

International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF) Trust

**NATIONAL TRAINING OF TRAINERS (TOT) WORKSHOP
ON THE SSF GUIDELINES
(INLAND FISHERIES)**

Concept Note

Venue: Seva Kendra, Kolkata

Date: 22-24 December 2022

I. Introduction

The Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (the SSF Guidelines) were endorsed by the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) at its Thirty-first Session in June 2014. The implementation of the SSF Guidelines is identified as a significant step for enhancing the contribution of small-scale fisheries to nutrition and food security. As part of the implementation process, International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF) Trust is organizing a National Training of Trainers (TOT) Workshop (Inland Fisheries) in Kolkata from 22 to 24 December 2022. Key fishworker representatives from Assam, Bihar, Jammu and Kashmir, Kerala, Maharashtra, Manipur, Odisha, Rajasthan and West Bengal, are expected to attend the Workshop.

II. Context

Till about the year 2000, marine fish production dominated India's total fish production. The inland fisheries in India in 2021-22 contributed over three-quarters of the national fish production of 14.73 million metric tonnes. The inland fisheries sector also contributes to the livelihood of 1.24 million fishers. In spite of the fact that the inland fisheries sector has grown in absolute terms, the development in terms of its potential is yet to be fully realized, especially to make use of India's vast inland water resources.

Inland fisheries and inland water bodies come under List II (State List, entry 21) of the Indian Constitution and therefore subject to legislation at the state level. Transboundary rivers, such as Narmada, Cauvery, Krishna, and Brahmaputra, however, come under the Union List when it comes to disputes over water resources.

The inland fisheries sector is dealing with multiple challenges including overfishing, pollution, environmental degradation, poor access to water bodies, climate change impacts and natural and human-induced disasters. The scattered distribution, a diverse management regime and weak governance have not been helpful either.

III. Background

The SSF Guidelines seek, among other things, to ensure that small-scale fishers are not arbitrarily evicted and their legitimate tenure rights are not extinguished or infringed (para 5.9). Towards addressing the grievances of small-scale fishers, States are to provide access to justice through impartial and competent judicial and administrative procedures (para 5.11). In regard to large-scale development projects, the SSF Guidelines draw attention to ensuring access to judicial and administrative procedures for dispute resolution, and to provide effective remedies such as reparation, indemnity, and just compensation to affected fishers and fishworkers (para 5.11).

In regard to protected areas and livelihood options, the SSF Guidelines draw attention to ensuring the participation of small-scale fishing communities in the design, planning and implementation of management measures including protected areas (para 5.15). To compensate for livelihood losses from

seasonal closure of fisheries, social security protection for workers in small-scale fisheries (para 6.3) are proposed to be employed.

The SSF Guidelines note that the tenure rights, including customary rights, to marine fishery resources, small-scale fishing areas and adjacent land of small-scale fishers, fishworkers and their communities, with special attention to women, are to be secured through law and are to be identified, recorded and respected. Likewise, the State is to recognize and protect publicly-owned resources that are collectively used and managed (para 5.6). Further, States are to grant preferential access of small-scale fishers to fish in waters under national jurisdiction, and to create exclusive zone for small-scale fisheries.

IV. Aim of the Workshop

The workshop would enhance the capacity of fishworkers' organizations, CSOs, and community-based organizations to engage with the SSF Guidelines to negotiate issues of concern in regard to policy, legislation, lives and livelihoods of the SSF communities within the framework of resource management and social development.

V. Objectives of the Workshop

- To comprehend, consistent with the SSF Guidelines, issues related to the just access of small-scale fishers, fishworkers and fishing communities, including women, to inland fisheries resources and adjacent land through the responsible governance of tenure at the state and local level;
- To understand existing schemes and entitlements with respect to the lives and livelihoods of small-scale fishers and fishworkers; and
- To discuss implications of policies of concern to small-scale fishers and fishworkers (e.g. National fisheries policy, 2020 and legislation at the state level on inland fisheries).

VI. Methodology

The resources for the TOT Workshop (Inland fisheries) are developed after undertaking a need assessment of fishworkers' organizations. Practical exercises and group work are planned to help trainers to address their concerns. Background documents and power point presentations are to be shared to introduce and explain each theme. The TOT Workshop (inland fisheries) will be followed up by a one-day capacity development training workshop in several states of India, led by the trained participants.

VII. Expected Outcome

Strengthened capacity of inland fishing communities to actively engage in securing sustainable small-scale fisheries in the context of implementation of the SSF Guidelines.

For more information, contact:

Nivedita Shridhar
ICSF Trust, First Floor, 22
Venkatrathinam Nagar, Adyar
Chennai 600020
E-mail: icsf@icsf.net
Telephone: 044-24451216