



The Importance of Capture Fisheries in Food Security in Mozambique

Food Security: The majority of Mozambicans' are food insecure. According to the FAO, the annual per capita consumption of fish is 5 kilograms whereas the worldwide average is 16kg. The country has over 2,700 km of coastline and approximately 13,000 km² of freshwater. In Mozambique, fish are harvested in mass quantities; however, instead of being used for domestic consumption fish are primarily commoditized and exported to foreign markets. Fish provides 21.6% of the average animal protein for Mozambicans. According to the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), "Overfishing, pollution, habitat degradation, and natural disasters have impaired the ability of coastal populations to meet their basic economic and social needs. This results in a reduction in their food security and puts them at greater risk for disease."

Economic Role of Fisheries: Fisheries exports from Mozambique are worth \$96.6 million. Overall, fisheries contribute to 28% of the agriculture GDP and 4% of the overall GDP (FAO). Marine fisheries are a vital part of fish production accounting for 90% of total fish production. Of all marine fisheries production, 80% of the fish are harvested by artisanal fishers. Although the economic value of fisheries is primarily seen from marine production, fresh water fisheries also play a critical role in the informal economies of inland villages being used as a primary tool in barter economies and local markets that are typically not regulated.

Job Security: Fisheries creates jobs that employ both genders in coastal communities and inland fishing villages "About 500,000 people directly depend on fishing activities for their livelihood. Employment generated from fishing activities is generally in fish product distribution and sales. This provides livelihood for a large number of women operating from landing sites to the markets" (FAO).



Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper: Fisheries plays a strong role in Mozambique's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper stating that "Fisheries are an important sector in the struggle against poverty and the promotion of economic growth, particularly given the large involvement of small-scale producers. The sector has great potential to expand in both the domestic and foreign markets, with the participation of both the small and large-scale sub-sectors. Expansion of the fishing sector is subject to environmental constraints. Therein lies the vital importance of structural change in the sector... In the short to medium-term, environmental considerations require strict control of the process of granting licenses. Development of the fisheries sector also depends on raising the standard of knowledge and the capacity of the workforce in both the small and large-scale subsectors."

Fishery Constraints: The FAO identifies the following problems as the major constraints faced by the fishery sector: "Poor landing conditions and landing structures, lack of ice and cold storage at landing sites and on board of fishing boats, lack of knowledge on proper handling procedures by the fishermen, and limited knowledge of the good processing practices; distribution infrastructures in potential markets are largely unsatisfactory. Poor roads that connect the fishing communities to their markets are not always reliable and decentralized distribution centers with cold storage facilities are missing. The involvement of intermediaries (marketing agents) increases prices for the final consumers."



The Need for Proper Fisheries Management: The fisheries sector in Mozambique has great potential to provide food security and alleviate poverty throughout Mozambique. However, the current model of exporting fish products combined with the poor infrastructure and regulatory system within the country makes fish for consumption not yet attainable. With proper assistance and guidance from USAID and partner projects, food security and biodiversity conservation can be achieved through improved capture fisheries management.



The Global FISH Alliance promotes sustainable fisheries and aquaculture practices through the application of a system-wide approach that balances economic, environmental, governmental, and social components essential to enhancing livelihoods and biodiversity. Supported by the U.S. Government and partners, G-FISH brings together government, private sector, and civil society to work collaboratively on specific fisheries around the world.

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Resources:

UN Food and Agriculture Organization Mozambique Fisheries Overview:
ftp://ftp.fao.org/FI/DOCUMENT/fcp/en/FI_CP_MZ.pdf

Republic of Mozambique: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
<http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2007/cr0737.pdf>

Action Plan for the Reduction of Absolute Poverty (2001-2005): Mozambique:
http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPRS1/Resources/Country-Papers-and-JSAs/Mozambique_PRSP.pdf

African Poverty Reduction Strategy Programmes and the Fisheries Sector: Current Situation and Opportunities by Reid Thorpe, et al. African Development Bank, 2004.

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