



Enhancing Fisher Women's Involvement in Hilsa Fisheries in Bangladesh

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Content

- Why Gender has been prioritized ?
- How it is being integrated throughout the program
- Challenges & insights



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Hilsa (Ilish) Indian Shad



- National fish in **Bangladesh**
- **11%** of Bangladesh's total catch
- **1% of GDP**
- Rich in **Omega 3** and essential minerals such as **Vitamin A** and **Zinc**
- Bangladesh harvests **65%** of global hilsa
- Conserving hilsa may enhance **biodiversity**



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Improved resilience of the Meghna River ecosystem and communities reliant on coastal fisheries

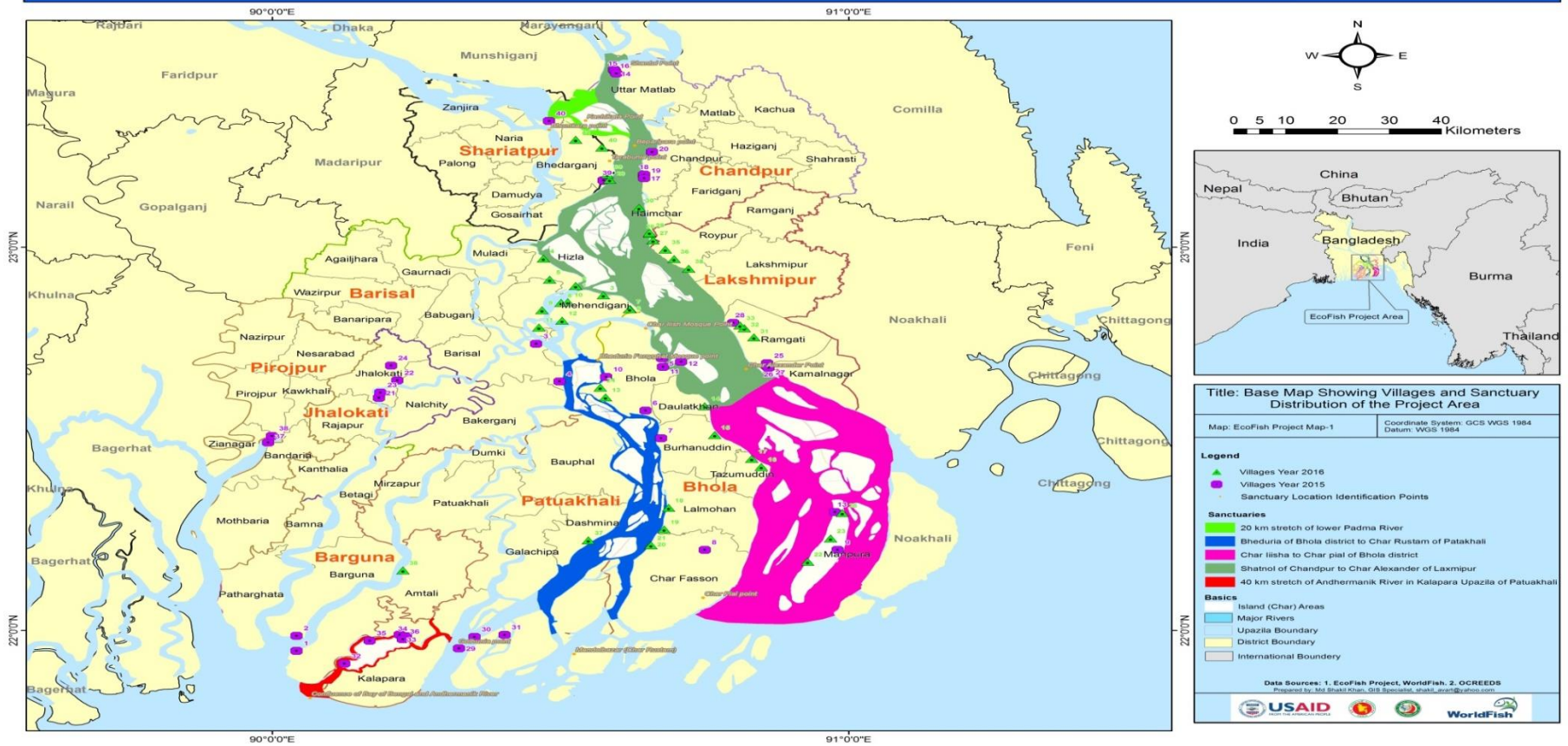


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ECOFISH^{BD} Project Overview

Enhanced Coastal Fisheries in Bangladesh (ECOFISH BD)



Why Gender in EcoFish?



- **Women's participation** in Hilsa fisheries value chain in Bangladesh is largely **invisible**
- **Weak power** of poor fishermen and women relative to other **stakeholders** in Hilsa fisheries sector
- Lack of **active participation of women** in different **co-management** group
- Limited scope of **participation in decision making** in household as well as community level
- Limited access to **productive resources/income generating opportunities** for women
- **Over burdened** with **micro credit loans**, which are **beyond their control**



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Hypothesis



If women's capacity and livelihoods are improved, this will enable better Hilsa conservation



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Mainstreaming Gender in ECOFISH^{BD}

ECOFISH^{BD} aims to promote resilience and improved livelihoods through better access to science and analysis for decision making; taking actions to support co-management; building enhanced diversified livelihoods, equity and empowerment of poor women and men depending on hilsa fisheries; and improving policy for gender equity and governance.

Ensure gender integration at each stage of the project cycle, eg.

- Planning and design
- Implementation and management,
- M&E,
- Reporting & documentation



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Planning & Design



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Community Profiling



Active participation of women & men in community profiling exercise



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Gender Analysis



Gender analysis in community profiling for identifying of development needs in fishing HHs



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Implementation



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Hilsa Conservation Group (HCG)



At least 30% fisher women involved in Hilsa Conservation Group (HCG)



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Community Savings Scheme



Community savings scheme are exclusively focused on women



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Alternative Income Generating Activities(AIGAs)



Creating opportunities of AIGAs for women in fishers HHs



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Alternative Income Generating Activities (AIGAs)



Increase resilience and social cohesion through AIGAs



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Market Linkages through Pebble



Connecting the fisher women with global markets



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The Change Agents



Paravet (Community Animal Health Worker) Development



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Floating Boat Fishers



Rays of hope among boat fishers and promise of Hilsa conservation



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Fisher Women Congress



Conservation of Hilsa through Women Empowerment

Pledge for Parity in the fishing Households



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M&E

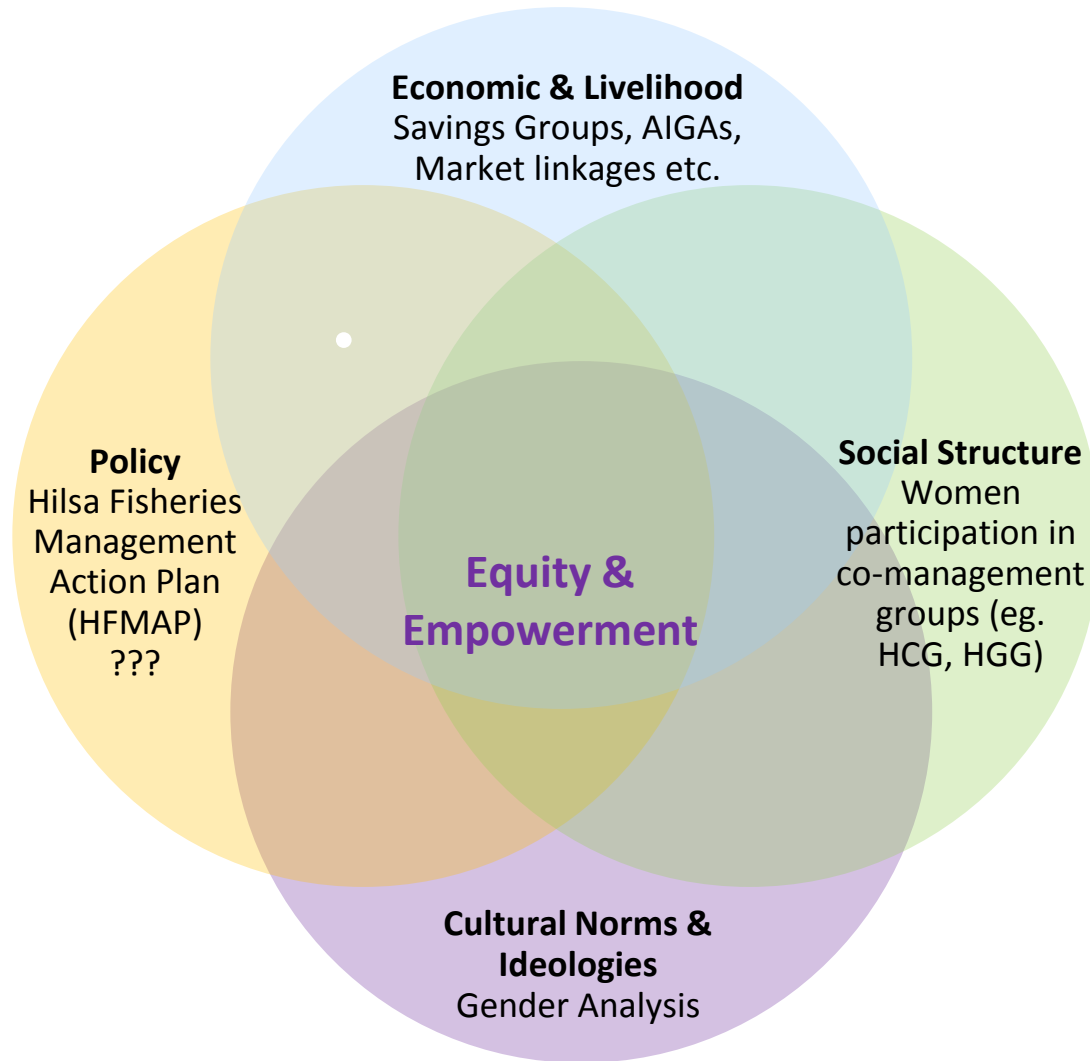
- Qualitative & Quantitative gender disaggregated data
- Baseline & Endline assessment of women empowerment through WEAI



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Conceptualizing Equity & Empowerment initiatives



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Reflections on Outcome & Challenges

- A visible change in the Women of 80 fishing communities have been noticed in terms of
 - Women promoting conservation through motivating their husband to comply with regulations
 - Contributing to family well being through AIGAs
 - Get rid off micro-credit loan through Community savings scheme
 - Improved market access through *Pebblechild*
(<http://www.pebblechild.com/>).

However,

- Gender norms & relation limiting women's mobility & freedom
- Lack of participation of men & women in Hilsa conservation initiatives
- Women involvement in Co-management system is still challenging



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Thank You

