

**Proceedings of State-level Consultation on
Operationalizing the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-
Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication, 2015
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations**



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Venue: CYSD, Bhubaneswar



**Organized by
NIRMAN – Bhubaneswar, Odisha
Environmental Change and Governance Group (ECGG),
University of Waterloo, Canada**

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Background of the Consultation

According to the 2015 FAO Voluntary Guidelines, small-scale fishing is a large rural sector in many parts of the world, especially Asia. It provides jobs, livelihoods, food security, and cultural identity to a significant number of people. According to Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations estimates, some 90% of 38 million people recorded as fishers all over the world are classified as small-scale. Small-scale fisheries contribute about half of global fish catches and, in the case of catches destined for direct human consumption, the share contributed by the small-scale fisheries increases to two-thirds. Small-scale fisheries employ more than 90 percent of the world's capture fishers and fish workers, about half of whom are women. In addition to employment as full- or part-time fishers and fish workers, seasonal or occasional fishing and related activities provide vital supplements to the livelihoods of millions. Small-scale fishing and related activities often underpin the local economies in coastal, lakeshore and riparian communities and constitute an engine, generating multiplier effects in other sectors.

However, small-scale fishers throughout the world are being dispossessed of their livelihoods, property rights and cultural identity through the impacts of various driving forces, such as the expansion of large-scale industrial fisheries, growth of unabated aquaculture and creation of protected areas based on the principles of human exclusion, unsupportive policy frameworks and the re-allocation of coastal resources to other uses such as urban and industrial areas, and recreation and tourism. Of course, many sectors of the global and national economies are being transformed, but the changes occurring in the small-scale fisheries sector are having major social and economic impacts, resulting in the marginalisation of small-scale fishing communities and creating environmental injustices and equity problems through large-scale loss of their livelihoods, food security and wellbeing. Therefore, despite their importance, many small-scale fishing communities continue to be marginalized, and their contribution to food security and nutrition, poverty eradication, equitable development and sustainable resource utilization – which benefits both them and others – is not fully realized.

On the above backdrop, the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (the SSF Guidelines) is the

first internationally agreed instrument dedicated entirely to the immensely important but often neglected small-scale fisheries sector. The SSF Guidelines are the result of a bottom-up participatory development process based on the recommendations of the Twenty-ninth and Thirtieth Sessions of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI). Between 2010 and 2013, FAO facilitated a global process that involved more than 4000 representatives of governments, small-scale fishers, fish workers and their organizations, researchers, development partners and other relevant stakeholders from more than 120 countries in 6 regional and more than 20 civil-society organization-led national consultative meetings. The outcomes of these consultations provided the basis for the work of an FAO Technical Consultation, which met in May 2013 and February 2014 to agree on the final text.

The SSF Guidelines were finally endorsed by the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) in June 2014 after a long participatory consultation process. The endorsement of the SSF Guidelines by the Thirty-first Session of COFI in June 2014 represents a major achievement towards ensuring secure and sustainable small-scale fisheries. The endorsement of the SSF Guidelines by COFI members was indeed a landmark achievement, but now the challenge of implementation lies ahead. The full text of the guidelines can be found at: <http://www.fao.org/fishery/ssf/guidelines/en>.

The SSF Guidelines aim at providing guidance for the governance and development of small-scale fisheries in the context of global and national efforts to eradicate hunger and poverty. The SSF Guidelines are broad in scope, and their implementation will necessarily engage a wide range of government agencies, civil society organizations, and small-scale fisheries stakeholders, along the entire chain from harvest to markets. FAO is helping to create awareness and to facilitate the implementation process of the SSF Guidelines around the world, but the success or failure in their implementation relies first and foremost on the individual states and civil society organizations – particularly fisher and fishworker organizations – to whom the SSF Guidelines are primarily addressed.

The SSF Guidelines represent a global consensus on principles and guidance for small-scale fisheries governance and development. They were developed in close collaboration with representatives of small-scale fisheries organizations and other relevant stakeholders in a process facilitated by FAO. The SSF Guidelines complement the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and its related instruments as well as other negotiated voluntary

international instruments such as the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security and the Voluntary Guidelines to support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security.

The main objectives of the SSF Guidelines are:

- a) to enhance the contribution of small-scale fisheries to global food security and nutrition and to support the progressive realization of the right to adequate food;
- b) to contribute to the equitable development of small-scale fishing communities and poverty eradication and to improve the socio-economic situation of fishers and fish workers within the context of sustainable fisheries management;
- c) to achieve the sustainable utilization, prudent and responsible management and conservation of fisheries resources consistent with the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (the Code) and related instruments;
- d) to promote the contribution of small-scale fisheries to an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable future for the planet and its people;
- e) to provide guidance that could be considered by States and stakeholders for the development and implementation of ecosystem friendly and participatory policies, strategies and legal frameworks for the enhancement of responsible and sustainable small-scale fisheries, and
- f) To enhance public awareness and promote the advancement of knowledge on the culture, role, contribution and potential of small-scale fisheries, considering ancestral and traditional knowledge, and their related constraints and opportunities.

In order to achieve the objectives of responsible fisheries and sustainable development through securing small-scale fisheries, the SSF Guidelines outline the following key areas requiring urgent attention by the state and other concerned stakeholders:

- a) ***Responsible governance of tenure:*** Small-scale fishing communities need to have secure tenure rights to the resources that form the basis for their social, economic and cultural wellbeing, and the state should recognise and ensure such rights.
- b) ***Sustainable resource management:*** States and all those engaged in fisheries management should adopt measures for the long-term conservation and sustainable use of fisheries resources and to secure the ecological foundation for food production.
- c) ***Social Development, employment and decent work:*** Due attention to social and economic development may be needed to ensure that small-scale fishing communities are empowered and can enjoy their human rights.
- d) ***Value chains, postharvest and trade:*** All parties should recognize the central role that the small-scale fisheries post-harvest subsector and its actors play in the value chain, and give due consideration to the impact of international trade in fish and fishery products and of vertical integration on local small-scale fishers, fish workers and their communities.
- e) ***Gender equality:*** All parties should recognize that achieving gender equality requires concerted efforts by all and that gender mainstreaming should be an integral part of all small-scale fisheries development strategies. These strategies to achieve gender equality require different approaches in different cultural contexts and should challenge practices that are discriminatory against women.
- f) ***Disaster risks and climate change:*** States should recognize that combating climate change, including in the context of sustainable small-scale fisheries, requires urgent and ambitious action, in accordance with the objectives, principles and provisions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), taking into account the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) outcome document 'The future we want'. In case of disasters caused by humans, impacting small-scale fisheries, the responsible party should be held accountable.

It is pertinent to note that India has remained an important partner in the entire process of SSF Guidelines formulation and an official signatory to it. With the SSF guidelines now

in place and India being a strong supporter and a signatory to the guidelines, the onus is on the individual states to make adequate provisions for their effective operationalisation through legal and institutional means. The guidelines offer many important suggestions on how to ensure an enabling environment and create support for their implementation. Appropriate steps in the direction of creating (1) Policy coherence, institutional coordination and collaboration, (2) Information, research and communication, (3) Capacity development, and (4) Implementation support and monitoring are necessary for effective operationalisation of the SSF Guidelines are highlighted.

NIRMAN, in collaboration with Environmental Change and Governance Group (ECGG), University of Waterloo, Canada, organised a one day consultation on United Nations FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication. This consultation was held on the 19th December 2015 at Development Research Training Center, CYSD, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India.



A total of 42 representatives from coastal and inland fisher organisations, including both in the government and non-government sectors, participated in this consultation meeting.

The overall objective of the consultation was to facilitate understanding of the principles of the SSF Voluntary Guidelines and their application in order to support sustainable small-scale fisheries in the country, in general, and the state of Odisha, in specific. During the one day consultation participants deliberated on the current status of Small-Scale Fisheries (SSF) in the state and shared experiences, discussed priorities, designed actions, and made recommendations on appropriate policies for implementing the SSF Guidelines in the state. It is also expected that the lessons drawn from this particular consultation will have important implications for national initiatives on sustainable small-scale fisheries management as well as similar actions at the level of other states in India.

3. Proceedings of the Consultation

SESSION I- INAUGURAL SESSION

The objective of the consultation was to create a platform where all the stakeholders can come together and figure out the most pertinent issues and challenges plaguing the small scale fisheries sector and chalking out possible solutions to address the challenges.

Mr. Prasant Mohanty, Executive Director, NIRMAN, Odisha welcomed the dignitaries and the



expert of the inaugural session. In his welcome address Mr. Prasant Mohanty, outlined the importance of fishery sector in providing livelihood security and creating employment opportunities. Prof. Prateep Kumar Nayak, University of Waterloo with a brief introduction about the contribution of small fishery discussed on the need for brainstorming among all the stakeholders to unleash the potential that the sector offers in the context of FAO guidelines for sustainable small-scale fisheries. Professor. Prateep Kumar Nayak,

University of Waterloo, in his address explained the potential of small-scale fishing and how majority of the people in rural sector in many parts of the world, especially Asia and India are dependent on it. He emphasized the significance of the sector in terms of jobs, livelihoods, food security, and cultural identity to a significant number of people. To



support to his argument he shared with the dignitaries that 90% of people recorded as fishers all over the world are classified as small-scale (UN FAO). Small-scale fisheries contribute about half of global fish catches The share increases to two-thirds in the case of catches destined for direct human consumption. He also talked about the different provisions in the guidelines.

While summing up the Session's proceedings, Prof. Prateep Kumar Nayak, highlighted the following issues in order to secure rights and food security of small scale fishers:

- Governance of tenure in small scale fisheries and resource management
- Responsible governance of tenure
- Sustainable Resource Management
- Value chain, Post-harvest and trade
- Policy Coherence, Institutional Coordination and Collaboration

Following the inauguration, participants were divided into two groups to discuss more details on 'Tenure, Responsibility and Control and Sustainable Resource Management' pertaining to the SSF Guidelines.

SESSION II- Findings from the Group Discussion

The broad issues identified by the groups are in the context of production (fish catch), i.e reduction of fish production in Chilika Lagoon and Odisha coast of Bay of Bengal, migration of youth to different parts of the country for survival, lack of rights over home stead land, lack of enforcement mechanism



leading to over-exploitation of fish resources and lack of insurance and identification of being a small scale fisher. The issues related to lack of processing and marketing infrastructure were also discussed. To be specific in the given context, the groups were very vocal and were concerned with respect to declining

access to fish (due to impact of conservation measures), technological upgradation, infrastructural bottleneck, lack of market linkage, investment and financing, Institutional, legislation and social factors At the same time he emphasized the huge opportunity that remain untapped in terms of fish value added products.

The other specific issues identified are lease of



fishery areas for five years should be given to the fisher community and rights over fish production place. The tenure of lease and allotment/change and development of the fish production areas. The small scale fish production areas should not be encroached and existing encroachments should be removed promptly. In the context of social security measures, the fisher communities should be included in insurance schemes and a system of fishermen credit card should be introduced just like kishan (farmer) credit card. The fishermen basic rights like transportation facility, education, health, drinking water, sanitation and provision of electricity should be properly facilitated. The fisher folk community should be given subsidy on all the fishing equipment. Fishing rights over inland water bodies should be legally given to the fisher local fishers. Special security squad should be established to safeguard every fish production source and also to keep the fishermen safe. In the context of employment scenario, educated unemployed fisher youth should be given preference in jobs and higher studies. To ensure proper pricing mechanisms, the fixing of the fish rate should be done through fishermen cooperative societies.



Following are the outcomes of breakout group discussions which were presented in the plenary and extensive discussion was held on each of the points.

Topic: Tenure, Responsibility and Control and Sustainable Resource Management

Group-A

- To provide identity card of fishing communities.
- Rights over fish production areas should be provided to Fishing communities.
- Provision for availability of pension to Fishing communities pension just like old age pension, widow pension etc.
- Credit card should be introduced to fishermen like kisan credit card.



- Basic facilities like communication, transportation, education, health, water and sanitation, electricity should be properly facilitated to fishing communities.
- The special security squad should be established to safeguard every fish

production source and also to keep the fishermen safe.

- In the context of employment scenario, educated unemployed youth should be given preference in jobs and higher studies
- To provide same scope and opportunity to female fishing communities.
- Setting up basic infrastructure at the village level like cold storage chambers.
- The fishing community should be given subsidy on all the fishing equipment's and also the fishing rights in inland water bodies should be legally given to the fishermen
- Govt should make arrangement of adequate amount of financial support for the fish production as well as for the skills required for the same.
- Each primary fishery cooperative should be given a fixed amount of money and granted loan at low interests.
- Arrangements should be made to provide precise information regarding fish rate in market.
- Law should be enacted to ensure that no other person or company except the fisherman takes the tanks /ponds/reservoirs on lease.
- The fishermen should be included as a part of the industries that have been built around the fisheries.

Group –B

- The tenure of lease and allotment/change and development of the fish production areas
- To fix assessment of fish rate by Co-operative
- Lease of land for five years should be given to the fishing community and rights over fish production place
- Provision of capital and tools support
- Adequate number of cool storage should be arranged to properly preserve the fish of the fishing communities
- Fish produced by small fisheries should be certified at Govt. level
- Govt. should create an enabling environment for sustainable development in small-scale fishing communities.
- Govt. should ensure that small-scale fishers, fish workers and their communities have secure, equitable, and socially and culturally appropriate tenure rights to fishery resources.
- To restore, conserve, protect and manage local marine and coastal ecosystems should be given to fishing communities.
- Govt. should encourage and support the role and involvement of both men and women, whether engaged in pre-harvest, harvest or post-harvest operations.
- Govt. should, prior to the implementation of large-scale development projects that might impact small-scale fishing consider the social, economic and environmental impacts through impact studies, and hold effective and meaningful consultations with these communities, in accordance with national legislation.
- State should restrain from the policy on unsustainable and excess fishing in the small scale fisheries



Way Forward: Solutions & Opportunities

- Strengthening Primary fishers cooperative societies'
- Skill trainings in the context of use of latest technologies
- Provision of availability of credit at concessional interest rates
- Setting up basic infrastructure at the village level like cold storage chambers
- Developing Market Systems & linkages
- Strengthening the synergies between different Institutions
- Technological Intervention and value addition in the context of Micro –enterprise development
- Provision of capital and tools support
- Promoting participatory governance at the planning and implementation level-Fishers class representatives at both the levels
- Implementation of comprehensive fishery policy
- Access to existing livelihood entitlements

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the guest and participants.

Annexure

Participants list

Sl. No	Name	Address
1	Mr. Pranaya Kumar Parida	CIFRI, Kolkata
2	Mr. Banamali Jena	Purbanchal Maschya Mahasangha, Chillika
3	Mr. Bhanjya Kishore Jena	Gabakund
4	Mr. Tapan Behera	Berhampur, Puri
5	Mr. Bhimasen Behera	Gopinathpur
6	Mr. A.R Mohapatra	DDK/Bhubaneswar
7	Mr. B. Das	DDK/Bhubaneswar
8	Mr. Krushna Chandra Jena	Berhampur, Puri
9	Mr. Sadasiva Jena	Rayapur, Puri
10	Mr. Dhabaleswar Jena	Berhampur, Puri
11	Mr. Pradumn Jaysingh	Kholamunha
12	Ms. Kaitlin Murray	Intern, NIRMAN
13	Mr. Pranakrushna Sharma	Prameya, Media
14	Mr. Manoj Kumar Swain	Prameya, Media
15	Mr. Bighneswar Sahu	Samadrusti
16	Mr. Sumant Banerjee	NIRMAN
17	Mr. Ratan Kumar Jena	NIRMAN

18	Mr. Alok Pradhan	News 7
19	Mr. Shibu Lenka	News 7
20	Mr. Bishnuhar Parida	News 7
21	Mr. Bagirathi Behera	Sarasudu Nagar
22	Mr. Gangadhar Jully	Khatisahi
23	Mr. Mahadev Dera	Serana
24	Ms. Sabnam Aferin	NIRMAN, Tumudibandha
25	Mr. D.G Pradhan	Bhubaneswar
26	Mr. Dr. K. S Bhatta	CDA
27	Mr. Guru Charan Rout	APOWA, Kendrapara
28	Mr. Madhusudan	Sambad, Media
29	Mr. Dillip Subudhi	Bhubaneswar
30	Mr. Sunil Mishra	Journalist, New Delhi
31	Ms. Asamapika Sahoo	Dharitri, Media
32	Ms. Aiswarya Parija	Nitidin, Media
33	Mr. S Bheema Rao	VIEWS
34	Mr. Raghunath Bala	Chillika
35	Mr. Biswanath Das	Chillika
36	Mr. Prasant Mohanty	NIRMAN
37	Mr. Prateep Nayak	University of Waterloo
38	Ms. Shusrisangeeta Das	NIRMAN
39	Mr. Prashant Palai	NIRMAN
40	Mr. Prangya Chudhury	Kalinga TV
41	Mr. Sudarshan Chhotaray	Bhubaneswar
42	Mr. Pranob Ranjan Chaudhury	Bhubaneswar