

Testing guidelines for designing data collection systems for co-managed fisheries

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Since 2002, the WorldFish Centre has been working in collaboration with the Marine Resources Assessment Group (MRAAG), Aquaculture Sills Ltd (ASL), the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), and the Mekong River Commission (MRC) to develop guidelines for designing data collection and sharing systems for co-managed fisheries.

The development of these guidelines, funded by the UK Government's Department for International Development (DfID), Fisheries Management Science Programme (FMSP), has focused around an eight-stage participatory design process which aims to provide co-managers, at all levels, with data and information they require to support the management process (Figure 1).

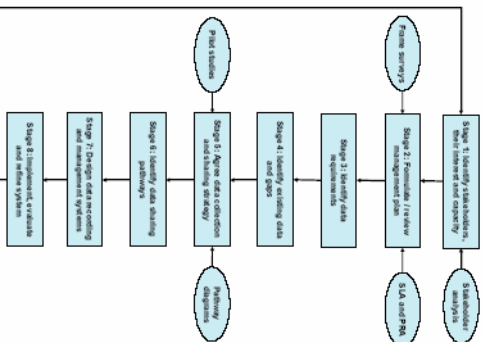


Figure 1. The eight-stage participatory design process.



The WorldFish Centre has played a key role in field-testing and evaluating the Guidelines under the CBFM Project. In June this year, the Guidelines were field tested with 50 stakeholders at three CBFM sites in Jessore, Tangai and Sunamganj in Bangladesh.

Using the guidelines, the stakeholders, representing the Departments of Fisheries and Agriculture, partner NGOs (PNGOs), Community Based Organizations (CBOs), Local Government Engineering Departments (LGED), the Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) and Local Government and Rural Development (LGRD) were able to discuss and agree upon stakeholder roles and responsibilities by means of small group discussions, and a voting approach.



Stakeholders identifying their information needs.

Stakeholders were also able to identify detailed lists of information requirements to support those roles and responsibilities including explanations for why this information is needed.

In some cases, stakeholders also were able to proceed to stages 3 and 6 of the design process, focusing mainly upon identifying common data needs, and potential data collection tools and sources using tables provided in the Guidelines. Potential networks for sharing information among stakeholders were also identified (Figure 2).

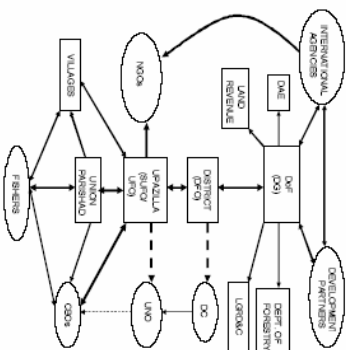


Figure 2. The information sharing network developed by stakeholders at Sunamganj.

It is expected that these preliminary designs can be refined and implemented to ensure that the information needs of local communities and governers that the stakeholders can be sustained beyond the life of the CBFM project.

Summarising the results of the evaluation activities, Dr Mustafa reported that "The Guidelines... would be of immense help to the field practitioners in collecting valid, reliable and pertinent data in the context of co-management".

The Guidelines will be published as a two part FAO Fisheries Technical Paper before the end of this year. Part I: Practical Guide has been written specifically for co-managers and facilitators working in the field and offers simple and practical advice on identifying the information needs of different stakeholders in relation to their management objectives and responsibilities, and developing collaborative ways of collecting and sharing the information in the most effective way.

Part II: Technical Guidelines provide more technical detail on each of the sessions included in the Practical Guide, including examples of the types of data that might be of interest to different stakeholders, data collection methods

The guidelines are intended to complement, rather than replace, existing relevant manuals and guides already published in this and other FAO production series.



Participants presenting their information needs. Website: <http://www.mrpfidc2.htm>

Upcoming events

- August
- Fish Fortnight 2005 (August 7-21)
 - Worldfish Center and NGOs to fresh handling over management of waterbodies to Community Based Organizations (CBOs)
 - Worldfish Center DG Steven Hall expected to visit Bangladesh office
 - Steering Committee Meeting
 - 30th - Project Coordination Meeting at CARITAS office, Meppur
 - Memorandum of Agreement (MOU) to finish being signed between CBOs and Department of Fisheries (DOF)
- September
- 12th to 16th - CBRM-2 Portfolio Director, Alan Brooks to report to the Worldfish Center Board of Trustees Meeting in Cairo, Egypt
 - Media Advisory Committee Meeting at FEMCOM office, Dharmoad
- Review workshops will be conducted at the waterbody

Please send your stories and photos to the Communications Team

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