Building block 1

Trial and upscale of modified basket traps

We conducted a series of awareness and sensitization meetings with the basket traps fishers and the community on impacts of destructive fishing gears on ecosystems and livelihoods. The basket trap fisher recommendation modification the traditional basket traps from 2-3 inches mesh sizes. We co-designed the traps with the volunteer fishers prior to the trials. Sixteen fishers volunteered to trial the modified traps. Trained fishers and other community members collected fish data throughout the trial. We used the data to evaluate the catch composition, size structure of fish captured, juvenile retention, catch per unit effort (CPUE) and fishers' income. From the data, modified traps were considered beneficial economically and ecologically, and all the basket traps fishers expressed interest to start using the. This led to the upscale phase where the fishers were facilitated to construct the modified basket traps.

Classification

Category-Training, capacity building, research, awareness and sensitization, local traditional knowledge,

Scale of implementation-Local, Sub-national, regional

Enabling factors

a) **Sensitization and awareness programs**

We involved the local community in sensitizing their peers on the negative impacts of using unsustainable fishing practices.

b) **Building on participatory research**

We trained BMU members to collect data on daily catches. Data was analysed and results shared with the fishers and the rest of the BMU. The next step of adoption and uptake was deliberated with the fishers. Use of the 3-inch basket traps was seen to reduce the proportion of immature fish individuals, reduced the proportion of non-target species, and increased the mean length and weight of the target species captured, thereby providing benefits to the ecosystem and economically.

c) **Capacity building in construction of basket traps**

Volunteer fishers were facilitated to construct the 3-inch basket traps with CORDIO providing initial resources. The fishers on the other hand sourced for additional construction material from the wild, which reduced the cost of construction. Use of locally available and cheap materials to construct the basket traps makes them more economically viable and operationally convenient. Also, more fishers could be reached with the limited resources. 70 fishers each received 2 traps, totaling to 140 traps.

d)Use of local traditional knowledge in gear construction

The members had knowledge in basket traps construction, and only made modifications in mesh sizes from 2.5inches to 3 inches. Being contracted to do the construction motivated them more as they earned money from the exercise, while at the same time they were constructing basket traps that they would use.

Lessons learnt.

- Community-based conservation initiatives must involve the community actively in planning, designing, execution, and discussions on progress.
- It's important to educate the local population about the effects of unsustainable fishing methods.
- Making the fishers construct the traps was an assurance of traps of good quality.
- When beneficiaries understand the issues, are involved in creating solutions, and gathering data to show if the suggested remedy is effective, recommended interventions are more readily accepted.