

**LASU-ICSF-FAO-WORLDFISH**

**FINAL REPORT OF SYNERGY AND COLLABORATION WITH WORLDFISH**

**Report**

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## INTRODUCTION

The WorldFish, a member of CGIAR, is the world's leading scientific research organization dedicated to improving the contribution of fisheries and aquaculture to livelihood, nutrition and environmental improvement, with a strong focus on the poor and vulnerable. WorldFish has a 40-year track record of delivering research innovation in fisheries and aquaculture to advance knowledge, promote sustainable, evidence-based solutions and strengthen policy design and implementation. This has been achieved in partnership with an extensive network of national and international research institutions, universities, the private sector, NGOs and development agencies that share a common vision to help the millions of people in the developing world who depend on fish for food, nutrition and income.

The WorldFish mission is to strengthen livelihoods and enhance food and nutrition security by improving fisheries and aquaculture. WorldFish pursues this mission through research and development partnerships focused on helping those who stand to benefit the most: poor producers and consumers, women and children. Research addresses three interlinked challenges within the fish agri-food system: sustainable aquaculture, resilient small-scale fisheries and enhancing the contributions of fish to the nutrition of the poor. Our focus is on countries where demand for fish is high and where research can make the most difference.

Recognizing the actual and potential importance of fish to the people of Nigeria, WorldFish partnered with a wide range of stakeholders—state agencies, civil society, communities and the private sector—to conduct a scoping study and value chain analysis to better understand the fish agri-food system in Nigeria, and how fisheries and aquaculture could be used to improve food and nutrition security, youth employment and the livelihoods and income of the poor. However, to meet future demand for fish, particularly in developing countries like Nigeria, aquatic production must be doubled by 2030 and postharvest losses minimized.

Meeting this challenge requires research innovations across the entire spectrum of fish-food systems, from production through processing, retailing and consumption. Referring to the crucial role of fish in global strategies to reduce poverty and improve food security and nutrition, and noting the need for investment in research and development.

WorldFish is leading the 6-year CGIAR Research Program on Fish Agri-Food Systems (FISH). FISH focuses on the interlinked challenges of sustainable production from aquaculture and small-scale fisheries, with the crosscutting themes of gender, youth and capacity development, in priority geographies in Africa, Asia and the Pacific. FISH also interacts with several other CGIAR research programs (CRPs), including Agriculture for Nutrition and Health (A4NH), offering another promising opportunity to enhance the contribution of fish to nutrition security and health.

In Nigeria, a scoping study, preliminary assessment and consultation indicate strong potential for delivering impact for the poor through investments in aquaculture and, possibly, small-scale fisheries. Recognizing that the scoping study did not assess the value and potential of small-scale fisheries in Nigeria, an early assessment is necessary to evaluate this as well as the potential for interventions to reduce food insecurity, improve nutrition and increase household income.

The engagement with the WorldFish was built on extant synergies in promoting sustainable development of the small-scale fisheries in the country and preceded the LoA with ICSF started in March 2021. WorldFish and LASU have an existing Memorandum of Understanding initiated in 2020 between Dr. Harrison Charo, the former Country Director of Nigeria and Egypt, and the duo of Prof. Shehu L. Akintola and Dr. Kafayat A. Fakoya referred to here as the LASU team. Prior to this MOU, the LASU team had been acquainted with Dr. Phillipa Cohen, Research Leader, Small-Scale Fisheries Program WorldFish; co-authored a working paper on Fish in Food Systems<sup>1</sup> with Dr. Kendra Bryd;

attended Fish in Africa Food Systems Symposium, participated in the IHH Global Key Messages WorldFish Seminar; co-principal investigators in two aquaculture related- projects and co-authors in two publications; co –developed potential proposal on small-scale fisheries; lead authors/gender advisor in the IHH Nigeria case study.

Thus from the above, LASU was well positioned to collaborate with WorldFish on the FAO-ICSF SSF VG Implementation. The collaboration led to development of a synthesis (background) paper and a working paper. WorldFish provided technical inputs and advisory roles in the synthesis paper on Nigeria small-scale fisheries led by the LASU team. The working paper on the contributions of small-scale fisheries to food and nutrition security has since been published by WorldFish<sup>2</sup>. It was led by Dr. Kendra Bryd while Sarah Erickson, communication specialist, WorldFish designed the infographic on the contributions of small-scale fisheries in Nigeria.

WorldFish participated in the panel presentations at the workshops. **Dr. Sunil Siriwardena**, WorldFish Nigeria and **Dr. Kendra Bryd** delivered presentations at the National Workshop for State and non-State actors. The key messages from Dr. Siriwardena’s presentation: “Harnessing Potential of Inland Fisheries: Closing the Demand and Supply Gap” highlighted the inadequacies from dependence on one species of cultured fish- the African catfish and the challenge posed by competing uses for freshwater which could determine the pace to increase aquaculture production. Therefore, this accentuated superiority of small-scale fisheries over aquaculture in terms of species diversity, optimization of reservoir fisheries in determining the fishery potential; strengthening fisheries management and embracing culture-based fisheries. The second presentation by **Dr. Kendra Byrd**, a Senior Research Fellow - Nutrition and Food Systems, University of Greenwich Natural Resources Institute was titled: “Small-scale fisheries are an important part of the food system in Nigeria”. She emphasized dominance of small scale fisheries in domestic fish production and the role of inland fisheries in tackling malnutrition and small fish which when consumed whole often supplies more nutrients per serving as main source of the most nutritious fish.

In the training workshop for media and advocacy, **Dr. Philippa Cohen**, Consultant to WorldFish and Adjunct Research Fellow at James Cook University, Australia, demonstrated the linkages between the SSF Guidelines and the 17 SDGs in 2030 in her presentation titled: “Experience from advocating for sustainable small-scale fisheries”. She recommended focus to providing evidence on consequences of losses if small-scale fisheries are eroded and what will be there to gain by investing in good governance of small - scale fisheries. In addition, she emphasized the importance and linkage of the four elements: research, policy, advocacy and communications to produce evidence for action-research of the costs and benefits for policies and investments.

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<sup>1</sup> Bradley, B., Byrd, K., Atkins, M., Isa, S.I., Akintola, S., **Fakoya, KA**, Ene Obong, H. and Thilsted, S.H. (2020). The potential of fish in Nigeria food system: recommendations to improve the food and nutrition security of vulnerable populations. Penang, Malaysia: WorldFish. Program Report: 2020-06.

<sup>2</sup> Byrd KA, **Fakoya K**, Akintola S, Westlund L, Isa S, Cohen PJ. (2022). The role of small-scale fisheries in Nigeria’s food system. WorldFish, Penang, Malaysia.