



Engaging Women and Men in Small Scale Fisheries and Agricultural Development – Solomon Islands

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GAF6 Symposium, 3rd – 7th August 2016,
Thailand, Bangkok



What the presentation is about?

My personal perspective on how WorldFish Solomon Islands team realize a need around gender, what we did about it and what we have learned..

.....so who am I?



Papua New Guinea

Solomon Islands



Solomon Islands

Australia

Choiseul

Isabel

Western

Malaita

South Pacific Ocean

Guadalcanal

Solomon Sea

Makira-Ulawa

Temotu

Rennell and Bellona

WorldFish areas of work

- **Community-based natural resource management**
 - engage women, men and youths in the natural resource management process
 - Train rural women from communities engage in resource management
- **Nutrition**
 - engage with communities & other NGOs as partners to improve agricultural farming for nutrition & income
- **Aquaculture**
 - worked on an inland aquaculture project
 - collect stories by using 'most significant change' methodology – in part of our gender work to try and understand the roles of men and women in aquaculture
 - conduct workshop for fish pond farmers (men & women) – creating space for men and women to share their experiences and benefits of aquaculture



PELAGIC FISH

FRUITS AND NUTS

SHIFTING CULTIVATION: STAPLE ROOTS
AND TUBERS

REEF FISH

CASH CROPS

BACKYARD VEGETABLE
GARDEN

MANGROVES

zoriquedangi

Gender in fisheries and aquaculture – the need for gender equality

- Women play a critical role in each stage of small-scale fisheries value chains, including their participation in extraction, processing and marketing of fish and fish products
- Yet, women tend to be marginalized from efforts to manage natural resources and develop small-scale fisheries, sometimes include from research efforts
- There remains a need for better creating space for women to fairly participate, contribute to, and benefit from natural resource management and development programs and projects



Recognizing our challenge in research

There is information:

- about gender roles and engagement in decision making; and
- women being disadvantaged in natural resource management outcomes

.....BUT! there is something we are missing – it's the key knowledge about ***why...*** in understanding how women and men face similar and different *informal* barriers to participating, contributing to and benefiting from natural resource management.

What did we do?

- We conducted a study (including social-gender analysis) in two places – Malaita and Western Provinces
- **Methods**
 - four FGDs tools
 - Semi-structured key informant interviews
 - Interviewed 8-10 people in each focus group
- **Size of study**
 - total of 175 FGDs from 140 HHs in Malaita
 - total of 57 FGDs from 50 plus HHs in Western
- **Time period**
 - four days of field study



Key insights regarding gender norms and relations

- Both men and women face challenges...but women face greater restrictions in access to information and support services, participation in decision making processes, physical mobility
- Cultural norms and customary rights system are highly influential
- Influence of power relationships between husband and wives
- Transition, people are more money oriented and emphasis on more immediate returns. E.g. see cash return immediately
- Men and women are reluctant to 'take risks' - leaving external agencies to 'carry the risk'
- Both need for evidence of success
- But women had to navigate these power factors
- In western Province, women lead changes and tend to lead more innovative activities than men whilst in Malaita men tend to innovate more than women

How has this helped meet the challenges?

- Helps to see gender in terms of negotiations and relationships
- Signals the need for both men and women to be engaged in gender transformation processes
- Reflecting and giving back what belong to the communities could help men, women, boys and girls understand themselves – it's a step in a transformative process or starting point to shift mindsets



How has this changed my perception and understanding about gender in SI

- Gender is not only about '*women*' but it is also about '*men*'
- Create more space to make room in a way we can recognize the potential women and men have
- It could be helpful to view or explain 'gender' in the local context, with the local language and knowledge
- It appears, the dominance of patriarchal attitude influence people's perceptions of equality – we grow, live and learn with the attitude/mentality that...*women nurtures and men heads household*

Next steps

- Possible deepening of understanding of gender relations, norms and outcomes by ethnographic study
- Possible longer term historical analysis
- Integration of empowerment into M&E: Quantitative assessment of some aspects of empowerment –excerpts of WEAI-A into M&E
- Developing gender transformative strategies that would work well in the context
- Bringing this into partnership - E.g. Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC)



Thank You



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