ISSN: 1995-1132

CRFM Technical & Advisory Document
Number 2020 / 07

CORONAVIRUS IMPACTS, IMPLICATIONS AND WAY FORWARD FOR THE FISHERIES SECTOR IN CRFM MEMBER STATES

CRFM Secretariat
Belize, 2020

CRFM Technical & Advisory Document – Number 2020 / 07

Coronavirus Impacts, Implications and Way Forward for the Fisheries Sector in CRFM Member States

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CRFM Secretariat
Belize, 2020

CRFM TECHNICAL & ADVISORY DOCUMENT – Number 2020 / 07
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Correct Citation:
CRFM (2020). Coronavirus Impacts, Implications and Way Forward for the Fisheries Sector in CRFM Member States. *CRFM Technical & Advisory Document*, No. 2020/ 07. 11p.

ISSN: 1995-1132
ISBN: 978-976-8293-33-6

Published by the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism Secretariat,
Belize and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CAP	Caribbean Community Agricultural Policy
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CCCFP	Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy
CRFM	Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism
FAD	Fisher Aggregating Device
GPS	Global Positioning System
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
MS	Member States
RFNSAP	Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy and Action Plan
SPS	Sanitary and Phytosanitary measures
SSF Guidelines	Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication
SVG	St. Vincent and the Grenadines
TBT	Technical Barriers to Trade

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1.0 BACKGROUND

In March and April 2020, CARICOM Secretariat coordinated a series of Meetings and consultations with Member States and regional Institutions including the CRFM, to develop the "*CARICOM COVID-19 Agri-Food Risk Management Framework"* and the "*CARICOM COVID-19 Agri-Food Action Plan*" to support Member States in effectively managing food supply and availability during the COVID-19 crisis. The guiding principle for the elaboration of the COVID-19 Agri-Food Risk Management Framework is the Caribbean Community Agricultural Policy (CAP), which is further supported by the Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy and Action Plan (RFNSAP) and the Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy (CCCFP). The development and rapid implementation of a risk management plan should be undertaken to lessen the gravity of the potential negative impact that COVID-19 can have on CARICOM's agri-food sector, with an emphasis on food and nutrition security. It should be noted that the agri-sector covers primary production of fish, crop, livestock, intermediate production and production of final products for consumption.

The CARICOM COVID-19 Agri-Food Risk Management Framework notes that Member States are likely to suffer major disruption in both goods and services, given that COVID-19 is expected to become more protracted and globally widespread. This will be particularly problematic because Member States' economies are characterized as open, fragile, reliant on international trade and vulnerable to exogenous shocks.

The Agri-Food Risk Management Framework indicates that the Region currently has an agri-food import bill of US $3.7 billion (2018), which translates to an annual agri-food trade deficit of just above US $2.2 billion[1]. The United States, Canada and Mexico account for an average of 47% of CARICOM's total agri-food imports, and any disruption in that trading corridor emanating from declining production levels, travel and logistics interruptions, port closures among others on the back of COVID-19, can *inter alia* -

(i) Have a deleterious effect on CARICOM's overall food and nutrition security in the short- to medium-term;
(ii) Cause increases in food price volatility for intermediate and final products;
(iii) Stretch CARICOM Member States fiscal deficits; and,
(iv) Add further pressure on foreign currency reserves due to declining exports, foreign direct investment, tourism receipts, remittances and disruption to economic activities across all sectors.

These predicted impacts will disproportionately affect the poor and vulnerable groups within CARICOM Member States, further increasing food security challenges in terms of availability, access, stability and utilization, as well as the nutritional deficiencies which they currently experience.

The Risk Management Framework provides the basis for the CARICOM COVID-19 Agri-Food Action Plan, which seeks to ensure that Member States benefit from improved capacity to mitigate and prepare for an effective and timely response to the threats of COVID-19 and beyond. Thus, safeguarding food and nutrition security, promoting intra-regional trade, ensuring the protection of livelihoods and strengthening the overall resilience of the agri-food system. In terms of addressing the severe direct costs on the sector and the regional economy, the plan highlights the importance of identifying mitigation actions to reduce the impact on the agri-food system. The Plan recognizes that Member States, CARICOM institutions and development partners will need to reallocate funding in the immediate term to finance these mitigating actions. The broader resource mobilisation effort will pursue private-public partnership instruments, government fiscal arrangements as well as through a combination of grants and loans from the commercial financial sector and development agencies *inter alia*. The plan envisions that CARICOM Ministers of

[1] Statistics Unit, CARICOM Secretariat

Agriculture with support from Ministries of Finance would commit to deep engagements with multilateral and development finance institutions (IDB, World Bank, Caribbean Development Bank, IFAD, etc.) as a matter of urgency to explore the possibilities for responding to the pandemic and implementation of this Action Plan.

From an economic perspective, the fisheries sector is very important for CRFM Member States. In 2018, the total estimated values of marine capture fisheries and exported fisheries products were $502,738,320 USD and $293,800,000 USD respectively. The CRFM Secretariat is the competent authority for implementing the CCCFP and the Protocol on Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries for Caribbean Community Fisherfolk and Societies. The Protocol seeks to implement the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines). In the case of the COVID-19 pandemic, Section 9. 7 of the SSF Guidelines is particularly relevant- "States should understand how emergency response and disaster preparedness are related in small-scale fisheries and apply the concept of the relief-development continuum. Longer-term development objectives need to be considered throughout the emergency sequence, including in the immediate relief phase, and rehabilitation, reconstruction and recovery should include actions to reduce vulnerabilities to potential future threats. The concept of 'building back better' should be applied in disaster response and rehabilitation." Given this background and recognizing the need to identify mitigation measures and assess the impacts of COVID-19 on the fisheries sector, the CRFM undertook a rapid assessment survey.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

The CRFM assessment is meant to support Member States and Regional Institutions and development partners with implementation of the Risk Management Framework at the regional and national levels. The objectives of this assessment are:

(i) To determine the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the fisheries sector and the effects on production, markets, fisher livelihoods, and food security.

(ii) To inform priority actions that will minimize the impacts of COVID-19 within the fisheries sector at the national and regional levels and specifically through the Response and Recovery Phases of the risk management process and the COVID-19 Action Plan; and

(iii) Identify and take advantage of opportunities that may arise from the pandemic to improve the fisheries sector and livelihoods of fisherfolk and fishing communities.

3.0 METHOD

During May 6-20, the CRFM Secretariat conducted a rapid assessment of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic within the fisheries sector and the effects on production, markets, fisher livelihoods, and food security. In order to collect the information, a questionnaire targeting the Chief Fisheries Officers within the Fisheries Divisions/Departments was developed, along with one specifically for fisherfolk. The questionnaires were circulated to all CRFM Member States; and, Fisherfolk Organizations through the CNFO.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The survey findings are provided in the following paragraphs; in general, the rapid assessment identified what support measures were currently being offered by the private/public sector and what additional support is needed.

4.1 Fisheries Department Survey

1. Fifteen (15) Member States responded to the questionnaires. These included Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, and Turks and Caicos Islands.

2. Overall, the most frequently identified effects of the pandemic were reduced trade (12), reduced production (10), and decreased access to fish by consumers (8).

3. The most frequently identified working arrangements for the Fisheries Divisions/Departments included remote working (14), reduced working hours (10), and staff rotation (8) or some combination of these. Data and information which continued to be collected by the Divisions/Departments included catches (11), fisher registration (11), and vessel registration (9).

4. All the Member States indicted that there were communication and outreach efforts to prevent the spread of COVID-19 including good hygiene practices, and social distancing by limiting numbers of fishers on boats and for the public while purchasing fish.

5. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, governments implemented various measures which consequently reduced fishing activities and effort. These measures included states of emergency, curfews, social distancing, closure of beaches, and reduced operating hours for markets.

6. Various guidelines and policies were developed by the governments for the fisheries sector, as a result of COVID-19. A summary of these is provided below:
   - Direct aid to households to supplement income, loan deferrals, rental support, food hampers, loans to small businesses, salary relief grants;
   - Stimulus packages - reduction in the price of fishing gear, reduction in the price of fuel, deployment of FADs, provision of fishing boats and engines on generous terms;
   - Only licensed vessels being allowed to sea, and all captains required to carry fisher ID to sea;
   - Fishers not being allowed to retail their catch, and products being sold to a land-based seafood processor or a wholesale buyer;
   - Prohibition of long-liners going out to sea;
   - Issuance of passes for fish vendors using vehicles to sell fish;
   - Duty free allowances for aquaculture feed, inputs for the industry (nets, outboard motors);
   - Provision of credit for setting up refrigeration, freezing and processing facilities for the agricultural sector at a low interest rate;
   - Hygiene protocols for markets including increased cleaning and sanitation;
   - Installation of GPS trackers for fishing vessels to prevent unauthorized activity.

7. The most frequently identified objectives for the government’s interventions for the fisheries sector due to COVID-19 included: general safety and security (14); maintaining livelihoods (14); maintaining supply of fish for local consumption (13); and maintaining supply for export (6).

8. Eleven (11) Member States indicated that restrictions had been imposed on fishing activities which included; specific hours for operation (11), restrictions on points of sales (7), reduced number of fishing days (5), restrictions on the number of fishers on board (5) and restrictions by specific vessel categories (3).

9. Fishers were considered as essential workers in twelve (12) Member States. Seven Member States (7) estimated that 70-85% of fishers were still operating during this period and three (3) Member States indicated that only 10-30% of the fishers were operating. Four (4) Member States estimated that all fishers were still operating.

10. Seven (7) Member States estimated that there was a decrease in catches in comparison to the same time period last year, while three (3) estimated that there was an increase. Four (4) Member States indicated this still needed to be assessed, and one (1) estimated that there was no change.

11. It was estimated by five (5) Member States that catches had decreased by more than 70 % when compared to the same time period last year. The other Member States were unable to estimate the change in catches at the moment.

12. Eight (8) Member States indicated that facilities were available for fishers to store catches if not sold immediately.

13. Six (6) Member States noted decreases in prices of locally caught fish during the last three months, five (5) Member States indicated no change, two (2) Member States indicated increases, one (1) Member State was uncertain and one (1) Member State noted that there had been price changes and this was influenced by availability. Regarding the change in prices of imported fish during the last three months, four (4) Member States were unable to verify whether there had been a change, seven (7) Member States indicated that there had been no changes three (3) Member States indicated that there had been increases, one Member State noted a decrease in price.

14. Overall Member States indicated that there was a decrease in local demand for fish by restaurants (14), hotels (15), wholesale retailers (14) and processors/exporters (12). However, an increase in demand by households was noted by eight Member States (8).

15. At the regional and international levels, eight (8) Member States indicated that there was a decrease in demand for fish and seafood, while the other seven (7) indicated that there was no change.

16. In terms of where people continued to buy fish during the pandemic, the most frequently identified points of sales were, supermarkets (12), fish markets (11), travelling vendors (8), road side stalls (7) and on the beach (6).

17. The most frequently identified effects on the supply chain for export of seafood and fish products included: disruptions in air freight (12), disruptions in transportation logistics (10), disruptions in processing (10), reduced access to fishing materials and supplies (8), disruptions in sea freight (5), reduced access to fish and seafood (5) and inadequate storage facilities (4).

18. The top three support measures provided by the private/public sector to help fisherfolk during the pandemics included: delays/reductions in utility payments (10), deferred mortgage payments (8), and social security and unemployment benefits (6).

19. The most frequently identified measures for ensuring food security and livelihoods of fisherfolk included: promotion of fish consumption (6), micro loans (2), development of online marketing options (2), and facilitation of intra-regional and international trade (2).

20. Additional support which was recommended for the fisheries sector included:
    - Alternative livelihood programmes;
    - Negotiation of partnerships with supermarkets/processing facilities to purchase fish;
    - Online marketing of fish products;
    - Unemployment benefits;
    - Stimulus packages including boats and engines;
    - Aquaculture development;
    - Value addition and use of underutilized species;
    - Increase in cold storage and processing capacity and installation of solar energy panels;
    - Support to fisherfolk regarding marketing options;
    - Improved accessibility of product to customers, with options such as phone in orders and pick up systems;
    - Strengthening of the local market by improving structures; provision of financial support to fishers for investment in newer engines, fishing gear and materials.

4.2 Fisherfolk Survey

1. Seventeen (17) fisherfolk responses from nine countries (9) were examined, including Belize (1), Dominica (1), Grenada[2] (4), Guyana (1), Jamaica (3), St. Kitts and Nevis (2), Saint Lucia (3), St. Vincent and the Grenadines (1), and Trinidad and Tobago (1). These fisherfolk were members of twelve fisherfolk organizations:
    - Belize - Wabafu Fishermen Association;
    - Grenada - Grenville FAD Fishers Organization, Sauteurs Fishermen Cooperative, Gouyave Fisherman Cooperative Society Ltd., Southern Fishermen Association;
    - Guyana - Guyana National Fisherfolk Organization, the Upper Corentyne Fishermen's Co-op Society Ltd;
    - Jamaica - Lyssons Fisherfolk Benevolent Society, Rio Nuevo Fisherfolk Group;
    - St. Vincent and the Grenadines- SVG National Fisherfolk Organization;
    - Saint Lucia - Gros Islet Fishermen Cooperative, Choiseul Fishermen's Cooperatives Society Limited;
    - Trinidad and Tobago - Maracas Bay Fishing Association.

2. Fifteen (15) respondents indicated that there had been a decrease in the amount of fish caught during the last three months (February, March, April) and the most frequently identified reasons for this were COVID-19 (13), fish being more difficult to find at sea (4), and decreased demand (3).

3. Sixteen (16) respondents also indicated that there had been a decrease in the amount of time spent fishing. Various reasons were given for the decrease in fishing time including, curfews, limited number of fishing days, reduced market operation times, states of emergency, reduction in vending options, restricted fishing times, and reduced access to fishing supplies due to lockdowns.

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[2] Twenty-four fisherfolk responded from Grenada, however in order to reflect a regional perspective, only four responses were included in the regional analysis. These four responses were randomly chosen and represented four Fisherfolk Organizations. A summary of the Grenada fisherfolk responses is provided as Annex 1.

4. In terms of the availability of fishing materials/inputs, the most frequently identified items which fishers could not get included: bait (11), gear (9), and ice (6).

5. Nine respondents indicated that there had been a drop in fuel prices within the last three months (9).

6. Sixteen (16) respondents indicated that there had been a decrease in income during the last three months in comparison to the same time period last year. Twelve respondents (12) estimated this decrease in income to be by 50% or more. Related to this decrease in income, sixteen (16) respondents also indicated that there had been a decrease in the amount of fish sold with thirteen (13) respondents estimating that the decrease in amount of fish sold was by 50% or more.

7. In terms of changes in local fish prices during the last three months, seven (7) respondents indicated that there had been a decrease, while six (6) respondents indicated there was no change and four (4) respondents indicated an increase. Regarding fish prices for imported fish, thirteen (13) respondents indicated that there was no change.

8. In terms of how the crisis has impacted the way fish was sold, disruptions in the operations of local markets (13) and disruptions in the operations of regional and international markets (7) were the most frequently identified factors by fisherfolk.

9. In terms of where people continued to buy fish during the pandemic, the most frequently identified points of sales were fish markets (12), travelling vendors (12), road side stalls (11), supermarkets (8) and on the beach (8).

10. Disruption in transportation logistics (10), disruptions in processing (9), disruptions in air freight (7), inadequate storage facilities (6), and disruptions in sea freight (5) were the areas in the supply chain most frequently identified as being affected.

11. The main economic challenges being experienced by fisherfolk were the inability to meet living expenses (16) and reduced income (14). The majority of the fisherfolk indicated that if the current situation was to continue, they could only manage one month before facing significant economic challenges (10). Two (2) respondents indicated that they could continue for 2 months before facing significant economic challenges while three (3) respondents indicated that they could continue for 3 months.

12. In terms of support that has been offered by the private/public sector during this time, delay or reduction in utility payments (8), deferred mortgage payments (5) and social security/unemployment payments (5) were most frequently identified.

13. The support measures most frequently identified as being required from the private/public sector in order to continue contributing to food security and generating income included; micro loans (12), stimulus packages including boats and engines (9), promotion of fish consumption (9), development of online marketing options (8), and facilitation of intra-regional and international trade (5).

5.0 WAY FORWARD

The results of the surveys provide a rapid assessment of the COVID-19 impacts on the fisheries sector in fifteen (15) CRFM Member States. At the regional level, a number of actions have already been taken to support the implementation of the COVID-19 Agri-Food Risk Management Framework for the Region including:

- Formation of a COVID-19 Food Security Taskforce for the Region which includes the various regional partners and Member States;
- Assisting Member States in developing and implementing food production plans;
- Commencement of the creation of a trade platform which identifies commodities of economic and nutritional importance to Member States which can be produced and harvested in the short term (4 – 6 months);
- Engagement in the determination of infrastructure and production capacities (present and possible) and identifying the supply excesses across the Region with the aim of promoting greater intra-regional trade and commerce; and,
- Provision of a coordinating mechanism in terms of information sharing, donor support and intra-regional trading for excess supplies.

The CRFM assessment could be used to (i) support the collection of supplementary information by Member States and (ii) facilitate the implementation of the Agri-Food Risk Management Framework specifically through the Response and Recovery Phases of the risk management process as summarized below:

Response

(i) Control, contain and minimize the impact of COVID-19 and other such events on the Agri-food system;
(ii) Identify beneficiaries (farmers, fishers, agro-processers, traders, households, communities, businesses, institutions, etc.);
(iii) Implement relevant interventions based on assessed actual impacts; and,
(iv) Communicate external support needed.

Recovery

(i) Minimize disruptions and recovery time of the agri-food supply chain;
(ii) Throughout implementation of response and recovery activities, look out for secondary impacts or risk (e.g. sudden or unexpected market related shocks);
(iii) Document lessons learned (positive and negative) for use in future programming, planning and policy; and,
(iv) Incorporate 'Building Back Better' principles where applicable.

Additionally, the assessment results could be used to guide implementation of a number of priority actions for immediate response to COVID-19 (May to December 2020) and medium to long-term response to regional food and nutrition security resilience (2021 onwards). The challenges and mitigation measures identified in the impact assessment along with the priority actions by focus area along with specific responses for the fisheries sector are shown in Table 1. In moving forward, the pandemic has also provided the opportunity for strengthening and expanding the value chains which would contribute to improved resilience of the sector.

Table 1: Challenges and mitigation measures identified in the impact assessment along with the associated priority actions by focus area as set out in the CARICOM COVID-19 Action Plan and incorporation of specific responses for the fisheries sector.

Focus area	Immediate Response to COVID-19 – May to December 2020	Medium to Long – Term Response – Regional Food and Nutrition Security Resilience – 2021 Onwards	Challenges in the Fisheries Sector	Mitigation Measures Developed in Response to COVID-19 -Fisheries Sector
Policy Intervention	• Include Agriculture and Fisheries personnel in the category of essential workers **(COVID-19 only)** allowing ease of movement. • Intensify provision of income support and food grants to vulnerable populations to respond to loss of income, closure of school feeding programmes etc. • Pursue activating the "7^{th} Freedom of the air only for Cargo Services."	• Integration of Right to Food concepts and principles and good governance practices in national legal and institutional framework for food and nutrition security. • To develop a regional roadmap and funding approach to support Doing Business Environment reform. • Removal of all remaining non-tariff barriers to trade (SPS-TBT barriers).	• Not all States identify fishers as essential workers. • Majority of fisherfolk reported reduced income. • Extent of income reductions unknown at the harvest and post-harvest levels and this has gender implications. • Eligibility criteria for income support may not be inclusive for all fisherfolk. • Disruption of air freight.	• Fishers considered as essential workers in most MS. • Provision of social security and unemployment benefits.
Institutional Intervention	• Strengthening Research and Development in key agri-food products and the value chain. • Assist Member States in the implementation of National Operational Plans. • Development of Regional Guidelines for Agricultural Health and Food Safety Inspectors in Member States on Personal Protection during the Coronavirus Pandemic.	• Improve technical support and extension services using modern model of delivery to support capacity enhancement of value chain actors. • Creation of an Information System to manage data and regional agricultural statistics.	• Fisherfolk do not have adequate support in value addition and marketing aspects of the value chain. • Real time data on catches and fisheries product are not available.	

Focus area	Immediate Response to COVID-19 – May to December 2020	Medium to Long – Term Response – Regional Food and Nutrition Security Resilience – 2021 Onwards	Challenges in the Fisheries Sector	Mitigation Measures Developed in Response to COVID-19 -Fisheries Sector
Investment (Private Sector Lead)	• Deepen Private Sector engagement for production and procurement of selected agri-food products. • Strengthen local supply chains particularly linkages between local fishers and supermarket and other retail outlets to improve consumer access to fish. • Develop online portal for marketing of fish and seafood to buyers and consumers. • Promote/ facilitate substitution of locally produced fish in place of imported fish from extra-regional sources. • Develop local processing of fish to make available more of the forms of fish and seafoods that consumers want (e.g. dried salted & pickled fish with extended shelf life. • Creation of a Regional Food Import – Production Monitoring Mechanism. • Identify central storage (dry and cold) and packaging requirements and engage the Private Sector to in partnership for capacity enhancement. • Formalize Transportation and Logistics Coordination with the Private Sector and Shipping entities. • Promote regional arrangements to ship fish and seafood among CARICOM Member States using existing fishing vessels with capacity to travel among the countries and reduce dependence on formal external shipping entities.	• To facilitate the introduction of greater modern and climate smart technology into the agri-food sector. • Development of a Cross Border / Corridor Food Production and Investment System.	• Inadequate cold storage. • Disruption in transportation logistics.	
Agri-food Sector Financing	• Identification of accessible and sustainable financing for actions related to the agri-food system.	• Establishment of a regional agricultural development and emergency response Fund/Facility leveraging underutilised regional financial capital.	• The extent to which fisherfolk are benefitting from provision of micro-loans and stimulus packages is unknown.	• Provision of micro-loans and stimulus packages.

Annex 1: Grenada Fisherfolk Survey

1. Twenty-four (24) fisherfolk responded to the survey. Of these 24 fisherfolk, a total of 17 were members of the following fisherfolk organizations: Carriacou Fisherfolk (2), Grenville FAD Fishers Organization (10), Sauteurs Fishermen Cooperative (1), Gouyave Fisherman Cooperative Society Ltd. (1), and Southern Fishermen Association (3).

2. Twenty-one (21) respondents indicated that there had been a decrease in the amount of fish caught during the last three months (February, March, April) and the most frequently identified reasons for this were COVID-19 (20).

3. Twenty-three (23) respondents also indicated that there had been a decrease in the amount of time spent fishing. The two reasons given for this were the limited number of fishing days (3 days per week) and the curfew (5 am -7 pm).

4. In terms of the availability of fishing materials/inputs, the most frequently identified items which fishers could not get included: bait (17), fuel (13), ice (12) and gear (8). Regarding fuel prices, twenty-three (23) respondents indicated that there had been a drop within the last three months.

5. Twenty-three (23) respondents indicated that there had been a decrease in income during the last three months in comparison to the same time period last year. Twelve respondents (12) estimated this decrease in income to be by 50% or more. Related to this decrease in income, twenty-one (21) respondents also indicated that there had been a decrease in the amount of fish sold with sixteen (16) respondents estimating that the decrease in amount of fish sold was by 50% or more.

6. Regarding changes in local fish prices during the last three months, fourteen (14) respondents indicated that there had been a decrease, while four (4) respondents indicated there was no change and six (6) respondents indicated an increase.

7. Regarding fish prices for imported fish, seven (7) respondents indicated that there was no change, six (6) respondents were unsure, five (5) respondents indicated that there was a decrease, four (4) respondents indicated that there were no imports and one (1) respondent indicated an increase. The uncertainty regarding the prices of imported fish points to the need for further consideration and monitoring.

8. In terms of how the crisis has impacted the way fish was sold, disruptions in the operations of local markets (21) and disruptions in the operations of regional and international markets (16) were the most frequently identified factors by fisherfolk.

9. Regarding whether people were still purchasing fish from the regular points of sales, the most frequently identified were fish markets (20), road side stalls (20), travelling vendors (17), supermarkets (10) and on the beach (7).

10. Disruption in transportation logistics (17), disruptions in air freight (16), inadequate storage facilities (15), disruptions in processing (11), and disruptions in sea freight (10) were the areas in the supply chain most frequently identified as being affected.

11. The main economic challenges being experienced by fisherfolk were the inability to meet living expenses (24) and reduced income (24). The majority of the fisherfolk indicated that if the current situation was to continue, they could only manage one month before facing significant economic challenges (13). Three (3) respondents indicated that they could continue for 2 months before

facing significant economic challenges while five (5) respondents indicated that they could continue for 3 months. Three (3) respondents indicated that they were already facing significant economic challenges.

12. In terms of support that has been offered by the private/public sector during this time, delay or reduction in utility payments (19), deferred mortgage payments (11) and social security/unemployment payments (5) were most frequently identified.

13. The support measures most frequently identified as being required from the private/public sector in order to continue contributing to food security and generating income included; stimulus packages including boats and engines (16), promotion of fish consumption (16), micro loans (14), facilitation of intra-regional and international trade (12) development of online marketing options (7).

The CRFM is an inter-governmental organization whose mission is to “Promote and facilitate the responsible utilization of the region’s fisheries and other aquatic resources for the economic and social benefits of the current and future population of the region”. The CRFM consists of three bodies – the Ministerial Council, the Caribbean Fisheries Forum and the CRFM Secretariat.

CRFM members are Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago and the Turks and Caicos Islands.

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