

## SUMMARY OF KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW

### 1. Roles

Out of twenty (20) respondents, three (3) of them said that their respective husbands solely fish on the periphery island of Sta. Cruz. The other two (2) respondents said their husband fish on two areas namely Sta. Cruz Island and Tagtabun. Three fish in Sta. Cruz and Layag-layag. Only 1 husband of the respondents' fish in the Sta. Cruz Island and Sumarik while eleven (11) of them fish in multiple places such as Sta. Cruz, Layag-layag, Labuan, Tagtabun, Sumatra, Mariki, Linungan, Banalipa, Sinucsuc, Baliwasan, and Paseo. The Fisherfolk were able to get fishes, seaweeds, and other sea creatures from the sea which they sell.

All of the respondents said that the sea is essential to them because fishing is their primary source of living wherein not only fish can be sold but also seaweeds and other sea resources. There are three (3) of them who consider the land work as less effective as a source of income due to reasons that they struggle in cultivating the land because they are not accustomed to it.

All the respondents are housewives. All the household chores are being done by them such as cooking, washing dishes and clothes, cleaning the house, taking care of their children and even their grandchildren. Less than ten (10) of them have a small business in selling goods (food) to help sustain their daily needs especially when their husbands' catch isn't good. Since their husbands are the ones fishing, their counterparts as wives are preparing the materials for fishing such as nets, hooks, etc. They also sell their husbands' catch of the day at the market or sell it at wholesale while others sell it to the neighborhood.

Twelve (12) of the respondents' sons join their father in fishing or they fish separately since their sons are old enough and were able to earn 100, 300, and 500 pesos depending on their deal with buyers. The remaining eight (8) said their sons are still young or are minors and have no knowledge of fishing. One (1) respondent's child already passed away. All of the respondents' daughters do not join in fishing but they are the ones who help their mothers in cleaning the house, selling the fishes at the market, and even peddling it to the neighborhood. Moreover, one (1) daughter is accepting laundry from others to earn extra income. All the respondents' minor children are still studying.

The respondents believe that they belong to the so-called women fisherfolk even though they are only selling the fishes caught by their husbands. The job they are doing still belongs to the fishing sector.

When the pandemic started, the families' source of sustenance did not change but their daily routine and income were greatly affected. Their husbands cannot go fishing often anymore since they are afraid to get infected by the virus. Also, there are additional documents that they need to comply with to allow them to operate as usual. They earn less now compared to their income before because customers demand also declined. One (1) respondent decided to peddle their catch to the nearby Christian community hoping that they will earn more.

### 2. Economic Participation and Recognition

Most of the respondents said that they are fishing together with their male family members like their children, brothers, cousins, uncles and the like. Women, most likely, are the ones who sell

their catch in their neighborhood or at the market and the other half rests and recharge for the next days' fishing. The materials they use in fishing are nylon, fishing net, and ice case. They also need gasoline for their boats.

Inconsistency of income is one of their problems because their earnings depend on the number of fish caught. They can earn ranging from 200 – 1,500 pesos. When they catch a good amount of fish, they can buy essential goods such as food for their families and materials for fishing. However, there are days that they tend to loan money from stores so they can feed themselves and their families when the sales are not good.

Almost half of the interviewees are registered with 4Ps while some are registered with BFAR. However, there are a few who are unsure whether or not their registration is still valid. Most of them said that there is a sea patrol in their area like coast guards and maritime personnel who watch over them and are there whenever they need assistance.

For decisions related to fishing, women are not encouraged to speak up or make contributions in decision making. Their participation is only in selling the catch. Despite the silencing, women still think that they are given enough attention in the sector they are in because they feel that they are secured. In the sea, there are coast guards and maritime personnel that protect the fishermen. In the land, on the other hand, there are barangay tanod and policemen who protect them while they are selling their catch.

### 3. Access to information, resources, and food production

Some of them knew that once they are caught with an expired license, the authorities will just give them a chance to renew their license before arresting them. Others have no idea what that is all about. Furthermore, few fisherfolks knew that when someone is caught on the sea by the authorities, the barangay is there to help or assist them with their needs. Also, they knew that they need to register their boats for them to be assisted easily when the need arises.

"I don't know because I do not know how to read/ write.", the common answer of the interviewees when asked if they know the rights of women as stipulated in the Magna Carta of Women and benefits as fisherfolk. They asserted that there is no way for them to know the rights they have since no one invited them to join meetings or seminars within their area to inform them about it. But despite these inadequacies, the interviewees shared that some of them were able to receive things such as plywood, ice case/ box, and also boat and machine for fishing. Moreover, in this time of the pandemic, they were able to receive goods from the government such as the 25 kilos of rice, food pack, and cash worth P5,000.00, which is not enough to sustain their daily needs. They are also being reminded by the local government to always wear a face mask and face shield.

### 4. Experiences of Marginalization, Stigma, Discrimination

The respondents shared that their daily earnings are only enough to feed themselves for the day which gives them a headache whenever there's no extra money left for other expenses. They can eat three times a day only whenever their husbands had a good catch. On the contrary, if the daily catch is not good, they only eat twice a day, or sometimes, they do not eat for that day. They also stated that the authorities are responsive to their needs. They were able to receive assistance such as financial assistance for medical bills and other such as certifications, identification cards, and permits for their "Bangka".

## 5. Trafficking and Gender-Based Violence

Trafficking and Gender-based violence in the area are poor to nonexistent according to the respondents. However, one of the respondents allegedly witness some "Bisaya women" akyat barko while others say they heard some stories in their community but there are no proof and evidence whether it is factual or it is just gossip. "There's no one in ours", that is the answer of an interviewee when asked if she knows about the abuses among women in their community before the pandemic. The rest of the respondents confirmed that they have not known or witness any form of abuse against women because their community is peaceful.

When the respondents asked about the root causes of violence, two of the interviewees answered that it is happening because the usual perpetrators are under the influence of illegal drugs. One of them shared that maybe one of the reasons is "kapit sa patalim" just for them to survive and be able to feed themselves. Two (2) of them said that maybe some were beaten because of financial difficulties/constraints and who are struggling to find means of survival. The rest of the respondents said that women are beaten by their husbands or partners because women might have done something wrong. Also, the respondents opined that violence happens because the people are struggling to find goods because of the constraints brought by the CoVid-19 pandemic.

When there are issues in the community, the respondents said that they consult their Tribal Leader first to solve it. If the issue is not yet resolved, they call for help from their neighborhood watchmen or policemen. There, both parties will be asked for the details. During the lockdown, the community did not experience any form of violence but they heard stories of violence from their neighboring community where one was shot while the other one was beaten up.

## 6. General Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic

When the pandemic started, fishermen's income was greatly affected. According to the respondents, their husbands cannot go fishing often anymore because of the additional documents they need to comply with to allow them to catch fish in the sea. They also cannot move freely; they need to comply with the documents needed so they can sell at the market or peddle in their neighborhood since the authorities are always observing. Their income is lesser now compared to their income before because the number of customers decreased. They also expressed how hard they are living now since the pandemic started because aside from doing the household chores, they also think of other ways to help their husbands in earning money due to slumped sales of fish.

Most of the respondents said that assistance from the government is enough for some time only. Although they only received once, they are still grateful that the government was able to help them.

The respondents' families overcame the problems caused by the pandemic by helping each other by finding alternative ways to earn money. They also pray to God for their families' safety and health. Moreover, their community also helped them by lending them money or give them food so they can have something to eat for the day. Their neighbors also let them borrow their boats and fishing materials whenever they need it.

## 7. Recommendations

According to the interviewees, if given a chance to ask the government to improve the situation of fisherfolks, it would be giving poor fishermen boats and machines so they will be able to own one and stop borrowing boats from others. They added that the government should safeguard

women by empowering them through seminars and skills workshops with doubled efforts so there will be less probability for them to experience sexual harassment. Furthermore, the interviewees exclaimed that when the pandemic is done, it will be easier for them to deliver their products since they will not anymore have to face questions from the authorities at checkpoints. They also said that women fisherfolk should persevere especially in rainy and sunny seasons to earn more to buy essential goods.