



Pacific handbook for gender equity and social inclusion in coastal fisheries and aquaculture



© Sangreeta Mangubhai

MODULE 1

Introduction



FAME
Fisheries,
Aquaculture
and Marine
Ecosystems
Division



SDP
Social
Development
Programme

Pacific handbook for

gender equity and social inclusion

in coastal fisheries
and aquaculture

Module 1: Introduction

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Noumea, New Caledonia, 2019

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Original text: English

This publication should be cited as:

Barclay K., Leduc B., Mangubhai S., Vunisea A., Namakin B., Teimarane M. and Leweniqila L. 2019. Module 1: Introduction. In: Barclay K., Leduc B., Mangubhai S. and Donato-Hunt C. (eds.). Pacific handbook for gender equity and social inclusion in coastal fisheries and aquaculture. Pacific Community (SPC), Noumea, New Caledonia. 20 p.

Prepared for publication at SPC's Noumea headquarters, B.P. D5, 98848 Noumea Cedex, New Caledonia, 2019

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Key points

- Progressing gender equity and social inclusion is an essential part of building a sustainable and resilient future for Pacific Island people.
- Social inequalities, such as gender inequality, hold back social, political and economic development. Gender discrimination is estimated to cost the East Asia and Pacific region USD 2440 billion annually.¹
- Gender equity and social inclusion are fundamental human rights. Enabling everyone to enjoy these rights will bring tremendous gains in health, education, food security, employment and livelihoods.

Social dimension of coastal fisheries and aquaculture

What are we missing when we overlook the social dimension of coastal fisheries and aquaculture?

Over the last decade, we have made efforts to address the human dimension of natural resource management. When the human dimension is considered in fisheries and aquaculture, it is often in the context of ‘coastal communities’. However, communities are not homogenous – their members have different roles, status and entitlements.

Baseline surveys of communities generally use the ‘household’ as the basic unit. This can result in differences between the roles of women and men of various ages and their power relations being overlooked, even though inequality of household members, in terms of decision-making and income sharing, is often at the root of development and environmental issues.

There was an earlier wave of effort to promote the role of ‘women in fisheries’ in the Pacific, especially in the 1980s. Today there is renewed interest in the area of ‘gender and fisheries’.² This focus on gender equity, equality and social inclusion comes from awareness of women’s critical role in fisheries and management of marine resources, and the importance of everyone benefiting equitably from technical and scientific interventions designed to achieve development outcomes.

Integrating a **gender and social inclusion (GSI)** perspective in coastal resource management and development improves our capacity to achieve the goal of improving the well-being of all people living in coastal areas.³

The social or human dimensions of fisheries are the social, cultural, personal, governance and economic aspects of fisheries, as distinct from the ecological aspects.

Misconception: ‘Gender’ is only relevant for women

Gender is about the roles of people of all diversities. It also refers to the relationships between women and men and their respective status in their society, community, and family. It is not only about women.

The roles that women have are fundamentally shaped by the roles that men have. Gender roles and relationships are based on beliefs and practices that can be transformed to create more balanced relationships, partnerships and resilience for everyone. For example, social ideas about masculinity can be harmful to men, who may be expected to behave in certain ways or take up activities that can affect their mental and physical health.

When we take a gender perspective, we look at relationships between women and men to identify where there are differences that generate inequalities, vulnerabilities, fears and exclusion. Transforming harmful social ideas and practices requires everyone’s collaboration, regardless of their gender.

- 1 Ferrant, G. and Kolev, A. 2016. The economic cost of gender-based discrimination in social institutions. OECD Development Centre Issues Paper. Paris: OECD. http://www.oecd.org/dev/development-gender/SIGI_cost_final.pdf
- 2 Williams, M. J. 2014. Twenty-five issues of the Women in Fisheries Information Bulletin: The story within the story of 25 years of women in fisheries at SPC. Women in Fisheries Bulletin 25 (October). Noumea: SPC. 5–10. <http://coastfish.spc.int/en/publications/bulletins/women-in-fisheries/433-women-in-fisheries-information-bulletin-25>
- 3 FAO. 2015. Voluntary guidelines for securing sustainable small-scale fisheries in the context of food security and poverty eradication. Rome: FAO.

What can we find out from a gender analysis of coastal fisheries and aquaculture?

People use their coastal resources in different ways and develop specialised knowledge and skills related to them. Women use coastal marine resources to provide food as well as material for handcrafts for customary exchange or income generation. They farm seaweed and sell fish and invertebrates in markets. They often have good knowledge of the marine resources in shallow waters and along the shore.

Men collect coastal marine resources for subsistence as well, but they also go out to sea to catch fish for food and for sale. They may know more about marine life in deeper waters. Men are usually more involved than women in high-value commercial fisheries such as beche-de-mer (sea cucumber), but women also take part in beche-de-mer harvesting in some places including Fiji and Papua New Guinea.^{4,5,6}

A gender analysis could show that we overlook certain areas of fisheries and aquaculture due to ‘unconscious bias’.



What is unconscious bias?

Unconscious bias is discrimination that we are unaware of. It becomes embedded in our thinking processes through social and cultural messages surrounding us in our childhood and daily lives. Our unconscious biases may be different from our conscious values, but they nevertheless affect our judgements about people. Even people who despise racism and believe in gender equality may have unconscious biases leading them to prefer one skin colour over another, or men over women, for example. Our analysis can also be affected by stereotypes. For example, we might assume some people are more skilled at, interested in, or suited to a certain task. We may believe women pay more attention to detail and are more patient, and that men are greater risk takers and naturally better leaders.

Unconscious bias can occur in several ways. We might define fishing and aquaculture narrowly (e.g. based on fishing for sale only) or focus only on activities that men are more involved in, and ignore those dominated by women.

Unconscious bias clouds people’s perceptions and understanding of fisheries participation, resulting in women being excluded from resource management, with loss of their specific skills and knowledge.

We think of fishing as something that takes place on fishing boats, and we concentrate mainly on the fisheries that generate cash. For example, in the industrial tuna fishery, fleet employees are all male and fishery access fees are an important source of government revenue. Coastal fisheries that involve using boats and producing fish for sale in markets also tend to be dominated by men.

Women do fish, and their fishing is important for food security, but we notice and value men’s forms of fishing more. Some women use boats to fish, but most of them fish or glean (collect by hand) close to shore in shallow waters where they do not need boats, and their catch is often consumed directly for food, rather than being sold.^{7,8,9}

We also tend to forget about women’s participation in fisheries because we focus on the point of harvest rather than the whole supply chain. Women make up the bulk of the tuna processing industry workforce. They tend to be more involved in processing and marketing fish from coastal fisheries, including smoking, salting, drying, or cooking fish using traditional and modern methods. In addition, women use seashells to produce handcrafts that have high cultural value and generate income.

4 SPC. 2015. A new song for coastal fisheries – Pathways to change: The Noumea Strategy. Noumea: SPC.

5 Mangubhai, S., Nand, Y., Ram, R., Fox, M., Tabunakawai-Vakalalabure, M. and Vodivodi, T. 2016. Value chain analysis of the wild caught sea cucumber fishery in Fiji (Report No. 02/16.) Suva, Fiji: Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and Fiji Department of Fisheries.

6 Barclay, K., Kinch, J., Fabinyi, M., Waddell, S., Graeme Smith, Sharma, S., ... Hamilton, R. 2016. Interactive governance analysis of the beche-de-mer ‘fish chain’ from Papua New Guinea to Asian markets. <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.10787.66083>

7 Rohe, J., Schlüter, A., and Ferse, S. C. A. 2018. A gender lens on women’s harvesting activities and interactions with local marine governance in a South Pacific fishing community. *Maritime Studies*, 1–8.

8 Harper, S., Zeller, D., Hauzer, M., Pauly, D. and Sumaila, U. R. 2013. Women and fisheries: Contribution to food security and local economies. *Marine Policy*, 39(C), 56–63.

9 Kronen, M. and Vunisea, A. 2009. Fishing impact and food security – Gender differences in finfisheries across Pacific Island countries and cultural groups. *SPC Women in Fisheries Information Bulletin* 19 (February), 3–10. <http://coastfish.spc.int/en/publications/bulletins/women-in-fisheries/115-women-in-fisheries-information-bulletin-19>

Both women and men share the unconscious biases that cause us to overlook women's roles in fisheries. This can seriously affect the accuracy of survey results. For example, national Household Income and Expenditure Surveys (HIES) conducted over the 2012–2015 period in various Pacific countries found that women made up only 8% of the fisheries labour force.¹⁰ Fisheries research, however, has found that women's participation in fisheries in the Pacific is often over 50% when we include gleaning and subsistence fisheries.^{11,12} It is possible that unconscious bias affected those administering the HIES and those responding, or perhaps the questions were formulated in a way that meant women's fishing was not picked up.

Case study: Invisibility of women's fishing in Wallis and Futuna



Women in Wallis and Futuna engage in fisheries activities daily. They harvest coastal finfish species and glean on the reefs for all types of invertebrates. Most of their catch is for subsistence consumption, but some is sold. Women are mostly gleaners and collectors in coastal areas while men are mostly engaged in deep-sea fishing. Despite this situation, an official from the Ministry of Fisheries told a visiting consultant that women in Wallis and Futuna do not fish. The government official and consultant had lunch in a restaurant and ate shellfish. The consultant asked who had collected the shellfish. The government official said women collected the shellfish but that this was not fishing. Because women's gleaning and gathering activities are classified as 'just collecting shellfish', their activities are not recorded in fishing statistics and consequently are not included in fisheries development work. All over the Pacific and the rest of the world, women's fishing activities are undervalued because they typically occur in the informal sector and are mostly unpaid.

Case study: Invisibility of women's role in aquaculture in Fiji



A study conducted in 2016 in Fiji on gender perspectives in aquaculture showed that women were heavily involved in tilapia farming, even on farms owned by men or run by a committee led by men. Women undertook the roles of feeding and cleaning, while men took the lead in pond maintenance and harvesting. All farmers interviewed indicated that maintenance of the pond (including the initial digging) was usually undertaken by men but these were not frequent events, whereas women carried out feeding every day. Yet the women were often seen as 'helpers' and not as fish farmers.¹³

10 Pacific Community. 2017. Coastal fishery report card 2017. Noumea, New Caledonia: SPC. <http://fame1.spc.int/en/publications/roadmap-a-report-cards>

11 Kronen, M. and Vunisea, A. 2009. Fishing impact and food security – Gender differences in finfisheries across Pacific Island countries and cultural groups. SPC Women in Fisheries Information Bulletin 19 (February): 3–10. <http://coastfish.spc.int/en/publications/bulletins/women-in-fisheries/115-women-in-fisheries-information-bulletin-19>

12 Kailola, P. 1996. Vanuatu – Technical Report: An assessment of the role of women in fisheries in Vanuatu. Bangkok: FAO. <http://www.fao.org/docrep/X5195E/X5195e00.htm#TopOfPage>

13 Pacific Community, Women in Fisheries Network – Fiji, and Ministry of Fisheries, Fiji. 2018. Gender analysis of the aquaculture sector in Fiji: Community-based tilapia farms in Viti Levu. Noumea, New Caledonia: SPC.



Who is socially excluded?



What is social exclusion?

Social exclusion is a complex and multi-dimensional process. When people are socially excluded, they lack or are denied resources, rights, goods and services, and are not able to participate in the normal relationships and activities available to most people in a society, whether in economic, social, cultural or political settings. Social exclusion affects both the quality of life of individuals and the equity and cohesion of society as a whole.¹⁴

Social exclusion is difficult to define because the people who are socially excluded are not the same everywhere – it depends on the social context. For example, in some countries, elders are highly respected and they are the decision-makers in their household and community. However, in other societies, elders are seen as a burden and not fit for modern society, so their voice in decision-making is very limited.

Social exclusion affects individuals who cannot participate in a development process or benefit from it because their identity, and the informal rules related to identity, deny them the right to participate. Thus they become marginalised. Being marginalised is the same as being socially excluded.

Identity – ‘Who you are’

Your gender, your age, and the family and social groups you belong to give you your roles, responsibilities, social status and entitlements. Identity includes gender (male, female, other gender); age (young, middle-aged, old); physical condition (do you have a disability, an illness, good health); residency and citizenship status (indigenous, local, migrant); race or ethnicity (Pacific Islander, Indian, Chinese, European, mixed race); property (landless, landowner); caste¹⁵ (high caste, low caste, commoner); sexual orientation; identity as lesbian gay or transgender; and relationship status (married, single, widowed, separated).

In all societies there are people who are socially excluded. These people have limited capacity to influence and participate in decision-making, even if they are involved in the activity being discussed, such as coastal fishing or aquaculture. They are likely to have limited opportunities to benefit from public programmes such as extension services or technical information. They have greater difficulty accessing financial services such as subsidies or loans. Social exclusion often translates to being dependent on the generosity of others and being vulnerable to poverty.

For example, if a young woman with low social status has a disability, she may have fewer opportunities to find a job or form a relationship, which further reinforces her vulnerability to poverty and exclusion. On the other hand, if an old man with disabilities is from a land-owning group and is married, he is likely to be safer from hardship and included in decision-making in his household and community.

Clearly, people experience hardship and poverty differently depending on their identity. For example, when household resources are limited, more may be put towards education for boys rather than girls. With more education, boys may then have better economic opportunities in later life, so their experience of growing up in the same household will be different from that of their sisters.

While gender roles and relationships vary across cultures, overall, in most societies, women struggle to exercise their human rights, have limited access to productive resources, less control over incomes and little say in decision-making. Some do not have access to family planning services or control of their sexual and reproductive health. In some societies, lack of access to family planning also makes it difficult for women to participate fully in society.

Because their fundamental human rights are not always recognised, because they have fewer financial and productive assets, and because of social rules and unequal power relationships, women are highly vulnerable to violence, exploitation and hardship.

14 FAO. 2015. Voluntary guidelines for securing sustainable small-scale fisheries in the context of food security and poverty eradication. Rome: FAO.

15 Some Pacific societies have a clear caste system that differentiates high-caste and low-caste people (sometimes called ‘commoners’). Each caste has different sets of privileges, responsibilities and rights, with clear ownership rights. In Tonga, for example, the system of royal, aristocratic and commoner status also shapes social hierarchies.

MAIN CAUSES OF GENDER INEQUALITY IN PACIFIC ISLAND COUNTRIES¹⁶

- Violence against women and girls. Family health and safety surveys conducted by SPC and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in the Pacific show that many women – from 25% up to 68% in some countries – have experienced violence from an intimate partner during their lifetime.¹⁷
- Very limited representation and participation of women in decision-making at all levels. The Pacific region has the lowest rate of female political representation in the world.
- Limited access to employment and income-generating opportunities, and invisibility of women's roles in livelihood activities and unpaid care work.
- Difficulties in accessing the justice system.
- Attitudes to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). SRHR are often not recognised or not translated into effective legislation, policies and services.

Misconception: Gender-based violence is not relevant for fisheries or aquaculture work

Gender-based violence is often considered by agencies that deal with women's affairs, but not often in fisheries and aquaculture. However, development activities of any type carry risks of increasing this violence.¹⁸ For example, a project that improves women's incomes may contribute to violence in households if male relatives try to control the income. Women selling fish and seafood in local markets are more at risk of sexual harassment and other forms of abuse that occur in public areas. Like any development programme, a fisheries and aquaculture initiative can contribute to women's economic empowerment but also has the potential to generate conflict. The solution is not to avoid improving the socio-economic situation of women, but to work with people or organisations with gender and development expertise to find the right approach to deliver the services and put safeguards in place to prevent gender-based violence.

DID YOU KNOW?

Two out of three women and girls in the Pacific are not safe in their own home.

Studies conducted in 19 Pacific island countries found that 63% of women and girls in Melanesia, 44% in Micronesia, and 43% in Polynesia have been subjected to physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner during their lifetime.

THIS IS OUR BUSINESS!

Break the silence!
Rompez le silence!

... so women and girls of all diversities who experience violence know they are not alone, they deserve to be safe, and they can be supported to end the cycle of violence.

¹⁶ Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 2016. Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration trend assessment report 2012–2016. Suva, Fiji.

¹⁷ For more information see: Pacific Community. 2015. Beijing +20: Review of progress in implementing the Beijing Platform for Action in Pacific Island countries and territories. Noumea, New Caledonia: SPC. <https://www.spc.int/sites/default/files/wordpresscontent/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Beijing20.pdf>

¹⁸ Eves, R. and Crawford, J. 2014. Do no harm: The relationship between violence against women and women's economic empowerment in the Pacific. Canberra: Australian National University, State Society and Governance in Melanesia (SSGM). https://openresearch-repository.anu.edu.au/bitstream/1885/143080/1/SSGM_IB_2014_3_0.pdf

DID YOU KNOW?



Sometimes the workplace is the only safe place for someone experiencing domestic violence - the place where she or he can think, get organised, and find support to take action.

SPC and the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) have domestic violence policies in place to provide support to their staff experiencing domestic violence.



... of your organisation's policy and how it can help survivors of violence.

TO BE ABLE TO IDENTIFY WHO IS SOCIALLY EXCLUDED IN A COMMUNITY, YOU NEED TO

- know the composition of a community in terms of people's age, gender, marital status, disabilities, residency, and social and economic status.
- See who attends community meetings and who does not; who speaks up and who does not express their views;¹⁹ and whose concerns and interests are being discussed.
- Analyse differences in the standard of living among groups in the community based on income level, quality of housing, food and clothing, ownership of new technology (e.g. mobile phones), ownership of bikes, motorbikes, outboard motor boats, cars, etc.
- Observe social interactions to determine who is likely to be socially excluded. Are there people who are subject to harsh behaviour (including violence) and mockery, or who are ignored? Do people from some groups behave in a submissive way? Are they shy or silent? Do they stay away from social interaction?
- Analyse who has access to resources and various forms of capital and the ability to mobilise these assets.

In many societies around the world, women experience various levels of social exclusion as do other groups who are disadvantaged or face discrimination. The situation is not the same across the region, and in many ways there is less discrimination than in the past. Nevertheless, there are still obstacles that prevent women and other groups in the community from benefiting equitably from programmes and services.

At the community level, women may not actively participate at the same level as men in governance bodies, especially those set up to address natural resources management and use of land and coastal resources. In the past, the belief that fisheries and aquaculture was a male-dominated sector in which women played a small role as 'helpers' shaped how programmes and services were designed by external agencies such as development partners.

19 Dyer, M. 2018. Transforming communicative spaces: The rhythm of gender in meetings in rural Solomon Islands. *Ecology and Society* 23 (1): 17. doi:10.5751/ES-09866-230117

Misconception: Gender roles, 'women's place', and other social hierarchies are part of our Pacific culture and traditions, so we should not question them.

Questioning gender roles, social status and social hierarchies challenges some cultural traditions. It involves questioning power and identifying what differentiates men and women across all ages and social status groups. However, gender equality can be improved in ways that maintain core cultural values, sometimes by simply changing practices that have harmful outcomes.

Pacific Island cultures, like cultures everywhere, are not static. They change over time as a result of urbanisation, education, technology, media, communication, migration, and so on. This does not mean cultural identity and practices are wiped out. Rather, they continually adapt. For example, in the past, it was rare to see Pacific Island women working in the government and occupying decision-making positions. Now it is becoming 'normal' in many countries.

Gender equality and social inclusion may be regarded as ideas pushed by people from 'developed countries' and therefore not appropriate for Pacific Island cultures. However, calls for greater social inclusion have also arisen from within the Pacific Islands region. Gender equality and human rights have been promoted by Pacific Islanders for over 25 years and have increasingly been integrated in domestic policies and legislation.

Social change is never an easy process, especially as some people may fear losing their privileges and power, but it is usually necessary to address new challenges. The message here is that 'everybody should work together, side by side, so that we can all advance as one community'.

One way to approach these discussions is to think about the origins of a practice that causes social exclusion and examine whether it is still useful today, or if it has become something that the community would like to change.

Case study: Culturally sensitive social change in Kiribati

In Kiribati, community decision-making takes place in the maneaba and in accordance with the social customs of the maneaba. Women are supposed to sit behind the men and listen to what is being decided by the men. Many say that women speaking in the maneaba is not part of Kiribati culture. At the same time, we are seeing more and more young women graduate from universities and they want to use their knowledge to help improve their communities.

'I have returned home with a degree in marine science and I want to give back to my people. When I am in the village to do my work, I am not there to intrude and erode the Kiribati culture of speaking in front of the elders and other men on marine and natural resource conservation or management. First, I must seek permission from my elders or village chairs to allow me to speak in the village meeting at the maneaba. When I am given the opportunity to speak, I am not killing my culture, but I am helping the village elders, men and all, to make wise decisions in managing our resources. It is my role to then share with my communities what I have brought back with me from my tertiary education. If I pay respect to the village elders and seek their permission to speak in the maneaba, then together we can maintain our cultural values while also enabling me as a young woman to contribute my education for community benefit.'

Maiango Teimarane, Kiribati Islands Conservation Society



Why promoting gender equity and social inclusion improves fisheries and aquaculture outcomes

Coastal fisheries are vital to the economies and food security of Pacific Island countries and territories.²⁰ Women are heavily involved throughout the coastal fisheries supply chain in the Pacific, especially in fisheries that produce food for family consumption. Making sure women's participation in these fisheries works as well as possible is therefore very important for improving development outcomes in the region (Fig. 1.1).

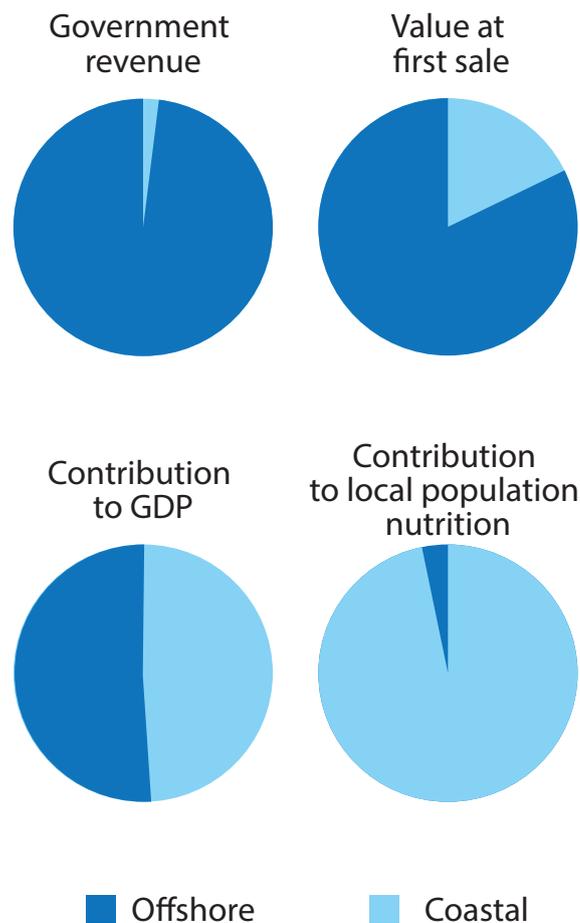


Figure 1.1. Relative importance of offshore and coastal fisheries in the Pacific Islands region in terms of benefit (Pacific Community 2014²¹).

20 Gillett, R. 2016. Fisheries in the economies of Pacific Island countries and territories. Noumea, New Caledonia: SPC. <http://coastfish.spc.int/en/publications/462.html>

21 Pacific Community. 2014. Coastal fisheries and aquaculture: Balancing management and development. Policy brief 26/2014. Noumea: SPC. https://www.spc.int/DigitalLibrary/Doc/FAME/Brochures/Anon_14_PolicyBrief26_CoastalAquaculture.pdf

Experience shows that when equity and inclusion issues are thoroughly addressed in community livelihood activities and national policies and strategies, better development outcomes result.²² Inclusive approaches can lead to improved outcomes for everyone involved in fisheries and aquaculture, not only for groups who are disadvantaged and discriminated against. These approaches also prevent conflicts, contribute to overall well-being and strengthen people's resilience.

In most places in the Pacific Islands region, local-level management of natural resources is done through community groups, which are often male dominated. If we only understand problems from the perspectives of dominant people (in many cases, older men, resource owners and those with high social status) then solutions are likely to be limited.

For example, communities working with conservation organisations in the Western Province of Solomon Islands devised community-based fisheries management rules without listening to the voices of women, even though women in that area do a significant amount of fishing for food and income.²³ The rules meant fishing was restricted in areas close to the village where women fished more than men. Women were therefore less likely to follow the rules, partly because they did not consider them to be legitimate because they were not consulted, and partly because it was too hard for them to go to new areas to fish beyond the *tambu* areas. When people have to travel further to fish, there may be less fish in their families' diets, or they may be too tired or unable to tend to other responsibilities.

To ensure that coastal fisheries and aquaculture benefit people equitably, it is important to adopt measures that promote inclusiveness and equity.

Case study: Including women in coastal fisheries decision-making in Kiribati



In Tabonibara, a village in North Tarawa, the women are very different from other women in North Tarawa villages. They glean on the reef and salt fish from the men's catches and make shell handcrafts that they use for subsistence and to generate income. The women walk for miles and cross the channels from Tabonibara to Kainaba village to catch the ferry to travel to the capital in South Tarawa to market their products. They then walk from house to house to sell them. They stay on South Tarawa for two or three days before travelling the long distance back. Yet until recently no-one really considered them as stakeholders in fisheries. A community-based fisheries management project has been conducted in North Tarawa since 2013 and through this project, people came to recognise the importance of the women's activities to the community. The views of women are now included in fisheries decision-making in Tabonibara.

22 Levitas, R., Pantazis, C., Fahmy, E., Gordon, D., Lloyd, E. and Patsios, D. 2007. The multi-dimensional analysis of social exclusion. University of Bristol: United Kingdom.

23 Rohe, J., Schlüter, A. and Ferse, S. C. A. 2018. A gender lens on women's harvesting activities and interactions with local marine governance in a South Pacific fishing community. *Maritime Studies* (2018) 17. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40152-018-0106-8>

Key concepts

Gender

While the biological attributes of being male or female determine people's sex, gender is a social identity – that of being a man or a woman, boy or girl, or other gender identity. Society associates certain roles, responsibilities, entitlements and behaviours with those identities, and also has expectations for them.

Sexual characteristics are physical – people are born with them. Gender is learned through socialisation as children grow up and it varies across cultural groups and over historical periods.

Equity and equality: What is the difference?

Gender equality does not mean that people must become the same. It means that, even though they are different, they have the same rights.

PACIFIC DEFINITION OF GENDER EQUALITY

Gender equality, according to Pacific Ministers of Women's Affairs, means that women and men of all diversities have:²⁴

- the right to be safe
- the right to be respected
- the right to earn incomes
- the right to express their views and be heard
- the right to express their gender identity
- the right to choose how many children they have
- the right to choose their intimate partner
- the right to have safe and accessible services and infrastructure for people differently abled
- the right to participate in decision-making and occupy leadership positions, and
- the right to decide for themselves the future they want.

However, even when laws and policies affirm that all people are equal, the reality is that they do not experience equality in all dimensions of their lives. Women and other socially excluded people struggle against unequal treatment in many areas. Even if policies and rules do not discriminate against them or prevent them from accessing resources and services, they still do not benefit equally in terms of development outcomes because they have different needs and capacities. The violation of their human rights is overlooked in development initiatives and public services.

That is why it is important to implement measures to compensate for the disadvantages experienced by some segments of the population. These measures support equity. Providing the same resources, or an equal amount of resources to everyone does not ensure equality of outcomes; it can even reinforce inequality. Figure 1.2 below illustrates the difference between 'equality' and 'equity'.

²⁴ Pacific Community, 2017. Pacific Platform for Action on Gender Equality and Women's Human Rights 2018–2030. Noumea, New Caledonia: SPC. <https://www.spc.int/sites/default/files/wordpresscontent/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/PPA-2018-Part-I-EN2.pdf>

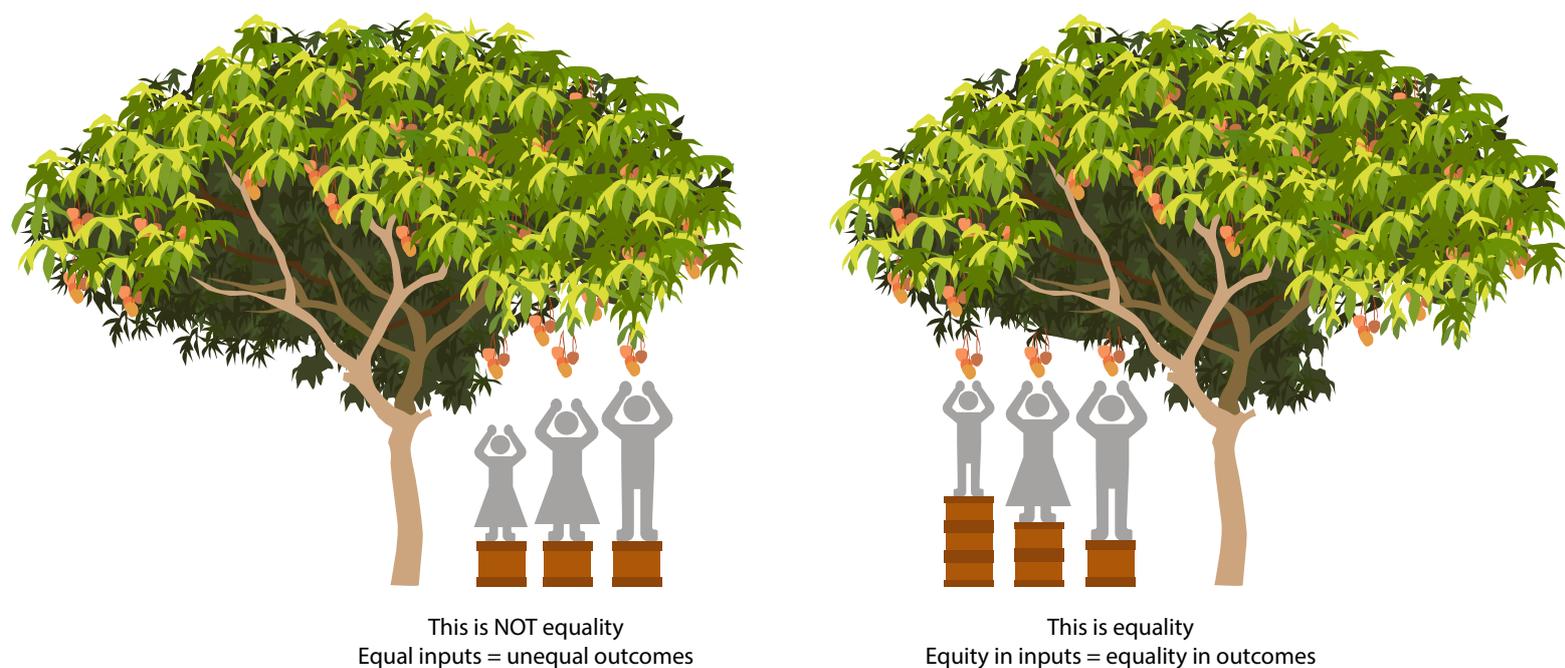


Figure 1.2. Equality and equity.

In fisheries and aquaculture, we want to achieve equality in development outcomes for everyone in the community. But giving everyone the same inputs or interventions (numbers of boxes in Fig.1.2) may not be equitable because people have different capacities. To ensure equality of outcomes, an intervention must be tailored to fit these differences. Achieving *equality of outcomes* from a fishery or aquaculture development may require providing *different resources or a different amount of resources* to different groups in the community. This may mean the intervention is unequal but the end result is greater equality across groups in society.

Empowerment and social inclusion: Complementary approach for shared benefits

Empowerment is about people taking control of their lives by gaining skills, being able to solve problems, making decisions for themselves, being self-reliant and believing in their capacity. It is about people exercising their rights. A combination of resources and actions is needed to support this process.

The choice of strategy to support the empowerment of people who are socially excluded depends on the context of the community in question and what is at stake for different people in that community. The process for supporting one socially excluded group (such as youth) may be very different from the best process for another group (such as people with disabilities). Moreover, people may be empowered in one area of their lives and disempowered in other areas. For instance, a woman may be empowered in her work life because she has good employment and holds a Director's position, but she may be disempowered in her family life because she has to conform to social norms that compel wives to obey their husbands or suffer domestic violence.



What are gender norms, or social norms about gender?

Social norms are shared ideals about how people should behave. Gender norms are the accepted attributes and characteristics of being a woman or a man (ideas of how men and women should be and act) at a particular point in time for a specific society or community. These norms, which are internalised early in life through the process of gender socialisation, provide the standards and expectations that women and men should conform to. They also result in gender stereotypes.

When people are empowered, they participate in decision-making that affects their lives and they exercise their rights. When people who are socially excluded are empowered, they have greater capacity to address their issues and transform the rules that have contributed to their exclusion.

Case study: Empowerment of women who fish for mud crabs in Ba Province, Fiji



Mud crabs are a popular food and lucrative product on the domestic market in Fiji. Women from Ba Province in Fiji harvest mud crabs from mangrove areas for food and, importantly, to supplement their household income.

The women were concerned at the destruction of mangrove areas by activities such as rubbish dumping. Because the fishery is not highly visible, there was no awareness that destroying the mangroves was damaging a fishery that produces a popular food and that many families rely on for income. Because of their social status, it was difficult for the women to address the issues with the people damaging the mangrove ecosystem.

In 2016, the Women in Fisheries Network – Fiji ran a gender and fisheries workshop using the photo-voice method. Women were loaned cameras to take photographs of issues of concern to bring to the workshop for discussion to: (i) create awareness and build knowledge about their role in fisheries; (ii) understand current policies and legislation protecting and empowering women; (iii) develop an appreciation for the gender roles of men and women working as partners in the community; and (iv) support the women as agents of change in creating sustainable sources of livelihood and alleviating poverty. Using the photos, the women developed a list of recommendations to address the issues affecting the mud crab habitat, including implementing best practices for waste management; conducting an environmental impact awareness campaign; holding awareness-raising workshops with relevant authorities; and implementing a mangrove reforestation programme. As a result, the women were better able to discuss these issues in their community.

Social inclusion goes beyond including people in a project designed for the ‘majority’. It is about designing a programme and establishing rules that (1) recognise the diversity of concerns and needs of different segments of the population, and (2) contribute to removing the obstacles causing the social exclusion of some members of a society. Social inclusion is not about striving to put people in a ‘frame’, but rather transforming the frame to make it inclusive (Fig. 1.3).

Social inclusion requires transforming institutions or the ‘rules of the game’. It involves removing institutional barriers that maintain unequal opportunities to access development outcomes and introducing changes at the system level. If professional or management practices result in some people not having the same opportunities, those practices (‘how we do things here’) need to change. Social inclusion recognises and values diversity, i.e. the fact that people are different and do not all have the same life experiences and needs.

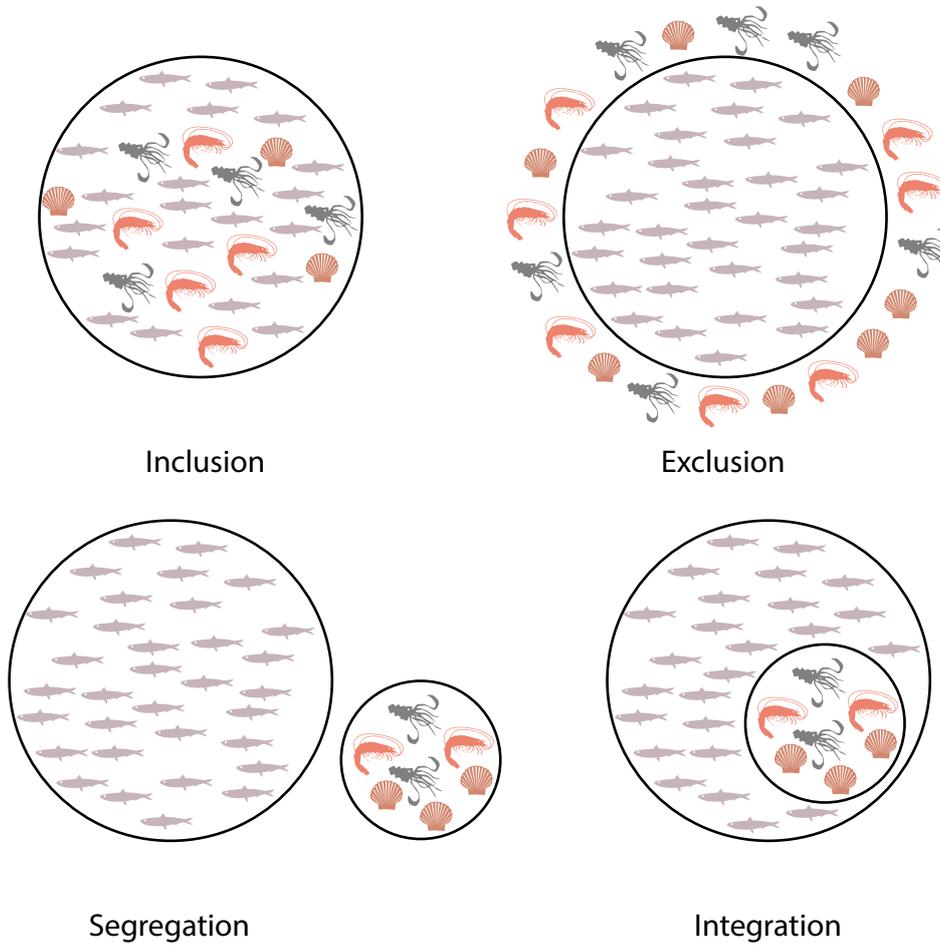


Figure 1.3. Difference between inclusion, exclusion, segregation and integration.

Mainstreaming gender and social inclusion

MAINSTREAMING OF GSI PERSPECTIVES IS THE APPROACH PROPOSED IN THIS HANDBOOK.²⁵ THIS APPROACH MEANS THAT

- Before we make decisions, we think about the needs and concerns of women, men, and all people within communities, especially those who are socially excluded, and look at how our decisions are likely to affect them (Fig. 1.4).
- When we design programmes or services, we think about the likely impacts on women and men of all diversities from all segments of the population.
- When we implement programmes and services, we make sure that women and men of all diversities can access and benefit from them.



Putting people at the center of all our decisions and everything we do

Figure 1.4. When do we mainstream gender and social inclusion?

²⁵ For a definition of gender mainstreaming see: ECOSOC. 1997. Mainstreaming the gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system. Chapter IV, Coordination Segment. Report of the Economic and Social Council of the 1997 General Assembly, Fifty-second Session. New York: United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/docs/52/plenary/a52-3.htm>

International commitments to shared benefits, social inclusion and gender equality

Pacific Island governments have committed to promote gender equality and social inclusion in coastal resource management and development internationally, regionally and nationally (Table 1.1).²⁶

Table 1.1. Summary of international and regional commitments made by Pacific Island governments towards gender and social inclusion (GSI) in coastal fisheries and aquaculture.

Commitment	Relevance to GSI in coastal fisheries and aquaculture
International	
Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development	SDG 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls SDG 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources
Voluntary guidelines for securing sustainable small-scale fisheries (SSF) (2015)	Developed under the auspices of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the SSF guidelines outline the principles for the responsible management and development of small-scale fisheries in every country. They include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensuring tenure and therefore resource access social development, employment and decent work considering post-harvest, trade and whole value chains as well as fisheries gender equality FAO has also developed a handbook to support gender equity in implementing the SSF guidelines.
Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (1979)	Article 1 For the purposes of the present Convention, the term ‘discrimination against women’ shall mean any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field. Article 11 is about equality in employment. Article 14 is about the particular problems faced by rural women, such as those involved in fishing and aquaculture.
Beijing Platform for Action (1995)	The Beijing Platform for Action is an agenda for women’s empowerment. It is aimed at removing all the obstacles to women’s active participation in all spheres of public and private life through ensuring women have a full and equal share in economic, social, cultural and political decision-making. To this end, governments, the international community and civil society, including NGOs and the private sector, are called upon to take strategic action in a number of critical areas of concern identified in the Platform for Action: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women and poverty Education and training of women Women and the economy Women in power and decision-making Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women Human rights of women Women and the environment

²⁶ For an analysis of how well international commitments are followed through in regional and national documents see: Govan, H. (in preparation). Linkages between Pacific Island and global policies supporting coastal fisheries. FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Circular. Rome, Italy: FAO.

Commitment	Relevance to GSI in coastal fisheries and aquaculture
<p>Commission on the Status of Women, 62nd Session. Agreed conclusions (2018)</p>	<p>The Commission recognizes the important role and contribution of rural women as critical agents in poverty eradication, in enhancing sustainable agricultural and rural development as well as fisheries. It underlines that meaningful progress in these areas necessitates closing the gender gap, introducing appropriate gender-responsive policies, interventions and innovations, including in agriculture and fisheries, and women’s equal access to agricultural and fisheries technologies, technical assistance, productive resources, land tenure security and access to, ownership of and control over land, forests, water and marine resources, and to participation in local, regional and international markets (para. 16). The Commission encourages the provision of support and resources for women fishers and aquaculturists in developing countries (para. 50). Implement economic and social policies for the empowerment of all rural women and girls (para. 46).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poverty alleviation including agriculture and fisheries production (para. 46 m) • Mainstreaming a gender perspective in agriculture and fisheries development, taking into account the SSF guidelines (2015) (para. 46 r) • Empower rural women as actors for food security and improved nutrition, including their local environmental knowledge and contributions to conservation (para. 46 v) • Encourage and facilitate rural women’s entrepreneurship (para. 46 dd)
Regional	
<p>A new song for coastal fisheries: The Noumea strategy (2015)</p>	<p>“A new song for coastal fisheries” is the key document guiding Pacific coastal fisheries. It emphasises that the contributions of women and youth are often overlooked or diminished and says that women and youth must have a greater role in decision-making about coastal resources and more equitable access to benefits from them.</p>
<p>Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) roadmap for inshore fisheries management and sustainable development 2015–2024</p>	<p>MSG (Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu) has pledged to implement this set of principles in national jurisdictions by 2024. Its vision is to achieve sustainability for economic, social, ecological and food security purposes, including by empowering communities to manage their coastal resources.</p>
<p>SAMOA Pathway (2014) – Outcome of the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States</p>	<p>We recognize that gender equality and women’s empowerment and the full realization of human rights for women and girls have a transformative and multiplier effect on sustainable development and are a driver of economic growth in small island developing states. Women can be powerful agents of change (para. 76).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and girls (para. 77 a) • Integrate a gender perspective in priority areas for sustainable development (para. 77 b) • Strengthen women’s economic empowerment and ensure equal access to productive employment (para. 77 c) • End all forms of violence against women and girls (para. 77 d) • Support women in leadership (para. 77 e) • Guarantee equal access to good-quality education and health care (para. 77 f) • Ensure sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights (para. 77 g) • Tackle multiple intersecting forms of discrimination affecting women and girls, including those with disabilities (para. 77 g) • Give women equal rights over access to, ownership of and control over land and other forms of property, credit, inheritance, natural resources and appropriate new technologies (para. 77 i).

Commitment	Relevance to GSI in coastal fisheries and aquaculture
<p>Pacific Platform for Action on the advancement of women and gender equality (1994, revised 2004 and 2017)</p>	<p>Original document (1994) included: Education and training; economic empowerment; agriculture and fishing; legal and human rights; shared decision-making; environment; culture and the family; mechanisms to promote the advancement of women; violence; peace and justice; poverty; indigenous people's rights</p> <p>The 2004 revision included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • - Women's legal and human rights: leadership, elimination of violence, human rights; • - Women's access to services: health and education; economic empowerment of women <p>The 2017 revision included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase efforts to mainstream gender perspectives across all legislation, policies, programmes and services delivered by government, CROP (Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific) agencies and CSOs (civil society organisations). • Develop and strengthen effective partnerships between governments, institutions, CSOs, the private sector and faith-based organisations, so that women and men of all ages across all levels of society are empowered as individuals and communities to prevent violence and all forms of discrimination. • Establish mechanisms and systems to make stakeholders accountable for implementing commitments on gender equality and the human rights of all women and girls, including through harmonised monitoring and reporting.
<p>Pacific Youth Development Framework (2014)</p>	<p>Four outcomes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) More young people secure decent employment 2) Young people's health status is improved 3) Governance structures empower young people to increase their influence in decision-making processes 4) More young people participate in environmental action

Commitment	Relevance to GSI in coastal fisheries and aquaculture
Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration (2012)	<p>1. Gender-responsive policies and programmes</p> <p>Strengthen consultative mechanisms with civil society groups, including women's advocacy groups, on key budget and policy issues of national and subnational governments.</p> <p>Support the production and use of sex-disaggregated data and gender analysis to inform government policies and programmes.</p> <p>Incorporate articles from CEDAW in legislative and statutory reforms and policy initiatives across government.</p> <p>2. Leadership and decision-making</p> <p>Adopt measures, including temporary special measures (such as legislation to establish reserved seats for women and political party reforms), to accelerate women's full and equal participation in governance reform at all levels and women's leadership in all decision-making.</p> <p>Advocate for increased representation of women in private sector and local-level governance boards and committees (e.g. school boards and produce market committees).</p> <p>3. Women's economic empowerment</p> <p>Remove barriers to women's employment and participation in the formal and informal sectors, including in relation to legislation that directly or indirectly limits women's access to employment opportunities or contributes to discriminatory pay and conditions for women.</p> <p>Implement equal employment opportunity and gender equality measures in public sector employment, including state-owned enterprises and statutory boards, to increase the proportion of women employed, including in senior positions, and advocate for a similar approach in private sector agencies.</p> <p>Improve the facilities and governance of local produce markets, including through fair and transparent local regulation and taxation policies, so that market operations increase in profitability and efficiency and encourage women's safe, fair and equal participation in local economies.</p> <p>Target support for women entrepreneurs in the formal and informal sectors.</p> <p>5. Ending violence against women</p> <p>Implement essential services (protection, health, counselling, legal) for survivors of violence.</p> <p>Enact and implement legislation to protect women from violence and impose appropriate penalties for perpetrators.</p>
Pacific Framework for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2016)	<p>Improve the social and economic inclusion of women and girls with disabilities in all areas of life – by ensuring that they have equal access to development opportunities, representation in government decision-making, and sexual and reproductive health services, and that their special vulnerabilities to intersectional discrimination including all forms of violence are addressed.</p>