

## DOCUMENT

## A Gender Perspective in CBCRM

**Integrating a gender perspective in CBCRM approaches:  
A review of experiences and best practices of Oxfam Novib  
partners in Southeast Asia and other efforts worldwide**

This report is by Cornelia Quist, Leonore Poloton-De la Cruz and International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF), December 2008

This report provides insights on integrating a gender perspective in the practice of community-based coastal resource management (CBCRM) in Southeast Asia, based on a review of literature and on experiences of selected organizations in the region. Providing an analysis of gender relations prevailing in coastal communities in the region and key gender issues in coastal resources management, it outlines successful strategies and experiences of gender integration in approaches and actions in coastal resources management.

The report highlights various threats facing fisheries and fishing communities in Southeast Asia, with implications for both the sustainability of fisheries resources and the livelihoods of fishing communities. These include: growing pressure on coastal resources and habitats; pressures of overfishing; and threats due to trade liberalization and export-oriented aquaculture. Coastal zones are also sites of extreme poverty due to inequitable access to resources, systematic negligence of small-scale fisheries by governments, and the absence of effective resources management and governance.

Against this backdrop, there is growing acknowledgement, including by governments, of the limitations of centralized management systems, and an appreciation of the potential of co-management and decentralization approaches, in particular CBCRM. CBCRM approaches, initiated first in the Philippines, have since been adopted in several other countries of the region, including Vietnam, Cambodia and Indonesia. The unique social, political and cultural context in these countries is influencing the way CBCRM approaches are unfolding there.

In general, there appears to be a commitment to co-management and decentralization processes, to a greater or lesser extent, by States across the region. Some States have taken steps to put in place an enabling legal and policy framework to support co-management and decentralization processes. However, while there are some concrete examples or success stories, these remain largely confined to donor-supported pilot projects. Co-management in the region is not yet anchored in national policy and most projects are supported by donor funding rather than from direct government funding.

The report highlights the need to promote genuine co-management and CBCRM processes, integrating a gender perspective. In this, there is much to learn from the efforts of organizations in the region and elsewhere in integrating gender issues in coastal resources management (CRM) programmes. Several 'best practices' and key lessons for mainstreaming gender at the organizational level, as well as at the programme level, are identified.

The review of organizational efforts has also brought to the fore some important issues for further analysis and reflection. These include: defining more clearly the value of women's contributions to fishing communities and the whole fishing industry, including through their work in social reproduction; sharpening what 'gender mainstreaming in CBCRM' means, so that both women's practical and strategic needs are addressed, particularly through participation in decisionmaking; ensuring their property/use rights to coastal and other resources; increasing women's direct economic gains and their access to economic and other resources; protecting women against violence and discrimination; transforming gender relations within government and other community institutions; and investing in individual and institutional learning.

This report can be downloaded at: <http://wif.icsf.net> (Bibliography, under the theme Women and Resources Management). ■



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Writers and potential contributors to YEMAYA, please note that write-ups should be brief, about 500 words. They could deal with issues that are of direct relevance to women and men of fishing communities. They could also focus on recent research or on meetings and workshops that have raised gender issues in fisheries. Also welcome are life stories of women and men of fishing communities working towards a sustainable

fishery or for a recognition of their work within the fishery. Please also include a one-line biographical note on the writer.

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