

Impact of deep sea fishing technologies on fisherwomen

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All over the world, women contribute in multiple ways for production, processing, marketing and management in fish. In Sri Lanka too, fishing communities, women play a key role in activities related to fisheries and maintaining households and communities. In the pre 1980's era only coastal and off-shore fisheries were well developed and fishing remains a small scale, labour intensive activity. As the technology developed, deep-sea fisheries sub sector make longer fishing trips, usually about one and half month. With this technological change women have to play an increasingly important role in resolving all household problems to meet social obligations. But yet their role is unacknowledged. Therefore this study focuses on the changing role of fisherwomen with this advanced technological change.

Study was done during January with the fisher community of *Kudawella* in *Hambantota* district. Structured questionnaire and PRA tools were used in the field survey. PRA tools such as historical profile, daily routine charts, pair wise ranking, Venn diagram, free scoring were employed to ascertain the qualitative information. Exercises were launched with a group of 30 fisherwomen. The data related to the changes of household and community responsibilities of fisherwomen during the three time spells, before 1970, from 1970-1990, and after 1990 were collected.

The result illustrated financial condition of the family has increased during the three time spells. The engagement of fisher women for non-fishing employments was rare due to time constraint as more and more household responsibilities. Most important outcome is, fisherwomen have to shoulder more responsibilities, for children's education, social obligations, participation in community associations and household matters. Another interesting finding is that fisher women enjoy more freedom than in early, due to the frequent periods far from home their husbands. Hence, it is important to concentrate on this matter to helping women in deep-sea fisheries sub-sector in dealing with the problems they face and to improve family welfare.