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# SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PROJECT (SFMP)

**Gender mainstreaming in fisheries management:  
A training manual**



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**Cover photo:** Woman fish processor showing her products at Elmina. (Credit: Elin Torell/CRC)

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## **Introduction**

The SFMP supports the Government of Ghana's fisheries development policies and objectives and squarely aims to assist the country to end overfishing and rebuild targeted fish stocks. Adoption of sustainable fishing practices and reduced exploitation to end overfishing is the only way Ghana can maintain the sustainability of its marine fisheries in order to increase its wild-caught local marine food fish supply and bring greater profitability to the fishery—which in turn has the potential to benefit two million men and women indirectly.

The SFMP aims to develop nested governance arrangements and management plans for fishery management units at three ecosystem scales, utilizing adaptive co-management approaches tailored to each unit. Civil society engagement is crucial in this process. The SFMP engages stakeholders in order to build consensus, involving men and women engaged in the fisheries sector at national and local level. The SFMP will also provide communities with diversified livelihoods, including ways to obtain greater profitability from fisheries value chains. One aspect of this work particularly emphasizes more efficient and profitable fish smokers that have potential for significant scale-up. This element places a strong focus on women and youth and utilizes local partners whose missions address the needs of these target groups. In the larger coastal fishing communities of the Central Region (CR), where child labor and trafficking is prevalent, the SFMP targets at-risk households with a strong communications initiative and will make these communities the priority beneficiaries of livelihood interventions.

Gender is mainstreamed throughout all project activities. As key players in the fisheries value chain, women are targeted for the improved fish smokers. Because women fish processors are large consumers of fuelwood, of which mangrove is preferred, we expect that women will play a critical role in promoting sustainability of this supply. The SFMP will also ensure that co-management plans represent the interests of both women and men. Because many women in Ghana own fishing vessels and finance fishing trips, they have the potential to wield considerable power over fishing decisions and influence changes in behavior that could have a positive impact on the fishery. The end goal is to make co-management systems more efficient and relevant—articulating the realities is a prerequisite to any change in response to those realities and/or changing the realities themselves. If we can better understand both men and women's roles—direct or indirect—in fisheries and fisheries-related areas of their lives, we may better identify solutions to food insecurity.

As a basis for the gender mainstreaming activities, the SFMP conducted a detailed gender analysis focusing on the fisheries sector and value chain. The gender analysis formed the basis for a gender strategy. This gender mainstreaming manual will assist the SFMP partners as they work to mainstream gender into fisheries co-management. It is a tool for implementing the project's gender mainstreaming strategy.

### ***Why is gender mainstreaming important to fisheries management?***

Fisheries management is essentially about changing people's behavior to sustain fish stocks for future generation. To encourage behavior change and manage any fishery, we need to know how men and women engage in fisheries and understand what motivates them to do what they do. Gender mainstreaming in fisheries management is very important because it gives men and women a chance to recognize and appropriately exploit opportunities to generate wealth and make right decisions in terms of more responsible fisheries practices and sustainable development.

The initial Ghana fisheries gender analysis found that in coastal fishing communities, there are clear roles for men, women, old, young, rich, and poor. Social structures and relations

determine gender relationships. The roles of men and women are different and often unequal. Men and women have different problems, interests, needs, and priorities, which must be understood clearly before we can successfully engage them in fisheries management

Step	Location	Role in the system	Sex
	Fishing Community	Canoe owner (deciding when and how to fish)  Fishing financier (pays for fuel and maintenance)	Mostly men  Mostly women
	Canoe	Fishing and maintaining equipment	Men
	Beach	Carriers  Fish buyers  Carriers	Mostly men  Men and women  Mostly women
	Fish processing compound	Fish processing (business owner and helpers)	Mostly women
	Transportation to market	Drivers and mates	Men
	Marketing town	Middlemen	Men and women
	The fish market	Wholesaler  Retailer (distribution)	Men and women  Men and women
	Marketing Destination	Consumers	Men and women

**Figure 1: Activities and roles in the chain of production, processing and distribution of fish**

Figure 1 shows men's and women's role in the fisheries value chain in Ghana. It shows that women are engaged in virtually every step of capture fisheries, except going out on boats. However, even though women engage throughout the fisheries sector, their roles are not equal to that of men:

- Women and men tend to do different work in the fisheries sector (Figure 1).
- Women tend to have less access than men to formal decision-making authorities and are less involved in local decision-making structures.

- Women and men have different access to and control over fisheries resources
- Women and men have different spheres of traditional knowledge and leadership
- Women and men have different domestic responsibilities, including financial expenditures.

SFMP gender mainstreaming considers these differences and brings women and men into a position where they participate as equals in fisheries management. Good gender mainstreaming focus on both women and men—integrating the voices of men and women, young and old in decision making. However, in some instances, where there are inequities in opportunities, woman-centered efforts can make a difference. It means reducing male dominance, meeting and learning from women at times that are convenient to them. One also has to be sensitive to the social diversity and complexity among women. Not all women are the same: some are rich; some are poor; some are young, and some are old; some are single, and some are married—their roles are different.

When women are provided with the best circumstances to enhance their socio-economic empowerment. They can contribute meaningfully to food security, poverty alleviation, and improved well-being for themselves, their families, and their communities. In short, they will help to create a world in which responsible and sustainable use of fisheries and resources can make an appreciable contribution to human well-being, food security, and poverty alleviation.

### **Gender Definitions**

**Gender Relations:** Ways in which a culture or society prescribes rights, roles, responsibilities, and identities of women and men in relation to one another.

**Gender Mainstreaming:** Refers to strategies that project staff and partners employ to ensure women's—as well as men's—attitudes, roles, responsibilities, concerns, and experiences are an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of policies and programs. Differences are recognized and routinely addressed for all activities.

**Gender-Sensitive:** Recognizing the differences and inequities between women's and men's needs, roles, responsibilities, and identities.

**Gender Equality:** Refers to norms, values, attitudes, and perceptions required to attain equal status between women and men without neutralizing the biological differences between women and men.

**Gender Equity:** Refers to fairness in women's and men's access to socio-economic, natural, and other resources (e.g., political resources, extension services, credit, etc.).

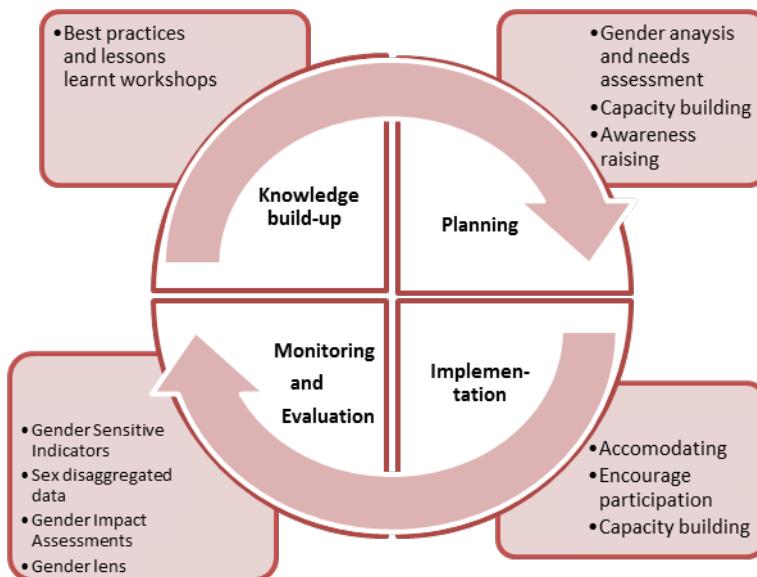
It is important to acknowledge that gender inequalities are deeply ingrained and difficult to change—and to accomplish change, gender mainstreaming needs to go beyond simply increasing the number of women in different positions. It means providing real opportunities to both women and men to influence the agendas, institutions, and processes of fisheries management. When mainstreaming gender, conflict might be inevitable, and the facilitator has to be a good mediator, resolving differences and nurturing relationships between the women and men involved.

## **The SFMP gender strategy**

The SFMP has developed a gender mainstreaming strategy that includes a number of critical actions:

1. Establish a gender network
2. Develop and disseminate gender mainstreaming communications materials
3. Monitor and evaluate gender mainstreaming effectiveness
4. Ensure gender equitable participation in meetings
5. Conduct gender-oriented training for local partners and fishery associations

The gender mainstreaming strategy targets beneficiary communities, SFMP implementing partners, and other community based organizations working in fisheries. It is based on the approach showed in Figure 2.



**Figure 2: SFMP Gender Mainstreaming Approach**

A gender checklist has been developed to mainstream gender issues into SFMP activities and is shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Gender mainstreaming checklist**

Key area	Checklist
Participation	Are all stakeholders given equal chance to participate in decision making? Have extra effort been made to include the marginalized (men and women) in decision making processes? Have extra provisions been made for nursing mothers, pregnant women and marginalized groups to participate effectively?
Allocation of resources	Is resource allocation gender equitable? Does it consider the likely impact that resource allocations have on women/men and boys/girls?
Knowledge and information	Has gender disaggregated data been collected? Gender disaggregated information should be gathered in all field research. The information should be validated to curb the tendency of placing premium on men's views only. The validation process should be carried out separately for men and women.
Responsibilities	Are both women and men made responsible for the planning and implementation of fisheries management? Project interventions should challenge the traditional roles of men and women, when the traditional roles exclude women from participating decisions affecting fisheries in their communities.

### ***General tips when working with stakeholders to mainstream gender***

When mainstreaming gender into fisheries management, it is best to keep the approach and language as simple as possible. Concepts such as “gender” and “mainstreaming” can be difficult to understand, and the starting point will likely be explaining what we mean by gender mainstreaming. Explain that the SFMP comes into the arena of gender mainstreaming from a perspective of women’s empowerment and nondiscrimination: the involvement of women to reduce inequalities, to improve their participation in decision-making, and to make visible their roles in fishing communities. When discussing and planning for gender mainstreaming, the following tips may be helpful:

- Give examples from everyday life to help people understand.
- Recognize that understanding of “gender” can be very different across various cultures and societies.
- Make sure that project and local NGO staff members have a sound understanding of the concepts before going out to work with communities.
- Avoid becoming bogged down with unhelpful definitions and long discussions about the value of gender mainstreaming.
- Provide sufficient time, resources, recognition, and support to the gender mainstreaming activities so that they can be effectively planned and implemented
- Identify gender focal points within partner NGOs and local communities. Focal points can help push forward the gender agenda. Commitment, motivation, and interest are key attributes of the focal points, which do not all need to be women.

- Build institutional capacity to implement programs for advancing gender equity through staff training and advancing women to leadership positions.
- Avoid using terms such as “fisherman” or “middleman.” Using these terms reinforces the image of fisheries being a male only domain.
- Make sure activities, such as trainings, clearly specify the involvement of women in terms of numbers and if possible background.

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

This manual presents a number of action tools that can assist in mainstreaming gender in fisheries management. It serves as a toolbox that local partners engaged in the SFMP can use as they work to mainstream gender into fisheries management in Ghana. The actions can be used during various stages of developing and implementing fisheries management activities. The actions should be used when applicable, and implementing all of them may not be necessary.

As shown in Table 2, the actions described in this manual can be useful when implementing the various actions described in the gender strategy. However, the actions should not be confined to the implementation of the gender strategy—they are also intended for partners to use when implementing other project related activities.

**Table 2: Gender mainstreaming activities and suggested action tools**

<b>Gender mainstreaming activity</b>	<b>Suggested gender mainstreaming action tool</b>
1. Establish a gender network	Action 1: Identifying your stakeholders
2. Develop and disseminate gender mainstreaming communications materials	Action 2: Analyzing the Gender Dimension of Fisheries Issues
3. Monitor and evaluate gender mainstreaming effectiveness	Action 5: Monitoring the impacts of gender mainstreaming
4. Ensure gender equitable participation in meetings	Action 4: Providing a seat for women (and men) at the table
5. Conduct gender oriented training for local partners and fishery associations	Action 3: Using the force field analysis tool for developing a plan of action

## Action 1: Identifying Your Stakeholders

**Purpose:** In order to mainstream gender in fisheries management, a first logical step is for the activity implementer to identify who the stakeholders are in the project activity.

**Methodology:** Use the table provided below to list all of the stakeholders involved in the fisheries activity. The identified stakeholders in the fisheries sector could serve as a reference. This can include those working in fisheries (fishers, mongers, processors, etc.) as well as those working in fisheries management or advocacy (department of fisheries, fisheries commission, trade groups, boat owners associations etc.) and specific individuals with unique influence (e.g. village and landing site leaders). Note the dominant gender of the group members and if the group is currently engaged in fisheries management. This will help identify which stakeholder groups participate in fisheries management and which are excluded. It will also show if the groups/individuals engaged in fisheries management are male or female dominated. Also note if any of the groups include individuals with gender expertise. Such individuals can help identify entry points for gender mainstreaming and become important allies during implementation.

### ***Worksheet 1: Identifying the stakeholder groups and individuals involved in the fisheries sector***

Stakeholder Groups and Key Individuals Involved in the Fisheries Sector	Dominant gender of the stakeholder group (M,F)	Engaged in fisheries management (V)	Have gender expertise (V)

Once stakeholders are identified, you know which stakeholders are already engaged in fisheries management, who has gender expertise, and what stakeholders the project needs to engage more to obtain a better gender balance.

## Action 2: Analyzing the Gender Dimension of Fisheries Issues

**Purpose:** The purpose of this action is to tease out the gender dimensions of fisheries issues that the SFMP is planning to address. It is not meant to include an exhaustive list of fisheries issues, but rather the top 1-4 issues that are addressed by the project. Assessing the gender dimension of fisheries at an early stage will help prevent making gender an afterthought. It will help identify whether gender issues are considered, and if not, work to ensure that they are.

**Methodology:** Using the blank Worksheet 2, list 1-4 fisheries issues that the project is working to address. For each issue, brainstorm what the gender dimensions are for each issue. How does the issue affect women and men? What power does men and women have to influence the issue? What are the practical and strategic interests of men and women in the issue?

### Example

Fisheries Issue	Issue 1: Fishers are harvesting undersized fish	Issue 2: A large percentage of fish is spoiled (post-harvest loss)
Gender dimensions of the issues	Men dominate fisheries management and enforcement. Few, if any, women are involved in enforcement.	When boats do not have freezing facilities, fish spoil on the boats. This means that less good fish is landed and it drives up the price of fish. Women fish buyers have to pay more for the fish.
	Men decide which mesh sizes to use; women are not consulted in these decisions.	Some women fish buyers have to buy lower quality fish, which will fetch a lower price when processed.
	Women processors and marketers have to buy whatever fish is landed in order to make a living. They have no viable alternative.	Male fishers will have less fish to sell at the landing site and will get less money for the spoiled fish.
	When the fishery collapses, women and girls will suffer most during times of food insecurity.	

## **Worksheet 2: Identifying the gender dimensions of fisheries issues**

<b>Fisheries Issue</b>	<b>Issue 1:</b>	<b>Issue 2:</b>
<b>Gender dimensions of the issues</b>		

Once the gender dimensions are identified, go back to the work plan or other project document that outlines how to address the fisheries issue. For each issue, ask the following questions:

1. Are the gender dimensions identified in Worksheet 2 highlighted in the background information to the intervention?
2. Are the gender dimensions identified in Worksheet 2 of interest to both women and men?
3. Do the proposed interventions reflect the needs of both men and women? Do they seek to correct gender imbalances?
4. Do the planned activities involve both men and women? Is there a need to add activities to ensure that a gender perspective is explicit?
5. Have indicators been developed that measure gender aspects of the objectives?
6. Has a communications strategy been developed to provide information materials that include the gender dimension of the issue and project activities?

If any of the answers to questions 3-6 are “no,” the following actions can be helpful in making sure that gender is better mainstreamed when addressing the fisheries issue.

### Action 3: Using the Force Field Analysis Tool for Developing a Plan of Action

**Purpose:** The force field analysis tool can be useful in developing a plan of action to address gender dimension of fisheries issues. This tool can identify the forces that work for and against an issue. It helps a team identify steps that they can take to build on positive forces and trends and to reduce the strength of forces that may restrain the project.

**Methodology:** To carry out a force field analysis, follow the following steps:

1. State the problem that gender mainstreaming is addressing, and what the end goal is.
2. List all positive forces that can help reach the goal and all negative forces restraining change.
3. Rank each force from 1 (weak) to 5 (strong).
4. Identify steps/activities that can be taken to build on the positive forces and mitigate the negative forces.
5. Rank the potential activities from most to least promising based on the human, material, and financial resources available.

**TIP:** remember that it is often easier to build on positive forces rather than trying to force change.

#### **Worksheet 3: Force field analysis**

State the problem and what the goal is <i>(e.g. Women fish processors are not adequately represented in fisheries management. The goal is increasing women fish processors engagement in fisheries management)</i>	
List the positive driving forces that can help the project reach its goal.  <i>Rank the forces in order of importance (1 weak—5 strong)</i>	Driving Force 1:  Driving Force 2:  Driving Force 3:  Driving Force 4:
List the negative forces that may work against the project reaching its goal  <i>Rank the forces in order of importance (1 weak—5 strong)</i>	Restraining Force 1:  Restraining Force 2:  Restraining Force 3:  Restraining Force 4:

What steps can the project take to build on the positive driving forces?	<p>What are possible actions to increase:</p> <p>Driving Force 1:</p> <p>Driving Force 2:</p> <p>Driving Force 3:</p> <p>Driving Force 4:</p>
What steps can the project take to mitigate or reduce the negative restraining forces?	<p>What are possible steps to decrease:</p> <p>Restraining Force 1:</p> <p>Restraining Force 2:</p> <p>Restraining Force 3:</p> <p>Restraining Force 4:</p>
List the most promising actions based on the human, material, and financial resources available	

The end result of this exercise is a list of priority actions that the project can take to reach its gender-related goals. A simple action to implement priority tasks should follow this exercise, or the current work plan should be amended to integrate the proposed priority actions. Below is an example action-plan template.

#### **Worksheet 4: Gender mainstreaming action plan**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Goal/vision:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Objective(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Activities</b> (what you need to do to achieve your objectives)	<b>Time Frame</b> (by when do you need to achieve the activities)	<b>Resources</b> (what resources are needed for each task)	<b>Who is responsible for implementation?</b>	<b>Evaluation criteria</b> (how do you measure progress/success?)

#### Action 4: Providing a Seat for Women (and Men) at the Table

**Purpose:** A first step to correct gender imbalances is often to make sure that women are represented at learning and decision making forums. The use of quotas in working groups, committees, and training workshops is a simple way to ensure that a minimum number of women participate in activities. It is important to realize that gender mainstreaming is more than numbers. Having women attend events does not necessarily mean that they will engage or have influence. Quota systems may result in women attending trainings and meetings that do not interest them. Setting aside seats for women makes women's representation possible, but it is also important to ensure that the women are actively participating. It is also important to engage men and work with them to increase equity.

**Methodology:** Below is a checklist to ensure that women are present and have a chance to participate.

#### **Worksheet 5: Checklist for equal participation**

Question	Check (✓) if yes
Do you have a quota to ensure minimum participation of men and women in meetings?	
Is the meeting at a place that women (and men) are able to get to?	
Is the meeting held at a time that is convenient for women (and men) and does not clash with other responsibilities inside or outside the household?	
Does the meeting have facilities that support the full engagement of women (and men) like baby care for nursing mothers and comfortable sitting for pregnant women and the aged?	
Does the meeting design use appropriate methods that motivate, support, and encourage women and men to engage in the process?	
Are there "safe spaces" where women are free to talk (e.g. groups without men present)?	

## Action 5: Monitoring and Evaluation the Impacts of Gender Mainstreaming

**Purpose:** An important part of the gender mainstreaming work is to develop a monitoring, evaluation, and/or learning plan to assess to what extent the gender mainstreaming activities developed under Action 3 work. Developing a gender-sensitive M&E plan is important, because it helps us:

- Identify if the projects have decreased or increased gender disparities or inequalities.
- Capture the impacts of project activities on men and women.
- Identify if changes in women's empowerment levels occurred as a direct or indirect result of project interventions.
- Communicate achievements and lessons learned.

**Method:** The gender mainstreaming monitoring plan can be a stand-alone plan comprised of gender-based results, gender-sensitive indicators and sex-disaggregated qualitative and quantitative data or an integration of gender indicators into the overarching project monitoring and evaluation plan. Examples of gender-based results that can be covered in the monitoring plan are:

- Increased acceptance by women and men of women as community decision-makers
- Greater personal and economic independence and self-confidence for women
- Increased women's involvement in personal, family or community development
- New, more visible, and more effective women's organizations
- More women in education and training programs
- Improved health of women and children (UNDP 2000)

The first step in developing a monitoring plan is identifying the indicators that will be used to measure progress and impacts. Indicators allow us to assess changes over time about given conditions or situations. It allows us to observe the results of initiatives and actions and assist in identifying what works and what does not work—providing a basis for adaptive management. Well-designed indicators are SMART—specific, measurable, assignable, realistic, and time-related. Once the indicators have been identified, the next step is to establish how to collect, analyze, and use the indicator data.

### **The Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index**

The SFMP project receives funding from the USAID Feed the Future (FtF) Program, which has adopted the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index to monitor program performance and track changes in women's empowerment that occur as a direct or indirect result of Feed the Future interventions. The index tracks women's engagement in agriculture in five areas:

**Production:** Sole or joint decision making over food and cash-crop farming, livestock, and fisheries as well as autonomy in agricultural production

**Resources:** Ownership, access to, and decision-making power over productive resources such as land, livestock, agricultural equipment, consumer durables, and credit

**Income:** Sole or joint control over income and expenditures

**Leadership:** Membership in economic or social groups and comfort in speaking in public

**Time use:** Allocation of time to productive and domestic tasks and satisfaction with the available time for leisure activities

A key innovation of the Index is that it is able to show in how many domains women are empowered and at the same time reveal the connections among areas of disempowerment. Developing gender-based monitoring, the SFMP project may need to use or adapt the WEAI framework.

**Worksheet 6: Building a gender mainstreaming monitoring plan**

SMART Indicator	What type of data will be collected?	How will the data be gathered? What are the data sources	How frequently will the data be collected and by who?	How will the indicator data be used?
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				

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