

Fisheries module for SPC's Community Education Training Centre (CETC) Programme

by Tony Chamberlain¹

Introduction

The Secretariat of the Pacific Community's (SPC) Community Education and Training Centre (CETC) runs an annual programme for women from the Pacific Island region. During the seven-month programme, the women live in at the CETC campus at Narere, Suva, Fiji Islands. All the trainees have an interest and are involved to some degree in community-based work back in their home countries. The women come from a diverse range of backgrounds ranging from housewives and mothers to government and NGO workers. Some of the women have little education, while others have strong education and training backgrounds. Some women from Francophone countries have a limited grasp of the English language. During the programme the trainees learn a wide range of topics covering nutrition, media, public awareness, community outreach, agriculture, and more.

The University of the South Pacific's (USP) Marine Studies Program (MSP) is running a three-year Post Harvest Fisheries Development Project (PHFDP) being funded by the Canadian Government under the Canada-South Pacific Ocean Development Program Phase 2 (C-SPOD-P II). One of the aims is to improve seafood utilisation, handling and processing of inshore and nearshore marine resources for subsistence and artisanal fishers in the Pacific Island region. In doing this PHFDP is hoping to collaborate with existing regional initiatives. The CETC, which delivers its training courses at a community level, is an appropriate and logical choice for such collaboration. Also women are a worthwhile target group because women at the community level do much of the post harvest handling, processing and marketing of seafood.

In 1999 the USP's PHFDP in collaboration with SPC Community Fisheries Section developed and delivered a pilot fisheries module. The Fisheries Module was offered as an elective in the CETC programme from 29 September 1999 to 1 October 1999. This is the first time such a module has been offered since the CETC's programme began back in the 1960s. Considering the importance of seafood to Pacific Islanders' food security, income generation and way of life, such a module is considered long overdue.

Development

A questionnaire was developed and given to the trainees to complete well before the module's delivery date. The data was collated and fisheries topics were listed in order of priority. From the analysis of the questionnaire data the following objectives were identified for the module:

- to promote recognition of the role of women as members of the fishing community
- to enhance participants' technical expertise and knowledge in post-harvest fisheries
- to teach participants skills that will enable them to assist and train others in sustainable fisheries for income generation
- to teach participants how to work with fisheries departments, women's departments and other government and non-government groups to provide support to those in the fishing community.

The bulk of the preparation was in the development of the module. This commenced when Ms Patricia Tuara, SPC Community Fisheries Adviser, visited CETC to deliver the questionnaire. Ms Tuara then worked with Mr Tony Chamberlain at USP and initial module outlines were drawn up based on the analysis of the questionnaire. In August Mr Chamberlain visited Ms Tuara in SPC, Noumea and further work on the module was carried out. The manual covered the following areas:

- Fisheries activities, gender aspect of fisheries, sustainable development
- Fishing skills, fishing methods
- Nutrition, spoilage, disease
- Processing invertebrates
- Processing fish
- Packaging
- Marketing
- Fisheries development at community level

Other teaching resources including information sheets and training videos were made available from SPC.

Delivery

Twenty-six trainees out of thirty chose to do the fisheries elective. Class work was mostly conducted in groups with some formal lectures and pre-

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Trainees trying out new seafood recipes in the CETC kitchen

sentations. The powerpoint presentations on fishing, health, curing and retailing of seafood shown at the new MSP lecture theatre were very popular.

Even more popular were the practical sessions and field trip. Jone Maiwelagi, USP Fisheries Officer,

showed the trainees net mending and fishing techniques. They were then taken out on the Marine Studies Program boats on a half-day trip to the reef to test their skills. Johnson Seeto, USP Marine Biologist also came along to endow everyone with his knowledge of marine life. Not a lot of fish were caught, but everyone had a good time!

Many types of seafood recipes were trialed at the CETC kitchen. At the MSP Post Harvest Fish Laboratory and Seafood Village, many more recipes were made as well as sashimi, and smoked and dried fish. Everyone enjoyed testing the food at the end of the day. Important lessons on handling and hygiene were stressed and

the microbial tests proved conclusively the need to handle seafood cleanly.

Overall the pilot module was successful and there is a request to repeat it again next year.

Pohnpei survey findings

by Lyn Lambeth

The previous bulletin reported briefly on the visit to Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia, by the Community Fisheries Officer. The survey was conducted by the officer with the assistance of Francis Itimai, Head of Fisheries Section; Anne Luior, National Women's Interest Officer;

and Estephan Santiago, Conservation and Management Officer. The assessment was requested by the Government of the in response to an identified need for more information on the participation of women in the fisheries sector in FSM.



Fish market in Pohnpei, FSM

The major findings of the survey were:

- Fishing is an important activity for both men and women in Pohnpei. Many people in the villages are involved in some form of subsistence and artisanal fishing or collecting. The neighbouring islanders from the atolls are still very dependent on fishing and reef gleaning to provide food for the family. Artisanal fishermen and women sell their catch from a number of outlets in the main centre, Kolonia. The large-scale commercial fisheries activities involve foreign fishing vessels, joint ventures and a few locally-owned companies. The majority of the purse-seine and long-line boat crews are foreign. A small number of Pohnpeian men and women