THE PHILIPPINES

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**Report on the consultation with stakeholders:  Challenges to participate in food security and poverty eradication in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao**

Three (3) cluster consultations were held in the country:

Mindanao- September 2018, Luzon - March 2019; and Visayas -May 2019.

These were attended by municipal fisherfolk, fishworkers, NGOs and other major stakeholders as well as representatives of relevant government agencies. These consultations were only the beginning of a series of consultations between Tambuyog and government agencies, who were able to hearfirsthand feedback/comments from stakeholders regarding the laws and policies on small-scale fisheries, benefits for municipal fishers if these are enforced and what are the challenges ahead.

Through the gathering of its partner small fishers groups in the three major islands of Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao, Tambuyog aimed to map the major tenurial and resource management instruments, propose programs in response to natural disasters and climate change and current support services provided to the fishery sector by selected government agencies based in the Philippines.

The following priority issues/challenges were articulatedby participating stakeholders in the consultations and were aimed at pursuing government policies and programs which would directly benefit small scale municipal fishers in line with the VGSSF.

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| **Governance of tenure in small-scale fisheries and resource management fisheries and resource management**No Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRRs) on fisherfolk settlement areas;The Community Fish Landing Centers (CFLCs) are not fully supported and have not being developed to support municipal fishers Noimplementing guidelines for delineating municipal waters of municipalities w/ offshore islandsLack of Recognition of sectoral rights to governance including that of customary rightsIssue and conflict in jurisdiction as well as authority to zone the ancestral waters vis-a-vis the municipal waters ariseThere is continuing degradation of the fishery resources due to prevalence of illegal activitiesMangrove destruction has been continuing. The National Greening Program (NGP) has not provided enough help in rehabilitation because the suitability of species and planting sites are not considered. This program is too focused on number of propagules plantedThere is no clear policy yet on ensuring decent work for fishworkers with the latest department administrative order need to be enforced/ Safety net / protection of fishers and fishworkersWomen still have no representation in the National FARMCBFAR and DENR are both devolved – their policies are not flowing smoothly at the local level.**On Disaster Risks and Climate Change**Impacts on fishers: first to bear the brunt of extreme weather events, increase in sea surface temperature already affect their livelihoods and rising tidal levels affect their settlement areas, **On Value Chains, Post-harvest and Trade**Lack of support for small scale fishers to participate fully and benefit from tradeFish Imports compete directly with local products**Issues specific to fishworkers**Lack ofData on fish workers onboard fishing vessels, limited only to land-based workers;Some fish workers are also underage. Information on what percentage are able to secure fishing license through “proxy” application process. Additionally, information is also limited on whether—even after their application was rejected—they are still engaged in fishing operations.Priority is often on the enforcement of anti-illegal fishing activities (IUUF).The focus on enforcement of policies on IUUF often leads to fishers on board fishing vessels being treated violators first instead of possibly exploited workers.Monitoring is also limited to the fishing activity itself and does not include the working conditions that fishers are subjected to during their operations.Recruitment is done through informal mechanisms (e.g. through relatives) which affects documentation of the process and possibly cases of violations.Recruitment and hiring is generally undocumented. While operators and fishers agree that the prevailing practices benefits both, they also admit that there are often no written contracts, particularly among small to medium scale operations.Women spouses of the fishers/fish workers and women community members have limited knowledge on the terms and conditions of work of their husbands. They also have limited information on which agencies are involved and where to seek assistance on matters relating to work, health, safety issues and disasters.Underpaid workers with long hours of work in the sea, and lack of mandatory benefitsAccording to stakeholders in the group, the hazards and difficulties associated with fishing is expected and to be accepted by anyone who wishes to participate in the industry. The communities/fishers in particular could not see it otherwise |