

THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE FISHERY SECTOR IN PANTAR ISLAND, INDONESIA

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In the archipelagic national state of Indonesia, collecting and harvesting of marine resources make an important contribution to the local livelihoods for both food security and cash income. However, the role of women and their contributions to the fishery sector is poorly recognized. The fishing sector is classified as a men's world. Almost all past policy and development interventions in the fishery sectors targeted fishermen. This paper presents illustrates clearly the women's role in the fishing sector in Pantar Island, eastern Indonesia. The aim of this paper is to explore the women's activities related to marine resources, the gear used, and the contributions of fishing as a family's source of livelihoods. The data on which this paper is based was collected through focus group discussions with women and key informant interviews with the village leaders and fisherwomen. Although the results of this paper provide a local context-specific analysis of the role of women in fishing, it shows that women do fish and women contribute significantly to the family's food security. Therefore fisherwomen are important stakeholder groups in the fishery sector and their contributions should be recognized by the fisheries policy makers.