

Workshop: Integrating Gender in Fisheries Economics Research

Session 3 – Case Study Exercise

The Shrimp Industry of Alpha

The marine fisheries sector in Country Alpha is rich, diverse, and important to the national economy. Fishery resources consist of several marine pelagic species as well as shrimp and prawn. Fisheries contribute significantly to GDP, and shrimp exports are an important source of foreign exchange. In addition, roughly 80% of the population consume fish daily, and fish (especially mackerel, sardine, and anchovy) constitutes a large portion of per capita protein consumption, especially by the poor.

Long a traditional, artisanal economic activity, Alpha's fishery has undergone a technological transformation first with the introduction of mechanized trawlers to harvest shrimp and then later outboard motorboats and ring seines for harvesting other fish species. Cold storage, ice, freezing, and improved transportation and telecommunications technologies have further supported the development and expansion of Alpha's fisheries sector. Over the past several decades harvests of shrimp (as well as other marine fish species) initially increased significantly but have plateaued in the past decade. International demand for shrimp remains strong. More recently the state has been promoting the development of aquaculture and the fish meal industry to increase shrimp production for export.

Historically, both men and women have worked in Alpha's fisheries. The traditional gender division of labor was that men harvested fish, and women processed the catch and took it to market. With the economic development of the sector and a recent influx of immigrants from neighboring Country Beta, the labor pool has expanded, and traditional gender roles are changing.

Exercise:

1. Imagine and map the shrimp value chain for Country Alpha from a gender-informed perspective. Include the full range of activities, including ancillary activities, types of production (capture/aquaculture), and all actors (paid/unpaid) in the chain. Consider also how the shrimp value chain might connect to value chains for other fish species. What questions do you need to ask to understand gender divisions of labor within the value chain?
2. Utilizing the *Key Questions for Gender-Informed Research* handout, identify a research problem deriving from the above scenario that incorporates gender analysis. What questions would you ask and what kinds of information and data would you need to understand the problem from a gender-informed perspective? What makes gender a significant focus of analysis in the shrimp industry of Country Alpha?

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