

LOCALLY BASED COASTAL FISHERIES (RESOURCE) MANAGEMENT: EMPOWERMENT, PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING

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Introduction

This article discusses the locally based coastal fisheries management project in Pathew District (LBCFM-PD), Chumphon Province, Thailand and the locally based coastal resource management project in Pulau Langkawi (LBCRM-PL), Malaysia. Phase I of the LBCFM-PD project terminated in December 2003. The outcomes are reported in this article. This article includes justification of each activity to propose proper solutions for alleviating weaknesses and threats of the activity. It also discusses proposals that can contribute to strengthen the activity and opportunities available. The LBCFM-PD project emphasises on people's participation, capacity building and empowerment throughout the implementation of the project activities. The LBCRM-PL project started in August 2003. The results of the preliminary survey in Pulau Langkawi are reported. These include the status of the community particularly in terms of socio-economic criteria and age of fishers. This article concludes with the outline of the direction and action plan for future project implementation.

Implication of the Locally Based Coastal Fisheries (Resource) Management

Locally Based Coastal Fisheries Management Project in Pathew District, Chumphon Province, Thailand

Framework of Project Implementation

The LBCFM-PD project will be implemented in five years. Phase I of this project started in October 2001 and terminated in December 2003 (Figure 1). The conceptual framework of the LBCFM-PD project emphasises on development of human resource and people's participation. LBCFM-PD has six main activities (Figure 2). The core activities are to encourage and extend LBCFM and to encourage local business. The other four activities are supportive activities to provide data, information and the practical means to contribute to the two core activities

The LBCRM-PL started in Pulau Langkawi, Malaysia, in August 2003 with the aim to strengthen local people's capacity, participation and empowerment in coastal management and community development through their involvement in the project activities.

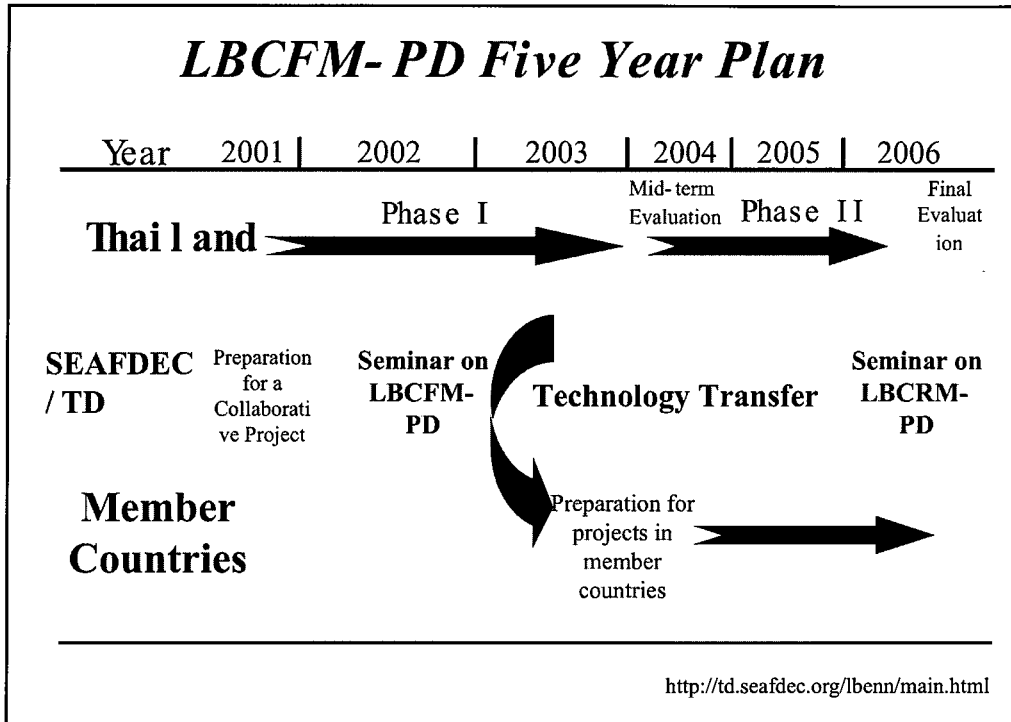


Figure 1: LBCFM-PD Five Year Plan

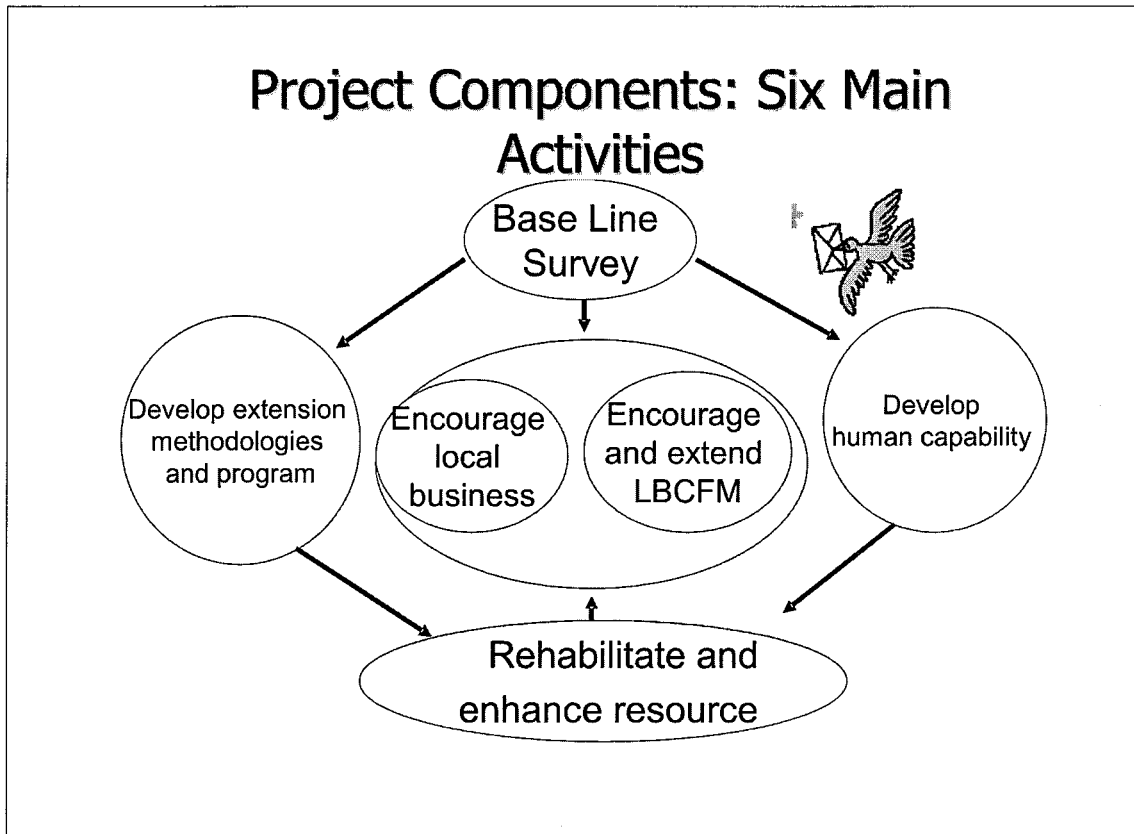


Figure 2: LBCFM-PD Project Components

Outcomes of the Phase ILBCFM-PD Project

The outcomes are illustrated through the core activities. Local people's participation and capacity building are key factors to show the progressive implication of each activity. Figure 3 shows sequence of the outcomes. The demarcation of the project site was approved by the cabinet and was officially proclaimed by the Chumphon Province on 6 November 2002. This official proclamation prohibits illegal fishing in the demarcated areas of the project site (Figure 4).

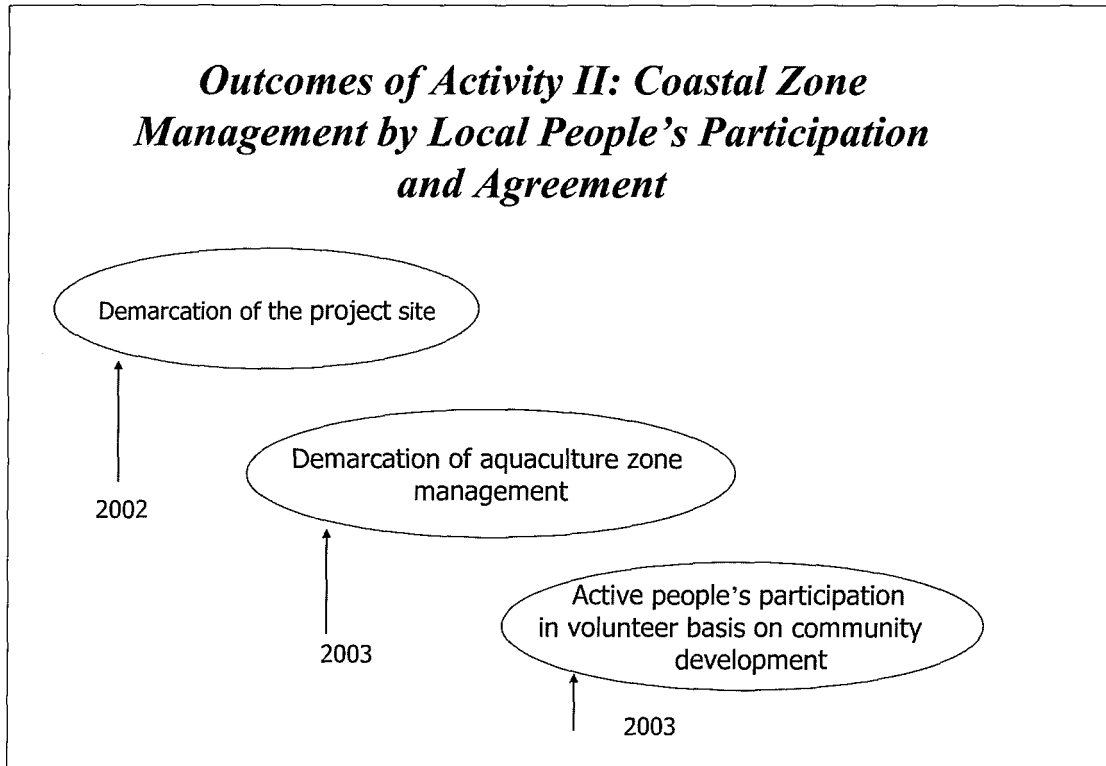


Figure 3: Coastal Zone Management by Local People's Participation and Agreement

Fishers, fish-farmers and other stakeholders participated in the discussion for the demarcation of the aquaculture zone to alleviate conflicts of interests among them. These resource users and stakeholders succeeded in preparing the draft of the demarcated zone for aquaculture in October 2003. Local resource users and stakeholders were aware of purpose of the demarcation and after the draft was presented to them, the local people signed the agreement (Figure 5).

The local people also participated in community development on a voluntary basis. They held discussions among them on what activities should be implemented and when they should be implemented. Active people's participation in community development is the initial stage of self-sustaining community development.

Capacity building of women's groups and their members' participation contributed to the establishment of local business entities. Women's groups and members tried and worked hard to develop their skills in fish processing to produce products for retail at local and urban markets. To promote a group's products, the group often joins food fairs and festivals to increase the number of market channels.

Factors Supporting the LBCFM-PD Project

The outcomes from Phase I of the project confirm that local people have motivation to participate in coastal resource management and community development. It is necessary to analyse each activity to define and propose proper management measures and the means for implementation of the project. This is to strengthen local people's capacity in community development and increase participation so that their own activities can be self-sustaining. Figures 6 and 7 are basic information on the status of each activity. The information provides the means and/or solutions for the local people to contribute to the management and to achieve progress through milestones of community development.

People's Participation and Capacity Building to Strengthen Decentralization of Coastal Resource Management and Community Development

People's participation in the project site can be categorized into two types and groups. The first is the business group which mostly relies on gender empowerment and participation to handle the group's business. The second is the volunteer group that fishers and the communities organize themselves and participation is voluntary. These two types of local people's groups are the community based management units (CBMU). Community based fisheries management (CBFM) and participatory approaches encourage local people to be involved in the decision-making process. Strengthening capacity of each group can enhance development of its own functional activities into cooperative work. A network among CBMUs that share common interests can be built (Figure 8).

Business and volunteer groups have their own functions. The first group highlights on the creation of jobs and the increase job opportunities particularly for women in the community. The second group takes on the function to manage, rehabilitate and enhance community resource to secure community productivity. Strengthening of each group's functions can help achieve sustainability of coastal resources and alleviation of poverty to the community.

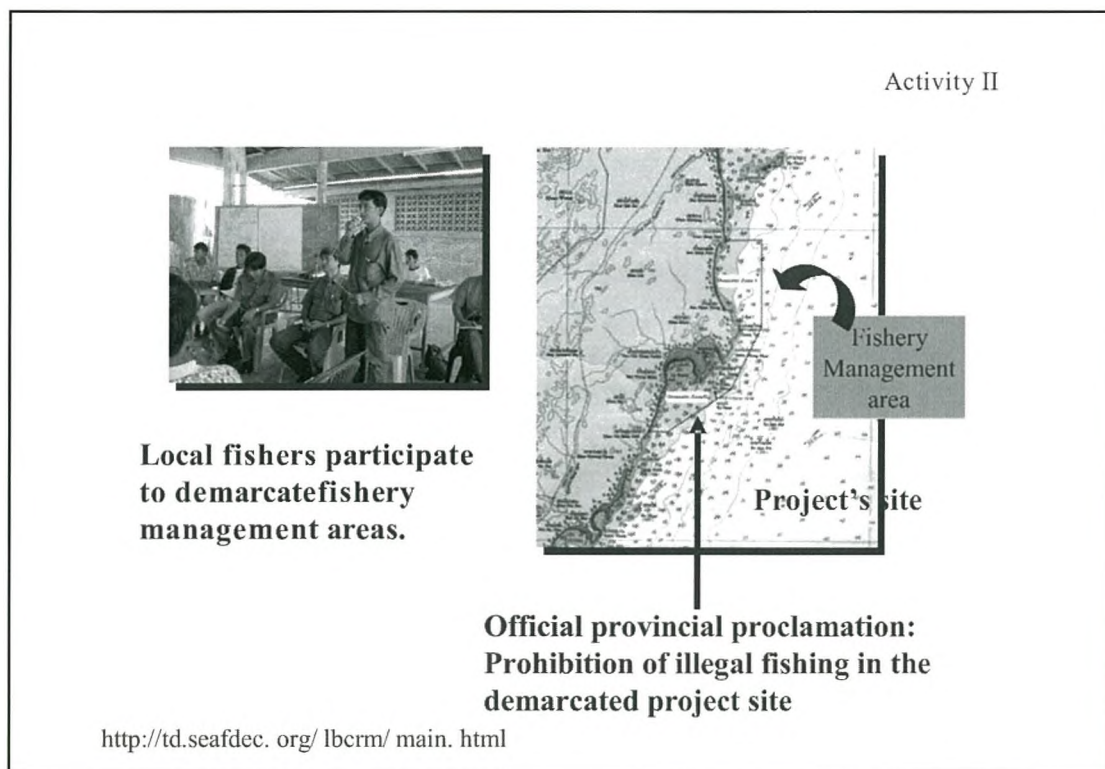


Figure 4: Demarcation of project site

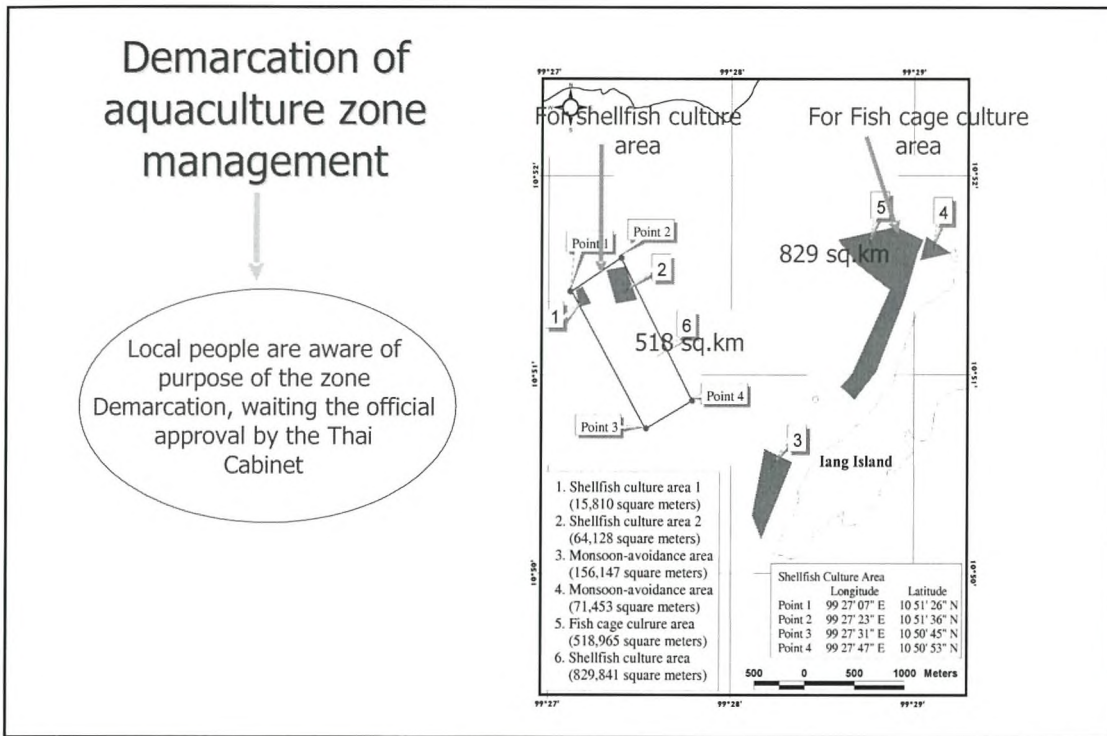


Figure 5: Demarcation of aquaculture zone for management

Items	Strengthen	Weakness	Opportunity	Threats
Demarcation of the project site	Manage resource in community owned-authorized areas	Effective enforcement by Govt. and MSC by LMB	Cooperation of Govt. and local management body	Operation cost of MSC
Aquaculture zone demarcation	Satisfy common interests	Empowerment of self-regulations	Fish farming cost-effective management	Geographic conditions of areas and fish diseases

Figure 6: Analysis of activities (1)

Items	Strengthen	Weakness	Opportunity	Threats
Local business entity	Develop women's skill in fish process and business management	Profit distribution	Produce varieties of products and market seeking	Member's manpower and quality of products
Community development	Initiate self-sustaining community development	Numbers of volunteers	Put activity in community development plan	Incentives

Figure 7: Analysis of activities (2)

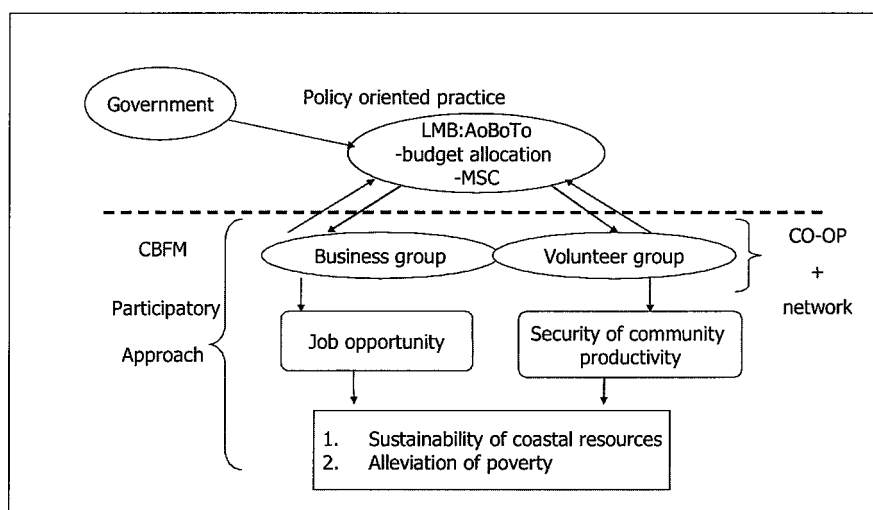


Figure 8: Strengthening decentralization of CRM and CDMz

However, these two groups need official contributions from local management bodies such as the Sub-district Administrative Organization (Ao.Bo.To.) in the case of Thailand. The Thai government officially implements decentralization of authority to the Ao.Bo.To. by mandate of the Thai Constitution, 1997. Nevertheless, the government should arrange for policy oriented practices to develop capacity building of the Ao.Bo.To. to support community development. Ao.Bo.To. takes on the fundamental responsibility to allocate budget to develop the community and undertakes monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) for resource management.

To strengthen people's participation which is based on experience gained from the field, emphasis should be placed on people considering their basic needs and common interests; logistics of the community and profit distribution. Therefore, there is a need for 1) a clear direction and action plan for activities in the short and long terms; 2) extension programs and officers to follow-up and monitor these programs; and 3) SWOT analysis and activity justification for the current project implemented (Figure 9).

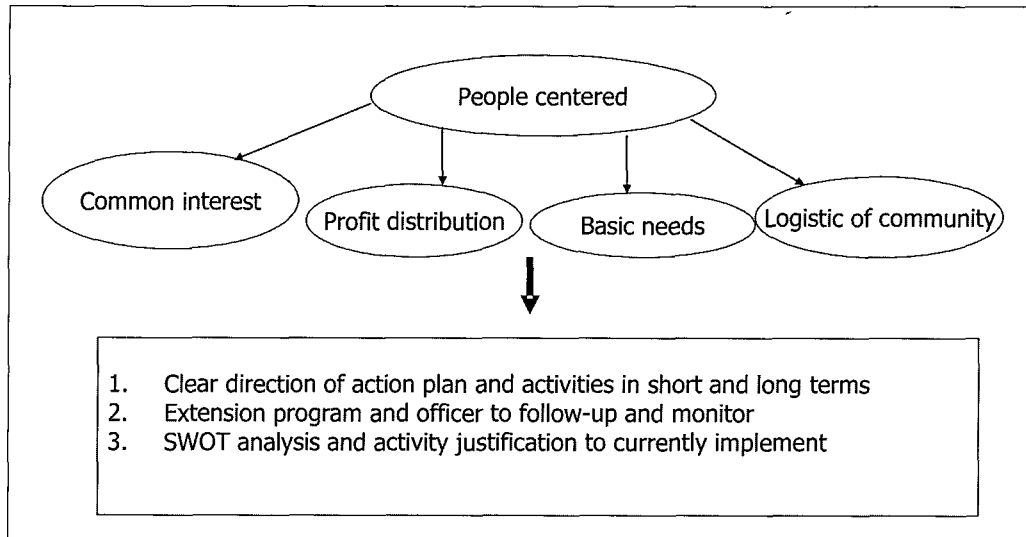


Figure 9: Achievement of active people's participation

Locally Based Coastal Resource Management Project in Pulau Langkawi, Malaysia

Framework of the Project Formulation

The LBCRM-PL is two year project which composes six activities. The six activities are:

1. base line survey
2. rehabilitation and enhancement of coastal resources
3. promotion of fish-based business
4. fishing gear technology improvement
5. encouragement and extension of LBCRM, and
6. enhancement of human capacity and participation.

Activities 1 to 4 are supportive activities and Activities 5 and 6 are core activities (Figure 10).

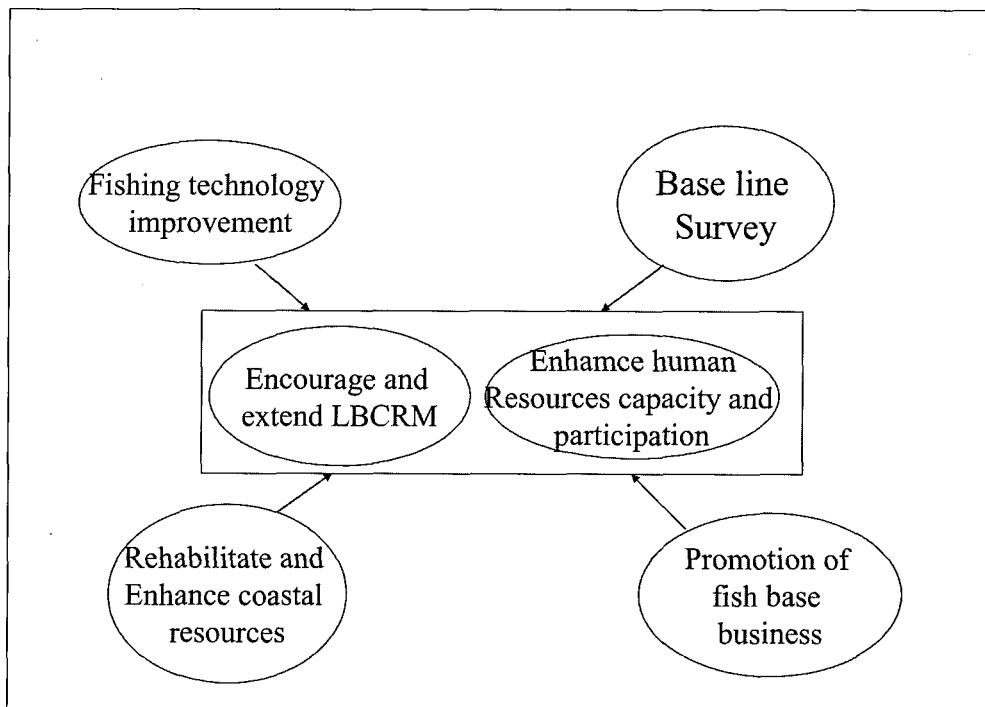


Figure 10: LBCRM-PL Project Components: Six main activities

The project conducted preliminary base line surveys on socio-economics and oceanography to gauge the need for capacity building of the target fishing community relative to the area of the fishing grounds. Results of the preliminary surveys show that the range of age of fishers in the community is between 45-55 years. This means that employment in the fisheries sector has only a few youths and few of the young generation are in fishing (Figure 11).

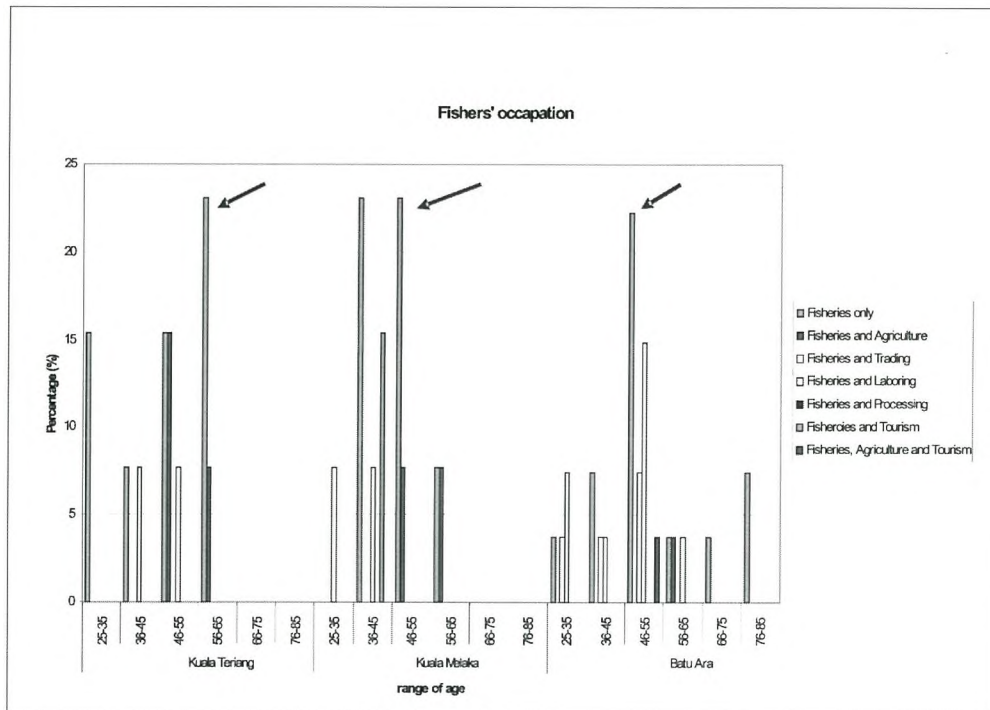


Figure 11: Results LBCRM-PL Project preliminary survey

The project also conducted Activity 6 by conducting an orientation workshop for local fishers. This workshop brought representatives from Pathew District including the head of a Sub-district, Chairperson of a women's group, Chairperson of a fishers' group, a staff member of the Marine Fisheries Research and Development Center to present the activities of the LBCFM-PD and to share their experiences. The Malaysian fishers also actively participated in asking questions and making comments. Malaysian women were also very interested in the women's group activities of the Pathew District.

Progress of Project Implementation

The Fishers Economic Group (Kumpulan Ekonomi Nelayan, KEN) mainly conducts business to sell ice, fuel oil, lubricants and fishing gear to fishers in the community. KEN supports women to establish women's groups. The objective of the women's groups is to enhance women's capacity in community economic development. The members of women's groups discuss among themselves on the skills they have and assess their own capacity and capability to undertake activities (Figure 12).

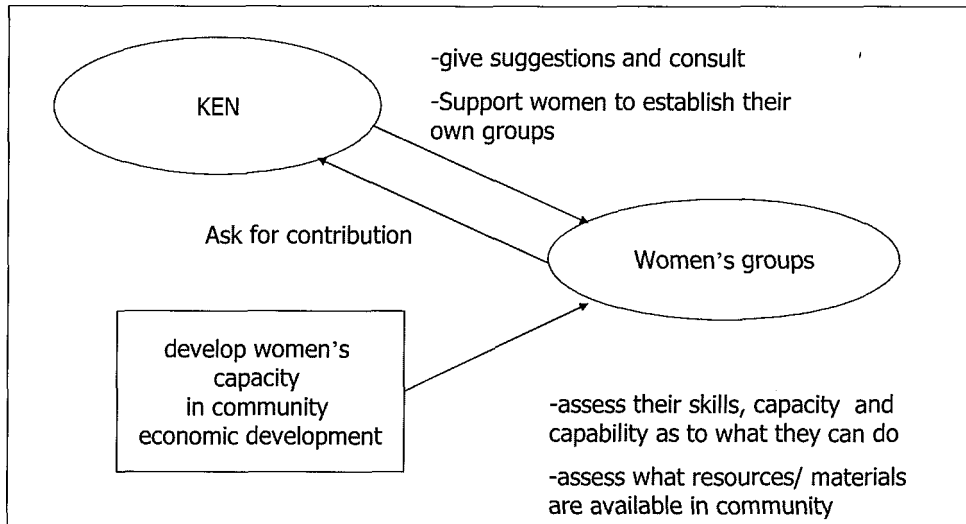


Figure 12: People's participation in CRM and CDM

What to do Next for the Projects

The LBCFM-PD plans to contribute to people's participation and capacity building through organization-driven strategies to strengthen CBMUs as the work force of community development and resource management. In the LBCRM-PL project it is necessary to motivate people's participation in coastal management and community economic development by creating group business activities that satisfy them with profit distribution. Strengthening of people's participation on a voluntary basis should generally contribute to each project through defining milestones of people's awareness building in community development and resource management.

Conclusion

People's participation and capacity building are mechanisms to strengthen and empower CBMUs to sustain coastal resource management and community development. Organization-driven strategy is a means to encourage systematic work and management in CBMUs to lead local people to coordinate with the local management body to improve and secure community economic development towards achieving sustainability of coastal resources.

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