



Socio-Economic Learning Framework

Key informant interview guide

Understanding equity in
fishing and farming supply chains

(SAMPLE)

Socio-Economic Learning Framework

Advancing seafood sustainability requires inclusive solutions that work for every member of the supply chain. The Monterey Bay Aquarium's Socio-Economic Learning Framework (SELF) is designed to gather insights about the lives and livelihoods of small-scale seafood producers to inform interventions that can improve both social and environmental outcomes.

[Learn more about SELF.](#)

About this guide

This is an example of how to use the Socio-Economic Learning Framework to collect information through key informant interviews. This is not a blueprint or script and should be adapted to the local context. Users should add, omit, or rephrase questions as needed to ensure the concepts are meaningful, the process will work in the local language (if translated), and the result will inform an ongoing strategy.

This format can also be adapted for transect walks.¹ Questions are for small-scale fishers and small-holder farmers unless noted. Where possible, include both male and female fishers and farmers, if both are active in the community. Some questions may need to be added or adapted to explore how women experience issues differently. Examples are included below.

¹ Transect walks involve walking through the community to observe and discuss daily activities, the surroundings, and existing risks and resources. Researchers use this approach to understand how the sites and topography of the area impact local lives and livelihoods.

For additional information, visit [Catalytic Communities](#).

Introduction

Please answer the questions below based on your experiences and observations. You may skip any questions you do not wish to answer. Your insights will help us better understand the challenges and opportunities within your community's supply chains.

Decent work

- Describe a typical day in your household. Who (men, women, girls, boys) does what tasks related to fishing/farming?
 - **For women:**
 - What kinds of work do you do that may not be considered part of the formal fishery or farm (e.g., post-harvest processing, managing household finances, household chores)?
 - Do you believe your work is recognized or valued by your community?
 - **For men:**
 - How do different individuals' roles and responsibilities change during peak season? Who else in your household contributes to fishing/farming activities?
- Do your children help with fishing/farming? At what age do they start, and what do they do?
- If children under 18 are involved, what kind of work do they do? How are they kept safe?
- Do you or others in your community employ workers? Who are they, and what are their working conditions like?
- Have you or others worked during unsafe conditions (e.g., bad weather)? If so, what caused those conditions?
- What safety measures or protective equipment do you use? Are they effective and easy to access?
- (Aquaculture-specific) Do you handle pesticides, antibiotics, or other hazardous substances? If yes, do you know what precautions to take?
- (Aquaculture) Have you experienced any skin problems, fungal infections, or waterborne diseases from your work?
- (Fisheries) What assistance is available if you're in an emergency at sea?

Entry barriers

- What types of people (by age, gender, or background) are involved in fishing/farming?
- What challenges or opportunities do young people face if they want to get into fishing/farming?
- Would you like your children to follow the same livelihood? Why or why not?
 - **For women:**
 - What hopes do you have for your daughters or daughters-in-law? What support do they need to succeed?

- **For men:**
 - Which jobs do you think are best suited for young men or women?
 - What future do you see for your sons or younger relatives in this work?
- Are there certain groups that face more difficulty getting involved? If so, why?
- Is it possible for people to leave fishing/farming if they want to? If not, why?
- (Aquaculture) Do you have access to suitable land and water to farm? Does your use of these resources affect others, or does the way others use these resources affect you? If yes, please explain.
- (Fisheries) Do others (e.g., other fishers, farmers, tourists) encroach on your fishing grounds or violate your fishing rights?

Market access

- Who is responsible for selling the catch or harvest? How are prices decided?
 - **For women:**
 - Do you play a role in transporting, negotiating, or processing what's sold? Are there challenges unique to women in this process?
 - **For men:**
 - Who do you sell to, and how do you negotiate prices? Are women involved in these transactions?
- Where do you sell your fish or farm products (e.g., local market, buyers, processors)?
- Do buyers seem to care more about sustainable practices or low prices and fast production?
- What options do you have for selling your products?
- Are you limited in who you can sell to (e.g., because of debt or loan agreements)?
- How do things like seasonal demand or product quality affect your ability to sell?
- What kind of storage, transportation, or cooling infrastructure do you use? Does it meet your needs?
- (Fisheries) How do you follow or experience rules like catch registration, closed seasons, or other fishing regulations?

Access to inputs

- How do you typically finance your fishing/farming work?
- Do you or others struggle with debt? If so, how does that impact your ability to reinvest in your work?
 - **For women:**
 - How involved are you in your family's finances/budget? Would you like to be more involved?
- Do you have access to helpful information about government rules or requirements?
- What support do you have for innovation or improving your systems?

- How do you get access to the gear, inputs, or capital you need? What barriers do you face?
- (Aquaculture-specific) Can you access high-quality inputs like seed, feed, or affordable energy sources? If not, what are the barriers?
- (Fisheries) Can you access affordable gear, fuel, and other inputs?
 - **For women:**
 - Do women in your community face different or additional challenges in accessing gear, boats, credit, or permits?
 - Do you own or co-own any equipment, land, or aquaculture plots?
 - **For men:**
 - Have you seen differences in how men and women access gear or resources? What explains these differences?
 - Do women in your community face different challenges in accessing these resources? If yes, what are they?

Social services

- Have you or your family experienced challenges accessing health care? If yes, please describe them.
- Do your children (ages 5–15) attend school regularly?
- Are there good opportunities for youth to gain skills or education in fishing/farming?
- Does your household receive any social protection support (e.g., retirement payments, child grants, unemployment benefits)?
 - **For women:**
 - Are women in your household or community typically included in these programs? If not, why do you think that is?
 - **For men:**
 - Are all household members—including women—covered by these programs? If not, why?
- (Fisheries) Can you access social protections during closed seasons?

Voice and participation

- Are you part of any groups (e.g., associations, cooperatives, savings, self-help groups)? What do these groups do for you? What is your commitment or role in return?
- Are your spouse or other family members involved in any similar groups? What do they gain from that involvement? What is expected of them in return?
- Have you ever participated in a training program (e.g., fisheries management, aquaculture, finance)? What was useful or not?
 - **For women:**
 - Are women invited or able to attend these trainings? What would help increase participation?

- **For men:**
 - Are women encouraged to participate in trainings or community meetings? What do you think could help improve their participation?

Economic resilience

- Do changes in your fishing/farming income affect your ability to cover basic needs (e.g., food, health care, school)?
 - **For women:**
 - Are you involved in setting or adjusting your household budget? Who decides what gets shifted when the budget is tight?
 - **For men:**
 - Which household expenses are paid from your income from fishing/farming? Who decides how to spend this income?
- Are there parts of the year when you have little or no income?
- What happens when there is a poor catch, disease outbreak, or price crash? How does your household cope?
 - **For women:**
 - Have you had to find ways to support your family during tough times (e.g., borrowing, small business, savings)? What did you do?
 - Were you involved in finding solutions or adjusting household plans during that time? What role did you play?
 - **For men:**
 - Who in your household helps respond to economic difficulties? How do you plan for uncertainty?
- Do you have other sources of income besides fishing/farming?
- Has the price you receive for your product changed in the past year?
- Do you think your (family's) income is enough for a decent standard of living?
- Do you need to take loans to pay for family expenses like health care, education, or ceremonies?

Transparency

- Do you have formal or informal agreements with the people who buy your products? Please describe.
- If you employ others, do they have clear agreements about pay and working conditions?
- Do you have the skills or tools to track and share information about your fishing/farming practices?

Partnerships

- Who do you work with (e.g., buyers, nonprofit organizations, government)? What kinds of partnerships have been most helpful?
- Are there any conflicts in your community over natural resources (e.g., fishing areas, water)? How are these resolved?

Final thoughts

- What changes would you most like to see to make fishing/farming more fair or sustainable in your community?
- Is there anything else you'd like to share?

These questions can be adapted to gather additional information from the wives of fishers/farmers.

Livelihood and household roles

- What is a typical day like for you? What responsibilities do you manage?
- Does your husband's work in fishing/farming affect your daily routine? How?
- Do you help with any part of the fishing/farming business? If yes, what do you do and how often?
- If your husband is away for long periods of time, how do you manage household or family responsibilities in his absence?

Financial decision-making and contributions

- Who decides how money from fishing/farming is spent in your household? Are you involved in those decisions?
- Do you have other/your own source(s) of income? If so, what kind of work do you do, and how important is it to the household?
- Are there times when you've had to borrow money or find other income when fishing/farming earnings were low? How did you manage?

Gender norms and empowerment

- Do you have an opportunity to include your voice when decisions are made in the household or community? Why or why not?
- Have you ever been invited to meetings or training related to the fishery/farming? If not, would you want to attend? What would the benefits be?
- What do you think would help women in your community feel more involved or supported in fisheries or aquaculture?

Children and future aspirations

- Do your children help with fishing/farming activities? If so, what do they do, and at what age did they start?
- Would you like your children to continue working in fisheries/farming? Why or why not?
- What kind of future would you like for your children, and what do you think they need to get there?

Perceptions of changes in the fishery/farm

- Have you noticed any changes in the fish catch, farming success, or market prices over time? How has that affected your family?
- What worries you the most about your family's future livelihood? What gives you hope?