



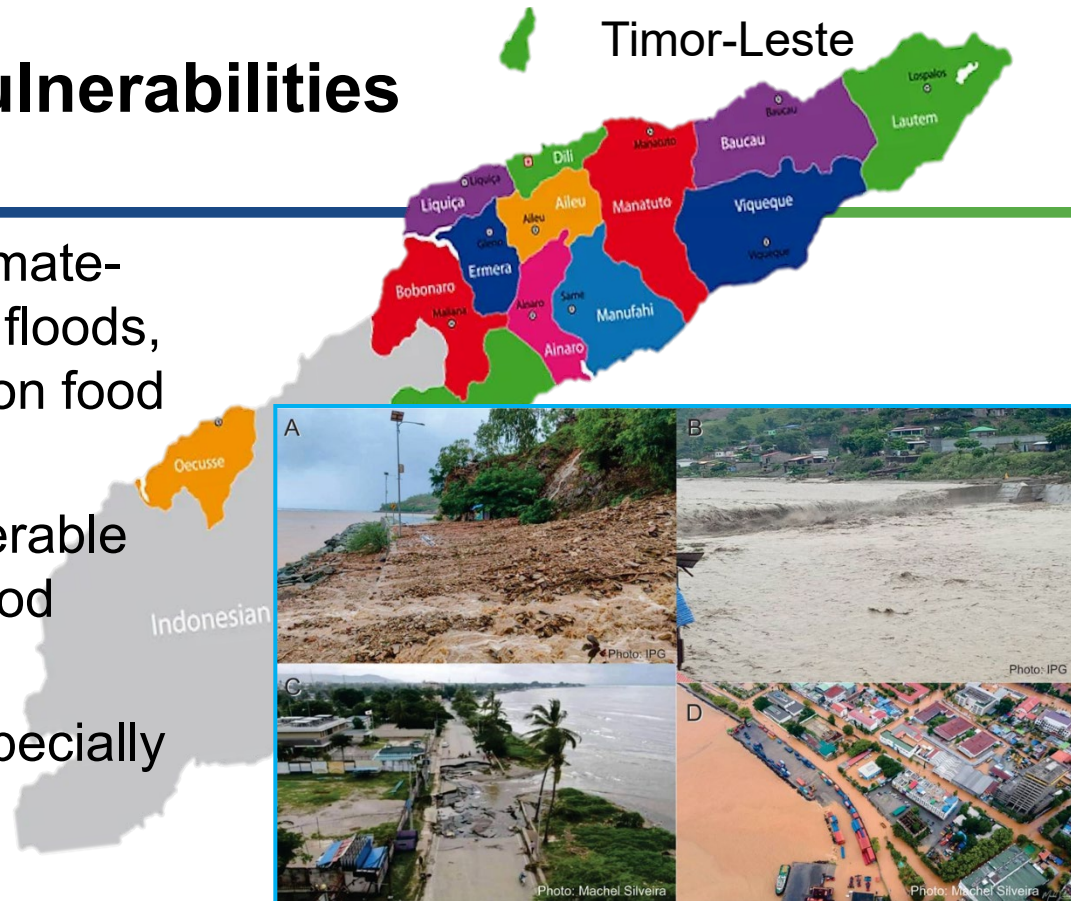
# Women's Voices in Fisheries Governance for Climate-Resilient Food Systems in Timor-Leste

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# Timor-Leste's climate vulnerabilities

- Timor-Leste faces frequent climate-related natural disasters (e.g., floods, droughts) and heavy reliance on food imports
- These result in a climate-vulnerable food system, contributing to food insecurity.
- Malnutrition rates are high, especially among women and children.



Case study: How women's roles in fisheries governance can contribute to a climate-resilient food system.



# The role of fisheries in climate-resilient food systems

- Fisheries provide a stable food source during shocks like floods, droughts, and the COVID-19 pandemic.
  - Banda Aceh
  - Solomon Islands.
- Aquatic foods support dietary diversity and nutritional security in coastal communities.



Fisheries are a critical resource for climate resilience, but women's contributions are often overlooked in governance.



# Challenges in fisheries governance in Timor-Leste

## Male-Dominated Sector:

- Women's roles in fisheries—gleaning, processing, and trading—are undervalued in policy and governance.
- Women are excluded from decision-making, limiting the effectiveness of fisheries management.



Women's knowledge and practices are key to sustainable fisheries management and nutrition security.



# Promoting women's participation in fisheries governance

## Aim:

Establish **co-management** committees with women's representation to improve governance.

- Committees' Composition: At least 30% women members.
- Training Focus: Co-management principles, climate-smart practices, and the importance of women's contributions to fisheries.

## Impact:

Strengthen women's voices in local management and support inclusive national fisheries policies.



# Capacity building for climate-resilient livelihoods

Capacity building through co-management committees:

- Training women and men in fish processing and business literacy.
- Focus on gender-sensitive technologies to improve livelihoods.
- Promote the nutritional importance of aquatic foods, particularly for pregnant and lactating women, and young children.



Strengthened resilient livelihoods through diversified income streams and improved nutrition.

# Contribution of aquatic foods to nutrition

- Nutrient composition analysis of 32 aquatic species caught by both women and men.
- Aquatic food consumption survey among women and infants

## Key Findings:

- Aquatic foods provide essential nutrients that are particularly important for maternal and child health.
- Gleaning and fisheries make vital contributions to year-round nutrition security.





# Actionable recommendations for policymakers and practitioners

## 1. Ensure women's representation in co-management committees

Recognize and value their contributions across the entire fishery value chain (from gleaning to processing and trading).

## 2. Fund interdisciplinary and storytelling research

To drive behaviour and policy change, amplify local voices, and shift community and policy perceptions.

## 3. Recognize hidden harvests in climate adaptation projects

Acknowledge the value of small-scale, informal fisheries, especially by women, in building food security & resilience to climate change.



Policymakers need to integrate these recommendations into fisheries and climate resilience strategies.



# Conclusion and call to action

- Women's participation in fisheries governance is crucial for climate resilience and food security in Timor-Leste.
- The research shows how local, gender-sensitive approaches can strengthen food systems and improve community livelihoods.
- Integrate women's roles into governance structures and recognize the importance of local knowledge for sustainable, climate-resilient food systems.



# Obrigado barak!

# Thank you!



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