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Organization of the  
United Nations

Evaluation of the project  
“Creating an enabling  
environment for  
securing sustainable  
small-scale fisheries”



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# **Evaluation of the project “Creating an enabling environment for securing sustainable small-scale fisheries”**

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## Abstract

This report presents the findings of the evaluation of project “Creating an enabling environment for securing sustainable small-scale fisheries” funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) between January 2019 and December 2023 (GCP/GLO/965/SWE, known as “SIDA-SSF project”). The project targets ten countries: Cabo Verde, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar, Myanmar, Namibia, Oman, the Philippines, Senegal and the United Republic of Tanzania. The project supports the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (FAO, 2015b - hereafter “SSF Guidelines”). Target beneficiaries are national governments, as well as small-scale fishers and fishworkers and their representative organizations.

The evaluation used an approach based on outcome harvesting and the project’s theory of change. data and information collection included desk reviews of project documentation and outputs, virtual interviews with partners and SSF stakeholders, an electronic survey and field visits in Oman and the Philippines.

It was found that the SIDA-SSF project was robustly designed, relevant and responsive to needs and emerging opportunities to further the implementation of the SSF Guidelines. Most notable achievements include greater awareness of the SSF Guidelines at all levels, the preparation of National Plans of Action for SSF (NPOA-SSF) in selected countries, the operationalization of the Advisory and Regional Advisory Groups under the SSF Global Strategic Framework (SSF-GSF), the Illuminating Hidden Harvests (IHH) study and the celebration of the International Year for Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYAFA) 2022. The elaboration of a monitoring system for the implementation of the SSF Guidelines has progressed. The project has influence in building the capacity of SSF organizations and actors to represent the interests of small-scale fishers and fishworkers at national level and in international fora. Partnerships are a cornerstone of project implementation and enabling to move the SSF agenda forward.

Recommendations include actions to be taken by the SIDA-SSF project core team and FAO. They emphasize approaches and priorities, thematic areas, collaborations and partnerships, social inclusion and targeting, project administration and oversight, learning and knowledge sharing, and finally the place of SSF in “blue” narratives and initiatives as areas to build on the project results and achieve sustainability and long-term impact.



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The evaluation benefited from the inputs of many other project stakeholders and beneficiaries, including government officers and representatives of fisherfolk organizations in the project countries, global and regional organizations and researchers. Their contributions were critical to the team's work and are deeply appreciated.



## Abbreviations and acronyms

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| AWFISHNET | African Women Fish Traders and Processors Network         |
| CFI-WA    | Coastal Fisheries Initiative – West Africa                |
| COFI      | FAO Committee on Fisheries                                |
| EDF       | Environmental Defense Fund                                |
| FAO       | Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations   |
| GSF       | Global Strategic Framework                                |
| IHH       | Illuminating Hidden Harvest study                         |
| IPC       | International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty     |
| IYAFA     | International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture |
| NGO       | non-governmental organization                             |
| NORAD     | Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation              |
| NPOA      | National Plan of Action                                   |
| SIDA      | Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency      |
| SSF       | small-scale fisheries                                     |
| UNOC      | United Nations Ocean Conference                           |

# Executive summary

## Introduction

1. This is the evaluation of the project “Creating an enabling environment for securing sustainable small-scale fisheries” – hereafter “SIDA-SSF project” (GCP/GLO/965/SWE) (start date 12 December 2018, end date 31 December 2023, inclusive of an inception phase to June 2019), implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA). This project builds on and synergises with the project “Enhancing the contribution of small-scale fisheries to food security and sustainable livelihoods through better policies, strategies and initiatives” (GCP/GLO/645/NOR, financed by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), 2015–2022). The SIDA-SSF project is part of FAO’s thrust to support small-scale fisheries through the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines) (FAO, 2015b). The project objective is to ensure that “Improved policy, legal and institutional frameworks in selected regions and countries and at the global level have facilitated the social, economic and environmental transformation of the small-scale fisheries sector needed for enhancing its contribution to food security and poverty eradication”. In line with the FAO SSF umbrella programme, the project’s expected impact is “Improved governance of small-scale fisheries contributes to the eradication of hunger and poverty, to sustainable development and to the sustainable use of the environment”.
2. The project is built around four interrelated components/outcomes on raising awareness on SSF (Outcome 1), on strengthening the science–policy interface (Outcome 2), on empowering SSF stakeholders (Outcome 3) and on supporting management and implementation of the SSF Global Strategic Framework (SSF-GSF) (Outcome 4). The project is active in ten countries: Cabo Verde, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar, Myanmar, Namibia, Oman, the Philippines, Senegal and the United Republic of Tanzania and targets primarily government authorities responsible for fisheries policies and the implementation of the SSF Guidelines at national level, and fishers, fishworkers and their representative organizations at regional, national and local levels. It is also responding on an ad hoc basis to demands formulated by other countries and/or organizations representing the interests of fishers and fishworkers at national and local levels.
3. The evaluation covers all project components and its period of implementation from June 2019 to June 2022, and encompasses all the project stakeholders. The evaluation intends to inform the remaining period of implementation of the project (until 31 December 2023) as well as planned and future initiatives under FAO SSF umbrella programme for the promotion and application of the SSF Guidelines. It is global in scope and includes case study analyses of project activities in Oman and the Philippines and in relation to stakeholder empowerment and the functioning of the SSF-GSF. It answered seven evaluation questions related to project design and relevance to SSF concerns, the results achieved and significant changes brought about, the contribution to social inclusion, equity and gender equality, the role of partnerships, the potential sustainability of advances made and their long-term impact, the appropriateness of project management and implementation arrangements.
4. The evaluation aligns with existing evaluation standards and adopted a utilization-focused, participatory and inclusive approach with internal and external stakeholders throughout the process. It also recognizes the complexity inherent to the project and the context within which it operates and the difficulty to attribute change and impact specifically to the project. The evaluation collaborated closely with the Project Task Force (PTF) and used the project’s theory of

change (TOC) and outcome mapping as frameworks of analysis. A desk review, key informant interviews and an online survey were used to collect data and triangulate evidence. Field visits were conducted in Oman and the Philippines for the two case studies.

## **Main findings**

5. The evaluation findings are presented by evaluation question.

*EQ 1. In what ways and to what extent does the project design allow for reaching the stated project objective and expected outcomes?*

6. The project's design and internal coherence are robust and enable complementarity between activities and progress towards expected outcomes. It is capitalizing on the role of catalytic partners (in particular social movements/civil society organizations) at regional and global levels. The design is also making room for creative and responsive project implementation arrangements that take into account external factors and local circumstances (e.g. COVID-19 constraints, unstable political situations) whilst responding to emerging needs and opportunities). Through improved oversight and management, the project has broadened its influence globally. Although the project's objectives and anticipated outcomes are more relevant than ever to the target beneficiaries (governments and representative organizations of small-scale fishers and fishworkers), the project design has overlooked SSF management issues and the place of SSF in ocean/aquatic resources conservation, including the potential threat of blue economies development on SSF actors, and horizontal communications and learning opportunities across project stakeholders.

*EQ 2. In what ways and to what extent is the project relevant and aligned with current international preoccupations related to SSF?*

7. The project is aligned with FAO's four betters and is increasing the visibility and recognition of SSF and SSF actors in international development discourses and commitments. The project is also directly supporting the commitments of the ten target countries to the implementation of the provisions of the SSF Guidelines and supporting progress towards Sustainable Development Goals 13 (climate action) and 14 (life below water) considered by the evaluation.

*EQ 3. What have been the advances and most significant milestones and changes generated by the project so far?*

8. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, over 60 percent of the project outputs have been completed. Most significant advances have been achieved so far in relation to raising awareness, empowering stakeholders and supporting the implementation of the project and the SSF-GSF, although the analysis of the project's theory of change suggests that these and the strengthening of the science-policy interface could be taken further through the full realization of the assumptions behind achieving each project outcome.
9. Evidence indicates that awareness of SSF has been raised both within and outside the project (Outcome 1). The International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYAFA) 2022, spearheaded by the project, is particularly important in increasing the visibility of SSF in global fora as well as in local initiatives. Targeted project activities and products are directly contributing to raising awareness on human rights in fishing communities and on the importance of SSF legislation at national levels, although further outreach in non-fisheries circles could be possible.
10. The preparation of National Plans of Action for SSF (NPOA-SSF) in selected countries is one of the most significant advances under Outcome 2 (strengthening the science-policy interface) as

this typically reflects the stronger capacity of the institution(s) in charge of the process, as well as reviewed national legislation in support of SSF. The project is exerting its influence in regional policy processes and organizations through direct support of participants in meetings and interactions with other projects but tangible outcomes from this type of interventions are not immediate. The release of the Illuminating Hidden Harvests (IHH) study findings is imminent and discussions are underway on the mainstreaming of its data collection protocols in support of national SSF policymaking.

11. There are examples of behavioural change and stakeholder empowerment (Outcome 3) at all levels, although some at individual and local levels are still in initial stages owing to pandemic-related delays and the time needed for bottom-up change to be visible. The greater organization of SSF actors in some of the target countries (e.g. Namibia and the United Republic of Tanzania) is indicative of their empowerment at national level, and at regional level, the creation of Regional Advisory Groups under the SSF-GSF's Advisory Group has been a key step in opening a space for regional and national organizations representing small-scale fishers in regional fisheries policy processes and in dialogues with the multiple SSF stakeholders. On the African continent however, and despite the buoyant environment in support of SSF, weaker vertical linkages between national and regional SSF organizations are undermining the amplitude of local and national SSF voices in regional and global discussions. The development of a regional e-learning course on SSF governance, as well as the use of distance learning modules and interactive and creative educational approaches are important project-supported advances contributing directly to the knowledge and capacity of SSF actors to ask for and promote change.
12. Important advances have also been made operationalizing the SSF-GSF (Outcome 4) under the project, although some of its structures are not yet functioning (i.e. the Knowledge Sharing Platform) and others (Friend of the SSF Guidelines, Advisory Group, Secretariat) are operating independently from one another. The creation and operationalization of the Advisory (and later, Regional Advisory) Groups constitutes a new dynamic in the landscape of SSF non-state actor organizations. These groups are bringing together existing SSF social movements and trust across all SSF actors is gradually building up despite the complex, political and sensitive nature of the SSF agenda. The development of a monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) system for the SSF Guidelines implementation is now well underway, with potential links with the monitoring approach elaborated by the Advisory Group.

*EQ 4. In what ways and to what extent are the project interventions contributing to gender equality, equity, social inclusion and empowerment of the targeted government actors, SSF actors and organizations, and reaching the intended users along the SSF value chain?*

13. The sensitive and inclusive targeting approach of the project has reached women, Indigenous Peoples and marginalized groups. This translates, for example, in equal numbers of men and women participating in meetings and some positive changes in attitudes towards women's work in fisheries, both at individual and policy levels. Indigenous Peoples and issues are at the core of the project activities in Costa Rica even though they were not mentioned in the project document. In general, sensitivity to the youth's aspirations and priorities in the context of SSF development is an area of work deserving greater attention.

*EQ 5. To what extent has the project managed to engage relevant, strategic and capable partners (so-called catalytic) at global, regional and national level?*

14. The project has a very extensive web of varied, committed and catalytic partners who can tackle the multiple facets of the SSF Guidelines. Involvement of FAO country offices and non-fisheries units at headquarters enables capitalizing on in-country and in-house knowledge. Partnerships

that predated the project, such as those with the International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty (IPC) Working Group on Fisheries, regional professional organizations of fishers and academic institutions has been pursued and supported the project's activities and advocacy for SSF. The project has opened up to new collaborations, including with smaller and less well-known international or local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) for targeted actions at subnational level. Collaborations with other ongoing SSF projects or initiatives is furthering the influence of the project and promotion of the SSF Guidelines, but the role of governments, as a partner, in advocating for SSF beyond fisheries authorities was insufficiently explored.

*EQ 6. What are the sustainability prospects of the advances the project has made and what is their potential to contribute to long-term impact?*

15. Since its inception, the project has seized opportunities that will increase the likelihood of pursuing the implementation of the SSF Guidelines beyond project end by embedding SSF in FAO, United Nations (UN)-wide and national initiatives and encouraging replication and scaling up of activities across countries. The IYAF 2022 and key SSF guidance materials produced by the project are part of the legacy of the project. However, sustainability prospects are uneven as pilot activities are still on a small scale, and capacity at national level and in SSF organizations not sufficient yet for impact at scale to happen without additional support.

*EQ 7. To what extent are the management and implementation arrangements appropriate?*

16. The project administration and technical oversight are excellent and smooth thanks to the effectiveness of the SSF Technical Network, the Project Task Force and FAO country offices (in the target countries). Adaptive management, coupled with regular monitoring, enabled the project to cope well with unforeseen circumstances and to seize opportunities for collaboration whenever they arose. Project spending is as expected. However, greater guidance could be offered to partners who are new to FAO collaboration procedures. Connections and horizontal communications among project partners to learn from one another and synergize their implementation efforts could be better stimulated.

## Conclusions

**Conclusion 1.** The project is confirming the universality of the SSF Guidelines. It has consolidated the progress initiated under the NORAD project and continued to expand in both scope and depth.

**Conclusion 2.** The project was well managed and has successfully stricken a delicate balance between influential actions at high level of governance and actions making a visible difference at local level. It has played a facilitative and catalytic role for others to be able to move the SSF agenda forward. It has also made a difference within selected countries by improving the policy environment in support of SSF but there is room for emulation and upscaling.

**Conclusion 3.** The project was an important, but not the sole, contributor to the significant changes and milestones achieved, at different levels and with regards to different topics and areas of work under the SSF Guidelines. As a consequence, attributing change to the project was difficult except for NPOA-SSF. Partnerships are a cornerstone of project implementation, but exchanges of experiences across partners sharing similar interests are limited.

**Conclusion 4.** Emphasis on non-state actors was timely and they are contributing to the momentum for implementing the SSF Guidelines, but structures to enable a coherent process and constructive dialogue for moving forward are only just being created/still weak. Vertical linkages across levels of governance require strengthening.

**Conclusion 5.** The project has been facilitating the social and economic transformation of SSF but the youth, Indigenous Peoples and women (to a lesser extent) received less attention. There is little evidence that the project is also facilitating the environmental transformation of SSF.

## Recommendations

17. To amplify the resonance and impact of the project as a whole, the proposed recommendations address approaches and priorities, thematic areas, collaborations and partnerships, social inclusion and targeting, project administration and oversight, learning and knowledge sharing, and finally the place of SSF in “blue” narratives and initiatives.

**Recommendation 1.** The project should continue to pursue its two-pronged approach of working with and supporting non-state actor organizations, and emphasizing actions at national and subnational levels. Support to the SSF-GSF structures to ensure stewardship of the SSF Guidelines are strengthened and should be continued. Beginnings of trust across SSF partners, as well as the partnership with the IPC Working Group on Fisheries, should be nurtured. [Conclusions 3 and 4]

**Recommendation 2.** Greater emphasis should be placed on environmental issues related to SSF. Ecosystem approach to SSF, co-management, tenure, inland fisheries, and biodiversity conservation are interlinked areas that need to receive more attention. [Conclusion 5]

**Recommendation 3.** Partnerships must be pursued and widened, while the structures to ensure stewardship of the SSF Guidelines are strengthened for replication at scale. Project partners would benefit from being introduced to one another and the wider project, and partnerships from being widened to non-fisheries ministries. Governments could be used to a greater extent to strengthen SSF advocacy within national governance [Conclusion 3]

**Recommendation 4.** Engagement with the youth should be rethought, governments – including non-fisheries ministries – more involved, and focus on HRBA with women, Indigenous Peoples and other marginalized groups, increased. [Conclusion 2 and 5]

**Recommendation 5.** Future project management should focus on improving the onboarding of new partners and their integration in the project as a whole, while enhancing strategic connections at national levels. [Conclusion 2]

**Recommendation 6.** Common themes of interest should be used to anchor and stimulate the sharing of experiences across project partners and countries, and exchanges across SSF non-state actors (SSF organizations and researchers). It should also be ensured that project learning feeds back into local and national policies and programmes. [Conclusion 2]

**Recommendation 7.** At the attention of FAO: the place of SSF in the blue economy paradigm and real-world initiatives should be carefully examined. FAO should emphasize the importance of the SSF Guidelines principles and the accounting of small-scale fishers and fishworkers’ concerns in these potentially controversial developments to its constituents. Coherence of the SSF Guidelines with FAO’s blue transformation strategy should be ensured. [Conclusions 1 and 5]



# **1. Introduction**

## **1.1 Purpose of the evaluation**

1. This is the evaluation of the project "Creating an enabling environment for securing sustainable small-scale fisheries" (GCP/GLO/965/SWE), implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA). The evaluation serves a twin purpose of accountability and learning. It is particularly timely as 2022 is the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYAFA). With an extension of the project implementation period, the evaluation took place a year and half before its end date (31 December 2023). It will thus inform the remaining period of implementation and potential future initiatives, as well as, indirectly, other ongoing or planned small-scale fisheries (SSF) initiatives under the FAO SSF umbrella programme. The evaluation team consisted of three independent consultants. Two were national consultants responsible for the evaluation of the project in the Philippines and Oman (case studies). The evaluation team leader oversaw the evaluation and was responsible for the analysis, preparation of the final report and a case study on the empowerment of the targeted SSF stakeholders and organizations in Africa.

## **1.2 Intended users**

2. The intended users of the evaluation results are: i) all FAO personnel involved in the design and implementation of the project, in headquarters and decentralized offices who will be able to use findings for strategic and programmatic purposes; ii) the SIDA as resource partner of the project; iii) governments in target countries who will use the findings to understand the results and impact of project activities at national level; iv) FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) and the entities established under the FAO SSF Guidelines Global Strategic Framework (SSF-GSF) and those in charge of promoting the IYAFA who will use the evaluation findings for internal learning and to promote further dialogue on SSF development and the implementation of the SSF Guidelines. Secondary users are: i) all other partners involved in project implementation, such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and social movements/civil society organizations in support of SSF and who could use the evaluation findings to optimize their involvement in the project; and ii) other donors, organizations and institutions interested in supporting and/or implementing activities of this project or similar projects. Findings will be of indirect relevance to the project's direct beneficiaries – men and women fishers and fishworkers and their communities in the participating countries.

## **1.3 Objective and scope of the evaluation**

3. The objective of the evaluation was to conduct a comprehensive and systematic analysis of the project, draw specific findings and conclusions for the main evaluation questions, and formulate recommendations that will inform the remaining implementation time of this project and a potential subsequent phase, as well as strategic directions for future work in support of SSF.
4. Scope: the evaluation covers the components of the project, as well as its design, inception phase and implementation period from June 2019 till June 2022. Between January 2019 and June 2021 there was an overlap between the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) and SIDA-funded efforts, as both agencies were working together and pulling funds on SSF issues in common. The present SIDA-funded of the project ("SIDA-SSF", described in section 2) is in direct continuation of, and complementary with, the NORAD-funded project ("Enhancing the contribution of small-scale fisheries to food security and sustainable livelihoods: FAO SSF



Guidelines Implementation Support Project" [GCP/GLO/645/NOR] active from October 2015 to February 2022). The evaluation acknowledged that the attribution of results and impact to the SIDA-SSF project specifically would therefore be difficult because of the two-year overlap and the fact that amendments to the NORAD project enabled its extension into a parallel two-year project (FMM/GLO/155/MUL) on implementing the SSF Guidelines for gender equitable and climate resilient food systems and livelihoods, with complementary activities and some countries in common with the SIDA-SSF project (Madagascar, Namibia and the United Republic of Tanzania). The evaluation has embraced this overlap and focused on the added value of the SIDA support to the overall efforts made to recognize the importance of SSF and to promote the SSF Guidelines. All components of the project are assessed by the evaluation.

5. The geographical scope of the evaluation is global. The ten countries targeted by the project (Cabo Verde, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar, Myanmar, Namibia, Oman, the Philippines, Senegal and the United Republic of Tanzania) provide national level focus. Two beneficiary countries and project Outcome 3 on stakeholder empowerment were selected for a greater-depth evaluation as case studies (see section 1.4.2.3). Oman has been selected to illustrate the application of the SSF Guidelines on gender and women's empowerment, and the Philippines for that on local governance, social protection, livelihoods and adaptation to climate change and disaster risks. These two case studies complement those undertaken for Costa Rica and the United Republic of Tanzania under the NORAD project GCP/GLO/645/NOR evaluation. Together they cover all the regions where support is provided to implement the SSF Guidelines: Africa, Latin America, Near East and Asia. The third case study, focusing on Africa, looks into stakeholder empowerment and the extent to which the SSF-GSF is supporting this process.
6. The evaluation questions are presented in Table 1. Evaluation questions. The evaluation matrix, which summarizes the methods used to answer each question and subquestion, is available in Appendix 2.

**Table 1. Evaluation questions**

| Topic                                      | Evaluation question   |
|--|---|
| <b>Design and relevance</b>                | EQ 1. In what ways and to what extent does the project design allow for reaching the stated project objective and expected outcomes?<br>EQ 2. In what ways and to what extent is the project relevant and aligned with current international preoccupations related to SSF? |
| <b>Results</b>                             | EQ 3. What have been the advances and most significant milestones and changes generated by the project so far?  |
| <b>Social inclusion and gender</b>         | EQ 4. In what ways and to what extent are the project interventions contributing to gender equality, equity, social inclusion and empowerment of the targeted government actors, SSF actors and organizations, and reaching the intended users along the SSF value chain?   |
| <b>Partnerships</b>                        | EQ 5. To what extent has the project managed to engage relevant, strategic and capable partners (so-called catalytic) at global, regional and national level?   |
| <b>Potential sustainability and impact</b> | EQ 6. What are the sustainability prospects of the advances the project has made and what is their potential to contribute to long-term impact?   |
| <b>Project management</b>                  | EQ 7. To what extent are the management and implementation arrangements appropriate?  |

Source: FAO Office of Evaluation (OED), based on preliminary desk research and inputs from PMT.

7. A stakeholder analysis was conducted at the outset of the evaluation. The resulting stakeholder landscape, presented in Appendix 3, served as a basis to develop the primary data collection strategy, notably select the stakeholders to interview (see section 1.4.2.1) and to survey (see section 1.4.2.2).

## **1.4 Methodology**

8. The evaluation is utilization-focused as it responds to the needs expressed by FAO and SIDA, as well as key project stakeholders. It is participatory and inclusive as it adopted a consultative and transparent approach with stakeholders throughout the process and paid attention to the inclusion of disadvantaged groups, women and minorities. It is complexity-aware, recognizing that the SIDA-SSF project operates in a context where multiple and dynamic actors influence each other, that cause and effect relationships can be difficult to ascertain and attribute, that there is a high chance for unexpected results (or even no result) to occur, that change depends on the buy-in of actors that the project can only influence, and that there are interactions between the project components and continuous results that can happen beyond the life of the project.
9. The evaluation aligns with existing evaluation standards, criteria and guidance, such as the United Nations Evaluation Group Norms and Standards (UNEG) (2022) and FAO Office of Evaluation (OED) Manual (FAO, 2015a) and methodological guidelines and practices. The methodology and analysis take into account FAO policies and strategies such as the FAO Policy on Gender Equality (FAO, 2020a) and the FAO policy on working with indigenous peoples and local communities as described in the FAO free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) Manual (FAO, 2016).
10. The evaluation used a mixed-method approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis, as well as primary and secondary data, as outlined below. The different approaches and data sources enabled triangulating and validating the information collected.

### **1.4.1 Desk review/secondary information collection**

11. Key documents produced by, or related to, the project (e.g. design document, inception report, progress/annual reports, NORAD project evaluation report, project publications including country-specific reports, website and news stories, social media, etc.) and produced by project partners (e.g. progress reports) were reviewed during the inception phase and throughout the evaluation.

### **1.4.2 Primary data collection**

12. Primary data collection involved key informant interviews framed by an adapted outcome harvesting approach (qualitative information), an electronic survey (quantitative information) and in-country data collection in the Philippines and Oman.

#### **1.4.2.1 Key informant interviews**

13. A total of 33 semi-structured key informant meetings (some with several participants) were held with stakeholders and other informants who were involved in or affected by the project design and/or implementation. Informants were selected to represent the range of beneficiaries and implementing partners, thus encompassing government, academia/research, other project representatives and non-state actors (NGOs and representative organizations of small-scale fishers at national and regional levels). Given the large number of partners, and the fact that many partners had already been involved in the NORAD project evaluation, priority was given to the individuals and organizations that had not been previously approached. An interview guide, aligned with the evaluation questions was followed and tailored on the spot to the role of the

respondent in the project. Key informant interviews provided qualitative insights into stakeholders' perceptions of the performance, successes and challenges to the project's general implementation, in line with the evaluation questions. A section of the interview template, inspired by the outcome harvesting approach, focused on milestones and changes brought about by the project. A preliminary discussion had been held with the SSF core team in this regard, in which the SSF core team shared with the evaluation team their perception on what are the most significant changes in their opinion, thus far. During this discussion, particular attention was paid to the description of the identified changes, their significance and how the project contributed to achieve them. Interviews were conducted remotely through Zoom or WhatsApp, and in-person in the two case study countries. The list of people interviewed is provided in Appendix 1. Confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed to all interviewees.

#### **1.4.2.2 E-survey**

14. An electronic (online) structured questionnaire survey was designed to collect quantitative data on: i) stakeholders' views of the project's performance, relevance and achievements, in line with evaluation questions; ii) gauge the scale of changes induced by the project, including those pre-identified by the SSF core team; iii) provide insights into the realization of the theory of change assumptions; iv) provide another source of information to triangulate the information collected during the key informant interviews and secondary sources. The sampling was purposive but not selective: beneficiaries, implementing partners as well as people who had interacted directly and indirectly with the project were included in the mailing list. A respondent could participate in both the key informant interviews and the e-survey. The survey was translated in English, French and Spanish. The Qualtrics software was used for design and compiling results (descriptive statistics and crosstabulations).
15. One-hundred and fifty-six people accepted to take part in the e-survey (95 percent effectively participating, 5 percent declining to do so), equivalent to a 19 percent response rate, which is aligned with typical response rates for surveys of this nature. Responses came from research (7 percent), policy (24 percent), capacity (29 percent) and coordination (32 percent) oriented stakeholders (n=120), mainly from the Africa (35 percent), Asia-Pacific (19 percent) and the global level (18 percent) (n=128). No responses were received from the Mediterranean and Black Sea region. Government officials, members of national NGO or civil society organization representing the interests of small-scale fishers and the environment in general, and FAO personnel were the most numerous in answering the survey. Fifty-three percent of respondents identified as men, 45 percent as women and 2 percent as other (n=144).

#### **1.4.2.3 Case studies**

16. As mentioned in the scope of the evaluation three case studies, outlined hereafter, were selected in collaboration with the SSF core team. They involved in-country data collection missions with in-person focus group discussions, key informant interviews and field visits for the two country case studies. The third case study on stakeholder empowerment and the extent to which the SSF-GSF is supporting this process focused on Africa and relied on information collected through virtual key informant interviews. The enquiry was also framed by the outcome harvesting approach to unearth changes brought about by the project, alone or in conjunction with other factors. The full analysis of each case study is available in Annexes 1–3. Their results have been integrated in the present report, as and where relevant.
  - i. The Philippines, where project activities are focussing on food security and nutrition for local fisherfolks (see case study for detailed description of the project intervention there, Annex 2). The guiding thread to the enquiry was the extent to which project activities have

contributed to improved food security, nutrition and livelihoods in the targeted groups/communities. A total of 41 people were met in four municipalities of Mindanao.

- ii. Oman, where project activities are focussing on gender; coastal women and capacity-building (see case-study for detailed description of the project intervention there, Annex 1): The guiding thread to the enquiry was the extent to which project activities have contributed to a transformation of gender relations and women's empowerment in the targeted groups/communities. A total of 28 people were met and two women's groups (enterprises) visited in the Al-Mussanah region.
- iii. SSF stakeholder empowerment and the role of the SSF-GSF: The guiding thread to the enquiry was the extent to which project activities, and in particular those undertaken by the entities of the SSF-GSF, have enabled the creation of vertical linkages and meaningful engagement of SSF stakeholders and organizations in Africa, and the extent to which this contributed to their empowerment (Annex 3).

## **1.5 Limitations**

17. Risks to the data collection had been identified during the inception phase, and measures to alleviate them put in place. Thus, the risk of low response rate to the e-survey was alleviated by: i) translating the survey in two other languages (Spanish and French) to overcome the language barrier; ii) using reminders to encourage recipients to respond; and iii) designing the questionnaire in a user-friendly format. Although anticipated to be somewhat lower, it was not possible to include individual fishers and fishworkers in the e-survey but their representative organizations, at least at national level, proved to be sufficiently connected to the internet to access the questionnaire and respond online.
18. Despite the new working habits that the COVID-19 pandemic has instilled, extensive reliance on virtual interactions was the largest limitation to the evaluation. Interactions used the most suitable platforms to each stakeholder (e.g. Zoom, Skype, WhatsApp, phone call, etc.). Although most of these interactions went smoothly, connectivity as well as no-show issues did occasionally occur, forcing to reschedule interviews, or their cancellation after several unsuccessful rescheduling attempts. The difficulty of using virtual platforms to interact directly with beneficiaries on the ground was mitigated by the possibility to carry out COVID-19 compliant site visits and in-person meetings and group discussions in two country case studies. Relatively stable political situations in the target countries facilitated communications with National Project Coordinators. However, language barriers and the limited involvement of the project in Latin America compared to other parts of the world reduced data collection and scope of analysis in this region (although the evaluation of the NORAD-funded project had already provided an in-depth case study of Costa Rica). Consultations with other UN agencies also working on SSF issues were not organized as deemed beyond the scope of the evaluation, but personal knowledge of the evaluators compensated for this to some extent.
19. The project operates in such a way that its sphere of influence is vast, while its sphere of control is narrow. As such, attributing change and impact specifically to the project was not possible. The evaluation acknowledges this as both a challenge (from an evaluation point of view), and as an asset (from a point of view of project implementation and ownership).

## **1.6 Structure of the report**

20. Following this introduction on the evaluation process, section 2 presents the background and context of the project. Section 3 presents the main findings for each evaluation question.

Conclusions and recommendations follow in section 4 and lessons learned are presented in section 5. In addition to the appendices, the report is accompanied by a number of appendices, which are listed at the end of the report.

## 2. Background and context of the project

21. The FAO-SIDA SSF project "Creating an enabling environment for securing sustainable small-scale fisheries" (GCP/GLO/965/SWE) follows the implementation of the FAO-NORAD SSF project "Enhancing the contribution of small-scale fisheries to food security and sustainable livelihoods through better policies, strategies and initiatives" (GCP/GLO/645/NOR), under the FAO umbrella programme for SSF (FAO, 2019a). The NORAD project was extended in 2020 (by a second amendment) with a much narrower focus on "Empowering women in small-scale fisheries for sustainable food systems" with national activities in five sub-Saharan countries (Ghana, Malawi, Sierra Leone, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania). Thus, the NORAD-SSF project consolidated the trajectory of change initiated with the adoption of the SSF Guidelines (FAO, 2015b). The SIDA-SSF project was developed to further the advances of the NORAD project, fill identified needs and operationalize the SSF-GSF, adopted in 2016, with the full and effective participation of all regions and in consultation with all small-scale fisheries stakeholders (FAO, 2020c). The premises upon which the SIDA-SSF project was built are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2. Premises (principles) for action of the SSF-SIDA project**

|  |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Addressing SSF pressures and supporting sustainable livelihoods is complex and goes beyond fisheries itself.</li><li>2) To create real change and impact, the SSF Guidelines need to be understood and applied at the national and local levels, supported by regional and global policy processes.</li><li>3) Implementation of the SSF Guidelines must be demand-driven.</li><li>4) Knowledge and data/evidence need to be gathered and strategically communicated.</li><li>5) A balanced and equitable partnership approach and cross-sectoral collaboration are fundamental for the implementation of the SSF Guidelines.</li><li>6) SSF actors (men and women along the whole value chain) have stronger voice when well organized and empowered with data/evidence.</li></ol> |
|--|

Source: FAO. n.d. *Project inception report*. Rome. Internal document.

22. In line with the FAO SSF umbrella programme, the expected impact of the project is: "Improved governance of small-scale fisheries contributes to the eradication of hunger and poverty, to sustainable development and to the sustainable use of the environment". According to the project's logical framework, edited at the end of the six-month inception phase (Appendix 4), the specific objective of the project is: "Improved policy, legal and institutional frameworks in selected regions and countries and at the global level have facilitated the social, economic and environmental transformation of the small-scale fisheries sector needed for enhancing its contribution to food security and poverty eradication".
23. The SIDA-SSF project is structured according to four outcomes/components:
- i. Outcome 1: Awareness is raised, focusing on the development of SSF webpage and other knowledge products, events and outreach efforts. Special global awareness raising efforts for the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture 2022.
  - ii. Outcome 2: The science-policy interface is strengthened, focusing on sharing of knowledge and supporting regional and local policy reform (Illuminating Hidden Harvest [IHH] study and data collection methods, specific country interventions and National Plan of Action (NPOA) development, support to regional policies and organizations).

- iii. Outcome 3: Stakeholders are empowered, focusing on capacity development of SSF actors and organizations, as well as institutional strengthening and capacity development for governments.
- iv. Outcome 4: Implementation is supported, focusing on monitoring and management of the project and the SSF-GSF. The SSF-GSF is made of three entities intended to mutually support one another: the Friends of the SSF Guidelines, the Advisory Group and the Knowledge Sharing Platform, supported by FAO as Secretariat (FAO, 2020c).

24. The project is supporting ten countries: Cabo Verde, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar, Myanmar, Namibia, Oman, the Philippines, Senegal and the United Republic of Tanzania, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal are part of the GEF-FAO Coastal Fisheries Initiative (CFI)-West Africa (FAO, 2022d), while Myanmar is a target country of the FishAdapt project (2020).<sup>1</sup> In Madagascar, Namibia, Senegal and the United Republic of Tanzania focus is on strengthening participatory governance of SSF fisheries through the elaboration of National Plans of Action for SSF. In the Philippines, focus is on food security, nutrition and livelihoods; in Oman, on gender and women’s empowerment. In Costa Rica, the project builds on work and legal improvements undertaken under the NORAD-SSF project. Since 2021, the project is also responding on an ad hoc basis to demands formulated by other countries and/or organizations representing the interests of fishers and fishworkers at national and local levels. The project has recently initiated activities in five other countries: Ecuador, Ghana, Togo, Tunisia and Peru. Table 3 summarizes the main features of the project.

**Table 3. Summary of main project features**

| Project                 | GCP/GLO/965/SWE  |
|-------------------------|--|
| Implemented by          | Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in close collaboration and coordination with various partners including governments; national, regional and global institutions responsible for fisheries governance; small-scale fisheries actors and their organizations; relevant academia/research organizations. |
| Resource partner        | Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)  |
| Ten focus countries     | <u>Africa</u> : Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar, Namibia, Senegal, United Republic of Tanzania<br><u>Asia</u> : Myanmar, the Philippines<br><u>Latin America</u> : Costa Rica<br><u>Near East</u> : Oman   |
| Approval date           | December 2018  |
| Start date (EOD)        | 12 December 2018   |
| Inception phase         | 12 December 2018 to 30 June 2019   |
| Previous end-date (NTE) | 30 November 2022   |
| New end-date (NTE)      | 31 December 2023   |
| Budget                  | USD 8 942 741 (delivery as per 1 July 2022: 49 percent)  |

Source: FAO. n.d. FPMIS database. In: FAO. Rome. Internal document.

<sup>1</sup> The FishAdapt project was put on hold because of the political situation in Myanmar (but the SIDA-SSF project remained active, albeit on a smaller scale).

## 2.1 Theory of change

25. The project's theory of change is presented in Appendix 5. Project activities, organized according to the four components of the project are presented in the blue circles. The green box contains a set of expected results (not labelled as such) stemming directly from the implementation of the programme components/activities. The anticipated "outcomes" (grey box) underpin the realization of "the recommendations and objectives of the SSF Guidelines" themselves, and enable "the facilitation of [...] the social, economic and environmental transformation of the small-scale fisheries sector needed for enhancing its contribution to food security and poverty eradication" (project objective). What are presented as "basic assumptions" (blue block arrow) and "strategic considerations" (orange block arrow) can be teased out as contextual facts and justifications on the one hand, and as a set of assumptions required to move from results to outcomes on the other. The extent to which this has happened is examined throughout the "results section" and in particular in subsection 3.2.
26. As shown by the intersecting circles of project components, there are interrelations among the project components themselves, as well as activities carried out at global, regional and national levels. While the project's intention is to improve the lives of SSF communities and increase the recognition and contribution of SSF to food security and national economies, actions at global and regional levels are also required to make this happen. This therefore assumes that vertical linkages are created across scales, between higher and lower levels of SSF governance, so that global and regional actions trickle down to national and local levels. For this reason, a new assumption was added by the evaluation to the existing set as "Vertical linkages across scales exist and enable global and regional actions in support of SSF to trickle down to national and local levels (and vice versa)".
27. There are also interactions across the people and organizations receiving support from the project and the roles they are anticipated to play in driving change with regard to SSF at different levels. Thus, the project is supporting national authorities responsible for fisheries governance in project recipient countries, as well as regional and global organizations involved in processes relevant for small-scale fisheries because of their mutual traction and capacity to bring and translate the SSF agenda to lower levels of governance. Academia/research partners have the capacity to add robustness to the decisions made by national authorities and regional organizations and steer (from behind) the trajectory of actions in support of SSF. Fishers and fishworkers from inland and coastal communities, through their organizations, are not only the target beneficiaries but also the main drivers of change and play a major role in "bottom-up" processes. The verification of the theory of change assumptions therefore depends on them playing these roles, and on the project's capacity to facilitate their doing so. There is more on the project stakeholders in section 3.4 on partnerships.
28. Risks of deviation from the mission to promote and protect SSF (as encapsulated in the SSF Guidelines) may be low, because of the history of preparation, adoption and past support to the implementation of the SSF Guidelines from the NORAD project, as well as the support harnessed by the project from "like-minded" organizations over the years. However, the influence of new development trends, in particular the push for national blue economy developments, could constitute an emerging risk for the advances achieved so far, as development priorities change and the SSF beacon gets handed over to trusted partners or national institutions deemed ready to take it further on their own.





### 3. Findings

#### 3.1 Design and relevance

*EQ 1. In what ways and to what extent does the project design allow for reaching the stated project objective and expected outcomes?*

**Finding 1.** The project's objectives and anticipated outcomes are more relevant than ever to the target beneficiaries (governments and representative organizations of small-scale fishers and fishworkers). The project design has made room for, and allowed to capitalize on, the role of catalytic partners (in particular social movements/civil society organizations) at regional and global levels in a unique way, but overlooked environmental considerations related to the management of SSF and the linkages between SSF and aquatic resources conservation.

29. The project was designed on the basis of six premises/principles for action which have stood the test of time (Table 2 in section 2). Its approach is primarily one of influence, supported by targeted actions, in alignment with the approach taken to implement the SSF Guidelines (FAO, 2021b). The project design and internal coherence are highly robust (see discussion of the theory of change in section 2.1). There are many complementary crossovers between activities and outcomes – for example output 1.2 (preparation of tools and guidance materials) feeding into output 2.3 (formulation of NPOA-SSF). Outputs 2.4 (support to regional policy processes and organizations), 3.1 (capacity development of SSF organizations) and 4.1 (support to the structures of the SSF-GSF) are highly connected and reinforcing one another. This was perceived as such by 80 percent of e-survey respondents (n=118). The project design also allowed a coalition of partners (e.g. WorldFish, the African Confederation of Professional Organizations of Artisanal Fisheries [CAOPA], International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty [IPC] Working Group on Fisheries) to play a key role in project implementation (project outcome 3 relies in large part on them) – in a way that may not have been achieved if FAO alone had been in charge of this. This is further elaborated upon in section 3.5 on partnerships and in the case study on stakeholder empowerment and the SSF-GSF (Annex 3).
30. All National Project Coordinators concurred on the relevance of the project and timeliness of the policy support provided to the governments and small-scale fishers and their organizations in the targeted countries. The SSF agenda has been gathering pace over the last five years, as evidenced by the number of fish/fisheries-related events and publications mentioning SSF (e.g. aquatic foods and nutrition discourses such as the Blue Food Assessment (2020) and related papers, (Hendriks, 2022) in Nature, UN Ocean Conference [UNOC], World Trade Organization [WTO] negotiations on fisheries subsidies, etc.), confirming the relevance of the project objective to facilitate the transformation of SSF. Support to SSF is ever more pressing given the pressures of climate change and challenges of economic development on equity.
31. The development of blue economies – and the challenges this may represent for SSF to carve its place and voice in such development agendas at national levels – were somewhat overlooked at the time the project was designed and during its inception phase (noting here that blue economy is as defined by the World Bank and/or European Union and not the same as FAO's former blue growth programme). The blue economy narrative was only emerging in 2019 when the project was designed and has since gathered pace and criticism, notably for its lack of congruence with blue justice and for the challenges it will pose to smallholders (e.g. Bennett *et al.*, 2019, Farmery *et al.*, 2021). While this may not have had implications during the project implementation itself, it may present some risk for the sustainability of advances (see section 3.5).

32. Addressing SSF management issues and the place of SSF in ocean/aquatic resources conservation and sustainable use, has however not been as prominent as social and economic considerations in the project design, in part owing to the dominant policy focus of the project. While these issues were discussed, in particular because of their close links with co-management, tenure and stewardship, they have remained in the background. This has left a gap in addressing the current disconnect between the fisheries and conservation communities (for example, the global campaign to protect 30 percent of the ocean by marine protected areas [MPA] by 2030 [30x30] and aquatic biological conservation discourses that tend to sideline SSF) and the management of stocks targeted by artisanal fishers (e.g. which management measures should be implemented to manage these stocks once a protected/priority zone has been established for small-scale fishers?).

**Finding 2.** The project was implemented in a flexible way that took into account external factors, local circumstances and expressed needs, and could respond to opportunities. Communication was insufficiently considered at design, despite the guidance provided by the FAO umbrella programme's communication strategy.

33. The six-month inception phase of the project sharpened the project's approach and targeting, and enabled to fully account for contextual factors in the preparation of activities, notably at national level. The project's approach to implementation was flexible, starting with ten supported countries and adding new ones as demands and opportunities arose, and adopted a results' framework with output descriptions that were generic enough to leave room for tailoring activities and responding to demands at national level and seizing unforeseen opportunities (whilst remaining guided by the overall framework of the SSF Guidelines). For example, the Philippines' needs assessments led to specific activities, while in other countries already on the "SSF track", support reinforced the mainstream of SSF in policy processes (e.g. Madagascar, Namibia and the United Republic of Tanzania). Activities initiated under the NORAD-funded project could also be pursued, though with different levels of support (e.g. IHH study), while emerging demands (e.g. Ghana, Peru) could be accommodated and opportunities for collaboration seized (e.g. Mozambique through the Southwest Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission (SWIOFC) - Nairobi Convention project [GCP/SFS/005/SWE]). As such, the project is more akin to a programme which components reinforce one another and tackle not only the multiple dimensions of the SSF Guidelines but also the broader enabling environment (academic and institutional) needed to promote SSF and the implementation of the Guidelines.
34. The process to select the target countries was bottom-up, with criteria clearly laid out in advance (Inception report, 2019). The resulting selection of the ten target countries was justified, but the reasons for inclusion were unclear to some key informants. Some countries were also included despite slow past progress (Côte d'Ivoire), which may not have been the most optimally strategic choice and lessened the difference the project could make in these places.
35. The advent of the COVID-19 pandemic at the start of the project did not change its relevance, but slowed its implementation and effectiveness (discussed further in the SSF-GSF case study where reliance on virtual communications and lack of in-person meetings slowed the momentum of SSF social movements in getting together). Although small-scale fishing communities and fishworkers throughout fish value chains were experiencing much hardship at the height of the pandemic, the project kept to its implementation trajectory focused on policy, leaving groundwork interventions to other partner projects better designed to provide relief, such as the FAO Flexible Multi-Partner Support Mechanism (FMM/GLO/155/MUL, NORAD funds).
36. The project has also demonstrated that potentially constraining external factors in the implementation of SSF-related activities (e.g. no civil society organizations in Oman, military coup in Myanmar) could be handled through creative adaptations. For example, in Oman, alternatives

were found to organize women's groups through their enterprises; in Myanmar, an alternative work plan focused on educational courses for fishers was developed after the military coup as law change made it difficult to work in some fishing communities, allowing the work to continue in certain regions where it was possible with the current political set-up). While acknowledging that such adaptations may not always be possible, and that their implementation often follows a lull to come up with a solution, they are a credit to the project to enable them to take place, and thus enhance its relevance to local needs despite adverse circumstances.

37. The FAO umbrella programme's communication strategy was adopted for the project and guided its outward communications, but it did not provide much guidance on how horizontal communications across project stakeholders should be handled and formal and informal knowledge exchanges emphasized. This has opened a gap in learning opportunities which became wider due to the lack of in-person meeting opportunities during the COVID-19 pandemic. This is further explored under section 3.6 on project management.

**Finding 3.** The project took heed of the NORAD SSF evaluation's recommendations. This improved its strategic management and oversight role, and broadened its influence even further.

38. The project core team accepted all the recommendations of the evaluation of the NORAD-SSF project (GCP/GLO/645/NOR) (FAO, 2020e) that preceded and had laid the ground for the SIDA-SSF interventions. Synergies were created with the FMM(FMM/GLO/155/MUL) project which directly followed up the NORAD project with common countries and complementary thematic areas. Flexibility in project implementation and management, which was praised during the NORAD evaluation, has been maintained. From its day-to-day (micro)management role, and with the support of National Project Coordinators in each of the target countries, the project leadership adopted a strategic oversight role which enabled to further the project's influence in multiple ways. The project core team also expanded and incorporated greater administrative and communication support. This is further reviewed in section 3.6 on project management.
39. The continuation of activities initiated under the NORAD project was facilitated by the period of overlap and inception phase of the SIDA-SSF project. A recent report (July 2022) on the progress of the implementation of the responses to the recommendations of the NORAD evaluation underlines further the benefits of the rolling over of two projects in terms of momentum build-up, outreach and amplification of impact in the current phase.

*EQ 2. In what ways and to what extent is the project relevant and aligned with current international preoccupations related to SSF?*

**Finding 4.** The project is congruent with FAO's new four betters. The project is also aligned with SDG 13 and SDG 14 and with national and international preoccupations related to the greater recognition and protection of small-scale fisheries and its actors, where such preoccupations exist.

40. The project started in alignment with FAO's strategic objectives, and has remained fully congruent with the Organization's four betters objectives (better production, better nutrition, a better environment and a better life) outlined in its new strategic framework for 2022–2030 (FAO, 2021a). The four betters and the four cross-cutting/cross-sectional accelerators that are to be used in support of these objectives i) technology; ii) innovation; iii) data; and iv) complements such as governance, human capital and institutions) echo the principles of the SSF Guidelines in their application to SSF. The principles and topics of the SSF Guidelines can be explicitly found in two of the priority programme areas of better production (i.e. blue transformation/small-scale producers' equitable access to resources), in all priority programme areas of better nutrition (i.e. healthy diets for all / nutrition for the most vulnerable / safe food for everyone / reducing food loss and waste / transparent markets and trade), in two of better environment (i.e. climate change

mitigating and adapted agrifood systems / biodiversity and ecosystem services for food and agriculture), and in principally three of better life (i.e. gender equality and rural women's empowerment / inclusive rural transformation / resilient agrifood systems), although the SSF Guidelines are also indirectly relevant to other priority programme areas.

41. International discourses, preoccupations and commitments/objectives are making more room for SSF and the role of smallholders in producing aquatic foods and sustaining aquatic ecosystems (e.g. 2021 Food summit, 2022 WTO negotiations on ending harmful fisheries subsidies, the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030), SSF as a regular agenda item at COFI). The SSF Guidelines are also responding to the growing concerns for the equitable dimension of sustainability of fisheries.
42. The project is also aligned with national commitments/objectives in the ten selected countries, and in others, as long as these are placing SSF at the centre of their concerns. This is particularly the case for African countries given the high prevalence of SSF activities on this continent where the majority of fisheries activities are small-scale. There is still room for stronger visibility of SSF in international development discourses, so the project not only is aligned with this where the thrust exists, but it also contributes to the alignment by emphasizing the importance of SSF in sustainable development and human well-being.
43. The project is fully aligned with, and supporting progress towards, SDG 13 on climate action (mainly through the provisions of Article 9 of the SSF Guidelines which are in direct relation with SDG targets 13.1 and 13.2) and SDG 14 on life below water (mainly through Article 5b on sustainable resources management, in direct relation with SDG targets 14.2, 14.5, 14.6, 14.7, and especially 14.B [on SSF], and indirect relation with target 14.1). A brief analysis of this alignment is available in Appendix 6. The project also aims to emphasize the interlinked nature of these and other SDGs, as well as the leave no one behind rationale that drives them.

## 3.2 Results

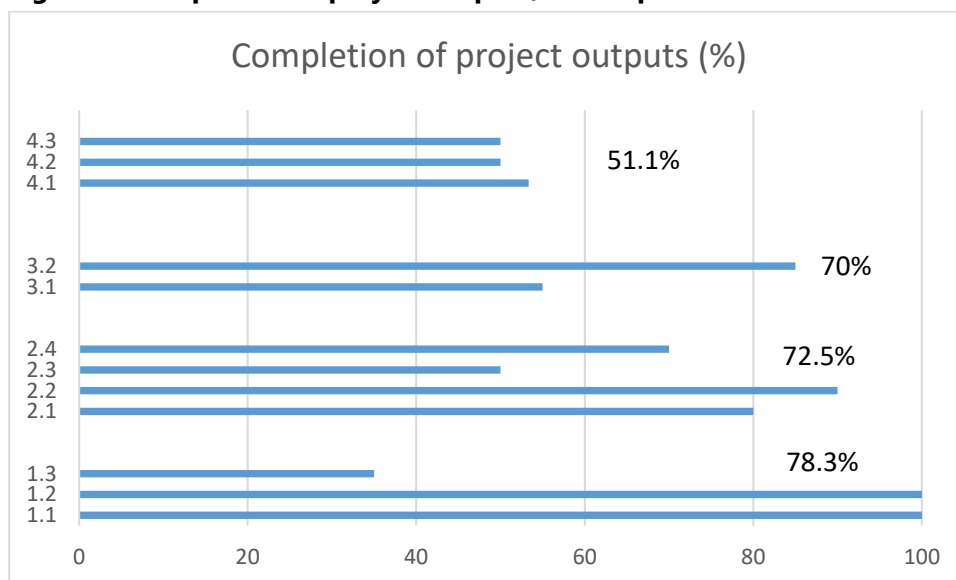
*EQ 3. What have been the advances and most significant milestones and changes generated by the project so far?*

**Finding 5.** The project has achieved satisfactory progress in relation to its planned outputs and outcomes. A no-cost extension to the end of 2023 should give room to progress the delayed and recently-initiated activities at country level, as well as reinforce the base for their sustainability.

44. The overall completion rate of the project as of April 2022 was 68 percent, which is satisfactory given the delays imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021, the prime years of project implementation. Figure 1 shows project completion by output. Largest progress has been achieved under outcome/component 1 (awareness of SSF and SSF Guidelines is raised) with overall 78.3 percent of outputs completed as of April 2022. This can be explained by the largely "desk-based" nature of the outputs (website creation, preparation of guides and toolkits, preparations of materials and events for IYAFA 2022). Outcome/component 2 (the science–policy interface is strengthened) and outcome/component 3 (stakeholders are empowered) lag slightly behind with 72.5 percent and 70 percent of their outputs completed as of April 2022, respectively. Participatory processes for the formulation of NPOAs for SSF and the finalization of the IHH study (final report not published at the time of writing) were slowed down by the pandemic. Outcome/component 4 (implementation is supported), which is largely process-based and dependent on the reactivity of other stakeholders, is the most behind, though this is relatively-speaking because it includes an indicator for the production of annual reports which have not yet all been prepared.

45. In terms of accomplishment of the outcomes, participants in the e-survey (n=118) estimated that outcome 1 (awareness is raised), outcome 3 (SSF stakeholders are empowered) and outcome 4 (implementation is supported) were “well accomplished” (40.5 percent, 32.5 percent and 32.8 percent respectively) while outcome 2 (the science–policy interface is strengthened) was only “somewhat accomplished” (34.8 percent).

**Figure 1. Completion of project outputs, as of April 2022**



Notes: short-hand for project outputs:

1.1 Webpage, 1.2. SSF guides and tools, 1.3 IYAFA 2022.

2.1 IHH study, 2.2 IHH methods, 2.3 Countries' SSF Guidelines implementation, incl. NPOAs, 2.4 Support to regional SSF policy processes and organizations.

3.1 Capacity development of SSF organizations, 3.2 SSF learning programmes.

4.1 SSF-GSF functioning, 4.2 SSF Monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL), 4.3 Project oversight and implementation.

Source: Prepared by the evaluation team, on the basis of the project progress report 2021–2022.

46. The no-cost extension granted to 31 December 2023, welcomed by all National Project Coordinators, should give room to progress with the delayed and recently-initiated activities at country level (e.g. Madagascar, Oman and the Philippines) and further strengthen, where necessary, ownership and commitment of project advances in national fisheries institutions.

**Finding 6.** The assumptions of the project's theory of change have been confirmed to various extents so far, in part due to the lengthy institutional and human processes they entail.

47. Table 4 provides an overview of the degree of verification of the project's theory of change assumptions (see section 2.1) in the countries and stakeholder groups it has targeted, based on the key informant interviews and secondary information, using a system of traffic lights. While there is a strong sense of ownership of the SSF Guidelines and commitment to what they entail in terms of equity, rights and justice, additional time, funds and building of trust across all stakeholder categories are still required to advance in the realization of assumptions. E-survey results suggest indeed that governments have not yet crossed the step between “showing commitment” to “taking responsibility” (15 percent of respondents, n=115, estimated that the assumption of governments' responsibility to implement the SSF Guidelines was “not verified at all” – the highest percentage in this category, or only “somewhat” [26 percent]). Views were also mixed on the extent to which the assumptions that “SSF organizations are empowered to influence policy change” and “Global and regional actions in support of SSF trickle down to national and local levels, and vice versa” were realized. Case study 3 on stakeholder empowerment/SSF-GSF illustrates the importance of facilitation in the dialoguing and building of

trust and understanding across SSF organizations with different (but potentially complementary) agendas.

48. The e-survey confirmed the assumption that "Better information and awareness on SSF is resulting in improved policies and decision-making in support of SSF and its actors" (score of 3.39/5, given by 68 percent of respondents, n=115). The instrumental role of partnerships and experience sharing in facilitating and supporting the implementation of the SSF Guidelines is also confirmed (score of 3.22/5, given by 73 percent of respondents, n=113), although the mechanisms to do this optimally remain to be defined.
49. As a consequence, the project is laying the basis for progressing towards its objective of "facilitating the social, economic and environmental transformation of the small-scale fisheries sector" but is still some way from reaching it – all the more so that environmental considerations are lagging (see section 3.1.1), and that this objective lies outside the sphere of direct control of the project.

**Table 4. Degree of fulfilment of the project’s theory of change assumptions in targeted countries and stakeholder groups according to the evaluation team on the basis of e-survey results and key informant interviews**

| Assumptions to move from results to outcomes  | Degree of fulfilment of assumptions in targeted countries and beneficiaries   |
|---|---|
| <b>Information and knowledge of SSF</b>   |   |
| Better information on small-scale fisheries, awareness of the SSF Guidelines and analytical tools, training and other guidance material are used and enhancing governments’ political will, and effective policy and decision-making in support of SSF actor empowerment and SSF Guidelines implementation. | The SSF Guidelines are owned, tools are available and supporting the reshaping of national policies and legislation.  |
| <b>Commitment of institutions – supportive policies and governance</b>  |   |
| Governments have committed to and taken on the responsibility to make SSF Guidelines implementation happen at the national level.   | Yes, but funds to do so are often lacking.  |
| Enabling policy, institutional and legal frameworks are in place in support of SSF Guidelines implementation.   | Institutional and legal changes have been initiated. More time is needed.   |
| Appropriate international policy guidance and the implementation of the SSF Guidelines and the human rights-based approach (HRBA) support the contribution of SSF to environmental, economic and social sustainable development.  | Too early to say (**)   |
| <b>Partnerships</b>   |   |
| Partnerships and experience-sharing are effective and support the implementation of the SSF Guidelines beyond the project.  | Trust and understanding issues between some partners have slowed the process. Rebuilding in progress (***)<br>Horizontal communications across some implementing partners are still weak. |
| Other partners like NGOs, international and regional organizations, academia and more facilitate and support SSF Guidelines implementation.   | Strong commitment but optimal process to provide support is still to be decided.  |
| <b>Engagement and empowerment of actors</b>   |   |
| SSF actors, through their organizations, are main drivers of change and are empowered to influence policy at local and national levels.   | Not yet, but primary step of improved organization of non-state actors has been made.   |
| [NEW]* Vertical linkages across scales exist and enable global and regional actions in support of SSF to trickle down to national and local levels (and vice versa)   | Structures to do this are in place but more time is needed.   |

**Notes:**

Colour gradient: deep green: fully fulfilled; pale green: on the way to be fully fulfilled; light red: initial steps made; deep red: embryonic or lagging behind.

(\*) Added by the evaluation team during the evaluation inception phase.

(\*\*) This assumption was deemed “well verified” and “fully verified” by 37% and 15% of respondents (n=114), but could not be confirmed from other sources or the analysis of collected information.

(\*\*\*) Further detail and explanation are provided in sections 3.1.1.3, 3.2.1.4, 3.4.1 and 3.6.1, as well as in Annex 3.

Assumptions were re-organised by sub-headings by the evaluation team.

Source: Prepared by the evaluation team on the basis of e-survey results and key informant interviews.

### 3.2.1 Outcome 1: Awareness is raised

50. Focus of main activities: Development of SSF webpage and other knowledge products, events and outreach efforts. Production of guides, tools and training materials. Special global awareness raising efforts for the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture 2022.

**Finding 7.** There is evidence that awareness of SSF has been raised both within and outside the project. The project’s spearheading of the IYFA 2022 has been particularly important in increasing the visibility of SSF although further outreach in non-fisheries circles could be possible.



51. There is evidence of visibility of SSF in global events as an indicator of awareness raised. Table 5 highlights the number of times “artisanal” and “small-scale” fisheries are mentioned in the 2017 and 2022 UN Ocean Conference 2017 and 2022 documents and side events.

**Table 5. Number of mentions of “artisanal” and “small-scale” fisheries in the 2017 and 2022 UN Ocean Conferences documentation and side events**

|  | UNOC 2017            | UNOC 2022 |
|--|----------------------|-----------|
| <i>High-level documents - total</i>  | 3                    | 1         |
| Political Declaration (draft, 2022) and Call for Action (2017)                       | 3                    | 1         |
| <i>Dialogues - total</i>   | 48                   | 59        |
| Small island developing State (SIDS) and SSF (2017); SIDS (2022)                     | 45 [1]               | 3         |
| Making fisheries sustainable (2017); Making fisheries sustainable and SSF (2022) [3] | 3 [2]                | 56 [3]    |
| <i>Conference report - total</i>   | <i>Not available</i> | 15        |
| <i>Side events - total</i>   | 4                    | 10 [4]    |
| <b>Total number of mentions</b>  | <b>55</b>            | <b>70</b> |

*Notes:*

Counts exclude titles, summaries/abstracts, footnotes and references.

[1] includes SSF Guidelines twice.

[2] includes SSF Guidelines 3 times (out of 3 mentions of SSF in the whole document).

[3] includes SSF Guidelines 6 times, FAO Umbrella programme once, and IYAFA once.

[4] includes one IYAFA/FAO-SIDA-SSF specific side-event, and one side-event for and by non-state actors in SSF (e.g. ICSF, AWFISHNET).

Source: prepared by the evaluation team.

52. This analysis is simple but revealing. It prompts two reflections. First, the move of SSF in the dialogues, from a small island developing States (SIDS) issue in 2017, to being integral to making fisheries sustainable in 2022, highlights the change in awareness and perceptions that has taken place over the last five years. In this process, SSF have gained in visibility – not only do they receive a higher absolute number of mentions compared to five years prior (55 against 70), but much of the narrative of the “making fisheries sustainable” of 2022 (concept paper) is in essence about SSF and fully encapsulates the principles and articles of the SSF Guidelines. Second, although there was already a relatively high number of registered voluntary commitments to SDG 14, target 14.b (on SSF) in October 2020 (280, when the second UNOC was due to take place, UNOC Secretariat, 2022), it is also possible that the extra two-year delay due to the COVID-19 pandemic was also an opportunity for SSF issues and organizations to further gather pace and this may have played in favour of SSF visibility at the UNOC 2022 (for example, SSF organizations were able to prepare a shared call for action that they presented at UNOC 2022). In fact, what was as a difficult time for social movements to engage with one another – the pandemic created much hardship at all levels and the difficulty of Advisory Group members to engage virtually was reported by many of them (see Annex 3) – could have, to some extent, provided the time for awareness to arise in other circles and create, in due course, the space for Advisory Groups and others to join forces as part of a broader momentum in support of SSF. This momentum cannot be solely attributed to the project, but it is instrumental as the project financially supported the attendance of selected members of social movements and Advisory Groups to the UNOC 2022 event and FAO created the space within the conference, through SSF-dedicated sessions and events for their participation (e.g. participation of the Co-President of World Forum of Fish Harvesters and Fish Workers / Vice-Chairperson of the IYAFA2022 / Secretary of African Women Fish Processors and Traders Network (AWFISHNET) in one of the conference panel discussions [interactive dialogue 4]). This not only raised the visibility of SSF in this forum, but empowered such movements and their representatives to speak up.
53. There is also evidence of raised awareness at individual and community levels. The increasing number of hits to the FAO SSF website is an indicator of the information being sought on SSF and

the Guidelines. Evidence of the use and impact of the SSF mini video animations produced by FAO was reported by one of the project partners as an introduction to their learning workshops with school children. Testimonies from project beneficiaries such as “I never knew I had human rights!” (student from a fishing community, Peru), are indicative of the shift in perspective, raised awareness and confidence about one’s individual rights. For example, in the Philippines, in the four municipalities where the project has been active, community leaders are at one in saying that the project’s workshops raised awareness on issues that affect SSF, and that they improved their management and leadership capabilities (see case study in Annex 2). For them, the training workshops on strengthening SSF and women’s organizations have already had a demonstrable impact in terms of enhanced organizational management, such as more systematic record-keeping and improved financial management. Thanks to this, they are now looking forward to engaging the local government units on a range of issues that affect their livelihoods and welfare. It is however more difficult to assess the difference the project made on raising SSF awareness among government officials given that those engaged in the project (in the ten target countries) already had some prior knowledge of the SSF Guidelines, through their prior involvement in the NORAD project or a partner project.

54. The publication of the FAO policy and legal diagnostic tool (in partnership with the Coastal Fisheries Initiative-West Africa [CFI-WA] project) and guide for legislating for sustainable SSF (FAO, 2020d) was deemed as “well significant” by 45 percent of e-survey respondents (n=111) – the highest achievement in this category. The publication of the legal guide is all the more important that it is filling a long-standing gap and information collected through its piloting is feeding in the FAOLEX database, with further plans to link it with the updating of the FAO fisheries country profiles as it becomes more widely used. The assessment of Cabo Verde’s legal framework against the ecosystem approach to fisheries (more in section 3.2.1.2) rested on the policy and legal diagnostic tool, demonstrating the relevance of the guidance material produced or co-produced by the project. Senegal has also expressed an interest in using the toolkit in support of the formulation of National Plans of Action for SSF, which has been piloted in Madagascar and Namibia and is nearing finalization (see section 3.2.1.2).
55. The declaration of 2022 as the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture 2022 received the highest number of votes from e-survey respondents in the category of “extremely significant” milestones or achievements, confirming the pivotal role of the project in spearheading its organization. IYAFA 2022 has spurred a variety of events and celebrations of SSF and their actors, at all levels (FAO, n.d.a.) organized by both FAO (e.g. virtual global launch and dialogues attracting over 500 attendants) and partners (with project support, e.g. regional workshops such as the one organized for Asia “IYAFA 2022-Celebrating Sustainable and Equitable Small-scale Fisheries” in Bangkok, Thailand, in May 2022), presence and participation in panels and discussions at UNOC 2022, local events such as a workshop showcasing the activities of small-scale fisheries and aquaculture producers in the University of Dar es Salaam in the United Republic of Tanzania, and many similar others that cannot all be cited here). The teaming with International Women’s Day events in March 2022 and other projects doubled the outreach and resonance of the IYAFA celebrations (e.g. seminar series to celebrate the International Women’s Day Women and a changing tide: How to break the bias, with focus on Africa, multiple projects across many countries brought together and around the world planned throughout 2022, including in Oman, in March 2022). IYAFA is also being used as framework for stimulating innovative ocean science solutions, sustainable blue foods and ocean economy under the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030) (FAO, 2015b).
56. The structures put in place by the project to promote IYAFA 2022, such as the creation of an International Steering Committee (ISC), Regional Steering Committees (RSC) and two vice-chairs

to give equal weight to SSF and small-scale aquaculture were reported as effective through regular meetings and the active promotion of the IYAFA Plan of Action – although it is too early to see impact on the ground. Awareness of IYAFA 2022 is high (86 percent of e-survey respondents, n=120, knew about it, and 68 percent had participated in an IYAFA-related event, n=113), but awareness of the year and SSF more generally in ocean conservation-oriented circles appears lower. For example, the lead evaluator observed first-hand the lack of awareness of IYAFA 2022 at an international summit on solutions for ocean conservation, a trend confirmed by one of the interviewees. This suggests that advocacy for SSF as integral to aquatic and environmental conservation needs to be amplified in these circles.

### 3.2.2 Outcome 2: The science–policy interface is strengthened

57. Focus of main activities: Sharing of knowledge and supporting regional and local policy reform (IHH and data collection methods, specific country interventions and NPOA development, support to regional policies and organizations).

**Finding 8.** There is evidence of the strengthening of institutions, policies and legislation in several of the countries targeted by the project, achieved notably through the preparation of NPOA-SSF. Greatest advances have been achieved where support existed prior to the project. Time requirements to see countries through the NPOA-SSF process should not be underestimated but there are signs that the guidance materials developed by the project is facilitating the process. Tangible outcomes of the project’s intervention in regional policy processes and organizations are more difficult to see.

58. In countries where the preparation of NPOAs has been initiated (Madagascar), and even completed (Namibia and the United Republic of Tanzania), interviewees acknowledged that this was one of the most significant changes in the way SSF issues are handled at national level that was brought about by the project. The project has also provided key additional support to see through lengthy processes such as the adoption of the new legislation in favour of SSF in Costa Rica (initiated under the NORAD project), and the revision of legal texts in Cabo Verde in conjunction with the GEF-FAO supported Coastal Fisheries Initiative in West Africa. New models of SSF governance, such as the one established in the United Republic of Tanzania which embeds NPOA-SSF in supportive institutional arrangements (a multistakeholder national task team responsible for the oversight of the implementation of the NPOA-SSF and a gender desk in the ministry, and emphasizing the role of non-state actors in fish value chains), were deemed to be well to extremely significant by 46 percent of e-survey respondents (n=109).

59. Countries are realizing the value of formalizing their commitment to SSF through the elaboration of an NPOA: some have expressed an interest (e.g. Malawi, Uganda) and others already taken the steps (e.g. Senegal) to develop their own. The case of the United Republic of Tanzania is a model in this regard, not only for blazing a trail, but also for opening the space to non-state actors and NGOs to influence the national policy agenda through the officially-constituted national task team. Countries can also show commitment to SSF outside the scope of a NPOA-SSF, through the mainstreaming of SSF considerations in national policies. The Philippines, for example, declared commitment to including SSF in its Comprehensive National Fisheries Industry Development Plan (CNFIDP) during COFI 2021.

60. The preparation of a NPOA-SSF is inherently slow if it follows principles of inclusiveness and participation, but the guides and tools developed by the project (see section 3.3.1) can increase the capacity of national stakeholders to stay on track and take the process in their own hands, as currently seen in Madagascar. Key informants and project documentation revealed that the elaborated NPOAs and reviewed legislation were the direct result of the use of guidance materials (e.g. NPOA-SSF toolkit for Madagascar’s NPOA elaboration, guide for legislating for sustainable

SSF [FAO, 2022d] for the assessment of Cabo Verde's legal framework). This indicates that better information on SSF and availability of guidance and tools enhances policy and decision-making in support of the implementation of the SSF Guidelines (theory of change assumption 1), especially when these tools are used in complementarity with e-learning and training courses on SSF (see section 3.3.3).

61. The project has also been exerting its influence in regional policy processes and organizations through direct participation in or funding of participants in many meetings aiming notably at strengthening the visibility and advocacy for SSF in these. This is essentially process-based, through interactions with other projects (e.g. Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic [CECAF]-PESCAO) or with initiatives that are driven by regional organizations, such as the African Union IBAR's strengthening of existing non-state actor platforms<sup>2</sup> (FAO, 2020b) and establishment of the AU-IBAR African Continental Non-State Actors Coordination Platform in Fisheries and Aquaculture to take further their mandate across the African continent. While the diffuse contribution of the project is important because it ensures that the right people are at the discussion table and it keeps these processes in motion, its tangible outcomes are difficult to measure.

**Finding 9.** Progress with the preparation of the Illuminating Hidden Harvest study has been made and the unveiling of its full findings is imminent. How its protocols will be applied and mainstreamed in the data collection and reporting practices of national fisheries (and other) authorities is still unclear.

62. Progress has been made towards the completion of the global IHH study (FAO, 2015b), initiated under the NORAD project. Key findings were presented and audience's questions about the study were answered at a highly attended (over 500 participants) webinar in November 2021 co-organized by FAO and IHH study partners (FAO, 2022a). The release of its full results is highly anticipated (59 percent of e-survey respondents estimate it to be a well and extremely significant milestone, n=109). Although there is evidence that the objective of the IHH study is resonating globally (e.g. mentioned at the UN Ocean Conference 2022 in Lisbon, Portugal, and in a Hendriks, 2022), how IHH data collection protocols should be translated in improved practices by national fisheries institutions has progressed slowly (this issue had already been raised in the NORAD project evaluation). Discussions among the partners behind the IHH have recently taken place (May 2022) and it is envisaged that some countries already supported by the project (Madagascar, the United Republic of Tanzania,) or soon to be (Indonesia) will work on adapting and developing capacity for implementing IHH data collection and analysis protocols at national level.

### 3.2.3 Outcome 3: Stakeholders are empowered

63. Focus of main activities: capacity development of SSF actors and organizations, as well as government actors, development of learning programmes.

**Finding 10.** There are examples of behavioural change and stakeholder empowerment, at all levels. These are the result of an in-depth and steady process of change to which many factors outside this outcome, and even the project, have contributed. For some activities, it is too early to see change, and those initiated at local levels need to be seen to completion to bring anticipated benefits.

64. At local level, there are signs of behavioural change, as a direct indicator of empowerment. For example, the Oman case study (Annex 1) illustrates that the training in leadership and soft skills provided by the project to two groups of women enabled them to not only better manage their processing businesses and organize their work, but also to better understand each other and

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<sup>2</sup> WANSABA (West Africa), EARFISH (East Africa), AWFISHNET (women processors), SANSABA (Southern Africa), PRAPAC (Central Africa), Maghreb Platform.

increase their capacity to deal with staff and conflict issues, thus boosting their confidence and increasing their feeling of responsibility and recognition of self-worth. The format of the training, redesigned in virtual labs and modules delivered regularly over several months during the COVID-19 crisis, built on technical training previously provided by the government-run Industrial Innovation Centre, and created a safe space for women to learn and express themselves.

65. However, the delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the time taken for thorough bottom-up planning processes (i.e. needs assessments to define activities, such as in the Philippines, see case study in Annex 2 or the need to change project area in Oman, see case study in Annex 1), as well as occasionally lengthy FAO procedures, mean that local interventions and pilots are still in their initial stages. These pilots should seek to progress during the extension granted to the project and through the effective mechanisms for project execution deployed by FAO country offices and local partners (see sections 3.5 and 3.7), as it will be important to keep the momentum to meet the expectations of beneficiaries and to trigger behavioural changes within the remaining project time. While there is evidence that the project’s capacity and awareness building activities (understood broadly to also include learning and outreach, e.g. radio programmes) have reached and been appreciated by their target audiences, key informants reported it was still too early to see visible changes in practices.
66. At national level, there are indicators that small-scale fishers’ organizations have been empowered. The creation of the United Republic of Tanzania Women Fish Workers Association (TAWFA) (in 2018, under the NORAD project) and its rapid expansion in chapters around the country thanks to the SIDA-SSF project, exemplifies the momentum that this representative organization of small-scale fishworkers is gaining through the widening of its membership. It also illustrates empowerment and voice of SSF actors through improved organization. TAWFA has gained recognition at ministerial level. Thus organized, its members were invited to partake in the NPOA formulation process led by the Ministry of Fisheries and they have since been invited in other consultation workshops. The opportunity for women fishworkers to engage in policy and decision-making related to SSF was deemed “impossible without TAWFA because women were too marginalized”. In Namibia, it is the NPOA-SSF process that raised awareness on the importance to get organized and has thus led to demand to establish SSF organizations in the country. This is important because organization is a first step towards empowerment. In Senegal, where the project has been working with existing fishers’ organizations, it has stimulated a new collaboration between the local committees for artisanal fisheries (CLPA) and the Ministry of the Environment to improve the co-management and patrolling of a mangrove protected area, thus increasing responsibility and understanding between both fishers and the government with regards to fishing and mangrove conservation.
67. At regional level, the creation of Regional Advisory Groups under the SSF-GSF’s Advisory Group has been a key step in opening a space for regional and national organizations representing small-scale fishers in regional fisheries policy processes. The Regional Advisory Group for Asia has been filling a void in the region and was the most active and influential at the time of the evaluation. This is illustrated by the participation of the Regional Advisory Group for Asia as an observer to the meetings of the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC) which demonstrates the advocacy advances that this mechanism of concertation across the SSF organizations can achieve. The Regional Advisory Group for Asia would like to go further in influencing national policymaking, informing small-scale fishers of developments at regional level, and working at field level to enhance behaviour change among fishers. The Regional Advisory Group for Africa, on the other hand, is operating in a landscape where regional organizations pre-existed and are engaging in processes (e.g. CAOPA, *Fédération des Pêcheurs Artisans de l’Océan Indien* [FPAOI], subregional African non-state actor platforms) including through direct or indirect support from the project.

The Regional Advisory Group for Latin America and the Caribbean had not progressed much by the time of the evaluation, but in the Caribbean region, the Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organisations has been operating for a while and is receiving support from the project.

68. Empowerment of SSF actors across the Africa region is mixed, despite being a region with numerous representative organizations and regional institutional set-ups promoting SSF actors' engagement in regional policies (e.g. CAOPA, FPAOI, subregional African non-state actor platforms). There are signs of empowerment at local and national levels, in countries with both a history of strong organization of small-scale fishers such as Senegal with the CLPA, networks (e.g. the Senegalese network of women in artisanal fisheries - REFEPAS) and federations that are closely linked, or in those newer to the process such as the United Republic of Tanzania (described above). However, this is not consistently found throughout the countries targeted by the project in the Africa region. Issues of power and representation between national and regional organizations were reported during some key informant interviews, thus undermining the vertical connections across these two levels, and the connection of local and national SSF actors to global fora. This is explored in greater depth in the case study on SSF stakeholder empowerment and the functioning of the SSF-GSF in Annex 3.
69. This notwithstanding, seeds of trust and dialogue across non-state fisheries actors have been planted. There is a complicated history of relationships and trust issues between social movements/civil society organizations in support of small-scale fishers and other non-state actors such as environmental NGOs, academia, professional associations, as exemplified by the difficult discussions at a meeting that brought them together in Penang, Malaysia, in late 2019 (cf. section 3.2.1.4). Dialogue between these organizations has however resumed thanks to a series of five online, on-invitation, webinars co-sponsored and facilitated by WorldFish and SwedBio, with the involvement of the IPC Working Group on Fisheries, and Advisory Group who designed the agenda. This is a significant change. The webinars it facilitated, co-sponsored by the project, SwedBio and WorldFish, empowered social movements representing SSF to take a driving seat in the discussions. This was found by several key informants to be very important in the process of (re)building trust and understanding across these stakeholders, but is only the beginning.

**Finding 11.** High-quality learning courses and educational approaches on SSF have been developed and delivered to government officials and other stakeholders. There is complementarity with the tools and guidance developed by the project and signs that they are generating understanding and interest in taking action. Linkages across partners or countries promoting SSF learning could be sought.

70. The five-day regional e-learning course "Regional Small-scale Fisheries Governance Training Course for Africa: Creating an Enabling Environment for SSF Guidelines Implementation"<sup>3</sup> developed and delivered by the International Ocean Institute–South Africa (IOI-SA) first to government officials of selected African countries<sup>4</sup> and FAO national SSF consultants, and repeated later in Asian countries, was considered as a cornerstone of the project by half of the e-survey respondents (n=109) and as very valuable by the participants (IOI-SA, 2021). The e-learning incorporated exercises familiarizing participants with the NPOA-SSF toolkit developed by the project (under outcome 1). Although it is too early for tangible evidence of changes in practices following the course, there are encouraging signs of snowballing with Malawi having started a NPOA-SSF development process and Uganda expressed an interest in following suite. Reportedly, the e-learning course would not have been developed without the intervention of the project,

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<sup>3</sup> The e-learning course was still under finalization at the time of writing, with an official launch planned in the autumn 2022.

<sup>4</sup> Ghana, Malawi, Namibia, Sierra Leone, South Africa, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda, selected because they are already working with FAO on small-scale fisheries projects.

and rather unexpectedly, and despite the challenges, the COVID-19 pandemic and moving of the course to online platforms as a consequence enabled its replication with countries from Asia.

71. Working with teachers and pupils, NGO Beyond the Surface International, based in Peru, has developed an interactive and creative educational approach to raising awareness about SSF and human rights in fisheries among pupils and their families. Teachers report that this has resulted in the destigmatization of fishers' children. This approach is also paving the way for inclusion of SSF in school curriculum, as well as the participatory data collection and monitoring of SSF. For example, homework assignments related to SSF are based on the "Too Big To Ignore" (TBTI) form and added to a database. How the data collected could feed into the monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) system for SSF under development (see section 3.2.1.4) could be explored. In Myanmar, the National Project Coordinator took initiative to design and deliver a series of distance-learning modules targeted at small-scale fishers in a stable area of the country to identify fishing-related issues and strengthen them institutionally so that a base is laid for when the political situation settles. Although this training was not initially planned, it is a refreshing and innovative change in the way training was delivered – typically very formally in institutions without enough focus on communities. In the same way that the training in Peru uses FAO's SSF mini-videos to trigger discussions, and that the IOI-SA training course incorporates the NPOA-SSF toolkit, this training incorporates the use of the SSF card game (FAO, 2015b) produced, emphasizing the relevance and value of the educational materials produced under the project.
72. At the time of writing (early July 2022), there were however no direct connections between the concerned interviewees who all expressed an interest in exploring the potential for building bridges across partners and countries, and sharing their experiences on teaching and learning approaches with different SSF audiences.

### **3.2.4 Outcome 4: Implementation is supported**

73. Focus of main activities: functioning of the SSF-GSF and its structures ([Regional] Advisory Group[s], the Friends of the SSF Guidelines, Knowledge Sharing Platform, Secretariat); monitoring of status of SSF governance and development and of SSF Guidelines implementation, successful implantation of the project according to the results-based management.

**Finding 12.** The visibility and influence of SSF organizations in representing the less-heard voices of small-scale fishers and fishworkers in global forums is rising through the work of Regional Advisory Groups (especially in Asia) and thanks to the facilitation of the IPC Working Group on Fisheries. However, other structures of the SSF-GSF, and the SSF-GSF as a whole, are not yet fulfilling their potential.

74. The execution of activities related to the capacity development of global and regional SSF organizations to enable them to engage in SSF development and governance (output 3.1) was to a large extent placed in the hands of the secretariat of the IPC Working Group on Fisheries. There were also other complimentary capacity development activities to strengthen organizations at regional level, through direct support to CAOPA, FPAOI and Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organizations (CNFO) under the project. The IPC Working Group on Fisheries is also supporting the functioning of the SSF-GSF mechanism (output 4.1), notably the Advisory Group. Interviewees suggest that these vertical linkages are the strongest where members of the Regional Advisory Groups are themselves also heading a national social movement as they can be a direct communication broker and relay information upwards and downwards between Regional Advisory Groups and organizations across levels.

75. In Africa, the relationship between the Regional Advisory Group for Africa (established in early 2020), existing subregional non-state actors platforms<sup>5</sup> and the AU-IBAR African Continental Non-State Actors Coordination Platform in Fisheries and Aquaculture (AU-IBAR, 2011) (launched in November 2021, but which seems to be struggling to meet so far), is in a state of flux. To the exception of AWFISHNET, little information could be found on how these subregional platforms will coherently and effectively support SSF advocacy. Whilst these developments are an encouraging sign of the buoyancy of the SSF environment in Africa and of the recognition given to SSF, and will to bring them into high-level discussions, there were concerns among some key informants that it could also complicate the landscape of SSF organizations and overlap mandates (although the constituency of existing African non-state actors platforms, including the coordination one, is wider than that of the Regional Advisory Groups, which is exclusively constituted of social movements/civil society organizations for SSF).
76. The case study on stakeholder empowerment / SSF-GSF (Annex 3) further highlights the progressive building of reciprocal trust among social movements representing SSF, professional organizations representing fishers, and others (UN, governments, environmental NGOs) as one of the key steps achieved towards the recognition and empowerment of SSF stakeholders. As indicated in section 3.2.1.3, there is still much to do to consolidate this, but the project has benefitted from the joint action of its partners in opening a space for the pursuit of dialogue and development of reciprocity and understanding across different interest groups. However, the case study also signalled that in Africa where small-scale fishers' organizations are the most numerous and up-down linkages were said to have been established, the weakest link appeared to be between local-national organizations and regional ones. For example, the REFEPAS in Senegal has only just established contact with AWFISHNET, and some key informants questioned the capacity of some regional organizations to truly represent the local interests of small-scale fishers. This suggests that, on the one hand, vertical channels require further strengthening for bringing up and down the interests of local small-scale fishers, and on the other hand, that the place and role of the Regional Advisory Group for Africa in this process be thoroughly considered, given the pre-existence of subregional platforms/organizations and as new regional structures, such as the African Continental Non-State Actors Coordination Platform in Fisheries and Aquaculture (AU-IBAR, 2011), to which the project indirectly contributed, are emerging (more on this in Annex 3).
77. The facilitating role of the IPC Working Group on Fisheries, hosted by Crocevia and receiving complementary funding from SIDA-SwedBio, has been pivotal and appreciated by concerned key informants in creating a sense of belonging and the space (and time) for collective decision-making and dialogue across the different social movements representing the interests of small-scale fishers. Although the Regional Advisory Group for Africa has only just been established, and the Regional Advisory Group for Latin America is still under planning, the decision to create the Regional Advisory Groups, as an outcome of this facilitation, is very robust. This is no small achievement given the challenges of lack of coordination among SSF organizations and the difficulty of the process and communications during the COVID-19 pandemic. Yet, this organizational set-up is only the beginning and unclear internal communication mechanism among the members of the (Regional) Advisory Groups were reported. It thus remains to be seen how the regional advisory groups evolve and how the facilitating role of the IPC Working Group on Fisheries plays out in keeping up the momentum and the relationship between FAO, SwedBio and SSF non-state actors / social movements.

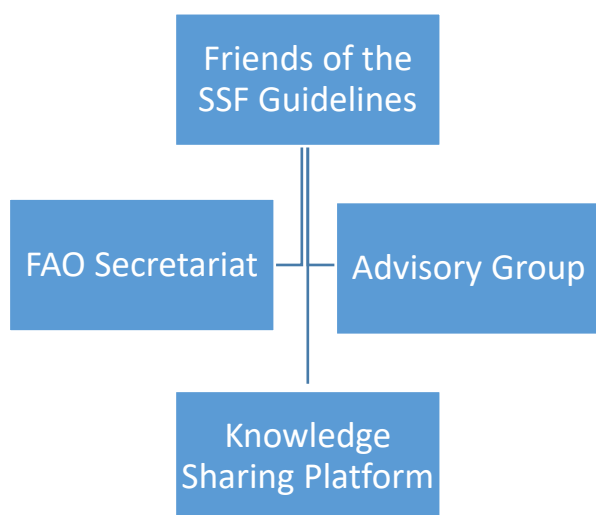
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<sup>5</sup> WANSABA (West Africa), EARFISH (East Africa), AWFISHNET (women processors), SANSABA (Southern Africa), PRAPAC (Central Africa), Maghreb Platform.



78. The SSF-GSF is an informal partnership mechanism. One of its structures, the Knowledge Sharing Platform, is not operational yet. The four SSF-GSF’s structures (Advisory Group(s), Friends of the SSF Guidelines, Knowledge Sharing Platform and Secretariat (Figure 2) are not functioning as a whole, but in a quasi-autonomous way, with few cross-overs. This may be partly explained by the fact that, according to key informants, each of the SSF-GSF’s components is understood as an entity in its own right with a clear constituency: governments for the Friends of the SSF Guidelines, social movements and non-state representative organizations of small-scale fishers and fishworkers (excluding NGOs) for the Advisory Group/Regional Advisory Groups, FAO for the Secretariat. The Knowledge Sharing Platform is so far inexistent, precisely for indecision regarding its membership (see para. 78 below). The facilitation role of the FAO Secretariat is not well defined, and appears more reactive than proactive because it is limited in staff and resources. Members of the Friends of the SSF Guidelines are playing a part in science–policy dialogues. For example, the United Republic of Tanzania was invited to share its experience and discuss lessons learned in the formulation of its NPOA-SSF at a Southern African Development Community (SADC) meeting, and to speak at an event organized for International Women’s Day (2022). However, due to infrequent meetings and frequent changes in people representing the countries, the Friends group is not particularly conducive to strengthening relations among its members, except when circumstances bring them together towards a particular purpose or task, as has been the case with the preparation for potentially catalytic events such as COFI (side-event on SSF Guidelines). Given the different interests and ways of working of the constituents of each of the SSF-GSF structures, and limited capacity of the Secretariat, building bridges is challenging. This in itself is not necessarily negatively impacting stakeholder empowerment, because empowerment is gained in other ways, as outlined in section 3.2.1.3 and in the case study (Annex 3). But it is somewhat undermining the mission of “stewardship” / guardianship of the SSF Guidelines and their ethos that the SSF-GSF was initially and intentionally set out for.

**Figure 2. Composition of the SSF-GSF**



Source: FAO. 2020c. *Global Strategic Framework in support of the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries*. Rome. <https://www.fao.org/3/ca7737en/ca7737en.pdf>

79. The creation of the Knowledge Sharing Platform has been fraught with difficulties, due in part to lengthy discussions between FAO, SSF organizations (including Regional Advisory Group, through the IPC Working Group on Fisheries), the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) and WorldFish on how and who should drive the agenda and functioning of the Knowledge Sharing Platform, as well as its changing terms of reference. In parallel to this process, and independently from the project, EDF spearheaded the establishment of the Small-Scale Fisheries Resource and

Collaboration Hub (“SSF Hub”),<sup>6</sup> inviting FAO, and the IPC Working Group on Fisheries to jointly explore if and how it could contribute to or become part of the Knowledge Sharing Platform. Although there was (and still is) no intention for the SSF Hub to act as the KSP, the SSF Hub is currently filling a gap in providing open access to SSF resources and engagement with SSF matters. At present, neither the future direction of the Knowledge Sharing Platform, nor its relation or complementarity with the SSF Hub are clear. The evolution of mindsets since the 2019 Penang meeting, as well as a renewed willingness to engage by all parties may open a space for a new conversation on the Knowledge Sharing Platform and its place within the SSF-GSF. This conversation should include members of all the SSF-GSF structures so that the creation of bridges and an improved *modus operandi* be simultaneously explored.

**Finding 13.** Advances have been made with the development of a monitoring system of SSF Guidelines implementation thanks to a revised approach to prepare it. Piloting of the system is about to start. There could be synergies with the monitoring approach and tools developed by the IPC Working Group on Fisheries and Regional Advisory Groups.

80. The development of a monitoring, evaluation and learning system for the SSF Guidelines implementation, initiated under the NORAD project with multiple partners (e.g. Duke University, WorldFish, the IPC Working Group on Fisheries, Rockefeller Foundation, etc.) and stalled by the COVID-19 pandemic, was reoriented towards the preparation of a robust framework for implementing participatory data collection, analysis and monitoring of the SSF Guidelines implementation and SSF issues more generally. This framework (“Involving the People - Democratizing SSF implementation and monitoring”, Kurien, 2022) was developed in collaboration with WorldFish and ICARDA, while ICSF will be mandated to pilot it in fishing communities in Ghana and India. In parallel, but complementarily to this, the IPC Working Group on Fisheries and the Advisory Group are gathering relevant qualitative information on SSF closely related to the chapters of the SSF Guidelines from the national and regional levels to inform decisions to be made by the SSF-GSF. The IPC Working Group on Fisheries and the Advisory Group’s approach is based on a methodology that they have developed and that is focused on social movements and SSF organizations (IPC Working Group on Fisheries / Advisory Group 2022).

### 3.3 Social inclusion, equity and gender

*EQ 4. In what ways and to what extent are the project interventions contributing to gender equality, equity, social inclusion and empowerment of the targeted government actors, SSF actors and organizations, and reaching the intended users along the SSF value chain?*

**Finding 14.** Women, Indigenous Peoples and marginalized groups have been reached, thanks to a sensitive and inclusive targeting approach. The SSF Guidelines themselves and project partners keep gender equality, equity and inclusion high in all activities, translating into greater awareness of gender issues in SSF and value chains. Some countries are also leading by example with visibility, recognition and support to gender equality at institutional and policy levels.

81. The project is very sensitive to gender issues. Gender equality is at the heart of the SSF Guidelines and defending women’s rights is fully integrated in the agenda of non-state actors (national organizations and social movements representing fishers and fishworkers’ interests) who are de facto promoting gender equality in their advocacy work for SSF. Given the important role of these partners (see section 3.5), this has been instrumental in pushing the gender equality and women’s empowerment agenda forward. All project activities have made a particular effort to equally

<sup>6</sup> The SSF Hub’s intention is to “co-create and maintain a resource and collaboration hub that addresses small-scale fisheries governance and community development in mutually supportive ways”, and to “accelerate the implementation of the SSF Guidelines, in support of the SSF-GSF” (EDF 2021).

include women, raise awareness about gender issues, and go beyond the acknowledgement of women and men’s specific needs to transform gender roles, harmful norms and power relations typically found in the fisheries sector and value chains. For example, 55 percent of e-survey respondents (n=118) witnessed equal participation of women in meetings or training events, while 24 percent and 42 percent estimated that activities had benefitted and empowered women, respectively. The Oman case study (Annex 1) illustrates positive changes in men’s perceptions of the work done by women in fish processing, as well an increase in women’s self-esteem and autonomy – both indicators of empowerment, following their engagement in a managerial skills training provided by the project. However, the case study also illustrates that awareness of the SSF Guidelines – and thus of gender issues in SSF – could be improved, especially among fisheries and non-fisheries authorities.

82. In the United Republic of Tanzania, as a result of the NPOA-SSF, the government has shown its commitment to gender equality by creating a Gender Desk in its Ministry of Fisheries (the gender desk is currently drafting a national gender action plan) and endorsing the work of TAWFA (see section 3.2.1.3). This in return has a beneficial effect on other project activities: the TAWFA chairperson was invited by the project to TAWFA’s story at the global virtual launch of IYAFSA 2022, and demonstrated her confidence and the ambition of the association. Similarly, in Senegal where national women fishworkers’ organizations are to be reckoned with, the project (in partnership with CFI-WA) is capitalizing on their influence to reach out to women and channel its support. As such, the project stands at the transformative end of the gender impact spectrum (exploit-accommodate-transform) (Pederson *et al.*, 2015).
83. In Costa Rica, the project has taken specific measures to meaningfully include and work hand in hand with Indigenous Peoples to harmonize the SSF Guidelines with their vision of the world, recognizing their territories, ancestral use of resources and cultural systems. Close coordination with Indigenous People’s organizations (for indigenous women) ensured effective and respectful interactions. FAO’s FPIC Manual was extensively used and its steps adhered to in the design and implementation of the activities with Indigenous People. Reciprocally, the sharing of consultants hired with FAO Indigenous Peoples Unit in headquarters and the project has led to the inclusion of fisheries-specific recommendations from the most recent UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the joint organization of webinars on Indigenous Peoples and inland SSF and the start of conversations between the SSF core teams and some organizations of Indigenous Peoples in North and Latin America.
84. The project has also made it possible, through flexible targeting approaches adapted to local circumstances (e.g. Oman’s women’s enterprises as there are no representative organizations as such, Myanmar fishers’ groups – see section 3.1), to a wider understanding and reach of “marginalized groups”. For example, in Namibia, targeting small-scale “harvesters” (who harvest seaweed and mussels) was more inclusive of a wider range of people depending on coastal resources, than small-scale “fishers”. This broader interpretation also enabled the project to target groups marginalized by their remote geographical location as well as their social group belonging.
85. While all interviewees suggest that gender considerations have become fully mainstreamed in everyday thinking and discourses about SSF, efforts for gender equality in SSF must be pursued. The Philippines case study (Annex 2), for example, highlighted that participation of men and women in training activities was not always equal, and that the activities had been designed with little consideration of the SSF Guidelines companion “Handbook on gender-equitable small-scale fisheries development and governance” nor of SEAFDEC’s [Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center] Gender Strategy (SEAFDEC, 2019). More empowerment of women came in

second position as to what e-survey respondents (n=108) wanted to see more of. Equally, participation of Indigenous Peoples was limited to only one country of the project, although Indigenous Peoples also live in the project area in the Philippines (Annex 2). This was underscored by the e-survey which highlighted that 31 percent of respondents (n=118) could not answer the question on their participation, and that otherwise they were only “somewhat well” taken into account (27 percent). Whilst Indigenous Peoples were not mentioned in the project document, support was foreseen in the refined implementation strategy described in the inception report six months after the official start of the project. Amplification and scaling out of the work on Indigenous Peoples (and their rights) in fisheries was something 48 percent of e-survey respondents (n=110) wanted to see a lot more of. More systematic attention should therefore be given to Indigenous Peoples in the project, so that their inclusion is ensured in SSF organizations and the Regional Advisory Groups, established or supported by the project, where they are deemed to be insufficiently represented (e-survey result).

**Finding 15.** Sensitivity to the youth and their aspirations and priorities in the context of SSF development is an area of work deserving greater attention.

86. E-survey respondents are divided on the work of the project with young people<sup>7</sup> (27 percent think it has empowered them, 22 percent it has only reached them, n=118), although many could not answer (22 percent) – a revealing sign of uncertainty. The underrepresentation of the youth in platforms and groups created by the project was also underlined by the e-survey. A key informant was of the view that the insufficient integration of the youth, their aspirations and concerns in the project stemmed from the poor adaptation of capacity building programmes to young fishers because they tend not to distinguish the educational status and learning aptitudes of small-scale fishers and lack emphasis on technologies that could modernize SSF and better align young small-scale fishers’ vision of the fisheries sector. Filling this need has in fact proved very effective in the context of the safety at sea and improved fishing practices promoted by the CC4Fish project in the Caribbean (FAO, 2022b). Greater empowerment of youth in SSF communities ties with quality rural education, an area where project partner Beyond the Surface International is making interesting progress (see sections 3.2.1.3 and 3.5).
87. The youth was not explicitly mentioned in the SSF Guidelines, nor in the project inception report (2019), but it has become an important part of the human development agenda that the project is waking up to (e.g. an IYAFSA webinar with focus on youth and technology in Africa is due to take place in July 2022). It will be important to amplify this in future project activities for the sake of inclusion on the one hand, and strategic for the future continuity of the relevance of the SSF Guidelines on the other.

### 3.4 Partnerships

*EQ 5. To what extent has the project managed to engage relevant, strategic and capable partners (so-called catalytic) at global, regional and national level?*

**Finding 16.** The project has developed a very extensive web of varied, committed and catalytic partners who can tackle the multiple facets of the SSF Guidelines. Partners have played an essential role in the implementation of the project and some are now furthering the SSF cause beyond the project itself. Each type of partnership has had a positive impact on the work of the project.

88. The landscape of stakeholders with which the project interacts is mapped by the evaluation in Appendix 3, which shows organizational partners, direct beneficiaries, as well as initiatives and

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<sup>7</sup> Young people (the youth) include young fishers / fishworkers, junior staff, newly graduated students, etc.

projects with whom the project directly interacts and provides an overview of their role (policy-oriented, research-oriented, capacity-oriented). Appendix 3 also exemplifies the diversity of state and non-state SSF organizations. The very large web of varied and catalytic partners enables targeting the multiple facets of the SSF Guidelines. The e-survey results confirmed that the project had succeeded in generating a common understanding of the project's objective and approach among partners (57 percent) (n=109). A majority of respondents (55 percent) agreed on the suitable variety of partnerships although this seemed to be slightly less consensual. E-survey results also confirmed the project itself and its partners were both deemed to have an equal influence on the successful implementation of activities.

89. The greater involvement of FAO country offices (compared to the NORAD project) has enabled to capitalize on knowledge of national contexts and players, thus forging partnerships with national authorities and working with local organizations. The mechanisms to establish such partnerships (typically through a field budget allocation to country offices, who then issue letters of agreements to local partners) have been effective in implementing activities. Working through local organizations also builds their awareness about SSF. The evaluation came across one example in which the local partner (Zubair Enterprises Development Centre in Oman) has started to incorporate SSF considerations in their own work, originally only focused on agriculture). At FAO headquarters, the SSF core team has been in regular contact with the FAO Partnerships Unit, Gender Team, Legal Office and Indigenous People Unit. This has strengthened the project's work on these topics and is helping to reduce duplications, as well as supported the mainstreaming of SSF in these units' works, as exemplified by the synergies created between the United Nations Decade of Family Farming and the SSF Guidelines.
90. The IPC Working Group on Fisheries was identified as partner to support SSF actors from the beginning and has been a natural extension of the activities under the NORAD-funded SSF project, but it took some time for Crocevia/IPC Working Group on Fisheries to find its place in the project due to complexity and sensitivities and an unclear – at least to start with – link between the IPC Working Group on Fisheries and the SSF-GSF. This notwithstanding, it is at the centre of the partnership linking FAO, SwedBio, social movements in support of SSF and the project (stakeholder empowerment and support to SSF-GSF's Advisory Groups). The IPC Working Group on Fisheries is making important efforts in coordinating and facilitating dialogue among its members and those of the (Regional) Advisory Groups (many of which are common to both). This has created a space for (non-professional) SSF organizations to be more active and vocal and placed them in the driving seat, although the processes to do so would benefit from being clarified and simplified. The project has also continued direct partnerships with regional professional organizations of small-scale fishers, such as CAOPA, who organized an awareness raising workshop with SSF actors, civil society organizations, academia and government officials in Ghana in 2021 (CAOPA, 2021). In Senegal, the local committees for artisanal fisheries are the partners of choice through which both the SIDA-SSF and CFI-WA projects are working because they are the direct contact with small-scale fishers themselves.
91. The project has opened up to new collaborators, including smaller and less well-known international or local NGOs for targeted actions at subnational level. This two-pronged approach to collaborations is ensuring momentum and credibility for large-scale initiatives, such as the IHH study on the one hand, as well as simultaneously executing more niche, locally-embedded, activities and boosting the capacity and recognition of those smaller but highly dynamic partners, on the other hand. For example, NGO Beyond the Surface International, based in Peru, has used its network of rural schools and teachers in combination with creative educational approaches as a conduit to raise awareness about SSF and human rights-based approaches (HRBAs) in fisheries among pupils and their families, influencing school curriculum and liaising with the TBTI initiative.

Reciprocally, the partnership with FAO has boosted the Organization's ambition, work capacity, horizon and credibility (it is now linking with other NGOs in Madagascar and India to replicate its approach – outside of its agreement with the project/fisheries association).

92. In parallel, the project has continued its collaborations with well-established partners such as academic institutions (e.g. WorldFish, Saint Mary's University, Duke University, Wageningen University), through the ongoing IHH study and new activities such as the development of the "Go-Small-Scale-Fishing" card game with the University of Wageningen, directly sponsored by the project. Expansion of these collaborations into new directions is continuously sought, for example with Saint Mary's University in Canada to address stewardship issues in SSF communities (SSF Stewardship. n.d.). Alongside the formal partnerships and collaborations described here and above, the project has also informally engaged with the EDF in SSF conversations and activities of common interest. Large environmental NGOs such as EDF are aware of the mistrust of social movements towards them. They have openly pursued their agenda in support of SSF through, for example, the establishment of the Small-Scale Fisheries Resource and Collaboration Hub ("SSF Hub") (see section 3.2.1.4) and acknowledge the benefits of their relationship with FAO to take forward a wide range of topics, (e.g. blue foods, etc.). As part of the continued trust-building process across all SSF stakeholders, it is important to keep the links visible and transparent to lesser the possible impression of agenda high-jacking or dominance.

**Finding 17.** Wherever possible, the project has found entry points in other ongoing projects and used these to expand its influence and promotion of the SSF Guidelines. This has generated reciprocal benefits (supporting SIDA-SSF project activities whilst widening the scope or impact of other project's activities), and needs to remain a strategic approach to project implementation.

93. For 54 percent of e-survey respondents (n=109), the project has been successful in collaborating with other fisheries projects and initiatives. These interactions are integral to the project's overall approach to influence and add-on rather than create from scratch. Key informants from the Coastal Fisheries Initiative in West Africa, the Fish4ACP project in the United Republic of Tanzania, CC4Fish project in the Caribbean confirmed the synergies and reciprocal benefits of, for example, co-funded activities (e.g. SSF awareness workshops and legal reviews) and the direct provision of additional funds to expand the scope of an activity (e.g. recruitment of a local NGO for additional value chain development in Cabo Verde, under the CFI-WA), as well as, reciprocally, the opportunity for these other projects to build on the advances of the SSF-SIDA project itself (e.g. FISH4ACP consolidating the capacity of the United Republic of Tanzania's network of associations of women fishworkers as it seeks to improve fish value chains in the country). Complementary projects also help pool human resources and increase human capacity at national level: for example, in Madagascar, the FMM project will contribute a member of personnel to work closely with the National Project Coordinator and support field activities; the SWIOFC-Nairobi Convention project (GCP/SFS/005/SWE) is cost-sharing NPCs in the United Republic of Tanzania and Madagascar, and is co-funding SSF organizational strengthening in Mozambique with the Korea-funded co-management project (GCP/GLO/080/ROK).
94. Indirect interactions, such as those ongoing with the CECAF-PESCAO project in Central and West Africa in the broader context of SSF umbrella programme, can also stimulate the incorporation of SSF considerations in these other initiatives. For example, mechanisms to integrate socioeconomic data related to SSF (linked to the IHH study) as part of the improvement of the data collection protocols of the CECAF Artisanal Fisheries Working Group, are being explored towards the standardization of SSF reporting in the CECAF region. Regional Fishery Bodies are an important mechanism for sustainable fisheries management, and the "infiltration" of SSF issues in their agendas and functioning, as is currently the case with CECAF whose Artisanal Fisheries Working

Group explicitly mentions the SSF Guidelines in its terms of reference, is a noteworthy development.

95. Despite overall positive and complementary engagement with ongoing projects or initiatives, and the transparent process to select and include new countries in the project, the size of the project intervention in comparison to the ones it is embedded in should also be taken into account. This could minimize the risk of project activities being drowned in larger initiatives and yielding few visible results (as is the case in Côte d'Ivoire where the SSF-SIDA project is dwarfed by the CFI-WA initiative).

**Finding 18.** Initial contacts with non-fisheries authorities at national levels were not systematically pursued. The role of governments in advocating for SSF within national governance was insufficiently explored.

96. At country level, the involvement of non-fisheries ministries has been limited to inception activities but not always purposefully pursued thereon despite important connections, notably with regards to social and gender issues. In Oman, for example, it was noted that the Ministry of Social Development had little awareness of the SSF Guidelines (Annex 1). There are examples of involvement of the private sector, for example supermarket chains in Oman, and the development of public-private partnerships to strengthen fish value chains in Cabo Verde, but this is not systematically sought.
97. In the Philippines – and potentially elsewhere – it was felt that the government, as a valued and trusted partner in the implementation of the project, could increase its advocacy for SSF within its constituencies, and promote more actively action in support of SSF and the recognition of its actors – beyond its policy responsibilities and the awareness raised through the project. For example, as was suggested in the Philippines case study (Annex 2), working in closer relationship with the executing partner on how the project could complement their plans, but also with international NGOs working on the fisheries nexus or university extension services implementing SSF projects, would strengthen the partnership base for the benefit of the project. In Oman, it was also felt that widening the partnership base could increase the impact of the activities (Annex 1).

### 3.5 Potential sustainability and impact

*EQ 6. What are the sustainability prospects of the advances the project has made and what is their potential to contribute to long-term impact?*

**Finding 19.** Prospects of sustainability are uneven. Since its inception, and as part of its influence, the project has seized opportunities that will increase the likelihood of pursuing the implementation of the SSF Guidelines beyond project end. Target countries are also deploying efforts and showing initiative in this regard. However, pilot activities are still on a small scale, and capacity at national level and in SSF organizations not sufficient yet for impact at scale to happen without additional support.

98. Earlier sections have highlighted the extent to which SSF issues have become amplified at all levels of fisheries governance. Partnerships and actions around SSF have kept growing, which signals visibility and ownership – two of the ingredients of sustainability. The project seems to be pursuing a two-pronged strategy to ensure that efforts for SSF Guidelines implementation are consolidated and pursued after the project finishes through i) embedding SSF in other initiatives and ongoing developments external to the project itself; ii) encouraging replication of activities and countries' initiatives to do so. For example, SSF is now embedded in the UN Decade of Family Farming (FAO, 2021d) (until 2028, with pilots addressing SSF issues in Ecuador and Togo, already covered by Family Farming support) and there is an example of an external programme on the sustainable development of fisheries and aquaculture currently being designed between the

Costa Rican Institute of Fisheries and Aquaculture and the World Bank that will expand the model of Marine Areas for Responsible Fisheries elaborated under the NORAD and SIDA-SSF projects. The United Republic of Tanzania, that completed its NPOA-SSF, is actively looking to integrate the NPOA-SSF in the different activities of the ministry (including the forthcoming Fisheries Master Plan for the United Republic of Tanzania) and building a coalition of external partners. SSF are also mainstreamed in the work of FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Livelihoods Team, and steps are taken to recruit an SSF statistician – a significant step that will not only expand the scope of the IHH study but could potentially revolutionize FAO’s longstanding fisheries data collection and reporting protocols. Here it will be important to examine the extent to which the pillars of FAO’s newly released blue transformation (FAO, 2022c) account for SSF. At national and organizational levels, it was reported that some organizations have integrated SSF considerations and fisheries topics in their capacity development courses as a result of their involvement in the project. This is the case of Zubair Enterprises Development Centre in Oman (Annex 1 and of the African Institute for Economic and Social Development (*Institut Africain pour le Développement Économique et Social*, INADES) – Formations in Côte d’Ivoire, placing them in a good position to replicate their training on financial literacy, business plans, co-management and gender to other small-scale fishers and fishworkers. It is also the case of IOI-SA that has strengthened SSF topics in its work.

99. The project has also been encouraging the replication/scaling up of activities across countries. Intentions to prepare NPOA-SSF are expressed beyond the countries initially targeted, which bodes well for the future even if, so far, the expression of interest is limited to Africa. For example, Malawi has started NPOA-SSF development process and Uganda is in the pipeline. In Senegal, a letter of agreement with the ministry was signed to adapt the formulation process with the involvement of SSF organizations. Namibia, the other country with a completed NPOA-SSF, is now actively seeking donor funds and building a supportive ecosystem of partners around the implementation of specific aspects of its NPOA-SSF. In Madagascar, the project is confident that the NPOA-SSF formulation process it has initiated will be completed by the end of the project and has already launched the procedure to mobilize the necessary funds for implementation through a Technical Cooperation Project with FAO. Some countries are exploring other sustainability mechanisms: in Cabo Verde, it is the establishment of public-private partnerships to pursue its work in support of fish value chains; in Peru, it is the potential to harness “power of schools as SSF monitoring and learning hubs” through the integration of creative SSF learning in school curricula. It is too early to be able to evaluate their sustainability potential.
100. Prospects for the sustainability of the momentum generated by IYafa 2022 appear good and several key informants were keen to pursue the implementation of the IYafa Plan of Action beyond 2023. Keeping the IYafa’s international and regional steering committees going beyond 2022 will be important in this regard. Taking IYafa beyond 2022 is also the intention of EDF with which the project has engaged, as part of their continued support to SSF, through the SSF Hub and future initiatives.
101. The project is also leaving an important legacy of project materials, especially guidance covering the fundamentals of SSF Guidelines implementation at national level such as the guide for Legislating for Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries (FAO, 2020d), the NPOA-SSF formulation toolkit (in press), and IOI-SA’s e-learning course on regional SSF Governance. It will be important to promote them and publicize their existence for sustainability.
102. However, despite these encouraging prospects of sustainability, pilot activities at country level are still young and small in scale. Their scaling out will need to be encouraged and supported so that they can make a difference to a larger number of beneficiaries. Many interviewees emphasized that more funding was required to enhance sustainability prospects. Results from the



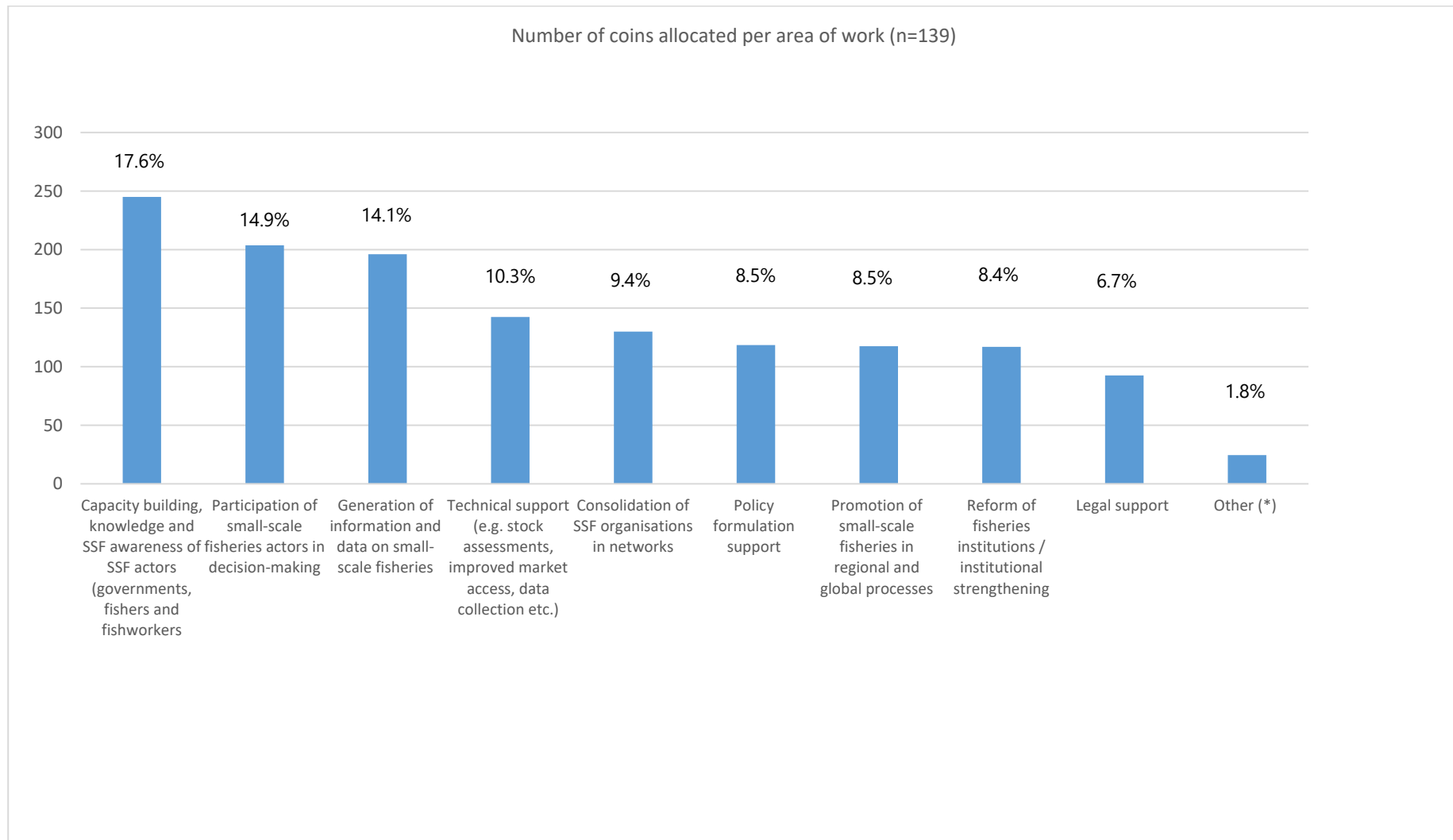
e-survey confirmed this by underlining that the four project outcomes have reached various status of sustainability (self-sustaining, at a stable stopping point/stepwise or not self-sustaining/contiguous).<sup>8</sup> Outcome 1 (awareness of SSF is raised) is deemed to have reached a stable stopping point. Opinions on outcomes 2 (the science–policy interface on SSF is strengthened) and outcome 4 (implementation of the project and support to the SSF-GSF) are shared equally between being at a stable stopping point and not self-sustaining. More worryingly, outcome 3 (SSF stakeholders are empowered) stands out as "non self-sustaining" for 43 percent of respondents (n=106) – the highest percentage. Indeed, concerns related to the capacity of SSF organizations and social movements to drive the agenda have been voiced and the future steering role of the SSF-GSF is unclear (see Annex 3).

103. The (Regional) Advisory Groups suffer from a lack of human and financial resources. Their continuation will be conditional to the generation of their own resources (as per their terms of reference). The IPC Working Group on Fisheries is well placed to continue its facilitation and support to SSF social movements, but also depends on external resources to do so. Moving SSF agenda forward has incompressible operating costs such as meeting attendance and logistics for dialogue. Without this invisible "glue", some key informants feared that the whole SSF system would collapse. As highlighted in section 3.2, the theory of change assumptions are partially fulfilled and the capacity of governments taking responsibility of the SSF agenda and NPOA-SSF implementation through allocation of financial and human resources is still to be demonstrated. There are also few signs that governments are advocating for the rights of small-scale fishers and fishworkers in potentially controversial national development discourses and directions, such as the development of the blue economy, and it was felt that, at country level, opportunities to integrate the results of the project's activities and pilots in national development initiatives were not systematically seized. For example, in the Philippines, the interface between the project and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources' planning of actions was reported as weak (e.g. Annex 2).
104. Respondents to the e-survey were also asked their opinions on areas of work that should be emphasized in the future to ensure the sustainability of the project results and SSF in the long term (Figure 3). It shows that priority support should now be placed on SSF actors and their organizations (i.e. social movements, civil society organizations and professional organizations representing the interests of small-scale fishers and fishworkers), both in terms of continuous capacity building and awareness and support to participate in decision-making. Complementary activities, such as improved SSF data collection and analysis, and technical support pre and post-capture are also seen as important to pursue in parallel to firm up the sustainability of the project results, along with more general institutional support. Aside from the continuous capacity building of SSF (non-state) actors and their organizations, which stands out and echo the need highlighted above, these results also suggest that the promotion of the SSF Guidelines is very much a "package" which all components must be worked on simultaneously for robust and meaningful progress to be achieved.

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<sup>8</sup> Self-sustaining: An outcome that will sustain itself and/or go to scale after the project has finished without significant further external investment. Self-sustaining outcomes depend on the project triggering a causal and dynamic mechanism; Stepwise: A process towards an outcome that reaches a stable stopping point. The main outcome has not yet been achieved but progress can be put on hold for some time without major reversals, e.g. development of a strategy to be implemented sometime in the future. A stepwise process may or may not eventually lead to a self-sustaining outcome; Contiguous: A need to continue to fund the work if the outcome is to be maintained or repeated, and when there is no expectation of a self-sustaining causal mechanism that will continue after the project ends. Future outcomes require the government or a donor to provide the necessary funding to do it again.

**Figure 3. Priority areas of work to ensure the sustainability of the project results and SSF in the long term**



**Notes:**

Respondents were given 10 "coins" of a value of 1 each to allocate to pre-defined areas of work.

(\*) Suggested areas of work included: policy implementation in support of SSF, integration of SSF in fishery management frameworks, gender considerations and women's participation at all levels of decision-making, IP's rights and responsibilities, capacity support in post-harvest, the SSF-GSF.

Source: Evaluation e-survey.

### 3.6 Project management

*EQ 7. To what extent are the management and implementation arrangements appropriate?*

**Finding 20.** The project administration and oversight were excellent and smooth. Greater guidance could be provided to partners who are new to FAO collaboration procedures. The strategic role of FAO regional offices has been reduced with the greater involvement of FAO country offices.

105. All key informants expressed their high satisfaction with, and appreciation of, working with the project, which was confirmed more generally by the e-survey results. The SSF core team was praised for its dedication, reactivity as well as flair and tact in navigating a complex landscape of stakeholders and agendas.
106. Administrative arrangements such as field budget allocations and letters of agreements, as well as contracting procedures were deemed to be effective to very effective by the majority of e-survey respondents (57 percent, n=106). The SSF core team at FAO headquarters, which has expanded in size since the NORAD project, is effectively coordinating and dealing with all aspects of the project. Key informants reported that any administrative issue that arose was quickly addressed and that the occasionally-reported typical delays caused by cumbersome FAO procedures were well managed, although for new partners onboard, "the learning curve was steep". Some new partners reported being unsure on their reporting requirements, for example level of detail to go into, and insufficiently introduced to, or somewhat intimidated, by FAO procedures. In the case where a country was hosting multiple SSF-related initiatives, for example countries in West Africa, advantages of sharing personnel were reported (this is why collaboration with the CFI-WAS was sought in the first place), but this was not systematic. Compared to countries where each project had some dedicated personnel and focal points (liaising with one another), Côte d'Ivoire, where the CFI-WA initiative is much larger than the SSF-SIDA project (see section 3.4) and shares the same National Project Coordinator with the SIDA-SSF project, oversight and reporting on SSF-SIDA activities were somewhat lost.
107. The project SSF Technical Network, constituted of Fisheries Officers in all FAO offices as well as officers in non-fisheries units (e.g. FAO Legal Office, Indigenous Peoples team, gender team, communication team, etc.), is fulfilling its support role and was deemed very useful by all interviewed members, especially to link up and exchange ideas and even broaden the scope of other projects (exchange on a GEF-funded fisheries project in Namibia (FAO, n.d.b.) was a good example of this). While the Project Task Force has been regularly providing oversight and interacting regularly with the SSF core team, the focus of its work has shifted to IYAFSA 2022 matters in the last year, which members do not resent and is justified given the support given by the project to IYAFSA, but has somewhat detracted attention away from other project important issues. The role of FAO regional offices in project execution has diminished with FAO decentralization in favour of country offices that have been successfully overseeing execution at national level (see section 3.4). As FAO Regional Fisheries Officers tend to be overloaded with other (non-project) responsibilities, they provide strategic regional guidance on the implementation of global projects such this one.

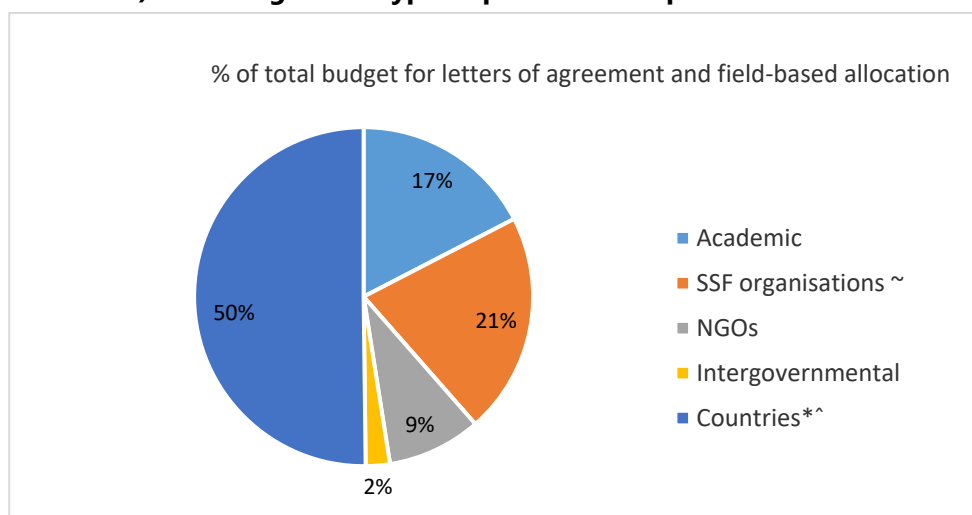
**Finding 21.** Adaptive management, coupled with regular monitoring, enabled the project to cope well with unforeseen circumstances and to seize opportunities for collaboration whenever they arose. Half of the project's budget has so far been spent, in line with expectations, but rather unevenly across the project outcomes.

108. The project has adapted very well to COVID-19 constraints, political situations and country contexts, generating some unexpected benefits and new learning, notably in relation to the redesign and wider outreach of training courses (e.g. Oman's virtual training labs, IOI-SA's e-

learning course) or events (e.g. a turned-virtual GEF-funded fisheries project event initially focused on Namibian participants opened its floor to participants from other countries in the region). Adaptive management and flexible project implementation mechanisms allowed seizing opportunities, for example financing SSF representatives to attend the UNOC 2022, COFI and other events, expansion of activities in Ecuador and Togo under the UN Decade of Family Farming and so on, as well as new partnerships possibilities, such as bringing new NGOs onboard, thus widening the project resonance.

109. The monitoring of project activities and progress is regular. There are good upward flows of information from countries (National Project Coordinators) and partners through the field-based allocations quarterly reports and letter of agreement implementation reports, although these could be more detailed and explanatory. Regular contacts and prompts between field-based allocations and letter of agreement signatories and the project administrator mean that issues can be identified early, and timely technical advice sought from the rest of the team, with an overall positive effect on smooth implementation. No major issue in the implementation of letter of agreement was reported so far. However, downward flows of information within countries are weaker: insufficient transmission of project products, such as needs assessment reports, to local stakeholders undermines the integration of project lessons and learning in local programmes and policies (e.g. the Philippines, see Annex 2).
110. A reasonable allocation of project funds (21 percent of the project budget) to SSF organizations, including the IPC Working Group on Fisheries and both professional and advocacy-based SSF representative organizations (Figure 4) is likely to have supported greater dialogue among SSF stakeholders.

**Figure 4. Allocation of SIDA project funds (through letters of agreement and field-based allocation) according to the type of partners in implementation**



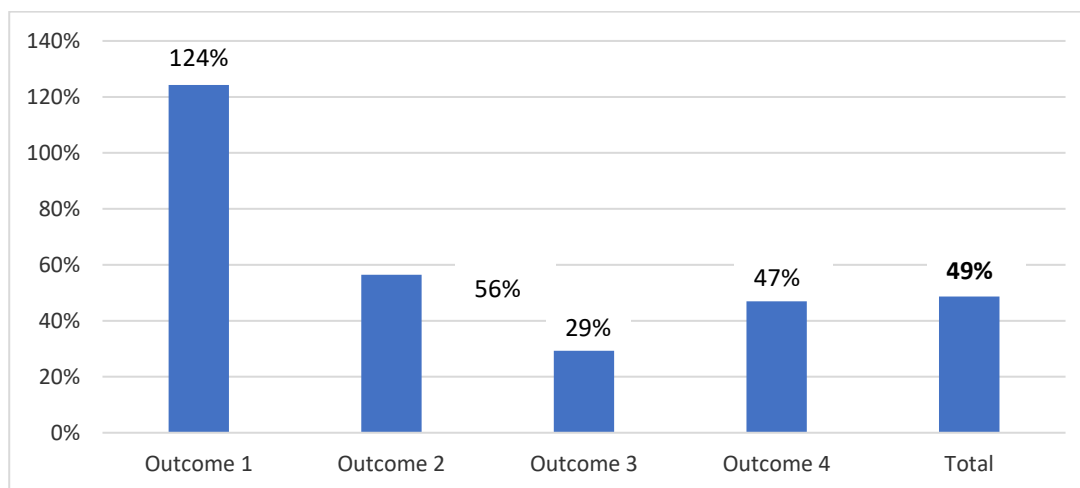
Notes: ~inclusive of social movements and professional organizations; \*target and non-target countries receiving support from the project; ^this may include an allocation to national level SSF organizations.

Source: prepared by the evaluation team on the basis of project budget figures (as of 01 July 2022) provided by the SSF Core Team.

111. The level of spending (49 percent of the total) is reasonable considering the savings made from reduced travelling, but also uneven across outcomes (Figure 5), with spending on activities under Outcome 1 dominating (124 percent). This may be explained by the fact that efforts were focused on the preparation of communication, outreach and learning materials during the pandemic, while money earmarked to support the travel of non-state actors to meetings (under outcomes 3 and 4) could not be spent. The difficulty to spend funds earmarked for stakeholder empowerment activities due to the impossibility to travel during the COVID-19 pandemic could also explain why

this outcome is lagging and not yet self-sustainable (see sections 3.2.1.3 and 3.5). Budgetary planning suggests an acceleration of expenditures over the remaining period of project implementation and use of all funds (if not even slightly more) by the end of 2023.

**Figure 5. Expenditure (\*) as a percentage of the budget allocated to each project outcome**



Note: (\*) as of 01 July 2022.

Source: prepared by the evaluation team on the basis of project expenditure reports provided by the SSF Core Team.

**Finding 22.** Despite efforts to connect all project partners, there are insufficient communication flows across project partners and missed opportunities for learning and synergizing implementation efforts.

112. The SSF core team holds frequent and regular meetings with many project stakeholders in FAO offices and in countries. The approach to communication has been mostly vertical, namely radiating outward to stakeholders from FAO headquarters. This has been done very effectively, often on a one-to-one/personal contact basis, and created the impressive network of partners that the project is capitalizing on (see section 3.4). However, to the exception of the three countries already connected through the CFI-WA, horizontal communication – across countries and partners – is a bottleneck. Project implementing partners felt insufficiently connected to one another and insufficiently aware of how they fitted in the project as a whole. While this was not affecting their work per se, it was felt that knowing how they would contribute to the bigger picture would stimulate them further, notably to connect with others working on common areas of interest.
113. The SSF Guidelines monthly newsletter and the SSF Guidelines webpage, which is constantly growing in terms of sub-pages, including specifically on the SIDA-SSF project, are part of the effort to better share information and knowledge among different project stakeholders. However, key informants also reported not being aware of what other countries were doing even within the same region, and to be missing opportunities to connect to share their experiences with others, especially now that the project is more advanced in its implementation. Contacts between Madagascar and Peru (though outside the scope of the project itself) and between Malawi and the United Republic of Tanzania for tips on setting up institutional structures to support the NPOA-SSF formulation process were reported, but these connections remain ad hoc, almost coincidental. Their establishment has been hampered by the impossibility of face-to-face meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic and their general lack in the project’s organization. This could change with the resuming of travel. Opportunities for liaison and information flows at country level, between different partners and FAO country offices, seem also to be missed when a collaboration is established directly between FAO headquarters and a new partner, as is the case in Peru with NGO Beyond the Surface International.

114. There are many learning opportunities around common areas of interest, for example across countries/governments on NPOA-SSF formulation processes (Madagascar-Namibia-the United Republic of Tanzania, in the future with Togo, in the Africa region), across implementation partners on SSF educational approaches (BSI-IOI-Myanmar), or across island developing States (Cabo Verde- Madagascar) but opportunities to do so have not been stimulated. Partners entering the project reported not being introduced to the project as a whole and did not have a good idea of how their work and inputs contributed to it. They also lacked introduction to its other key partners (e.g. who is doing what, where), and therefore would not know where/who to reach out to when they would like to share or receive information on a particular topic, aside from members of the core team at headquarters.



## 4. Conclusions and recommendations

### 4.1 Conclusions

**Conclusion 1.** The project is confirming the universality of the SSF Guidelines. It has consolidated the progress initiated under the NORAD project and continued to expand in both scope and depth.

115. Context matters but is not a prerequisite to make a difference because entry points for SSF-related interventions can always be found. Initiatives were creatively designed around constraints, they reached target groups and have started to make a difference. Inclusion and equity at the heart of SSF Guidelines and close collaboration with partners with similar concerns keep the spotlight on equity and justice in SSF.
116. The SIDA-SSF project has consolidated the progress made under the NORAD project (GCP/GLO/645/NOR) and continued to expand it in both scope and depth. Firming up this upward development trajectory is all the more needed as small-scale fishers and fishworkers will remain increasingly challenged by new development trends that have emerged (e.g. blue economy) or worsened (e.g. climate change) in the meantime.

**Conclusion 2.** The project was well managed and has successfully stricken a delicate balance between influential actions at high level of governance and actions making a visible difference at local level. It has played a facilitative and catalytic role for others to be able to move the SSF agenda forward. It has also made a difference within selected countries by improving the policy environment in support of SSF but there is room for emulation and upscaling.

117. Despite its breadth and complexity, the project's effective and strategic management have enabled to successfully strike a delicate balance between influential actions with long-term but diffuse and uncertain impact at high level of governance on the one hand, and targeted actions at local and national levels bringing about tangible changes on the other. For example, diplomacy and influence through the creation of the Regional Advisory Groups and amplification of their voice and recognition is slowly bringing about change, while changes at local level (in a particular location, with a particular group) can be more directly traced to targeted project actions (e.g. training skills to target groups). Given the influential nature of the project, as the "glue" behind many SSF parts and processes, it is difficult to grasp its tangible advances and attribute results directly to the project. The rising of SSF in national agendas and global discussions around ocean sustainability thanks to project support for SSF non-state actors and social movements' attendance to high-level meetings and negotiations is a case in point. Balancing multiple partners' interests and ways of working is however a difficult exercise, which the SSF core team has navigated well but which requires more time, funds as well as reciprocal trust and understanding on behalf of FAO and project partners, to firm up.
118. The project has made a difference at national level by improving the policy environment in some countries in support of SSF, but there is room for emulation. While ownership – and thus sustainability potential – is evident at national level, and intentions for adopting project approaches have been expressed, many activities at local level are still in early stages and could be expanded and upscaled to other target groups and areas. Greater awareness of the SSF Guidelines at local and national levels would better equip government officials to advocate for SSF. Equally, more sharing of experiences across project countries and partners would further stimulate the promotion and uptake of the SSF Guidelines.

**Conclusion 3.** The project was an important, but not the sole, contributor to the significant changes and milestones achieved, at different levels and with regards to different topics and areas of work under the



SSF Guidelines. As a consequence, attributing change to the project was difficult except for NPOA-SSF. Partnerships are a cornerstone of project implementation, but exchanges of experiences across partners sharing similar interests are limited.

119. The project has sown many seeds, but their growing is now mostly outside its direct control, which is denoting both ownership of the SSF beacon, as well as potential risks for misinterpretation. The extent to which the trajectory of implementation of the SSF Guidelines will be safeguarded by the SSF-GSF is however unclear and will merit a discussion with all concerned parties. The project's contribution to progress towards outcomes to achievement of milestones and to uptake and mainstreaming of the SSF agenda is evident but, with the exception of NPOA-SSF, these advances cannot be solely attributed to the project.

**Conclusion 4.** Emphasis on non-state actors was timely and they are contributing to the momentum for implementing the SSF Guidelines, but structures to enable a coherent process and constructive dialogue for moving forward are only just being created/still weak. Vertical linkages across levels of governance require strengthening.

120. The place given to non-state actors in the project, in particular social movements, civil society organizations and representative organizations of fishers and fishworkers, has been strategic and laid an important basis for their greater involvement in pursuing awareness raising and work in support of the SSF Guidelines. However, more support is required to fine-tune and enhance the functioning of the structures meant to enable them to play this role, such as the newly created Regional Advisory Groups of the SSF-GSF and other regional platforms on the one hand, as well as strengthened capacity and engagement of non-state actor organizations at national/local level on the other. While linkages between regional and global non-state actor organizations are strong in both Africa and Asia (so far), the link between national and regional representative organizations appears weaker, in particular in the former. Increasing support and engagement with national non-state actor SSF organizations will therefore be key to strengthen their advocacy role and ultimately the empowerment of their members. There are also issues with the capacities (internal and external communication, representativeness and leadership) of some non-state actors. Finally, there is a beginning of trust across non-state stakeholders (civil society organizations/social movements, environmental NGOs and academic partners) which bodes well for the pursuit of future dialogue and will be key to pursue further impact at local level, but will require time and understanding to continue to grow.

**Conclusion 5.** The project has been facilitating the social and economic transformation of SSF but the youth, Indigenous Peoples and women (to a lesser extent) received less attention. There is little evidence that the project is also facilitating the environmental transformation of SSF.

121. The evaluation has highlighted the wide range of social (e.g. awareness of human rights and behavioural change), institutional (e.g. plans of action and reviewed legislation) and economic (e.g. raised income from improved post-harvest processing and organizational skills) transformations that have been achieved or set in motion through the intervention of the project and its partners. However, the youth and Indigenous Peoples deserve greater attention, and women continued support, for this transformation to benefit and empower them too. Furthermore, advances with regards to SSF management and co-management, in association with enhanced ecosystem conservation and stewardship, have so far taken a back seat and need to receive more attention.

## 4.2 Recommendations

122. The proposed recommendations address areas of attention moving forward identified by the evaluation to amplify the resonance and impact of the project as a whole. All recommendations

are at the attention of the SSF core team unless specified otherwise. Pointers for consideration specific to the case studies are presented in Annexes 1–3, for interested readers.

## Approaches and priorities

**Recommendation 1.** The project should continue to pursue its two-pronged approach of working with and supporting non-state actor organizations, and emphasizing actions at national and subnational levels. Support to the SSF-GSF structures to ensure stewardship of the SSF Guidelines are strengthened and should be continued. Beginnings of trust across SSF partners, as well as the partnership with the IPC Working Group on Fisheries, should be nurtured. [Conclusions 3 and 4]

123. Support to non-state actors needs to be pursued. This should be done first through continued support to Crocevia / IPC Working Group on Fisheries (facilitation role as a caring and patient partner), in partnership with SwedBio, because the IPC Working Group on Fisheries can effectively enhance the visibility, recognition and modus operandi of the Regional Advisory Groups as conduit to amplify the voice and rights of small-scale fishers and fishworkers. As trust across non-state actors is gradually rebuilding, it is essential that social movements/civil society organizations remain in the driving seat, even if this process is slow. Mechanisms enabling dialogue driven by social movements, such as multi-non state actor stakeholders' webinars on all aspects of the SSF Guidelines have been fruitful and should be supported, and a new meeting of all interested non-state actor parties considered when the time to do so is deemed ripe. Synergies between the "SSF people-centred Methodology to monitor the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small Scall Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication", developed by the Advisory Group together with the IPC Working Group on Fisheries, and the SSF monitoring, evaluation and learning tool stemming from the IHH study should also be sought. In the meanwhile, an eye should be kept on the evolution of the relationship between the Regional Advisory Group-Africa and potentially overlapping or complementary African Non-State Actors Coordination Platform in Fisheries and Aquaculture (and its subregional branches).
124. In line with the strengthening of non-state actor organizations under Recommendation 1, support to the functioning of the SSF-GSF itself should be continued because it constitutes a robust framework for SSF stewardship and advocacy. Creation of bridges across the four structures of the SSF-GSF, including a potentially new role for the Knowledge Sharing Platform (see also Recommendation 6), should be explored by all those involved in the SSF-GSF, including FAO/SSF core team, donors such as SwedBio, and other interested partners. More resources should be allocated to FAO to perform its coordination role as Secretariat of the SSF-GSF.
125. In parallel, support to non-state actors should be continued by strengthening and working through local/national and regional non-state SSF organizations, such as CLPA in Senegal, AWFISHET for women across the African continent. Identifying "connectors", that is, people with leadership qualities or organizations who have the capacity to facilitate the connections and vertical linkages across national and regional levels, which tend to be weaker, will be important in this regard.
126. At national level, NPOA-SSF formulation should be further promoted and supported in more countries, using the tools and guidance developed for this purpose as they will enhance coherence in dissemination, process and uptake. In this regard, issues that may potentially arise with the formulation and implementation of NPOA-SSF in the context of decentralized administrations, where small-scale, inshore fisheries are not a union/federal matter, should be kept in mind. Opportunities for fully engaging SSF non-state actor organizations' in NPOA-SSF processes (formulation and implementation) should also be actively sought. In-country work should focus on the timely completion of current activities/pilots and urgently consider how to

replicate/scale them up and out to other areas and/or groups. In doing so, greater attention to awareness of the SSF Guidelines should be paid. This could be done, for example, through the building of some “SSF Guidelines 101” in all planned training and skills enhancement courses. The mainstreaming of the IHH data collection in national fisheries data collection and analysis should be supported, in parallel with the development of synergies with the country pilots for monitoring protocols for SSF Guidelines implementation.

## Thematic areas

**Recommendation 2.** Greater emphasis should be placed on environmental issues related to SSF. Ecosystem approach to SSF, co-management, tenure, inland fisheries, and biodiversity conservation are interlinked areas that need to receive more attention. [Conclusion 5]

127. Environmental aspects need to receive greater attention so that the transformation of SSF be complete (as per the project objective). This would mean, on one hand, greater engagement with non-fisheries/environmental organizations, mostly e-NGOs, advocating for ocean/coastal conservation and partaking more actively in discussions related, for example, to marine protection such as the marine protected area 30x30 initiative. This engagement should be conducted as part of the continuous reconciliation of diverging views and misunderstandings (eNGO vs fishers/SSF), and potentially envisaged through the Knowledge Sharing Platform (under its current name or relabelled) – should its role to do so be endorsed by all members of the SSF-GSF structures. Capitalizing on IPC’s strategic positioning in facilitating this dialogue (for example through its working group on biodiversity) should also be considered.
128. It would also mean, on the other hand, a greater focus on the management of SSF stocks and resources according to an ecosystem approach to SSF. Close collaboration initiated in relation to fisheries co-management with a Korean-funded project (in Mozambique) and the SWIOFC-Nairobi Convention project (GCP/SFS/005/SWE) (in Madagascar, Mozambique and the United Republic of Tanzania) should be pursued, and new ones, such as the streamlining of the ecosystem approach to fisheries (EAF) and the SSF Guidelines and developing training materials that more explicitly shows how the two approaches are complementary (with the EAF Nansen Programme) (FAO, 2022e) should be explored. Greater attention to the environmental dimension of the SSF Guidelines would also provide entry points to address complementary issues of biodiversity conservation; inland fisheries and tenure/co-management, the latter also supporting progress to achieving SDG 14.b on providing access to resources.

## Collaborations and partnerships

**Recommendation 3.** Partnerships must be pursued and widened, while the structures to ensure stewardship of the SSF Guidelines are strengthened for replication at scale. Project partners would benefit from being introduced to one another and the wider project, and partnerships from being widened to non-fisheries ministries. Governments could be used to a greater extent to strengthen SSF advocacy within national governance [Conclusion 3]

129. Replication at scale in countries requires greater involvement of multiple agencies and links with fisheries and non-fisheries initiatives so that results of pilots can be integrated in national initiatives, and the formulation integrated in national programmes for human well-being.
130. Collaboration with FAO’s specialized units such as Indigenous Peoples, Gender and Partnerships Units has shown its benefits for the outreach and influence of the project. This should be pursued, along with engagement with members of the SSF Technical Network, in particular with regards to EAF-SSF management issues.

## Social inclusion and targeting

**Recommendation 4.** Engagement with the youth should be rethought, governments – including non-fisheries ministries – more involved, and focus on HRBA with women, Indigenous Peoples and other marginalized groups, increased. [Conclusion 2 and 5]

131. Improved training courses that distinguish educated (youth) versus less educated trainees, incorporating technologies to a greater extent and accompanied with leadership, management and organizational skills would not only attract and respond to the aspirations of a greater number of young fishers and fishworkers, but also contribute to the modernization of small-scale fishing and post-harvest activities.
132. Awareness about the SSF Guidelines, and advocacy for SSF, should be raised further at all levels of national governance, from local to national without forgetting mid-levels in decentralized administrations. Non-fisheries ministries and the private sector should be brought in these efforts.
133. Human rights awareness of women living in fishing communities and working in fish value chains, as well as with Indigenous Peoples and other marginalized groups, should be emphasized to speed up change and progress towards their empowerment. Any intervention focused on livelihood improvement (through equipment, training, etc.) with these groups should follow a human-rights based approach.

## Project administration and oversight

**Recommendation 5.** Future project management should focus on improving the onboarding of new partners and their integration in the project as a whole, while enhancing strategic connections at national levels. [Conclusion 2]

134. More guidance should be provided to partners new to FAO and unfamiliar with some basic procedures of direct interest to them (e.g. letter of agreement) so that they know what to expect and what is expected of them, administratively. Simple “how to” or FAQ guide on the most common procedures used by the project, for example letter of agreement reporting, publishing a news story, etc. could be prepared to this effect. For partners joining the project for the first time, an introduction to the project itself (not to the SSF Guidelines which presumably would be already known to them) and to who is involved in what and where, would increase their understanding of their own contribution and sense of belonging to the project, as well as knowledge of who’s who. At country level, the SSF core team should also facilitate the connection between all concerned parties (e.g. FAO country office, new partners – especially if directly contracted from headquarters, members of SSF-GSF or IYAFA structures, representatives of civil society organizations, social movements and/or NGOs as appropriate).
135. While it is understood that the Project Task Force is playing a key role in the coordination of IYAFA 2022 celebrations, project management considerations should not be sidelined. The project’s exit and potential future should take central stage now that project end is in sight.

## Learning and knowledge sharing

**Recommendation 6.** Common themes of interest should be used to anchor and stimulate the sharing of experiences across project partners and countries, and exchanges across SSF non-state actors (SSF organizations and researchers). It should also be ensured that project learning feeds back into local and national policies and programmes. [Conclusion 2]

136. NPOA-SSF formulation, educational and learning approaches, the fact of being an island state, are experiences and characteristics that a number of countries and implementing partners have

gone through or have in common. Opportunities for bringing people together to exchange on shared topics and experiences should be sought, and horizontal communications and exchanges across countries and partners with similar interests or related activities encouraged, without the systematic direct intervention of the SSF core team. These exchanges should also consider bringing in other actors such as SSF researchers from around the world. The potential of the Knowledge Sharing Platform in supporting such peer learning should be explored.

137. At national level, monitoring and evaluation, learning, and knowledge management systems should be strengthened to capture how change happens, and how learning from project experiences can be shared with local governments and thus integrated into local programmes and policies, and replicated and scaled up. This would allow to better understand and seize opportunities for alignment and synergies with various stakeholders working on SSF issues.

### **Place of SSF in “blue” narratives and initiatives**

**Recommendation 7.** At the attention of FAO: the place of SSF in the blue economy paradigm and real-world initiatives should be carefully examined. FAO should emphasize the importance of the SSF Guidelines principles and the accounting of small-scale fishers and fishworkers’ concerns in these potentially controversial developments to its constituents. Coherence of the SSF Guidelines with FAO’s blue transformation strategy should be ensured. [Conclusions 1 and 5]

138. The development of the blue economy is an emerging threat for SSF and could jeopardize the work of the project so far because the fisheries interests are typically underrepresented compared to other powerful blue economy players (e.g. energy, shipping, tourism), and those of SSF even more so. This is of particular concern because representative organizations of small-scale fishers and fishworkers are not fully empowered and representations of their interests has not been rising as fast as the speed at which blue economy developments are taking place.<sup>9</sup> It is therefore essential and urgent that the place of SSF considerations in blue economy discourses and intentions be scrutinized, and that FAO steps up advice to its Members and influence to blue economy investors (e.g. international development banks) for a cautious approach to blue economy that does not give way to economic development pressures at the expense of the human rights and well-being of small-scale fishers and fishworkers.
139. Finally, it should be ensured that FAO’s new blue transformation motto and agenda (FAO, 2022c) are coherent with the SSF Guidelines, and that these are fully mainstreamed in FAO’s blue transformation.

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<sup>9</sup> The threat of blue economy development to small-scale fishers and fishworkers in Africa, in particular, is documented in Childs and Hicks, 2019, for example.

## 5. Lessons learned

140. With regards to the evaluation itself, the “fudging” of the project with sister initiatives (the preceding NORAD project and FMM extension, the Coastal Fisheries Initiative in West Africa [CFI-WA, and others] meant that key informants and survey respondents had much difficulty isolating efforts and attributing progress or change to a single donor project. In those circumstances, when influence complementarity with similar initiatives play a large role, and attribution is not possible, an evaluation of the programme as a whole, instead of the single projects, would be more pertinent.
141. With regards to processes and the participation of social movement and civil society organizations, time is essential to create truly democratic decision-making – all partners, including FAO, need to understand this. These processes also need organizations capable of self-reflection in order to identify and address issues that constrain their functionality.



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## Appendix 1. People interviewed

| Last name            | First name     | Level or country                | Affiliation  | Role (in relation to project, as appropriate)  | Interviewer | Date KII or meeting |
|----------------------|----------------|---------------------------------|--|--|-------------|---------------------|
| Alharthy             | Hasna          | Oman                            | FAO country office   | FAO Representative and national project team   | CB, HA, RR  | 15-Jun-22           |
| Alvarez Leiton       | Gloriana       | Costa Rica                      | FAO country office   | National Project Coordinator   | In writing  | 14-Jun-22           |
| Andong               | Rebeca         | Philippines                     | FAO country office   | National Project Coordinator and team member   | CB, DD, RR  | 23-May-22           |
| Chedrawi             | Ghady          | Oman                            | FAO country office   | FAO Representative and national project team   | CB, HA, RR  | 15-Jun-22           |
| Coumé                | M.             | Senegal                         | Ministère des Pêches et de l'Économie Maritime, Gouvernement du Sénégal            | National coordinator in the Ministry   | CB          | 26-May-22           |
| Da Costa, Fatou Sock | Maria Edelmira | Cabo Verde                      | FAO country office, CFI-WA Lead Technical Officer                                  | Ex-National Project Coordinator  | CB          | 02-Jun-22           |
| Diop                 | Madame         | Senegal                         | Réseau des Femmes de la Pêche artisanale au Sénégal (REFEPAS)                      | President  | CB          | 03-Jun-22           |
| Gee                  | Jennifer       | Oman                            | FAO headquarters   | National Project overseer, FAO NIF Gender Focal Point                                  | CB, HA, RR  | 15-Jun-22           |
| Hitula               | Alushe         | Namibia                         | FAO country office   | National Project Coordinator   | CB          | 24-May-22           |
| Ibengwe              | Lilian         | The United Republic of Tanzania | Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries, Government of the United Republic of Tanzania | Representative of the Friends of the SSF Guidelines / national focal point in Ministry | CB          | 17-Jun-22           |
| Ioniirilala          | Radonirina     | Madagascar                      | FAO country office   | National Project Coordinator   | CB          | 18-May-22           |
| Koné                 | Aboubakar      | Côte d'Ivoire                   | FAO country office   | National Project Coordinator   | CB          | 13-May-22           |
| Malibiche            | Hadija         | The United Republic of Tanzania | Tanzanian Women Fish Workers Association (TAWFA)                                   | Secretary  | CB          | 20-Jun-22           |

Appendix 1. People interviewed

| Last name    | First name    | Level or country                | Affiliation                                     | Role (in relation to project, as appropriate)  | Interviewer | Date KII or meeting  |
|--------------|---------------|---------------------------------|---|--|-------------|----------------------|
| Mkumbo       | Oliva         | The United Republic of Tanzania | FAO country office                              | National Project Coordinator   | CB          | 27-May-22, 13-Jun-22 |
| Mohajer      | Lotus         | Oman                            | FAO country office                              | FAO Representative and national project team   | CB, HA, RR  | 15-Jun-22            |
| Nyein        | Yin           | Myanmar                         | FAO country office                              | National Project Coordinator   | CB          | 27-May-22            |
| Pastores     | Maria-Cecilia | Philippines                     | FAO country office                              | National Project Coordinator and team member   | CB, DD, RR  | 23-May-22            |
| Touré        | Amadou        | Senegal                         | FAO country office                              | National Project Coordinator   | CB          | 11-May-22            |
| Ciocca       | Steven        | Africa-wide                     | FAO (the United Republic of Tanzania, offices)  | FISH4ACP Chief Technical Adviser and project team in Senegal and the United Republic of Tanzania | CB          | 09-Jun-22            |
| Gaye         | Amy           | Africa-wide                     | FAO (the United Republic of Tanzania, offices)  | FISH4ACP Chief Technical Adviser and project team in Senegal and Tanzania                        | CB          | 09-Jun-22            |
| McDonough    | Sakchai       | West and Central Africa         | FAO Regional Office for West and Central Africa | CECAF-PESCAO Project Officer   | CB          | 10-Jun-22            |
| Muumin       | Hashim        | Africa-wide                     | FAO (the United Republic of Tanzania, offices)  | FISH4ACP Chief Technical Adviser and project team in Senegal and Tanzania                        | CB          | 09-Jun-22            |
| van de Walle | Gilles        | Africa-wide                     | FAO (the United Republic of Tanzania, offices)  | FISH4ACP Chief Technical Adviser and project team in Senegal and Tanzania                        | CB          | 09-Jun-22            |
| Zamparelli   | Andrea        | Africa-wide                     | FAO (the United Republic of Tanzania, offices)  | FISH4ACP Chief Technical Adviser and project team in Senegal and Tanzania                        | CB          | 09-Jun-22            |
| Koch         | Emi           | Peru                            | Beyond the Surface International                | Founder  | CB          | 07-Jun-22            |
| Landman      | Jessica       | Global                          | Environmental Defence Fund (EDF)                | SSF team   | CB          | 14-Jun-22            |
| Rife         | Alexis        | Global                          | EDF   | SSF team   | CB          | 14-Jun-22            |

Evaluation of the project "Creating an enabling environment for securing sustainable small-scale fisheries"

| Last name         | First name   | Level or country | Affiliation  | Role (in relation to project, as appropriate)                      | Interviewer | Date KII or meeting  |
|-------------------|--------------|------------------|--|--|-------------|----------------------|
| Ruiter            | Pamela       | Global           | EDF  | SSF team   | CB          | 14-Jun-22            |
| Bihimvyumuderi    | Vincent      | Burundi          | WFF Burundi  | Member of the Regional Advisory Group for Africa                   | CB          | 25-Jun-22            |
| Gueye             | Gaoussou     | Africa-wide      | Confédération Africaine des Organisations de Pêche Artisanale (CAOPA), AU-IBAR African Non-State Actors Coordination Platform in Fisheries and Aquaculture, West African Region Non-Stage Actor Platform (for Fisheries and Aquaculture) [WANSAFA] | Secretary, President, Representative (respectively)                | CB          | 13-Jun-22            |
| Lucidi            | Velia        | Global           | Crocevia / IPC Working Group on Fisheries  | Secretary of IPC Working Group on Fisheries                        | CB          | 25-May-22            |
| Marciano          | Ana Carolina | Sweden           | SwedBio  | Co-founders of the IPC Working Group on Fisheries                  | CB          | 09-Jun-22            |
| Prasertcharoensuk | Ravadee      | Thailand         | WFF Thailand   | Member of the Regional Advisory Group for Asia                     | CB          | 15-Jun-22, 27-Jun-22 |
| Wetterstrand      | Hanna        | Sweden           | SwedBio  | Co-founders of the IPC Working Group on Fisheries                  | CB          | 09-Jun-22            |
| Subasinghe        | Rohana       | Global           | IYAFA 2022   | International Steering Committee Vice-chair                        | CB          | 17-May-22            |
| Jackson           | Lynn         | Africa           | International Ocean Institute - South Africa (IOI-SA)  | Regional SSF governance e-learning course designer and facilitator | CB          | 07-Jun-22            |
| Patel             | Anna         | Global           | WorldFish Centre   | Joint facilitator of SSF Webinars, Knowledge Sharing Platform      | CB          | 06-Jun-22            |
| Conti             | Mauro        | Global           | FAO headquarters   | Family Farming consultant, FAO Partnership Unit                    | RR          | 01-Jul-22            |

Appendix 1. People interviewed

| Last name   | First name | Level or country | Affiliation  | Role (in relation to project, as appropriate)                                  | Interviewer | Date KII or meeting |
|-------------|------------|------------------|--|--|-------------|---------------------|
| Franz       | Nicole     | Global           | FAO headquarters                                       | SSF core team  | CB, RR      | 02-Jul-22           |
| Funge-Smith | Simon      | Asia             | FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific           | Senior Fish Resources Officer, member of the SSF Task Force                    | RR          | 01-Jul-22           |
| Giovinco    | Angela     | Global           | FAO headquarters                                       | SSF core team / project administrator  | CB          | 28-Jun-22           |
| Schmidt     | Vasco      | Southern Africa  | FAO Subregional Office for Southern Africa             | Fishery Officer, member of the SSF Technical Network                           | RR          | In writing          |
| Toueilib    | Cherif     | Near East        | FAO Regional Office for the Near East and North Africa | Fisheries and Aquaculture Officer, member of the SSF Technical Network         | RR          | 16-Jun-22           |
| van Anrooy  | Raymon     | Global           | FAO headquarters                                       | Senior Fishery Officer, member of the SSF Task Force and SSF Technical Network | RR          | 10-Jun-22           |
| Westlund    | Lena       | Global           | FAO headquarters                                       | SSF core team  | CB, RR      | 02-Jul-22           |

**Colour codes:**

|        |                          |
|--------|--------------------------|
| Grey   | Countries                |
| Blue   | Projects                 |
| Yellow | NGOs                     |
| Green  | Social movements for SSF |
| Orange | IYAFA                    |
| Pink   | Academia/research        |
| Purple | FAO officers             |

**Interviewers:**

|    |                   |
|----|-------------------|
| CB | Cecile Brugere    |
| RR | Renate Roels      |
| DD | Dan Dalabaja      |
| HA | Hamed Al Gheilani |

## Appendix 2. Evaluation matrix

| Evaluation questions  | Indicators   | Respondents              |                   |  |   |   | Secondary data sources  |
|---|--|--------------------------|-------------------|--|---|---|---|
| <b>DESIGN &amp; RELEVANCE</b>   |  | SSF Core Team, FAO wide, | Catalytic players | Project implementers (incl. service providers) | Beneficiaries (direct): fishers/SSF organizations, Govt | Beneficiaries (indirect): other projects, communities |   |
| <p>EQ 1. In what ways and to what extent does the project design allow for reaching the stated project objective and expected outcomes?</p> <p>i. How relevant<sup>10</sup> are the project objectives, outcomes and outputs to the needs of the different target groups<sup>11</sup> and catalytic partners at global, regional and country level?</p> <p>ii. How is the internal coherence of the project (in a theory of change or intervention logic perspective) in terms of synergies and complementarity between objectives, outcomes, and outputs?</p> <p>iii. Are there important contextual factors that the project design take into account or overlook? And in what ways did changes in the context affect the relevance of the project during implementation?</p> <p>iv. To what extent have the evaluation recommendations from the NORAD evaluation and proposed actions by management been taken into account in this project?</p> | <p>Level of alignment /deviation between the contents of the ProDoc and inception report (including logframe) and the contents of the progress reports.</p> <p>Level of alignment between the project design and the SSF Guidelines.</p> <p>Respondents' perceptions.</p> <p>Level of alignment between the project design and FAO four betters.</p> <p>Level of alignment between the project design and the SDG targets.</p> | KII                      | e-S<br>KII        | e-S<br>KII                                     | KII<br>e-S  | KII<br>C-<br>CS                                       | <p>ProDoc, inception report, project progress reports (PPRs), core team self-evaluation. SSF Guidelines. NORAD evaluation and management response. Reports of capacity needs assessments (if any). FAO strategic documents. SDGs. Associated projects' documentation.</p> |

<sup>10</sup> Relevance is defined as "The extent to which the intervention objectives and design respond to beneficiaries', global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities, and continue to do so if circumstances change" (OECD-DAC, 2019).

<sup>11</sup> With reference to OECD-DAC, 2010, a target group is "The specific individuals or organizations for whose benefit the development intervention is undertaken".

| Evaluation questions   | Indicators  | Respondents                     |                          |   |  |  | Secondary data sources   |
|--|---|---------------------------------|--------------------------|---|--|--|--|
| <p>EQ 2. In what ways and to what extent is the project relevant and aligned with current international preoccupations related to SSF?</p> <p>i. To what extent is the project aligned with FAO's SO/four betters, as well as global and national priorities in relation to sustainable SSF?</p> <p>ii. To what extent is the project aligned with and relevant to SDG 13 and SDG 14 specially?</p>  | <p>Level of alignment between the project design and other projects' objectives in relation to the SDGs.</p>  |                                 |                          |   |  |  |  |
| <b>RESULTS</b>   |   | <b>SSF Core Team, FAO wide,</b> | <b>Catalytic players</b> | <b>Project implementers (incl. service providers)</b> | <b>Beneficiaries (direct): fishers/SSF org., Govt.</b> | <b>Beneficiaries (indirect): other projects,</b> |  |
| <p>EQ 3. What have been the advances and most significant milestones and changes generated by the project so far?</p> <p>i. To what extent has the project achieved the planned four outcomes so far and what is still outstanding? What factors are affecting achievement?</p> <p>ii. When, where and how were the key changes brought about?</p> <p>iii. Why do these changes matter, what was done differently?</p> <p>iv. What were the driving and/or inhibiting factors for success? Are there any visible trends?</p> <p>v. What was the contribution of the project to these changes?</p> <p>vi. Which stakeholders and/or circumstances were instrumental in bringing about the most significant changes?</p> <p>vii. Where is the project at in relation to its theory of change, and progress towards its objective of "facilitating the social, economic</p> | <p>Number of outputs produced under each component.<sup>12</sup> Feedback from participants attending capacity building workshops. Number of partnerships created (within and outside the project). Number of fisheries policies, laws, official statements mentioning SSF. Number of stories (comms) of change published. Number and type of</p> | <p>KII<br/>O<br/>HT<br/>e-S</p> | <p>KII<br/>e-S</p>       | <p>KII<br/>e-S</p>                                    | <p>KII<br/>e-S<br/>SE-CS<br/>C-CS</p>                  | <p>KII<br/>C-<br/>CS</p>                         | <p>Logframe. PPRs SSF core team self-evaluation. Reports of country activities and workshops. Letters of agreement. Communication products. National laws and policies. COFI statements. Partner organizations' websites and documentation. IHH documentat</p> |

<sup>12</sup> Acknowledging that outputs are only a – potential – stepping stone towards outcomes.



| Evaluation questions  | Indicators  | Respondents                     |                          |   |  |  | Secondary data sources   |
|---|---|---------------------------------|--------------------------|---|--|--|--|
| and environmental transformation of the small-scale fisheries sector”?  | participants at SSFVG training and awareness raising events. <sup>13</sup> Level of intention to use the project’s publications and results (e.g. number of downloads). Respondents’ perceptions.   |                                 |                          |   |  |  | ion and results. Associated projects’ documentation.   |
| <b>SOCIAL INCLUSION, EQUITY AND GENDER</b>  |   | <b>SSF Core Team, FAO wide,</b> | <b>Catalytic players</b> | <b>Project implementers (incl. service providers)</b> | <b>Beneficiaries (direct): fishers/SSF org., Govt.</b> | <b>Beneficiaries (indirect): other projects,</b> |  |
| EQ 4. In what ways and to what extent are the project interventions contributing to gender equality, equity, social inclusion and empowerment of the targeted government actors, SSF actors and organizations, and reaching the intended users along the SSF value chain?<br>i. To what extent does the project have clearly-defined target groups (e.g. government, SSF fisher communities, organizations and global/regional bodies) and are capacity, constraints and opportunities of the different target groups taken into account during implementation?<br>ii. To what extent are the implementation arrangements able to adequately and equally support stakeholders and organizations in the target countries of intervention?<br>iii. To what extent is the project taking a gender and social | Alignment between the ProDoc (statement on targeting, equity and gender) and project activities implemented. Respondents’ perceptions. Number of women, junior and Indigenous People participating in training and other capacity building activities. Efforts by project implementers to facilitate the participation of women and | KII<br>O<br>HT<br>e-S           | KII<br>e-S               | KII<br>e-S<br>C-CS<br>SE-CS                           | KII<br>e-S<br>C-CS<br>SE-CS                            | KII<br>C-CS                                      | Logframe. PPRs. SSF core team self-evaluation. Reports of country activities and workshops. Letters of agreement and other agreements in support of project implementation. National laws and policies. Partner organizations’ websites and documentation. |

<sup>13</sup> Acknowledging that numbers of participants is not an indicator of outcome per se, but a – potential – stepping stone towards it.

| Evaluation questions   | Indicators   | Respondents               |                          |  |  |  | Secondary data sources  |
|--|--|---------------------------|--------------------------|--|--|--|---|
| <p>inclusion perspective and to what extent have women, youth, vulnerable and marginalized groups been meaningfully engaged in the project at the various levels?</p> <p>iv. To what extent are policy and empowerment-related discussions and actions inclusive?</p>  | <p>youth in their events. Number of government SSF-related initiatives involving SSF non-state actors and organizations. Existence of units/desks dedicated to gender issues / women in SSF within ministries.</p>   |                           |                          |  |  |  |   |
| <b>PARTNERSHIPS</b>  |  | <b>SSF Core Team, FAO</b> | <b>Catalytic players</b> | <b>Project implementers (incl. service</b> | <b>Beneficiaries (direct): fishers/SSF org., Govt.</b> | <b>Beneficiaries (indirect): other</b> |   |
| <p>EQ 5. To what extent has the project managed to engage relevant, strategic and capable partners (so-called catalytic) at global, regional and national level?</p> <p>i. To what extent was the choice and range of partners created or facilitated by FAO for this project, their capacities and level of involvement appropriate for the promotion and implementation of the SSF Voluntary Guidelines and related project interventions?</p> <p>ii. Is there a common understanding of the project objectives, approach and respective roles among the key partners and stakeholders?</p> <p>iii. Looking at the landscape of partners supported that operate in the same geography or topic: What have been the key factors affecting coordination, collaboration and dialogue among partners in positive or negative ways? As well as vertical linkages between global initiatives</p> | <p>Alignment between the ProDoc and inception report (listed partners) and those the project effectively engaged with. Alignment between the SSF guidelines, the project's and the partners' visions. Degree of complementarity between the partners' missions. Percentage of project funds disbursed on partnerships. Respondents' perceptions.</p> | KII<br>O<br>HT<br>e-S     | KII<br>e-S               | KII<br>e-S                                 | KII<br>e-S   | KII<br>C-<br>CS<br>SE-<br>CS           | <p>Logframe. PPRs. SSF core team self-evaluation. Reports of country activities and workshops. Letters of agreement and other agreements in support of project implementation. Partner organizations' websites and documentation. Financial reports. Associated projects'</p> |

| Evaluation questions  | Indicators | Respondents           |                          |                             |  |  | Secondary data sources |
|---|------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|--|--|------------------------|
| <p>and their trickling at national and local levels – and reciprocally the feeding of local/national concerns into regional and global initiatives?</p> <p>iv. What form of partnerships are most impactful to further the work of the project?</p> <p>v. To what extent, and with what result, did the project effectively link with other relevant SSF development projects and collaborate with other organizations?</p> |            |                       |                          |                             |  | documentat ion.                        |                        |
| <b>POTENTIAL SUSTAINABILITY AND IMPACT</b>  |            | <b>SSF Core Team,</b> | <b>Catalytic players</b> | <b>Project implementers</b> | <b>Beneficiaries (direct): fishers/SSF org.,</b> | <b>Beneficiaries (indirect): other</b> |                        |

| Evaluation questions  | Indicators  | Respondents     |            |            |                             |                 | Secondary data sources   |
|---|---|-----------------|------------|------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|--|
| <p>EQ 6. What are the sustainability prospects of the advances the project has made and what is their potential to contribute to long-term impact?</p> <p>i. To what extent are the advances and identified changes self-sustaining, stepwise or contiguous,<sup>14</sup> and could they be supported by the existing and project-supported policy, legal and institutional frameworks in the targeted countries and regions?</p> <p>ii. What are potential factors of risk to the sustainability prospects?</p> <p>iii. Is there a clear indication of ownership and commitment (of governments, local SSF actors and the catalytic partners) to continue their support for project activities and an enabling environment for small-scale fisheries after project completion?</p> <p>iv. Are the types of resources and support provided by the project contributing towards the expected impact (strengthened governance of SSF, empowered SSF communities/organizations and improved livelihoods, food security and nutrition)? What needs specific attention during the remaining project implementation period?</p> | <p>Respondents' perceptions. Evidence of the level of commitment from governments (e.g. financing to NPOAs, creation of dedicated SSF units within ministries, etc.) and partner organizations (e.g. SSF-focused activities in work plans). Number of policies and laws incorporating SSF considerations.</p> | KII<br>e-S<br>S | e-S<br>KII | e-S<br>KII | KII<br>e-S<br>C-CS<br>SE-CS | KII<br>C-<br>CS | <p>Logframe. PPRs. SSF core team self-evaluation. Reports of country activities and workshops. Associated projects' documentation. Partners' documentation. Financial information.</p> |

<sup>14</sup> Self-sustaining: An outcome that will sustain itself and/or go to scale after the project has finished without significant further external investment. Self-sustaining outcomes depend on the project triggering a causal and dynamic mechanism; Stepwise: A process towards an outcome that reaches a stable stopping point. The main outcome has not yet been achieved but progress can be put on hold for some time without major reversals, e.g. development of a strategy to be implemented sometime in the future. A stepwise process may or may not eventually lead to a self-sustaining outcome; Contiguous: A need to continue to fund the work if the outcome is to be maintained or repeated, and when there is no expectation of a self-sustaining causal mechanism that will continue after the project ends. Future outcomes require the government or a donor to provide the necessary funding to do it again.

| Evaluation questions  | Indicators   | Respondents              |                   |  |   |   | Secondary data sources   |
|---|--|--------------------------|-------------------|--|---|---|--|
| <b>PROJECT MANAGEMENT</b>   |  | SSF Core Team, FAO wide, | Catalytic players | Project implementers (incl. service providers) | Beneficiaries (direct): fishers/SSF org., Govt. | Beneficiaries (indirect): other projects, communities |  |
| <p>EQ 7. To what extent are the management and implementation arrangements appropriate?</p> <p>i. To what extent are the project management and (decentralized) implementing arrangements clear to all and effective in addressing the project objectives?</p> <p>ii. To what extent has the project been able to adapt to any changing conditions (e.g. delays, COVID-19 pandemic, and ad hoc requests)?</p> <p>iii. Is the project, through the dedicated communication strategy, monitoring and evaluation (M&amp;E) and knowledge management efforts, adequately monitoring, assessing, documenting, learning and sharing its results, experiences and lessons learned?</p> <p>iv. To what extent are the implementation arrangements able to adequately respond to requests from the focus countries and seize emerging opportunities?</p> | <p>Respondents' perceptions. Alignment between the ProDoc, inception report and the achievements. Effectiveness of the project structure (e.g. core team – national coordinators). Evidence of a functioning M&amp;E system. Reporting system in place. Capacity to draw lessons from the project's activities and progress. Number of project outputs disseminated and used. Capacity to modify, tailor, adapt activities to unforeseen circumstances (e.g. COVID-19 restrictions).</p> | KII                      | e-S<br>KII        | e-S<br>KII                                     | KII<br>e-S                                      | KII<br>C-<br>CS                                       | <p>Logframe. PPRs. SSF core team self-evaluation. FAO procedures. Financial information. Project communication products/outputs. Project website and other outward-facing platforms (e.g. twitter). SSF umbrella programme communication strategy and project's communication strategy (if it exists).</p> |

KII: Key informant interview

e-S: electronic survey

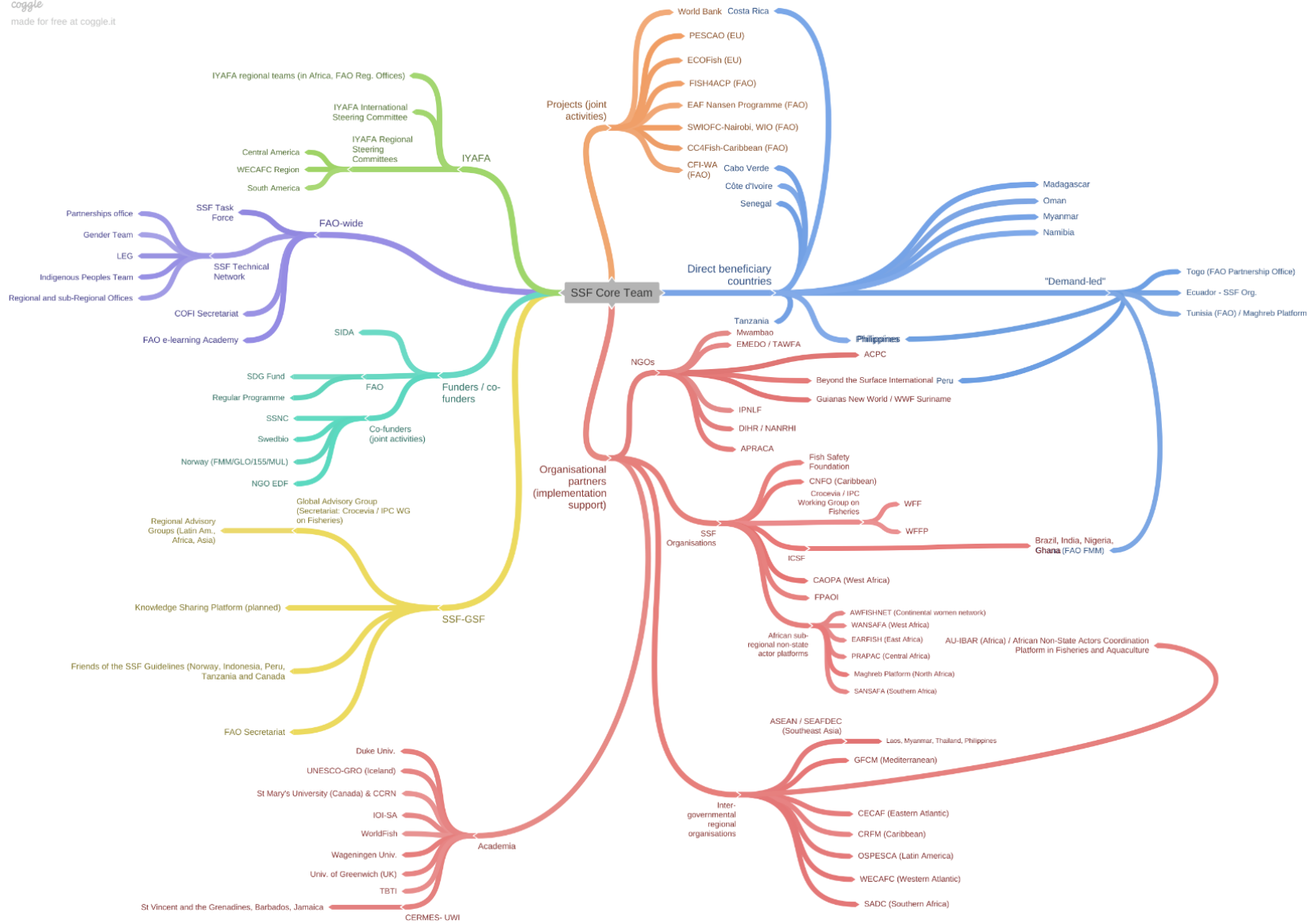
OHT: Outcome harvesting template = “changes” form

SE-CS: stakeholder empowerment case study

C-CS: country case studies

# Appendix 3. Map of project stakeholders

coggle  
made for free at coggle.it



Source: Elaborated by the evaluation team.

### List of acronyms used in the stakeholder map

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| ACPC       | Agricultural Credit Policy Council   |
| APRACA     | Asia Pacific Rural and Agricultural Credit Association   |
| ASEAN      | Association of Southeast Asian Nations   |
| AU         | African Union  |
| AU-IBAR    | African Union – Interafrican Bureau for Animal Resources   |
| AWFISHNET  | African Women Fish Processors and Traders Network  |
| CAOPA      | Confédération Africaine des Organisations Professionnelles de la Pêche Artisanale                |
| CC4Fish    | Climate Change Adaptation in the Eastern Caribbean Fisheries Sector (project)                    |
| CCRN       | Community Conservation Research Network  |
| CECAF      | Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic   |
| CERMES-UWI | University of the West Indies  |
| CFI - WA   | Coastal Fisheries Initiative – West Africa   |
| CNFO       | Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organizations  |
| CRFM       | Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism   |
| DIHR       | Danish Institute of Human Rights   |
| EDF        | Environmental Defense Fund   |
| EMEDO      | Environmental Management and Economic Development Organization                                   |
| EARFISH    | East African Region Non-State Actor Platform (for fisheries and aquaculture)                     |
| FAO        | Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations  |
| FPAOI      | Fédération des Pêcheurs Artisans de l’Océan Indien   |
| GFCM       | Regional Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean and the Black Sea                            |
| GSF        | Global Strategic Framework (for Small-Scale Fisheries)   |
| ICSF       | International Collective in Support of Fishworkers   |
| INCOPESCA  | Costa Rican Institute of Fisheries and Aquaculture   |
| IOI-SA     | International Oceans Institute – Southern Africa   |
| IHH        | Illuminating Hidden Harvests (study)   |
| IPC        | International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty  |
| IPLF       | International Pole and Line Foundation   |
| IYAFA      | International Year for Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture                                       |
| LEGN       | FAO Legal Services for Development   |
| NFI        | FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Division   |
| NGO        | Non-governmental organization  |
| OSPESCA    | Central America Fisheries and Aquaculture Organization   |
| PESCAO     | Improved regional fisheries governance in western Africa (project)                               |
| PRAPAC     | Regional Platform of Non-State Actors in Fisheries and Aquaculture in Central Africa             |
| SADC       | Southern Africa Development Community  |
| SANSAFA    | Southern African Regional Platform for Non-State Actors in Fisheries and Aquaculture             |
| SEAFDEC    | Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center   |
| SIDA       | Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency   |
| SSF        | Small-scale Fisheries  |
| SSNC       | Swedish Society for Nature Conservation  |
| SIDA       | Swedish International Development Agency   |
| SWIOFC     | Southwest Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission  |
| TAWFA      | Tanzania Women Fishworkers Association   |
| TBTI       | Too Big To Ignore  |
| UNESCO-GRO | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization – Fisheries Training Programme. |
| WANSAFA    | West African Region Non-Stage Actor Platform (for Fisheries and Aquaculture)                     |
| WECAFC     | Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission  |
| WFF        | World Forum of Fishworkers and Fish Harvesters   |
| WFFP       | World Forum of Fisher Peoples  |
| WIO        | Western Indian Ocean   |

## Appendix 4. Revised project logical framework (2019)

| Results chain   | Indicators <sup>2</sup>  |   |   |  | Assumptions   |
|---|--|---|---|--|---|
|   | Indicators   | Baseline  | Target  | Means of verification  |   |
| <p><u>Impact</u><sup>15</sup><br/>Improved governance of small-scale fisheries contributes to the eradication of hunger and poverty, to sustainable development and to the sustainable use of the environment.</p>  | Number of countries and regions where the SSF Guidelines are implemented   | Some countries and regions are planning implementation and the SSF Guidelines are reflected in relevant policies  | 13 countries and regions  | Policy documents   |   |
| <p><u>Outcome</u><sup>16</sup><br/>Improved policy, legal and institutional frameworks in selected regions and countries and at the global level have facilitated the social, economic and environmental transformation of the small-scale fisheries sector needed for enhancing its contribution to food security and poverty eradication.</p> | <p>1a. Number of national policy processes<sup>17</sup> that include the SSF Guidelines and the principles contained therein, including in particular reviewed and amended legislation.<br/>1b. Number of regional <b>SSF Guidelines strategies and policy processes that have been provided implementation support.</b><br/>2. Number of countries that have strengthened existing or introduced new participatory decision-making processes for fisheries management and where representative SSF organizations, for both men and women, exist and</p> | <p>1a. The SSF Guidelines are referred to in national policy processes for both marine and inland small-scale fisheries in two countries (Costa Rica, India).<br/>Legal reviews have been carried out or are ongoing in three countries but legal amendments have not yet been enacted.<br/>2. Councils and other mechanisms for including SSF actor participation in fisheries management processes exist in some countries.</p> | <p>1a. Three national policy processes.<br/>1b. Three regional policy processes.<br/>2. <b>Three countries.</b></p> | <p>1a. Policy documents.<br/>1b. Policy documents.<br/>2. Project reviews and reports.</p> | <p>Political will exists to support small-scale fisheries and the SSF Guidelines implementation</p> |

<sup>15</sup> The impact is the same as for the FAO SSF umbrella programme.

<sup>16</sup> FAO projects should have one outcome but programmes may have more. The FAO SSF Programme has four outcomes and this project contributes to these through its four components.

<sup>17</sup> In accordance with FAO SP1, policy processes are understood in their broadest sense: i.e. the way by which governments translate their vision into policies, strategies, legislation, programmes and actions and includes planning, design, budget allocation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.



| Results chain  | Indicators <sup>2</sup>   |   |  |   | Assumptions |
|--|---|---|--|---|-------------|
|  | Indicators  | Baseline  | Target   | Means of verification   |             |
|  | actively take part in these processes.<br>Case studies on tenure, including participatory management, were conducted for the UserRights2018 conference held in Korea.   |   |  |   |             |
| <u>Outputs</u><br>1.1 The FAO SSF Guidelines webpage is functional and maintained and includes relevant materials: implementation tools, reports, news, calendar, etc.<br>1.2 Implementation guides, tools and training materials, addressing different thematic areas of the SSF Guidelines and targeted to different audiences, as required, have been developed, disseminated and used in training and awareness raising events.<br>1.3 The International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYAFA) 2022 is celebrated around the world with appropriate awareness raising, communication materials and events. | 1.1a. Existence of webpage that provides up-to-date information in several languages.<br>1.1b. Number of website hits.<br>1.2 Number of guides, tools and training packages published, and used.<br>1.3 Number of events planned and delivered. | 1.1 A new FAO SSF webpage was launched in June 2018 but additional content is needed and it must be kept up-to-date information so it can inform partners of ongoing work and activities.<br>1.2 A gender handbook has been published. A guide on chapter 9 (disaster risks and climate change) and on legislating for the SSF Guidelines as well as an awareness raising card game are under development (August 2018); and technical papers with case studies on good practices.<br>1.3 FAO is the UN coordinator for the celebrations. FAO is developing a roadmap and work plan in collaboration with stakeholders (August 2018). | 1.1 a. Web page is functional.<br>1.1b. 1 000 hits/year.<br>1.2 Ten guides, tools and training packages.<br>1.3 12 events. | 1.1 Webpage and web user statistics.<br>1.2 Published material in the form of technical papers, policy guidance, training and capacity development tools, etc.<br>1.3 Published stories, event programmes, etc. |             |
| <u>Outputs</u><br>2.1 An update of the 2012 Hidden Harvest   | 2.1a Publication of IHH.<br>2.1b Number of conferences  | 2.1 Work has started on IHH through FAO/WorldFish/Duke  | 2.1a Main publication has  | 2.1a Publication.   |             |

| Results chain   | Indicators <sup>2</sup>   |  |   |  | Assumptions |
|---|---|--|---|--|-------------|
|   | Indicators  | Baseline   | Target  | Means of verification  |             |
| <p>report has been published and widely distributed (Illuminating Hidden Harvests: The contribution of small-scale fisheries to sustainable development” – IHH) and presented at key conferences.</p> <p>2.2 Data collection and analysis with regards to small-scale fisheries have been supported and improved methods and approaches are available through the work on IHH.</p> <p>2.3 A selected number of countries in different geographic regions have been supported in various aspects of SSF Guidelines implementation according to needs and demand.</p> <p>2.4 Regional policy processes and organizations have been supported.</p> | <p>and events where the IHH results have been presented.</p> <p>2.2 Existence and use of improved methods for collecting national level data collection on SSF.</p> <p>2.3 Number of countries that have developed NPOAs to implement the SSF Guidelines.</p> <p>2.4 Number of regional organizations that have been provided technical and financial support to enhance their capacity to assist their members in SSF Guidelines implementation.</p> | <p>University collaboration (August 2018).</p> <p>2.2 Methods for country case studies are being finalized to be tested and used for up to 50 case studies (August 2018).</p> <p>2.3 Some countries are in the process of developing NPOAs (e.g., Guinea, Senega, the United Republic of Tanzania) and others have expressed interest in implementing specific activities in support of the SSF Guidelines.</p> <p>2.4 FAO has collaborated with, in particular, SEAFDEC, OSPESCSA, African Union and CECAF.</p> | <p>been published.</p> <p>2.1.b IHH presented at one major conference.</p> <p>2.2 The improved methods developed by IHH are being used in at least three countries for continued data collection after IHH.</p> <p>2.3 Ten countries develop NPOAs or implement specific activities in support of the SSF Guidelines.</p> <p>2.4 Three regional organizations actively support SSF Guidelines implementation.</p> | <p>2.1.a<br/>Conference proceedings<br/>.</p> <p>2.2 Reports on data collection.</p> <p>2.3 Project reports.</p> <p>2.4 Project reports.</p> |             |
| <p><u>Outputs</u></p> <p>3.1 Capacity development has been provided to a selected number of small-scale fisheries organizations (existing ones or new ones) to enable them to engage in small-scale fisheries development and governance.</p> <p>3.2 Small-scale fisheries governance learning programmes have been provided to a selected number of government</p>   | <p>3.1a. Number of national, regional and global SSF organizations that have been supported in capacity development.</p> <p>3.1b. Number of women and Indigenous Peoples organizations that have been supported in capacity</p>   | <p>3.1 FAO has provided targeted support to SSF organizations for specific activities (e.g. CAOPA, ICSF, IPC Fisheries Working Group, etc.) and facilitated the development of an Indigenous People’s network in Central America.</p> <p>3.2 a and b There is an FAO e-learning course on the SDG 14.b</p>   | <p>3.1a. 15 organizations supported.</p> <p>3.1b. Five organizations supported.</p> <p>3.2a. Three learning programmes</p>  | <p>3.1 Project reports.</p> <p>3.2 a. Learning material and learning programme reports.</p> <p>3.2 b. Reports from learning</p>              |             |

| Results chain   | Indicators <sup>2</sup>   |  |  |   | Assumptions |
|---|---|--|--|---|-------------|
|   | Indicators  | Baseline   | Target   | Means of verification   |             |
| officials and other relevant stakeholders in support of SSF Guidelines implementation.  | development.<br>3.2a Number of learning programmes developed and carried out.<br>3.2b Number of government officials (men/women) trained.   | and several regional SSF Guidelines awareness raising and implementation planning workshops have been held for government officials and other stakeholders.  | developed and three courses held.<br>3.2b. 300 government officials (men/women) trained.   | programmes.   |             |
| <p><u>Outputs</u></p> <p>4.1 The SSF-GSF Secretariat and its related institutional structures are functioning and have had their first meetings and produced reports in accordance with their established terms of reference.</p> <p>4.2A monitoring system, with key indicators, has been developed and is set up in selected countries providing information on the current status of small-scale fisheries governance and development as well as on trends related to SSF Guidelines implementation.</p> <p>4.3 The project is successfully implemented based on results-based management.</p> | <p>4.1a Number of meetings held by the SSF-GSF bodies (Advisory Group, Friends of the SSF Guidelines and Knowledge Platform).</p> <p>4.1b Technical and/or advisory reports produced by the SSF-GSF bodies.</p> <p>4.1c Initiatives by countries and organizations started based on advice or contributions from the SSF-GSF.</p> <p>4.2 Number of countries publicly reporting on SSF Guidelines according to agreed indicators.</p> <p>4.3 Satisfactory progress reports are submitted to the donors on time.</p> | <p>4.1a. First meetings of the SSF-GSF bodies were held in May-July 2018.</p> <p>4.1b. No technical or advisory reports produced yet (August 2018).</p> <p>4.1c. No initiatives started based on advice or contributions by the SSF-GSF yet (August 2018).</p> <p>3.3 Monitoring systems not yet in place. A first workshop to discuss indicators was held in 2017 and testing of potential indicators is ongoing in the Caribbean (August 2018).</p> <p>3.4 Project logframe exists but some indicators, baselines and targets need to be refined during the inception phase.</p> | <p>4.1a. <b>Three</b> meetings held.</p> <p>4.1b. <b>Three</b> reports produced.</p> <p>4.1c. <b>Two</b> initiatives started.</p> <p>4.2 Ten countries with monitoring efforts in small-scale fisheries.</p> <p><b>Annual</b> reports timely submitted</p> | <p>4.1.a Meeting minutes/reports on FAO SSF website.</p> <p>4.1b. Technical and advisory reports.</p> <p>3.3 c. Project documents or other reports on initiatives.</p> <p>3.4 National monitoring reports.</p> <p>3.5 Progress reports.</p> |             |

*Notes:*

All baselines, indicators and targets will be refined during the inception phase.

Revisions brought during the inception phase are shown in **red** colour.

Source: Inception report, June 2019.

# Appendix 5. Theory of change

Basic assumptions

Small-scale fisheries (SSF) have the potential to contribute more to food security, poverty eradication and sustainable and equitable development than they currently do but they lack the attention of decision-makers and are often socioeconomically marginalized and fishers and fishworkers are politically weak. Appropriate international policy guidance exists and the implementation of the SSF Guidelines and the HRBA will lead to enhanced SSF contributions to environmental, economic and social sustainable development.<sup>1</sup> Addressing SSF pressures and supporting sustainable livelihoods is complex and goes beyond fisheries itself. A balanced and equitable partnership approach and crosssectoral collaboration is fundamental for the implementation of the SSF Guidelines:

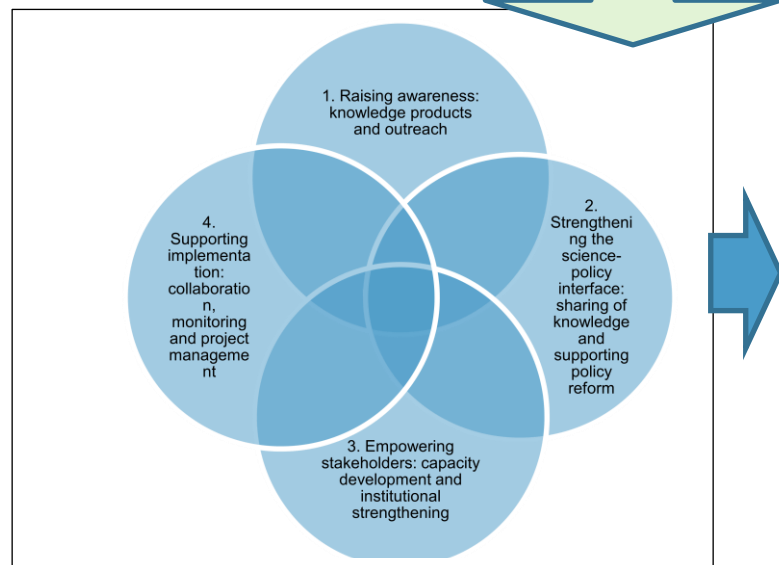
- governments have a key responsibility to make SSF Guidelines implementation happen at the national level;
- SSF actors, through their organizations, are main drivers of change and can influence policy and local and national levels if empowered;
- other partners like NGOs, international and regional organizations, academia and more can facilitate and support SSF Guidelines implementation.

To create real change and impact, the SSF Guidelines need to be understood and applied at the national and local levels, supported by regional and global policy processes.

Strategic considerations

Better information on small-scale fisheries and awareness of the SSF Guidelines promote governments' political will, contribute to effective policy and decision-making, support SSF actor empowerment and guide SSF Guidelines implementation. Knowledge and data/evidence need to be gathered and strategically communicated. SSF actors (men and women along the whole value chain) have stronger voice when well organized and empowered with data/evidence. Enabling policy, institutional and legal frameworks need to be in place. Partnerships and experience sharing are necessary for SSF Guidelines implementation. Implementation of the SSF Guidelines must be demand-driven. Support to SSF Guidelines implementation at the national level must include analytical tools, training and other guidance material.

Key areas of activities (project components)



The SSF Guidelines and small-scale fisheries information are communicated in a targeted, regular manner to key audiences and are mainstreamed in national, regional and global processes. Implementation guides, tools and training materials are available for capacity development for government, SSF actors and other stakeholders. The International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYAFA) 2022 is celebrated around the world. Information on the contributions of small-scale fisheries is available (through Illuminating Hidden Harvests - IHH) and communicated to policy makers. Methods and approaches are available for improved data collection on small-scale fisheries. A number of countries have assessed their enabling environment and are implementing the SSF Guidelines in a participatory manner through National Plans of Action (NPOAs) or other specific actions. Governments and regional organizations have been supported with capacity and policy development. Capacity development has been provided to a number of small-scale fisheries organizations, networks and platforms. The SSF Global Strategic Framework (SSF-GSF) is functioning. SSF Guidelines implementation is monitored and reported on in relevant fora.

Outcomes

The role of small-scale fisheries in food security and sustainable development is recognized and enhanced. Strong linkages hold science and policy on SSF together. SSF actors (men and women) are equipped to participate effectively in decision-making and governments welcome SSF representatives to have a seat at the table. Small-scale fisheries are continuously being managed in an informed, sustainable and participatory manner, bringing responsible fisheries and social and economic development together in a HRBA framework.

***The recommendations and objectives of the SSF Guidelines have become reality.***

## Appendix 6. Analysis of SDG 13 and 14 alignment with the SSF Guidelines

This appendix presents an overview of the correspondence between SDG 13 and 14 targets and indicators and the articles of the SSF Guidelines directly related to these.

Key sources consulted in support of the short synthesis presented in the main evaluation report are available at the end of this appendix.

### SDG 13: Targets and indicators

**Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.**

**Correspondence with SSF Guidelines: mostly through Art. 9 (disaster risks and climate change).**

**Target 13.1:** Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries.

- **Indicator 13.1.1:** Number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100 000 population.
- **Indicator 13.1.2:** Number of countries that adopt and implement national disaster risk reduction strategies in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030.
- **Indicator 13.1.3:** Proportion of local governments that adopt and implement local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national disaster risk reduction strategies.
- **Directly linked to:** Art. 9.3 and Art. 9.7

**Target 13.2:** Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning.

- **Indicator 13.2.1:** Number of countries that have communicated the establishment or operationalization of an integrated policy/strategy/plan which increases their ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change, and foster climate resilience and low greenhouse gas emissions development in a manner that does not threaten food production (including a national adaptation plan, nationally determined contribution, national communication, biennial update report or other).
- **Directly linked to:** Art. 9.2

**Target 13.3:** Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning.

- **Indicator 13.3.1:** Number of countries that have integrated mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning into primary, secondary and tertiary curricula.
- **Indicator 13.3.2:** Number of countries that have communicated the strengthening of institutional, systemic and individual capacity-building to implement adaptation, mitigation and technology transfer, and development actions.

**Target 13.A:** Implement the commitment undertaken by developed-country parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to a goal of mobilizing jointly USD 100 billion annually by 2020 from all sources to address the needs of developing countries in the context of meaningful mitigation actions and transparency on implementation and fully operationalize the Green Climate Fund through its capitalization as soon as possible.

- **Indicator 13.A.1:** Mobilized amount of USD per year between 2020 and 2025 accountable towards the USD 100 billion commitment.
- **Directly linked to:** Art. 9 overall

**Target 13.B:** Promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries and small island developing States, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities.

- **Indicator 13.B.1:** Number of least developed countries and small island developing States that are receiving specialized support, and amount of support, including finance, technology and capacity-building, for mechanisms for raising capacities for effective climate change-related planning and management, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities.
- **Directly linked to:** Art. 9.8 and Art. 9.9

## SDG 14: Targets and indicators

**Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources.**

**Correspondence with SSF Guidelines: mostly through Art. 5b (sustainable resource management).**

**Target 14.1:** By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution.

**Indirect relevance, yet important in places, for example to reduce throw away behaviour onboard vessels (e.g. Sri Lanka SSF, personal observation) and abandoning fishing gear at sea.**

- **Indicator 14.1.1:** Index of coastal eutrophication and floating plastic debris density.
- **Directly linked to:** "Pollution" in Art. 9.3 and in Preamble

**Target 14.2:** By 2020, sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including by strengthening their resilience, and take action for their restoration in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans.

- **Indicator 14.2.1:** Proportion of national exclusive economic zones managed using ecosystem-based approaches.
- **Directly linked to:** Art. 5.13, Art. 5.14 and Art. 5.15

**Target 14.3:** Minimize and address the impacts of ocean acidification, including through enhanced scientific cooperation at all levels.

- **Indicator 14.3.1:** Average marine acidity (pH) measured at agreed suite of representative sampling stations.

**Target 14.4:** By 2020, effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans, in order to restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible, at least to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield as determined by their biological characteristics.

- **Indicator 14.4.1:** Proportion of fish stocks within biologically sustainable levels.
- **Directly linked to:** Art. 5.16 and Art. 11.5

**Target 14.5:** By 2020, conserve at least 10 percent of coastal and marine areas, consistent with national and international law and based on the best available scientific information.

- **Indicator 14.5.1:** Coverage of protected areas in relation to marine areas.
- **Directly linked to:** Art. 15.5

**Target 14.6:** By 2020, prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, eliminate subsidies that contribute to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and refrain from introducing new such subsidies, recognizing that appropriate and effective special and differential treatment for developing and least developed countries should be an integral part of the World Trade Organization fisheries subsidies negotiation.

- **Indicator 14.6.1:** Degree of implementation of international instruments aiming to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.
- **Directly linked to:** Art. 5.20

**Target 14.7:** By 2030, increase the economic benefits to small island developing States and least developed countries from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism.

- **Indicator 14.7.1:** Sustainable fisheries as a proportion of GDP in small island developing States, least developed countries and all countries.
- **Directly linked to:** Art. 5.13, Art. 5.14, Art. 5.15 and Art. 5.18

**Target 14.A:** Increase scientific knowledge, develop research capacity and transfer marine technology, taking into account the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission Criteria and Guidelines on the Transfer of Marine Technology, in order to improve ocean health and to enhance the contribution of marine biodiversity to the development of developing countries, in particular small island developing States and least developed countries.

- **Indicator 14.A.1:** Proportion of total research budget allocated to research in the field of marine technology.

**Target 14.B: Provide access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets.**

- **Indicator 14.B.1: Degree of application of a legal/regulatory/policy/institutional framework which recognizes and protects access rights for small-scale fisheries.**

**Target 14.C:** Enhance the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which provides the legal framework for the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources, as recalled in paragraph 158 of The Future We Want.

- **Indicator 14.C.1:** Number of countries making progress in ratifying, accepting and implementing through legal, policy and institutional frameworks, ocean-related instruments that implement international law, as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, for the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans and their resources.

*Sources:* The Global Goals. n.d. Resources. <https://www.globalgoals.org/resources>; UNSTATS. n.d.a. Global indicator framework for the Sustainable Development Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

[https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/Global%20Indicator%20Framework%20after%202020%20review\\_Eng.pdf](https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/Global%20Indicator%20Framework%20after%202020%20review_Eng.pdf); UNSTATS. n.d.b. *SDG Indicators*. Metadata repository. <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/metadata/>

| Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)          | FAO SSF Guidelines       |   |  |  |                       |                                       |   |  |                             |  |            |
|---|--------------------------|---|--|--|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|---|--|-----------------------------|--|------------|
|   | Principles               | Topics on Sustainable Development                   |  |  |                       |                                       | Enabling environment and Implementation                 |  |                             |  | TOTAL      |
|   | SSF3: Guiding Principles | SSF5: Governance of Tenure in small-scale fisheries | SSF5: Social development, employment and decent work | SSF7: Value chains, post-harvest and trade | SSF8: Gender Equality | SSF9: Disaster risks & Climate Change | SSF10: Policy coherence, institutional coordination and | SSF11: Information, research and communication | SSF12: Capacity Development | SSF13: Implementation support and monitoring |            |
| SDG1. No Poverty                              | 1                        | 1   | 1  |  |                       |                                       | 2   | 1  |                             | 1  | 7          |
| SDG2. Zero Hunger                             | 1                        | 1   |  | 1  |                       | 1                                     | 2   | 2  |                             | 1  | 9          |
| SDG3. Good Health & Wellbeing                 | 1                        |   | 2  | 2  |                       |                                       | 1   |  |                             |  | 6          |
| SDG4. Quality Education                       | 1                        |   | 3  |  |                       |                                       | 1   | 2  | 2                           |  | 9          |
| SDG5. Gender Equality                         | 2                        | 4   | 6  | 2  | 4                     |                                       |   | 4  | 2                           | 2  | 26         |
| SDG6. Cleaner water & sanitation              | 1                        |   | 1  |  |                       |                                       |   |  |                             |  | 2          |
| SDG7. Affordable and Clean Energy             | 1                        |   |  |  |                       | 1                                     |   |  |                             |  | 2          |
| SDG8. Decent Work and Economic Growth         | 2                        | 1   | 18   |  |                       |                                       | 2   |  |                             |  | 23         |
| SDG9. Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure | 1                        |   | 2  | 2  | 1                     | 3                                     |   |  |                             |  | 9          |
| SDG10. Reduced Inequalities                   | 2                        | 1   | 1  | 2  |                       |                                       |   | 1  |                             |  | 7          |
| SDG11. Sustainable Cities and Communities     | 2                        | 1   | 1  |  |                       |                                       | 1   |  | 1                           |  | 6          |
| SDG12. Responsible Consumption & Production   | 2                        |   | 1  | 5  |                       |                                       |   | 1  |                             |  | 9          |
| SDG13. Climate Action                         | 1                        |   |  |  |                       | 9                                     | 1   | 1  |                             |  | 12         |
| SDG14. Life below water                       | 4                        | 20  | 2  | 2  |                       | 2                                     | 6   | 6  |                             |  | 42         |
| SDG15. Life on Land                           | 1                        | 2   |  |  |                       | 3                                     | 1   | 1  |                             |  | 8          |
| SDG16. Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions | 6                        | 7   | 4  | 2  | 2                     | 1                                     | 6   | 1  | 2                           | 2  | 33         |
| SDG17. Partnerships for the Goals             | 1                        |   |  |  |                       |                                       |   | 1  |                             | 4  | 6          |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                  | <b>30</b>                | <b>38</b>   | <b>42</b>  | <b>18</b>                                  | <b>7</b>              | <b>20</b>                             | <b>23</b>   | <b>21</b>                                      | <b>7</b>                    | <b>10</b>                                    | <b>216</b> |

|                |
|----------------|
| Nil            |
| 1-3 paragraphs |
| 4-9 paragraphs |
| 10+ paragraphs |

Source: Said, A. and Chuenpagdee, R. 2019. Aligning the sustainable development goals to the small-scale fisheries guidelines: A case for EU fisheries governance. *Marine Policy*, 107, p.103599. <https://bit.ly/3uQiPLn>



## **Annexes**

Annex 1. Oman case study

<https://www.fao.org/3/cc3634en/cc3634en.pdf>

Annex 2. The Philippines case study

<https://www.fao.org/3/cc3635en/cc3635en.pdf>

Annex 3. Stakeholder empowerment and the SSF-GSF in Africa

<https://www.fao.org/3/cc3633en/cc3633en.pdf>

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