



Considering gender in Community-Based Resource Management in Solomon Islands

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What the presentation is about?

How WorldFish Solomon Islands recognized the need to consider gender relations in Community-Based Natural Resource Management; what we did about it and what we have learned.



Women in fisheries

- Women fish too
- Women fish differently from men
- Women play a crucial role in coastal fisheries value chains





Yet, women tend to be marginalized from efforts to manage natural resources (f.e. community meetings)

There remains a need for creating space for women to participate in, contribute to, and benefit from community-based natural resource management

How do we engage with communities in a way that respects culture and local governance structures, without reinforcing norms that perpetuate inequalities?

- Gender in community-based natural resource management -

What is gender?

- refers to the relationship between women and men, girls and boys,
- refers to social expectation and opportunities associated with being a woman or man



Why focus on gender?

Gender and social inequality limits certain people's access to information, decision-making power, educational opportunities, health and resources – preventing equitable improvements in wellbeing.



We know that women are 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 on gender 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 findings 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 and access to resources.
- Cultural norms and customary rights system are highly influential (power relationships between husband and wives).
- Transition: people are nowadays money-oriented (need for immediate returns).
- Men and women are reluctant to 'take risks' - leaving external agencies to 'carry the risk'.
- Both men and women need evidence of success before taking action.

What did we learn?

- Gender is not only about ‘*women*’ but it is also about ‘*men*’
- See gender in terms of negotiations and relationships
- View or explain ‘gender’ in the local context, with the local language and knowledge
- Need for both men and women to be engaged in ***gender transformation processes***





EXPLOITATIVE

Reinforce, sustain or take advantage of inequitable norms and power imbalances to achieve objectives

ACCOMMODATING

Acknowledge, work around norms & inequalities

TRANSFORMATIVE

Examine, question & change harmful norms & the imbalance of power - outcomes and benefits are more equitable

EQUALITY

Understanding the gender-transformative approach in CBRM: learning from Kia community (Isabel Province)

Mothers Union take initiative to fully engage women, men & youths in CBRM

What they did:

- Approach and seek support from NGOs
- Taking initiatives to be proactive in community resource management activities
- Attend training as community-based trainers/facilitators
- Raising awareness
- Disseminate key messages on marine resource management
- Received fund – to do awareness training on resource management

What did we learn that can improve CBRM and ensuring gender equality?

- Development partners and government can help people achieve their long-term goals – and reduce disparities between women and men.
- Support from strong leaders is essential.
- Need to use existing local networks (e.g. MU)
- Need for more capacity building
- Respecting the role and work of women
- Provide communication materials to target groups

...“we gained new ideas and knowledge from other women and facilitators, and we felt free to talk and share; a separate workshop for men and women is good”...

Conclusion

“The National Gender Equality and Women’s Development Policy 2016–2020 recognizes that women and men are equal partners in the development of the Solomon Islands and it places gender equality at the heart of economic and social progress, which thereby gives equal value to the roles and responsibilities of the Solomon Islands’ women and men. It also recognizes that in order to redress gender inequalities, women and men need to work together to address attitudinal and institutional barriers to gender equality” – National Gender Equality and Women’s Development Policy 2016–2020 Solomon Islands.

Recommendations

1. Need for collaborative work in line ministries to strengthen and improve gender mainstreaming in the fisheries sector



2. Use the 'gender transformative approach' as guideline for better-improved CBRM

Resources / References

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Thank You



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