Case Studies on Women and Seaweed in Atauro Island, Timor-Leste WorldFish, Ikan Adapt Project, Timor-Leste

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Introduction

This study investigates the severe impacts of climate change including rising sea temperature and wave motion on seaweed farming communities, predominantly composed of women in Atauro Island, Timor-Leste.

Ikan Adapt project funded by GEF and implemented by WorldFish.

Women's contributions is overlooked and widely unknown by our own Timorese society.

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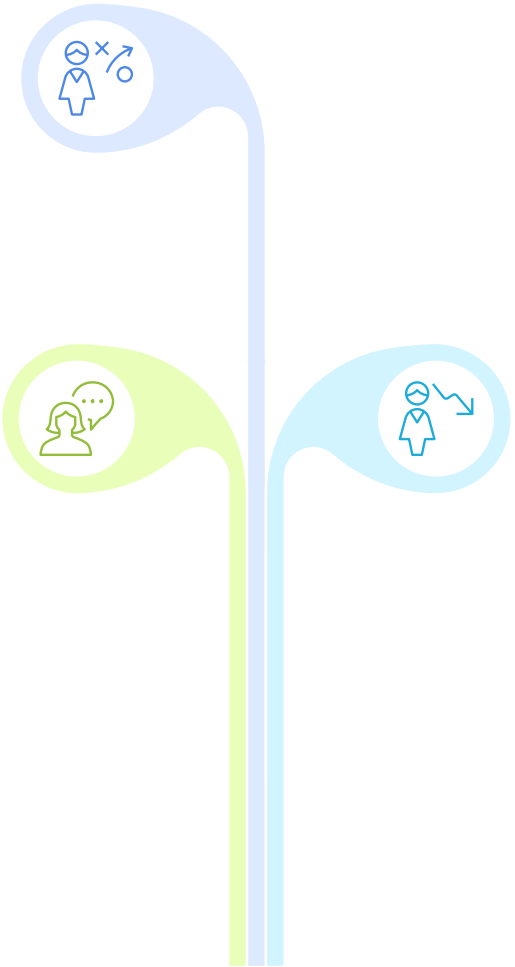
Key objectives

Risks and Challenges

Identifying risks and challenges faced by women cultivators.

Crucial Perspectives and Experiences

Understanding women's perspectives and experiences in seaweed farming.



Resilience and Adaptive Strategies

Examining women's resilience and adaptive strategies in cultivation.

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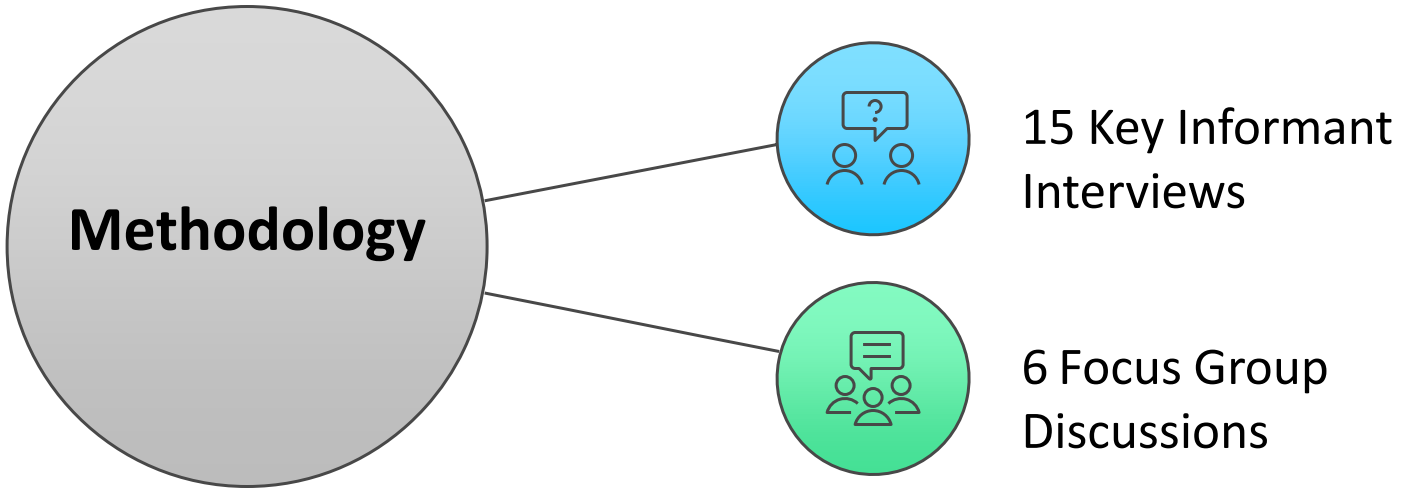
Research Methodology



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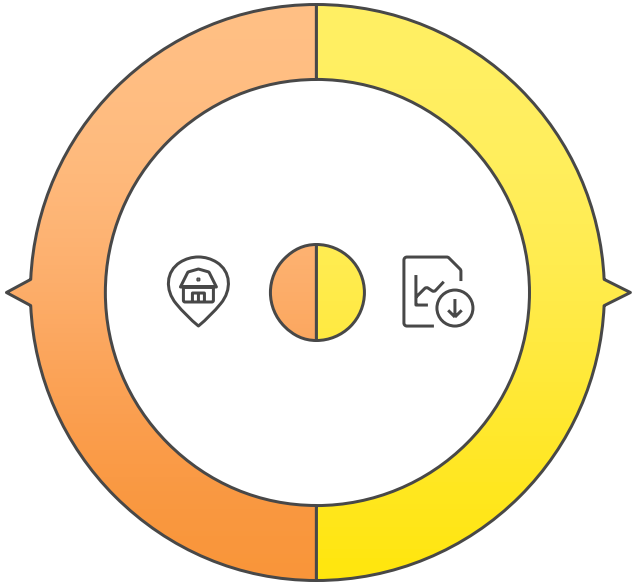
Seaweed farming in Timor-Leste

Farming locations

The sites of seaweed farming are: Ataúro, Liquiça, Manatuto, Oecusse, and Lautem.



Data

Lack of statistical data on the number of people involved in seaweed farming. Includes annual production for fresh and dried seaweed.

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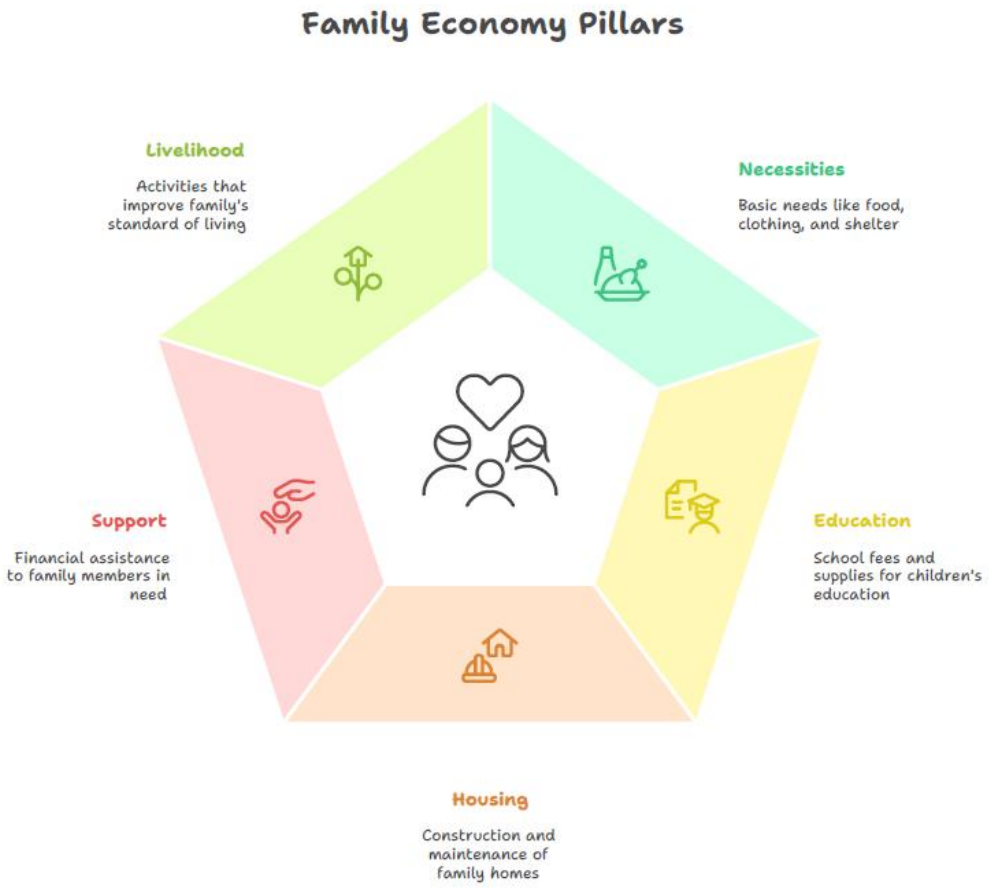
High contribution to household economies



"Involving in seaweed farming has helped my family's economy a lot. It has helped me, and my family, obtain the income that we use daily to fulfill our basic needs including building a proper house".

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Risks and challenges

Climate change:

Unseasonal big waves and winds, intensifies heat, draughts, rains, raising temperatures at sea and lack of access to weather information highly affected women who are involved in seaweed farming.

These environmental shifts have led to disease outbreaks, diminished seaweed production, and subsequently, a decline in women's economic independence.

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Risks and challenges

Materials:

Lack of materials such as boat, robes, buckets, technical trainings, seaboots/footwear, life jacket, proper storage facilities, emergency signaling devices, navigation, and communication, heavily affected women's work on seaweed production. As a result, most work is done manually and required extra time.

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Risks and challenges

Seedlings:

Lack of seaweed seedlings.

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Access to technical trainings:

Lack of access to technical trainings is also affected women's work on seaweed production especially on adapting to climate change.

"The main challenge is climate change where it affects the seaweed to suffer from the ice-ice disease where it causes low harvest results. Another one is on big waves and big winds. When this happens, I cannot go to the ocean to take care of my seaweed or even do some new planting of seaweed in the ocean".

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Program Intervention

Resilience and adaptive strategies by Ikan Adapt

- Provide technical training on climate-resilient seaweed farming.
- Use of varied strains with different environmental tolerances; rafts set up to compare performance of different strains in different conditions; use of water column (lowering seaweed) to avoid extreme temperature or low salinity.

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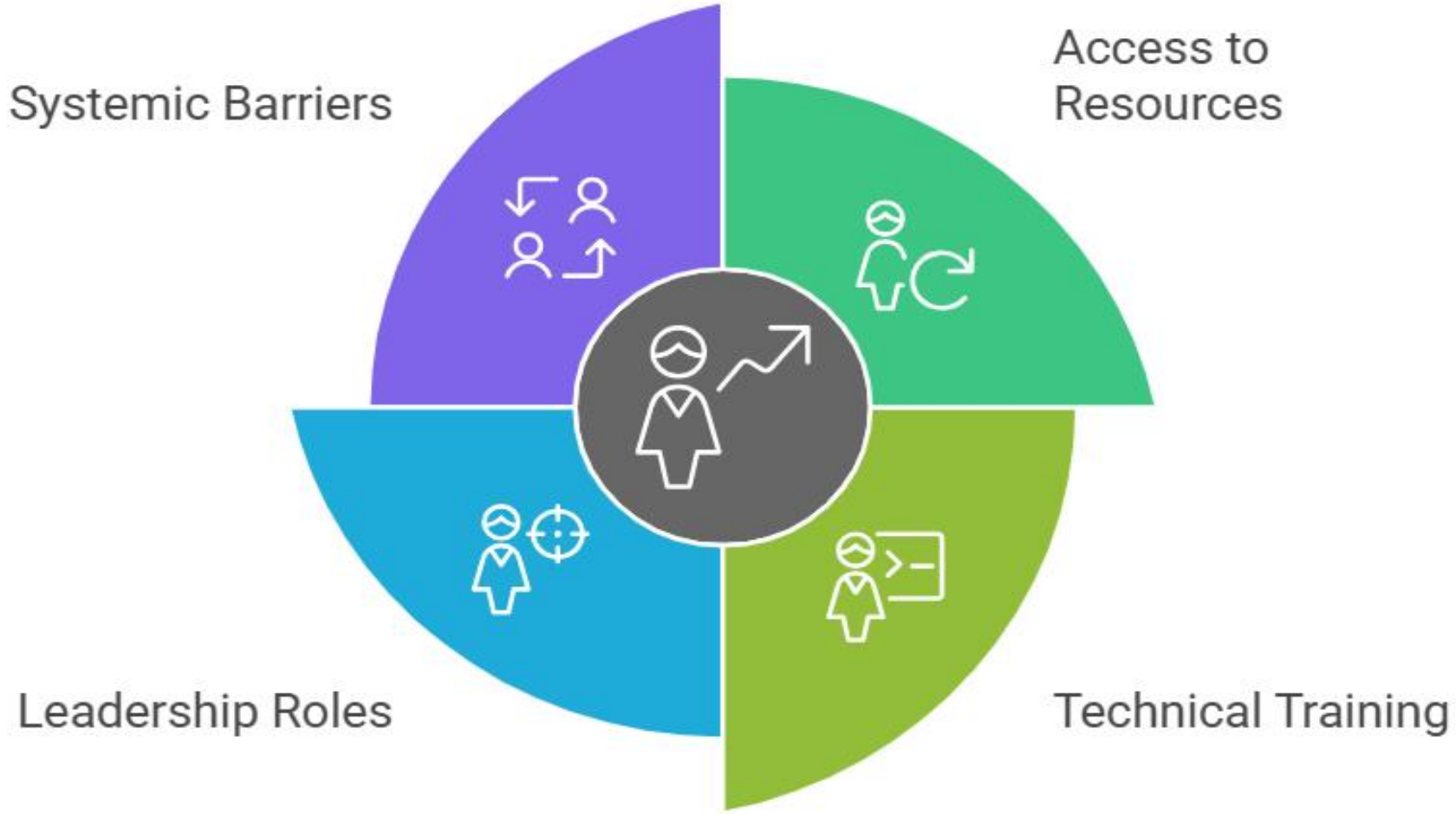
Recommendations



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