



StewardFish

Guidance on the StewardFish review process and social learning required to facilitate adaptation among fisherfolk organisations



**S. Compton
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The University of the West Indies – Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (UWI-CERMES)



**Developing organizational capacity for ecosystem stewardship and livelihoods in
Caribbean small-scale fisheries
StewardFish Project**

StewardFish

StewardFish is focused on empowering fisherfolk throughout fisheries value chains to engage in resource management, decision-making processes and sustainable livelihoods, with strengthened institutional support at all levels in the Caribbean and North Brazil Shelf Large Marine Ecosystem (CLME+) region.

The project is being funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), implemented by the Food & Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) Sub-Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, and executed by five (5) regional partners - Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI), Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (UWI-CERMES), Caribbean ICT Research Programme (UWI-CIRP), Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organizations (CNFO), and the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism Secretariat (CRFM Sec.) in Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines

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1. Introduction

Under the CLME+ SAP, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) is funding the *Developing Organisational Capacity for Ecosystem Stewardship and Livelihoods in Caribbean Small-Scale Fisheries* (StewardFish) project, to be implemented by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). The Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (CERMES) is working in collaboration with other regional implementing partners¹ to execute the various components of the project in seven countries within the CLME+ region: Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Component 4 of the project focuses on project management, monitoring and evaluation, and communication. Outcome 4.1 – *Good governance and learning for adaptation institutionalized among fisherfolk organisations*, has several activities specific to learning and understanding processes and mechanisms in place for strengthening institutional support and empowering fisherfolk across the region.

This report specifically focuses on activity 4.1.1.1 (b) - Provide guidance on the review process and social learning required to facilitate adaptation. The report was delayed due to COVID-19 constraints in the countries, which placed project activities behind schedule. The on-going impacts of the pandemic on communication and interaction feature prominently in several sections.

2. Review of StewardFish by NICs and FFOs

In light of the global coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the year of 2020 has presented some unique challenges and experiences for the functionality of national, regional and international institutional or other similar arrangements for marine and ocean governance. This included national intersectoral coordination mechanisms (NICs)/Fisheries Advisory Committees/Councils (FACs) and Fisherfolk Organisations (FFOs). There were some observable limitations experienced in project countries while remotely engaging them. Meetings of NICs/FACs and FFOs were impacted. The majority of project countries were unable to host face-to-face meetings, so virtual means were explored in order to facilitate communication and decision-making.

In order to encourage and support meetings of the FFOs (identified as the primary arrangements to be engaged for the StewardFish project after investigating which NICs/FACs or FFOs would be best suited for facilitating the adaption of StewardFish), project partners - the Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organisations (CNFO) and the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) Secretariat provided access to their Zoom and Go-to-Meeting virtual platforms, respectively. The goal of supporting these FFOs was two-fold: 1) to provide an opportunity and space for FFO boards and their members to meet as they would under pre COVID-19 conditions; and 2) to ensure the StewardFish project was on relevant stakeholders and partners meeting agendas for discussion. The project target was twenty (20) meetings of NICs/FACs/FFOs in the first half of the project (February – December 2020).

¹ The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI); the Caribbean ICT Research Programme (CIRP); the Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organisations (CNFO); and the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM).

Although this target was met, there was an uneven distribution of meetings in comparing project countries (Table 1). This could be attributed to the range of limitations encountered by each of the project countries, some due to COVID-19 protocols. A description of these limitations are presented in section 1.3.

Critical to the project target being met was the presence of StewardFish on the meeting agendas of these NFOs as well as NICs/FACs. For all NFO meetings that were recorded (formal or informal), StewardFish was present on the agenda even if only in a minimal way (e.g. brief updates on the project and ongoing or upcoming StewardFish activities).

Table 1. Total number of FFO and NICs/FAC meetings held in each project country between February to December, 2020.

Beneficiary Project Country Under Component 4	Number of Meetings NFO	Number of Meetings NICs/FACs	Totals
Antigua & Barbuda	0	0	0
Barbados	2	1	3
Belize	2	0	2
Jamaica	3	0	3
Saint Lucia	5	0	5
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	11	2	13
Other Project Country			
Guyana	0	1	1
Totals	23	4	27

In the case of Barbados where the NFO met informally via Whatsapp, the purpose of those meetings was to discuss various projects and initiatives, which included StewardFish. Specifically, the president of Barbados' NFO (Barbados National Union of Fisherfolk Organisations – BARNUFO) shared information on the purpose of the StewardFish project, the activities taking place (e.g. Activity 1.1.1.3: Deliver training, network capacity builders with NFOs to form a CNFO 'leadership institute; Activity 1.1.2.3: Develop ICT best practices for NFOs, along with ICT training to meet NFO proficiency standards; Activity 1.1.3.2: Conduct gender analysis to identify the capacity gaps of men and women, especially youth, in relation to fisherfolk leadership; Activity 1.2.1.1 Conduct institutional analysis and organizational assessment in key fisheries-related state agencies in the country and recommend priority improvement; Activity 2.1.2.1 Train fisherfolk in specific EAF-based plans, providing gear, technology and skills to change their practices where required; and Activity 3.1.2.1: Analyse fisheries value chains and opportunities for new marketing and distribution seafood products that improve nutrition) and opportunities under the project (e.g. the microgrants scheme to support Caribbean fisherfolk organisations (FFOs) with implementing organisational strengthening initiatives that will enhance their capacity to participate in coastal and marine resources governance and management, including ecosystem stewardship). Similarly, countries like St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Saint Lucia shared the same information during their NFO meetings. In two instances, special meetings of the NFO in St. Vincent and the Grenadines were held to specifically facilitate (with guidance from their StewardFish project mentor) work on their proposal for submission to the StewardFish Microgrants

Scheme for Caribbean Fisherfolk Organisations (under Output 2.1.1 Fisherfolk engaged in the management of marine protected areas or other coastal uses).

In Belize and Jamaica information on StewardFish was shared in a limited way. The few meetings held attempted to focus on matters of national priority given the impacts of COVID-19 on the fisheries sector (e.g. reopening of lobster season in Belize and governmental changes as a result of elections in Jamaica). Information on some StewardFish activities was shared during at least one meeting of Belize's NFO (e.g. gender analysis activities). It is unclear the extent to which information was shared during any of the NFO meetings in Jamaica since meeting agendas or minutes were not shared with the project researchers.

No meetings of NFOs were recorded for Antigua and Barbuda and Guyana. In the case of Guyana, the Guyana National Fisherfolk Organisation (GNFO) has low engagement and participation from fisherfolk. Ongoing internal conflicts involving primary fisherfolk organisations has resulted in no meetings of the GNFO. In Antigua and Barbuda, there is no formal national fisherfolk organisation, but there is a supporting informal Alliance of Fisherfolk that tries to bring the different groups of fishers together. However, attempts were not always successful. Regarding NICs and FACs, meetings of these arrangements were few. Only meetings of two FACs were recorded; one for the Barbados FAC and the other for Guyana's FAC. Notably the Barbados FAC meeting was of the executive board. In Guyana, a virtual meeting was held in July 2020, this meeting was focused on charting a way forward for the FAC since their appointment as an official body had come to a close. Stewardfish was mentioned as a project in-progress, but there were no further discussions.

Although not specifically focused on fisheries, there were two meetings of the National Ocean Coordinating Committee (NOCC) – a NIC, in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Fisherfolk have been invited to sit on this committee, but they have not attended any meetings to date. This is believed to be the result of a lack of communication among fisherfolk, since some of the primary fisherfolk organisations were not aware of the Committee.

There is awareness across project countries of StewardFish and related activities and opportunities. However, levels of awareness and engagement may differ between countries. The information that is shared about the project in each country comes mainly from NFO leaders. It should be taken into consideration that in their sharing information on StewardFish, it is mostly shared with their membership, which may not have a lot of active members or represent the majority. There is a clear difference in the level of engagement in comparing project countries, which is reflected by the difference in the number of meetings per country and the level of discussion based on StewardFish being present on meeting agendas. As a result, these differences in levels of awareness and engagement can impact the extent to which fisherfolk are participating in the project and the overall implementation of the project across all project countries.

The next section highlights social learning and its importance in the successful adaptation of StewardFish.

3. Social Learning

Understanding the learning processes and associated behaviours of NIC/FAC and FFO stakeholders engaged in this project is critical to the adaptation of StewardFish. Cox et al. (2019) reported (under Component 2 Activity 2.1.2.3 Use social media and low-cost communication to increase public awareness of EAF practices) the importance of understanding the existing context for communication among fisherfolk stakeholders; identifying practices and potential platforms for enhancing capacity building and information sharing (i.e. uptake and dissemination).

Social learning has been defined in multiple overlapping ways by researchers. However, Reed et al. (2010) emphasised the need to differentiate social learning, as a concept, from the conditions that facilitate social learning (e.g. stakeholder participation and individual or collective behaviours). There are two fundamental types of social interactions through which social learning may occur: 1) the transmission of information – learning new facts through social interactions; 2) the deliberation on ideas – an authentic exchange of ideas and arguments from which perceptions change through persuasion (Reed et al., 2010). Consequently, social learning can be considered as a change in understanding from the individual level extending into wider social units or communities through the social interactions between actors within social networks (Reed et al., 2010).

In the context of project management, monitoring and evaluation, social learning can be observed through the interactions of fisherfolk within the FFOs, NICs/FACs and related stakeholders (e.g. fisheries officers, other project partners) and the project activities (under the different components) which include social interaction. Understanding processes for social learning within this context not only lends to improving communication and information sharing, but can also help to identify and promote good governance practices.

There were several social learning opportunities to strengthen stewardship that are spread across different activities within the four components of the project. Table 2 provides a summary of these activities by component with a description of the activity in terms of its social learning potential.

Table 2. Summary of project components, partners and associated activities that represent some level of opportunity or outcome for social learning.

Component	Activity	Social learning
1 - Developing organisational capacity for fisheries governance	1.1.1.3 - Deliver training, network capacity builders with NFOs to form a CNFO 'leadership institute' Partners: CERMES, CNFO	Conducting virtual, supplemented by in-person interaction (where feasible), training and learning with NFOs to build NFOs network capacity and form a CNFO 'leadership institute'.
	1.1.2.3 – Develop ICT best practices for NFOs, along with ICT training to meet NFO proficiency standards Partner: CIRP	Using a participatory approach, developed online training modules with assessment exercises and performance monitoring tools as persistent, reusable resources for training of NFO board members and other key personnel to proficiency standards in ICT for governance. Training of at

Component	Activity	Social learning
		least 7 trainers to deliver training, utilizing the ICT in Governance modules, to NFO leaders.
	1.1.3.2 - Conduct gender analysis to identify the capacity gaps of men and women, especially youth, in relation to fisherfolk leadership: Gender meet and greet Partner: CERMES	The coordination and facilitation of four project activity inception sessions, promoted as Gender “Meet & Greet” sessions, with fisherfolk organisation leaders in Jamaica, Barbados, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Guyana. The sessions were initiated to inform fisherfolk leaders about StewardFish and the gender related activities to gain buy-in and cooperation for the upcoming gender analyses.
	1.1.3.2 - Conduct gender analysis to identify the capacity gaps of men and women, especially youth, in relation to fisherfolk leadership: Gender analysis training and group interviews Partner: CERMES	A participatory approach was used among stakeholders to identify key gender inequalities and suggest ways that the activity could narrow or close gender gaps, address inequalities, and/or empower women and girls in the specific sectors or areas that will be addressed by the activity. These activities also helped to gauge anticipated levels of and possible barriers to participation of men and women in the activity and whether/how the activity might affect men and women differently.
	1.2.1.1 - Conduct institutional analysis and organizational assessment in key fisheries-related state agencies in the country and recommend priority improvement: Institutional analysis and validation workshops/webinars Partners: CANARI, CRFM	Using a participatory, approach face-to-face workshops were held in 3 project countries - Jamaica, Barbados and Antigua and Barbuda, while, as a result of Covid 19 restrictions, virtual webinars were held to facilitate national meetings in 4 project countries - St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Lucia, Guyana and Belize - to present, validate, refine and receive input on preliminary findings and identify priorities for improvement of the fisheries institution in each project country.
2 - Enhancing ecosystem stewardship for fisheries sustainability	2.1.2.1 - Train fisherfolk in specific EAF-based plans, providing gear, technology and skills to change their practices where required: Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF) workshop(s) Partner: CERMES	A participatory approach was used in engaging fisherfolk to build their awareness of EAF principles and to improve fisherfolk involvement in coastal management. The first EAF workshop was held in Barbados, in September 2020. A wide cross section of stakeholders representing the government, civil society and private sectors participated in this workshop over a 2-day period.
	2.1.2.2 - Adapt international guidelines to produce codes of conduct and ethics based on EAF for local and national FFO: Development of CNFO Regional Code of Conduct	A participatory approach was used to engage fisherfolk in developing their own code of conduct for operating within the fisheries sector.

Component	Activity	Social learning
	Partners: CERMES, CNFO	
	2.1.2.3 - Use social media and low-cost communication to increase public awareness of EAF practices: Social media campaign for EAF awareness Partners: CERMES, CNFO	Utilised social media (Facebook, Instagram, twitter and the CNFO website) as a form of low-cost communication to increase public awareness of EAF practices among fisheries stakeholders and other interested and affiliated entities. The goal was to get the audience interested and excited and talking about a sustainable future and encourage the audience to spread/share the information.
3 - Securing sustainable livelihoods for food and nutrition security	3.1.2.1 -Analyse fisheries value chains and opportunities for new marketing and distribution seafood products that improve nutrition: Participatory value chain analysis webinars Partner: CANARI	Used a participatory approach, virtual webinars were held to facilitate national meetings in 3 project countries (St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Jamaica and Barbados) to bring together representatives of fisheries-related state agencies, fisherfolk organisations, academia and private sector organisations with a role or interest in developing sustainable fisheries value chains.
4 - Project management, monitoring and evaluation, and communication	4.1.1.1 - Hold quarterly meeting of NICs, such as FAC, or the NFO and fisheries authority at which StewardFish review is on the agenda in each country and share the PM&E findings regionally: Holding meetings of NICs/FACs/FFOs with StewardFish review on the agenda Partners: CERMES, CNFO	Engaging, supporting and encouraging fisherfolk leaders of FFOs as well as NICs/FACs to place StewardFish on meeting agendas in order to raise awareness of the project and its associated activities and opportunities.

In the context of social learning, each of the abovementioned activities facilitated the transmission of information (e.g. trainings, meetings, webinars and workshops) and presented ideas (e.g. EAF, Gender, information technology) through social interactions that were geared at: improving knowledge, understanding and awareness; influencing attitudes and behaviours; and building capacity of stakeholders within social networks. All of which are key areas in project management and evaluation and the successful implementation and adaption of StewardFish.

The following section highlights: 1) the limitations to adaption of StewardFish within NICs/FACs and NFOs; 2) barriers to social learning outcomes; and 3) the adaptive strategies used to mitigate challenges. Some of the challenges faced were in part, due to unique circumstances resulting from the impacts of COVID-19.

4. Challenges and Adaptations

The impacts of COVID-19 were widespread across all project countries from around March 2020. The health and safety protocols put in place for each country resulted in travel restrictions and limited, to no, face-to-face meetings. Therefore, much of the in-country, in-person activities (e.g. workshops and field scoping) had to quickly transition to virtual platforms.

In the case of NICs/FACs and FFOs (mainly National Fisherfolk Organisations – NFOs), the following lists the limitations and adaptive strategies put in place to facilitate StewardFish adaptation:

1. The Fisheries Advisory Committee (FAC) in Barbados remained in a relatively dormant state in 2020. This was due to internal changes that have occurred and which were being discussed. These changes included: legally revising the FACs membership to become more inclusive of other relevant sectors (e.g. Coast Guard, Tourism, civil society entities like the Barbados Game Fishing Association); and revising the Terms of Reference (TOR) of the FAC to make explicit the members' roles and the Committee's function. There was at least one meeting that involved the executive board (i.e. Chair, Deputy Chair and the representative from the Ministry of the Environment), who met with the Minister (Maritime Affairs and the Blue Economy) to discuss the aforementioned changes. There were no meetings of the full membership and it remains unclear when the FAC will meet in the future. It is likely the FAC may continue in its dormancy until the revisions mentioned have been made.

There have been no face-to-face meetings of the NFO Barbados National Union of Fisherfolk Organisations (BARNUFO), however, members (both board and wider membership) have been communicating informally via WhatsApp. Much of this communication was in an effort to keep fisherfolk (members and non-members) updated on fisheries matters that concern them, including ongoing projects such as StewardFish. There were at least two informal Whatsapp meetings where StewardFish was discussed and information was shared on project activities (e.g. . Activity 1.1.1.3: Deliver training, network capacity builders with NFOs to form a CNFO 'leadership institute; Activity 1.1.2.3: Develop ICT best practices for NFOs, along with ICT training to meet NFO proficiency standards; Activity 1.1.3.2: Conduct gender analysis to identify the capacity gaps of men and women, especially youth, in relation to fisherfolk leadership; Activity 1.2.1.1 Conduct institutional analysis and organizational assessment in key fisheries-related state agencies in the country and recommend priority improvement; Activity 2.1.2.1 Train fisherfolk in specific EAF-based plans, providing gear, technology and skills to change their practices where required; and Activity 3.1.2.1: Analyse fisheries value chains and opportunities for new marketing and distribution seafood products that improve nutrition), and opportunities (microgrants application - under Output 2.1.1 Fisherfolk engaged in the management of marine protected areas or other coastal uses). In spite of the limitations, efforts have been made to ensure fisherfolk and other relevant stakeholders are aware of StewardFish.

2. Belize, on 20 January 2020 passed the Fisheries Resources Act, a new law that formalized the adoption of an ecosystem-based management (EBM) approach. The legislation also created a Fisheries Advisory Council (FAC), which has responsibility for engaging and involving fishing communities to have a more active role in decision-making, specifically as it concerns the enforcement of fisheries laws, licensing, data collection, and the co-management of marine reserves. Many of the plans put in place for convening the FAC and realising its objectives, came to a halt due to the various shut-downs and protocols that came about as a result of COVID-19. There is currently no information available on whether or not the FAC or any other NICs (e.g. Belize National Climate Change Committee) have met for the year.

During the second half of 2020 Belize's NFO (Belize Fishermen Cooperative Association – BFCA) was able to host a meeting (18 September). StewardFish was included on the agenda, with there being discussion on the activity under Component 1 dealing with gender analysis. During this meeting, the Executive Director (of BFCA) shared information on the upcoming gender analysis to identify capacity gaps of men and women, especially youth, in relation to fisherfolk leadership. The purpose of providing the information was to develop a better understanding of the gender work being pursued under StewardFish. Whilst there have been very few meetings in Belize, fisherfolk with the BFCA are both aware and have an interest in the activities under StewardFish.

3. In Guyana, the Fisheries Advisory Committee (FAC) used the virtual platform Zoom as a means for conducting meetings and coordinating efforts to meet some of their objectives, with an understanding of the various limitations presented under COVID-19 conditions. The FAC held their last meeting (virtually) as an official body in July 2020. They, the FAC, were granted a 6-month extension (until December 2020), but have not met since the July meeting. Members have however, been communicating informally with each other using virtual means, primarily WhatsApp, mostly to share fisheries information. The fisherfolk representative on the FAC (president of the Guyana NFO) shared information about StewardFish project activities during the July meeting but there were no further discussions. Information on the project is shared informally via WhatsApp by the NFO president.

The NFO Guyana National Fisherfolk Organisation (GNFO), has been challenged by internal organisational issues (e.g. power struggles, strong dissenting and contentious opinions and actions among members), which were further compounded this year due to COVID-19. There were no meetings of the NFO in 2020 and no plans for hosting any in the near future. Increased fisherfolk engagement is necessary for ensuring their involvement in activities that would be critical to building awareness of StewardFish in Guyana and in facilitating the adaptation of the project.

4. In St. Vincent and the Grenadines, their National Ocean Coordinating Committee (NOCC) fully adapted to utilising the virtual platform Zoom as a result of country's

COVID-19 protocols. Two meetings of the NOCC were held (one in May and the other in September 2020). However, it was noted that Zoom meetings of the NOCC had lower engagement of participants (i.e. members were not as interactive during discussions), and fewer members attended these meetings when compared to 2019's in-person meeting(s). This could be attributed to the indirect/less personal nature of the interaction via Zoom. Although, the SVGNFO has a place on the NOCC and have been invited to attend, their representation at meetings has been lacking. It is believed that this is due to a lack of communication among fisherfolk, since some of the primary fisherfolk organisations were not aware of the Committee.

The SVGNFO also adapted to using virtual means – both Zoom and Go-to-Meeting platforms were used (facilitated by the CNFO and CRFM, respectively). At least one virtual meeting a month (since May) was held. StewardFish has consistently been discussed on their meeting agendas (information on project Activity 1.1.1.3: Deliver training, network capacity builders with NFOs to form a CNFO 'leadership institute'; Activity 1.1.2.3: Develop ICT best practices for NFOs, along with ICT training to meet NFO proficiency standards; Activity 1.1.3.2: Conduct gender analysis to identify the capacity gaps of men and women, especially youth, in relation to fisherfolk leadership; Activity 1.2.1.1 Conduct institutional analysis and organizational assessment in key fisheries-related state agencies in the country and recommend priority improvement; Activity 2.1.2.1 Train fisherfolk in specific EAF-based plans, providing gear, technology and skills to change their practices where required; and Activity 3.1.2.1: Analyse fisheries value chains and opportunities for new marketing and distribution seafood products that improve nutrition; and opportunities through the microgrants applications – under Output 2.1.1 Fisherfolk engaged in the management of marine protected areas or other coastal uses), and two special StewardFish meetings were held to focus on the microgrants process being executed by the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI). The main issues experienced by the NFO were technical in nature. The adjustments to using the virtual platforms created issues with access and connectivity. The NFO in St. Vincent and the Grenadines can be used as an example of good practice in project as well as participatory management and evaluation for the adaption of StewardFish.

5. There were no NIC meetings recorded for Saint Lucia, Jamaica or Antigua and Barbuda. In fact, there are currently no active FACs in place for Saint Lucia and Antigua and Barbuda. There is, however a National Ocean Governance Committee in Antigua and Barbuda. Similar to Belize, Saint Lucia and Jamaica held a few meetings of their NFOs throughout the second half of 2020. StewardFish has been reported to be on their agendas. Fisherfolk leaders, during meetings would present updates on StewardFish activities. Communication regarding NICs/FACs and FFOs in Antigua and Barbuda has been poor (very limited information has been communicated to project partners from the in-country contacts).

Adjusting to the COVID- 19 impacts has exposed some gaps in communication and highlighted opportunities that can be further explored (e.g. social media communication). Barriers to

transmitting information and facilitating changes in perception (e.g. changes in attitude towards stewardship) can impact social learning outcomes.

In cases where virtual meetings, webinars, interviews and interactive learning were used as the alternative to face-to-face delivery, the following were observed:

- Persons were not always able to access the virtual platform. They either did not own instruments (e.g. cell phone, laptop, tablet, etc.) that would afford them access, or they did not have internet connectivity (i.e. no WiFi or data). This was exemplified during some NFO meetings (e.g. St. Vincent and the Grenadines NFO) and during gender meet and greet session.
- Some persons were unfamiliar with the use and navigation of virtual platforms, such as Zoom and Go-to-meeting.
- In order to maximize online interest and engagement, webinar and meeting presentations were presented in a condensed form. This was done to cater to the impersonal nature of these virtual meetings/webinars.
- The impersonal nature of interactions did not support active participation during some sessions; however, some level of engagement was sought through tools provided in Zoom such as polls and white boards.
- Some group activities that could be easily facilitated in person could not be executed and/or monitored due to the limitations of the Zoom or Go-to-meeting software.

Where virtual interactions were already planned and being executed as the primary method – specifically the EAF awareness social media campaign and the CNFO virtual leadership institute, the following were observed:

- Persons mainly interacted with social media posts (primarily Facebook) that featured fisherfolk (e.g. Wednesday Woman and Friday Fisher media posts). These posts typically had a picture of the fisher (male or female) accompanied by a short description (who they were and their related activities and contributions to the fisheries sector in their country).
- Most other posts which featured other types of awareness information (e.g. EAF principles and Motivational Monday) as well as solicited interaction (e.g. Trivia Tuesday) were not as popular. Regardless of the social media platform used (i.e. Facebook, Instagram or Twitter), the type of information and how it is presented seems to be most critical to social learning.
- The social media audience responded best to information that was specific to an individual that they could put a face to.
- This information is useful for future use in how stewardship information can be communicated using social media.

Mitigating for COVID-19 impacts made it challenging to monitor and evaluate the levels and types of social interactions among fisherfolk within and across project countries. Although, information and ideas are shared on StewardFish for promoting stewardship and changes in attitudes (i.e. to become better stewards), the levels of awareness and engagement leave much to be desired. Understanding these challenges provides a learning opportunity for

revising approaches to StewardFish adaptation. Strategies for increasing awareness and engagement among fisherfolk should be explored.

5. Good Practices and Lessons Learned

The guidance provided in this section is a set of considerations for good practices that may favour more successful outcomes, from activities across all components, within all project countries. The following good practices are intended for use by project partners in executing remaining activities during the latter part of the project.

1. Virtual platforms such as Zoom and Go-to-Meeting can and should be used, as needed, as reliable alternatives to face-to-face meetings. The support provided by CNFO and CRFM via access to these platforms should be further promoted for improving NFO engagement among their members. The NFO in St. Vincent and the Grenadines is a good example of how utilising both Zoom and Go-to-meeting can greatly assist in connecting the organisation's members and moving forward initiatives, in spite of challenges.
2. In the absence of face-to-face interactions, and in instances where fisherfolk may not be familiar with virtual technology, ample planning and preparation must be done to improve understanding, engagement and interest in these virtual activities (i.e. meetings, webinars, interviews, etc.).
3. Continued support should be provided across all project countries for improving existing technological limitations (i.e. access to devices such as cell phones, tablets or laptops and connectivity). When using Zoom or Go-to-Meeting, training (how to navigate and engage the platform during a meeting) should be completed prior to executing an activity. Component 2 – gender “Meet and Greet” sessions addressed these issues by purchasing pre-paid data plans for participants in 3 of the 4 project countries in which these sessions were being hosted. This allowed participants to stay connected throughout the duration of the Zoom “call”. The draft report on the gender “Meet and Greet” also noted that fisherfolk can, with the appropriate training, quickly learn and adapt to online engagement. Webinars hosted by CANARI ensured that there was a brief explanation to participants on the basic navigation of Zoom. Addressing these limitations could help to ensure that participants are able to understand and effectively participate during online sessions.
4. The CNFO and the in-country mentors and liaisons/coordinators continue to be critical to the mobilisation of fisherfolk, especially for optimum participation in activities (virtual/online or face-to-face) and the overall successful implementation of StewardFish. They (CNFO and in-country coordinators) are also important when it comes to gaining a better understanding of on-the-ground limitations impacting implementation (e.g. COVID - 19 restrictions and protocols).
5. Where there is poor communication between project partners and countries, reliable alternates such as in-country coordinators should be identified early and be included in and informed of all project activities.
6. Short, descriptive and visually appealing (i.e. include picture(s)) forms of communication may be particularly useful to social learning outcomes when engaging

fisherfolk on social media (e.g. Facebook). This was exemplified in Component 2 – EAF awareness campaign in which posts with fisherfolk images received more reactions/attention. Information can also be quickly and easily communicated using WhatsApp, as this is seen as a preferred alternative to face-to-face communication.

7. Webinars, meetings and interviews that are meant to be delivered online/virtually should focus on the most critical aspects of the activity and be interactive. Because the virtual interface is impersonal and background distractions are a greater possibility for participants, attention and participation may be suboptimal. Therefore, activities must be executed efficiently. CANARI's virtual institutional and organisational analysis and value chain analysis webinars are good examples of well managed short information-sharing and learning sessions, which can be improved for delivering online activities with social learning outcomes.

6. Summary

The constraints presented by COVID -19 overshadowed some critical aspects of social learning, especially with regards to how networks can function to build or reinforce stewardship. The continued presence of COVID -19 still leaves much uncertainty and it is impossible to predict if and when circumstances would revert to more predictable conditions. Therefore, adaptable methods to facilitating the implementation of StewardFish must be continuously explored.

The challenges and gaps identified suggest that there needs to be more emphasis placed on approaches to increase awareness and engagement among NICs/FACs and FFOs to facilitate the adaptation of StewardFish.

While the option for virtual adaption proves to be useful, there is a need for developing a set of best practices in the use of these technologies to improve understanding and engagement (CIRP activities, which are on-going, on developing ICT best practices can provide some good insight).

Where blended approaches (both virtual and face-to-face) are being considered, project partners should be aware of the limitations and decide on consistent and synergistic methods for executing remaining activities (across all components within each of the project countries). Inconsistencies are likely to result in ineffective outcomes.

The good practices and lessons learned provide insight to and guidance on strategies that can and should be adapted and improved upon as the project moves forward.

7. References

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