

Center for Community-Based Resource Management (CBRM)

Natural Resources Institute, University of Manitoba

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Case Study Name:	When Fishery Rhymes with Poverty: A First Step Beyond the Old Paradigm on Poverty in Small-Scale Fisheries		
Authors:	Christophe Bene		
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Region:	Asia and Africa		
Country:	India, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka ; Cameroon, Congo, Nigeria.		
Ecosystem Type:	Coastal marine		
Social Characteristics:	Poverty, coastal community		
Scale of Study:	Global		
Resource Type:	Fisheries		
Type of Initiative:	Research-driven project		
Community-Based Work:	Socio-economic development		

Keywords:	small-scale fisheries, poverty, socio-institutional exclusion, Asia, Africa
Summary:	In this paper, we first look retrospectively at the perceptions embraced by academics, international agencies and practitioners of the relation between fisheries and poverty in developing countries and we try to identify the underlying paradigms which have structured these perceptions. The review reveals how the debate has focused on the economic (low income) and biological (overexploitation) aspects of the problem. We then revisit these perceptions in the light of the recent conclusions drawn from other sectors and in particular from the new “consensus” on poverty proposed by the international community. Incorporation of the recent research on poverty helps to show how socio-institutional mechanisms governing peoples access to fisheries resources—rather than the resources themselves—play such a critical role in vulnerability to poverty. Finally, a typology identifying four different categories of intrasectoral exclusion mechanisms is developed and illustrated through empirical studies derived from African and Asian fisheries.