

International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF) Trust  
Kerala Institute of Local Administration (KILA)

**WORKSHOP ON  
SEA SAFETY AND FISHERIES MANAGEMENT:  
TRAINING AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENTS,  
KERALA, INDIA**

*Kerala Institute of Local Administration, Thrissur, Kerala*

*01-02 March 2023*

**CONCEPT NOTE**

**I. Introduction**

The negotiated instrument, the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines) was 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 sub-national capacity development workshop on fisheries management, social development and safety at sea—supported by Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The Workshop will be held at Kerala Institute of Local Administration, Thrissur, Kerala, India, on 01-02 March 2023. Key representatives from panchayats, fishworker organizations, civil society organizations and community-based organizations in Kerala are expected to attend, along with representatives of the Kerala state fisheries and panchayat departments.

**II. Background**

The SSF Guidelines instrument recognizes the role of decentralized and local government structures in its implementation. The Constitution of India, 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> amendments, provide the platform to work in a decentralized manner and these amendments were aimed at ensuring economic development and social justice also at the local level, similar to the objectives of the SSF Guidelines.

In November 2019, a National Workshop of local self-governments (LSGs) was held, in Thrissur, Kerala, to raise awareness about the SSF Guidelines. The workshop focused on how the three-tier system of governance—at the panchayat, state and Union level—could aid in operationalizing the SSF Guidelines in India with the LSGs playing a pivotal role at the local level.

The Workshop recommendations that were put together based on the various sessions and group discussions pointed towards three main issues that required capacity building of the stakeholders:

- (i) How can LSGs contribute to the social development of fishing communities (coastal and inland) including safety at sea?
- (ii) How can LSGs effectively restore, conserve and manage aquatic and coastal ecosystems?
- (iii) How can LSGs, Union and state governments and civil society – strengthen the participation of fishing communities (coastal and inland) in democratic platforms for local governance?

### **III. Objectives of the Workshop**

Based on: (i) the 2019 workshop recommendations; (ii) KILA's methodology for Local Action Plan on Climate Change (LAPCC); and (iii) the need to address sea safety issues, the objectives of the workshop were framed. The Workshop aims to:

- Raise awareness of local self-governments (panchayats) about sea safety issues;
- Promote social development of marine and inland small-scale fishing communities; and
- Equip fishworker organizations and panchayats to engage in sustainable fisheries management.

### **IV. Expected Outcome**

The workshop envisions to sensitize fishworker, civil society, and community-based organizations to influence the Gram Panchayat Development Programme (GPDP) in selected panchayats of Kerala state, to include fisheries management, community-based sea-safety preparedness and social development. Local sea safety protocol can improve search and rescue (S&R) of fishers in nearshore/estuarine waters and scale up coordinated and coherent S&R to the national level as necessary.