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Capstone Projects

Title

Our Fisheries, Our Futures: Youth Engagement in Small Scale Fisheries

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Dedication:

This capstone project is dedicated to:

Hong Huynh and Paul Huynh, who committed their lives to ensuring their children have
the best futures;

The past, current, and future youth - may you continue to find dignity and pride in who you are;

The ocean - may you bring endless waves of hope with each changing tide.

Abstract:

This capstone project examines the barriers, opportunities, and best practices of youth engagement in small-scale fisheries and adjacent sectors. In partnership with Coast 2 Coast Movement, the project draws from survey responses, informal conversations, and educational design work connected to the 5th World Small-Scale Fisheries Congress 2026 in Hua Hin, Thailand. Findings suggest that youth disengagement from small-scale fisheries is not simply a matter of interest. It is tied to economic insecurity, low social status, limited decision-making power, weak mentorship pathways, climate and resource uncertainty, and a lack of visible futures. The first deliverable is *What's the Catch? Youth Futures in Small-Scale Fisheries Workshop Toolkit*, a workshop curriculum designed for global educators, young professionals, and youth-adjacent practitioners. The toolkit translates key themes from the project into interactive and action-oriented activities that help participants move from concern about youth disengagement toward practical strategies for youth voice, mentorship, livelihood pathways, intergenerational learning, and climate adaptation. The second deliverable includes two zine prototypes: one introducing the Small-Scale Fisheries Guidelines for government and institutional actors, and one introducing the Small-Scale Fisheries Curriculum for community members and educators. These zines serve as visual, accessible entry points into complex policy and curriculum materials, creating a first step for dialogue, curiosity, and locally grounded learning.

The workshop toolkit and zine printables can be found here: <http://bit.ly/4e8uMC2>

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Capstone Overview:

1. Introduction and Project Context

Small-scale fisheries are often described through numbers. They support food security, livelihoods, local economies, and cultural identity for communities across the world.¹ Those numbers matter, but they do not fully capture the lived experience of small-scale fishing communities. In many places, fishing is not only work. It is a way of learning from the water, building relationships across generations, and creating collective memories.²

At the same time, small-scale fishing communities are facing a range of pressures, including climate change, industrial competition, market instability, and youth migration.³ These pressures raise an important question for fisheries futures: who will carry this work forward, and under what conditions? Young people are often described as the “future” of fisheries, but they are not always given the tools, relationships, decision-making power, or visible pathways needed to actually shape that future.

The Food and Agriculture Organization’s *Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication* were created to support more equitable, human-rights-based, and sustainable futures for small-scale fishing communities.⁴ The Guidelines speak to tenure, gender equity, decent work, food security, social development, disaster risk, and enabling policy environments. However, like many global policy documents, they can feel technical or intimidating when they are not introduced through accessible and locally grounded learning experiences.

Coast 2 Coast Movement is working in this space through the Small-Scale Fisheries Curriculum, a global education project created with educators and collaborators across several regions.⁵ The curriculum helps communities teach young people about small-scale fisheries, regenerative wisdom, and the relationship between local knowledge and global policy. My original capstone project focused on supporting Phase II of Coast 2 Coast Movement’s SSF Curriculum expansion into Tanzania and Madagascar. Due to funding changes, the scope of the project shifted. Rather than directly supporting that implementation phase, my project now uses insights from the World Small-Scale Fisheries Congress to inform a youth futures workshop for global educators and youth-adjacent practitioners, with a focus on future work connected to Lima, Peru.

The capstone project sits at the intersection of small-scale fisheries, education, youth engagement, climate adaptation, and science communication. The focus is now to take what I learned from global conversations at the Congress and turn those insights into a practical workshop curriculum. The goal is to help educators and practitioners move from broad concern toward concrete action.

¹ FAO SSF Guidelines; Béné et al.; Mills et al.; WWF.

² Goodyear Ka‘ōpua; Whyte; Bruno et al.

³ IPCC; Allison et al.; Bennett et al.

⁴ FAO SSF Guidelines.

⁵ Coast 2 Coast Movement and FAO, *Small-Scale Fisheries Guidelines Curriculum*.

2. Project Goal and Research Questions

The goal of this capstone is to design a workshop toolkit that helps global educators, young professionals, and youth-adjacent practitioners create more meaningful pathways for youth engagement in small-scale fisheries and related sectors.⁶

The central research question guiding this project is: *What barriers, opportunities, and support systems shape youth futures in small-scale fisheries, and how can those insights inform global action?*

Earlier versions of the project focused more directly on training engagers to support the SSF Curriculum in specific countries. The current version is broader in audience but still practical in purpose. It asks how educators and practitioners can move from recognizing that youth engagement is important to actually designing systems, activities, and accountability practices that include youth earlier and more meaningfully.

The supporting questions became less about whether youth engagement matters and more about how to make it real. What themes emerged from the World SSF Congress survey responses and conversations? How can educators and practitioners move from concern to action? How can a workshop curriculum support youth voice, mentorship, livelihood pathways, intergenerational learning, and climate adaptation? These questions shaped the final toolkit and helped keep the project grounded in application rather than theory alone.

3. Background and Rationale

Small-scale fisheries are deeply connected to climate adaptation. Climate change is shifting species distributions, altering weather patterns, increasing uncertainty, and intensifying pressures on coastal and inland livelihoods.⁷ These changes are ecological, but they are also social and generational.⁸ If fishing becomes less predictable or less economically viable, young people may struggle to imagine futures connected to food systems and place.

This capstone treats youth engagement as an adaptation issue. Climate resilience is not only about policy, monitoring, or infrastructure. It is also about whether young people can see themselves as part of future fisheries systems.⁹ Youth futures depend on access to mentorship, decision-making power, livelihood pathways, identity, and recognition. Young people may leave fisheries because they are responding to systems that have not made space for them to stay, lead, or contribute in new ways.¹⁰

Survey responses from the World SSF Congress supported this framing. Key challenges include exclusion, lack of opportunity, limited voice in management, low income, stigma, lack of mentorship, and the perception that fisheries do not offer viable futures for young people. Responses highlighted many avenues for growth: the need for platforms, capacity-building,

⁶ Hart; United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child; FAO SSF Guidelines.

⁷ IPCC; Allison et al.

⁸ Bennett et al.; Whyte; Bruno et al.

⁹ IPCC; Bennett et al.; Armitage et al.

¹⁰ Hart; Pollock; Powell; United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

intergenerational learning, social media outreach, public speaking, youth leadership, and applied opportunities to practice skills in real contexts.¹¹

The clearest takeaway from the survey was not that youth are uninterested. The stronger and more useful interpretation is that youth are often navigating fisheries systems that do not consistently offer dignity, voice, stability, mentorship, or visible futures. That distinction matters because it changes the kind of educational response we design. If youth are framed as uninterested, programs often focus on persuasion. If youth are understood as under-supported, programs can focus on pathways, relationships, and shared decision-making.

This is where the workshop toolkit comes in. It is designed to help participants ask better questions. Instead of asking, “How do we get youth to care?” the toolkit asks, “How do we build systems, stories, and opportunities that show youth they already matter?”

4. Methods and Project Process

This project uses a qualitative, practice-based approach. Data and insights were collected through the World Small-Scale Fisheries Congress in Hua Hin, Thailand, where I participated in sessions, held informal conversations, supported Coast 2 Coast Movement activities, and distributed a survey focused on youth futures. The survey asked participants to reflect on the challenges facing youth in small-scale fishing communities, what would help youth engagement, and what has already been effective.

The 34 responses represented a range of sectors, including fisheries, aquaculture, conservation, education, policy, NGOs, research, and community advocacy.¹² They also represented regions from all around the world with most responses from Asia and the Pacific. The purpose was not to create a statistically representative dataset, but to help map the “seascape” of how people already working in and around small-scale fisheries are thinking about youth.¹³

After the Congress, I reviewed the survey responses and informal notes for recurring themes. These themes were then translated into workshop design priorities. For example, repeated concerns about youth exclusion from decision-making became the foundation for the Youth Accountability Check. Responses about mentorship and intergenerational learning informed activities such as the Fishing Futures Memory Map and Systems Web. Comments about low status, weak career visibility, and economic uncertainty shaped the Youth Pathway Design Lab.

This process allowed the project to move from listening to developing strategies. The workshop uses the themes that emerged from the Congress as a foundation for action-oriented learning. It focuses on helping participants reflect on their community’s relationships with youth and helps them carry forward an action plan.¹⁴

5. Key Findings

¹¹ World Small-Scale Fisheries Congress, *Youth Futures Survey Responses*.

¹² World Small-Scale Fisheries Congress, *Youth Futures Survey Responses*.

¹³ World Small-Scale Fisheries Congress, *Youth Futures Survey Responses*.

¹⁴ Freire; Chambers; Pretty.

The survey responses and conversations at the Congress revealed several connected themes. The first was economic viability. Many responses described youth disengagement as tied to low income, high operating costs, limited opportunity, and the belief that fisheries do not offer a stable future. In some responses, fishing was described as a low-status job or as something young people are discouraged from pursuing. This suggests that youth engagement cannot be separated from livelihood security.¹⁵ A young person may love their community and still decide that fishing is not a future they can afford.

A second theme was visibility. Across responses, there was a sense that fisheries are not always shown to youth as creative or full of possibilities. For many young people, small-scale fisheries may be something they know through family labor, economic stress, or responsibility, but not necessarily as a space for leadership, science, entrepreneurship, storytelling, advocacy, or climate adaptation.¹⁶ This distinction is significant because people are more likely to move toward a future when they can actually see themselves in it.¹⁷

A third theme was voice and decision-making. Responses repeatedly named the need for youth platforms, youth leadership, and participation in management. This theme became one of the most important parts of the toolkit because it pushes beyond the idea of youth as program participants. Youth engagement becomes more meaningful when young people have the ability to influence what is being designed, how decisions are made, and what success looks like.¹⁸

Mentorship and intergenerational learning also emerged strongly. Responses described adult-youth partnerships, peer learning, life history interviews with elders, and dedicated spaces for youth to learn and share. These responses reinforced that youth engagement is relational. Training matters, but training without trust and ongoing relationships can easily become another short-term activity.¹⁹ Young people need opportunities to practice skills in real contexts with adults who listen without taking over.

Finally, climate and resource uncertainty sat underneath many responses. Climate change was not always named directly, but concerns about declining resources, environmental degradation, livelihood instability, and economic uncertainty appeared throughout the data. This reinforced one of the central arguments of the project: youth futures are climate adaptation issues.²⁰ If environmental change makes fisheries less stable, then adaptation must include the next generation's ability to understand, respond to, and shape these changes.

6. Toolkit Design

The final toolkit is structured around a Next Generation Science Standards 5E learning model: Engage, Explore, Explain, Extend, and Evaluate.²¹ Each phase moves participants from personal reflection to systems thinking to action. The workshop begins with a welcome circle and a

¹⁵ Béné et al.; Mills et al.; FAO SSF Guidelines.

¹⁶ National Academies; Coast 2 Coast Movement and FAO SSF Curriculum; FAO SSF Guidelines.

¹⁷ Pollock; Powell.

¹⁸ Hart; United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

¹⁹ Freire; Chambers; Bruno et al.

²⁰ IPCC; Allison et al.; Whyte.

²¹ National Academies / NGSS Lead States.

Fishing Futures Memory Map. This opening activity asks participants to start from memory rather than policy. They reflect on a place, person, challenge, and hope connected to fishing, food, water, or community. The purpose is to remind participants that youth futures are not abstract. They are connected to relationships, place, and inherited knowledge.²²

The next activity, *Systems Web: Who Shapes Youth Futures?*, asks participants to map the relationships that shape youth engagement. Youth do not exist alone in a system. They are connected to fishers, women processors, elders, teachers, parents, local government, NGOs, markets, researchers, funders, schools, and community leaders. By using string or visual mapping, participants can see where relationships are strong, where communication breaks, and where young voices are missing.²³ The activity makes the invisible system more visible.

The third activity, from *Youth Are Leaving* to *What Is Missing?*, helps participants reframe deficit-based statements. Rather than saying, “Youth are not interested in fishing,” participants ask, “What would make fisheries feel meaningful, respected, and viable for youth?” Rather than saying, “Youth lack experience,” they ask, “What mentorship, practice, or leadership opportunities are missing?” This activity is important because the way adults describe youth shapes the kinds of programs they design. If youth are framed as the problem, adults design programs to fix them. If systems are understood as incomplete, adults can design pathways, relationships, and opportunities to fill in the gaps.²⁴

The heart of the workshop is the Youth Pathway Design Lab. In this section, participants design a realistic youth engagement intervention that could be adapted to different contexts. Each group identifies a barrier, a youth audience, a role for youth, an adult support role, a climate or sustainability connection, and one realistic next step.²⁵ The goal is to create a mini-prototype that could be tested with limited resources.

The workshop ends with a 30-Day Action Plan and Youth Accountability Check. This final step keeps the workshop from ending as only a good conversation. Participants identify who they need to contact, which youth or youth-connected group should be invited, what question they need to ask before designing anything, what small activity they can begin, what support they need, and how they will know if the first step worked. The accountability check asks where youth voice enters the idea, what youth can actually change, who benefits, who might be left out, and what adults need to start or stop doing.²⁶

Together, these activities move participants from memory to systems to reframing to design to action. The workshop is meant to be flexible. It can be adapted for groups with youth present, groups without youth present, multilingual settings, and highly experienced participants.

7. Scaling the Youth Accountability Check for Larger NGOs

²² Goodyear Ka’ōpua; Whyte; Bruno et al.

²³ Chambers; Pretty; Armitage et al.

²⁴ Pollock; Cameras for Girls; Tuck; Ladson-Billings.

²⁵ Hart; Bennett et al.; FAO SSF Guidelines.

²⁶ Hart; United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child; Powell.

The Youth Accountability Check began as a reflection tool at the end of the workshop, but it a useful tool if scaled for larger NGOs and institutions. Many organizations say they value youth engagement, but youth inclusion can easily become symbolic if there is no structure to make it measurable.²⁷ A larger accountability framework would help organizations move from good intentions to repeatable practice.²⁸

A scaled version could function as a Youth Inclusion Accountability Framework. The purpose would be to help organizations examine whether youth are actually included in their systems, not only featured in photos, but also invited to events, or described in strategic plans. The framework would ask organizations to look across the full project cycle: planning, budgeting, program design, implementation, evaluation, and communication.

The first step would be a youth inclusion audit. Before launching a project, an organization would ask where youth currently appear in the process. Are youth consulted only after decisions have already been made, or are they included when priorities are being set? Are young people asked to share stories, or are they also invited to shape budgets, timelines, research questions, and definitions of success? This audit would help organizations identify whether youth engagement is happening at the level of participation, advising, co-design, or shared decision-making.

The second step would be to create a decision-making map. For each project, organizations would identify the major decisions being made and ask which of those decisions youth can realistically influence. This is the difference between inviting youth into a room and giving youth something real to shape. If youth cannot change anything, then the process should not be described as youth-centered.²⁹ The organization would need to either adjust the process or be honest about the limits of youth participation.

The third step would be resourcing. Youth engagement takes time, trust, transportation, translation, safety planning, mentorship, and compensation.³⁰ A scalable accountability framework should require organizations to budget for youth participation from the beginning. If youth are expected to contribute knowledge, stories, labor, or leadership, then organizations should plan for stipends, meals, travel support, accessibility needs, and follow-up. Without resources, youth engagement often depends on who already has the privilege and free time to participate.³¹

The fourth step would be feedback and return. Organizations often collect youth input but do not always return to explain what happened with that input. A Youth Inclusion Accountability Framework should require a feedback loop.³² After youth share ideas, organizations should report back in accessible language: what was heard, what changed, what could not change, and

²⁷ Hart; United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

²⁸ Pretty; Chambers; Kooiman et al.

²⁹ Hart; United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

³⁰ Chambers; Freire; Powell.

³¹ Ladson-Billings; Powell.

³² Pretty; Chambers.

why. This practice builds trust because it shows young people that their participation did not disappear into a report.³³

The final step would be public accountability. Larger NGOs could include youth inclusion indicators in annual reports, grant reports, or program evaluations. These indicators do not need to be overly complicated. Organizations could track how many youth were involved, what roles they held, what decisions they influenced, whether they were compensated, and what changed because of their input.³⁴ The goal is not to reduce youth engagement to numbers, but to create enough structure that organizations cannot claim youth-centered work without showing how youth were actually included.

In practice, this framework could become a short checklist or scorecard. At the beginning of the project, it would help organizations design youth inclusion into the project. In the middle, it would help teams notice whether youth voice is being lost. At the end, it would help organizations evaluate whether youth participation changed anything.

If scaled well, the Youth Accountability Check could help NGOs shift from youth engagement as an event to youth inclusion as an organizational habit.

8. Evaluation and Measures of Success

The toolkit includes pre- and post-workshop questions to evaluate whether participants leave with more confidence and clarity. Before the workshop, participants are asked how confident they feel in identifying barriers to youth engagement, how confident they feel in designing youth-centered activities, how often youth are included in decision-making in their work, and what youth engagement challenge they are currently thinking about. At the end, they answer similar questions and identify one concrete action they will take in the next 30 days.

The workshop is successful if participants can identify a specific youth engagement challenge, reframe that challenge as a systems or pathway issue, design one realistic intervention, name a clear role for youth beyond passive participation, and leave with a practical next step.³⁵ Success is measured by whether they leave with a clearer understanding of what youth engagement requires and an action they can actually take.

The evaluation also asks what still feels difficult or unclear. This matters because youth engagement is not easy work. It involves many intersections, including power, trust, resources, language, and time.³⁶ The workshop aims to help participants name challenges clearly and move forward with more responsibility.

9. Limitations

This project has several limitations. First, the survey data came primarily from people attending the World Small-Scale Fisheries Congress. While this created access to a global and highly

³³ Freire; Pollock; Powell.

³⁴ Hart; Creswell and Poth.

³⁵ Hart; Pretty; Chambers.

³⁶ Powell; Pollock; Cameras for Girls.

engaged group of practitioners, it also means the responses reflect people already connected to fisheries conversations. The findings should not be treated as representative of all small-scale fishing communities or all youth.

Second, many of the perspectives collected were from adults or youth-adjacent actors. Some responders were young people or early-career professionals, but the project does not claim to be a youth-led assessment. This limitation directly shaped the workshop design. The toolkit repeatedly reminds facilitators that if youth are not present, the ideas generated are drafts, not final answers. A required next step is to ask the youth what they would change.

Third, the toolkit has not yet been fully tested in the Lima, Peru workshop context. It is a recommendation designed by survey themes, Coast 2 Coast guidance, and my own professional experience, but it will need feedback from facilitators and participants in real settings. The toolkit should be treated as a living document that can be adapted, tested, and revised.³⁷

10. Significance and Next Steps

This capstone matters because youth futures in small-scale fisheries are often discussed in hopeful language but not always supported through concrete systems. Young people are called “the future,” but that phrase can become empty if youth are not given mentorship, decision-making power, livelihood pathways, and space to shape the programs meant to support them.³⁸

The *What's the Catch?* toolkit responds to this gap by offering a structured workshop that moves from reflection to action. It asks participants to name barriers, map relationships, reframe assumptions, design pathways, and commit to a next step. It also introduces an accountability practice that could be scaled for larger organizations seeking to include youth more meaningfully in their work.

The next step is to use the toolkit in future youth programming, including the gathering of global educators in Lima, Peru, in 2026. That setting will provide an opportunity to test the activities, gather feedback, and refine the framework with educators, practitioners, and, ideally, more direct youth participation. Longer term, the Youth Accountability Check could be developed into a practical tool for NGOs and institutions that want to evaluate whether youth inclusion is actually built into their systems.

³⁷ Chambers; Pretty; Freire.

³⁸ Hart; Pollock; Powell.

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Curriculum Toolkit:

What's The Catch?

Youth Futures Small-Scale Fisheries Workshop Toolkit

Purpose

This toolkit was created to support youth engagement in small-scale fisheries and related sectors. It is based on survey responses and conversations gathered at the 5th World Small-Scale Fisheries (SSF) Congress in Hua Hin, Thailand.

Using input from youth, educators, researchers, policy actors, NGO practitioners, and community advocates, the toolkit aims to identify the major barriers and opportunities shaping youth futures in small-scale fisheries.

Target Audience

This toolkit is designed for:

- Educators working with youth in fisheries, agriculture, conservation, or food systems
- Community-based organizations supporting small-scale fishing communities
- Youth-adjacent practitioners designing programs or workshops
- Local partners interested in intergenerational learning
- Institutions seeking more meaningful youth engagement

The toolkit can be used in full or adapted into individual activities depending on time, audience, language, and local context.

Core Message

When it comes to small-scale fisheries, youth are responding to systems that often fail to offer dignity, voice, stability, and visible futures. Oftentimes, this leads to youth leaving the industry, resulting in a “greying of the fleet” effect, where the average age in the workforce increases.

The World SSF Congress survey shows that economic insecurity, low social status, limited decision-making power, lack of mentorship, weak career visibility, and climate-related uncertainty are barriers to youth engagement.

The main question that needs to be answered is: What needs to change so that youth can imagine a future in small-scale fisheries?

Background

Small-scale fisheries support food security, livelihoods, cultural identity, and local economies around the world. Yet many fishing communities are facing climate change, resource decline, economic uncertainty, and youth migration.

At the World SSF Congress, participants described a recurring challenge: young people often do not see fisheries as a viable future. Qualitative data from the SSF Congress reflect this sentiment: some responses noted that fishing is seen as a “low-status job,” that youth “don’t seem to see opportunities,” or that small-scale fisheries are rarely presented as real career pathways.

Global testimony from young people in small-scale fisheries suggests that many systems have not made fisheries feel like a place where young people can thrive.

This toolkit responds to that gap by turning survey findings into workshop activities focused on belonging, visibility, and action for young people.

Survey Findings

Theme 1: Fisheries Are Often Not Seen as a Viable Future

Many respondents described youth disengagement as tied to economic insecurity, low income, and lack of visible opportunity.

Common phrases included:

- “Not able to make enough money”
- “Not viable future for living”
- “Better job opportunities in sectors on land”
- “There are no good futures in SSFs”

Youth engagement cannot be separated from livelihood security. If fisheries are not economically viable, young people may not see them as a future worth choosing.

Theme 2: Fishing Is Sometimes Socially Undervalued

Several responses pointed to stigma around fishing. Fishing was described as unattractive, low-status, or not something youth are encouraged to pursue.

One response noted that small-scale fisheries are rarely presented at career days and that youth are often taught to aspire for “more.”

Youth futures require narrative change. If fisheries are framed only as hardship or limitation, youth may struggle to see dignity, creativity, or possibility in the sector.

Theme 3: Youth Need Voice and Decision-Making Power

Responses repeatedly named exclusion from decision-making as a major barrier.

Common structural changes included:

- Participation in management
- Platforms for youth voice
- Inclusion in decision-making
- Leadership development
- Institutional spaces for youth to be heard

Youth need a stronger role in shaping programs for their small-scale fisheries and related sectors.

Theme 4: Mentorship and Intergenerational Learning Matter

Many responses emphasized mentorship, adult-youth partnerships, peer learning, and intergenerational knowledge exchange.

Examples included:

- Youth doing life history interviews with elders
- Mentorship and adult-youth partnerships
- Peer learning
- Dedicated spaces to learn and share

Youth engagement is relational and happens within the community. Young people are taken seriously when there is trust, mentorship, and space to develop their skills.

Theme 5: Communication and Visibility Are Part of the Solution

Responses named social media, public speaking, content creation, Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), and communication as important tools.

This supports the idea that youth futures are shaped not only by resources but by visibility. Youth need to see fisheries as innovative, meaningful, and connected to real possibilities.

Communication is one avenue of creating imaginable futures for youth.

Theme 6: Climate and Resource Decline Shape Youth Futures

Climate change was not always named directly, but many responses described declining resources, environmental degradation, and economic uncertainty. One response linked economic viability to the threat of climate change, while others pointed to marine resource decline and anthropogenic pressures.

Youth futures are climate adaptation issues. If environmental change makes fisheries less stable, youth engagement must also address resilience, livelihood diversity, and long-term community adaptation.

What's The Catch Curriculum:

Youth Futures in Small-Scale Fisheries Workshop

Core question: How do we build systems, stories, and opportunities that show youth they already matter?

5E Phase	Activity	Purpose
Engage	Fishing Futures Memory Map	Connect participants to personal and place-based knowledge
Explore	Systems Web: Who Shapes Youth Futures?	Map relationships, power, and missing links
Explain	From “Youth Are Leaving” to “What Is Missing?”	Reframe youth disengagement as a systems issue
Extend	Youth Pathway Design Lab	Build a practical youth engagement intervention
Evaluate	30-Day Action + Youth Accountability Check	Leave with concrete next steps

Welcome Circle

Time: 5 minutes

Purpose

To set the tone of the space, and because squeaking the crab is fun

Materials

A squeaky toy (sea animal or crab preferred)

Facilitator prompt

“Hello, everyone. Thank you for being here today. My name is [insert name here] and I’d like to welcome you. To start off, we like to do a welcome circle where people can say their name,

pronouns, where home is, and how they're feeling in this moment in a word. And it's important to squeeze the squeaky toy in the crab! I'll go first."

After the crab has been around the world, receive it with gratitude.

"Thank you for sharing. It sounds like a lot of people are feeling [reflect on what's been said]. Let's use that energy as we move into our first activity!"

Activity 1: Fishing Futures Memory Map

Time: 20 minutes

Purpose

To begin with lived experience instead of policy language. This activity invites participants to connect youth futures to memory, place, food, family, work, and water.

Materials

- Blank paper or printed map templates
- Markers
- Sticky notes
- Optional: photos, shells, rope, fish cards, or local objects as visual prompts

Facilitator Prompt

“Before we talk about youth engagement as a program or policy issue, let’s start with a memory. Small-scale fisheries are not just jobs. They are food, family, place, movement, skill, identity, and knowledge. Think of a place, person, or moment that shaped how you understand fishing, food, water, or community.”

Instructions

Ask participants to draw a simple “memory map.” It does not need to be geographic. It can be symbolic.

They should include:

- A place connected to water, food, or fishing
- A person who taught them something
- A challenge connected to that place
- A hope for the next generation

Then ask them to pair-share:

- What did you draw?
- What does this memory teach you about youth futures?
- What knowledge would be lost if young people disconnected from this place?

Group Debrief

Ask:

- What kinds of knowledge showed up?
- What emotions showed up?
- What do young people inherit besides work?
- What do they need in order to carry knowledge forward?

End by saying:

“Now that we have started from memory and place, we are going to look at the systems around youth. Because youth futures are not shaped by youth alone.”

Activity 2: Systems Web–Who Shapes Youth Futures?

Time: 30 minutes

Purpose

To map the relationships, institutions, barriers, and opportunities that shape youth engagement.

This activity should feel like an SSF-style “lines of communication” or relationship web activity. The goal is to make invisible systems visible.

Materials

- Ball of yarn or string
- Stakeholder role cards
- Large chart paper
- Markers
- Sticky notes

Stakeholder Cards

Create cards such as:

- Youth
- Fishers
- Women processors
- Elders
- Teachers
- Parents
- Local government
- NGOs
- Markets
- Researchers
- Policy-makers
- Funders
- Climate/environmental agencies
- Schools
- Seafood buyers
- Community leaders

Instructions

Participants stand in a circle or work at tables.

One participant begins with the *youth* card. They hold the string and pass it to another knowledge-holder while naming a relationship.

Example:

“Youth connect to elders through knowledge.”

“Youth connect to markets through livelihood opportunities.”

“Youth connect to government through policies, but maybe not directly.”

Each person who receives the string names:

1. What connects this actor to youth?
2. What support or barrier exists in that relationship?

As the web forms ask participants to notice:

- Who is strongly connected?
- Who is missing?
- Where does power sit?
- Where does communication break?
- Where could youth have more voice?

Debrief

Ask:

- What relationships are necessary for youth engagement?
- Which relationships are weak or missing?
- Which actors are making decisions about youth without youth?
- What would make this web healthier?

End by saying:

“Now that we can see the system, we can start asking better questions. Instead of asking why youth are not interested, we can ask what the system is making possible or impossible.”

Activity 3: From “Youth Are Leaving” to “What Is Missing?”

Time: 25 minutes

Purpose

To reframe youth disengagement as a systems and pathway issue, not an individual failure.

Materials

- Statement cards
- Reframe worksheet
- Markers

Statement Cards

Give each group one statement:

- “Youth are not interested in fishing.”
- “Youth are leaving their communities.”
- “Youth do not see fisheries as a real career.”
- “Youth lack experience.”
- “Youth are not involved in decision-making.”
- “Youth do not understand the value of fishing.”
- “Young women are not supported in fisheries leadership.”

Instructions

Each group rewrites the statement using this structure:

Instead of saying:

“Youth are not _____.”

Ask:

“What conditions would help youth _____?”

Examples

Deficit statement:

Youth are not interested in fishing.

Reframed question:

What would make fisheries feel meaningful, respected, and viable for youth?

Deficit statement:

Youth lack experience.

Reframed question:

What mentorship, practice, or leadership opportunities are missing?

Deficit statement:

Youth are leaving.

Reframed question:

What would make staying connected to place feel possible?

Group Share-Out

Each group shares:

1. Their original statement
2. Their reframed question
3. One action that becomes possible after reframing

End by saying:

“The way we describe youth shapes the way we design for youth. If youth are framed as the problem, we design programs to fix them. If we can identify the gap, we can design new pathways, relationships, and opportunities.”

Activity 4: Youth Pathway Design Lab

Time: 50 minutes

Purpose

Design a realistic youth engagement intervention that could be adapted to different contexts.

Design Challenge

Design one activity, program, or pathway that helps youth see, shape, or lead a future in small-scale fisheries or a related sector.

Each group's idea must include:

1. A specific youth audience
2. A clear barrier it addresses
3. A role for youth beyond passive participation
4. An adult-youth partnership
5. A climate, livelihood, or sustainability connection
6. One realistic next step that could happen within 30 days

Youth Pathway Worksheet**1. Barrier We Are Addressing**

What is the specific barrier?

Examples:

- Lack of mentorship
- Low income
- Weak career visibility
- Youth excluded from decisions
- Schools disconnected from fishing communities
- Climate uncertainty
- Lack of pride or recognition
- Young women not supported in leadership

2. Youth Audience

Who is this for?

Consider:

- Age range
- Fishing family or non-fishing family
- Rural or urban youth
- Students
- Young fishers
- Young women
- Early-career professionals
- Youth already engaged
- Youth not yet engaged

3. Youth Role

What role will youth actually hold?

Choose one or more:

- Participant
- Storyteller
- Researcher
- Advisor
- Co-designer
- Facilitator
- Decision-maker
- Community messenger
- Project leader

Push participants to move beyond “participant” whenever possible.

4. Adult Support Role

What do adults provide?

Examples:

- Mentorship

- Technical training
- Access to boats, landing sites, schools, or meeting spaces
- Introductions to decision-makers
- Funding support
- Safety support
- Transportation
- Listening without taking over

5. Activity Idea

What will the youth do?

Examples:

- Interview elders about changes in fisheries
- Map local fishing places and climate impacts
- Create short videos about fisheries futures
- Join a local fisheries meeting
- Visit landing sites or markets
- Design a youth-led seafood story project
- Create a “blue careers” map
- Build a youth advisory circle
- Lead a community listening session

6. Climate and Sustainability Connection

How does this activity connect to climate adaptation or sustainable futures?

Examples:

- Tracks changes in fish availability
- Documents community adaptation strategies
- Connects youth to local ecological knowledge
- Builds skills for livelihood diversification
- Makes climate impacts visible
- Supports stewardship and local decision-making

7. What Success Looks Like

How would you know this worked?

Examples:

- Youth return for a second session
- Youth speak in a decision-making space
- Youth produce a story, map, or recommendation
- Adults change one program decision based on youth input
- A school or NGO commits to continuing the activity
- Youth report feeling more confident or included
- A mentor relationship continues after the activity

Example Activities

These are outlines that can be outfitted to specific communities and contexts.

Model 1: Intergenerational Story Mapping

Youth interview fishers, processors, elders, or family members about how fishing has changed over time.

Best for: cultural identity, climate memory, local knowledge

Youth role: interviewer, storyteller, mapper

Output: story map, photo wall, short video, or community presentation

Model 2: Fishing Futures Walk

Youth and adults walk through a landing site, market, shoreline, river, lake, or community space.

Prompts:

- What has changed here?
- What do elders remember?
- What do youth notice?
- What feels uncertain?
- What is already adapting?
- What should be protected?

Best for: place-based learning, climate adaptation, community observation

Youth role: observer, question-asker, documenter

Output: adaptation map or community reflection

This is similar in spirit to field-based education models where participants explore a real place, observe carefully, and connect stewardship to lived experience. For example, the tidepool curriculum you uploaded emphasizes exploration, etiquette, conservation, and respect for natural areas as part of field learning.

Model 3: Blue Futures Career Map

Youth map current and future roles connected to fisheries.

Roles may include:

- Fisher
- Seafood entrepreneur
- Marine technician
- Educator
- Conservation worker
- Fisheries researcher
- Policy advocate
- Market organizer
- Aquaculture worker
- Storyteller
- Community organizer

Best for: career visibility

Youth role: researcher, designer, presenter

Output: local youth careers map

Model 4: Youth Advisory Circle

Youth meet regularly with an NGO, school, fisher group, or local government partner to give input on fisheries-related programming.

Best for: decision-making power

Youth role: advisor, co-designer, decision-shaper

Output: youth recommendations, meeting notes, program changes

Model 5: Fisheries Media Lab

Youth create short videos, photos, posters, or social media posts about fisheries, climate change, livelihoods, and community futures.

Best for: visibility and narrative change

Youth role: content creator, interviewer, communicator

Output: media campaign, exhibit, short film, zine, or community story wall

Model 6: Problem-to-Practice Mini Project

Youth choose one local fisheries issue and design a small action project around it.

Examples:

- Plastic pollution near landing sites
- Declining fish availability
- Lack of youth voice in meetings
- Safety concerns
- Loss of local knowledge
- Market access challenges

Best for: action learning

Youth role: investigator, designer, implementer

Output: small pilot project or community recommendation

Action Step: Build a Mini-Prototype

Time: 20 minutes within the Extend section

After designing their idea, each group creates a mini-prototype.

Examples include:

- A 3-step agenda
- A sample youth invitation
- A first-session activity
- A youth recruitment plan
- A partnership map
- A one-page concept note
- A 30-second pitch
- A first question they would ask youth before starting

Prompt

“You have 30 days and limited resources. What is the smallest version of this idea you could actually try?”

Share-Out

Each group gives a 2-minute pitch:

1. The barrier
2. The youth role
3. The activity
4. The first action step
5. What support they need

Activity 5: 30-Day Action Plan + Youth Accountability Check

Time: 20 minutes

Purpose

To make sure the workshop ends with movement, not just good conversation.

Individual Action Plan

Each participant completes:

My 30-Day Action

Within the next 30 days, I will:

Contact:

Who is one person or organization I need to speak with?

Invite:

Which youth or youth-connected group should be included?

Ask:

What question do I need to ask youth before designing anything?

Start:

What is one small activity I can realistically begin?

Support:

What resource, permission, or partner do I need?

Measure:

How will I know if this first step worked?

Youth Accountability Check

Before leaving, participants answer:

1. Where does youth voice enter this idea?
2. What can youth actually change?
3. Who benefits if this works?
4. Who could be unintentionally left out?

5. What is one thing adults need to stop doing?

This step makes the workshop more than hopeful. It makes it responsible.

Partner Check

Participants pair up and explain their 30-day action plan.

Partner asks:

- Is this specific enough?
- Is youth voice included early enough?
- Is the first step realistic?
- What could make this more community-centered?

Group Closing Reflection

Ask participants to complete one sentence:

- “I used to think youth engagement needed...”
- “Now I think youth engagement also needs...”
- “One action I will take is...”

End by saying:

“Youth futures are more than just words. They are built by creating spaces, relationships, and pathways where young people can practice shaping that future now.”

Conclusion

The goal is not to design perfect programs in one session. The goal is for each participant to leave with one practical next step, one clearer question, and one stronger commitment to building youth futures with care.

Evaluation Metrics*Pre-Workshop Questions*

1. How confident are you in identifying barriers to youth engagement in your field?
Scale: 1–5
2. How confident are you in designing youth-centered activities or programs?
Scale: 1–5
3. How often are youth included in decision-making in your work?
Scale: 1–5
4. What is one youth engagement challenge you are currently thinking about?

Post-Workshop Questions

1. How confident are you now in identifying barriers to youth engagement?
Scale: 1–5
2. How confident are you now in designing youth-centered activities or programs?
Scale: 1–5
3. What is one concrete action you will take in the next 30 days?
4. What youth role will your action support?
5. What still feels difficult or unclear?
6. Did this workshop change how you think about youth engagement? If yes, how?

Success Indicators and Modifications

The workshop is successful if participants:

- Identify a specific youth engagement challenge
- Reframe that challenge as a systems or pathway issue
- Design one realistic youth engagement intervention
- Name a clear role for youth beyond passive participation
- Identify at least one adult support role
- Connect their intervention to climate adaptation, livelihoods, or sustainability
- Leave with a 30-day action step
- Report increased confidence in designing youth-centered programming

If youth are present

Youth should not only answer questions. Invite youth to challenge assumptions, define success, and participate as co-designers.

Add this prompt: “What would make this activity feel worth your time?”

If youth are not present

Name the limitation:

“We are designing around youth futures without enough youth voices in the room. That means today’s ideas are drafts, not final answers. The next step is to ask the youth what they would change.”

If participants have limited English proficiency

- Use icons and images
- Let participants draw instead of writing
- Use paired discussion before whole-group share-out
- Keep prompts short
- Provide a key terms translation sheet
- Allow participants to work in their preferred language

If the group is highly experienced

Ask:

- Where could this become tokenistic?
- Who holds decision-making power?
- What would youth be allowed to change?
- What happens after the first activity?
- How would this become sustainable?

Curriculum Logic Model:

Youth Futures in Small-Scale Fisheries Workshop Curriculum

Project Purpose

This project draws on insights from the World Small-Scale Fisheries Congress to design a workshop that helps global educators and youth-adjacent actors move from concern over youth disengagement to concrete action steps for youth engagement.

The workshop curriculum draws from the major themes that emerged from the Congress survey, including youth visibility, mentorship, decision-making power, livelihood pathways, climate uncertainty, and intergenerational learning. Participants will map relationships, reframe youth engagement challenges, design practical pathways, and leave with a 30-day action plan.

The goal is to help members leave with one practical, locally adaptable action step for supporting youth futures in small-scale fisheries and related sectors.

Inputs

Resources that support the project

- World Small-Scale Fisheries Congress participation
- Youth futures survey and informal conversations
- Synthesized themes from survey responses
- Coast 2 Coast Movement guidance
- SSF Guidelines and SSF Curriculum principles
- Government and community zine prototypes
- Existing youth, educator, and partner networks
- Peru workshop planning team
- Global educators and youth-adjacent practitioners
- Translation support when needed
- Facilitation materials: chart paper, sticky notes, markers, role cards, worksheets
- Time for curriculum design, facilitation, and evaluation

Activities

What happens in the project and workshop

Capstone Development Activities

- Collect survey responses and informal insights at the World SSF Congress
- Identify recurring themes related to youth futures
- Translate those themes into workshop design priorities
- Develop a youth engagement curriculum for the Peru convening
- Create evaluation tools to measure participant learning and action planning

Workshop Activities

- Begin with a Fishing Futures Memory Map to connect youth futures to place, food, family, water, and lived experience
- Use a Systems Web to map the people, institutions, relationships, and missing links that shape youth futures
- Reframe deficit-based statements about youth into systems-based questions
- Design locally adaptable youth engagement pathways
- Build a mini-prototype of one youth engagement idea
- Create a 30-day action plan
- Complete pre- and post-workshop reflection questions

Outputs

Concrete products created

- Youth futures survey responses
- Summary of major youth engagement themes
- Two zine prototypes: government-facing and community-facing
- Youth Futures in Small-Scale Fisheries workshop curriculum
- Facilitation guide and activity worksheets
- Systems web activity template
- Youth pathway design worksheet
- 30-day action plan template
- Pre- and post-workshop evaluation questions
- Workshop prototype ideas created by participants
- Participant action commitments

Short-Term Outcomes

Reflection and recognition during the workshop

The goal is for participants to:

- Recognize that youth disengagement is not only an issue of interest, but also of systems, pathways, and opportunity
- Identify specific barriers shaping youth futures in their own context
- See youth engagement as connected to livelihoods, climate adaptation, education, culture, and governance
- Better understand the relationships and institutions that influence youth participation
- Reframe youth-related challenges from deficit statements into action-oriented questions

Example measurable indicators

- At least 80% of participants identify one specific youth engagement barrier in their context
- At least 80% of participants reframe one deficit-based statement into a systems-based question
- At least 75% of participants report increased confidence in identifying youth engagement barriers

Intermediate Outcomes

Action after the workshop

The goal is for participants to:

- Design one realistic youth engagement pathway or activity
- Name a clear role for youth beyond passive participation
- Identify at least one adult support role or partner needed to move the idea forward
- Connect their activity to climate adaptation, livelihoods, sustainability, or community resilience
- Leave with a 30-day action step that can be attempted in their own context

Example measurable indicators

- Each group creates one youth engagement prototype
- Each prototype identifies a youth role, an adult support role, a barrier addressed, and a first action step

- At least 70% of participants report increased confidence in designing youth-centered activities
- At least 70% of participants complete a 30-day action plan

Long-Term Outcomes

What long-term success looks like

Over time, this curriculum aims to support:

- More intentional youth engagement in small-scale fisheries and adjacent sectors
- Stronger intergenerational learning pathways
- More visible and viable roles for youth in fisheries, food systems, conservation, education, and policy
- Youth futures programming that is designed with youth input rather than adult assumptions alone
- Educators and practitioners who are better prepared to create practical, place-based youth engagement opportunities
- Stronger connections between youth engagement, climate adaptation, and sustainable livelihoods

Example long-term success indicators

- Workshop participants pilot at least one youth engagement activity after the Peru convening
- Participants adapt the workshop tools for their own communities or organizations
- Youth are included earlier in program design, planning, or evaluation
- Partner organizations report that the workshop helped clarify next steps for youth engagement

Evaluation Questions

Process Evaluation

Core question: Did the workshop happen as intended?

- How many participants attended?
- What sectors were represented?
- Were youth or young adults present? If so, how many?
- Were participants able to complete each activity within the allotted time?
- Which activities generated the most discussion or energy?

Outcome Evaluation

Core question: Did participants learn or shift their thinking?

- Did participants become more confident in identifying youth engagement barriers?
- Did participants become more confident designing youth-centered activities?
- Did participants reframe youth disengagement as a systems issue rather than an individual failure?
- Did participants identify concrete roles youth could hold in future programming?

Application Evaluation

Core question: Will this lead to action?

- Did each participant leave with a 30-day action step?
- Did participants identify who they need to contact, invite, or ask before moving forward?
- Did participants identify a realistic first version of their idea?
- Did the workshop produce ideas that the Peru planning team can adapt or continue developing?

Zines:

The zines were created using the illustrations from Daniela de los Ríos. Additionally, the layout was designed in collaboration with Wadsworth Creative Studios.

The individual zine pages, print-ready versions, and folding guide can be accessed here:
<http://bit.ly/4e8uMC2>

Small-Scale Fisheries Curriculum Zine Print Ready (For Community and Educators):

Why Are Small Scale Fisheries Important?

Fishing is more than food. It is:

- Livelihood
- Connection to water
- Culture
- Knowledge

PROTECT FISHERIES

SUSTAINABLE FUTURES

STRENGTHEN TRADITIONS

Small-scale fisheries support communities across the world!

The Small-Scale Fisheries Curriculum is a Learning Tool

It helps strengthen leadership, learning, and shared futures.

Learning Happens Together!

Explore activities like:

Mapping

Storytelling

Research

Photos & videos

Community Discussion

Our Fisheries Our Futures

Small Scale Fisheries Guidelines

Supporting sustainable fisheries for communities, youth, and educators

Thanks for reading!

Learn more here:

The SSF Curriculum was made through a participatory process by rural educators in fishing villages in Peru, India, Algeria, and Madagascar.
Illustrations by Daniela de los Rios
Layout by Wadsworth Creative Studios
Zine by Nathan Huynh

COAST 2 COAST

Women and Youth Shape the Future

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

ENVIRONMENTAL KNOWLEDGE

FOOD PREPARATION

MARKET

Women and young people already play important roles in fishing communities.

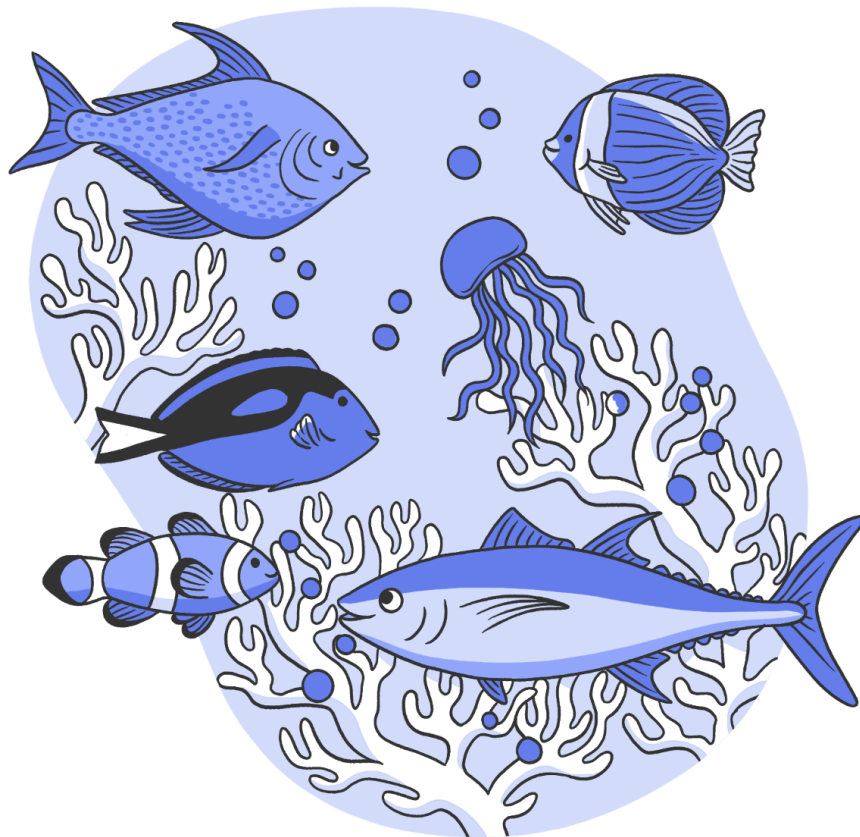
The SSF Curriculum helps strengthen leadership, learning, and shared futures.

Small-Scale Fisheries Curriculum Zine Individual Pages (For Community and Educators):

Page 1

Our Fisheries Our Futures

Small Scale Fisheries Guidelines



Supporting sustainable fisheries for
communities, youth, and educators

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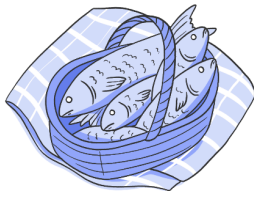
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SUSTAINABLE
FUTURES

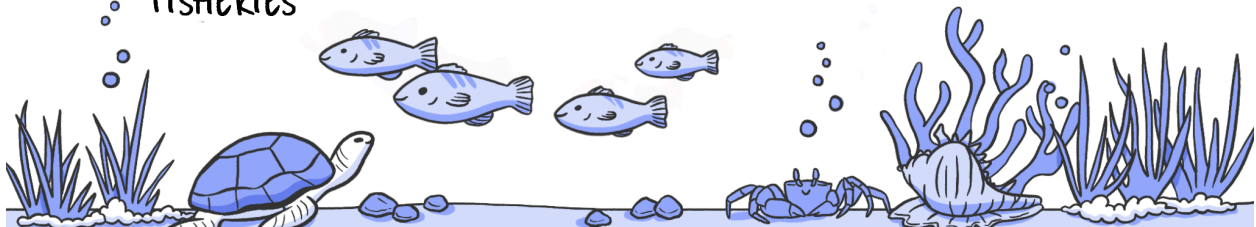


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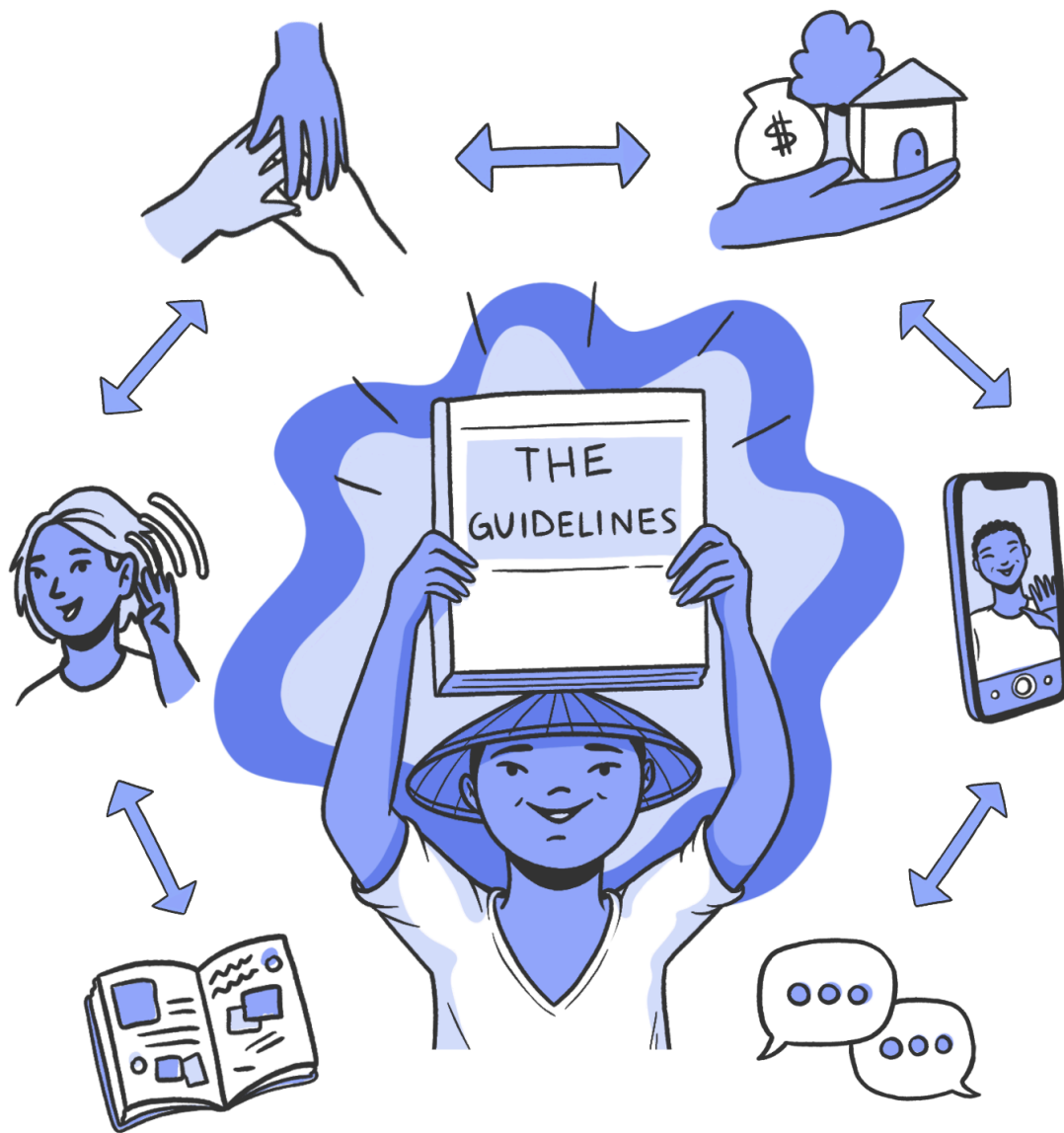


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Learning Happens Together!

Explore activities like:



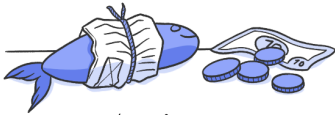
Women and Youth Shape the Future

Women and young people already play **important roles** in fishing communities.

The SSF Curriculum helps strengthen leadership, learning, and shared futures.



FOOD PREPARATION



FISH MARKETS



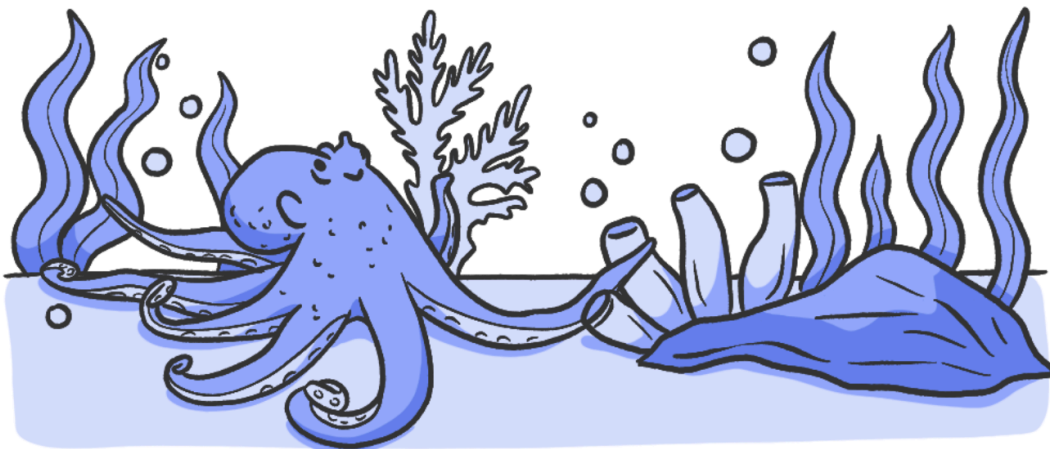
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Learn more here:



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Illustrations by Daniela de los Ríos
Layout by Wadsworth Creative Studios
Zine by Nathan Huynh



Small-Scale Fisheries Guidelines Zine Print Ready (For Government and Institutions):

Why Small-Scale Fisheries Matter

Small-scale fisheries are essential for **Food, livelihoods, and culture.**

- 3+ billion people rely on fish for protein
- 90% of fisheries workers are in small-scale fisheries
- Women and youth play critical roles

Fishing communities face **growing pressures:**

- Climate change
- Resource decline
- Limited political representation
- Youth leaving fishing communities

FOOD SECURITY LOCAL KNOWLEDGE COMMUNITY IDENTITY CULTURAL HERITAGE

Small Scale Fisheries Guidelines
From Global Policy to Local Action

Thanks for reading!
Ready to learn more?



The SSF Curriculum was made through a participatory process by rural educators in fishing villages in Peru, India, Algeria, and Madagascar. Illustrations by Daniela de los Rios. Layout by Wadsworth Creative Studios. Zine by Nathan Huynh.



Supporting sustainable fisheries, resilient communities, and shared ocean futures.

What are the SSF Guidelines?

The Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries were adopted by FAO in 2014.

Why Local Governments Matter

Local governments help turn global policy into real action.

They can support:

- Sustainable fisheries
- Food security
- Gender equity
- Youth participation
- Inclusive governance

They provide guidance to support:

- Community participation
- Fisheries education
- Youth leadership
- Local food systems

The Guidelines are not regulations; they are a **framework for collaboration.**

From Policy to Practice

These approaches strengthen **trust, collaboration, and stewardship.**

The SSF Curriculum helps translate the Guidelines into **real-world learning.**

Activities include:

- Participatory mapping
- Community storytelling
- Youth research projects
- Dialogue between fishers and decision-makers

GENERATIONAL MINDSET
YOUTH LEADERSHIP
COMMUNITY DIALOGUE
SHARED KNOWLEDGE

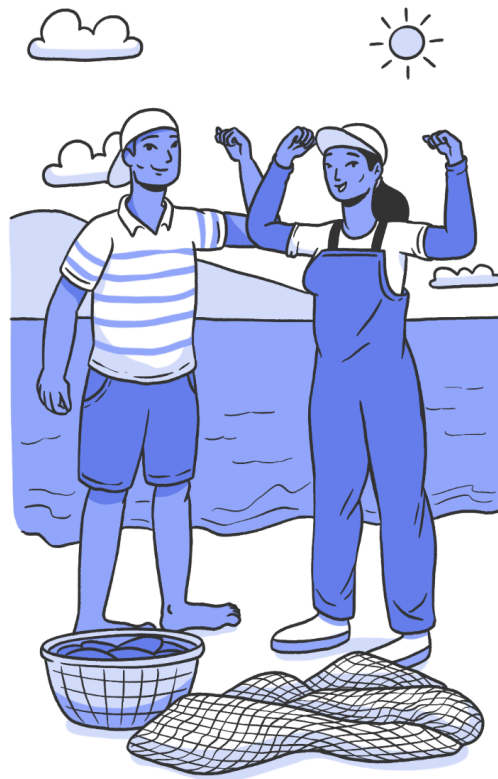


Small-Scale Fisheries Guidelines Zine Individual Pages (For Government and Institutions):

Page 1

Small Scale Fisheries Guidelines

From Global Policy to Local Action



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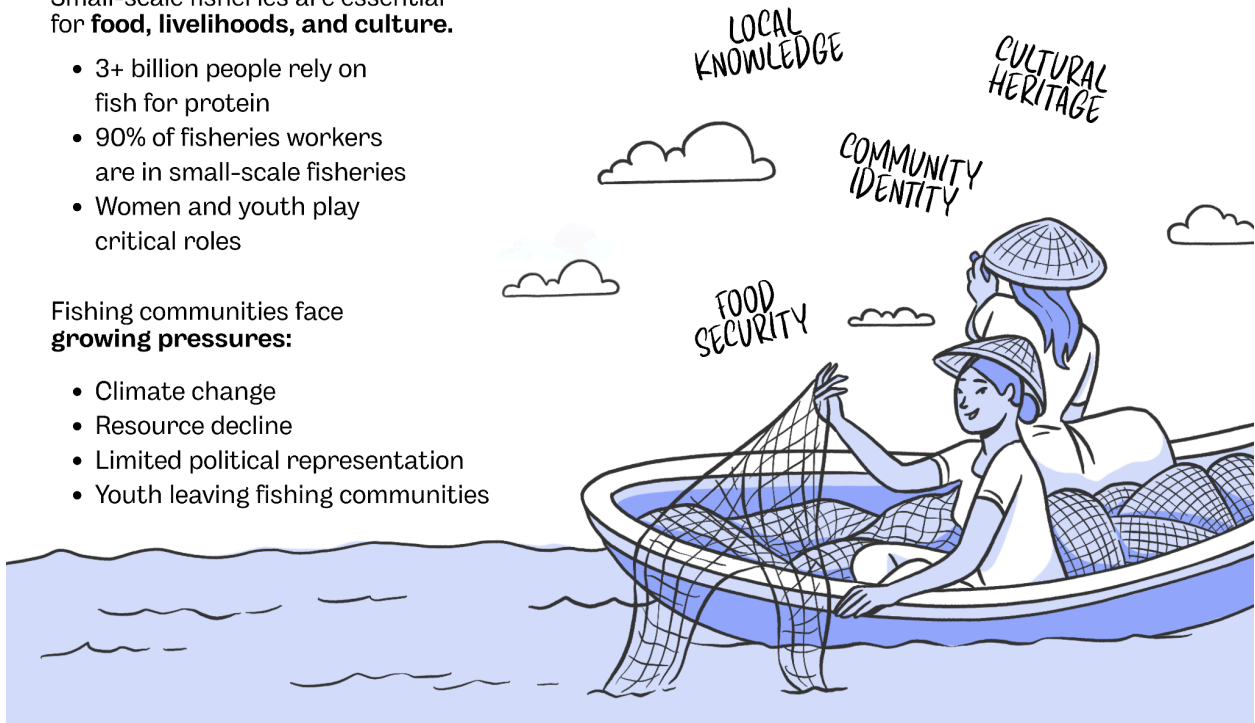
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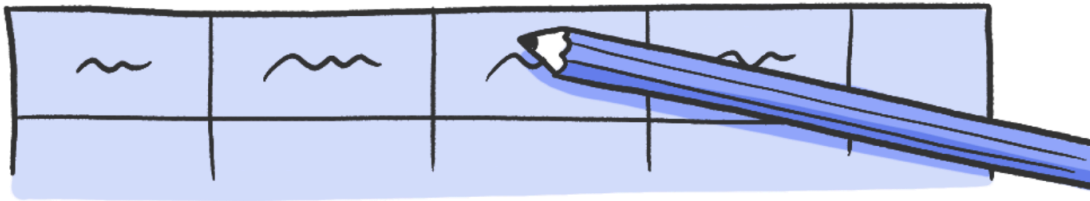
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The Guidelines are not regulations; they are a **framework** for **collaboration**.

Why Local Governments Matter

Local governments help turn *global policy* into **real action**.

They can support:



COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION



FISHERIES EDUCATION



YOUTH LEADERSHIP



LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS

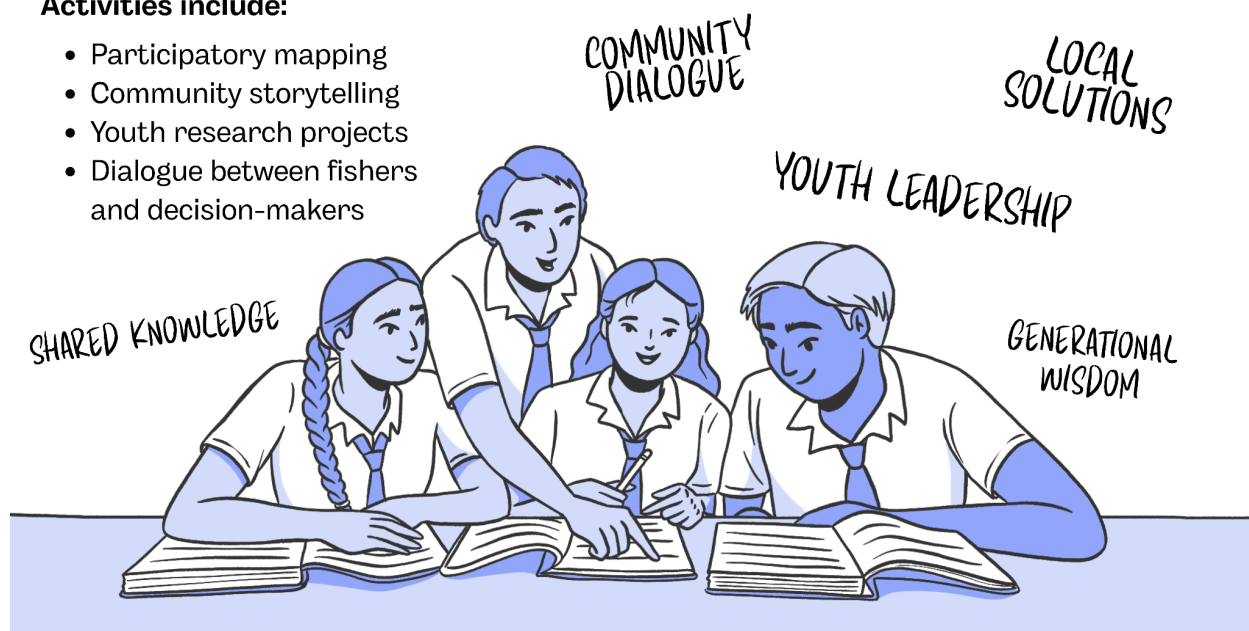
From Policy to Practice

The SSF Curriculum helps translate the Guidelines into **real-world learning**.

These approaches strengthen **trust, collaboration, and stewardship**.

Activities include:

- Participatory mapping
- Community storytelling
- Youth research projects
- Dialogue between fishers and decision-makers



Thanks for reading!

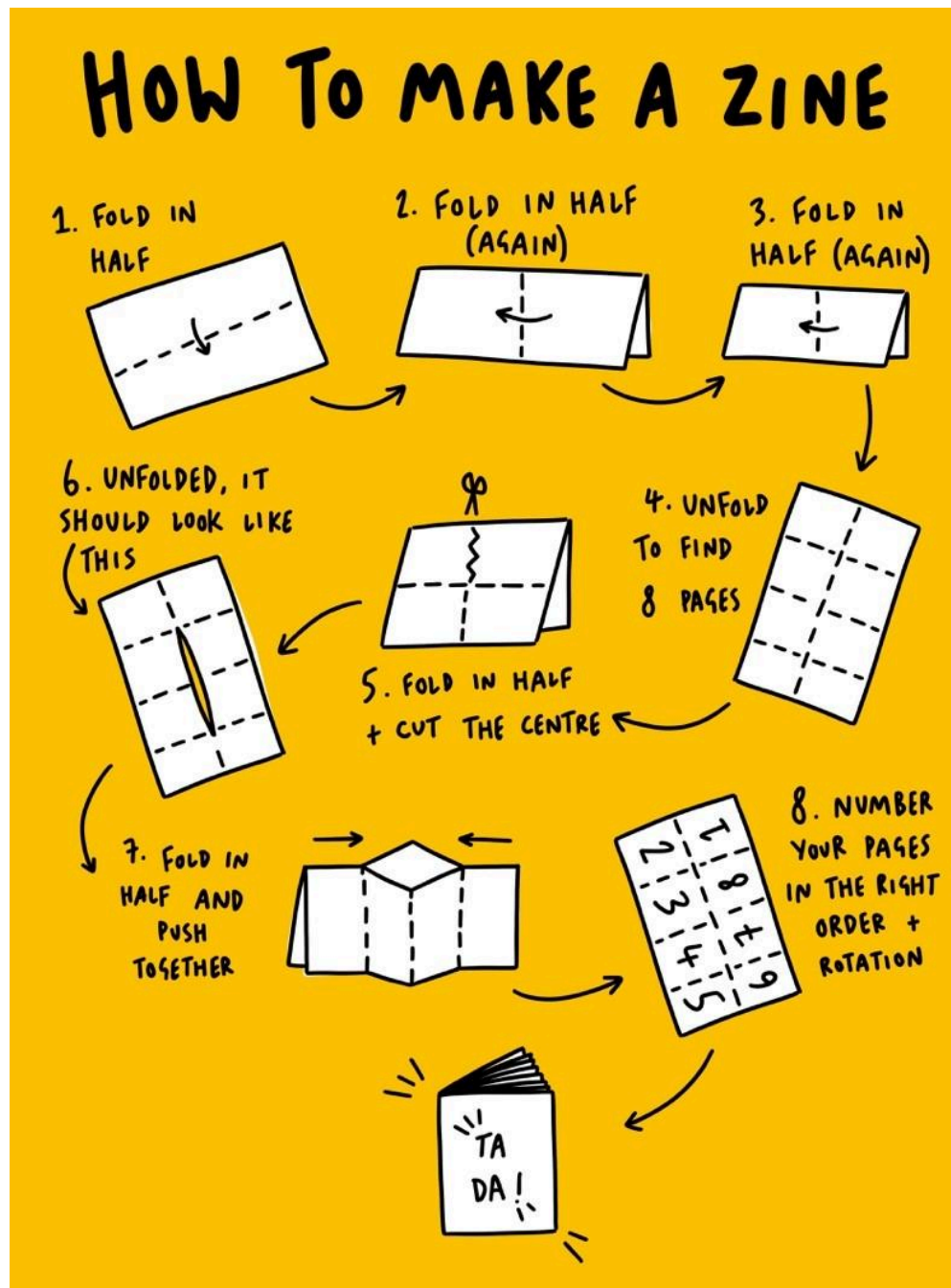
Ready to learn more?



The SSF Curriculum was made through a participatory process by rural educators in fishing villages in Peru, India, Nigeria, and Madagascar.

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Zine by Nathan Huynh



Folding Guide:

Via: <https://www.42ndstreet.org.uk/>