GENDER EQUITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION ANALYSIS FOR COASTAL FISHERIES

Wildlife Conservation Society

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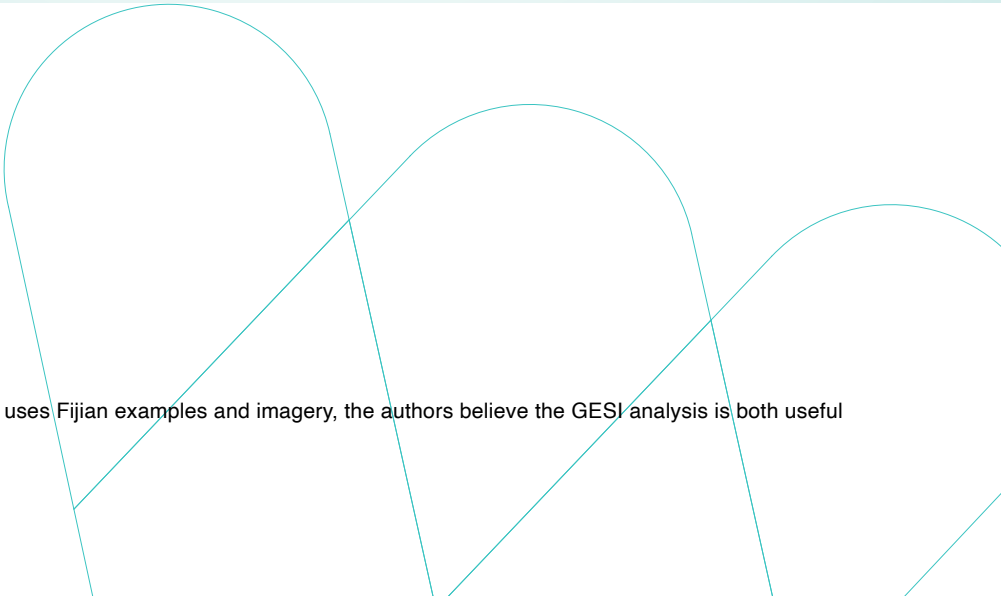
PURPOSE

This guide to gender equity and social inclusion (GESI) analysis has been designed for government institutions and other organisations engaging on community coastal fisheries who wish to apply a GESI lens to their work, as an important step to improving GESI best practice.[1]

KEY POINTS

1. A GESI analysis helps to identify the knowledge and expertise of different groups in communities and their respective roles in coastal fisheries, which are critical for the sustainable use and management of fisheries resources.

2. To ensure fisheries projects and programmes are inclusive, data for GESI analyses must be disaggregated by sex, age, ethnicity, and other relevant social categories.

3. A GESI analysis provides information that can be used to design interventions to ensure fisheries resources provide equitable benefits for every member of the community.

4. If equity and inclusion in fisheries are not addressed, key groups of people will continue to miss out, and fisheries management systems will be ineffective.

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[1] While this guide was developed in Fiji, and uses Fijian examples and imagery, the authors believe the GESI analysis is both useful and recommended more broadly.

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Why is GESI relevant to fisheries?

Communities are not homogenous and include people from different backgrounds. The issues that individuals face and their access to and use of services and opportunities vary based on their gender, age, ethnicity, economic background, social standing, education, (dis)ability, sexual orientation, history (including migrant status, colonial history), and any combination of these factors. In other words, people's identities and experiences affect their power and privilege, and the disadvantage and discrimination they may face in their lifetime. The issues people face also vary from one community to another depending on how their community is organised, the governance systems that control access to natural resources, local tenure arrangements, levels of education and wealth, and cultural traditions and practices.

Fisheries management systems cannot be fair, just and sustainable, if they do not have gender equity and social inclusion (GESI) at their heart. For example, implementation of fisheries management plans requires the support of the entire community but these plans will be ineffective if community members are not consulted and *meaningfully engaged*[1] in the development of the plans. A GESI analysis enables a better understanding of the needs of community members, including those who often miss out, for more effective targeting of interventions to ensure fairer outcomes for individuals and the communities of which they are a part of. Excluding women, youth and other groups ignores the unique perspectives and knowledge they hold – particularly when they play key roles in fisheries value chains. In addition to being a moral and ethical issue, many of the topics a GESI analysis will touch on relate to individuals' fundamental *human rights*[2] (e.g. gender equality, right to food, right to work, right to participation, including in decisions on natural resources one is dependent on for food or livelihoods).

In many Pacific communities *cultural and social norms*[3] play a key role in defining men and women's participation in resource use. These norms often present constraints for women's participation due to their expected family responsibilities (e.g. care of children, the elderly, and the home) and community commitments (e.g. church, fundraising, catering for social events); these all limit their time. Other norms include roles of men as decision-makers in fisheries management, and the invisibility of women's contributions despite their key role in coastal fisheries. When women, youth and other groups do not have a seat at the decision-making table, their voices go unheard. Ignoring these social aspects has consequences such as *tabus* (traditional closures) set by men being ignored by women as they had not been consulted, especially if the *tabu* was placed where women fish close to the village for food for their families. Men may consider these areas easier to police but it is not feasible for women to travel further away to fish due to their domestic responsibilities.

Experience shows that when equity and inclusion issues are genuinely addressed, better outcomes result. Inclusive approaches can lead to innovative solutions and improved outcomes for everyone involved in fisheries, not only for groups who are disadvantaged. These approaches also prevent interventions from harming anyone (i.e. making their lives worse), causing or increasing community conflicts, and contribute to people's overall well-being and resilience. If equity and inclusion in fisheries are addressed, then management systems are more likely to be effective and fisheries will remain productive and healthy for the people who are dependent on them for food, livelihoods and cultural practice.

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[1] Attendance of workshops and meetings where a person cannot say anything, or their suggestions are ignored is not meaningful engagement. For guidance on what constitutes *meaningful engagement* see: Kleiber et al. (2019) Gender-inclusive facilitation for community-based marine resource management. https://digitalarchive.worldfishcenter.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.12348/3747/FISH-2019-08.pdf

[2] The Pacific Community's social and environmental policy defines *human rights* as: "The rights inherent to all human beings, regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion or any other status. They include the right to life and liberty, equality before the law, peaceful assembly, freedom from slavery and torture, freedom of opinion and expression, the right to work and the right to education, amongst others. Human rights are protected in international and national laws."

[3] *Cultural* and *social norms* are the rules, expectations or beliefs of a specific cultural or social group that guide or constrain social behaviors (without the force of law), and often relate to a perceived social pressure to engage or not engage in specific behaviours. They are standards for appropriate and inappropriate behavior that determine what is (and is not) acceptable in interactions among people.

Using a gender risk assessment to improve a mud crab project in Bua

Mud crabs are a delicacy and a lucrative product that is sold locally and internationally. The majority of mud crab fishers are women who catch crabs for food and/or to sell for income. Due to increasing demand, women from Tavea Island in Bua Province noticed an increase in the number of fishers using fishing methods like net fishing and baited scoop nets to catch crabs, resulting in declines in the number of mud crabs in the wild. In 2020, the Wildlife Conservation Society ran a Gender and Risk Assessment in Tavea Village as part of a mud crab fattening project to improve fisher income. Men, women and youth (i.e. both women and men) were divided into three separate groups on the island to discuss:

a. issues faced by the crab fishers;

b. understand and appreciate the different roles each group play in the communities;

c. develop ideas on how the mud crab fishery can be utilised and managed wisely; and

d. increase the meaningful engagement of women in decision-making processes about their resources.

The women listed issues around the overfishing of mud crabs and collectively decided to develop a mud crab management plan to ensure all fishers in the village only caught crabs above the legal size limit, and berried crabs were left in the wild to reproduce.

They also developed ideas for running awareness programs in neighbouring communities that shared their fishing grounds. The discussions held at the community level gave men and the youth a deeper appreciation of the women's knowledge on the mud crab fishery, and highlighted the importance of including women in decision-making processes for managing local resources.

Contribution by: Ana Ciriyawa, Wildlife Conservation Society

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When to do a GESI analysis?

GESI analysis should be done *before* the start of a project or programme as part of planning. Some of the questions you might ask can also be used for monitoring, evaluation and learning *during* a project (i.e. monitored to see if changes are happening where expected), and *after* the project (i.e. to understand what has changed and for whom). In other words, a GESI analysis will help fisheries managers and practitioners consider and measure social impacts – both positive and negative – and to adapt their approaches and activities accordingly.

Collecting data for a GESI analysis

As outlined in the Pacific Community's *Pacific Handbook for Gender Equity and Social Inclusion in Coastal Fisheries and Aquaculture*[4] (hereafter SPC GSI Handbook), there are a number of ways to do a GESI analysis to look at the social aspects of fisheries. All of them seek to understand:

- **Roles and use patterns** – the roles of women and men of all diversities (different ages, abilities/disabilities, etc.) in fisheries, the different ways they use natural resources, and the impacts of their activities on marine ecosystems;

- **Benefits from fisheries** – how different people benefit from fishing (e.g. income, food, cultural, social); and

- **Access to and control over resources** – how social interactions, including relations between women and men, and social rules and hierarchies affect people's roles in coastal fisheries, and the opportunities and benefits they gain from the sector.

The SPC GSI Handbook presents key questions that may be asked for GESI analysis (adapted and included in Annex 1).

IMPORTANT: A GESI analysis must look at social inequality that might exist such as:

- **Unequal division of labour and benefits** – who is doing the work, and who is benefitting?
- **Unequal access to natural resources, assess and capital** – who is being left out?
- **Unequal participation in decisions on the use of natural resources** – whose voice, opinions or ideas are missing or not being heard?

For each of these, it is important to identify gender specific barriers and constraints and provide recommendations and solutions for the integration of GESI to overcome these. Examining social inequalities must be done sensitively, as it probably will uncover uncomfortable issues into community dynamics. Ultimately the aim of understanding these inequalities is to be more fair in how we do business and also to minimise risk to particular groups, especially to those that are more vulnerable or marginalised.

Examples of routine analyses done by fisheries managers and practitioners, and how to consider GESI is provided in the table below (adapted from the SPC GSI Handbook). Note the word 'activity' in the table can refer to a one-off activity or initiative, as well as an ongoing programme. An additional list of questions is included in Annex 1.

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[4] Leduc B, Barclay K, Kunatuba J, Danford M, Rakuro M (2021) Module 2: Gender and social inclusion analysis. In: Barclay K, Mangubhai S, Leduc B, Donato-Hunt C, Makhoul N, Kinch J, Kalsuak J (eds.). Pacific handbook for gender equity and social inclusion in coastal fisheries and aquaculture. Second edition. Noumea, New Caledonia: Pacific Community 19 pp.

Table 1. Examples of GESI considerations for different types of fisheries analyses

EXAMPLES	GESI CONSIDERATIONS
Fisheries needs assessments	• What are the specific needs of each group in the community (disaggregated by sex, age, other social categories)? • What are the unique perspectives of different groups on the proposed activities? • Who will be doing what kinds of work in the activities, and is it fair to all? • How do social and cultural norms affect the participation and engagement of the different groups in activities? • What are the costs and benefits of the activities for different groups in the community? • Are there any risks for any of the groups participating or benefitting from an activity, and can these be avoided or minimised? • What are the barriers different groups face that will affect their ability to participate in or benefit from an activity?
Fisheries stock assessments	• Does the stock assessment include species that women, youth and the elderly fish for? • Does the stock assessment include different habitats that different types of fishers might target? • Has gleaning been given equal consideration as fishing? • Has the different knowledge of women and men of their fisheries been understood and included? • Has the different time investments and technologies used by different fisher groups been considered? • Has equal consideration been given to fisheries targeted for food as well as for livelihoods?
Market surveys	• Are data on the number of women and men, and other social identifiers (e.g. ethnicity, origins) collected in the market? • What are the different freshwater or marine fish, invertebrates and algae being sold by different groups? • Are market vendors selling for themselves or on behalf of someone else (e.g. another vendor, a family member)? • Do all vendors have equal access to market resources (e.g. tables, fridges, storage facilities)? • Do all vendors have equal access to market information, including relevant laws that apply to them? • Who makes decisions about the sale of seafood, and the use of the income generated from sales? • How is the income from seafood sales used and distributed in families? • What are the barriers different groups face when selling at local markets, (e.g. access, safety and security, transport)?
Value chain analyses	• Who are the main players along the fisheries value chains (differentiated by gender, ethnicity, roles, etc.)? • Does the analysis take into account 'hidden' or 'unpaid' labour and roles that women or youth might play? • Are there barriers different groups engaged in different parts of the value chain face in terms of accessing or getting information on different market opportunities? • Do different women have equal negotiating power as men in the value chain? • Are opportunities to 'value add' equally available to different fisheries players along the value chain? • Are there technologies or post-harvest processing techniques available to all groups? • Which fisheries players need assistance accessing finance schemes?

GESI framework

Whether starting with the development of a fisheries project, or a management plan or reviewing activities in retrospect, a GESI framework can help to categorise information obtained from your GESI data collection (the answers to the questions in Table 1 and Annex 1) and analyse it according to certain themes. A framework can help make the *invisible, visible*. It can provide reminders to think about the influence of the themes on each other, and on different outcomes for the different people involved in fisheries.

There are various frameworks or models of change designed to meet such objectives; however, the approach captured in the figure below, that is adapted from CARE International[5] is being increasingly adopted by development agencies. While such frameworks focus on gender equality, the addition of social inclusion is appropriate as differences in benefits from services that women and men obtain is dependent not only on gender, but on additional factors including age, ethnicity, economic background, social standing, education, (dis)ability, sexual orientation, history (including migrant status, colonial history), and any combination of these factors. All of these factors affect people's access to opportunities and resources.

As gender inequity and social exclusion are complex issues, the GESI framework conceptualises change as requiring complementary interventions at three levels to create the personal, social and structural conditions that enable people to realise their rights.

The aim is to:

■ build individual capacity of people of all gender identities, life stages, and (dis)abilities;

■ change relations between the people involved in the work and the key people around them (e.g. family members, community members); and

■ transform structures so the people involved in the work can realise their full potential in their public and private lives and can contribute equally to, and benefit equally from, social, political and economic development.

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[5] CARE (2020) Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in the context of Food Security and Nutrition.

BUILD INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY

Building confidence, self-esteem and aspirations (non-formal sphere) and knowledge, skills and capabilities (formal sphere).

CHANGE RELATIONS

The power relations through which people live their lives including intimate relations and social networks (non-formal sphere) and group membership and activism, and citizen and market regulations (formal sphere).

GENDER EQUITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

TRANSFORM STRUCTURES

Discriminatory social norms, customs, values and exclusionary practices (non-formal sphere) and laws, policies, procedures and services (formal sphere).
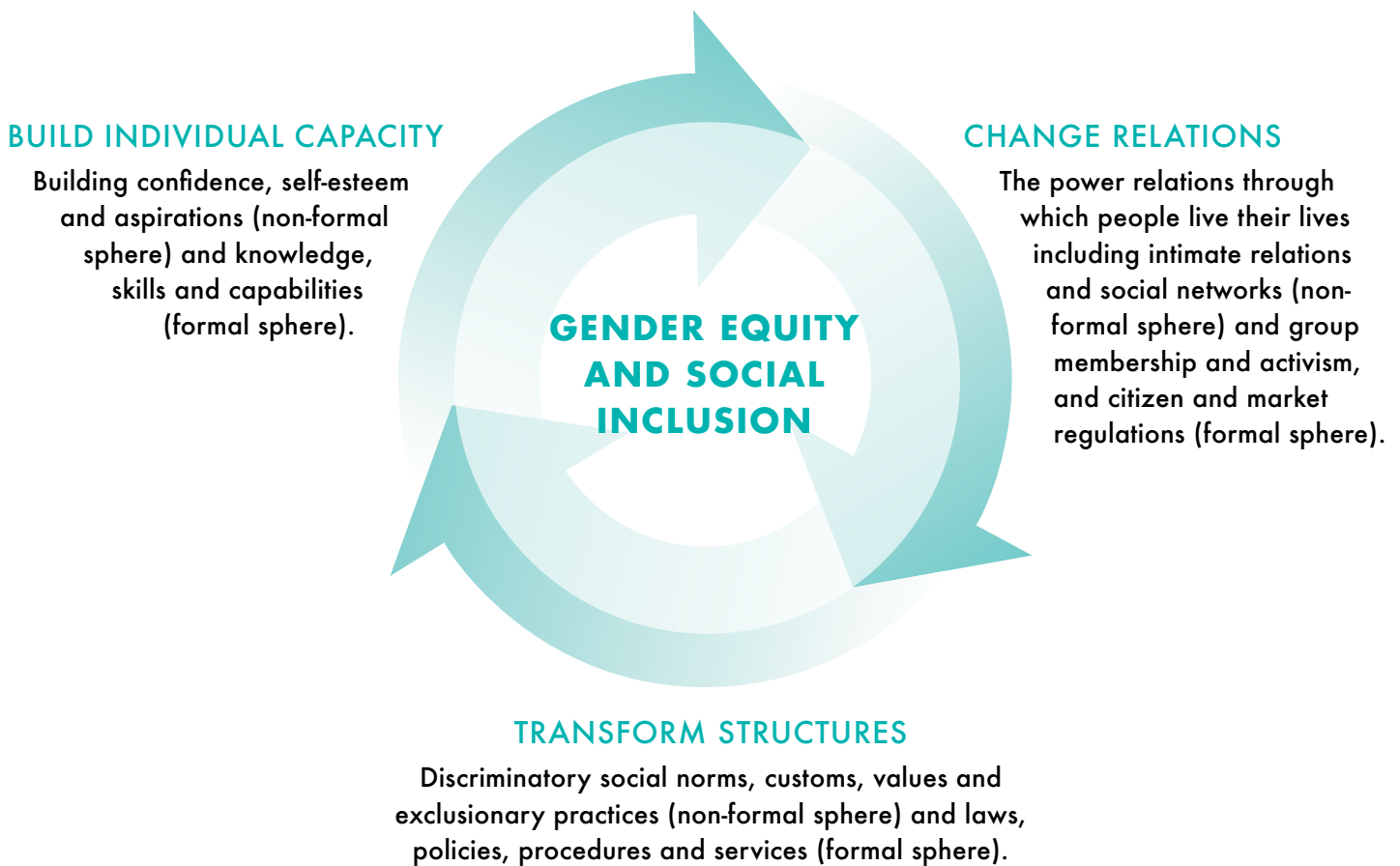
FIGURE 1. Gender equity and social inclusion framework. Adapted from: CARE (2020)

An **individual's capacity** refers to a person's ability to use and understand information to make a decision, and communicate any decision made. Capacity-building is frequently done through training in a range of technical areas. However, these trainings should include the social aspects of the work in order to make the links to GESI clear. This would enable participants to understand the ways in which women and marginalised groups often miss out on access to resources (e.g. financial, trainings, information, access to fisheries) and opportunities to improve their livelihoods. For example, trainings might be held at times when women are not available, or women may be responsible for catering for workshops preventing their attendance. Or there may be assumptions that women fishers glean and do not want to learn critical boat driving skills to access fisheries resources further out to sea.

Relations refer to social networks and these are particularly important in the communal societies of the Pacific in which decisions are often reached by group or family consensus rather than individuals. Within these relationships, behavioural rules and social norms often dictate what people (particularly women) can or cannot do and they reinforce assumptions about the range of roles and opportunities open to different groups of people. Their hierarchies systematically privilege some groups (often older men) over others. Discrimination is often the result of customs linked to: stereotypes about gender roles; unequal access to productive resources such as land; unequal bargaining positions within the household or community; gendered division of labour within households; and women's (and youth's) marginalisation from decision-making spheres at all levels. Discrimination can be indirect, sometimes unintentional[6], and it may be difficult to see it in a specific context where certain rules that disadvantage women are widely practiced and accepted by both men and women.

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6   This is an example of what gender experts call "unconscious bias" where we make judgments or have behaviours toward others that we are not aware of. It is embedded in us through the social and cultural messages we have received from the moment we are born, and that surround us in our daily lives.

For example, it is considered normal for women or youth not to speak at village meetings because it would be seen as disrespectful; therefore, workshops are facilitated in a way that does not allow them to voice their opinions and concerns.

Structures are informal and formal structures, institutions and processes that act as barriers to GESI. Structures also include discriminatory gender norms, customs and values that might privilege only certain groups. Plans, policies and committees may omit any reference to equity and inclusion or only make token reference to the need to include women and marginalised groups. As discussed earlier, fisheries projects and programmes will be ineffective if women and marginalised groups are not consulted and meaningfully engaged in the development of plans and policies and on decision-making committees.

Change is only needed where structures create inequalities. It should be noted that there are already existing empowerment elements or processes in Pacific ways of life, including cultural practices such as traditional recognition of women's knowledge that can be used to achieve fisheries outcomes. Change is needed when formal and/or informal structures and behaviours jeopardise equality and inclusion. Where change is needed, it must be addressed at all three levels of the GESI framework to achieve impact. The three levels function like the legs of a three-legged stool in that they depend on each other. Change in a single area rarely leads to lasting improvement in the lives of individual people.

The GESI framework emphasises the need to work on individual capacity and empowerment, relations between groups and power-holders, and the broader structure and enabling environment. It also highlights the need to work at non-formal levels, such as social norms, as well as with formal institutions.

To assist managers and practitioners apply a GESI analysis to their work, a series of questions which can be used as a *check list* have been included in Annex 1. Each question provides valuable information or data that can be collected on *individual capacity, relations and structures*, and should be analysed under these same headings. Once analysis is completed, examples of actions that can be taken under a GESI framework are provided in Table 2. The table can be used as a way to articulate or examine how projects or programmes will work at multiple levels to address the issues identified in a GESI analysis. It should be reviewed regularly to enable staff to share learning and ideas and to identify gaps requiring further attention.

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TABLE 2. Examples of tools and activities that can be done once a GESI analysis has been completed.

BUILD INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY	CHANGE RELATIONS	TRANSFORM STRUCTURES
Who is being reached by the activity or project and how is their capacity being built in regard to GESI?	How are the individuals involved in the project being supported by their families and communities to put their learning into practice?	What practices, policies, services are being implemented or changed to support the individuals trained/involved in the project?
Examples of tools		
▪ Time Use Survey Tool 2, Module 2, SPC GSI Handbook ▪ Power Walk Activity 11, Fiji Women's Fund's Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Toolkit These sessions may be included in technical trainings. In every training task who does what, and what are the impacts for different groups.	▪ Community engagement protocols that encourage support such as husbands sharing responsibilities at home to enable spouses to perform roles in fisheries. ▪ Power Walk ▪ *Rethinking the Fijian Man* video www.youtube.com/watch?v=qh_ClbaSVTs	▪ Terms of Reference for Management Committee to include representation of women and marginalised groups as members. ▪ Develop and share communications products on GESI in fisheries to demonstrate benefits of equality and inclusion.
Examples of activities		
▪ Conduct disaggregated analysis and reporting of data collected. ▪ Put in place mechanisms to ensure the full and active participation of men and women of different groups at all stages of implementation (this may include same sex groups as needed). ▪ Ensure that individuals involved in the work understand the need for broader community support. ▪ Identify relevant income-generating fisheries activities, including post-harvest activities for all interested groups. ▪ Provide resources and training targeted at the specific needs of different groups (Note: to be equitable, some groups may need more support than others). ▪ Ensure that benefits are distributed equitably. ▪ Ensure that project objectives and activities adequately address the fisheries needs and priorities of men and women of different groups.	▪ Power Walk in communities to build understanding of how some people miss out on access to opportunities and fisheries resources and the importance of support. ▪ Hold community sessions to talk about social structures (traditions, governance, religion, rights and status of groups, etc.) that reduce the ability of men and women to access resources and information critical to fisheries. ▪ Male staff to engage with men in communities regarding support for women and marginalised groups. ▪ Staff role modelling such as male and female staff all helping with cooking, washing clothes, etc. while in communities. ▪ Show videos in communities that emphasise key points about GESI and the benefits of equality and inclusion for fisheries work. ▪ Engage with women, youth, people living with disabilities and other community groups on GESI.	▪ Create mechanisms to ensure balanced representation of different groups (men, women, youth, elders, people with disabilities) within management structures across the different fisheries. ▪ Create mechanisms such as community sessions and engagement protocols to share information about the work with all groups, targeted at their specific information needs. ▪ Ensure gender issues are clearly identified and addressed in current fisheries policies, programmes and institutional arrangements. ▪ Ensure that all implementing partners have commitments to GESI. ▪ Use sex-disaggregated indicators and specific tools to implement monitoring and evaluation to track how the project or programme has addressed women's and men's fishing needs. ▪ Provide reminders of any language on GESI in fisheries policies.

GESI integration

GESI analysis is a useful tool for apply a GESI lens to coastal fisheries. However, further actions can be taken to strengthen GESI integration into individual organisations work.

Some steps to support the integration of GESI into programming include:

- Incorporate **GESI analysis** and **data disaggregated by sex, age and other social factors** to inform actions, with participation by staff, partners and participants;

- Articulate how programming will work across all three domains of the **GESI framework**, explicitly state **gender equality results** and include GESI-sensitive **indicators** for every stage of the project or program cycle;

- Include a **GESI strategy** or gender action plan outlining roles, responsibilities, funding, work plans and accountability to meet GESI requirements;

- Identify **potential programming risks** and take steps to **mitigate unintended consequences** of backlash and gender-based violence, regardless of sectoral focus;

- Form **partnerships with community groups** to better collaborate towards shared goals and elevate the voice of marginalised people;

- Undertake **participatory GESI reviews** of projects or programs, document best practices and challenges, and create **mechanisms for cross-learning** within an organisation and with partners.

These efforts will help implement a *transformative approach* to GESI.

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ANNEX 1. Checklist of example questions[7] that can be used in GESI analyses organised under the three pillars of the GESI Framework

Build individual capacity

- Describe the composition of the population involved in coastal fisheries activities disaggregated by gender, age, ethnicity, and other relevant social categories.

- What is the role of women and men of different segments of society (disaggregated by gender, age, ethnicity, and other relevant social categories) in relation to coastal fisheries activities for food and livelihoods (income)?

- What traditional knowledge, skills and practices do they use? Whose knowledge, skills and practices are valued? Who has limited access to valuable knowledge?

- Who has what kinds of use rights, ownership and decision-making power over natural resources?

- How will environmental and economic changes in natural resources, coastal fisheries activities potentially affect women and men from different segments of society? Will the likely impacts be different for different social groups?

- To achieve equitable development of coastal fisheries, what are the needs of women and men from different segments of the community, including in accessing services and programmes?

- What level of access and control do women and men from different segments of the population have over the resources and technologies[8] required to effectively harvest coastal marine resources?

- Do men and women have access to education and training about fisheries? Does this access vary for men and women from different segments of the community?

- What are the benefits of coastal fisheries activities, as perceived by women and men from different segments of the community?

  - Food security (how many times do they eat the fish they collect per day/week/etc.) What proportion of protein intake does this fish represent (e.g. half the protein intake per week)?

  - Incomes: What is the investment in terms of time and money? What percentage of total household incomes comes from these activities? How is the income distributed within the family? What do people do with the income (buy food, save, pay school fees, etc.)

  - Are there other social or cultural benefits?

Change relations

- Do inequalities exist in accessing resources for coastal fisheries activities (land, fishing grounds, equipment, information, training, etc.)?

- Are there inequalities in the distribution of benefits from fisheries, and are there opportunities to promote equitable benefit sharing?

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7 Adapted from Leduc B, Barclay K, Kunatuba J, Danford M, Rakuro M (2021) Module 2: Gender and social inclusion analysis. In: Barclay K, Mangubhai S, Leduc B, Donato-Hunt C, Makhoul N, Kinch J, Kalsuak J (eds.). Pacific handbook for gender equity and social inclusion in coastal fisheries and aquaculture. Second edition. Noumea, New Caledonia: Pacific Community 19 pp.

8 Technology can include post-harvest equipment, mobile phones, or computers used for fishing operations.

- At the household level, how are financial decisions made in relation to fishing (e.g. buying equipment; paying for help with harvesting; selling products; using the income generated by fisheries, etc.)?

- How will changes proposed by the project affect gender and other social relationships? Could they worsen the social exclusion experienced by women or other groups?

- Do they have the potential to positively transform situations of inequality by reducing exclusion and leading to equality in development outcomes across communities?

Transform structures

- What organisations are involved in managing natural resources used for coastal fisheries (e.g. local government, provincial fisheries agencies, community leadership and authorities)? What is the social composition of these governing bodies (disaggregated by gender, age, ethnicity, and other relevant social categories)? Who is left out?

- What are the decision-making processes of these bodies? Are women and other socially excluded groups able to participate effectively, or do older men's perspectives dominate? Who is left out?

- Are women, young people, and other socially excluded groups happy with the decision-making process? Do they think some things should be done differently?

- How would changes proposed by legislation, by policy or by a fisheries project impact on different segments of the population? (Consider activities performed, time dedicated to those activities, workload, use patterns, productivity, financial benefits, nutritional benefits, access to and control over productive resources, etc.)

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