

# **EVALUATION REPORT ON IMPACT OF FISHING HARBOUR PROJECTS ON THE LIVING CONDITIONS OF TRADITIONAL FISHERMEN**

## **1. The Study**

Prior to India's Independence, marine fishing was carried out through the traditional country crafts by fishermen whose operations were confined to coastal regions. This practice was replaced by introduction of mechanised boats. Since the operation of a large number of fishing vessels (mechanised boats, etc.) created navigational hazards in the commercial ports, a need was felt for separate full-fledged fishing harbours in the area of major commercial ports. In view of this Ministry of Agriculture took up the development of major /minor fishing harbours with fish landing centres under the central and centrally sponsored schemes.

At the instance of Planning Commission, the Programme Organisation undertook the study to assess the impact of fishing harbour projects on the living conditions of traditional fishermen and their problems of evacuation and rehabilitation.

## **2. Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the evaluation study were as under:

- i) to assess the impact of fishing harbour on the living conditions of traditional fishermen in terms of employment, income, indebtedness, health and social status,
- ii) to examine change, if any, in the fishing frequency, the quantity and quality of fish catch by the traditional fishermen after commissioning of fishing harbours/ fish landing centres,
- iii) to ascertain the extent to which the facilities created at the fishing harbours/fish landing centres are availed of by the traditional fishermen, and
- iv) to identify problem, if any, faced by the traditional fishermen evacuated from the project area including that of their rehabilitation.

### **3. Sample Size/Criteria for Sample Selection**

For the purpose of study, 3 major and 5 minor harbours and 1 fish landing centre were selected from out of 8 maritime states. One major/minor harbour and one fish landing centre were selected from each State and two fishermen villages were selected, one nearest and the other farthest from each selected major/minor fishing harbour and fish landing centre. Further, 1210 traditional fishermen were canvassed . Thus in all 8 states, 8 Harbours, 8 Fish Landing Centres and 32 villages and 1210 traditional fishermen were covered.

### **4. Reference Period**

The study was conducted between June and September, 1993. The reference period of the study was 1992-93.

### **5. Main Findings**

1. All the 165 fishermen families were traditional fishermen, who were evacuated in 1985 and rehabilitated in 1988.
2. It was reported by more than 60 percent traditional fishermen that they never availed berthing facility or fish landing facility as distance from harbours/ landing centre was one of the main reasons for not availing such facilities.
3. There was no school in the selected villages of two fishing harbours— Visakhapatnam and Cochin and fish landing centre at Sabelia.
4. Radio signalling facility for carrying out fishing activities safely was available only at two fishing harbours and at one fish landing centre.
5. The quantity of fish catch showed an increase of 7.03 percent in the fish landing centre while in the case of harbours, it decreased by 21.07 per cent after commissioning of harbour and landing centre projects.
6. More than 82 percent traditional fishermen were satisfied with the quantity of fish catch while 56 percent of traditional fishermen reported the quality of fish catch as better before commissioning of the project.
7. After commissioning of the project, the percentage of traditional fishermen covering a distance from 11 to 20 nautical miles was increased from about 11 percent to 17 percent.

8. An amount of Rs. 15.2 lakhs was taken as loan by 47 traditional fishermen from money lenders for boats only.
9. Although 796 (65.78 percent) traditional fishermen consulted private physician in case of illness in the family, yet more than 60 percent of total traditional fishermen reported no change in their health condition even after commissioning of the project.
10. After commissioning of the project, the percentage of traditional fishermen participating in the cooperative societies as members increased from 29.04 percent (356) to 40 percent (481).

## **6. Major Suggestions**

1. The traditional fishermen who were evacuated from their villages due to construction or expansion of fishing harbour/fish landing centres should be rehabilitated.
2. Provision for financial assistance should be made available for the traditional fishermen to motorise/mechanise their traditional boats in order to increase their fish catch.
3. The fish landing facility for the traditional fishermen should be made available near villages.
4. The arrangements for education of the children of traditional fishermen should be made available in the village.
5. A number of health centres/ dispensaries should be opened at the site of the fishing harbours/fish landing centres.
6. It was reported that in order to get satisfactory price, marketing of fish should be encouraged through cooperatives.
7. The loan facilities should be made available through banks/cooperative societies for traditional fishermen for meeting their expenditure on boats, fishing and nets, etc.
8. The traditional fishermen should be encouraged to participate in the agencies like Gram Panchayat, Zila Parishad and Cooperative Societies.