



DEVELOPING THE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND TALENT OF YOUTH TO FURTHER FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION

The following case study was received as a result of a call issued by the Committee on World Food Security for case studies highlighting examples of initiatives aimed at 'Developing the knowledge, skills and talent of youth to further food security and nutrition'. The cases received provide the background for a discussion of lessons learned and potential policy implications at a special event on October 15th, 2015 during CFS 42. Find out more at www.fao.org/cfs/youth.

Master-Apprentice Programme for Young Fishers, Finland.

Background

Thanks to the combination of an apprenticeship project for young fishers in southern Finland and FLAG¹ support to improve a local fishing business, 33 year old Tanja is now a successful fisherwoman and entrepreneur, selling her fresh and processed produce directly to consumers.

Challenges

Aging fishermen is among the main challenges of small-scale coastal and inland fisheries in Finland. Indeed, in the South Finland FLAG area there are only 110 full-time fishermen left, and two thirds of them are due to retire in the coming years. At the same time, approximately two thirds of fish consumed in Finland is imported, despite healthy local stocks and good demand for local fish. In this context, attracting young people to professional fishing is a particularly strong priority of the FLAG and *Åkerfelt's Fish*, a family fishing company on Löparö island, benefited from FLAG support when fisherman, Kurt Åkerfelt, was set to retire, implying the closure of yet another fishing company in the area.

Approach Used

With the support of the [South Finland FLAG](#), Mr Åkerfelt's daughter, Tanja, participated in a "Master-Apprentice" project, along with five other young fishers. This offered practical training to allow young people to learn from a network of more experienced fishermen. The training allowed her to learn fishing and processing techniques in a practical, "on the job" environment. She also learnt about fishing vessels and received support to identify specific development needs for her father's company that she planned to take over.

In a second phase of the project, the trainee fishermen received advice on applying for company-related grants and, in Tanja's case, this led to her submitting a project to the FLAG for support to finance the necessary equipment to improve the sales of her father's fishing business. This included

¹ [Fisheries Local Action Groups](#) (FLAGs) are public private partnerships, funded by [Axis 4](#) of the European Fisheries Fund to support the sustainable development of fisheries areas.



an ice machine to allow her to sell her fish from her mobile sales wagon, including at fairs and fish markets where proper cooling capacity is paramount.

Outcome and Impact Achieved

The FLAG has effectively managed to link two different projects, a training project for young, start-up fishermen (which trained 6 young people) and a private company investment project which, with €2 397 of public money, mobilised a private investment of €5 593.

As a result, a young woman was provided with the skills and confidence to become a professional fisher and take over the management of her father's business, avoiding the disappearance of local fishing company. She is now working full-time: fishing in a 6 metre open boat and, with the support of her sister and husband, processing and marketing her catch. Indeed, tapping into a trend towards local and healthy food, the sales of their spiced and canned Baltic Herring delicacies, smoked salmon and fish steaks are selling particularly well. Moreover, the ice machine investment has helped Tanja market her products in a wider area in South Finland as she can keep the fish fresh for full days in the sales locations. This has increased the company turnover by some 50% since father's time.

Lessons Learned/Opportunities for Scaling-Up

The "funnel" concept of linking capacity building and networking with company-specific investments is highly transferable to other fisheries areas and policy fields. Making the business profitable has proved an effective way of attracting youngsters to continue fishing, while targeted training can provide the skills for young people to hit the road running.

Policy Implications

Axis 4 of the EFF is a bottom-up approach to local development, inspired from the LEADER rural development programme. This kind of approach has been extended as a possibility under all European Structural and Investment funds for the 2014-2020 programming period under the name of Community-Led Local Development (CLLD).

CLLD has proved effective at supporting a broad range of socio-economic development in local communities, including enhancing the sustainability of local food production. Through innovation and improved food quality standards; better marketing of local products, including support for "KM 0" produce; and by ensuring that young people are better informed and connected with fishing and agriculture, including as a career option, CLLD offers strong potential to contribute to enhancing food security.