

FISH VALUE CHAIN

Quarterly Newsletter

ASSAM AGRIBUSINESS AND RURAL TRANSFORMATION PROJECT (APART) 4th Edition March 2020

GENDER INCLUSIVE FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE DEVELOPMENT

Capture fisheries and fish farming remain prominent sectors of Assam's economy as a source of employment, income and livelihood of rural folk. The state's natural aquatic resources, which include flood plains, rivers, canals, beels and ponds provides livelihood to thousands of rural people who are directly or indirectly involved in production and marketing of fish in the state. Despite the participation of women and men, they often do not equally benefit from the sector. Further, the earnings by women are given to men as the latter were reported to make decisions over household expenditures. These findings suggests that gender inequality is high in Assam and development research and interventions by the State needs to focus on understanding causes and consequences of the inequalities if it aims to reach, benefit and empower women. In the case of the fisheries sub-component of APART, it is important that the knowledge is generated along the fish value chain to reduce inequalities and further women's empowerment. Gender inequality not only limits women's opportunities to participate in and benefit from value chains, but also

undermines the overall performance of the chain by generating distortions in the labour market, losses and inefficiencies (FAO, 2018).

Aiming to increase women's participation in APART's fishery interventions to improve food security, nutrition and income without considering social and gender dynamics, norms, increasing time/work burden, gender relations, gender barriers and decision making may result in increasing the number of women 'engaged' on paper but may not in reality benefit them. Similarly, the intervention could also potentially increase women's heavy work burdens, further undermining their well-being. Therefore, a gender scoping was conducted in selected APART project districts to understand social realities and to generate needed evidence. Additionally, a gender integration workshop was conducted to ensure that the implementation of the fisheries sub-component is gender- and socially inclusive, responds to the needs of both women and men; and proactively avoids negative consequences for women (e.g. increasing women's work burden) and other marginalized groups.



Women engagement in fisheries activities

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION (FGD) FOR GENDER SCOPING STUDY IN FISH VALUE CHAIN

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) for Gender Scoping in Fish Value Chain was conducted in 7 (seven) districts under APART by WorldFish along with ARIAS Society and Department of Fisheries during the period from November, 2019 to January, 2020.

The purpose of the gender scoping was to identify gender division of labor within aquaculture and fisheries activities and in the beneficiary households, the perception of men and women beneficiaries towards participation in fish farming activities, social and gender norms and barriers within the communities, as well as to investigate whether women and men are able to participate equitably in the APART intervention given the social challenges and opportunities that exist. District Social Sector Coordinators (DSSCs), Technical Experts in Fisheries

(TEFs) and staff from WorldFish worked together in project districts as a team and carried out the FGDs in Kamrup, Nalbari, Barpeta, Nagaon, Morigaon, Goalpara, and Kokrajhar districts. The FGDs were conducted using tools and formats provided by WorldFish gender experts.

The FGDs were conducted with women and men separately in both pond polyculture and beel fisheries communities. The FGDs were audio recorded upon verbal consent from all the participants. These audio recordings were transcribed and key points from the discussions were extracted. Based on the outcome of the gender scoping, WorldFish gender experts are developing recommendations for gender integration in the fish value chain under APART.



Focus Group Discussion on Gender Scoping

FPG LEVEL FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION ON BETTER MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR CARP POLYCUltURE AND MOLA-SIS FARMING

Farmers' training at the village level is very essential for technology dissemination among the beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries under APART. To create awareness among the farmers for adoption of Better Management Practices of Carp Polyculture and Carp-Mola-SIS farming under APART, a series of Focus Group Discussions (FGD) at Farmer Producer Group (FPG) level are taken up by WorldFish in collaboration with Department of Fisheries, Government of Assam. So far 12 FGDs were conducted in Dhoronipur village in Darrang (7th December 2019), Dabulia paradutta kutchi and Pub-borola villages in Barpeta (9th& 10th January 2020), Phukondoloni, Kolakhuwa Gaon and Bishnupur in Lakhimpur (24th, 25th& 26th February, 2020), Nabajyoti Gaon in Golaghat (24th February, 2020), Solmara Bormer Gaon in Jorhat (25th February, 2020) and Mothiachiga Gohain Gaon in Sivasagar (26th February, 2020). The main objectives of the FGD training was to provide the technical support to

the farmers on better management of the farming practices to reduce the losses and increase the benefits as well as for sustainability and environmental safety. 269 participants attended the 12 FGDs conducted so far including both the beneficiaries as well as the non-beneficiaries of APART from the selected clusters. During the Focus Group, Discussion Technical Experts from WorldFish introduced the BMP guidelines for carp Polyculture followed by participants interaction, the importance of Mola-SIS farming along with Polyculture of carps and its nutritional value, the need for gender integration in aquaculture and also the importance of the role of women in fisheries and aquaculture. After the completion of the Focus Group Discussion, the Technical Experts also visited the beneficiaries' ponds to provide technical advice and explained to them about the importance of pond record bookkeeping.



Focus group discussion with FPGs in better Management Practices for Carp Polyculture

MOLA-SIS FARMING PROMOTION ALONG WITH CARPS IN POLY CULTURE DEMONSTRATIONS

Stocking of Small Indigenous Species (SIS) including Mola, rich in micronutrients for improving the human nutrition, in Carp Polyculture demonstrations is promoted by WorldFish under Apart Project. In this connection, WorldFish experts visited Assam during February 2020 for mola and SIS stocking in polyculture demonstration ponds. On 11th February 2020, WorldFish experts Dr.C.V.Mohan, Project Leader, WorldFish, Malaysia, Dr Benoy Kumar Barman, Sr.Scientist, WorldFish, Bangladesh and Dr R.Suresh, Resident Consultant, WorldFish Assam along with DoF officials and APART staff visited three polyculture demonstration ponds where mola and SIS already stocked in North West Cluster of Jorhat district and checked mola and SIS establishment. WorldFish Experts, Dr Benoy Kumar Barman, Sr. Scientist, Dr Manos Kumar Saha, Aquaculture

Specialist, WorldFish, Bangladesh and Dr R.Suresh, Resident Consultant, WorldFish Assam along with DoF officials and APART staff visited APART Project districts Viz.,Barpeta, Morigaon and Kamrup on 15th, 16th, and 17th February 2020 respectively and stocked mola and SIS in polyculture demonstration pond. Dr Manos Kumar Saha, Aquaculture Specialist demonstrated the use of mola and SIS segregation and grading net to segregate the mola and SIS from bigger fishes without stress and mortality. The experts participated in the farmers' meetings and explained the practices to be followed for the successful production of Mola-SIS along with carps under polyculture. The experts also distributed BMP Guidelines manual of mola and SIS along with carps to the farmers.



Carp-Mola-SIS farming demonstrations under APART

TRAINING OF TRAINERS (ToT) FOR THE DEPARTMENTAL OFFICERS AT COLLEGE OF FISHERIES

To impart the training to the farmers within the cluster area under APART, the college of Fisheries under Assam Agricultural University conducted ToT programme from 10th - 12th February 2020 covering 18 nos of Fisheries Development Officers (FDOs), 3 nos of SMS (KVK), 8 nos of Technical Expert-Fisheries (TEF), APART and 3 nos of Project Associates-Fishery, APART. Experts from WorldFish Dr C.V. Mohan, Principal Scientist and Country Lead, World Fish Malaysia, Dr Benoy Kumar Barman, Sr. Scientist, World Fish, Bangladesh and Dr R. Suresh, Project Co-ordinator,

World Fish Project-Assam served as the main resource persons for the ToT programme.

The chief guest for the ToT, Dr C. V. Mohan in his speech emphasized upon the importance of “Nutrition sensitive Aquaculture practices” and on the occasion, Dr Benoy Kumar Barman gave an encouraging speech about “Beel fisheries development through technical and governance interventions”. Dr. R. Suresh delivered a speech on “Role of World Fish under Apart Project and BMPs for Polyculture and Carp-Mola Farming”.



ToT of the Departmental officers

WORLD FISH EXPERTS VISIT BEELS DEVELOPED UNDER APART

The vast beel fisheries resources existing in the state of Assam need to be sustainably developed for enhancing fish production to ensure sustainable livelihood to the rural fishers from this beel fisheries by carefully adopting scientific fish farming to enhance productivity as well as conserve the fish diversity. Therefore interventions for the sustainable increase in the production of fishes from beel fisheries to benefit the local communities are carried out under Fishery sub-component APART. In this connection, Dr C.V. Mohan, Country Leader, WorldFish, Malaysia, Dr Benoy Kumar Barman, Sr.Scientist, WorldFish, Bangladesh, Dr R. Suresh, Resident Consultant,

Assam WorldFish Project, Dr Sanjay Sarma, Fishery Project Coordinator, ARIAS Society along with DOF officials and APART Project staff visited beels selected for development during 2019-20 in Jorhat, Sivasagar, Majuli and Nalbari districts on 11th, 12th, 13th and 18th February 2020 respectively. They interacted with the beel user communities, collected the baseline information of the beels and provided specific development strategies for a sustainable increase in fish production as well as conserve the local indigenous fish species diversity in the beels through better management and governance.



Visit of the WorldFish Experts to the beels developed under APART

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP AND EXPOSURE STUDY VISIT ON FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT TO CAMBODIA & MYANMAR

The Government of Assam has taken up a number of schemes including the on-going World Bank-funded externally aided project of Assam Agri-Business and Rural Transformation Project (APART). This sub-component is focusing on improving the quality of the inputs such as fish seed and feed for aquaculture, increasing the fish productivity and production from the pond/tank aquaculture systems, increasing production through culture-cum-capture fisheries activities in the beels, promoting diversification of fish species – particularly genetically improved strains - in combination with Indian major carps in the culture systems, improved post-harvest management, value addition and marketing of produce by setting up fish farmer common service centres (CSCs). Accordingly, a team of 3 (three) members, one from the WorldFish Resident Consultant under APART Dr R. Suresh and two officials from Directorate of Fisheries Dr Dhrubajyoti Sharma, Nodal Officer, APART (Fisheries) and Dr Sanjay Sarma, Fishery Co-ordinator, ARIAS Society visited to attend International Workshop on Nutrition on small fishes followed by field visit at Cambodia and Myanmar from 2nd December to 8th December 2019. Besides participating the International workshop conducted by WorldFish, the team visited the Integrated vegetables cum fish culture, community paddy fish farming, natural water bodies and sustainable utilization of the resources through cage aquaculture

and managing aquatic agricultural systems to improve Nutrition and livelihood in Cambodia. Along with the Assam team, other International delegates from Africa, UK, Malaysia and Taiwan also participated in this Workshop cum field exposure visit.

In Myanmar, the team visited the feed based aquaculture of Catla and Rohu and the Myanmar Fishery Partnership (MFP), a new initiative being established to assist the Myanmar Government in strengthening effective collaboration for the sustainable development of Myanmar’s fisheries and aquaculture sector. Four policy briefs have been developed by the Myanmar Fisheries Partnership to help the government address the most challenging issues facing fisheries in Myanmar. The WorldFish, Myanmar extended full support during field visit how the Myanmar Government to revitalize the fisheries sector through actions such as recovering fish stocks and habitats, ensuring decent employment and labour conditions, and providing transparency in revenue raising and licensing. Sustained engagement by the government to transform the sector and to initiate the fisheries sector to fully contribute to Myanmar’s development. The WorldFish is actively associated with Technical aspects for the fisheries development in Myanmar.



Participants in the International Workshop on Fisheries held at Cambodia



Rohu & Catla production in Cambodia



Carp-Mola-SIS farming demonstrations under APART

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