

BARRIERS TO WOMEN'S EQUITABLE ENGAGEMENT IN TRADITIONAL DRY FISH INDUSTRIES OF INDIAN SUNDARBANS: SOME CROSS CUTTING ISSUES



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Introduction

- Indian Sundarbans, winter migratory bagnet fishery is a typical feature
- Winter migratory bag net locally called as 'been jal' is the main fishing gear of Hooghly –Matla estuary
- Large number of fishers migrate specially during mid of October to early of February and set up temporary fishing camps.
- The winter bag net fishery has key contribution in total fish production from Hooghly Estuary
- Majority of the catches are used as dry fish



- In the transitory dry fish camps women are actively involved as dry fish workers
- Women engage in traditional dry fish industries are facing some cross cutting issues related to social, socio-ecological, economical and policy context.
- A study was conducted to identify the gender barriers faced by the women engage in traditional dry fish industries in Indian Sundarbans.



Material and methods

Selection of site :

Fresarganj, Bakkhali, Kalisthan Sagar
South 24 Parganas, Sundarbans

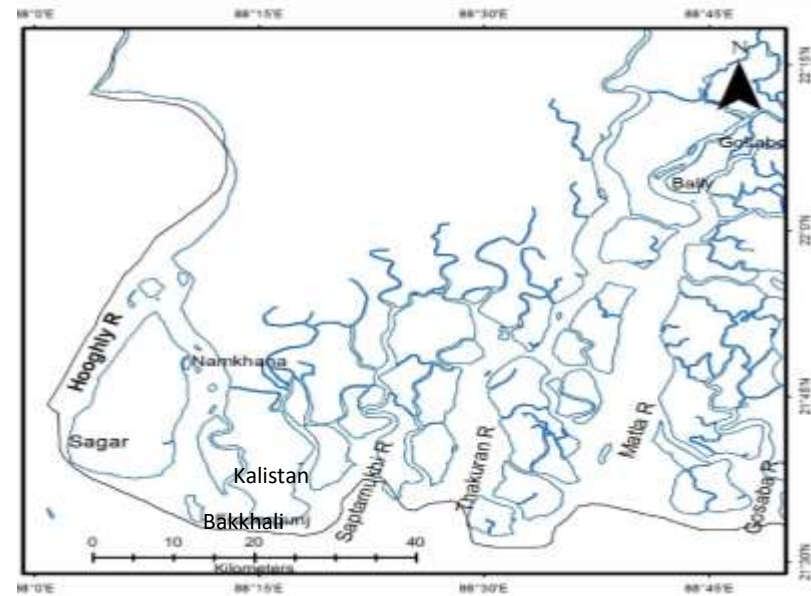
Sample size:

Primary data was collected from 160 women dry
fish workers

Method of data collection:

Face to face questionnaire interview, through
focus group discussion, key informants'
interview and PRA

Data analysis: Frequency-Percentage, Garrett
ranking technique



Result and discussion

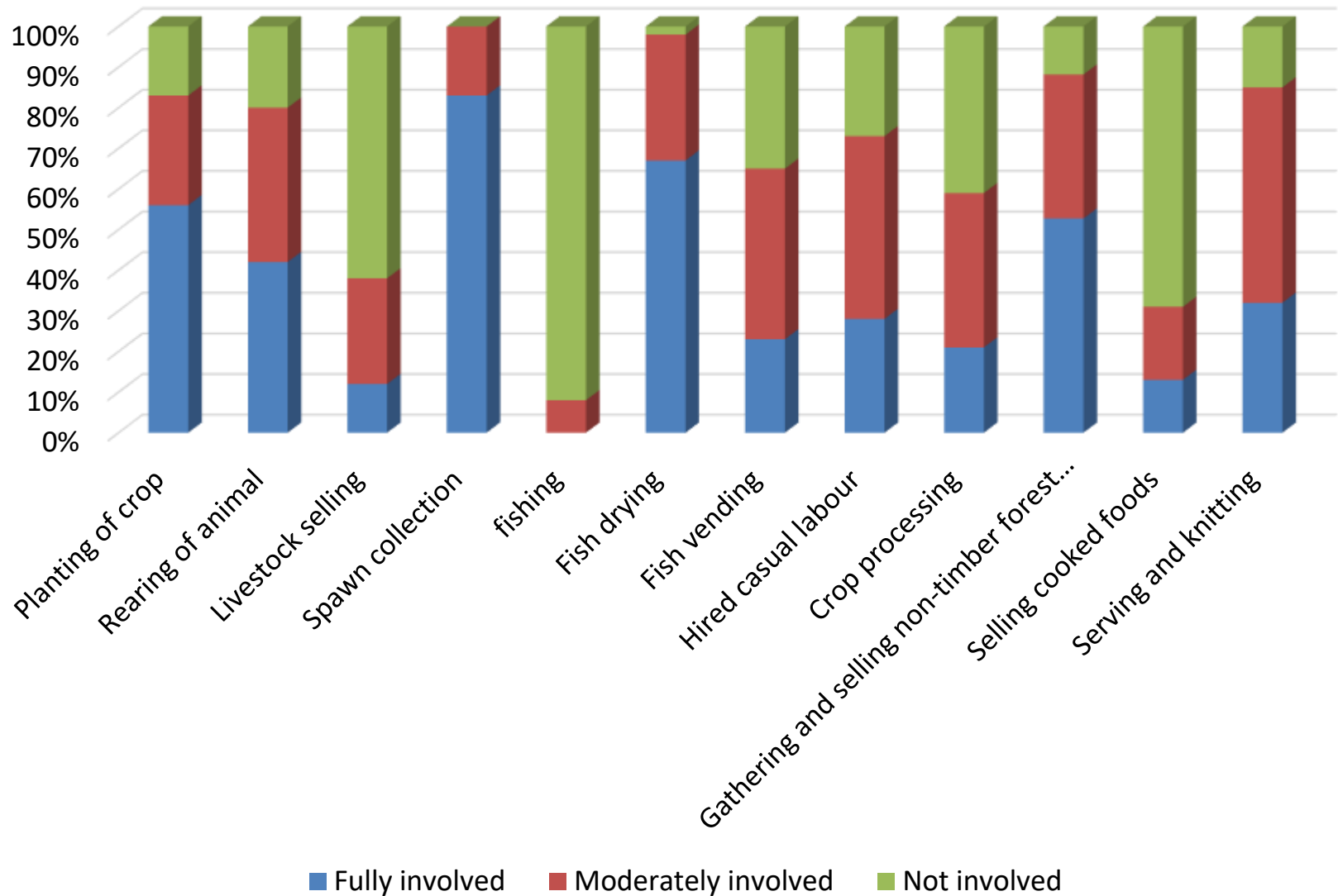
Demographic information

Male female ratio	1000:960
Caste composition in fishers community	Scheduled caste: 67% Scheduled tribe: 1.2 % General and other backward class: 31.8%
Age structure (26-50)	Women (71%)

- The artisanal fishing community in Sundarbans i.e., people who fish for their livelihoods are mostly fishermen by caste like *Kaibarta*, *Pod*, *Jelia* or *Namasudra*.
- Opportunity and expediency to fish has attracted other communities belonging to general or other backward caste like *Mahisya*, *Mahara*, etc.



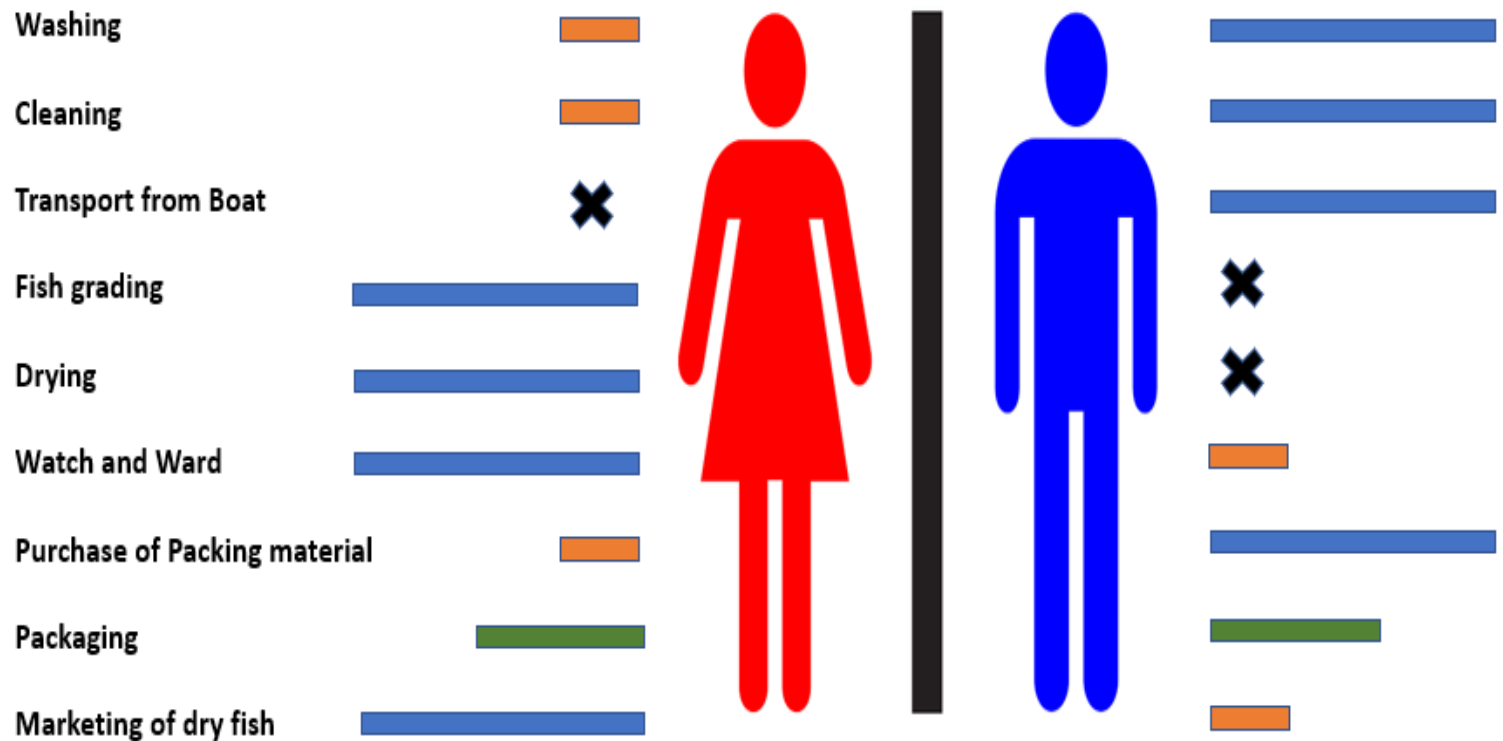
Involvement of rural women of Sunderban in income generating activities



Seasonal calendar of women in Sundarbans

Activities	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Seed Collection		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		
Fish Drying	■									■	■	■
Fish catching							■	■	■			
Vegetable Cultivation							■	■	■	■		
Collection of Timber			■	■	■							

Gender Participation Matrix: Role Distribution of Men and Women in Dry Fish Activities



✘ No participation

Low participation

Medium participation

High participation

High participation



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Dry fish camp





Major gender barriers

- Women get 15-25% less wage than the men in the dry fish camp
- 71 % women reported that they have to take permission from their husband or inlaws to work in the Khuti
- Managing households and children is the primary responsibility , so often women involved in fish drying have to compromise their own time and health for earning family, reported by 54% of the women dry fish worker
- 65% of the women expressed that security at workplace is a major issue
- Hygiene and sanitation is a major issue faced by 58% of the women dry fish workers



Estimation of Garrett value, total score and rank of the identified constraints through Garrett Ranking Technique

Nature of the Constraints	Mean Score	Rank
Lack of awareness about policies and programmes	84.06	I
Low institutional credit linkage and high interest rate of money lender	79.8	II
Lack of gender-sensitive vocational training for fisherwomen	62.25	III
Less access and control over resources and less decision-making power	49	IV
Lack of proper infrastructure and hygiene condition	42.9	V
Less mass media exposure and limited access to modern technologies	21	VI
Socio-cultural restrictions	11.78	VII

Way forward

Strategies for meeting practical gender needs

- Mass literacy & Health awareness campaigns
- Gender sensitive technologies
- Trainings to overcome occupational health hazards
- Sanitation and hygiene
- Infrastructural facilities for health and education



Strategies for meeting strategic gender needs

- Financial inclusion and support
- Institutional linkage
- SHG / Mahila Mandal
- Female para extension workers
- Gender sensitive training
- Nutritional and livelihood security
- Women component in research and development policies

- Valuation study on women's livelihood role
- Designing gender sensitive extension and training approach
- Developing integrated livelihood and nutritional security model

SSF guideline section

Access to fishing resources (6.4) (Social Development. Employment and decent work)

Access to markets and marketing resources (7.6)
(Value Chain and post-harvest trade)

Recognition of opportunities for fisheries labour (6.5), (Social Development, Employment and decent work)

Recognize the role of women and ensure amenities and services and services appropriate for women (7.2)
(Value Chain and post-harvest trade)

Education, Health (6.2) (Social Development. Employment and decent work)

Occupational health and safety (6.12)
(Social Development. Employment and decent work)

Violence and access to justice (6.9)
(Social Development, Employment and decent work)

Policy coherence (10.1)
(Policy coherence, institutional coordination, and collaboration)

Capacity development (11.7, 12.1)
Capacity development



THANK YOU

