



SUCCESS STORY

USAID Supports Fishing for Knowledge and Sustainability



As part of their certification, USAID Ber-IKAN awards each successful participant with a life jacket, a mandatory safety requirement under the government regulation. Outfitted in her USAID Ber-IKAN supplied bright orange lifejacket, Marni Jainara, a fisherwoman from Bajo Village, Sula Islands Regency, in Maluku Province, uses the official USAID Ber-IKAN 'fish' sign signaling her appreciation.

Photo: USAID Ber-IKAN / Meysella Anugrah

"These skills and safety tools are greatly needed. I would not have been able learn or purchase these given the costs I must cover for my family's daily needs. Thank you USAID for your support."

Marni Jainara, a fisherwoman from Bajo Village, Sula Islands Regency of North Maluku Province

Climate change is escalating the intensity and frequency of storms around the world while pressure on fisheries resources increases. In Indonesia, the second largest fish producing country in the world, these climate change and pressure on fisheries resources contribute to threaten the future of Indonesia's small-scale fishers who make up the largest fishing fleet in the country. New regulations require boat captains and crews to be certified by January 2024 to specific standards. However, awareness of these requirements is low and the demand for training far exceeds the availability of training opportunities.

USAID's Sustainable Fisheries Management (USAID Ber-IKAN) project is working with the Indonesia Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (MMAF) in eight provinces across Indonesia to deliver training that awards Fisher Proficiency Certificates (SKNs) to successful participants, certify they have achieved the minimum standards required under the new regulations.

Using an innovative approach, USAID Ber-IKAN training modules combine practical knowledge on fishing techniques, gear usage, and occupational safety with the introduction of nautical charts and sustainable fishing practices. At the end of the training, local fishermen are able to deploy equipment more safely, navigate their vessels using detailed government bathymetry maps, and enter into discussions on sustainable fisheries management.

Marni Jainara, a female fisher from Sula Islands Regency, emphasizes the importance of the training. "About three years ago, our boat was swept away by huge waves and we sank. We had no life jackets or safety equipment on board. We drifted in the ocean for two hours until we were eventually rescued by another fishing boat." Jainara expressed her appreciation for USAID support in enhancing the fisher's skills and safety. "For a long time I was afraid every time we went to sea. Thanks to USAID Ber-IKAN, I feel more capable to deal with emergencies when they happen and I know more about how to conserve our fish," she said.

Acquiring Fisher Proficiency Certificates provides benefits for fishers and coastal communities. Fatal accidents at sea can be reduced and fishers are more able to engage in discussions on how to sustain fish resources, on which whole communities depend. The training brings small-scale fishers, the largest fishing group in Indonesia, together with government representatives tasked for both safety and sustainability of the resource. Combining discussions on responsible fishing techniques, safety-at-sea, and resource sustainability contributes to a brighter and safer future for Indonesian coastal communities.

USAID Ber-IKAN is a five-year partnership between USAID and the Government of Indonesia to support sustainable fisheries management in Indonesia. Led by Resonance, in partnership with DT Global, the Environmental Defense Fund, Marine Change, and the MDPI Foundation, USAID Ber-IKAN brings market-based innovations and strategies that ensure sustainable utilization and conservation of Indonesia's marine fisheries resources for current and future generations.