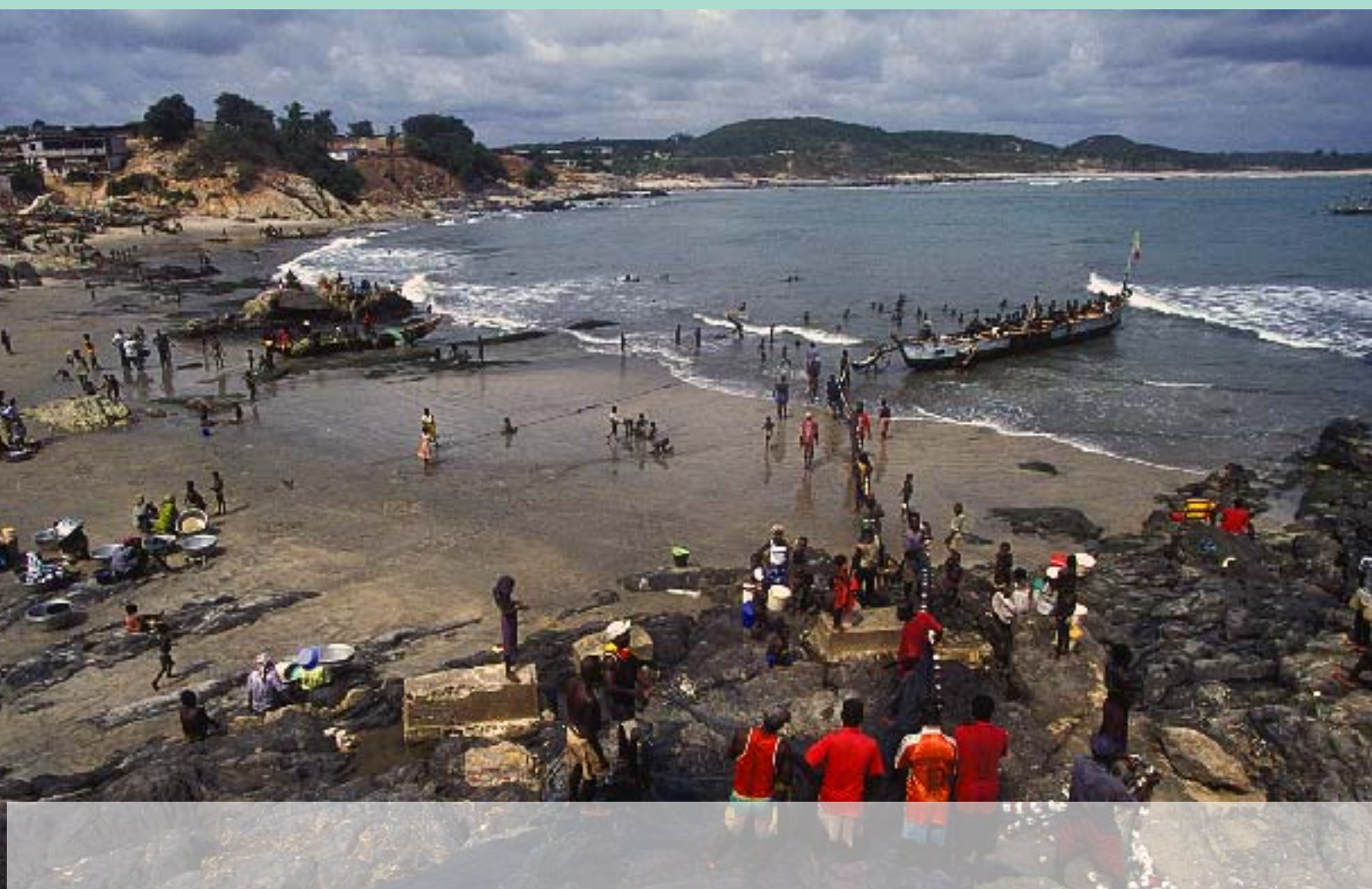


# Participatory landing site development for artisanal fisheries livelihoods

Users' manual



**Cover photograph:**

The fishing community of Moree, Ghana throngs the beach to buy fish from returning boats and to help unload and maintain nets. Sustainable Fisheries Livelihoods Programme, GCP/INT/735/UK. FAO/23972/D. Minkoh

# Participatory landing site development for artisanal fisheries livelihoods

Users' manual

by

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# Preparation of this document

The foundations for this manual were laid during a national training course on landing site development in Guinea, organized by the Programme for the Integrated Development of Artisanal Fisheries in West Africa (IDAF) in the 1990s. In order to make the course available to other countries in the region, the training materials were put into a distance learning course format, focusing on the use of participatory rural appraisal (PRA) techniques in the collection of landing site information. After field-testing in Ghana in 2000, the materials underwent a complete review, resulting in a greatly reduced version with a practical rather than a theoretical focus.

During the second stage of developing the materials, the entire concept was changed. The practical focus was enhanced by establishing specific outputs for each unit, and the document was modified from a guided distance learning course into a step-by-step, stand-alone manual. Existing units were improved and adapted using insights from the sustainable livelihoods approach (SLA) and experiences from the Sustainable Fisheries Livelihoods Programme (SFLP) and other West African fieldwork. New units were added to respond to the need for more guidance on information analysis, strategy formulation, project proposals and the search for financial and technical partners. The revised manual follows the entire formulation process for a landing site development strategy from the first introductory meetings up to the moment of implementation in a simple, easy-to-follow style.

While the format and contents of these materials have evolved over time, the basic principle of using participatory approaches and the landing site as the starting point for catalysing development activities to improve the standard of living of artisanal fisher families has remained constant.

## **Distribution:**

FAO Members and associate members

FAO Fisheries Department

FAO Regional and Subregional Fisheries Officers

# Abstract

*Participatory landing site development for artisanal fisheries livelihoods* is a practical guide for formulating a development strategy for coastal artisanal fisheries in developing countries. It is intended for those responsible for implementing projects and close enough to the field to work with landing site users. It guides the reader on how to ensure the continuous support of landing site users, explains where and at what stage to seek technical and financial support and indicates the different types of information required by funding and technical agencies to be able to finance and implement a project.

The manual is based on the authors' experience with participatory rural appraisal (PRA) and the sustainable livelihoods approach (SLA) at landing sites and coastal fisheries communities in Benin, Cape Verde, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau and other West African countries. The text uses examples from these countries. The use of "fisheries production chains", adapted from the agricultural "transect walk", is a new addition to the participatory toolbox.

In contrast to existing materials on participatory approaches in fisheries, this manual:

- centres around the improvement of livelihoods rather than management of resources;
- uses landing sites as an entry point, rather than communities;
- presents the tools in a step-by-step format, for easy and simple application;
- provides the user with a minimum of relevant participatory tools necessary to formulate a project, rather than a vast array of possible tools;
- applies the information collected through participatory analysis using the SLA framework; and
- gives guidelines for the development of a widely supported development strategy and formulation of one or more projects to implement the strategy.

In this way, the manual helps project officers to use the information collected more effectively, enabling them to be true intermediaries who are able to give landing site users specific projects in return for the time and effort they invest in "participation".

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Users' manual.

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Jan Johnson (at the time, FAO Fisheries Industries Officer in West Africa) originally conceived the idea of national training in Guinea using distance learning courses based on PRA port profiles. Max Wilkie (consultant) was contracted to put this idea on paper. The document produced was field-tested by Lionel Awity and Samuel Quaatey (Ghana Department of Fisheries). The resulting document was revised by consultants Ricardo Ramirez and, later, Karin Verstralen. When Jan Johnson left the FAO Fisheries Department, Noeky Lenselink (FAO Fisheries Industries Officer) further developed the document. Karin Verstralen rewrote it and added to the existing materials, and Noeky Lenselink adapted the final draft. The editing was done by Diana Willensky.

This manual was funded by and prepared within the framework of the FAO programme *Sustainable Development of Small-scale Fisheries* (RP 233A2). More specifically, it is an output of the development of participatory methods and tools. Much of the manual was inspired by the authors' and consultants' experience with numerous FAO projects in West Africa, specifically: the Sustainable Fisheries Livelihoods Programme (SFLP), the Programme for the Integrated Development of Artisanal Fisheries in West Africa (IDAF), the Fisheries Development Programme in Cape Verde, and the Natural Resource Conflict Management Sub-Programme of the Livelihoods Support Programme (LSP).

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## INTRODUCTION

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## **WHY USE THIS MANUAL?**

### **How to use this manual**

The purpose of this manual is to help you facilitate participatory development planning at artisanal fisheries landing sites. Participatory development planning and implementation of projects is a means for improving the livelihoods of the people who work there. The manual takes you through the process of choosing a landing site to work with, composing a working group, analysing the prevailing situation, identifying a strategy for landing site development, developing selected projects, and identifying the necessary inside and outside support and inputs for implementing the projects.

### **Who should use this manual**

This manual targets staff working at artisanal fisheries landing sites. It aims to improve artisanal fishers' conditions of work and living. This manual can be of use to you if you are the community development officer at community or district level, an officer of the fisheries department responsible for activities in a district or region, a non-governmental organization (NGO) facilitator or project coordinator, a representative of a fishers' organization, a financial service provider targeting landing site users or an agent of the fish processing industry.

### **What you are expected to do and know**

You are expected to take on the role of *facilitator* and *technical adviser* of the landing site planning process. The first half of the manual explains how to help a working group made up of landing site users to go through the planning process. The last half shows how to create a landing site development strategy and project proposals that can be discussed with landing site users as well as agencies that could support the proposals.

It is assumed that you are familiar with facilitation skills, that is, enabling different people and stakeholders to contribute to and benefit equally from development processes. Previous experience in the use of the participatory methods presented in this manual is not needed because they will be explained step-by-step. Some of the basic principles of participatory information collection and planning are explained later in this introduction. You do not need to be an expert in artisanal fishing or in the management or maintenance of landing sites. Such knowledge may help, but this manual is written in such a way that it is not essential. It would be useful if you had some previous experience in using a logical framework and in writing project proposals.

### Key terms

#### What does a facilitator do?

A *facilitator* provides an environment that is conducive to group processes such as discussions and decision-making. Important qualities for a facilitator include good listening skills, respect for all and the ability to give constructive feedback and express empathy.

A *facilitator* ensures that all participants feel free to speak by using methods that allow shy people to give their opinion and discourage dominant people from taking over the entire process.

A *facilitator* ensures that the process is recorded, so that it is clear to everyone what decisions were taken, why they were taken, and what the next steps are. One or more group members may be asked to help in this task.

#### What does a technical adviser do?

As a *technical adviser* you will be expected to structure and monitor the participatory development process.

A *technical adviser* points out when outside expertise may be required, where to find that expertise or how to go about finding it.

A *technical adviser* records the results of the participatory development process and turns them into project proposals.

### Where to use the manual

This manual is based on artisanal marine fisheries in West Africa. Nevertheless, the steps and tools in this manual can be used for other parts of the world and even for inland fisheries. If you are working outside of West Africa, you may want to look for examples from your own country or region and add them to the ones given in the text.

This manual will encourage you to look beyond the physical boundaries of a landing site when you consider the capabilities, assets and activities of landing site users. This means that when you consider the type of problems landing site users perceive, you may have to look into a wide range of issues, from natural resource management to small-scale enterprise development, fish marketing and health and/or housing. The manual allows you to be flexible and take a broad approach so that you can adapt the focus of landing site development planning depending on landing site users' preoccupations, your position, the organization you work for and its mandate.

### DEFINING THE MAIN CONCEPTS: LIVELIHOOD, LANDING SITES, ARTISANAL FISHERIES, PARTICIPATION

#### Improving livelihoods at landing sites

The overall aim of this manual is *to improve the livelihoods* of fishers and their families by building on their strengths and removing the constraints to development.

**Livelihood**

A *livelihood* “...comprises the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources) and activities required for a means of living”. (Carney, 1998)

A *landing site* is a useful entry point for participatory development planning in artisanal fisheries because it is the one geographical place where the majority of stakeholders come together: from crew to boat owners, from money-lenders to mechanics, from fish processors to consumers and from local sedentary to migratory fishers. They may not all be there at the same time of the day or season but at some point you are likely to find them there. Other stakeholders not directly present at the landing site, but linked to artisanal fisheries, can be found by following information leads from the landing site to other places. The landing site is thus an effective and efficient starting point for you to improve the livelihoods of a large variety and number of people.

**Landing sites**

A *landing site* covers a certain physical area; the infrastructure in place; technical, financial and social services available; activities taking place and users deriving all or part of their livelihood from its activities.

A *landing site* may range from a small settlement on a stretch of beach with hardly any infrastructure and facilities to larger artisanal fisheries areas that are part of bigger ports or harbours in or close to urban centres.

**Artisanal fishing and artisanal fisheries****Artisanal fisheries**

*Artisanal fishing* is an important economic activity in many countries. It employs thousands of people, provides food to a large part of the population and contributes significantly to foreign exchange earnings. While *artisanal fishing* refers to an activity, *artisanal fisheries* refer to the sector.

A *fishery*, for the purpose of this manual, is a category of fishing operations (from financing and fishing to processing and trading) that shares certain characteristics and dynamics. For example, the fishers in a fishery all use similar gear, target the same fish species, and fish during the same period of the year.

*Artisanal fisheries* generally use relatively low levels of technology and investment both for fishing and for processing. It is also distinguished by its high levels of labour input, which is often recruited through family relationships. Still, there are large variations within and between countries, and there is no clear, universal definition of “artisanal”.



Artisanal fisheries do not generate the economic and social benefits they are capable of (IDAF, 1998) because of a number of constraints including poor management, low levels of organization, a lack of financing, poor infrastructure and severely limited technical assistance. Working and living conditions of people based at artisanal fisheries landing sites are far below what they could and should be. As a result, artisanal fisheries are less productive, and do not contribute as much as they could to poverty alleviation, food security and health.

One of the main problems has been a lack of understanding of artisanal fisheries and the issues at stake. Governments and donor agencies have generally failed to effectively consult, collaborate or otherwise let landing site users *participate* in their projects, either because they did not feel the need or because they did not know how. Yet, the participation by landing site users is a key element in order to have a positive and lasting effect in development planning. They are the primary beneficiaries of landing site development, they know the prevailing situation best, and they can often identify weaknesses or impracticalities in proposed solutions. Nevertheless, expertise and stakeholder interests from individuals outside the landing site are also needed in development planning, as the detailed assessments to be made and decisions to be taken may fall outside the realm of experience and knowledge of landing site users. When using this manual, you will have to actively ensure the participation of both. The next section will explain how to do this.

### **Participation**

*Participation* is “the act of taking part in or having a share in an activity or event”  
(*Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, 1978*)

To summarize, these concepts form the basis for the approach used in this manual:

- improve the livelihoods of those who make all or part of their living from fishing-related activities;
- use the landing site as an entry point for improving working and living conditions of stakeholders; and
- employ participatory techniques for improved planning and more effective implementation of development projects.

## **ACHIEVING THE MOST FROM PARTICIPATORY APPROACHES**

### **Ensuring participation**

One way of ensuring participation is by creating a working group made up of representatives of landing site users. They will do the actual information collection, analysis and planning, and are responsible for ensuring good communication with the landing site user groups they represent. A second way to ensure inputs from landing site users is to consult and interview them throughout the planning process. Yet another technique is using regular feedback sessions to make sure that everyone is aware of what is going on. This has the added advantage that corrections, contradictions or doubts can be pointed out where relevant. When

taken seriously, this generates a sense of ownership and commitment, which is necessary for the successful implementation of the projects resulting from the development planning process.

### **Using triangulation to ensure the quality of results**

One of the key principles of participatory approaches is *triangulation*.

#### **Triangulation**

*Triangulation* refers to a way of examining issues and information from more than one perspective. By considering the views of all major stakeholders involved in landing site operations your analysis will be more complete and widely shared. This facilitates the implementation of the resulting proposal and increases its chance of success because the stakeholders understand and support the project.

The use of triangulation is important for:

- the composition of the working group;
- the exercises and techniques you are going to use; and
- the different categories of landing site users you will approach or interview as resource persons or informants in your exercise.

*Using triangulation for the composition of your working group* means that you ensure that its members constitute representatives of various groups: landing site users and outsiders, women and men, young and old, fishers and traders, and so on. However, keep in mind that the working group itself needs to be rather small (about four to five people); otherwise it will become unwieldy.

*The triangulation of exercises and techniques* refers to the cross-checking of information collected from landing site users by applying a variety of methods for gathering information. For example, observation may show something different to what you have been told during an interview or transect walk, and a map may illustrate that you have not understood information given by a key informant. Make good notes of the results of different exercises, compare results at the end of each exercise or day, and identify where the results coincide and where there is conflicting or missing information. In the latter case, the working group may want to go back and collect the information that is missing, or you may want to present the informants with the conflicting information and ask for clarification.

The same goes for *triangulation of your key informants*. Make sure you speak to a variety of landing site users, so that you do not end up with the views of only one group. This will increase the validity of the results, the relevance of solutions and the support and commitment from landing site users.

### **Optimal ignorance: collect only as much information as you need**

Another key principle of participatory approaches is that of *optimal ignorance*.

**Optimal ignorance**

*Optimal ignorance* means getting only the information that is really needed and no more.

The exercises and techniques in this manual have the potential of generating a great deal of information and it is important that you agree on what is relevant for your exercise. Keep your objectives clearly in mind so that you can make the best use of the time available: not only your time, but also that of the working group and of the resource people. Your authority to bring landing site users together may be sufficient for an initial meeting, but their commitment to the process depends on whether they see direct benefits and results.

**HOW THIS MANUAL IS ORGANIZED****Stages in the planning process**

The approach of this manual is action-oriented, allowing you to apply what you learn immediately. It encourages you to initiate a planning process in five stages:

*Making necessary preparations (Unit 1)*

- Finding a suitable landing site
- Creating a working group
- Devising a work plan

*Collecting data (Units 2–4)*

- Painting a picture of the landing site and its users (Unit 2)
- Preparing fisheries production chains (Unit 3)
- Understanding the effects of changes over time (Unit 4)

*Conducting a situation analysis (Unit 5)*

- Bringing together all the elements based on information collected in Stage 2
- Assessing internal strengths and weaknesses
- Prioritizing problems

*Developing a strategy (Units 6–7)*

- Finding workable solutions (Unit 6)
- Creating a work plan (Unit 7)

*Towards implementation (Unit 8)*

- Writing the project proposal

**Layout of the units**

Each unit has its own table of contents. The introduction to the unit explains where that particular unit fits in the planning process and the exercises you will be using. It also contains a box that explains key terms. These definitions are specific

to the manual, and as such are not necessarily related to a dictionary or other formal resource.

The rest of the unit is divided into sections by exercise (e.g. “*seasonal calendars*”). Each exercise contains three main sections: an introduction, an explanation of who should participate, and the steps to take to conduct the exercise. The exercises are illustrated with examples and figures to give you an idea of possible results. These are only examples; feel free to adapt them to your local reality and the issues raised by the people you interview. Occasionally, notes are provided. They propose variations on the exercise or point out where you may need to take special care.

The units end with a note summarizing what you should have achieved in the unit and explaining how it fits in with the next unit.

### **Preparing each unit**

It is best to read and study all eight units before starting. Then start again with Unit 1, making sure that you are familiar with its contents, have planned the field activities well in advance and have been in close collaboration with landing site users. Only then should you begin your planning process. Before going into the field, you should have a clear idea about how to proceed beyond Unit 1. This is important because you will need to make appointments with landing site users for your next visit and should brief your team members on what the working group is going to do next and how. Do the same with regard to the units that follow.

### **Implementing the exercises**

Each unit covers a number of exercises for information collection or analysis. Each exercise explains all the steps in detail, so all you have to do is follow them. You do not have to use all the exercises but you are advised to use at least one from each unit, preferably more. For many of them, you can use any materials to record your findings (drawing on the ground, using sticks or other items). You will want to record the findings on a large piece of paper using markers, which will be posted and used for discussions or a presentation of the results. You may also find it useful to have a notebook or file with sheets of paper and pen or pencil on which to record the outcome of the exercise. (Keep in mind that you may want to give the final results to the landing site representatives at the end of the planning process.)

### **Taking notes, summarizing and providing feedback**

Throughout the planning process it is important to take good notes to capture the results of the exercise, whether you are working with fisheries production chains, calendars or other diagrams. Resource people may make comments or say things during interviews that are difficult to draw. Record them and keep them with the diagram so that you will remember them and take them into consideration.

At the end of each exercise and unit, you will no doubt have collected a large amount of information, sometimes so much that it can be confusing. For this reason, it is good practice to ask the working group to summarize the main points after each exercise. You can do so by asking questions such as: Who are

the key players? Which stakeholders seem most vulnerable and harmed by certain situations? What stands out as a strong positive point? Where are the main problems? Are there bottlenecks? What interesting suggestions have been made? Where do we have enough information? Where is important information missing? Put your findings together on a few large sheets of paper. For the same reason and using a similar technique, also summarize the exercises for each unit. In Units 5 and 6 you will build on these summaries to develop your landing site development situational analysis and strategy.

The results of the exercise and the summaries will also be useful during feedback sessions that you should organize at the end of each unit. Feedback sessions help to keep stakeholders up-to-date on the planning process and give you an indication of whether you have collected and interpreted the information correctly.