



Australian Government

Australian Centre for  
International Agricultural Research

Fisheries

# A nutrition-sensitive approach to fisheries management and development in Timor-Leste and Nusa Tenggara Timur Province, Indonesia



## Overview

**Fishing provides livelihoods for millions of people living along coasts and near inland waterways, and is important for the nutrition security of billions globally.**

In Timor-Leste and the Nusa Tenggara Timur province of Indonesia there is persistent and widespread food and nutrition insecurity, with rates of childhood stunting and undernutrition among the highest in the world. Fish has a unique role to play in addressing this crisis. Fish and other aquatic foods are a rich source of nutrition that can contribute substantially to childhood nutrition and reduce the risk of seasonal periods of hunger that cost the health, wellbeing and economic performance of individuals and entire societies.

This project will work with fish workers, their communities, and local and national institutions to pilot approaches to inclusive nutrition-sensitive fisheries management. New knowledge from implementing inclusive nutrition sensitive management in these two distinct country contexts will contribute to the development of global principles of inclusive nutrition-sensitive approaches to fisheries. The project will re-scope and refocus management objectives, and support innovations and sector investments that strengthen fisheries contributions to food and nutrition security, inclusion and equity outcomes in the target regions.



## KEY FACTS

**ACIAR Project No.** FIS-2017-032

**Duration:** September 2021 to July 2025  
(3 years and 11 months)

**Target areas:** Timor-Leste, Nusa Tenggara Timur province of Indonesia

**Budget:** A\$2,225,000

### Project Leader

Dr David Mills, Senior Scientist and Timor-Leste Research Leader, WorldFish

### Key partners

- WorldFish, Malaysia
- CSIRO, Australia
- Directorate General of Fisheries, Timor Leste
- Research Centre for Marine and Fisheries Socio-economics, Indonesia

### ACIAR Research Program Manager

Prof Ann Fleming

## Objective

**The project aims to identify the livelihood and nutrition benefits of fisheries in Timor-Leste and Nusa Tenggara Timur, and test approaches to inclusive nutrition-sensitive co-management systems for inshore fisheries.**

It will:

- Define key drivers that shape the integration of fish into household food systems in target communities.
- Evaluate factors enabling and limiting the consumption of fish and its potential to reduce under-nutrition, particularly in children in the first 1000 days of life, and for women.
- Determine pathways to nutrition benefits from case study fisheries (fisheries aggregating devices and gleaning fisheries), identify barriers to improved outcomes from these fisheries, and entry points for nutrition-sensitive fisheries management adoption.
- Test and refine principles and practices for inclusive nutrition-sensitive fisheries.
- Develop best-practice guidance and frameworks for implementation of inclusive nutrition-sensitive fisheries management in partner regions.

## Expected scientific results

- Increased capacity within Directorate General of Fisheries Timor-Leste to continue to engage with its nearest neighbours in collaborative research in fisheries management.
- Increased understanding of the current and potential role of fish in food systems, and the overall importance of fish to household and individual food and nutrition security.
- Development of tools to allow managers to incorporate nutrition sensitivity into coastal fishery management systems
- Improved policy to address poverty and nutrition insecurity.
- Increased profile of fisheries in the nutrition policy space globally.

## Expected impact/outcomes

- Improved health outcomes for children in the first 1000 days of life.
- Empowerment of women in fisheries co-management.
- Changes in fisheries management approaches and policy to include a focus on optimal nutrition outcomes.
- Changes in policy that recognise women's fishing and its contribution to livelihoods.
- Enhance the science capacity of all partners, particularly in the areas of gender, nutrition, coastal sustainable livelihoods and fisheries governance.

