



Regional Fisheries Livelihoods Programme for South and Southeast Asia (RFLP)

GCP/RAS/237/SPA

**Regional Workshop on
Lessons Learned and Best Practices:
Post-harvest; Livelihoods Enhancement and Diversification; and
Gender Mainstreaming**

29 May – 1 June 2012
Bangkok, Thailand

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1. Introduction

1.1 About the RFLP

The Regional Fisheries Livelihood Programme for South and Southeast Asia (RFLP) sets out to strengthen capacity among participating small-scale fishing communities and their supporting institutions in Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam. By doing so the RFLP seeks to improve the livelihoods of fishers and their families while fostering more sustainable fisheries resources management practices.

The four-year (2009 – 2013), USD 19.55 million RFLP is funded by the Kingdom of Spain and implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) working in close collaboration with national authorities in participating countries.

RFLP has six key areas of activity and will seek to create the following:

- Co-management mechanisms for sustainable utilization of fishery resources
- Improved safety at sea and reduced vulnerabilities for small-scale fisher communities
- Improved quality of fishery products and market chains
- Strengthened or diversified income opportunities for fisher families
- Better access to microfinance services
- Increased sharing of knowledge

A major part of process of sharing knowledge is the pooling of lessons learned in the different RFLP countries, analysis at the regional level and their communication to the participating countries and others in the region.

The Regional Workshop on Lessons Learned and Best Practices: Post-harvest; Livelihoods Enhancement and Diversification; and Gender Mainstreaming was held in Bangkok, Thailand from 29 May – 1 June 2012. The workshop acted as a major regional knowledge sharing activity and was largely based on the outcomes of the national consultation workshops/consultations carried out in each RFLP country during May 2012.

This regional workshop, along with the national lessons learning workshops that preceded it, also responded to Recommendation 7 of the RFLP Mid-term evaluation, recommending a more strategic approach to lessons learning.

1.2 Objective of the workshop

The objective of the regional workshop was to identify, highlight and discuss:

- Lessons learned (from positive or negative aspects) relating to output 3 (post harvest), output 4 (livelihoods), and gender mainstreaming in all six RFLP countries and related recommendations;
- Best practices in relation to output 3, 4 and gender mainstreaming in all six RFLP countries;
- Obtain initial information for the preparation of thematic studies on outputs 3, 4 and gender mainstreaming.

Lessons learned were addressed at all levels and stages: positive and negatives on process, implementation, macro level, micro level, intended and unintended consequences, sustainability etc.

This data will be used to improve project delivery and management at national level as well as for regional knowledge sharing.

1.3 Participants

The workshop was attended by the following:

- FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific Senior Fishery Officer
- RFLP regional team: Regional Programme Manager, Chief Technical Advisor, Information Officer, Gender and M&E advisor
- RFLP National teams key staff
- RFLP National counterparts

In all there were 24 participants. The full list is found in section 7.

1.4 Date and venue

The workshop took place at the Vie Hotel, Bangkok from 29 May – 1 June.

1.5 Opening address

Jose Parajua, RFLP Regional Programme Manger made an opening address. He stated that after some two years of full implementation in most countries RFLP was now at a stage when it could realistically reflect on what had been done. This sharing of knowledge and experiences gained during RFLP implementation would make an important contribution to the programme exit strategy. He emphasized the three main goals of the workshop namely to: to obtain and provide feedback for the fine-tuning of internal implementation mechanisms, and to deal with issues that constraint success; to identify successful interventions that would serve as examples and catalysers of suitable approaches for wider application on the national, and even regional, levels; and to help develop recommendations for any further steps that may need to be taken to ensure sustainability and replicability of project outcomes, once the project finalizes.

2. Key points from country presentations on lessons learned and best practices

2.1 Post harvest

Water/sanitation/ice/infrastructure

Limited access to clean water and sanitation is a major inhibiting factor to improving hygiene and sanitation on fishing boats and landing sites. This has a major impact on ice production which has been found to be contaminated. Water treatment systems have been considered but are too expensive for RFLP. Clean water and sanitation are prerequisites for hygiene and sanitation however these are likely to be major, long-term interventions, requiring inputs from different government agencies, NGOs and the private sector. Advocacy should take place to bring the needs of coastal fishing communities in this regard to the attention of relevant national agencies. Advocacy should also take place aimed at relevant agencies regarding the need for enhanced monitoring of the quality of ice plant production. (Cambodia)

RFLP should focus on introducing simple techniques and technologies that are practical, achievable and affordable - and have the potential to bring about improvements to hygiene in the short-term. (Cambodia)

Ice may not be needed/financially viable if catch is sold fresh or within a few hours of capture. Likewise due to local preferences iced fish may not receive higher prices and therefore no incentive exists for its use. (Sri Lanka)

The improvement of market places and landing sites is a major priority for communities however this would require the installation of running water, waste disposal systems, storage facilities and ice plants that are beyond the capability of RFLP. Advocacy/awareness activities should take place to bring these needs to the attention of relevant parties. (Sri Lanka)

A pilot project for the production and distribution of ice was established in order to calculate costs and to evaluate the organizational capacity of the NDFA to maintain the ice production and distribution system. The pilot revealed that NDFA was not able to maintain the system and therefore a new strategy involving local organizations and authorities was developed. (Timor-Leste)

A feasibility study needs to be conducted to assess local demand etc., before the construction of ice plants or any other infrastructure. (Philippines)

Port/landing site renovation that requires construction/infrastructure is expensive and can account for a large proportion of available budget. As a result, other areas of intervention may need to be scaled down. Clear cost/benefit analysis and prioritization of needs should be undertaken before large budget interventions are commenced. (Viet Nam)

Service provider selection

Implementation of activities such as the GHP manual development was affected by key government/agency staff involved being moved to other roles / responsibilities and their knowledge and expertise being lost. Although this situation will never be completely overcome the commitment

and prioritization from the related department should be carefully assessed beforehand to minimise this possibility. (Cambodia)

The implementation of post harvest activities may be hampered by a lack or the unavailability of trained professionals. For example, experts on post harvest fisheries are limited in SRL and those that exist are mainly employed in permanent positions in DFAR, NARA, ITI and universities. As a result they are unwilling to carry out short term assignments. (Sri Lanka)

Though technical competency is seemingly available to carry out post harvest improvement activities within government agencies in SRL they do not appear to have sufficient administrative and financial flexibilities necessary to comply with implementation deadlines. It is important to carefully analyze the capability of the contracted party against the ToR and offer for them to only undertake segments for which they are capable. (Sri Lanka)

Work plan development

The delay in the development of a GHP manual had a serious knock on affect (approx one year) on the implementation of follow up pilot activities. Efforts should be made to avoid designing work plans whereby the implementation of certain activities relies completely upon the completion of other activities. (Cambodia)

Project design should address the pre-requisites to situational issues (such as lack of infrastructure, sanitation, clean water) before attempting to carry out interventions. (RFLP Programme Management Office)

It is important that work plans are not over ambitious and take into account the considerable length of time necessary to implement post harvest activities, especially if equipment has to be purchased following FAO procurement procedures. (RFLP Programme Management Office)

Attitudes to hygiene

Changing people's attitudes toward good hygienic practice is a long-term process that cannot take place overnight. People are often aware of what are good and bad hygienic practices, however it is more difficult to change their practices. Community members are often receptive to improved techniques when they can be demonstrated to be practical, affordable and cost-effective. Focus should therefore be on encouraging uptake of improvements that are achievable under existing conditions. (Cambodia)

There needs to be a realistic appraisal as to what can be done with regards to changing attitudes and practices over a short time period. The probability of initiatives being replicated or carried on by authorities or other parties should be considered. (Cambodia)

The impact of GHP training can be monitored by conducting checklist based audits to assess the uptake of simple hygienic practices in CFIs. (Cambodia)

In certain countries the perception exists that iced fish are not fresh fish. If processors are not getting more money for a more hygienic product, there is no incentive for them to practice such measures. Consumers therefore need to be made more aware of the need for hygienic product and to demand better products. (RFLP Programme Management Office)

The difference should be made between issues of safety and those relating to quality of products. The food safety of products should be the main priority, whilst improved quality should be secondary. (RFLP Programme Management Office)

Post harvest issues

Insanitary conditions, lack of infra-structure, absence of financial incentives, limited consumer awareness, and the paucity of knowledge / information on post-harvest fisheries and absence of control remain significant constraints to the implementation of GHP in small scale fisheries in Cambodia. (Cambodia)

Training effectiveness

Rather than focus on individual beneficiaries it would be better to target key community members for development as community based trainers over a period of time. The trainers will need to be provided with appropriate training aids e.g. TOT manual etc., and supported as trainers within their own communities. (Cambodia)

Training a body of trainers represents one of the best ways to build capacity and to ensure sustainability and replication; however this will only be successful if TOT alumni are motivated and have the incentive to actively pass on what they have learned. TOT alumni have played a major role in helping implement post harvest activities in INS due to:

- Careful selection of TOT participants - selected not only from the fisheries agency, but also from universities and NGOs. By selecting a mix of TOT participants, skills in a variety of organizations can be built. This also helps reduce reliance on skills being built in a specific organization (e.g. fisheries agency) which may be lost through redeployment of staff.
- Motivation and involvement of TOT participants – From the beginning efforts were made to ensure the TOT alumni fully understood RFLP's activities. They were provided with advanced training and exposure visits so that they fully understood the role they would need to play and were also hired to carry out field activities and implementation. As a result TOT alumni have become local experts who are motivated and can help facilitate community development using their new skills.

TOT alumni can be a powerful tool and offer the advantage of being faster, more cost effective, efficient, and better able to identify and assess the needs of communities. Observations carried out by the national consultant following initial training for communities helped identify skill levels and knowledge that may need further improvement and adaptation of follow up training accordingly. (Indonesia)

Efforts were made in Cambodia to build the capacity of a large number of fishers/processors/traders on the application of hygiene and sanitation. However, the large number of participants (910) negatively impacted the quality of trainings. Large numbers of trainees also makes it too expensive to purchase adequate equipment or materials for practice. Hygiene and sanitation training took place as a one-off event with no follow up from service providers. As a result the impact was limited. This type of 'one-off' exposure would be better positioned as awareness raising rather than training. (Cambodia)

At certain hygiene and sanitation training sessions activities had to be carried out on the floor rather than on a raised surface as a table, while basic equipment such gloves and masks were also not available. It is vital that training sessions can demonstrate improved practices or techniques that they are attempting to disseminate. (Cambodia)

To be effective training needs to be followed up. The follow up of training must be considered during the planning and budgeting stages. (Cambodia)

Beneficiary selection/screening process needs to be strong. Key indicators should include resolute interest and an entrepreneurial mindset. Rather than targeting entire groups consideration should be given to individuals within groups. (Philippines)

Training of trainers in better practices in fish handling and hygiene was effective due to the proactive nature of participants and their interest to learn. The content of the training was well prepared and the use of promotional-visibility materials (t-shirts) was an incentive for participants. (Timor-Leste)

The selection of fishers to be provided with on-board preservation equipment in Viet Nam is a good example of a transparent beneficiary selection. The process started with consultations to discuss and agree on selection criteria among local authorities and communities. It was led by the local Fisheries Association (FA) in order to reinforce its role as the representative of local fishing communities as well as to help it build organizational and coordinating skills. The selection was undertaken by FA members to ensure that it was transparent and that the members agreed. The results of the selection were recorded and endorsed by the FA Executive Board and/or local authorities. Also, the list of beneficiaries with full contact details needs to be provided for follow up and to ensure linkages with other interventions. (Viet Nam)

The daily calendar of fishers should be considered when setting training times. (Sri Lanka)

Training materials need to be in local language and attractive. The training methodology should be slow, easy to follow and participatory. (RFLP Programme Management Office)

It is important that if inputs/equipment are to be provided for participants to put training into practice, then procurement lead-times need to be considered carefully. Too long a gap between completion of training and provision of equipment will lead to a loss of motivation and trainees forgetting the skills they have been taught. (Viet Nam)

Integrated approach

RFLP's integrated post harvest programme in Indonesia encompasses all aspects from improved product processing, community training, standardization, and labeling, packaging, provision of supporting tools, certification and market development. (Indonesia)

Emphasis needs to be placed on the economics of supply/market chains and not only on processing techniques or adding quality or value to products. Often, raw materials (e.g. sardines and shrimps) are susceptible to price instability due to seasonality and accessibility affecting production cost and profit margins. (Philippines)

Emphasis in post harvest actions needs to be placed on marketing issues and not only improving production as many small scale producers face difficulties from lack of market information and marketing skills. (Viet Nam)

Emphasis needs to be placed on enhancing the capacity of government technical staff (in particular extension workers) with regards to fisheries product related marketing expertise. There is a lack of expertise due to the traditional focus on improving productivity. As a result, government technical agencies that developed work plans did not include marketing-related activities as it was not a priority of local government targets. (Viet Nam)

Marketing techniques included in TOT training in Viet Nam have not been passed on further. Marketing was only one component of the training and was not sufficient to give the participants sufficient confidence/skills. In addition there was no support available from government authorities for training to be passed on at commune-level after the TOT. (Viet Nam)

Technical specialists often only consider the production side of fishing, producing garments, post-harvest etc. However you have to be able to sell what is produced. Marketing therefore needs to be given attention from the beginning when designing activities. (RFLP Programme Management Office)

Competition/ Economies of scale

Raising the standards of production by small groups (e.g. women's livelihood groups engaged in producing bottled shrimp paste, bottled Spanish sardines) may bring them into competition with established or existing processors or market players. Continuous training and upgrading of skills including continuing product development to improve product quality is therefore necessary. Assistance from national government agencies should also be sought in various areas including improving marketing strategies: engaging in trade fairs as well as market and product positioning. (Philippines)

The ability of small-scale producers to enter the market may be negatively impacted by their small production quantities. As a result, groups should be formed and/or strengthened to increase production. One method of doing this is to focus on establishing 'centres of processors' where focus is on a single product (e.g. seaweed-based snacks) for a geographical area in order to achieve economies of scale like One Village One Product. In this regard it is important that producer groups are also given support regarding group/business development as well as access to capital and micro-finance. (Indonesia)

Demand for improvement in post harvest skills exists from individual household-based women processors to women's livelihood associations and small and medium enterprises. Careful consideration needs to be made to ensure interventions to support small producers are not going to compete with larger, more efficient SMEs. (Philippines)

Gender

Post harvest activities are mainly carried out by women. Therefore it is vital that gender assessment/analysis takes place prior to designing interventions (daily calendar etc). (Indonesia)

Post harvest activities have not only provided a sense of economic empowerment to women recipients, but also improved their community status and productive use of time. (Philippines)

Post-harvest activities are mainly carried out by women and therefore provide a good opportunity to interact with females in the fishing community. This "practice" is especially important for government technical staff, as they typically do not pay due attention to gender issues particularly when implementing model demonstrations. (Viet Nam)

Collaboration

Collaborating closely with authorities such as the DKP with regards to planning helps to generate more ideas, ensures better quality of implementation and helps avoid past mistakes. Collaboration can also help raise the profile and boost motivation of local authorities. A good example was the collaboration between RFLP Indonesia and DKP in the IFI Expo in Jakarta. This not only raised awareness of products from NTT, but also gave the provincial authorities a chance to gain confidence and experience on a wider stage. (Indonesia)

Counterparts must be selected carefully to ensure that they are proactive and generally interested. Those with negative attitudes or different interests/agendas should be avoided. (Timor-Leste)

Inter-ministerial collaboration may be necessary to facilitate the effective implementation of activities (e.g. provision of ice in Timor-Leste). For this to be effective contacts at the highest levels

are needed. Successful pilots may not only encourage replication of activities at the community level, but also at the agency/ministerial level. (Timor-Leste)

Efforts to establishment a national federation of fisheries cooperatives in Timor-Leste foundered when a key member of government staff involved in the process moved position. New staff did not follow up, while a request was also made for RFLP to provide extra funding for the process without apparently consulting other government figures. Lessons learned include that there is no point in trying to push an initiative if there is no local interest. It is important to make clear to beneficiaries from the outset that proposals cannot be supported that are not within existing plans and strategies. (Timor-Leste)

Include development project/programme activities within government activity work plans and budgets and do the annual planning process for the government and projects at the same time. The involvement of government staff in RFLP actions to introduce new approaches (especially IEC on food safety) has both enhanced their skills and increased the potential of the approaches being replicated in other government programmes. (Viet Nam)

New techniques/technologies

New products should be proven to be technically, economically, environmentally and socially feasible and acceptable by local community. A cool box designed for motorcycle traders made from FRP (Fibre Reinforced Plastic) kept fish fresh and in good quality when being transported over long distances and for up to three days. This reduces the cost of having to purchase more ice, allows traders to sell products at a higher value and across a wider geographic area (including the interior) and provides consumers the benefits of an improved cold chain. However considerable time was needed to provide technical assistance and to ensure that the product was well received by the market. (Indonesia)

Uptake of new fish processing technologies or value addition techniques may be slow due to the entrenched predominance of traditional processing/vending/trading practices. (Philippines)

Attempts to promote better fish quality in Timor-Leste by using simple solar driers built from recycled materials (old canoe) were unsuccessful as fishers didn't find the technique attractive. Although basic equipment/techniques may be effective/ low cost they may still be rejected by community members as they can represent/symbolize under-development. (Timor-Leste)

If it is not possible to carry out a full range of activities relating to post harvest, emphasis can be placed on introducing simple techniques that are cheap, simple and easy to implement such as improving hygiene when drying fish by using a mosquito net. (Timor-Leste)

IEC/awareness

The effectiveness of posters or any other IEC or awareness material depends very much upon where they are placed. Inappropriate placement will result in little impact and efforts need to be made to ensure that they are put where they will be seen by those to whom they are targeted. Materials should be placed where they will not get wet or out of direct sunlight that can bleach the colours. Less copies, made from a longer lasting material (e.g. laminated) and placed well will have more long lasting impact than more copies that are poorly placed and that do not last. (Indonesia)

Certification/regulations

In-situ technical assistance/advisory provided by RFLP resulted in increased confidence among SMEs to apply and adopt HACCP pre-requisites and diversify products. Field visits to and discussions on PH practices with SMEs, women processors; provide real-time technical solutions to production

issues/problems to arrive at sound decision-making for process and product improvements. (Philippines)

It is extremely difficult for small-scale fish food processors to meet minimum requirements of existing institutions/policies (e.g. PHI FDA, LTO) relative to food safety and quality. Post-harvest livelihoods projects (bottled shrimp paste, bottled sardines) have been constrained by the lack of basic production area minimum requirement for a License-to-Operate or through lack of access to potable water. Collaboration may be necessary with government counterparts should more expensive infrastructure/potable water supply be necessary. Pilots of post-harvest livelihood projects should be developed with complete assistance packages. (Philippines)

It is very important to keep up-to-date with product standards and regulatory/statutory requirements which may change over time. Simple IEC material explaining any changes in these requirements to small-scale producers should be produced. (Philippines)

Need for post harvest/livelihoods/micro-finance links

Post harvest training on fishery-based food processing and value-adding technologies/fish processing may only be beneficial to small-scale fishers/household processors and women's groups when they are framed as livelihoods initiatives or translated into actual livelihoods or micro-enterprises. Training can enhance knowledge and skills among most recipients, but without access to start-up capital or on-going support such as extension by local government these skills are unlikely to be put to use and may ultimately have no impact. A complete package of basic capital/ equipment support, skills training, hands-on coaching and business feasibility development/business advisory is necessary. Training should not stand alone, but be part of a business starter/incubation package. A pilot intervention (with small capital outlay) should be considered to test market/product. (Philippines)

Post harvest interventions need to be clearly converged or integrated with livelihoods/ micro-finance components. Participants need to be provided with a single package of training covering all three areas rather than separate training sessions being held in a piecemeal manner. (Philippines)

Need for links with resource management

Resource management issues need to be considered when planning post harvest activities if they are likely to increase the demand for aquatic products. Ideally, groups or individuals involved in post harvest actions should also be involved in co-management activities. This can be used to encourage fisher community members of both sexes to join co-management groups. (RFLP Programme Management Office)

Alignment with government priorities

Commitment and support from the VIE government and related agencies to carry out actions relating to post-harvest loss and food safety is high as this is currently a high priority on the national agenda. As a result project activities are not considered as an add-on to the current tasks of government staff. (Viet Nam)

Misc

Post harvest actions undertaken have sought to improve existing technologies or livelihoods and not to introduce something completely new. (Sri Lanka)

It is important that the local availability of raw materials and conditions (e.g. weather) are considered when planning post harvest activities. (Sri Lanka)

Selection to participate in post harvest activities is a good method to encourage membership of Fisheries Associations. (Viet Nam)

2.2 Livelihoods Enhancement and Diversification

Length of time/resources needed for livelihoods interventions

Working with local communities to help them identify and develop better livelihoods options requires considerable time, effort, resources and commitment. For example in Cambodia it took almost two years of planning and preparation before livelihoods interventions could begin. (Cambodia)

The theory of self-determination was important and allowed greater flexibility in livelihoods and group selection. The full SLED process however would take 2-4 years. RFLP Philippines has modified the SLED approach to meet the time constraints and local conditions. (Philippines)

Livelihoods group support takes time usually longer than typical RFLP PHI staff contracts (Philippines)

The bidding and procurement procedure is lengthy and the delays caused by this have had a negative impact on local communities, resulting in them losing interest to take part in activities. E.g CFI Trapaing Sangke, Kampot Province, had to wait for the bidding process of dock building since May 2011 until April 2012. (Cambodia)

Project interventions will not be successful if resources are spread too thinly. In Cambodia too many CFIs are being supported which limits the ability to provide sufficient support. (Cambodia)

The scope of the project is too ambitious, attempting to cover all 11 LGUs in a limited time and with limited budget. It is recommended to scale-down geographical areas of intervention with more focus on interventions based on existing resources in conjunction with fisheries co-management measures. (Philippines)

Limited time-frame, budget and staff requirements negatively affect the implementation of livelihood diversification/micro-enterprise projects with various activities/assistance along the different life stages/gestation of livelihoods/micro-enterprises (e.g. inception-planning-implementation-adjustments-maturation) are hampered. It is recommended to carry out key interventions to build up management and financial capacities of livelihood groups e.g. basic bookkeeping, savings mobilization. Also link-up livelihood groups to government agencies to provide business development services and assistance (although a bit slow and loaded). (Philippines)

Planning/approach

Project activity planning must be in sync with the seasonal calendar of the community so that livelihoods interventions can be made at the right time to avoid failure. (Cambodia)

The feasibility study conducted in Cambodia was a community based approach with collaboration from CFIs, commune councils, provincial department of agriculture, and FiA at all levels. It therefore helped RFLP to avoid mistakes often made in the project work such as failure to clearly specify the local problems, estimation errors, and expert-based intervention. (Cambodia)

Livelihood options were initiated by local people and they consulted with the project team for alternatives that can help generate jobs for women (i.e. oyster mushroom cultivation, chicken rearing, fish sauce group, fermented fish group). (Cambodia)

The validation of findings with stakeholders especially CFIs is vital to ensure that the interventions respond to the real needs of CFIs. (Cambodia)

The right invention comes with right feasibility finding - capacity building for chicken rearing and rice bank. This has worked well because it meets the need and interest of local people. (Cambodia)

Given that the livelihoods output was deemed secondary in Timor-Leste efforts focused on the delivery of an outcome at policy level that could benefit all farmers and fishers in the country: hence the "National Aquaculture Strategy Plan". (Timor-Leste)

By not focusing on reducing fishing effort RFLP Timor-Leste is promoting a different trend to the one promoted by most regional and international organizations and could be accused of promoting a non sustainable overexploitation of the resources. This may be problematic if seen without an in depth knowledge of the situation of the fisheries sector and the nutrition situation in Timor-Leste. It is therefore important to continue to raise the level of knowledge about the current situation of the fishing sector in Timor-Leste, as well as its potential role in addressing problems of food insecurity. It is also important to make explicit the intention of RFLP to promoting a sustainable development of the fishing sector that can address some of the primary nutrition issues in country and adequate use of the resource base. In addition current efforts to raise awareness on the potential effects of fish depletion during RFLP activities should be reinforced. (Timor-Leste)

Social preparation, organizational formation and development and capacity building to prepare for micro-enterprise development should be integral in any livelihood intervention. (Philippines)

For an alternative livelihood option to be successfully introduced, it is important to ensure that the model is appropriate in the local context (needs, socio and economic conditions). The delivery of input material for model implementation needs to be done properly and regular technical support provided. Experience sharing should also be encouraged through both formal (workshop) and informal channels (chats, visits in the neighbourhood). (Viet Nam)

Implementation partners / capacity

It is important to carefully assess the capacity of implementing organizations before activities begin. The capacity of the Vocational Training Authority of Sri Lanka was not assessed at the beginning to implement needs assessments, beneficiary selection and training. VTA did not have the capacity to carry out certain tasks and as a result the implementation of vocational training programmes was delayed. Different partners should have been engaged to implement different parts of the programme. (Sri Lanka)

Developments in the output four and other have shown to us that in order to get the best results, RFLP TIM must implement directly gives better results given the weaknesses in local organizations and the low number of fisheries experts in country. Reduce the number of activities and be focused in delivering high quality deliverables. When not many beneficiaries can be reached (lack of capacity, budget, etc.), focus activities on the policy level instead. (Timor-Leste)

The use of local experts and service providers resulted in low quality delivery of materials and teaching methods as they simply use their own staff and methods to deliver training etc which may not be of a high standard. Delays on reporting were experienced as were low quality of procurement. The use of TOT alumni or expert outsiders alongside the LOA holder can help build capacity and ensure higher quality delivery. (Indonesia)

Certain consultants who were "hand-picked" in order to speed up project progress have not performed satisfactorily. Their poor work quality has had a demotivating effect on communities and resulted in extra cost being necessary to hire another consultant to solve the difficulties. It is therefore recommended that for construction-related activities, the project should consider a

“guarantee clause” in the contract to ensure their responsibilities for trouble-shooting if problems occur for at least three months after the completion of the activity. More competition needs to be introduced for the selection of Service Providers. (Viet Nam)

LOAs should be used for used for services only and not procurement of goods unless it can be demonstrated that the holder has strong qualification/capacity. (Indonesia)

Expectations

While carrying out feasibility studies, some local people understood that all of their priorities would be supported by project even though this was clearly explained. It is vital that communication with communities is very clear and that no assumptions are made that the community fully understands the situation. (Cambodia)

Expectations from LGUs and communities are higher than RFLP can deliver. (Philippines)

Capacity building

The transfer of knowledge on book keeping, recording and financial management has not been put into practice yet as no follow up has been carried out. These follow up activities should have been included in the LOA. (Cambodia)

Follow up was included in the signed LoA and the service provider needs to conduct the follow up at least twice. (Cambodia)

Non-fisheries livelihoods

It is important not to view or perceive livelihoods options for fishing communities through a narrow perspective (i.e. only fisheries related activities). (Sri Lanka)

Promotion of non-fisheries related activities such as home gardening, chicken raising, oyster mushroom cultivation can help reduce pressure on fisheries. (Cambodia)

CFi Trapaing Sangke, Kampot province, was able to propose dock building in their community rather than more traditional alternatives such as chicken rearing or fish culture as they see that most fishers are spending lots of money on dock service. Once the dock is in operation, CFI will be able to earn income and decrease the expense of fishers as the service fee will be lower than the private dock. (Cambodia)

Livelihood projects offer great potential as ‘alternatives’ to fishing for small-scale fishers/fisher wives. They are considered by most recipients as real alternative livelihood projects (esp land-based) as they offer income to fisher’s wives when fishing is impossible during bad weather conditions. This helps augment household income and is used for food consumption, children’s education; empowers women economically; improves community status and use of time. (Philippines)

Livelihoods groups which are producing bags and hats report a strong seasonality in demand (orders come at New Year etc when companies want bags for gifts). As a result there are times when they have few orders and would require training in producing other goods. (Philippines)

What constitutes a livelihoods diversification strategy needs to be decided from the beginning of the project. Problems arose regarding certain proposed activities as some stakeholders considered that the promotion of non-fisheries related livelihoods was against the scope of the project. (Sri Lanka)

It is important that efforts are made to get livelihoods actions off the ground as quickly as possible however sustainability must be considered. In Sri Lanka participants in the home gardening

programme received hybrid seeds during the 1st season for early adaptation. However during the 2nd season local seed varieties were used to create seed banks. A combination of annual, bi-annual and perennial crops were included in the package. (Sri Lanka)

The success of home gardening, like other agricultural actions, is at the mercy of the weather. Unexpected weather patterns have affected the home gardening programme. During the 1st season the programme delivered the expected results however it has been affected by drought during the 2nd season. (Sri Lanka)

Natural products have been used to help women weavers Rote Ndao produce new natural colors that are more interesting than traditional colors. The natural dyes increase the profitability of the weaving. There is also a strong niche market demand for this naturally dyed cloth. However, evaluation needs to take place of whether the use of such products is likely to have any environmental impact. (Indonesia)

Beneficiary selection/motivation

It is important to select the right participants who are willing to learn and to practice. (Cambodia)

Direct beneficiaries of livelihoods actions are mainly minimal, mostly 10-20 per recipient group. RFLP cannot target large numbers of beneficiaries, so it is important to have agreed criteria for beneficiary selection. The main impact will be through documenting the process and sharing the lessons learned with other people, government institutions, development projects, donors, etc. Beneficiary selection has to be influenced by the RFLP outcome which targets communities rather than individuals, so targeting the entrepreneurial poor may be better. (Philippines)

Strong well organized groups have been selected and these have been women's groups. Men have less time. Very few male groups submitted proposals. This has been mainly because of time limitations. (Philippines)

Groups selected should be well organized, motivated, and have time available for livelihoods activities. (RFLP Programme Management Office)

Implementing activities through existing organizations will have a positive impact and will also help reinforce the importance and role of community structures and organizations. In Sri Lanka having local fisheries cooperative societies (FCS) as primary beneficiaries of RFLP activities helped facilitate the smooth implementation of activities and makes sustainability more likely. However such organizations themselves need to be carefully selected. Criteria used including that they were: registered, audited, had a good track record, had participated in other project activities, had capacity etc. Fishers who were not members of the FCS were also not included in the project. (Sri Lanka)

Beneficiary selection should be carried out through existing community structures. In Sri Lanka Fisheries Cooperative Societies (FCS) played a major role in the beneficiary selection process with FCS leaders selecting individual beneficiaries using criteria given by the project. Random checks were undertaken to verify that proposed participants met these criteria. The more participatory and transparent selection is, the better it is for community harmony. However despite taking considerable steps beneficiary selection was still in favour of more dominant members of the community while disputes arose with members of other FCS regarding the provision of equipment. (Sri Lanka)

Choosing the right fit of recipient groups is difficult. A decision needs to be made as to whether interventions support the 'poorest of the poor' or the entrepreneurial poor? A few LGUs asked why assistance is being provided to the 'strong' when those needing assistance are the 'weak' ones.

Because of limited time-frame and budget (to undertake community organizing, social preparation and organizational development), NCs worked with selected strong, registered community organizations using diagnostic tools posing questions in beneficiary selection. (Philippines)

There should be no free lunch for participants. Inputs were provided in several rounds based on the progress achieved and participants needed to earn 'project support' through their efforts and commitment. As part of the home gardening initiative seed packages and perennial plants were given to beneficiaries who completed training successfully with no support being provided for those if they did not attend training. Water tanks were provided only to those who were able to show that they had developed successful home gardens (only 50 beneficiaries out of 67 were received the tanks) while others were given a grace period to improve their gardens. (Sri Lanka)

Beneficiaries should be more involved in the delivery of inputs. Small-scale aquaculture models in Quang Tri the fingerlings provided were too small while delivery took place during the cold season. As a result the mortality rate was high. Beneficiaries need to take part in buying input materials, rather than passively waiting for assistance from extension workers. (Viet Nam)

Beneficiaries need to understand their roles and rights in implementing models so as to be empowered and to avoid them considering that they are benefiting from "favours" by the project or commune authorities. (Viet Nam)

Beneficiaries need to be selected by the community members rather than being hand-picked by Commune authorities. (Viet Nam)

Careful consideration must be made of the geographic areas of intervention in order to avoid local conflicts. (Sri Lanka)

Beneficiary selection problems - RFLP tried to identify appropriate beneficiaries with assistance of TOT alumni. However there is often little distinction between fishers and farmers in the coastal areas and so difficult to select 'pure' fishers. Community members need to be involved in selection as if only local leader is involved then family members will be selected. Likewise government staff cannot be relied on to be unbiased. In depth discussion is needed to ensure beneficiaries are appropriate. (Indonesia)

There should be no hesitation to retrieve goods provided to trainees if they are not being used; to stop supporting participants who do not show commitment to attending training or applying training techniques. (Timor-Leste)

Local resources

The utilization of potential local resources is one of the keys to success for local business operation. (Cambodia)

The utilization of local resource person (full skill villagers) is one of the keys to success for local business operation and effective skill transferring. (Cambodia)

Market access

Market access must have been identified for the business operation. (Cambodia)

RFLP beneficiaries under output 4 have produced a number of new goods including FRP-made cool box for motorcycle traders, agro-based products, seaweed (mainly *Halymenia* sp.), catfish and woven products with natural color. However most new products are produced in small quantity, and it

needs time to increase market demand though the new products was based on market analysis result. (Indonesia)

Sustainability/replication

Involvement of local authorities and government line departments (commune council and FiA Cantonment) is important to promote ownership, commitment and sustainability. If they are not involved then there is very little chance of any sustainability or replication. (Cambodia)

It is best to create ownership with CFIs in order to ensure the sustainability of the livelihood activities and this also requires full support by local authority and government line departments. (Cambodia)

The participatory approach sees communities identify livelihoods activities they wish to undertake. However in certain instances (e.g. CAMBODIA chicken raising) this means that implementation needs to be carried out by an NGO skilled in this area. Although participant skills are built there is no institutional capacity building and as a result little realistic chance of any replication. (Cambodia)

Livelihoods options are context and site specific, so large-scale replication is extremely difficult (RFLP Programme Management Office)

Important to not 'sugar coat' information about activities that may give rise to unrealistic hopes and expectations (Philippines)

Counterpart funding / collaboration

It is important to follow government budget process (budget planning etc) if you want to link into government funds and planning. (Philippines)

Involvement of non-fisheries related government ministries/agencies such as Ministry of Industry, SME development etc should be actively pursued. (Indonesia)

Project workplans should be developed in collaboration with government department (e.g. local fisheries agency) workplans so that they can effectively complement one another. (Philippines)

Working with co-funding organizations can give rise to issues of visibility, and ownership. Implementation with more than one partner have an impact on timeframes and lead to delays. All agreements should be written and all concerned parties copied in order to avoid misunderstandings and confusion. When possible avoid working with more than one partner. (Timor-Leste)

Integration between outputs

Livelihoods income should/could be used to fund some of the costs of co-management patrolling. (Cambodia)

The importance of the link between livelihoods and access to capital is clear however it takes time to build the confidence of livelihoods groups to engage with MFIs for credit to expand existing production activities. (Philippines)

Linkages were made between FRP cool boxes made by alumni of a vocational training programme with Output 3 activities (provision of the cool boxes for traders to ensure enhanced hygiene); and Output 5 (credit scheme to purchase the cool boxes). (Indonesia)

Links with rural development

The post of livestock officer in RFLP Cambodia communes is vacant. It would appear that there is a lack of emphasis placed on fishing communities in this regard that should be addressed if coastal communities are to increasingly turn to non-fishing activities. (Cambodia)

Grassroots extension works have not been sufficiently involved in project activities for non-fishing livelihoods actions. They are based in each commune but are poorly resourced as it is not their priority to provide fishing communities with technical assistance for farming activities as RFLP mainly works directly with Fisheries agencies. As the project aims to promote non-fishing livelihoods, it is important to stress their involvement of agricultural extension workers in activity planning and implementation. (Viet Nam)

Integrated approach

A 'Pump-priming' strategy to jump-start development of micro enterprises among recipient groups has proven to be effective. This has seen the extension of livelihood diversification projects through providing business planning training, skills enhancement training and provision of capital equipment, inventory capital (raw materials/supplies); initial marketing/purchase by RFLP of products (bags, bottled shrimp paste). Recipient groups have indicated that this approach has resulted in far greater impact compared to training only modalities and results in instantaneous ability to produce and earn. (Philippines)

Gender

Shrimp paste production and sewing actions with women's groups reinforce some of the traditional gender roles of women. (Philippines)

The strengths and skills of women should be built upon. For example many women already practice chicken raising at home and this can be capitalised upon. Likewise women should be motivated to share ideas and become more involved in decision making. (Cambodia)

The majority of livelihoods actions backed by RFLP were women-run with six out of nine existing, operational livelihoods projects being women-managed/owned. LGU and male counterparts (FARMC/PO leaders) have asked for livelihood projects for male fishers which were 'overlooked' by NCs. (Philippines)

Fishers were interested in strengthened livelihoods while women were interested in alternative livelihoods. Fishers were not generally aware of alternative livelihood opportunities, mainly due to a lack of interest in them. Their interest lies in strengthening existing fishing –related livelihoods by adopting new technology, rather than adopting new livelihood options. Women, on the other hand, were very interested in alternative livelihoods and are also very much aware of them. Fish processing, small businesses, garment industry, farming and animal husbandry are some of the important livelihood options preferred by women in the study area. It is therefore important that gender analysis (Daily Calendar, Seasonal calendar) takes place to reveal unproductive spare time women may have. Implementation of women focused activities will bring extra income for the household. An analysis of gender division of household labour is important at the beginning of a livelihood project. (Sri Lanka)

Lighter equipment was procured in recognition of the number of women who would be involved in home gardening. (Sri Lanka)

Politics

Highly political community settings may marginalize other stakeholder groups who do not belong to same political alliances. (Philippines)

The success of programmes will be impacted if there is a lack of political will. (Sri Lanka)

Beware of delays caused by election periods. (Timor-Leste)

Baseline data

Accurate base line data is critical but has been weak and not helpful. If done well this can be extremely useful for preparatory work and strategy formulation. It can also provide profiles of resources and assets while identifying and profiling potential and appropriate recipient groups. It needs to be done well with a competent service provider. (Philippines)

Livelihood diversification in fisheries is not a priority for the sector in Timor Leste. Reviewing the existing literature and accomplishing a fish consumption survey helped in justifying a refocusing of the output. Research in the form of the Baseline Survey and Fish and animal protein consumption and availability survey helped confirm the rationale for this decision. (Timor-Leste)

Filling data and information gaps through activities such as a fish consumption survey has helped the MAF and other government and non government institutions plan interventions and strategies affecting the sector and related to food security. The results of such studies need to be shared as widely as possible for new projects that are currently being planned. (Timor-Leste)

The fish and animal protein consumption and availability survey was time consuming, expensive and didn't produce gender disaggregated data as per request under ToR. Mistakes were made during data gathering process. It is important to highlight weaknesses and mistakes in methodology during the revision process and let researchers know. It is not enough simply to write ToRs and agree on the methodologies. It is vital to control the data gathering process at all stages. Consideration should be made as to whether it is advantageous to outsource to consultancy firms. Direct implementation has shown better results. When involving students or other enumerators in data gathering it is better to keep the coordination directly under RFLP and release payments directly. (Timor-Leste)

Seaweed

Seaweed offers additional income for fishers and their households, and in many places reducing fishers dependence toward marine and coastal resources. Simple technology improvements - the use of drying racks - has helped improve seaweed quality and boost income. Existing and traditional practices saw seaweed dried on top of sand where it was easily contaminated by the sand and domestic animals. (Indonesia)

In many places in NTT province, seaweed farming has become a valuable source of additional income and helped reduce dependency on coastal resources. A new species *Halymenia* sp was introduced in collaboration with DKP Rote Ndao to expand seaweed production, meet demand from international market (Canada). This species has better growth and is more resistant to white disease (ice-ice) and fish. (Indonesia)

Drying and washing seaweed properly results in a better price. (Indonesia)

Market access appears to remain a problem with regards to seaweed production. The seaweed variety was introduced in order to export to Canada however it would appear that this trade is controlled by only one trader whilst most other collectors and traders depend on the Surabaya market. There is a need for additional infrastructure development, transportation and distribution planning to ensure NTT seaweed has better access to the market. (Indonesia)

Aquaculture

Fish feed for catfish farming is expensive as depends upon imports from Java (Surabaya) and Bali. Training is therefore needed on developing fish feed using local raw materials. (Indonesia)

Languages

Working languages can cause problems. There can be delays in translating documents. The government requested translation into the two official languages (Portuguese/Tetum) in order to present it for official approval in the parliament. However there are very few good translators able to translate English to Tetum and even less who can translate into Portuguese. Revisions of translations are extremely time consuming. It is recommended to avoid contracting a full time translator but create a list of preferred professionals based on experience that can receive regular requests from RFLP. Minimize the size of the reports as much as possible and use a language that can be easily translated. When possible select carefully the documents to translate. (Timor-Leste)

2.3 Gender mainstreaming

Gender analysis and other gender studies

Countries teams were not fully satisfied with the results of the gender analysis that were done as part of the baseline surveys. In view of this, some countries are carrying out complementary gender related studies. Sri Lanka, for example, recently undertook a complementary gender analysis (see above on the gender analysis section. It is also available in the RFLP website).

RFLP Timor-Leste is planning to undertake a national survey on gender roles in fishing communities. This study will provide valuable information on migration patterns and gender roles of Timorese fishing communities. The study will be accomplished by using an experimental method. The data gathering process will be carried out by the staff of the NDFA as part of the capacity building in data gathering and data management to the national staff. The staff will be taking geo-referenced photographs and will fill up a simple questionnaire with basic information about the persons that are in the photo. This information will be directly entered in the www.peskador.org interface by the district staff and then it will be publicly available. The sample will be divided by gender and generation. Historical patterns of migrations will also be drawn. The result of the study will be an inventory of gender roles and livelihoods. The results will be:

- A document with details of the experimental methodology
- A set of maps
- A policy brief

With regards at looking at gender related impact of the RFLP, some countries are starting the process of undertaking a gender assessment of the RFLP impact, looking at the effects of RFLP interventions at household level, dealing with the double burden and by providing concrete examples of women's empowerment as a result of project interventions. The results of these studies will be available in the website once finalized.

Gender related studies should be carried out at different phases of project implementation. In addition to the selection of gender sensitive indicators, projects should undertake gender analysis during initial phases of the project (ideally during the stakeholder analysis), and gender impact assessments at the final stages.

About the effectiveness of the gender trainings

Despite the number of gender trainings carried out in RFLP countries, it appears that there is still some degree of confusion on what gender mainstreaming means, and how gender concerns could be

effectively incorporated during country planning and implementation. During consultations with country teams and also by observations done by the MTE team, the effectiveness of gender trainings carried out at community level (e.g. Viet Nam) was put into question, mainly due to their short duration (one-day). Despite the novelty of these trainings (in Viet Nam, it was the first time Women's Union's carried out gender trainings targeting to men and women in fishing communities) and their enjoyable nature (in Viet Nam as well, fishers declared these trainings were "fun"), the impact of these trainings at household or community level was questionable. However, the trainings were, even more importantly, an opportunity for meso-level actors to be aware of "gender perceptions" and "gender stereotypes in the fisheries sector". In the Vietnamese example, it is expected that Women's Union and DARD officials, through their participation in the TOT gender training, will be now more sensitive to gender issues in fishing communities and better prepared to deal with those issues during their routine work in the fisheries sector, including the implementation of other government programmes.

Changes in attitudes and mindsets take time and need more than can be provided by short duration gender training. Gender sensitization needs the involvement of men as well as women, at community level. But from a project management point of view, the focus should be given to meso-level actors that play a very important role providing services and can be kept responsible to continue the gender mainstreaming work once the project finalizes.

Improving women's participation in co-management and decision-making

RFLP is making efforts to increase the participation of women in decision-making, including their participation in co-management mechanisms, taking various roles in fisheries management interventions.

In the Philippines, RFLP has integrated gender into Coastal Resource and Fisheries Management Plans (CRFM) of the LGUs. As a result, women will be acting as fish wardens, fishery law enforcers. RFLP is also working with the communities to set a women's managed area.

In Sri Lanka, the inclusion of women representatives in co-management coordination committees has been made compulsory, as well as the inclusion of minimum 2 women directors in the Fish Finance Network Association. As mentioned above, thanks to RFLP support and advocacy, the Sri Lankan government is studying the revision of the Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Act No. 2 of 1996 so as to allow women to become legal members of Fisheries Committees. This will be an unprecedented achievement towards gender equality for the Sri Lankan fisheries sector.

In Timor-Leste women have been involved as signatories of the first ever documented *Tara Bandu*, a traditional coastal resources management practice. Local authorities and communities were informed of the need to involve women in resource management, and agreed to an RFLP request to include women as signatories of the *Tara Bandu* document. This means that now women have a role in the formalization of the traditional and community based resource management system, albeit a mainly symbolic one, a role that they did not have before the RFLP intervention. As signatories, they will now participate in all decision making meetings. Despite this important achievement, RFLP will need to follow up the impact of the initiative as acting as signatories does not automatically mean that they would have power to make or influence decisions. In any case, it is an important first step, which gives women a role in the formalization of the regulation and access to the public sphere. Symbolic changes like this should be promoted, by seeking their replication in other districts.

In Viet Nam, the RFLP is supporting 16 Fisheries Associations (FAs) between the provinces of Quang Nam, Quang Tri and Thua Thien Hue. The FAs are community-based organizations for mainly male fishers – of the 1335 members, only 36 are women. In Viet Nam, it is normal that men represent their household in most registrations. The local authorities argument is that even though women's

names do not appear in FA, they are considered FA members. RFLP is working to increase women's FA membership and encourage their active participation, through an incentive scheme that includes: i) provide assistance for livelihood model implementation to women that are FA members only, and ii) specify that the membership fee is by household, instead of individual – this means that if both husband and wife are members, they will only need to pay one fee.

RFLP is applying efforts to increase and enhance women's participation in decision-making, including in fisheries co-management structures traditionally only dominated by men. To be recognized for the first time as members and signatories of fisheries organizations is a symbolic achievement and it should be considered a first step towards gender equality. More efforts should be provided to guarantee women's full participation in decision-making, which may need to go on beyond the life of the RFLP. The RFLP needs now to monitor achievements, document results and share information for replication with other areas.

Being aware of potential negative effects: The risks of overburden and domestic violence

Despite the number of activities that are directed to increase women's participation in decision-making and in income generating activities, project staff expressed concern about the potential risk that the project could have in the communities, especially on the women they are trying to help.

For example, Cambodia declared that with more involvement of women in more activities could lead to increase their workload, as they still have to attend to household work. After attending training on gender, men seemed to be helping out with household chores, but only in a minor way. Household violence was also a concern, despite the number of trainings and dissemination workshops carried out (not only by the RFLP). Philippines staff expressed similar concerns, indicating that efforts should be employed to sensitize male fishers in order to avoid women's double burden among women's empowerment goals.

In Timor-Leste, where specific training to women's staff in the NDFA has made them very valuable contributors and indispensable in their department, there is a risk that they become *multi-task* workers instead of *specialized* workers, with a possibility of overburden. As a response to this risk, RFLP is promoting specialization and division of labour in the Fisheries Department, instigating and approach that promotes meritocracy (promotion based on merits), by providing capacity building to the staff whose performance is good and by giving a special focus to women staff.

As a positive example it is worth mentioning the case of Viet Nam, where it has been reported that, due to declining catches and the efforts done to involve women in livelihood diversification options, male fishers are willing to spend more time helping with traditionally "women's" activities", like pig and chicken raising. In this, men are starting to support women in their household chores, while they can dedicate more time to income generating activities.

The project should be aware of the risks of overburden or even of domestic violence if there is resistance to change by men. Through sensitization and specialization approaches, men and women should be included in the process and see the benefits of supporting roles.

Drawing the limit – how far can the RFLP go?

Overall, activities have been carried out with a focus on the practical needs of women and men (e.g. increases in their income, facilitating their access to productive assets, etc.), with the attention to strategic needs being largely based upon increasing women's participation in decision making, by facilitating and promoting their participation in co-management mechanisms.

However as part of its gender strategy, RFLP also needs to draw limits on how much it can do related to gender. Philippines for example declared that the "strategic focus of RFLP gender mainstreaming

was not very clear” indicating the variety of concerns that the project team is not able to take care of (e.g. domestic violence, overburden, etc). Capacity building in gender aspects is also important, but there needs to be limit. In cases where many activities related to gender were carried out (e.g. in Sri Lanka, where there had gender trainings, gender analysis, gender awareness campaigns, and many activities targeted to empower women), the team considered they needed an “advance gender training course”, although their sensitivity in gender issues and the work done would appear that extra training is not necessary.

It is recommended that country teams build partnerships with local NGO's and government departments that lead women's empowerment and gender equality efforts, being realistic that the program needs to have a limit on gender activities in order to not minimize the other outputs of the programme. Gender concerns have to be taken into account, in order to make the programme more fair and effective, but without losing the perspective of its overall goal. The RFLP is not a gender programme, is instead a fisheries programme that mainstreams gender in its design and implementation.

The establishment of quotas and the need for flexibility in order to foster women's participation

During the workshop, country teams discussed the pros and cons of setting targets for women to participate in RFLP activities. Country teams indicated that setting quotas could be a first step towards mainstreaming gender, guaranteeing the participation of both men and women in project activities. The establishment of quotas makes can provide an easy monitoring indicator with regards to women's participation. It also makes easier the process of attempting to facilitate joint decision-making, providing the opportunity to both men and women to articulate their needs. The teams concluded that setting quotas was a normal practice of the development process in developing countries; and it can be good to use quotas to set minimum targets for some governance structures. On the other hand, the group agreed that is better if each activity is designed according to specific needs and conditions of men and women and that there are activities that can be more suited to one group than another. The quota system could have the motivation/willingness/interest levels reduced (if not taking care of the specific needs) and therefore the impact of activities can likely be reduced. Looking just at numbers of women and men participating in project activities gives no indication of the quality of their involvement in any activity, which indicates that efforts for fair participation should go beyond numbers. The group also agreed that in co-management mechanisms setting quotas or reserving seats for women's participation it was seen as a good practice, as otherwise women could be excluded of decision-making.

Is also worth noting that in some cases, activities can be more effective by having women participating in them – for example, in the Safety at Sea trainings in Sri Lanka. As women do not fish, it was initially thought that their participation in this type of training was not necessary. However, women were invited to be part of the training, and are now actively contributing to safer behavior of fishers (their husbands, fathers and sons) when at sea, maximizing the scope of the trainings.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that just by putting quotas of men and women to participate in project activities, it might not be so straightforward to guarantee their participation (despite the nature of the activity). A clear example is the case of RFLP Indonesia, during December 2010, the implementing counterpart failed to have the expected number of women participating in their seaweed training, although they had been invited. The practical training was done near their village, however, the theoretical part was given in another village, and they were not able to attend because it needed sleep over in the other village, and women were not able to be away of their households over-night. Mobility may be an issue for the participation of women, either because is not socially acceptable, or have other responsibilities to take off, like child care.

The establishment of quotas is an “easy” practice for project staff, as they can follow up the numbers of men and women participating in project activities in a convenient way, and it is easy to provide guidance to service providers during beneficiary selection. Despite this, some activities are more sensitive to women’s needs and others to men’s (see below discussion on “challenging traditional roles”). However, the project should not exclude the participation of women or men in any of the activities based on gender stereotypes. Activities can also be more effective when involving men and women. Mobility issues also must be taken into account, activities should be planned close to the village and child care may be provided to allow women with young children to attend.

Challenging traditional roles

The “appropriateness” of activities that may challenge the traditional roles of men or women was discussed. The question was asked how much a fisheries project can challenge stereotypes or what realistically it could achieve. There was some concern that by challenging traditional roles, the project could be seen as disrespectful to traditions, culture and religion, giving “social headaches” that could go beyond the project possibilities. It was agreed that the possibilities of what can be done depend very much on the specific context. The team overall considered that any change in mind set was good, and that as traditions and culture changes over time, change is inevitable and should be encouraged. Changes in roles should not only be directed to women, but also to men, and they have to be seen as positive changes, as expressed by the sentence “Quality time for dads with their children”. By challenging traditional roles, women can be more empowered, through a fairer and more balanced decision making processes in communities.

RFLP needs to be aware and sensitive of traditional gender roles, however, opportunities for empowerment of women should be sought, including changes in roles with new activities for women (e.g. fish wardens in the Philippines), and support of men (e.g. by providing greater support in the household activities, which was reported it was already happening in Viet Nam and Cambodia). For further projects, is worth mentioning that during their planning phase, activities should be designed responding to the needs of women and men (that man be different but complementary).

Gender and Sex-disaggregated data at national levels

As a normal practice, the RFLP collects data of men and women participating in project activities. However, at national levels, gender or sex-disaggregated data indicating the roles of men and women in the fisheries sector is generally not collected. RFLP notes that more attention and support should be given at national levels to gather this type of data, including socio-economic information, in order to have a clearer picture of the contributions of men and women to the sector, including their roles and their participation in decision-making. The data should provide detail information on migration patterns and seasonal roles in the productive tasks. Of special relevance is the study planned by RFLP in Timor Leste to develop a survey of gender roles in fisheries that will be available in the National online Fisheries Database. This will be the first time that Timor-Leste undertakes such a study, and other countries could follow the example.

The RFLP should advocate for collaboration between the Department of Census and Statistics and the Fisheries Department to start collecting sex-disaggregated data and gender division of roles in the fisheries sector.

3. Evaluation of lessons learned process

A discussion on the lesson learned process took place with comments made as follows:

RFLP Cambodia held a national consultation workshop, but it was difficult to dig out the information from the participants. The number of beneficiaries should have been fewer and it should involve the appropriate National Consultants (NCs). (Cambodia)

For the presentation the PowerPoint templates helped, but where there was little information it was difficult to complete the template. (Cambodia)

The approach is good but at the national level the lessons learned activity involved the service provider and FiA staff and should have been two days instead of one. The NC's and RFLP staff can discuss ahead of the national workshop. The Regional workshop approach is good as we can learn from other country's lessons learned and improve activities in Cambodia. The regional workshop should be documented and shared among the participants. (Cambodia)

RFLP Cambodia should share national lessons learned with ministries, donors etc., at the next NCC meeting and the technical working group for fisheries (TWGF) in perhaps July. (Cambodia)

It is necessary to place more emphasis on gathering specifics of the technical aspects which have worked. (Cambodia)

The NPC, MEO and NC's should work to share findings at the regional level and later share with the NPD's later. (Viet Nam)

We cannot afford to bring all the NC's to a regional level meeting. The NC's have to be involved at the national level and their technical information should be brought and shared at the regional level. (RFLP Programme Management Office)

Today's mistake can be tomorrow's success. The process of lessons learning at this workshop has been very good and I am learning a lot about what has and hasn't learned and this will assist me to better conduct my post as the RFLP VIE NPD. The workshop report should highlight those things that have worked and those that have not. (Viet Nam)

In RFLP VIE a small meeting was organised with the NC's, MEO, NPD and NPC to gather the lessons learned information quickly and cheaply. This information needs to be written up and shared at both the NCC meeting, and the national and provincial levels. Thematic national workshops can be conducted by output in country. Thereafter the information can be shared with the region. (Viet Nam)

RFLP TIM works primarily on on-the-job training capacity building for NDFA staff. Lessons learning should involve the donors. The NDFA would like to have a similar national lessons learned workshop in TIM. (Timor-Leste)

It is important to link coastal livelihoods activities across several sectors and this requires effective coordination of several government departments. The lessons learned should be shared widely and across sectors, to ensure sustainability. (Timor-Leste)

There was insufficient time to arrange a workshop and arranging workshops in TIM is time consuming. There is a concern that RFLP TIM staff are over-loaded and that the lessons learning process is one more task. It is important that the lessons learned are shared in a format which makes them widely taken up, rather than only being included in a report. (Timor-Leste)

Ministry level steering committee meeting will be arranged to solve issues with RFLP. (Sri Lanka)

A national workshop was arranged to discuss output 3, 4 and gender and it was identified that administration issues were more problematic than the technical issues. (Sri Lanka)

There is a need to conduct a small workshop with NC's and key stakeholders to set new targets for RFLP SRL to develop an action plan for the final project period. (Sri Lanka)

This process should show us how effective the RFLP PHI strategy is and allow us to revise activity work plans and budget to maximise impact. These periodic reviews should have been done throughout the project period. The outputs from this regional workshop we can take back to our countries to improve the national programmes. (Philippines)

It was a good process going from internal RFLP Philippines to regional level. However, separate administration and technical presentation session are needed. (Philippines)

The one-day national lessons learned workshop was insufficient. A longer period was needed with more time for time for specific outputs. The monitoring at ground level needs to be intensified. There is a reluctance to give frank feedback on any negatives and external facilitators may be needed. The use of FGDs can be used to gather the required data. (Philippines)

Agree that external experts should be used to gather impact data for the different RFLP outputs. This process has provided lessons learned information that will allow the national projects to improve their activities. The national teams should bring examples of their extension materials which could be shared by NC's at the regional lessons learned workshop. (Indonesia)

Good process to share lessons learned. Perhaps the one cock and five chickens system can be adopted in INS. (Indonesia)

At the national level the NC's gave a lot of input on technical lessons learned. Arranging FGD's takes time to arrange, but stakeholders gave a lot of feedback on the project. The willingness to share is good too. Involvement of the government counterparts at both the national and regional level is important. (Indonesia)

Regional RFLP could have given clearer guidance as to what type of lessons learned to focus on.

The lessons learned process should not be a separate process. It should be an integral part of the M&E process. The NC's are meant to be providing feedback on lessons learned. However it may be more difficult to get information from the service providers. (RFLP Programme Management Office)

The NCC should be used as a vehicle to feedback lessons learned to counterparts and stakeholders. (RFLP Programme Management Office)

Facilitation is important and there is money within the M&E to cover facilitators, and field note takers etc. (RFLP Programme Management Office)

There are a variety of audiences for lessons learned, both internal for the project and external for donors, governments, other ministries, NGO's INGO's, FAO etc. (RFLP Programme Management Office)

RFLP is a regional lesson learning livelihoods programme in coastal areas of the six countries and to show how it can be done within the local context. The programme is working in difficult contexts, but flexibility has been allowed. Now we have to identify if this approach has been working or not. These lessons learned need to be shared with governments, donors etc. At the moment we cannot describe how we did things. At the moment we have been so busy implementing. RFLP has learned a lot and some has been negative. This has to be shared even if the lesson learned is negative. This documentation is vital to the success of RFLP. (FAO)

There has been too much focus on success. There has been too much focus on the way forward and not enough critical review of what has been done and how it can be improved. This cannot be left to the end of the programme. (FAO)

It is important not to become over concerned with procedural issues such as procurement, DSA, difficulties in the monsoon season etc and get on with documenting the process, the technical aspects of the work, and the lessons learned. (RFLP Programme Management Office)

It is suggested that any administration issues that can be solved at national level should be settled there and not brought to any other meeting. (Philippines)

The comparative advantage of FAO is not in the social approaches that many NGO's can do. FAO has the technical strength but can also use improved social approaches as part of the process. (FAO)

4. Action points for follow up

Action points stemming from the workshop for follow up:

Non-relevant/low priority activities Should annual workplans include activities that national teams consider to be non-relevant these can be removed. However the PMO should be consulted and NCC approval granted beforehand. The key point is to focus on relevant/high priority actions until the end of the programme.

- *Action: National teams to consider and advise PMO accordingly.*

Scope of community/beneficiary involvement In line with the recommendations of the mid-term evaluation, national teams are requested to review the number of communities and beneficiaries they are working with in order to concentrate efforts for the remainder of the programme on those which are likely to have the greatest impact. Criteria should be developed upon which decisions to cut/reduce or continue activities with communities should be based. Discussions in this regard should also take place with the government counterpart. Where recommendations to cut/reduce communities/activities are made, a strategy to do so should also be included.

- *Action: National teams to consider, discuss with NPD and report to PMO by 1 July.*

Involvement in National Coordination Committee (NCC) For the upcoming NCC other ministries, departments or agencies and other relevant stakeholders which may contribute to livelihoods development should be invited to attend so that they are aware of RFLP activities and can potentially collaborate and improve RFLP impact.

- *Action: National teams to draw up invitation list.*

Lessons learning process effectiveness In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the RFLP lessons learned process national teams are requested to document on a single page and provide to the PMO:

- How will lessons learned at national level be shared to maximise impact?
- What do national teams intend to do differently as a result of the lessons learned process?
- What lessons learned (if any) from *other* RFLP countries will you be able to use or will be of use to you in your planning/implementation?
- *Action: National teams to complete and return to PMO by 19 June.*

Follow up to lessons learned In order to dig deeper into the specific lessons learned on certain topics the PMO will draw up a list of areas to be covered and circulate to national teams. Input into these can then be provided by email/skype follow up.

- *Action: Information Officer to draw up list and circulate by 19 June.*

Location of the RFLP national coordination offices Difficulties arising from the location of the RFLP National Coordination Offices have been raised by a number of countries (e.g. difficulties relating to NC recruitment). NCOs should provide PMO with further information in this regard.

- *Action: PMO will circulate request for information to national teams shortly.*

5. Ending the RFLP

Jose Parajua, Regional Programme Manger gave a presentation on the steps to be taken by regional and national teams as well as government counterparts leading up to the end of the RFLP in August 2013. This included details on: Working Plans and Budget; Implementation timings: Exit strategy: Monitoring: Reporting and Evaluation.

The presentation containing all details is attached as Annex 1

6. Programme of event

Day 1 – Tuesday, 29th May 2012
Theme: Output 3 – Post harvest

Time	Topic	Speaker
08.00 – 08.30	Registration	
08.30 – 08.35	Welcome address	<i>Jose Parajua, Regional Programme Manager, RFLP</i>
08.35 – 08.40	Welcome address	<i>Simon Funge-Smith, Senior Fisheries Office, FAO RAP</i>
08.40 – 09.00	Introduction	<i>Steve Needham – Information Officer</i>
Country presentations following standard template: 30 mins + 15 mins Q&A		
09.00 – 09.45	Cambodia	<i>NPC/MEO</i>
09.45 – 10.30	Indonesia	<i>NPM/MEO</i>
10.30 – 11.00	Coffee/tea break	
11.00 – 11.45	Philippines	<i>NPC/MEO</i>
11.45 – 12.30	Sri Lanka	<i>NPM/MEO</i>
12.30 – 13.30	Lunch	
13.30 – 14.15	Timor-Leste	<i>NPC/MEO</i>
14.15 – 15.00	Viet Nam	<i>NPC/MEO</i>
15.00 – 15.30	Coffee/tea break	
15.30 – 17.00	Plenary discussion	
17.00 – 17.30	Wrap up and end	
19.00 – 21.00	Group dinner (Mango Tree restaurant) Depart hotel 18.30hrs	

Day 2 – Wednesday, 30th May 2012
Theme: Output 4 – Livelihoods

Time	Topic	Speaker
08.30 – 09.00	Introduction	<i>Steve Needham – Information Officer</i>
Country presentations following standard template: 30 mins + 15 mins Q&A		
09.00 – 09.45	Cambodia	<i>NPC/MEO</i>
09.45 – 10.30	Indonesia	<i>NPM/MEO</i>
10.30 – 11.00	Coffee/tea break	
11.00 – 11.45	Philippines	<i>NPC/MEO</i>
11.45 – 12.30	Sri Lanka	<i>NPM/MEO</i>

Time	Topic	Speaker
12.30 – 13.30	Lunch	
13.30 – 14.15	Timor-Leste	<i>NPC/MEO</i>
14.15 – 15.00	Viet Nam	<i>NPC/MEO</i>
15.00 – 15.30	Coffee/tea break	
15.30 – 17.00	Plenary discussion	
17.00 – 17.30	Wrap up and end	

Day 3 – Thursday, 31st May 2012
Theme: Gender

Time	Topic	Speaker
08.30 – 09.00	Introduction	<i>Angela Lentisco – M&E and Gender advisor</i>
Country presentations following standard template: 30 mins + 15 mins Q&A		
09.00 – 09.45	Cambodia	<i>NPC/MEO</i>
09.45 – 10.30	Indonesia	<i>NPM/MEO</i>
10.30 – 11.00	Coffee/tea break	
11.00 – 11.45	Philippines	<i>NPC/MEO</i>
11.45 – 12.30	Sri Lanka	<i>NPM/MEO</i>
12.30 – 13.30	Lunch	
13.30 – 14.15	Timor-Leste	<i>NPC/MEO</i>
14.15 – 15.00	Viet Nam	<i>NPC/MEO</i>
15.00 – 15.30	Coffee/tea break	
15.30 – 17.00	Plenary discussion	
17.00 – 17.30	Wrap up and end	

Day 4 – Friday, 1st June 2012
Theme: Exit strategy

Time	Topic	Speaker
08.30 – 09.00	Introduction	
09.00– 10.30	Management and planning issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timeline to end of RFLP • Preparation for next NCC round • Budget issues • Exit strategy 	<i>Jose Parajua, Regional Programme Manager, RFLP</i>
10.30 – 11.00	Coffee/tea break	
11.00 – 12.30	Continue from morning session	<i>Jose Parajua, Regional Programme Manager, RFLP</i>
12.30 – 13.30	Lunch	

7. Participant list

	Country	Name	Title
1	Cambodia	Ms. Kaing Khim	National Project Director
2		Mr. Thay Somony	National Project Coordinator
3		Ms. Khim Wirya	M & E Officer
4	Indonesia	Mr. Liliek Soeprijadi	GoI - INS
5		Mr. Aminudin Salka	National Project Manager
6		Mr. Suhendra	M & E Officer
8	Philippines	Ms. Jessica Munoz	National Project Director
9		Mr. Benjamin Francisco	RFLP NPC
10		Mr. Glenn Labrado	M & E Officer
11	Sri Lanka	Ms. Damitha de Zoysa	Secretary of Fisheries & NPC - SRL
12		Ms. Champa Amarasiri	National Project Manager
13		Mr. Nishan Dissanayake	M & E Officer
14	Timor-Leste	Mr. Fernando Egidio Amaral	National Director of Industrial Crops and Agribusiness
15		Mr. Enrique Alonso-Poblacion	RFLP Timor-Leste Technical Advisor
16		Mr. Pedro A. M. Rodrigues	National Project Officer
17	Thailand	Mr. Simon Funge-Smith	Senior Fishery Officer
18		Mr. Jose Parajua	Regional Programme Manager
19		Mr. Don Griffiths	Senior Technical Advisor
20		Mr. Steve Needham	Information Officer
21		Ms. Angela Lentisco	International Consultant
22	Viet Nam	Mr. Pham Trong Yen	National Project Director
23		Mr. Nguyen Song Ha	National Project Coordinator
24		Ms. Hoang Thi Phuong Thao	M & E Officer