

Socio-economic analysis of vulnerability factors along Lake Malawi fish market chain

by

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Introduction

- Target area: Southeastern arm of Lake Malawi and Lake Cahora Bassa
- Target population: Women
- Main objective: understanding and developing business innovations to reduce Vulnerability among Women Fish Traders in South East Arm of Lake Malawi and Cahora Bassa.

Expected outputs

- Improved knowledge base on the trends and risk factors of HIV and AIDS in the fisheries sector with respect to women fishers;
- Identify viable investment options to reduce vulnerability and increase mitigation capacity in the fisheries sector and generate benefits for populations at risk in wider society;
- Improved policies, institutions and processes for dissemination and investment in best practice

Study Approach

- Rapid appraisal conducted in the southeastern arm of Lake Malawi and Lake Cahora Bassa
- Review of literature
- Main survey conducted in Malawi using individual interviews, focus group discussions and key informant interviews
- Research sites (Msaka, Masasa, Makawa and Malindi)

Key Findings

- What we already know
 - Fishermen are a sixth high risk profile, with an HIV prevalence of 16.6% (GoM, 2006).
 - The MDHS (2004) showed a relatively high HIV prevalence rates in the fishing district of Mangochi (20.8%) against national average (11.8%)
- Reasons for HIV prevalence
 - Fishing practices where transactional and recreational sex is high,
 - Tourism industry,
 - Deeply rooted cultural practices,
 - High illiteracy rates and
 - Immigration.

Research Findings

- Relatively a young group of respondents
- 72% married (About 4 percent were in polygamous families)
- Widowed (8%) or divorced (10%) or single (6%).
- Low level of education
- A majority joined fishing industry recently
- Family support important in starting a business
- About 53% of the respondents accessed loans
- Fish processing and selling as major occupation (74%)
- **Value addition** activities undertaken include fish drying and transportation to wholesale markets

Value Chain of the Fishery Sector

- Buying of fish
 - 82% bought fish on their own
 - 46% bought fish from people they had no relationship with
 - 97% bought on cash basis
- Processing of fish
- Transportation of fish to a wholesale market



Source of Women Fishers' Vulnerability to HIV and AIDS

- Customership between Buyer and Seller
- Fish for Sex Relationships
- Relationship and/or marriage with migrant fishers
- Women Fisher's Vulnerability at the Wholesale Market (saving their operational costs)

Main Conclusions

- Tendency for women traders to have their business grow overnight
- Competition among traders when fish catches are low
- There is knowledge about HIV and AIDS but reality dictates otherwise
- Type of loans partly responsible for risk behavior women might adopt