

## Handbook for Pacific gender and social inclusion in small-scale fisheries and aquaculture

In 2019, the Pacific Community (SPC) will publish a handbook designed to give practical guidance for staff working on fisheries and aquaculture in Pacific Island governments on how to improve gender and social inclusion in their work. The Handbook on Pacific Gender and Social Inclusion in Small-scale Fisheries and Aquaculture (hereafter referred to as 'the Handbook') will focus on the responsibilities of Pacific Island governments to help promote sustainable development outcomes for all people relying on coastal fisheries and aquaculture for their livelihoods. The contents of the handbook will, therefore, be structured around the tasks involved in government work on coastal fisheries and aquaculture – around the planning and implementation of projects and programmes – including social analysis, monitoring and evaluation, policy development, community engagement, fisheries management, and livelihoods projects.

The idea for the Handbook came about in 2017 as part of discussions around the activities in the final year of an Australian Government-funded 'Pacfish' project on community-based fisheries management in Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Kiribati. One of the questions raised was how to better understand the connections between community-based work and the work of governments, regional organisations and donors. As part of the process, staff from the University of Technology Sydney (UTS) travelled to Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Kiribati and asked people working in government agencies for fisheries management and aquaculture development, environmental protection, and women's affairs about how they approach gender equality and social inclusion in their work on coastal resource management and development. Findings from these interviews were discussed during a workshop

in June 2017 at UTS. Workshop participants decided that some kind of a toolkit or handbook for fisheries agency staff would be useful. Staff working in fisheries and aquaculture are usually trained in biology rather than the social sciences, and while many are aware that social inclusion is an important part of sustainable fisheries and aquaculture development, they don't have the right training or experience to address social issues in their work.

A first draft of the Handbook was worked on during a writing workshop in November 2017 (Fig. 1). Feedback and new material were then incorporated into the draft during the following months. A second draft was worked on during another writing workshop in November 2018 (Fig. 2), bringing the first edition of the Handbook through to publication in early 2019.



**Figure 1.** Participants of the first Handbook writing workshop, November 2017, Nadi, Fiji.

## Content of the Handbook and plans for 2019

The Handbook will be specifically tailored to Pacific Island government staff working on coastal fisheries and aquaculture, and will include many examples and case studies from the region. The first edition of the Handbook will consist of five modules: 1) Introduction (an overview of why gender and social inclusion are important in coastal fisheries and aquaculture in the Pacific); 2) Gender and social inclusion analysis; 3) Monitoring, evaluation and learning; 4) Government processes; and 5) Policy cycle. During 2019, we intend to draft three more modules to include in a second edition of the Handbook on: 6) Community engagement; 7) Livelihood projects; and 8) Small-scale fisheries management.

Once the Handbook is launched, the next activity will be to trial its use in training for government staff from around the region, and revise it based on lessons learned from this testing. The aim is to have the Handbook be as useful for fisheries and aquaculture staff as it can be, and that means that testing and revision will be needed. It will also be important to develop high-quality teaching materials for using the handbook in training activities.

If you would like to be involved in helping develop the second edition of the Handbook, or in the training as a trainer or as a trainee, please contact the following organisers:

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## Organisations that have supported the Handbook's development

The Handbook on Pacific Gender and Social Inclusion in Small-scale Fisheries and Aquaculture will be published by the Pacific Community (SPC). It was developed through writing workshops funded by the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (FIS/2010/056 and FIS/2012/076) and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization Subregional Office in Apia, Samoa.

Other participating partner and author affiliate organisations include (in alphabetical order): Australian National Centre for Ocean Resources and Security, Centre of Excellence on Coral Reef Studies at James Cook University, Charles Darwin University, Fiji Ministry of Fisheries, Kiribati Ministry of Environment Lands and Agricultural Development, Kiribati Islands Conservation Society, the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency, Samoa Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Solomon Islands Community Conservation Partnership, Solomon Islands Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources, University of the Sunshine Coast, University of Technology Sydney, Vanuatu Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation, Wildlife Conservation Society, Women in Fisheries Network – Fiji, and WorldFish.



**Figure 2.** Participants of the second Handbook writing workshop, November 2018, Suva, Fiji.

