

Recognizing and Amplifying the Value of Women Shellfish Harvester's Work Through Rights-based Fisheries Co-Management



TRY OYSTER WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION
The Gambia and Beyond

Fatou Janha, TRY Oyster Women's Association
Karen Kent, University of Rhode Island, Coastal Resources Center

The Gambia



Ecosystem-based Co-Management



The Government of The Gambia granted TRY **exclusive use rights** to the cockle and oyster fishery in the Tanbi Wetlands National Park

The first case
for a
women's group
in Sub-Saharan
Africa



Cockle and Oyster Co-Management Plan



Cockle and Oyster Fishery Co-Management Plan
for the
Tanbi Special Management Area
The Gambia



January 2012

Ministry of Fisheries, Water Resources and National Assembly Matters



REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA

Management Objectives:

- Biological
- Ecological
- Social
- Economic

Key Management Measures:

- Closed season 8 months
- Size restriction (bigger than 6cm)
- Specified gear (axe)

Management plans become living documents with frequent review and amendments to adjust to changing fishery and environmental conditions.

Key Outcomes and Impact



Sustained Implementation Over 7 Years with Minimal Support

- Annual closed seasons 8 months per year
- Use of less destructive gear and harvesting techniques
- Monitoring of illegal activities and engaging government authorities to pursue enforcement
- Term limits for TRY officers at community and national level

Co-management provided consistent ecosystem governance even during political crisis when natural resources are highly vulnerable to over-exploitation because it depends more on the women resource users themselves than on government institutions

Key Outcomes and Impact



Replication of Women Shellfisheries Co-Management in Ghana



DENSU DELTA COMMUNITY-BASED
FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PLAN
GREATER ACCRA REGION, GHANA



MINISTRY OF FISHERIES AND
AQUACULTURE DEVELOPMENT (MOFAD)
FISHERIES COMMISSION

The Government of Ghana granted DOPA **exclusive use rights** to the oyster fishery in the Densu Delta

The 2nd case for a women's group in Sub-Saharan Africa

Key Management Measures:

- Closed season 5 months
- Size restriction (7cm or bigger)

Key Outcomes and Impact



Building social, economic, and natural capital for the oyster harvesters and their wider communities

650 women members of TRY and DOPA in The Gambia and Ghana benefitted from trainings and participatory action research on:

- Leadership
- Organizational development
- Co-management
- Oyster biology
- Shellfish aquaculture
- Mangrove replanting
- Improved hygiene and handling
- Processing, branding and marketing
- Literacy



Key Outcomes and Impact



Building social, economic, and natural capital for the oyster harvesters and their wider communities

Solidarity

Self-Confidence

Decision-making authority

Key Outcomes and Impact



Building social, economic, and natural capital for the oyster harvesters and their wider communities



Improved hygiene & handling, marketing & branding = increased price per kilogram

Key Outcomes and Impact



Building social, economic, and natural capital for the oyster harvesters and their wider communities



**TRY youth
benefiting from training
in
oyster biology
& water quality**

**Youth
involvement in
co-management**

Key Outcomes and Impact



Building social, economic, and natural capital for the oyster harvesters and their wider communities



**TRY + DOPA = 50 ha mangroves
planted in The Gambia & Ghana**

Key Outcomes and Impact



Tools for Scaling up good practices regionally with strong community-ownership

WOMEN SHELLFISHERS AND FOOD SECURITY PROJECT



THE
UNIVERSITY
OF RHODE ISLAND



Strategies that empowered marginalized women shellfishers & amplified the value of their work



Engagement of youth from oyster harvesting communities to reinforce women's work and fill gaps in government capacity



The “New TRY Generation”

Collection of water quality and harvest data needed for informed decision-making on oyster management & to document the economic, environmental, and social value of the oyster fishery and the work of women harvesters

Strategies that empowered marginalized women shellfishers & amplified the value of their work



Peer learning and technical assistance for local capacity building



Strategies that empowered marginalized women shellfishers & amplified the value of their work



Scaling up Gambia best practices in community-based co-management to Ghana



**DENSU DELTA COMMUNITY-BASED
FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PLAN
GREATER ACCRA REGION, GHANA**

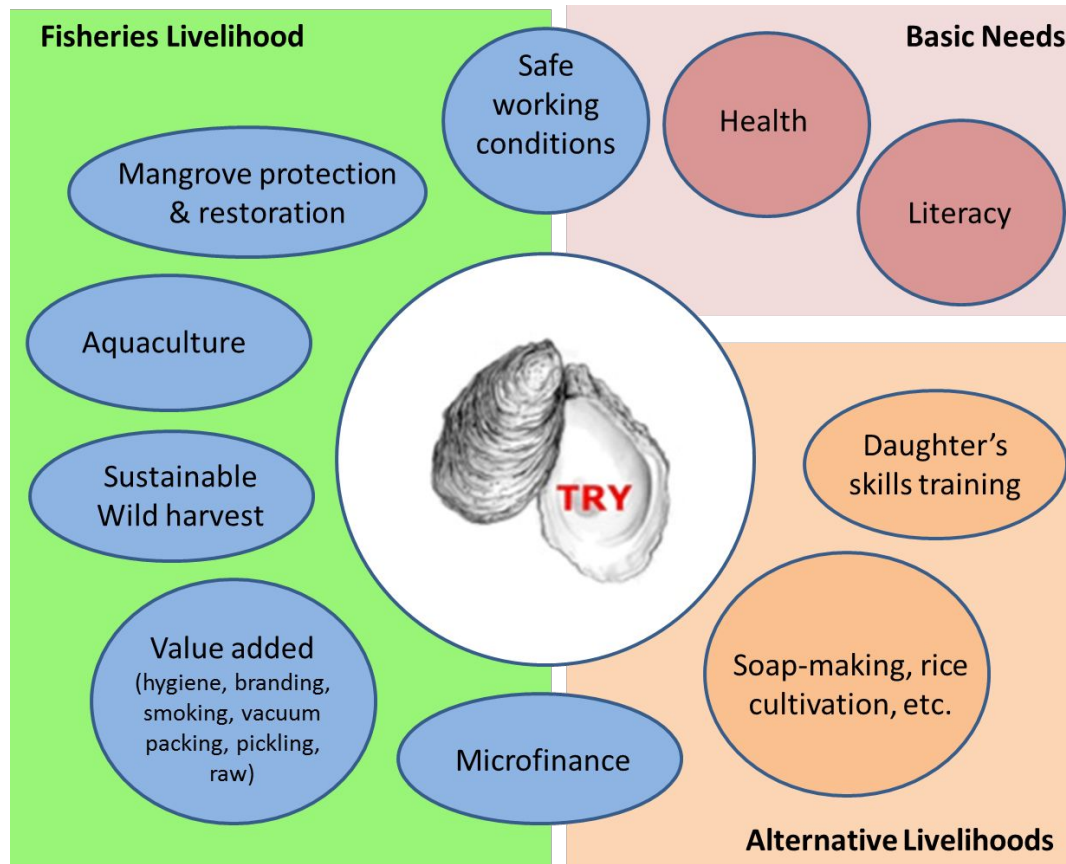


MINISTRY OF FISHERIES AND
AQUACULTURE DEVELOPMENT (MOFAD)
FISHERIES COMMISSION

Strategies that empowered marginalized women shellfishers & amplified the value of their work



Participatory management of integrated programs combining local and scientific knowledge



Lessons Learned



- Improving shellfisheries livelihoods through rights-based, ecosystem-based co-management is an effective entry point for empowering women through broader recognition and validation of their valuable work.
- Youth engagement within TRY can help to address an important challenge faced by the oyster harvesters, the weak capacity of fisheries departments in The Gambia and Ghana to play their co-management role, especially for data collection and reporting.



THANK YOU

