

Diffusion Of Technology in Vulnerable Communities: An Analysis of the Role of Technology in Making  
Small-Scale Fisheries Viable

by

Muhammad Tahir bin Yousaf

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## Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

## **Abstract**

This thesis investigates the diffusion of technology in small-scale fisheries (SSFs), focusing on how technological innovations can enhance their sustainability and viability, particularly within marginalized communities. SSFs play a vital role in global food security and livelihoods, yet they face significant challenges such as limited market access, environmental degradation, and overfishing. The research explores the diffusion of key technologies, including GPS monitoring devices, smartphone applications, and real-time monitoring systems, which hold the potential to improve resource management, operational efficiency, and market connectivity in SSFs. The study is framed within theoretical models like Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations Theory, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), and Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT), offering a comprehensive analysis of how these technologies spread within vulnerable SSF communities. Case studies from Southeast Asia, Latin America, the Philippines, Timor-Leste and Africa illustrate both the successful diffusion of technologies and the challenges encountered, such as financial barriers, lack of technical capacity, cultural resistance, and inadequate institutional support. The thesis highlights that the successful diffusion of technology depends not only on the innovations themselves but also on factors like community participation, tailored training programs, access to financial resources, and supportive governance frameworks. The study concludes that while technological diffusion can transform SSFs operations by improving sustainability and resilience, overcoming socio-economic and infrastructural challenges is crucial. This research provides a nuanced understanding of technology diffusion in SSFs and offers practical insights for policymakers and stakeholders seeking to promote sustainable fisheries through technological innovation.

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I would also like to extend my heartfelt thanks to my close friend, Dr. Hassan Bashir, whose support, and guidance have helped me tremendously throughout this process.

## **Dedication**

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my family, particularly my son, Jassim, who suffers from Metachromatic Leukodystrophy.

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

Small-scale fisheries, which generate 90% of global income from secure fisheries, have long been overlooked in research and decision-making, despite their critical role in sustaining local economies, cultures, and civilizations worldwide (Pascual-Fernandez et al., 2020). These fisheries confront several obstacles, especially in European countries where they fight to survive against marine aquaculture and industrial fisheries (Percy & O'Riordan, 2020). Small-scale fishing has gained attention again recently as a responsible and sustainable source of energy and resources (Pascual-Fernandez et al., 2020). Fish that has been locally harvested is in high demand in modern societies, and there is also a growing awareness of the benefits of eating fish and fishing culture. The international and national governance structures' support or hindrance of small-scale fishermen's operations, as well as the broader public's perception of their significance, greatly influence the fishermen's incentive to work (Salmi et al., 2024).

The most important factor enabling a fair and environmentally friendly blue economy is diverse efficient governance (Evans et al., 2023). But in the 20th and early 21st century, the growth of hierarchical science-based fisheries and environmental governance systems has lemmatized the potential of small-scale fisheries (Gillette et al., 2022; Salmi, 2015). According to Salmi (2015), the operations of small-scale fisheries are incredibly varied, and they are usually adaptable to shifting conditions. Importantly, small-scale fisheries serve as food providers for society. They have a lower climate impact and promote food nutrition in times of disasters as compared to traditional food growing ways (Saiha, 2021; Silvenius et al., 2022).

The role of politicians and decision-makers for small-scale fishers also has great influence on governance opportunities. Jentoft and his colleagues quoted in 2010 about the influence of norms and pictures in the conduction of governance and the importance of interactive theory in its

impact (Kooiman, 2003; Kooiman & Bavinck, 2005). Due to their disadvantageous and susceptible position, small-scale fisheries are often disregarded by the Blue Growth/Blue Economy agendas. To better comprehend the issues surrounding small-scale fishing, the idea of "Blue Justice" has been presented as a substitute for these agendas (Jentoft & Chuenpagdee, 2022).

One way to address the afore mentioned concerns related to SSFs is the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). ICT has become a crucial tool that may improve and speed up the transmission of information and make communication easier, regardless of a person's location (Meng et al., 2013). The concept of rural development denotes a desire to enhance the standing and circumstances of rural communities by acknowledging the dual nature of the link between urban and rural areas. Researching the potential advantages of ICT is crucial to increase access to necessities for human growth including nutrition, healthcare, and literacy. Considering the potential advantages of ICT for rural development, it is important to note that, given that rural regions are frequently described as having limited access to information, information distribution is a crucial component of any program aimed at promoting rural development (Fadeyi et al., 2015). With the use of ICT, fisherman can organize their lives considerably better. They can communicate by phone, computer, and internet, detect aquatic resources using the Global Positioning System (GPS), and maintain records of sales. However, there are still barriers to ICT diffusion in rural areas, especially in small-scale fisheries: infrastructure deficiencies, insufficiency of willingness to adapt, poor or no government support, no ICT policy regulations, cost issues, people's resistance to change, and a lack of technical expertise. Educational training programs must be conducted for comprehension of ICT, to ease the lives of rural residents (Shah et al., 2013).

This study examines how ICTs can effectively diffuse in small-scale fisheries to influence global problems like environmental change, poor water sanitation management, and land fragmentation which have an immediate effect on industry.

## 1.2 Small-Scale Fisheries (SSFs)

The term "small-scale fisheries" (SSFs) typically conjures up images of tiny, antique fishing vessels outfitted with ancient equipment that need labor-intensive fishing techniques. In this platonic setting, fishermen are usually the main characters, maneuvering boats either alone or in small groups to catch fish. Individual fishing tactics are frequently assumed to adhere to one of two archetypal behavioral patterns: either naturally harmonious and ecologically and socially sustainable, or according to the economically logical and competitive fisher of fisheries bioeconomic models. Since fish is one of the most popular foods and products exchanged worldwide, it plays a major role in sustaining livelihoods, food security, and human wellness in both marine and inland capture fisheries (Béné et al., 2016; Loring et al., 2019). Around 90% of the 120 million people who rely on fishing for a living are in developing nations, and over 90% of them engage in the small-scale fishing industry. Moreover, around 40% of the global fish harvest is generated by small-scale fisheries, and nearly all of this harvest is consumed locally (FAO, Duke University, & WorldFish, 2023).

The types of gear used, the distance from shore that they fish, or the characteristics of the vessel are common ways to distinguish between small- and large-scale fisheries (Davies et al., 2018; Gibson & Sumaila, 2017). Small-scale marine fishing fleets are often made up of handmade, subsistence, local, and small-scale commercial and non-commercial fisheries. These fisheries are typically restricted to the inshore regions around their regional ports and use tiny vessels equipped with static gear for fishing (Gibson & Sumaila, 2017). The fact that industrial fleets are sometimes bolstered by substantial subsidies sets small-scale fishing fleets apart from

them as well. Thus, fish especially those from small-scale, wild-harvest fisheries represent essential food supplies for developing nations.

Fish accounts for between 32% and 70% of the animal protein consumed in African nations. Fish offers a variety of vitamins, minerals, and micronutrients, including calcium, iron, zinc, and vitamin A, in addition to protein. Hicks et al. (2019) demonstrate that the nutrients available from the nation's marine capture fisheries surpass the nutritional needs of coastal populations in nations with poor nutrient intakes. Comparably, according to another study, the Peruvian anchoveta (*Engraulis ringens*, *Engraulidae*) fishery is among the greatest in the world in terms of capture volume, yet many of the coastal communities there also experience famine and malnutrition at the same time (Gibson & Sumaila, 2017).

Given the significant nutritional contribution of fish to vulnerable populations, technology plays a crucial role in ensuring both the sustainable production of fisheries and the maximization of their nutritional value. Technology has the power to boost output, promote environmentally friendly operations, and refine fishing strategies. Small-scale fisheries can have great variation in their viability impacted by innovations including better processing methods, revolutionary fishing gear, and increased market data access. Considering its one example, technology can enhance traditional processes like salting, dehydration, and smoking leading to an increase in shelf life and dietary value of fish products (Jentfot, 2020).

Furthermore, technology has the potential to improve the security of the economy, and accessibility to resources by having connections to larger markets. The essential feature for integrating technology into these operations is to understand the various social, economic, and environmental circumstances of small-scale fishing communities. By focusing on the interaction of technology, small-scale fisheries, and local food systems, this research attempts to analyse the role of technology in the livelihoods and dietary requirements of the population at risk.

### 1.3 Technology in Small-Scale Fisheries

Technology (both rudimentary or advanced) being a fundamental element of fishing activity is essential for sustaining small-scale fisheries' feasibility and viability. Despite decades of marginalization in research and decision-making worldwide, small-scale fisheries play a significant role in local populations, cultures, and economics as primary producers, employing 90% of the people working in capture fisheries worldwide (Pascual-Fernandez et al., 2020). The incorporation of technology, presents an opportunity to tackle multiple obstacles encountered by these fisheries and considerably enhance their operational efficacy by assisting in locating, gathering, managing, transforming, and dispersing aquatic resources and their derivatives as depicted in Figure 1 given below.

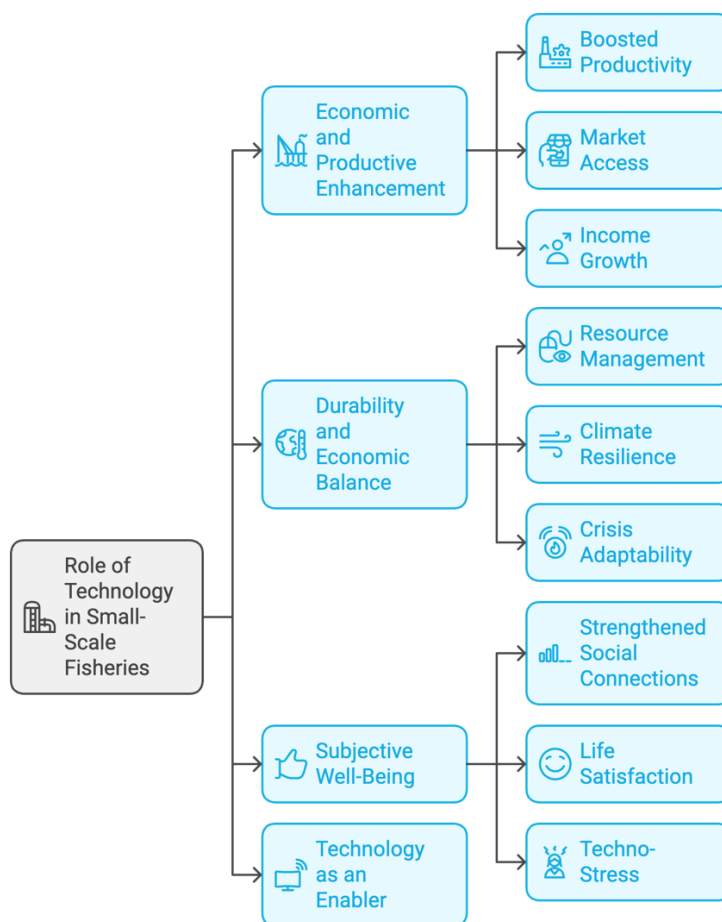


Figure 1: Role of technology in Small-Scale Fisheries

### 1.3.1 Economic and Productivity Enhancement

The use of technology, particularly information communication, can lead to higher economic and productivity results in fishing and rural communities. Furthermore, the usage of the Internet increases farm productivity, reduces poverty, provides environmental and sociocultural services, and job development, and increases rural household income and spending (Khan et al., 2022; Chaudhary & Suri, 2022). Technology, such as data gathering (in the form of hardware, software, or mobile applications) for resource management and online platforms for product sales, helps small-scale fisheries achieve improved market access and efficiency on water (Nguyen et al., 2022).

### 1.3.2 Durability and Ecological Balance

Increased monitoring, scientific assessment, and data-and science-based management of fisheries will be necessary to improve fishery performance in terms of seafood output, profitability, earnings, and biodiversity. Fortunately, improved fisheries monitoring across all types of fisheries is becoming more and more possible because of technology that uses camera-based electronic monitoring (Silvenius et al., 2022). These developments add to the numerous advantages of small-scale fisheries, including their ability to improve food availability, and economic, social, and political issues as well as lessen their influence on the climate (Salmi, 2015; Saiha, 2021). High compliance rates, records of sustainable fishing methods, and access to markets that need high standards of sustainability and openness are all made possible by technology (Evans et al., 2023).

### 1.3.3 Subjective well-being

By creating a social connection between digitization and fishing, technology has played a role in boosting possibilities and enhancing well-being. Fishermen may extend their horizons and create strong social bonds by utilizing the internet. Personal qualities include aptitudes, psychological makeup, beliefs, and culture, digital tools can increase life satisfaction and

happiness (Viklund & Forsman, 2022; Zheng & Ma, 2022). It also has an impact on reducing inequalities and mental health problems as they could impact the general welfare of fishermen (Brailovskaia & Margraf, 2020; Panova et al., 2020).

In conclusion, technology plays an important part in improving financial stability, and job security, fulfilling goals and aspirations for the well-being of small-scale fisheries; it also presents chances for improved educational levels. These important fisheries need to be developed sustainably, which means that technological innovations must be explored and integrated.

#### 1.4 Types of Technologies

Technology's incorporation into small-scale fishing has completely changed multiple aspects of fishing management and operations. Notable technology innovations include real-time monitoring systems, GPS tracking devices, and mobile applications tailored for fishermen as represented in Figure 2 below. By strengthening data collecting, resource management, and operational effectiveness, these technologies collectively improve the sustainability, efficiency, and precision of small-scale fishing.

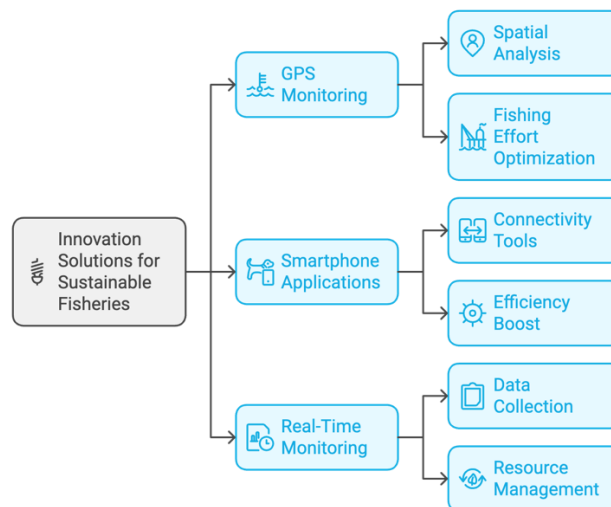


Figure 2: Innovative Solutions for Sustainable Fisheries

#### 1.4.1 GPS Monitoring Devices

Mapping fishing locations and analyzing spatial dynamics have become considerably easier with the introduction of technology, especially GPS geolocation devices, into small-scale fisheries. Although conventional techniques depended on predetermined speed limits to differentiate between angling and non-angling activities, these methods have frequently proven insufficient in a variety of situations and equipment types (Burgos et al., 2013; Navarrete Forero et al., 2017). More precise and broadly applicable frameworks for categorizing boat movements and measuring fishing effort have been made possible by recent developments in low-cost, sophisticated GPS trackers and machine learning techniques, such as random forest models. Studies like the monitoring of reef fisheries in Madagascar have shown that these technological innovations not only enhance resource management and exploitation but also support the endurance and applicability of small-scale fisheries (de Souza et al., 2016).

#### 1.4.2 Smartphone applications for fishermen

Small-scale fishing has undergone a revolution because of the widespread use of mobile applications, which offer a number of tools that improve connectivity and the fishing experience. Additionally, these apps often come preloaded with high-definition digital cameras, GPS, accelerometers, and gyroscopes, allowing for the collection of many kinds of data. Fishermen are using smartphone technology and locational services to find nearby fishing locations and their weather and water conditions, access information on everything from how to secure the best baits for different target species and keep track of their own catches and share them with other anglers. This has led to a proliferation of apps for use in sport and recreational fishing (Amrita & Paramasivan, 2016).

### 1.4.3 Real-time monitoring

Improved quality and more complete fisheries and value chain data can help refine fishery management toward sustainability and food and nutrition security goals, among other things. Small-scale fisheries in low-income nations face resource constraints, thus filling these gaps will need awareness of those constraints as well as the ability to gather, store, analyze, and act upon data. Thus, real-time monitoring is one of the techniques that can collect, transmit, analyze, and visualize data. It will overcome the data transmission issue of small-scale fisheries, by continuously delivering updated information about systems. It also facilitates the comprehensive evaluations of fishing impacts and trends, which enhances resource and data management. In the end, this strategy encourages more sustainable fishing methods and efficient management of coastal resources by bridging important knowledge gaps and improving understanding of marine ecosystems (Tasseti et al., 2022).

## 1.5 Theoretical Frameworks

### 1.5.1 Roger's Diffusion of Innovations Theory

The diffusion of innovation theory developed by Everett Rogers explains the mechanisms by which innovations proliferate across a population. New concepts, goods, services, or behaviors are all considered innovative. Diffusion is described by Rogers as "the process by which an innovation is communicated among the members of a social system through specific channels over time." As stated in this definition, the four main factors that contribute to the diffusion of innovations are invention, communication channels, time, and social structure. One example of the diffusion of technological innovation is the internet, which grew from a relatively concentrated few users in the 1970s to a vast number of users in the general population by the early 2000s. Rogers' theory sheds light on the diverse ways that different types of fishermen utilize new technologies, such as GPS tracking, real-time monitoring (e.g. pesKAAS), and mobile applications, in the framework of small-scale fisheries. Researchers and industry

professionals can create customized interventions to hasten technology adoption, mitigate the impacts of climate change, and enhance resource management in small-scale fisheries by utilizing Rogers' theory (Sahin, 2006).

### 1.5.2 Technology Acceptance Model

In 1989, Davis and colleagues introduced the technology acceptance model (TAM) as a tool to forecast the probability of a new technology being adopted by a group or organization. TAM is one of the main models used to anticipate how people will behave when faced with new technology, whether they choose to accept it or reject it. It has its roots in the psychology theories of reasoned action and planned behavior. The foundation of TAM is the idea that a person's own views, attitudes, and intentions may explain why they acquire and use technology. TAM evaluates the impact of perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness. TAM's main goal was to shed light on the mechanisms that support technology adoption to forecast technological behavior and offer a theoretical justification for its effective use. TAM can offer important insights into how fishermen view and use new technologies, like smartphone applications, electronic tracking devices, robotics, and real remote sensing in small-scale fisheries. The Technology acceptability Model (TAM) is a reliable, effective, and economical framework for estimating user acceptability of technology integration across the fisheries industry. This eventually supports the more efficient usage of innovative technologies in the fisheries sectors (Sari et al., 2022).

### 1.5.3 Innovation Diffusion Theory

Bryce Ryan and Neal Gross first developed the Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT), which examines how innovations move both inside and between communities. The DOI hypothesis has mostly concentrated on how technologies are regarded and how creative the companies that employ them are. According to Rogers (2003), an innovation's adoption is influenced by a number of factors, including its relative advantage over currently available

technologies, compatibility with organizational work processes and knowledge, complexity of implementation, trialability, and observability of the innovation's development within and across competitors. The pace of innovation adoption is predicted by individuals' views of these five features. Fishing technology innovation is a critical issue in developing and middle-income nations, IDT can throw light on how distinct types of fishermen embrace new technology including gear development or other fishing methods in the context of small-scale fisheries, which can increase the mortality rate of fish and thus enhance fishing rate (Cheng, 2014).

## 1.6 Significance of the Study

The global south, specifically for food safety and the income of millions of people, depends on small-scale fisheries through the creation of foreign exchange obtained via global trade. However, small-scale fisheries confront many problems including overfishing, lack of governance, wildlife attacks, and restricted technical capacity. Creative solutions need to be developed to deal with these problems and improve the livelihood and employment opportunities of small-scale fisheries. Assessment of the social, economic, and ecological aspects along with the success and failure factors of technology implementation in small-scale fisheries is the main objective of this research. The introduction of effective strategies for supporting small-scale fisheries by investigating the variables influencing technology diffusion/adoption, evaluating the effects of technology on the livelihoods of fishermen, as well as challenges faced by fishermen, and evaluating the potential of technology to address important concerns is mainly facilitated by this project.

## 1.7 Research Aim and Objectives

The aim is to gather an extensive account of small-scale fleets spanning various regions, fisheries, and species, including the variety and particular circumstances in which SSFs function by employing diffused technologies, to illustrate the ecological and social sustainability of this

fishing sector. This project involves the theoretical analysis of various case studies to evaluate the technology adoption, the effect of adoption on the livelihoods of fishermen, and the identification of enabling variables and impediments. The main objectives of this research are as follows:

1. To assess the adoption capacity of technologies by fishermen.
2. To analyze the several case studies by the theoretical framework.
3. To assess the success and failure factors of theories on the utilization of technology.
4. To determine the challenges encountered by small-scale fisheries.

### 1.8 Research Questions

To analyze the factors influencing the adoption of technological innovations in small-scale fisheries, this study aims to address the following research questions:

**RQ1:** How does the introduction of novel technologies in small-scale fishing relate to perceived benefits and usefulness?

**RQ2:** What role does compatibility with conventional methods play in the successful integration of emerging innovations in small-scale fishing?

**RQ3:** What effect do assistance and training programs have on the acceptance and continued utilization of new technologies in small-scale fishing operations?

**RQ4:** Which technical advancements are the biggest barriers for small-scale fisheries to embrace and how may these be addressed?

### 1.9 Scope of the Study

The scope of this study is to inspect how new technology introductions impact longevity and means of subsistence for small-scale fishing groups. The center of the study will be understanding the factors that influence fishermen's adoption of new technologies, the challenges they face in doing so, and the potential benefits of technology in terms of enhanced market accessibility, conservation of resources, and fishing methods. The specific areas of evaluation

will include the assessing efficacy and suitability of various technologies like GPS, smartphones, and real-time monitoring, determining the societal, interpersonal, and financial factors affecting the rate of technology adoption among fishermen, and evaluating the effects of technology on dietary needs, earnings, and revenues of fishermen. Furthermore, this research will include the analysis of the impact of laws and policies on the spread of technology along with an in-depth study of case studies to investigate the success and failure factors of technology experiences.

### 1.10 Structure of Thesis

The structure of this thesis is as described here with the first part being an introduction of the project describing the background, importance of technology in small-scale fisheries and its types, the significance of the study, aims, objectives, theoretical framework, and scope of the project. Reviewing the body of research on technology and small-scale fishing, the second chapter sets the foundation. Detailed discussion on conceptual frameworks, community-specific conditions, and the functions of intermediary organizations are included as it explores different methods of technology diffusion. Along with discussing the background and difficulties small-scale fisheries confront, the chapter also looks at how technology might improve sustainability and what obstacles need to be removed before it can be widely used. By thoroughly reviewing theoretical viewpoints, including Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations, the Technology Acceptance Model, and Innovation Diffusion Theory, the positive and negative impacts are evaluated.

Furthermore, an overview of the technologies that are prevalent in small-scale fisheries is given in Chapter 3, discussing their effects on social dimensions, sustainability, governance, policy-making, and economic viability. In addition to discussing the obstacles and future directions of technology adoption, this chapter includes case studies that demonstrate effective technology implementations. Chapter 4 demonstrates the impact of various theories mentioned above on case studies of small-scale fisheries in various territories. A range of geographic areas

and technological advancements, providing a varied viewpoint on the difficulties and achievements are being covered by these case studies. The goal of conducting this research is to find obstacles, and enablers that can guide future practices and laws. The knowledge acquired from this analysis will be beneficial for further technological advancements and the improvement of the livelihoods of fishermen.

As chapter 3 involves the scrutinization of case studies and discussion of theories, chapter 4 provides the results of this theoretical analysis, which involves the examination of advantageous and disadvantageous elements involved in the integration of technologies. It examines the implications of these findings for practitioners, and academics and emphasizes the significance of technological dissemination in enhancing the workability of small-scale fishing in vulnerable areas. This chapter offers recommendations for future study subjects and real-world applications. This project aims to provide an outline for future research and interventions by analyzing the lessons learned and the obstacles faced, to facilitate the technology usage.

## 2 Enhancing the Viability of Small-Scale Fisheries: The Role of Technology and Innovation

The issue of spread of technology in any society depends on a multitude of factors which include socio-economic, cultural, and institutional/infrastructural level of development. In case of marginalized communities this becomes even more complex because these communities are, by definition, at the fringe of the society. That is, that communities are traditionally not the focus of economic development at the level of the state. Communities where small-scale fisheries (SSF) is the primary economic activity represent an ideal venue for studying the peculiarities of technology diffusion in marginalized settings. Fish are available in nature and humans mostly live on land. To harvest fish as a source of food, by definition, requires involvement of a variety of technologies. From the most rudimentary to highly sophisticated, fishing simply cannot be accomplished without resorting to some sort of technology, e.g., gears, net, spears, boats, communication techniques, market study tools, etc. Indeed, the potential technological advancements are of great interest in sustainable development for such communities. However, various obstacles, such as value expectations, willingness to participate, and readiness to include technological innovations, still need to be overcome. In this context, this chapter examines published scholarship on issues surrounding technology adoption in SSFs. In particular, this review focuses on both homegrown<sup>1</sup> and adopted technologies. In addition to presenting a comprehensive overview of technology use in SSFs, this review also aims to identify gaps in existing research to find opportunities to make SSFs more viable and less vulnerable.

A unique characteristic of SSF communities is that they represent a technology-scarce environment that is simultaneously dependent on technology. This inevitably leads to innovation

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<sup>1</sup> There are many local names for improvisation. For example, in South Asia (India and Pakistan) it is often referred to as *Jugaad*. See <https://www.bbc.com/culture/article/20171213-jugaad-an-untranslatable-word-for-winging-it>

in technology identification and adoption. These communities' challenges can exist at various stages of fishing operations. This is evident in areas with inadequate infrastructure and insufficient financial resources, compounded by a need for more access to skilled technicians who could offer support in technology centers. Moreover, the interplay of sociocultural dynamics and unequal power relations can influence technology adoption and effective use, thereby determining its impact on local livelihoods and ecosystems (Jentoft et al., 2007).

Under-resourced communities face enormous obstacles at technology adoption levels due to a lack of infrastructure, poor financial resources, and a deficiency of trained personnel. For example, in areas far away and where electricity and internet connectivity are limited, the absorption of digital technologies into the community, like mobile phones or computers, is a difficult task. Furthermore, community, cultural, and power relations and imbalances contribute mainly to the uptake and application of technology, affecting the ability to effectively address livelihood and ecosystem issues at the local level. Indeed, in several small-scale fishing communities, cultural norms or social hierarchies could become a barrier to undergoing new fishing methods and implementing new fisheries management tools. In addition to the above, community residents who cannot afford proper training or help to exploit the available technology will resort to developing inequalities. Consequently, it is necessary to actively deal with sociocultural and structural factors to guarantee equitable opportunities for technology in under-resourced communities.

In the case of small-scale fisheries, tech transfer is also a two-edged sword and possesses both potentials and drawbacks. Even though devices or applications such as positioning devices, mobile applications, sonar boost fishing practices, resource management, and market access, exist, their uptake can be hindered by constraints within the practical economic sector. On the other hand, the nature of technology assimilation by the SSF communities also gives rise to

injustice in the benefit and sharing of technology between the elderly and active participants, thereby making equitable and inclusive approaches used in sustainability management even more significant (Cinner et al., 2016).

The literature review method used involves a combination of theoretical analysis and contextual application. This review synthesizes existing literature on technology diffusion theories, specifically focusing on marginalized communities and small-scale fisheries (SSFs). It employs Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations theory, Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), and Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT) as core conceptual frameworks to analyze how technology adoption can enhance SSF viability. The review critically evaluates both the benefits and barriers associated with technology diffusion in SSF communities, emphasizing socio-economic, cultural, and institutional factors that affect technology acceptance and usage. Furthermore, it integrates case studies and examples from research on intermediary organizations, participatory approaches, and multilateral partnerships to demonstrate real-world applications and challenges. Through this multi-theoretical approach, the review not only highlights the complexities of technology diffusion but also points out gaps in empirical research and proposes future directions for studying technology adoption in SSF. This method allows for a nuanced exploration of how theoretical models intersect with the practical realities of marginalized communities, especially those dependent on SSF.

## 2.1 Approaches to Technology Diffusion

Technology diffusion in marginalized communities acts as a composite phenomenon comprising a multilayer of innovation, socio-economic determinants, and institutional implementations. In this part, the process of technology diffusion among marginalized groups of society is explained in detail, and the literature and theories adopted are elucidated.

Technology diffusion in marginalized communities is a complicated and multifaceted process in which factors such as technical change, socioeconomic factors, and implementation mechanisms play a crucial role. Therefore, the technological spread among the oppressed social categories demands research to explore the speediness of technology-transferring processes within society. They could do this by using current relevant literature and diffusion of innovation theory constructed by Rogers, for example, to look in detail into the mechanism of diffusion of technologies to these communities.

In particular, studies have been done on how technological capabilities are influenced by the accessibility of resources, cultural norms, and institution-wide support among marginalized sectors of populations. Along with this, multilateral donors, international organizations, and the emergence of specialized partnership models that drive technology transfer and application have been key topics in the literature. Consequently, a complete investigation into the social diffusion of technology in disadvantaged communities must be a multipronged approach that involves a number of additional contextual factors and theoretical perspectives.

## 2.2 Understanding the Diffusion of Technology in Marginalized Communities: Institutional and Social Perspectives

Technology diffusion, or the spread of technology, is a phenomenon that all nations face due to the recognized innovation of technology within society over time (Rogers, 2003). This includes the acquisition, transformation, and employment of new technologies, with multi-domain influence impacting the social, economic, and environmental complexities. The most crucial concept in the analysis of technology diffusion is the conceptual frameworks like Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations theory. This Theory provides one approach to understanding the underlying factors that engineer the urgency of adopting and disseminating new technologies (Rogers, 2003).

Marginalized communities' technology diffusion inevitably bears special peculiarities due to economic and social gaps, underdeveloped infrastructure, and limitations in the institutions. Shaikh (2017) underlines the complex circumstances behind the hurdles to access resources, including financial support and technical skills. In addition, social and cultural barriers, which are the traditional ways and perceptions of technology, influence the adoption of technology, either through acceptance or use (Mansuri and Rao, 2004).

In the field of technology diffusion, particularly among marginalized communities, various theoretical models were used at the time beyond Rogers' Theory of diffusion of innovations; these theories were used to widen and enrich the spectrum of comprehension of this complex topic. Therefore, institutional Theory asserts that institutional arrangements and existing social structures are the primary things to be considered when the technology is adopted (DiMaggio and Powell, 2004). This approach shifts the focus to reliance on factors such as social power imbalance, norms, and regulations that shape the way in which technology development happens among the less privileged.

Further, the Social Network Theory posits that the interplay between social interactions and communication networks is instrumental in spreading technological advancements. Granovetter's work (1973) suggests that the likelihood of new technologies permeating among individuals in communities, particularly those marginalized or lacking access to educational resources promoting the free dissemination of information, is significant. Additionally, the Capability Approach developed by Sen (1993) examines how technology diffusion can enhance individual performance and augment the wealth of capabilities within underprivileged communities. This theoretical framework addresses individuals' diverse capabilities and opportunities, advocating that these elements be considered critically in the context of technology adoption and diffusion.

### 2.2.1 Notice of Specific Conditions and Demands within Community Borders and Area

Therefore, it is important to appreciate local particulars as well as specific requirements of a community to influence technological change in underprivileged communities. Mansuri and Rao (2004) state that any technology-based initiatives aimed at empowering the marginalized are bound to fail unless they are adequately contextualized, and the prevailing sociocultural dynamics are taken into account. It requires an inclusive program with the residents being involved as partners in designing, implementing, and evaluating the technical dimension. Similarly, Ortiz (2016) considers the significance of involving all the local key stake holders, such as leaders of the community, representatives of traditional authorities, and civil society organizations, in the development of technology implementation strategies. Local knowledge and grassroots perspectives could be emphasized as being the most effective approach for inclusion and enhancement, which would make the technological interventions more pertinent and sustainable for this specific group. A such, participative technology deployment schemes give communities a chance to actively participate in the process of innovation and own the innovations, which directly or indirectly makes them capable of taking control of their lives.

This raises the questions about the differences in diffusion of technology in global north vs the global south. Technology diffusion then by definition is context dependent. The context here is economical social, political development.

### 2.2.2 Positive role Played by Intermediate Organizations and Partnerships

Intermediary organizations and collaborative partnerships play an essential role in technology diffusion in marginalized regions by bridging the gap between developers and end-users, often geographically disparate. Atiso, Folitse, and Manteaw (2021) emphasize that the function of these intermediaries, which include non-governmental organizations (NGOs), research bodies, and development agencies, is crucial in devising and implementing technology transfer and

adoption initiatives. These entities serve as pivotal conduits for knowledge transfer, providing expertise, building capacity, and facilitating access to financial resources. For example, augmenting the thesis by discussing the influential roles of systematized entities such as Oxfam and scholarly institutes like the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) could underscore the importance of intermediaries in propagating technology (Stezano, 2018). Such organizations are instrumental in carrying out technology transfer and dissemination programs that educate and empower diverse underprivileged populations across the globe. Additionally, incorporating insights from counterarguments or alternative perspectives, such as those presented by Saddique et al. (2022) and Hall et al. (2006), lend additional credibility and depth to the discourse surrounding intermediary organizations and technology diffusion.

Inter-connections among various actors like government agencies, private actors, and community-based entities are key to ensuring collaborative technology dissemination. Collaboration between different stakeholders, which include key players with different proficiencies and capabilities, will help to address the challenging issues of technology integration that disadvantaged communities face. Collaboration and knowledge-sharing bilateral cooperation increase the impact of applied science and sustainability of interventions, hence promoting positive socio-economic and environmental results.

### 2.3 Challenges and Opportunities

The proliferation of technology within marginalized communities (such as SSFs) faces numerous challenges that hinder its subsequent adoption and utilization. These difficulties are mainly attributable to resource constraints, which result in limited access to financial support and the technical expertise necessary for adopting and integrating new technologies (Gupta et al., 2022). Additionally, sociocultural barriers, such as ingrained traditional values and customs, may impede innovation and acceptance of novel technologies, fostering resistance to change.

Furthermore, governance-related issues complicate the process due to inadequate recognition of policies and institutional frameworks. Such oversight fails to facilitate the fair distribution of resources and opportunities, exacerbating existing disparities within these communities (Gupta et al., 2022).

Moreover, the social dynamics within households and the cultural narratives surrounding gender and power play a significant role in determining access to and control over technological resources, thereby affecting the empowerment of vulnerable groups. For example, gender disparities may lead to women being excluded from the management of technology-centered decision-making processes, which in turn limits their ability to benefit from technological innovations. Despite these obstacles, technology possesses the potential to significantly improve the well-being of marginalized communities and contribute to balanced and equitable development. It is imperative to recognize the transformative impact of technology, particularly in providing access to essential services such as education and healthcare and addressing environmental challenges.

The transformative potential of technology in enabling deprived communities to overcome barriers to growth and development is profound. Through various technological innovations, these communities can enhance their resilience against predictable and unpredictable disasters, ultimately improving their living standards. This transformation is not solely attributed to the accessibility of mobile technology, which has revolutionized financial services, healthcare information, and educational resources in remote areas, but also to the broader implications of informed decision-making that technology facilitates. Furthermore, advancements in renewable energy technologies present opportunities for communities to substitute fossil fuels, contributing to pollution reduction and sustainable development. Mobile technology has been a game-changer in enhancing financial inclusion for underserved

populations. Mobile money platforms, such as M-Pesa in Kenya, have enabled individuals without access to traditional banking services to conduct financial transactions, save money, and even secure loans. According to a study by Jack and Suri, the introduction of mobile money services has significantly increased the financial autonomy of low-income individuals, allowing them to manage their finances more effectively and engage in previously inaccessible economic activities (Baruch-Mordo et al. (2019). This financial empowerment is crucial for fostering entrepreneurship and stimulating local economies, as individuals can invest in small businesses or agricultural ventures, creating jobs and improving their socio-economic status.

In addition to financial services, mobile technology has also transformed healthcare access in deprived communities. Mobile health (mHealth) applications provide critical health information, facilitate telemedicine consultations, and enable appointment scheduling, which is particularly beneficial in areas with limited healthcare infrastructure. A study by Free et al. highlights that mHealth interventions have effectively improved health outcomes by increasing access to healthcare services and enhancing patient engagement (Weber, 2023). For instance, in rural areas of India, mobile health initiatives have successfully reduced maternal and infant mortality rates by providing timely health information and support to expectant mothers (Shi, 2017). This access to healthcare not only improves individual health outcomes but also contributes to the overall well-being of the community.

Education is another domain where technology has made significant strides in empowering deprived communities. Online learning platforms and mobile educational applications have democratized access to educational resources, enabling individuals in remote areas to pursue learning opportunities that were previously unavailable. According to a report by the World Bank, the use of mobile technology in education has been shown to enhance learning outcomes and increase enrollment rates, particularly among marginalized groups (Sembiring &

Krisna, 2019). For example, initiatives like the Khan Academy and Coursera have provided free educational content that individuals can access at their convenience, thereby fostering lifelong learning and skill development. Moreover, technology plays a crucial role in enhancing community resilience against disasters. Integrating mobile technology into disaster management strategies allows for real-time communication and information dissemination during emergencies. For instance, mobile applications can provide alerts about impending natural disasters, such as floods or hurricanes, enabling communities to prepare and respond effectively (Sadiq, 2023). Liu et al. emphasize that access to digital financial services can promote local green technologies, which are essential for sustainable development and disaster resilience (Mutaqi et al., 2023). By leveraging technology for disaster preparedness, communities can mitigate the impacts of adverse events and recover more swiftly.

The role of renewable energy technologies in empowering deprived communities cannot be overstated. As highlighted by Khan (2017), the development of renewable energy sources provides an opportunity for communities to transition away from fossil fuels, thereby reducing pollution and enhancing energy security (Barone et al., 2018). Renewable energy technologies, such as solar panels and wind turbines, can be deployed in off-grid areas, providing reliable electricity to households and businesses. A study by Sadiq demonstrates that the continuous evolution of renewable energy technologies has led to more cost-effective solutions for off-grid communities, enabling them to access clean energy and improve their quality of life (Amer, 2020). This shift not only addresses energy poverty but also contributes to environmental sustainability by reducing reliance on fossil fuels. Furthermore, the successful implementation of renewable energy projects often involves community engagement and capacity building. As noted by Mutaqi et al., the active involvement of local communities, government, and civil society organizations is essential for raising awareness and promoting the adoption of renewable

energy practices (Zhong et al., 2018). By fostering a sense of ownership and participation, communities are more likely to embrace renewable energy technologies, leading to sustainable development outcomes. For instance, community-led solar projects in rural areas of Africa have demonstrated that local ownership and management can enhance the sustainability and effectiveness of renewable energy initiatives (Rubner et al., 2019).

Technology, thus, serves as a powerful enabler for deprived communities to overcome barriers to growth and development. Through mobile technology, communities gain access to financial services, healthcare information, and educational resources, empowering them to make informed decisions that enhance their socio-economic status. Additionally, advancements in renewable energy technologies provide opportunities for communities to transition away from fossil fuels, contributing to pollution reduction and sustainable development. As these communities continue to leverage technology, the potential for transformative change remains significant, paving the way for a more equitable and sustainable future.

To summarize, diffusion of technology in the marginalized regions of a society might be problematic, but the advantages of such technology diffusion for the empowerment of the population in developing areas are undeniable. Persistently overcoming obstacles like resource scarcity, indigenous customs, and governance deficiencies may maximize the value of technology in densifying prospects and enhancing the lives of groups who are shunned. Promotion of cooperation, providing gender parity, and addressing the needs of certain areas by designing interventions that fit technology to the socio-economic contexts of the community are a must in every attempt to bring the net benefits of the use of technology to marginalized communities.

Thus, information technology's diffusion within the marginated categories is a contemporary and complicated process that has many socio-economical, cultural, and institutional factors

(Table 1). Technological solutions that can be replicated should be considered, especially when addressing a nuanced awareness of local contexts, community needs, and existing socio-economic structures. One way to achieve this is by adopting participatory approaches that create platforms for meaningful communication between the technology developers and people at the grassroots in the communities where the interventions will be applied. This will also help leverage partnerships with traditional intermediaries that mainly serve the poor in the communities.

*Table 1: Challenges and Opportunities in the Diffusion of Technology within Marginalized Communities*

<b>Section</b>	<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>
<b>Resource Constraints</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Limited access to financial resources for adopting and integrating new technologies.</li> <li>- Lack of technical expertise to effectively use new technologies.</li> <li>- Poor infrastructure, especially in remote and underprivileged areas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Technological innovations (e.g., mobile technology, renewable energy solutions) can enhance livelihoods by overcoming financial and technical challenges.</li> <li>- Mobile money platforms enable financial autonomy and economic participation, fostering entrepreneurship and community resilience.</li> </ul>
<b>Sociocultural Barriers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Resistance to technological adoption due to traditional values and cultural customs.</li> <li>- Gender disparities limiting women's access to and control over technological resources, affecting decision-making.</li> <li>- Inequitable distribution of technological benefits, leading to social divides.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mobile technology has the potential to democratize access to education, financial services, and healthcare, particularly in marginalized communities.</li> <li>- Participatory approaches to technology adoption can address sociocultural dynamics and promote inclusive development.</li> <li>- Encouraging gender equality through technology adoption enhances empowerment and socio-economic outcomes.</li> </ul>
<b>Governance and Policy Issues</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inadequate policies and institutional frameworks prevent equitable resource distribution and impede technology diffusion.</li> <li>- Governance oversights can exacerbate existing inequalities and hinder technology-driven progress.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Renewable energy technologies present opportunities to build sustainable infrastructure while reducing reliance on fossil fuels.</li> <li>- Government policies that support equitable technology adoption can promote balanced development and better livelihoods.</li> </ul>

Section	Challenges	Opportunities
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Active involvement of civil society and local governance can improve adoption and management of renewable technologies.</li> </ul>
<b>Social Dynamics and Power</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Power imbalances and social dynamics, including household gender roles, influence technology adoption and decision-making.</li> <li>- Vulnerable groups, particularly women, may face exclusion from benefiting from technological innovations due to cultural narratives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Community-based technology solutions promote collective ownership and decision-making, enhancing resilience and self-reliance.</li> <li>- Technology deployment can transform decision-making processes in communities, encouraging more inclusive participation.</li> <li>- Empowering marginalized groups through tech-based initiatives fosters social equity and resilience.</li> </ul>
<b>Technological Impact</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Technology can exacerbate issues such as overfishing, environmental degradation, and the loss of traditional livelihoods if not managed sustainably.</li> <li>- Disparities in access to technological advancements can lead to social and economic inequality.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Technologies such as renewable energy solutions (solar panels, wind turbines) and mobile applications can transform and enhance the resilience of SSFs.</li> <li>- Mobile healthcare and educational technologies improve access to critical services in marginalized communities.</li> <li>- Technological innovation plays a crucial role in disaster preparedness and climate adaptation, particularly for SSF communities.</li> </ul>
<b>Environmental Considerations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Technology mismanagement may contribute to environmental issues like overfishing and pollution.</li> <li>- Climate change, habitat degradation, and pollution further complicate sustainability efforts in SSFs.</li> <li>- New technologies may strain marine ecosystems without proper regulation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Renewable energy technologies help reduce pollution and foster sustainable development.</li> <li>- Technology can enhance the ecological balance by improving resource management practices.</li> <li>- Renewable energy projects led by local communities contribute to long-term sustainability, empowering communities to preserve ecosystems while improving livelihoods.</li> </ul>

## 2.4 Small Scale Fisheries: Context and Challenges

SSFs are a critical element of global fisheries, most of them from developing countries, as they are the basis of many lives, contribute to food security, and preserve the culture ((FAO,

Duke University, & WorldFish, 2023). SSF offers several promises to livelihoods but is also saddled with a range of challenges that threaten their sustainability and resiliency. In the next part, I offer a detailed analysis concerning the environment in which SSF operates, where there is the greatest difficulty in reaching objectives and future vision in adapting to the new technology to face these issues of operation.

#### 2.4.1 Context of Small-Scale Fisheries

Perhaps in the 1950s, the term 'small-scale 'could have been used neatly to categorize a discrete set of fisheries: those run by kin or community concerns regarded as traditional or heritage, fishing in waters adjacent to beaches or inland, operated from shores or small vessels and involved in processes with very minimal mechanization as well as very short (local) supply chains. On the contrary, this definition no longer exists. SSFs in the Global South form a great part of the economy, and they have taken quite a leap in terms of development and diversification. This is not about discrete borders but a continuum in which places are linked through market integration, human movement, and learning technology, as well as by socio-economic context (Mills et al., 2011).

The research by Nayak and Berkes (2022) establishes a critical foundation for understanding the challenges faced by SSFs and the urgent need for strategies to address them. SSFs are integral to coastal economies yet are vulnerable due to unsustainable practices and overfishing, which threaten SSF traditions, food security, and livelihoods in coastal communities. Nayak and Berkes (2022) suggest that technology diffusion and adoption in SSFs could exacerbate sustainability challenges if not managed carefully. Therefore, it is crucial to investigate how technology is adopted within SSFs and its subsequent impact on ecological balance. Such research is fundamental for designing initiatives that foster sustainability in these fisheries. A comprehensive analysis of Nayak and Berkes' work will contribute to a holistic understanding of

the movements of SSFs and inform the development of policies that promote sustainable livelihoods in coastal regions.

SSFs encounter many challenges that can compromise their sustainability and reliability. Among these issues is the critical concern of escalating data and applying unsustainable techniques, leading to overfishing, and risking marine ecosystems. The overexploitation of fisheries resources threatens to disrupt the balance of marine ecological systems, leading to a reduction in biodiversity and the degradation of marine habitats. The ramifications of these practices are far-reaching, not only imperiling generations of established SSF methodologies but also precipitating food scarcity and the erosion of livelihoods for communities along coastlines dependent on these marine resources. This underscores the urgent need for integrating sustainable practices within SSFs to preserve both the environmental integrity of marine ecosystems and the socioeconomic well-being of coastal populations.

#### 2.4.2 Challenges Facing Small-Scale Fisheries

Environmental degradation and pollution not only impact small-scale fisheries (SSFs) but also pose significant risks to coastal and non-coastal protected areas, undermining conservation efforts Jackson et al. (2001). Overfishing, driven by increasing demand and unsustainable practices, accelerates the depletion of fish stocks, leading to ecological imbalances within ecosystems (Liu & Su, 2015). These practices not only threaten the operational framework of SSFs but also jeopardize food security and the survival of coastal communities dependent on marine environments (Wernberg et al., 2016). Climate change exacerbates these challenges, further increasing vulnerability and instability in these regions (Hughes et al., 2017). Addressing overfishing, habitat degradation, pollution, and the effects of climate change is crucial to sustain marine ecosystems and the human communities reliant on them (Bellwood et al., 2011)..

The perils of habitat degradation, pollution, and the impacts of climate change further exacerbate the plight of sustainable SSFs. These environmental stressors compound the vulnerabilities faced by SSFs, altering fish migratory patterns, spawning ground dynamics, and diminishing overall productivity (FAO, 2018). The situation's complexity is intensified by the indirect effects of climate change, such as ocean acidification and sea-level rise, directly threatening the already limited resources. These changes jeopardize not only food security but also the livelihoods of SSFs and their dependent communities, placing an urgent demand on addressing these multifaceted environmental challenges to ensure the resilience and sustainability of small-scale fisheries.

The constraints faced by SSFs extend into the economic sphere, particularly in market access and resource availability, which are as crucial to their operations as the lymphatic system is to human health (FAO, 2018). The absence of adequate infrastructure—such as reliable transportation networks, storage facilities, and market access—severely limits SSF groups' participation in the value chain and their ability to reach profitable markets. This deficiency restricts economic opportunities and stifles innovation and the development of alternative and more sustainable livelihoods.

Moreover, the lack of financial resources and limited technical services hampers innovation and investment in eco-friendly practices within the SSF sector. Economic barriers prevent fishers from obtaining credit and the necessary investments to adopt the latest environmentally sustainable technologies and fishing methods (Kleiber et al., 2014). Additionally, technical challenges and inadequate extension services are significant obstacles that prevent adopting improved practices and hinder the adaptability of SSFs to the evolving challenges posed by climate change. Addressing these barriers is essential to fostering resilience and promoting sustainable development within these communities.

In response to these intertwined environmental and economic challenges, the integration of technology within SSFs offers a promising avenue for enhancing resilience and sustainability. Technological advancements, such as data-driven resource management systems, remote sensing, and digital tools for market access, can play a significant role in addressing these challenges. These innovations improve monitoring and promote sustainable fishing practices while providing fishers with better access to profitable markets, thereby tackling both environmental and economic vulnerabilities. However, the successful adoption of such technologies requires overcoming existing barriers such as insufficient financial resources, limited infrastructure, and inadequate technical support. If these constraints are not addressed, the introduction of technology could exacerbate inequalities within SSF communities, further marginalizing those without access to resources. Therefore, technology must be introduced in a manner that is context-sensitive, inclusive, and aligned with the socio-economic realities of SSFs to ensure that it fosters sustainability, equity, and resilience in the face of ongoing environmental and economic challenges.

#### 2.4.3 The Role of Digital Technology in Enhancing Sustainability, Gender Equity, and Economic Resilience in SSFs

Digital technology, which consists of many dimensions such as GPS trackers and fish finders and platforms like mobile applications and remote sensing technologies, can be seen as avenues through which fishing practices can be improved, resources can be well managed, and accessing the market can be enhanced (Crona and Bodin, 2010). The study of technology adoption in SSF can be one way to improve fishing operations.

Numerous studies have attested that GPS tracking devices and fish finders help fishers in positioning, increase catch rates, and reduce fuel consumption, thus increasing their economic lives (Crona and Bodin, 2010). Additionally, mobile applications have been constructed to

provide fishers with real-time information on weather conditions, market prices, and regulatory updates for better decision-making and adaptation. In the meantime, such applications have recourse to technological aspects that aim at enhancing the livelihood of the fishers.

In addition, technological intervention opens up the possibility of fighting gender disparities in many SSF communities by giving women alternative livelihood outlets, such as fish processing and marketing, which are not arduous but more conducive to their participation (Villasante et al., 2022). It is no trivial task that women play throughout the value chain of small-scale fisheries, particularly in fish processing and marketing, even though their more visible roles can be found in the fishery product value chain. Considering the extensive division of labor between the male and female members of the fishing community that has been passed down from generation to generation (men do the fishing and women do the processing), society as a whole is influenced to see women and men in this role being supported in initiatives for the community-driven development (Lentisco and Lee, 2015).

Corona and Bodin (2010) highlighted the potential benefits and drawbacks of incorporating GPS trackers, mobile applications, and fish finders in SSFs. These technologies have increased catch rates and reduced fuel consumption, contributing to efficiency and sustainability. However, evaluating the pros and cons of technology adoption within SSFs is crucial against the backdrop of diverse contexts and the varying economic conditions of fishing communities (Crona & Bodin, 2010). Recently, technological interventions have been tailored to bridge gaps in economic opportunities, providing women involved in producing and selling fish in brackish water areas with alternative livelihood options (Syddall & Fisher, 2024). This approach underscores the need for nuanced applications of technology that consider the unique needs and challenges of different SSF communities.

The utilization of technology in SSFs can have diverse impacts on community sustainability. While technology has the potential to empower women, improve economic outcomes, and enhance community resilience by facilitating access to markets and resource management tools, its effects are not consistent He et al. (2018). In certain instances, technology may unintentionally result in negative consequences, such as heightened pollution or exacerbated social disparities, attributed to differential access and utilization of technological tools (Mehrabadi et al., 2016). This contrast raises concerns regarding the adequacy of current theoretical frameworks in addressing the intricate social and economic requirements of SSFs.

A comprehensive analysis of these issues is imperative to formulate strategies that align technology deployment with the objective of promoting fair and sustainable SSF communities. Grasping the potential positive and negative repercussions of technology on SSFs is vital for devising approaches that mitigate risks and optimize benefits for these communities. By taking into account the multifaceted implications of technology deployment in SSFs, policymakers and stakeholders can collaborate to ensure that technological interventions positively contribute to the social, economic, and environmental well-being of these communities.

#### 2.4.4 Challenges of Technology Adoption in SSF

While introducing and diffusing technology in SSFs brings numerous benefits, they are accompanied by a suite of challenges (Table 2). Insufficient capital, lack of technical expertise, and inadequate support services form a formidable barrier that mainly affects marginalized fishers and those distant from urban centers, preventing them from harnessing new technologies (Kleiber et al., 2014). Furthermore, concerns about the unfair distribution of profits from technological projects underscore the potential for these innovations to exacerbate existing inequalities within SSF communities (Cinner et al., 2016).

The complexities of sustainability in the context of technological adoption in SSFs also warrant scrutiny. While technological advances can enhance productivity and yields, there is a concurrent risk of overexploitation and environmental degradation if these technologies are mismanaged or used without restraint. Therefore, integrating technology in SSFs is a double-edged sword, offering considerable benefits but posing significant risks. The scarcity of funding, technical knowledge, and limited access to service providers are acute challenges, particularly for impoverished fishers in isolated areas (Kleiber et al., 2014). Moreover, the distribution of benefits from technological advancements may unfairly tilt toward those already at an advantage, further entrenching disparities within the SSF communities (Cinner et al., 2016).

The sustainability of technology in SSFs demands a complex and careful approach. While innovations can potentially increase productivity, the danger of resource overexploitation and habitat degradation remains if not appropriately monitored and managed. Ensuring sustainable and efficient SSFs requires a balance between technological advancement and conservation practices, as SSFs' long-term viability is at stake. This highlights the need for comprehensive socio-economic and environmental evaluations of technological adoptions and future management systems to mitigate negative impacts and ensure equitable access to the benefits of technology.

*Table 2: Technology diffusion - a double edged sword*

<b>Technology</b>	<b>Function</b>	<b>Impact on SSFs</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
<b>GPS Trackers &amp; Fish Finders</b>	Help in positioning, increasing catch rates, reducing fuel consumption	Enhances economic efficiency and resource management	High initial cost and uneven access to technology
<b>Mobile Applications</b>	Provide real-time info on weather, market prices, regulations	Improves decision-making and adaptation strategies	Lack of infrastructure, training, and digital literacy
<b>Remote Sensing Technologies</b>	Improve monitoring and sustainable resource management	Increases resilience through improved monitoring and sustainability	Uneven distribution of benefits, potential for overexploitation

## 2.5 Theories of Technology Diffusion

### 2.5.1 Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations Theory

Everett Roger's seminal Diffusion of Innovations Theory (DIT) provides a framework for understanding how change is adopted across various sectors. Theory provides a valuable framework for understanding how technology can be effectively diffused in marginalized communities, such as those involved in small-scale fisheries (SSFs). By applying the principles and mechanism (highlighted below and in Figure 3) of this theory, stakeholders can identify strategies to enhance the adoption of innovative practices and technologies that can improve the livelihoods and resilience of these communities. The following discussion outlines how the theory can inform technology diffusion in SSFs, focusing on its mechanisms and implications.

#### 2.5.1.1 *Mechanisms of Technology Diffusion in Small-Scale Fisheries per Rogers' DIT*

##### 1. Understanding Innovation Attributes:

Rogers identifies five key attributes of innovations that influence their adoption: relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability. For small-scale fisheries, it is crucial to ensure that any new technology or practice demonstrates a clear relative advantage over existing methods. For instance, introducing more efficient fishing gear or sustainable aquaculture practices can enhance productivity and sustainability, making them attractive to fishers. Additionally, these innovations must be compatible with local cultural practices and existing knowledge systems to facilitate acceptance Singhal & Quinlan (2008).

##### 2. Adopter Categories:

The classification of adopters into *innovators*, *early adopters*, *early majority*, *late majority*, and *laggards* can help identify key stakeholders within small-scale fishing communities. Early adopters, often respected community members, can play a pivotal

role in influencing others to embrace new technologies. By targeting these individuals for training and support, organizations can create a ripple effect that encourages broader adoption within the community (Zhu, 2024).

3. Communication Channels:

Effective communication is essential for the diffusion of innovations. In marginalized communities, interpersonal communication channels, such as community meetings, peer networks, and local leaders, can be more effective than mass media. Engaging local fishers in discussions about new technologies and practices can help build trust and facilitate knowledge sharing. For example, workshops or demonstrations showcasing the benefits of new fishing techniques can encourage participation and adoption (Gianelli, 2024).

4. The Innovation-Decision Process:

Understanding the stages of the innovation-decision process—knowledge, persuasion, decision, implementation, and confirmation—can guide the development of targeted interventions. For instance, providing educational resources and hands-on training during the knowledge stage can help fishers understand the benefits of new technologies. Continuous support during the implementation stage, such as access to technical assistance and resources, can further enhance the likelihood of successful adoption (Guo-zhong, 2017).

5. Social System and Context:

The social structure and cultural context of small-scale fishing communities significantly influence technology diffusion. Factors such as social norms, values, and existing power dynamics can either facilitate or hinder the adoption of innovations. Engaging with community leaders and stakeholders to understand these dynamics is crucial for

designing interventions that resonate with the community's needs and aspirations (Lagos, 2008).

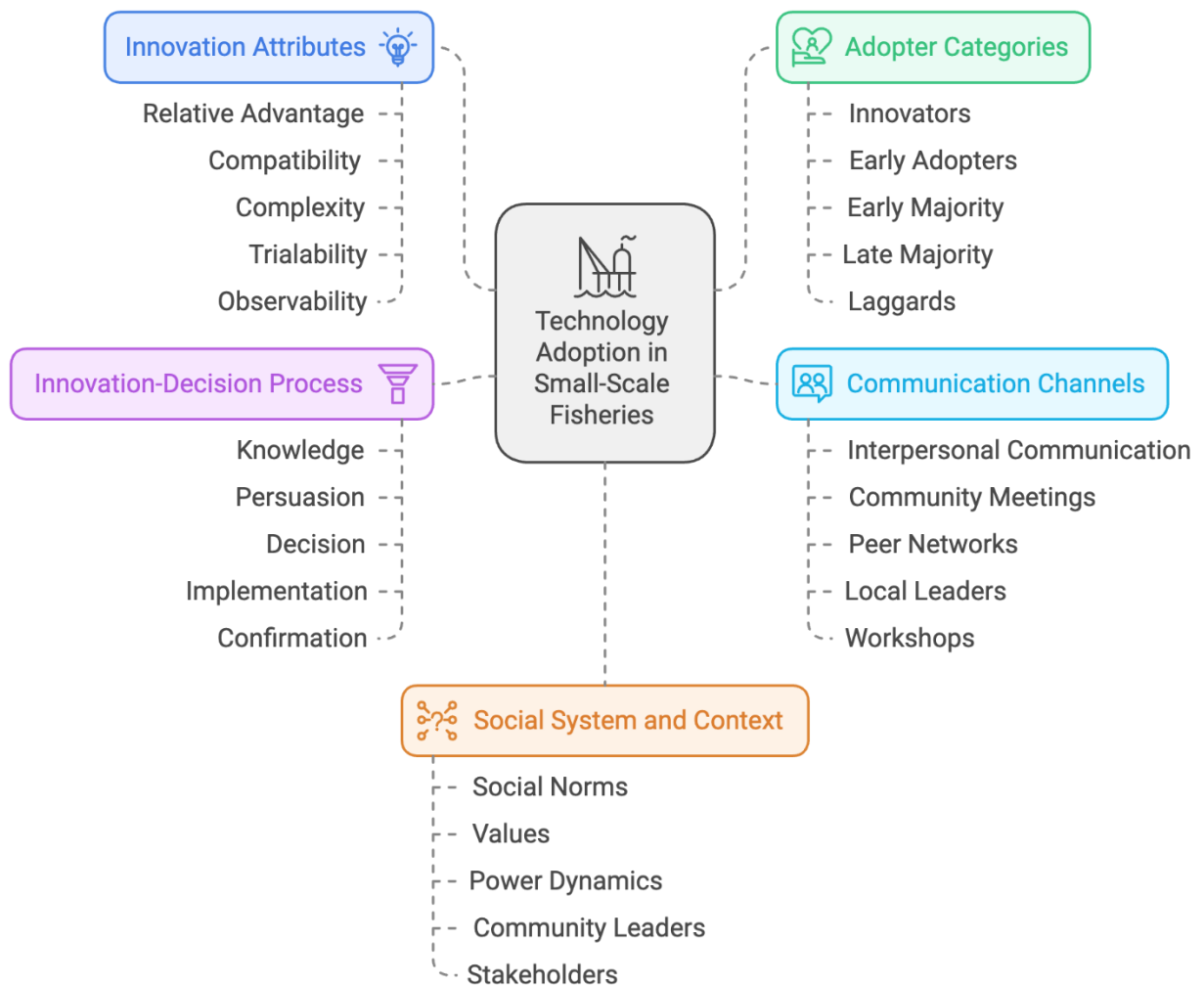


Figure 3: Roger's Diffusion of Innovative Technology Theory

This Theory elucidates the mechanisms by which new technologies are accepted, disseminated and diffused, offering insights into the intricacies of technological spread within fields as diverse as agriculture, health, education, and communication. As such, it has enhanced our understanding of the adoption process of technology and the pathways through which different technological developments are propagated and embraced within societies (Sahin, 2006).

DIT has been instrumental in informing the adoption of innovations among small farmers in developing countries. This theoretical framework has served as a linchpin for research efforts, particularly in rural areas, where its models have been applied to assess farmers' adoption of various crop types. The identification of the five adopter categories as outlined by Rogers—innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards, enable researchers to dissect the intricacies behind farmers' decisions to embrace new technologies. By understanding each group's distinct characteristics and motivations, researchers and policymakers can tailor interventions to accelerate technology adoption rates. Such targeted strategies are vital for improving agricultural productivity, ensuring food security, and fostering economic development in these communities. This theory is significant as it captures the multifaceted nature of the technology adoption phenomenon. As such it can caution technology developers and implementers to be conscious of the context in which they are developing technology adoption plans.

Rogers' theory further elucidates the role of media and communication channels in diffusing innovations throughout society (Communication Theory, 2013). It underscores that individuals are more likely to rapidly adopt new technologies when they receive information from trusted sources within their social networks. This is particularly significant because it highlights the linkage between communication strategies and technology adoption.

However, DIT has not been without its critics, particularly concerning its treatment of socioeconomic and cultural factors in the diffusion process. Critics have argued that the Theory offers a reductive view of adoption, focusing excessively on individual-level factors and failing to account for the broader economic and social contexts that influence adoption decisions (Bass et al., 1994). In SSFs, for instance, the actual dynamics of technology adoption can be best understood by involving local communities who can articulate their needs regarding resource

access, policy support, and cultural frameworks. Here, technology adoption takes on meanings that linear diffusion models cannot fully capture. The models within Rogers' Theory have been critiqued for needing to accurately reflect the nuanced adoption dynamics that occur in diverse environments and under conditions of rapid change.

## 2.6 Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

Davis's Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) is a widely recognized framework that seeks to explain and predict user acceptance of technology. Developed by Fred Davis in 1986, the model has been instrumental in understanding how individuals come to accept and use new technologies, particularly in the context of information systems. TAM posits that two primary factors influence an individual's intention to use a technology: perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEOU). Key components and mechanism of the model are highlighted below (Figure 4):

### 2.6.1.1 Key Components of the Technology Acceptance Model

1. Perceived Usefulness (PU):

This refers to the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system or technology will enhance their job performance. If users perceive that a technology will significantly improve their efficiency or effectiveness, they are more likely to adopt it.

2. Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU):

This aspect reflects the degree to which a person believes that using a technology will be free from effort. If a technology is perceived as easy to use, it is more likely to be accepted. Davis argues that PEOU can influence PU; if a technology is easy to use, users may find it more useful.

3. Behavioral Intention to Use:

According to TAM, the intention to use a technology is determined by PU and PEOU. A stronger belief in the usefulness and ease of use of a technology leads to a higher likelihood of adoption.

4. Actual System Use:

The ultimate goal of the model is to predict actual usage behavior based on the intention to use. If users intend to use a technology, it is expected that they will engage with it in practice.

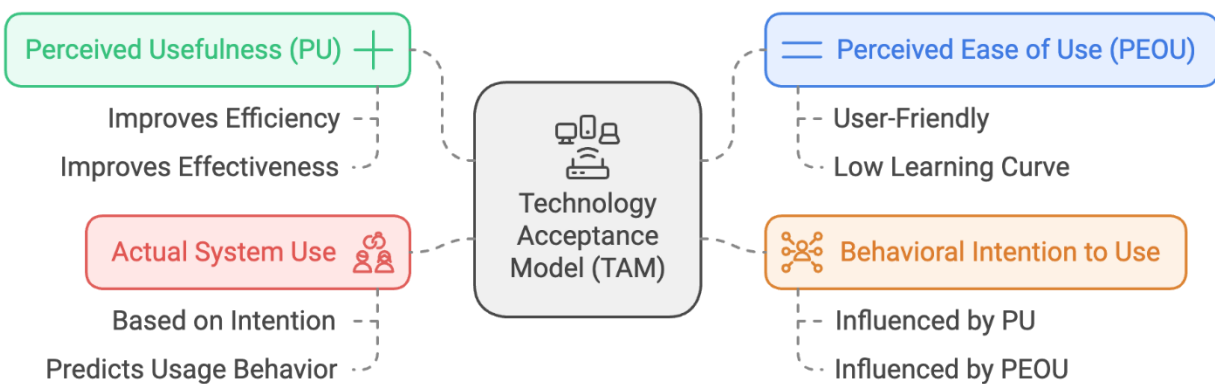


Figure 4: Technology Acceptance Model - Key Components

2.6.1.2 Mechanisms of the Technology Acceptance Model

1. Causal Relationships:

TAM establishes causal relationships between the constructs. Specifically, it posits that PEOU influences PU, which in turn affects the behavioral intention to use the technology. This causal chain helps to clarify how perceptions shape user acceptance.

2. Feedback Loops:

The model acknowledges that actual usage can also influence perceptions of usefulness and ease of use over time. As users gain experience with a technology, their perceptions may change, creating a feedback loop that can enhance or diminish future usage intentions.

### 3. External Variables:

While the original TAM focused on PU and PEOU, later extensions of the model (such as TAM2 and TAM3) incorporate external variables that can influence these perceptions, including social influence, facilitating conditions, and individual differences.

TAM has been widely used in various fields to study technology adoption and user behavior. For example, in the tourism industry, TAM has been applied to understand factors affecting the acceptance of tourism applications (Dawson et al., 2017). In the healthcare sector, TAM has been utilized to assess user acceptance of automated hand decontamination systems (Sari et al., 2022). Additionally, in the context of e-commerce, TAM has been employed to investigate the adoption of online-to-offline platforms (Fahiraningrum & Richard, 2020).

Moreover, TAM has been extended and adapted in different studies. Researchers have incorporated social pressure and social benefits into the model to explore users' acceptance of social networking sites (Sutoyo & Pradipta, 2023). Furthermore, an extended version of TAM has been used to examine factors influencing online shopping intention in developing countries (Widuri, 2022). It (TAM) has also been extensively utilized in empirical research to examine technology adoption in urban settings, focusing on services like mobile banking. Studies using TAM seek to understand consumer perspectives on mobile banking applications' benefits and ease of use. They explore how an individual's perceptions of the usefulness and usability of financial transactions on mobile platforms influence their decision to adopt such services. Researchers have identified critical motivators for acceptance by assessing user attitudes and perceptions. These insights have been instrumental in devising strategies to enhance the adoption rates of mobile banking, revealing how perceived utility and ease of operation can drive the widespread uptake of new financial technologies.

On the other hand, one of the major distinguishing features of TAM is that it is easy to use and understand. The model suggests a simple title framework for the incorporation of the technology adoption decisions into the individuals (Ajibade, 2018). For this reason, TAM focuses on the acceptance of technology by considering the beneficial factors as well as the level of difficulties involved during the usage.

In addition, TAM puts the users' reactions and their responses to using the product as determinants of acceptance. TAM stresses a phenomenon of a part-subjective nature of technology acceptance and hence underscores that the impact of newly designed and implemented technologies should be seen by a variety of parties. This user-centric methodology enables the creation of solutions in the right direction to ensure that users' concerns are rectified and the technology adoption process goes smoothly.

Despite the widespread application of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), it has encountered critiques for its narrow focus, particularly its limited consideration of the complex factors influencing technology adoption. Opoku and Kwesi (2020) point out that TAM's emphasis on perceived usefulness and ease of use might oversimplify the decision-making process. This simplification becomes particularly problematic in environments where users have significant economic and cultural differences. TAM may only partially capture the multifaceted nature of technology acceptance by focusing mainly on these two factors. Socio-economic status, cultural beliefs, and institutional constraints are critical in shaping technology adoption patterns. However, these often need to be adequately integrated into TAM, leading to potential gaps in understanding how and why individuals and communities accept new technologies.

Additionally, the TAM's heavy dependence on user perceptions introduces the possibility of biases and inconsistencies in predicting adoption behaviors. Users may have preconceived notions of technology's usability and usefulness that do not necessarily match their actual

experiences upon usage. This disparity suggests that real-world adoption behaviors might deviate from initial acceptance attitudes. Furthermore, TAM does not account for other significant factors, such as social influence or organizational facilitators, which can also be pivotal in shaping technology adoption decisions. These omissions suggest a more comprehensive model incorporating various determinants impacting technology acceptance and usage.

## 2.7 Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT)

The Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT), established by Bryce Ryan and Neal Gross in the 1940s, provides another framework for examining how innovations are diffused through social systems. The theory was initially developed through a study on the diffusion of hybrid corn among Iowa farmers, and it has since evolved to encompass a wide range of innovations across various fields. Similar to Roger's DIT, IDT focuses on the process through which new ideas, products, or technologies are communicated and accepted by individuals or groups. It posits that the adoption of innovations follows a predictable pattern involving different categories of adopters, including innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards (Cheng, 2014) (Figure 5).

### 2.7.1.1 Key Components of the Innovation Diffusion Theory

1. **Innovation Attributes**: IDT emphasizes that certain characteristics of innovations influence their rate of adoption. These attributes include:
  - a. *Relative Advantage*: The degree to which an innovation is perceived as better than the idea it replaces. Innovations that offer clear benefits are more likely to be adopted.
  - b. *Compatibility*: The extent to which an innovation aligns with the existing values, past experiences, and needs of potential adopters. Innovations that are compatible with the social norms of a community are more readily accepted.

- c. *Complexity*: The perceived difficulty of understanding and using the innovation. Simpler innovations are more likely to be adopted.
  - d. *Trialability*: The ability to experiment with the innovation on a limited basis before full-scale adoption. Innovations that can be tested are more likely to be embraced.
  - e. *Observability*: The extent to which the results of the innovation are visible to others. Innovations that demonstrate clear and observable benefits are more likely to be adopted.
2. Adopter Categories: Ryan and Gross introduced the concept of categorizing adopters based on their willingness to adopt innovations. These categories include:
- a. *Innovators*: The first individuals to adopt an innovation, often characterized by risk-taking behavior.
  - b. *Early Adopters*: Respected individuals who play a key role in influencing others; they are often well-connected within the social system.
  - c. *Early Majority*: Individuals who adopt innovations just before the average member of the social system; they are more deliberate in their decision-making.
  - d. *Late Majority*: Skeptical individuals who adopt innovations only after the majority has accepted them; they often require peer pressure to adopt.
  - e. *Laggards*: The last individuals to adopt an innovation, often resistant to change and focused on tradition.
3. The Diffusion Process: IDT outlines a process through which innovations spread through a social system. This process involves:
- a. *Communication Channels*: The means by which information about the innovation is transmitted among individuals. Interpersonal communication is often more effective than mass media in influencing adoption.

- b. Social System: The social structure of a community influences the diffusion of innovations. Factors such as norms, values, and the degree of interconnectedness among members of the social system can either facilitate or hinder the adoption process.

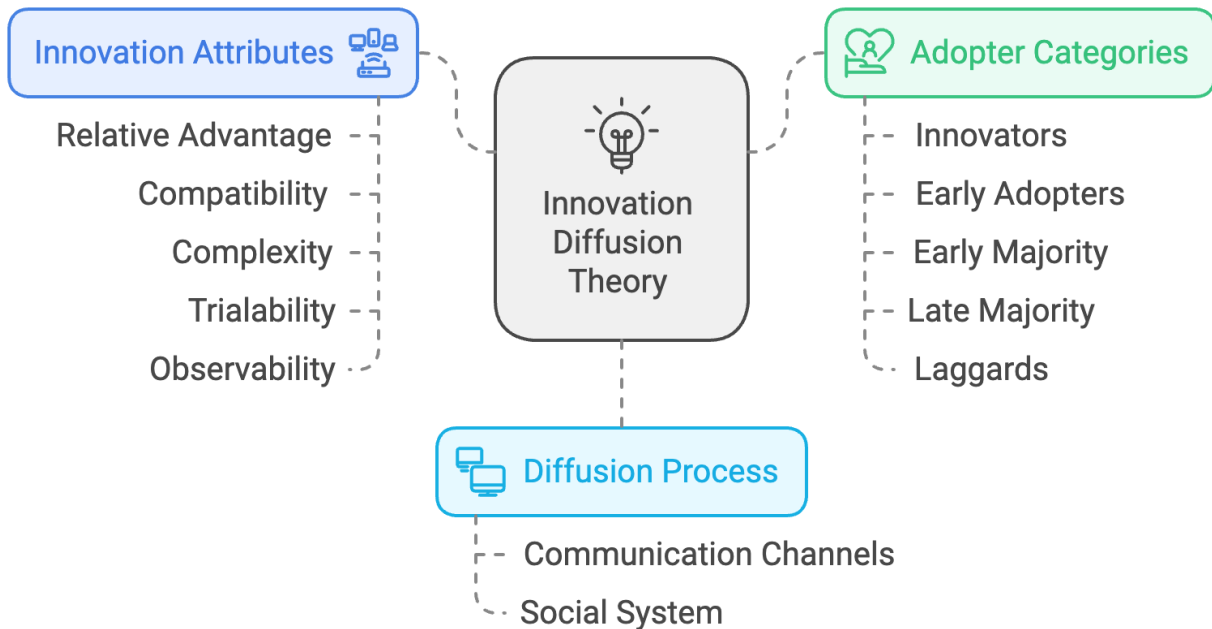


Figure 5: Key components and mechanism of IDT

The Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT) has been crucial in various research disciplines, particularly in addressing disparities in the adoption of renewable energy technologies in underserved regions. Researchers have utilized IDT to investigate how information about sustainable technologies, such as solar panels and biogas systems, is disseminated within local networks in rural communities. By analyzing communication patterns, researchers can identify key individuals who act as opinion leaders and determine the most effective communication channels. This understanding allows for the development of strategies to accelerate the adoption of these technologies, aiming to improve access to renewable energy and address technological inequalities in remote areas (Eck et al., 2011).

IDT emphasizes the importance of social networks in information dissemination and advocates for a participatory approach where peer influence and societal norms are central to the decision-making process. The theory recognizes the pivotal role of individuals with influence, who hold strong opinions, in disseminating information and driving change within their social circles. IDT categorizes adopters based on their readiness to embrace innovations, including innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards, highlighting the diffusion mechanisms over time. These adopter categories enable researchers to tailor strategies to meet the unique needs and concerns of each group, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of diffusion efforts (Miller & Mobarak, 2015).

Research has demonstrated that opinion leaders play a critical role in innovation diffusion, significantly impacting the adoption of new technologies, such as renewable energy innovations. The presence of opinion leaders influences the adoption curve, leading to a rapid increase in adoption as more members of the social system follow suit. Identifying and engaging opinion leaders early in the diffusion process can help accelerate overall adoption within the population (Azarova et al., 2019; Anderson et al., 2017; Burt, 1999).

Furthermore, integrating IDT with other theoretical models, such as the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), has been beneficial in understanding and predicting the adoption of renewable energy technologies. By considering factors like social acceptance, individual attitudes, and behavioral intentions, researchers have been able to develop comprehensive frameworks to promote the adoption of sustainable practices in various industries and regions (Reyes-Mercado & Rajagopal, 2017; Chen et al., 2016; Schuster et al., 2006).

In conclusion, the Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT) serves as a foundational framework for studying the adoption of innovations, particularly in the context of renewable energy

technologies. By leveraging IDT and understanding the role of opinion leaders, social networks, and adopter categories, researchers can design targeted strategies to facilitate the diffusion of sustainable technologies, ultimately contributing to the advancement of renewable energy adoption and addressing technological disparities in underserved communities.

However, IDT also comes with its own limitations as well. It often overlooks structural challenges to technology adoption, such as socioeconomic barriers and institutional contexts. Critical framework obstacles like capital acquisition, infrastructural deficits, and institutional limitations can impede innovation adoption, especially in marginalized or under-resourced communities. Moreover, IDT may need to fully account for the influence of cultural norms and values on adoption behaviors. Cultural impact plays a significant role in shaping individuals' attitudes and receptivity to new technologies, influencing the pace at which they adopt innovations. By focusing primarily on communication as the driving force behind adoption, IDT risks an oversimplified view that may not capture the complex interplay of factors influencing behavior toward adoption.

To sum up, while IDT contributes significantly to understanding the social processes behind innovation diffusion, it should be integrated with other perspectives considering structural and cultural elements for a comprehensive view of technology adoption. Approaches that merge multiple theoretical frameworks provide a richer, more nuanced understanding of how innovations spread across different contexts, leading to more effective and inclusive diffusion strategies.

#### *2.7.1.2 Overview of Technology Adoption Theories: Contexts, Applications, and Critical Evaluation*

The following table (Table 3) provides a summary/overview of the Technology adoption theories, the context in which each of the theories are used, their application, advantages and disadvantages.

Table 3: Overview of Technology Adoption Theories: Contexts, Applications, and Critical Evaluation

<b>Theory</b>	<b>Context</b>	<b>Application</b>	<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations	Various sectors	Agriculture, health, and communication.	Comprehensive framework emphasizes communication channels and social networks.	Overlooks socioeconomic and cultural factors and focuses on individual attributes and communication channels.
Technology Acceptance Model	Consumer technology adoption	Urban areas	A simple model focusing on perceived usefulness and ease of use emphasizes user perceptions and attitudes.	May oversimplify the decision-making process and may not capture the complexities of adoption in diverse communities.
Innovation Diffusion Theory	Communication process	Rural communities, renewable energy	Highlights the importance of interpersonal communication and social networks and emphasizes the role of opinion leaders and change agents.	May overlook structural barriers to adoption and underestimate the influence of cultural norms and values.

### 2.7.2 Developing a Multidimensional Framework for Technology Adoption: Integrating Theoretical Perspectives to Address Complexities in Marginalized Communities

The integration of various academic interpretations in studying technology adoption among marginalized groups not only offers several advantages but also involves a deliberate synthesis of distinct theoretical frameworks, each contributing unique insights to form a cohesive and comprehensive approach. This integrated theory combines the strengths of multiple models, such as Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), and the

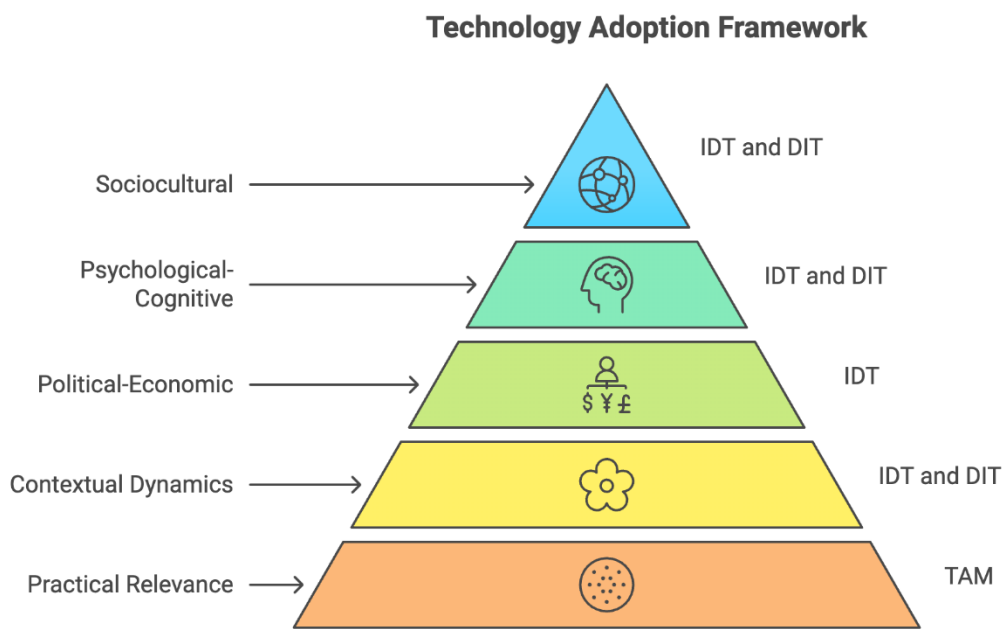
Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT), to construct a multifaceted perspective that can better address the complexities of technology adoption processes.

#### *2.7.2.1 Nature of the Integration*

The integration process involves weaving together theories that focus on different aspects of technology adoption. Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations theory, which emphasizes communication channels and social networks, is combined with TAM's focus on individual perceptions, such as perceived usefulness and ease of use. By also incorporating insights from IDT, which highlights the role of opinion leaders and social networks, the integrated model becomes more holistic. This synthesis enables researchers to account for a broader spectrum of socio-economic, cultural, and psychological factors that influence technology adoption among marginalized communities.

This approach moves beyond the limitations of using any single theory. For instance, while Rogers' framework may overlook socioeconomic and cultural factors by focusing mainly on communication processes, TAM's perception-oriented model may oversimplify the decision-making process. By combining these, the integrated theory can address these gaps, providing a more nuanced understanding of the various dynamics that influence the adoption process (Figure 6).

The integrated concept emerges as a comprehensive model that includes multiple layers of analysis.



*Figure 6: Technology Adoption – An Integrated Framework*

#### 1. Practical Relevance Layer:

This layer serves as the foundation of the integrated framework for technology adoption, emphasizing the necessity of aligning technological interventions with the tangible, everyday needs of marginalized communities. This layer underscores that the success of technology adoption is not solely determined by theoretical frameworks or systemic interventions but by the extent to which a technology is perceived as practically useful and directly beneficial to the target community. It recognizes that technologies must address real-world challenges faced by individuals and communities, such as improving livelihoods, enhancing productivity, and solving pressing issues in ways that are both accessible and sustainable.

Drawing from insights on adoption barriers and user behavior, the Practical Relevance Layer prioritizes the creation of technologies that are intuitive, user-friendly, and easily integrated into the community's existing practices. It acknowledges that technology adoption is most effective when innovations are co-developed with input from end-users, ensuring their design reflects the

local context, cultural sensitivities, and specific needs of the community. For instance, in small-scale fisheries, tools like GPS trackers or mobile apps for market access can directly enhance efficiency and economic outcomes, making them more appealing and impactful for users. Moreover, this layer stresses the importance of fostering community ownership and trust by engaging stakeholders in the co-creation of technological solutions. Such participatory approaches not only build trust but also promote a sense of ownership, which is critical for long-term adoption and sustained use. Accessibility also forms a central theme of this layer, focusing on overcoming barriers such as cost, technical complexity, or limited infrastructure that might otherwise hinder equitable technology adoption. Localized training, financial assistance, and support services play a pivotal role in ensuring technologies are not only relevant but also implementable in the community's unique setting.

## 2. Contextual Dynamics Layer:

The Contextual Dynamics Layer is essential for adapting technology adoption strategies to the specific needs and realities of different marginalized groups. This layer highlights that communities are not homogeneous; they possess diverse socio-economic conditions, cultural practices, and communication patterns that significantly influence how technology is perceived and adopted. The model incorporates the Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT) to understand the role of social networks and local leaders, and Rogers' focus on communication processes and intermediary organizations, to design context-specific interventions that align closely with the community's unique characteristics and environment.

This layer emphasizes that effective technology diffusion must consider the existing social fabric and power dynamics within communities. By leveraging local social networks and influential leaders, the model tailors strategies to fit the community's structure, ensuring that technology interventions are not only accessible but also trusted and supported by community

members. For instance, utilizing opinion leaders, who are respected figures within the community, can serve as a powerful means to advocate for new technologies. When these leaders endorse and demonstrate the benefits of an innovation, they create a ripple effect, making it easier for other community members to accept and adopt the technology.

Additionally, this layer stresses the importance of intermediary organizations, such as NGOs, community groups, or cooperatives, in implementing and supporting these context-specific strategies. These organizations are often more familiar with the local dynamics and possess the necessary trust and credibility within the community. They play a crucial role in bridging the gap between external technology providers and local communities, ensuring that communication and training efforts are culturally appropriate and aligned with the community's needs. By adapting strategies to fit the distinct contexts of each community, the model facilitates more inclusive and effective technology diffusion that accounts for the complexities and variances within marginalized populations.

### 3. Political-Economic Layer:

The Political-Economic Layer integrates various theoretical perspectives to examine the structural and economic factors influencing technology access in marginalized communities. This layer emphasizes that technology adoption is not only a result of individual choices or social influences but also significantly shaped by broader systemic factors such as policy frameworks, economic conditions, and institutional structures. It recognizes that access to technology is often unevenly distributed due to these factors, which can create or reinforce existing inequalities within communities. By focusing on these dimensions, this layer provides a comprehensive understanding of how technology diffusion is embedded within the larger socio-economic and political landscape.

This layer highlights the importance of policy interventions in addressing systemic barriers that hinder technology access. For instance, gender disparities often prevent women from engaging fully with technology due to socio-cultural norms, limited mobility, or restricted access to financial resources. Policy measures designed to promote gender inclusivity—such as providing targeted financial aid, creating women-led technology programs, or offering childcare services during training sessions—can help overcome these barriers. Similarly, financial constraints may inhibit individuals or communities from investing in new technologies. Policies that facilitate microloans, subsidies, or tax incentives can alleviate such economic challenges, making technology more accessible and affordable for marginalized groups.

#### 4. Psychological-Cognitive Layer:

The Psychological-Cognitive Layer integrates insights from the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) to explore how individual perceptions and attitudes influence technology adoption. This layer focuses on two key aspects: perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness. These perceptions are critical determinants in the decision-making process, as they shape whether individuals see the technology as beneficial and manageable within their everyday lives. By examining these cognitive factors, the model allows researchers to understand how individuals assess new technologies based on their perceived compatibility with existing habits and skills, and how these perceptions can drive or inhibit the adoption process.

This layer extends beyond the individual level to consider the broader social and economic contexts that shape these perceptions. For example, peer influences within a community or workplace can significantly impact how a person perceives a technology's value and ease of use. When peers adopt and positively discuss a technology, it can create a supportive environment that encourages others to follow suit. Additionally, the availability of resources, such as training programs, financial assistance, or access to infrastructure, plays a critical role. Individuals who

have access to these resources may find it easier to overcome initial hesitations or barriers, thereby perceiving the technology as more accessible and beneficial.

By incorporating these broader contexts, the Psychological-Cognitive Layer highlights the interaction between individual attitudes and external factors. It suggests that interventions designed to promote technology adoption must address not only the technical features of the innovation but also the social and economic conditions that influence perceptions. For instance, providing hands-on training, peer support networks, and financial incentives can enhance perceived ease of use and usefulness, making the technology more appealing. This comprehensive approach ensures that technology diffusion strategies are not only focused on cognitive acceptance but are also embedded within the real-world social and economic landscapes of the target communities.

By integrating these insights, the Political-Economic Layer underscores the need for comprehensive, context-specific policy strategies that address the structural determinants of technology access. It suggests that interventions should not merely focus on increasing the availability of technology but also create an enabling environment where individuals have the necessary economic and institutional support to adopt and use technology effectively. This holistic approach ensures that technology diffusion is sustainable and equitable, providing marginalized communities with the tools and opportunities they need to engage meaningfully with new innovations.

##### 5. Sociocultural Layer:

The Sociocultural Layer is a crucial aspect of the integrated framework for understanding technology adoption among marginalized communities. Drawing from Rogers' Diffusion of

Innovations and the Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT), this layer focuses on the impact of social networks, cultural values, and opinion leaders. It recognizes that technology adoption is heavily influenced by the social relationships and cultural norms within a community. Social networks facilitate the spread of information, while cultural values determine the community's openness to new technologies. Understanding these elements is essential for designing culturally relevant interventions that align with traditional practices and beliefs, making new technologies more acceptable.

Opinion leaders play a central role within this layer as influential figures who can shape community perceptions and attitudes toward technology adoption. These leaders, often respected individuals like elders or religious figures, act as intermediaries, encouraging the uptake of technology by demonstrating its benefits. In addition to individual opinion leaders, intermediary organizations such as NGOs and CBOs are also pivotal. These entities serve as trusted facilitators, offering resources, training, and knowledge dissemination tailored to the community's needs, ensuring that the information and technology presented are accessible and relevant.

This layer emphasizes the need for culturally sensitive and inclusive approaches, acknowledging that communities are not homogeneous and that technology interventions must be adapted to local contexts. Such approaches involve engaging communities in the co-creation of strategies, building trust, and promoting ownership. It also highlights the importance of addressing sociocultural barriers, such as gender norms that may limit participation, ensuring that technology adoption efforts are inclusive. By understanding and leveraging these social dynamics, the sociocultural layer supports a holistic and effective diffusion process tailored to the specific needs and values of each community.

The resulting integrated theory or concept is not a linear model but rather a multidimensional framework that reflects the dynamic and interactive nature of technology adoption in marginalized communities. It combines social, economic, cultural, and psychological elements to create an adaptable and context-sensitive approach. This model allows for the design of tailored interventions that are deeply rooted in the realities of marginalized communities, ensuring that they address the unique challenges these groups face. Ultimately, the integrated framework provides a more holistic perspective, capable of identifying interactions between different factors—such as how social norms influence individual perceptions or how economic barriers interact with cultural values—thereby offering a comprehensive strategy for promoting technology adoption. By incorporating a diverse range of theories and perspectives, the integrated model ensures that research findings have more practical relevance and are better aligned with the actual contexts of technology adoption among marginalized groups.

Integrating various academic interpretations in studying technology adoption among marginalized groups offers numerous advantages for scholars. This synergistic approach can address theoretical inadequacies by allowing researchers from different backgrounds to complement one another's work. Here are some key benefits of this integration:

1. Comprehensive Understanding:

By combining theories, such as Rogers' channel-focused Diffusion of Innovations and the more perception-oriented Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), researchers can consider a broader array of social, economic, and cultural factors that influence adoption. This blended approach provides a deeper and more nuanced comprehension of the motivations behind the adoption or rejection of technology.

2. Context-Specific Strategies:

Marginalized communities are not monolithic; their needs are diverse and multifaceted. By employing a mix of theoretical insights, tailored interventions can be designed to address the unique challenges different communities face. For instance, the Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT) can illuminate the influence of social networks and opinion leaders in certain communities. At the same time, Rogers' Theory highlights the role of intermediary organizations where direct access to technology is limited.

### 3. Enhanced Policy Implications:

Understanding the interplay of socio-economic, cultural, and institutional factors can lead to more effective policymaking. An integrated approach uncovers new policy avenues that can tackle systemic barriers to technology adoption. For example, it can inform policies that address gender disparities and their impact on technology access and utilization.

### 4. Identification of Interactions:

A comprehensive model recognizes the complex interactions between personal perceptions—such as perceived usefulness and ease of use—and broader social norms, economic conditions, and cultural values. This enables researchers to unravel intricate cause-effect relationships and design multifaceted solutions.

### 5. Validation and Triangulation:

Integrating different theories enhances the validity and reliability of research findings. Triangulation—using multiple theories and data sources—strengthens research outcomes, allowing scholars to assert the effectiveness of proposed interventions more confidently.

By weaving together these varied theoretical frameworks, researchers can capture the complexity of technology adoption processes and create research outputs more likely to result in practical, real-world applications and solutions for marginalized groups.

Therefore, the idea of combining different epistemologies is considered a strong tool to fully comprehend the process of technology adoption among the communities of disadvantaged groups. Through an examination of socio-economic factors, cultural determinants, and communication realities, researchers can formulate strategies that are more impactful while addressing the specific challenges that are vulnerable to the adoption of new technologies. Through this integration of various factors namely, sociocultural, political-economic, psychological-cognitive, and geographical, a more holistic perspective of the adoption process is thus obtained while, at the same time, making research findings with better insinuations in the actual contexts of adoption.

## 2.8 Identifying Gaps and Future Directions

Existing research has made commendable progress in clarifying the mechanisms of technology diffusion within low-end and small-scale fisheries communities. However, notable gaps persist in this field of study. Addressing these gaps necessitates additional research or novel investigative approaches to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the factors that influence the integration and utilization of technology in these specific communities. This part enumerates these flaws and lists the possible directions for the research that can be given in this domain.

There is a clear need for more empirically grounded research that addresses the cultural, institutional, and economic factors influencing technological shifts within SSF. Existing studies have contributed valuable theoretical insights and anecdotal evidence to our understanding of technology diffusion. However, more empirical data and statistical analysis are needed to support these insights. Empirical research is essential for uncovering the multifaceted dynamics involved in technology uptake and the barriers that impede it.

Furthermore, the significant impact of sociocultural factors on the behavior related to technology adoption warrants closer examination. A nuanced understanding of how local values,

norms, and practices influence the reception and utilization of technology in SSF communities can facilitate the design of more effective, culturally sensitive interventions. Integrating culturally held beliefs and social norms is crucial for these communities' acceptance and practical application of technologies. Future empirical studies are expected to delineate the intersection of these sociocultural factors with technological innovations and to elucidate the determinants that shape technology adoption patterns and outcomes.

The institutional context of SSF is crucial in understanding the governance, policy, and regulatory influences on technology diffusion within the sector. Institutions governing property rights, co-management approaches, and community-based management systems play significant roles in shaping the incentives and constraints actors face when considering the adoption of new technologies. In addition, policy and regulatory frameworks serve as pivotal determinants that can either facilitate or obstruct the spread of technological innovations. These governance structures must be examined closely to understand their impact on technology diffusion and identify whether they function as enablers or barriers within the SSF context.

Research in the area of the long-term sustainability risks posed by technology transfer within the context of SSF is vital for getting an understanding of the wider effects of technical advancement on resource governance, biodiversity protection, and resistance to change. Although the literature has extensively focused on the quick effects of technology adoption on fishing techniques and economic affairs, it is still timely to comprehensively examine the complexity of sustainability aspects.

Another important area of focus is the potential impact of new fishing technologies on fish populations and marine ecosystems. Tools like fish finders, GPS systems, and advanced fishing gear can enhance fish catch rates and efficiency. However, there is a growing concern that these technologies could contribute to overfishing and the subsequent depletion of fish

stocks if not used responsibly and sustainably (Crona & Bodin, 2010). Research is needed to assess how these technological interventions affect the abundance, distribution, and ecological interconnections of marine species and to understand how fish populations and ecosystems can adapt to the altered conditions these technologies create. Such studies are crucial for developing guidelines and regulations that ensure fisheries' long-term sustainability and marine habitats' conservation.

While potentially beneficial economically, introducing technology into SSFs may carry adverse social and environmental implications. As Cinner et al. (2016) indicate, deploying certain technologies could lead to short-term economic gains but may also precipitate increased competition and resource conflicts. Furthermore, Villasante et al. (2022) highlight concerns that unanticipated consequences of such innovations might disrupt traditional fishing practices and cultural customs, potentially destabilizing local communities. Therefore, research in this domain should establish an equilibrium between social and ecological outcomes and economic gains, considering the diverse perspectives and expectations that characterize small-scale fishers' communities. This balanced approach should incorporate assessments of how technological interventions might align with or contradict the community's social structures, environmental stewardship practices, and economic objectives, ensuring that technological advancements support the overall well-being of these communities.

In addition, the flexibility of advocacy strategies and objectives as well as institutional frameworks also plays a role in influencing the ways of adopting broadly accepted environmentally sustainable fisheries and aquacultural innovations. Institutional functions, such as the implementation of property rights regimes and the formation of co-management systems, can change entirely the motivation and degree of limitation in a community for the adoption of new technologies within the social safety nets (Partelow et al., 2020). As part of the

sustainability initiatives, policy landscapes, and structural arrangements should be put in place to make sure that technical organizations adhere to their other wider sustainability goals, for example, human rights, climate resilience, and ecosystem tenure.

While the role of advocacy strategies and institutional frameworks in influencing the adoption of environmentally sustainable fisheries and aquacultural innovations is crucial, several questions arise:

1. What do the deployment of various advocacy tactics entail in regard to the fulfillment of environmentally friendly ways of fishing and aquaculture?
2. From the standpoint of institutional functions, what mechanisms do they implement to make it easier or more difficult to apply technological change in fisheries and aquaculture?
3. How should the design and structure of policy frameworks and pertaining institutional arrangements be aligned with multidimensional objectives of sustainability, beyond the needs of financial profitability?
4. How the economics of development get balanced, in the sense of fish farming and aquaculture technologies adoption, if there are environmental concerns?

## 2.9 Summary of the Chapter

SSFs face numerous challenges that may contribute to a decline in their sustainability, including overfishing, environmental degradation, lack of market access, and the adverse effects of climate change. These issues render SSF communities endangered and vulnerable. However, technological advancements are not solely a source of threat; they also present opportunities to address these challenges and improve the livelihoods within small-scale fishing communities.

Innovations such as GPS tracking devices and mobile applications can enhance the productivity

of aquatic activities, provide critical data for resource management, facilitate market access, and thereby boost the overall economic viability of SSFs.

While there is potential for technological advancements to yield benefits, barriers such as access to finance, technical expertise, and support services present significant impediments to equitable technology adoption among SSF communities. Limited financial resources and a dearth of human capital often hinder the rapid integration of modern technologies, particularly in remote and underprivileged areas. Additionally, the uneven deployment of support services and extension programs exacerbates community disparities, perpetuating long-standing obstacles to development.

Sustainability concerns surrounding technology deployment in SSFs must also be addressed with caution. Although technological solutions may reduce costs and increase fishing efficiency, inappropriate applications could result in overfishing and marine pollution. To ensure that technological diffusion proceeds without compromising the long-term viability of fisheries and marine ecosystems, there is a pressing need for strategies sensitive to the specific contexts of different sub-regions. These strategies should balance the benefits of technological adoption with the imperative to maintain the health and sustainability of marine environments.

Addressing the challenges associated with adopting technology in SSFs communities requires a collaborative effort from policymakers, researchers, and development practitioners. Promoting inclusive, equitable, and sustainable technological solutions is imperative. When all key stakeholders unite to assist in bridging access gaps and spearheading a campaign for responsible technology use, the focus can shift towards maximizing the benefits of technology. Such a concerted approach can enhance the operational capabilities of SSF communities, safeguard marine ecosystems, and ensure their preservation for future generations.

### 3 Technological Transformations in Small-Scale Fisheries: Impacts, Barriers, and Future Directions

#### 3.1 Overview of Prevalent Technologies in SSF

SSFs' structure is complex and ever-evolving, featuring diverse waterside communities worldwide. These communities heavily rely on technology to enhance their quality of life and promote the sustainability of fisheries resources. On one end of the spectrum, traditional technologies such as wooden boats, hand lines, and simple fishing gear remain vital in SSF, especially in remote or resource-limited areas. These traditional tools support daily operations and preserve indigenous knowledge and cultural heritage passed down through generations.

Economic theories and mathematical models have often influenced the adoption of these methods, aiming to simplify and manage the chaotic nature of ecosystems, fishers, and their technologies. However, attempts to extend commercial fishing technologies to SSF have generally failed, leading to significant ecological and social consequences (Smith & Basurto, 2019).

In contrast, modern innovations, with their promising potential, are increasingly developed to address the challenges faced by the contemporary coastal livelihoods sector. These include state-of-the-art fishing vessels equipped with GPS systems, sonar for fish detection, and automated fishing gear. Additionally, the integration of digital tools such as mobile phones, tablets, and computers facilitates communication, data collection, and market access, opening up new avenues for progress and sustainability. A summary of types and extent of technology in SSFs is presented below in Table 4.

Table 4: Types and extent of technology in SSFs.

<b><u>Technology Type</u></b>	<b><u>Description</u></b>	<b><u>Extent of Use</u></b>
Traditional Fishing Tools	Includes wooden boats, hand lines, and basic fishing gear.	Widespread in remote and traditional communities.
GPS Systems	Used for navigation and tracking, providing real-time location data for fishing vessels.	Increasingly adopted in modernized SSF sectors.
Sonar Fish Detection	Used to detect fish schools under the water for more efficient fishing.	Adopted in technologically advanced fishing operations.
Mobile-Based Fisheries Management	Mobile apps providing market data, weather forecasts, and fishing guidance.	Implemented in regions with sufficient infrastructure and tech literacy.
Electronic Monitoring Systems	Onboard systems like cameras and sensors to monitor fishing activities.	Becoming more common as costs decrease and regulation increases.
Remote Sensing Technologies	Satellite imagery and drones to monitor illegal fishing and ocean habitats.	Used by governments and large-scale operators to manage resources.
Blockchain for Traceability	A secure ledger technology for tracking seafood from catch to consumer.	Emerging technology in supply chain management, limited to pilot projects.
AI for Resource Management	AI tools for stock assessment, fishing behavior prediction, and ecosystem management.	Adopted in research and resource management programs, expanding in SSF.
Renewable Energy Solutions	Solar, wind, and hydroelectric systems providing sustainable energy for fishing operations.	Used in aquaculture and coastal communities with renewable resources.

The disparity in technology adoption is primarily influenced by geographic location, resource availability, and socio-economic status. Remote or disadvantaged areas might lack access to advanced technologies due to destroyed infrastructure or limited budgets. Conversely, isolated

communities in more developed areas often have access to better technology and digital resources, enabling them to adopt sophisticated innovations more readily.

Globally, nearly **500 million people** depend, either partially or fully, on small-scale fisheries (SSFs) for their livelihoods. SSFs play a crucial role in providing food security and nutrition, contributing significantly to employment, local income, and national economic development. These fisheries allow rural communities to maintain and express their cultural identities through oral traditions, cuisine, and other art forms. SSFs are responsible for a substantial portion of global marine and inland catch, with their output contributing directly to human consumption and food security (FAO, Duke University, & WorldFish, 2023).

Understanding the factors that influence the adoption of information and communication technologies in SSF is not just important, it is a pressing necessity for their successful integration and sustainable development. Socio-economic elements, cultural traditions, institutional support, and environmental issues all play roles in shaping the patterns of technology diffusion within fishing communities. Addressing these factors is not just vital, it is our shared responsibility as policymakers, researchers, and practitioners aiming to ensure fair and effective technology use in SSF, thereby enhancing productivity, livelihoods, and marine conservation efforts.

### 3.2 Technologies and Governance

Technology has transcended its role as a mere support tool; it has emerged as a game-changer in the development of monitoring, control, and surveillance (MCS) in SSFs. Innovations like GPS equipment with tracking capabilities, remote sensor technologies, and electronically linked monitoring systems have not just revolutionized, but fundamentally transformed how fisheries overseers monitor fishing activities, enforce regulations, and combat illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing.

Take, for example, GPS tracking devices. These devices are not just tools for tracking fishing vessels' movements in real-time, but they are also key players in controlling fishing activities and enforcing compliance with fishing regulations. Equipped with GPS, these vessels can be monitored to ensure they only operate within designated fishing zones, avoid sensitive habitats during closures, and adhere to catch limits and closed seasons (Toonen & Bush, 2018). This high degree of transparency and accountability is a powerful tool in the hands of authorities, aiding them in minimizing illegal fishing practices and sustaining fisheries management.

Moreover, remote sensing technologies, including satellite imagery and aerial surveillance drones, have become widely used in combating IUU fishing. These tools give governments more control over fishing activities and discourage unlawful practices. Technologies such as these can track fishing vessels in restricted areas, detect illegal fishing equipment, and continuously monitor ocean habitats to identify changes in fish species and other marine life. By utilizing remote sensing data, authorities can designate areas, set traffic rules, and organize enforcement efforts to conserve time, space, and resources.

Electronic monitoring tools, including onboard cameras and sensors, allow fishing activities to be monitored economically and on a large scale while still being cost-effective. These systems can capture video footage of fishing activities, record the weights of caught fish, and ensure adherence to fishing regulations. Electronic monitoring systems automate data collection and analysis, reducing reliance on human observers and minimizing errors and misrepresentation.

Integrating these technologies ensures sustainable fisheries management by providing instant data on fish stocks, fishing efforts, and fleet movements. The role of technology is to empower authorities to take timely and informed actions based on long-term trends and accurate information (Natsir et al., 2019). This proactive management helps prevent overfishing, over catch, and habitat loss in the marine environment. However, it is crucial to ensure these

technologies are affordable, appropriate, and accessible to all small-scale fishing communities, considering their specific needs, capacities, and socio-economic backgrounds. Efforts should also be made to address potential challenges such as privacy and security concerns and develop necessary skills for effective ICT use in areas of information, transparency, and monitoring. A summary of the type of technology and governance impact is given below in Table 5.

*Table 5: Technological Innovations and Their Governance Impact in Small-Scale Fisheries*

<b><u>Technology</u></b>	<b><u>Purpose/Function</u></b>	<b><u>Governance Impact</u></b>
GPS Tracking Devices	Tracks fishing vessels' movements in real-time; ensures compliance with designated zones and fishing regulations.	Increased transparency, accountability, and control over fishing activities; helps minimize illegal fishing.
Remote Sensing Technologies (Satellite & Drones)	Monitors fishing vessels, tracks illegal activities, detects changes in marine habitats and fish species.	Allows governments to combat IUU fishing, improve spatial planning, and enforce regulations efficiently.
Electronic Monitoring Systems (Cameras & Sensors)	Records fishing activities, automates data collection, and ensures adherence to regulations by capturing footage and weights.	Reduces dependency on human observers, improves data accuracy, and enhances regulation enforcement.
Integrated Monitoring Systems	Combines real-time data from GPS, remote sensing, and electronic systems to manage fisheries comprehensively.	Empowers authorities with timely data to prevent overfishing and habitat loss through proactive management.

### 3.3 Technology and Policy Making

In recent years, integrating technology with policy in SSFs has become a focal point for stakeholders aiming to devise sustainable solutions to the challenges faced by coastal communities. Technological tools are now crucial in shaping policy-making by facilitating data collection across various parameters within SSF, including stock assessments, monitoring of fishing activities, and environmental impact evaluations (Prado et al., 2024). This influx of data-

driven insights allows policymakers to make well-informed decisions crucial for protecting and sustaining small-scale fisheries. For example, satellite imaging, drones, and electronic tracking systems have significantly improved the precision and cost-effectiveness of monitoring fishing activities, such as vessel movements, catch reporting, and compliance with regulatory measures. This enhanced capability helps policymakers understand SSF dynamics and address associated challenges effectively. Additionally, technological advancements like underwater sensors, tags with acoustic signatures, and DNA barcoding have revolutionized the tracking of fish stocks. These tools provide real-time data on fish populations, migration patterns, and genetic diversity, enhancing the accuracy of fish stock estimates, aiding policymakers in setting quotas, determining seasonal closures, and conserving marine protected areas based on robust scientific data.

Integrating these advanced technologies into fisheries management frameworks aims to balance fish stock management with the protection of marine diversity and ecosystem integrity. Moreover, new technologies are also shaping environmental policies that encourage fisherfolk to adopt innovative tools, gaining widespread popularity. Recognizing technology's potential to improve the sustainability, productivity, and socio-economic resilience of small-scale fishing communities, international bodies and governments are actively promoting technology transfer, capacity building, and innovation. For instance, the FAO has established guidelines to ensure that technological practices in SSF are responsible and beneficial (March and Failler, 2022), emphasizing the importance of participatory approaches, local knowledge, and community engagement. Furthermore, regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) have implemented agreements and regulations to encourage selective fishing devices, low-impact fishing methods, and alternative career paths for SSF. This policy framework addresses the use

and limitations of technology and aims to leverage it as a tool for promoting sustainable development along coastlines.

To further illustrate the critical role of technology in shaping policy within small-scale fisheries, Figure 7 provides a visual representation of how various technological tools are integrated into the policy-making process. As highlighted in the preceding discussion, these technologies—ranging from satellite imaging and drones to electronic tracking systems and DNA barcoding—enhance the accuracy of data collection and real-time monitoring. This, in turn, leads to a deeper understanding of SSF dynamics, enabling informed decisions on setting quotas, determining seasonal closures, and designating marine protected areas. By promoting responsible practices, the integration of technology fosters capacity building and innovation, ultimately supporting the sustainability and resilience of SSF communities. Figure 7 encapsulates this interconnected process, underscoring the importance of data-driven approaches in formulating effective SSF policies.

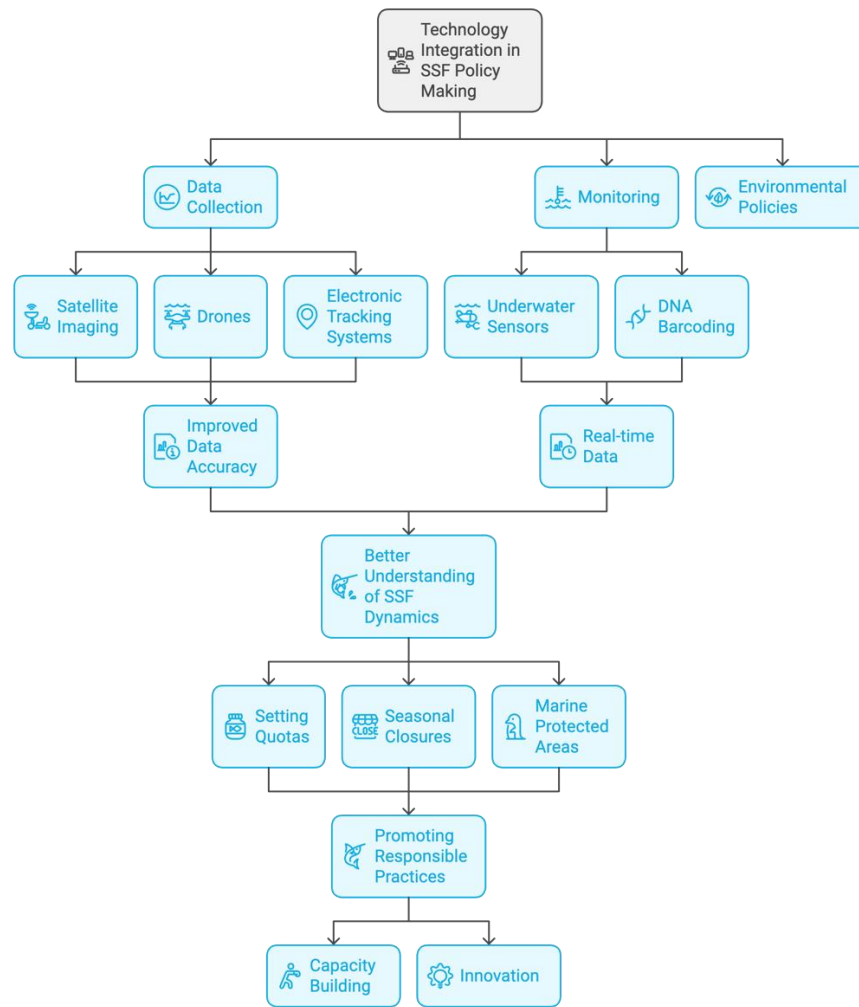


Figure 7: Technology integration in SSF policymaking for enhanced data-driven decision-making.

### 3.4 Technological Impact on Sustainability:

Technologies have emerged as indispensable tools for fostering ecological sustainability in SSFs, which face diverse ecological, social, and economic challenges. The shift towards low-impact fishing equipment and practices is a noteworthy advancement. Traditional methods often result in bycatch and habitat degradation. However, new technologies like turtle excluder devices (TEDs) and circle hooks have shown that sustainability can coincide with maintaining high catch rates, thereby preserving biodiversity and promoting the long-term viability of fisheries (Virgilli et al., 2024).

The rapid advancement of monitoring and surveillance technologies also plays a critical role in promoting sustainability and enforcing regulations within SSF. Tools such as electronic monitoring devices, positioning systems, and area-defense technologies facilitate real-time tracking of vessels, monitoring of catch composition, and adherence to size and gear restrictions. These technologies enhance the capacity of authorities to regulate fishing efforts, enforce laws, and curb illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing activities, thus bolstering governance in the fisheries sector. Furthermore, integrating ecosystem-based approaches into SSF management highlights the importance of ecological modeling, spatial analysis, and decision-support tools. These technologies enable policymakers to assess the environmental impacts of fishing activities, identify critical areas or species for protection, and develop management policies that safeguard ecosystem health and resilience. For instance, marine spatial planning effectively identifies essential marine ecosystems, establishes protected areas, and regulates fishing activities to minimize environmental conflicts and disruptions (Hammar et al., 2020).

However, the application of these technologies must be approached with caution. While gear and methods that reduce ecological impact can immediately lessen adverse effects, their success in promoting biodiversity conservation often hinges on factors such as adoption rates and compliance with sustainable practices (Rees et al., 2020). Additionally, while surveillance technologies can improve enforcement efficiency initially, they may lead to unintended consequences, such as the displacement of fishing violations to unmonitored areas or increased pressure on already stressed communities. Moreover, ecosystem-based management approaches that rely heavily on technical tools and models might provide a static view of highly dynamic ecological systems, potentially overlooking cumulative environmental impacts, climate change, and other stressors. Therefore, achieving sustainability in SSF necessitates a multifaceted approach incorporating innovative technologies, effective management strategies, stakeholder

involvement, and rigorous scientific research. Continuous evaluation and adaptation of technologies and practices at all stages—introduction, operation, and maintenance—are essential to ensuring SSF can adapt to and thrive amidst changing environmental conditions and human impacts.

To provide a clearer understanding of how various technologies contribute to sustainability within small-scale fisheries (SSF), Table 5 offers an overview of key technological tools and their specific impacts. As discussed, these technologies, ranging from low-impact fishing gear to advanced monitoring systems, play a critical role in reducing ecological harm, promoting responsible fishing practices, and ensuring the long-term viability of marine resources. However, challenges such as compliance with sustainable practices, community impacts, and the adaptability of certain tools must be addressed. Table 6 summarizes these technologies, their contributions to sustainability, and the associated challenges, highlighting the need for a balanced approach to technology adoption in SSF.

*Table 6: Overview of Technological Tools and Their Impact on Sustainability in Small-Scale Fisheries (SSF)*

<b><u>Technological Tool/Approach</u></b>	<b><u>Description</u></b>	<b><u>Impact on Sustainability</u></b>	<b><u>Challenges</u></b>
Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs) and Circle Hooks	Low-impact fishing equipment that reduces bycatch.	Preserves biodiversity and promotes long-term fishery viability.	Adoption rates and compliance with sustainable practices.
Electronic Monitoring Devices	Real-time tracking of vessels and catch composition.	Enhances governance by regulating fishing efforts and curbing illegal fishing.	Initial enforcement efficiency may lead to unintended consequences like displacement of violations.
Positioning Systems	Tracks vessel movements and	Facilitates adherence to size and gear restrictions,	Potential pressure on already stressed communities.

	enforces fishing restrictions.	improving sustainability.	
Area-Defense Technologies	Defends specific areas from illegal or overfishing activities.	Helps maintain protected areas and prevents illegal fishing.	May lead to displacement of fishing violations to unmonitored areas.
Ecological Modeling and Spatial Analysis	Tools for assessing environmental impacts and identifying critical areas.	Informs management policies to safeguard ecosystem health and resilience.	Static models may overlook dynamic ecosystem changes, climate stressors, and cumulative impacts.
Marine Spatial Planning	Designates marine protected areas and regulates fishing activities.	Minimizes environmental conflicts and disruptions, supporting ecosystem resilience.	Requires continuous evaluation and adaptation to changing environmental conditions.

### 3.5 Social Dimensions of Technology in SSF

The penetration of technology into SSFs significantly alters the social landscape, influencing multi-faceted aspects of power relations and enhancing or diminishing gender roles, among other social issues in coastal regions. While technological advancements can provide considerable opportunities for improving livelihoods, empowering marginalized communities, and fostering a more cohesive social fabric, they also have the potential to exacerbate existing inequalities, threaten traditional practices, and marginalize specific segments of society. Therefore, exploring the social dimensions of technology adoption in SSF is essential for promoting equitable and inclusive development in coastal communities and is also vital for the growth of smallholder agricultural production.

Technologies significantly impact community dynamics, often strengthening community cohesion. Coastal fishing communities, steeped in tradition and cultural practices, face disruptions when new technologies such as motorized boats, fish finders, and processing equipment are introduced. These innovations can alter supply and demand, displace jobs, and

create new power dynamics within these communities (Cooke et al., 2021). For example, the automation of fishing vessels intensifies competition for scarce resources, posing challenges for anglers without access to upgraded technologies.

Furthermore, technology is a cornerstone for community initiatives to enhance communication, information sharing, and collaboration. In Kerala, India, mobile phones and social media platforms have empowered fishing communities to organize protests, exchange information about fishing spots and weather conditions, and defend their rights more effectively. Another crucial aspect of technology use in SSF is its impact on gender dynamics, which influences women's participation, empowerment, and leadership roles within the fishing community. Traditionally, women have engaged in subsistence activities such as labor-intensive postharvest processes, trading, marketing, and household management. The advent of new technologies like motorboats and mechanical processing devices has created opportunities for women to engage in traditionally held roles by men. However, gender inequality in access to technology and power remains a significant barrier, preventing the full involvement of women and perpetuating old challenges (Roy et al., 2023).

Moreover, technology's role in SSF can amplify existing social inequalities and paradoxically lead to sharper divisions of equity and justice within fishing communities. Commercializing fishing rights and the increasing concentration of capital among the affluent can displace small-scale fishers, indigenous populations, and other vulnerable groups who rely on shared resources. For instance, in West Africa, the expansion of industrial fishing fleets and the rise of foreign-owned processing plants have displaced small-scale fishers. This led to a withdrawal from traditional fishing grounds and increased poverty and food insecurity among local communities (Arthur et al., 2020). This underscores the importance of carefully considering the social impacts when integrating technology into SSF.

Table 7 provides an overview of the social impacts resulting from the adoption of technology in small-scale fisheries (SSF). It highlights how technology influences power dynamics, gender roles, community cohesion, and equity within coastal communities. While advancements in technology offer opportunities for improved livelihoods and empowerment, they also pose challenges, such as the potential to exacerbate inequalities and marginalize vulnerable groups. The table underscores the importance of carefully addressing these social dimensions to ensure that technology adoption fosters inclusive and equitable development in SSF.

*Table 7: Social Impacts of Technology Adoption in SSFs*

<b><u>Dimension</u></b>	<b><u>Technological Influence</u></b>	<b><u>Positive Impact</u></b>	<b><u>Negative Impact</u></b>
Community Dynamics	Motorized boats, fish finders, processing equipment	Strengthens community cohesion, enhances communication and collaboration	Displaces jobs, creates power imbalances, competition for resources
Communication and Collaboration	Mobile phones, social media	Enhances information sharing, protests, and rights defense	Can create dependencies on digital tools, risk of excluding non-users
Gender Roles and Participation	Motorboats, mechanical processing devices	Empowers women to take on new roles, increases women's participation	Gender inequality in access to technology and decision-making remains
Equity and Justice	Commercialization of fishing rights, capital-intensive technologies	Potential for economic empowerment and modernization	Risk of displacing small-scale fishers and marginalizing vulnerable groups

### 3.6 Economic Viability and Technology:

New technology, which helps to increase the productivity of fishing communities, gives them access to new markets and develops financial skills, plays a vital role in developing the economic sustainability of SSFs. Along with the communities that have always depended on SSF being

increasingly pressured by overfishing, climate change and the growing trend of globalization of markets, technological innovations could bring opportunities for them to build efficiencies, lower costs, and diversify their incomes in the long term and as such to help ensure the survival and resilience of these coastal livelihoods.

Among the modes by which technology adds economic value to labor-intensive fishing sectors is substantial productivity improvement; coconut has caused a reduction in fishing costs (Yang et al., 2020). Innovations like GPS navigation systems, fish finders, and sensors built into boats allow fishers to find out where to fish with higher accuracy, maximize fishing effort, and cut human resources cost, time and fuel used. In addition, the craft of mechanized fishing equipment and processing equipment such as hydraulic systems, filleting machines, and mechanized winches enables labor-intensive tasks and increases catch handling capacity; as a result, fishers only need to handle very little of the process. Adequately, these modern technologies not only bring better catch quality and market value to operators but also allow them to go into business in an eco-friendly and sustainable way while strictly following the regulatory fishing conditions. Following through, technology helps boost the productivity level in small-scale fisheries by using the resources most efficiently, cutting operational costs and increasing the profit margin.

### 3.7 Case Studies of Technology Implementation

The practical application of technology in SSFs provides invaluable insights into real-world utilization within these communities. By analyzing before-and-after scenarios, researchers can assess the impact of technology on productivity, livelihoods, and resource management. This section will delve into four case studies that highlight successful technology interventions in SSF communities, illustrating the effective use of technology.

These examples showcase the direct benefits of technology in enhancing fishery operations and offer lessons on the broader implications for community development and environmental sustainability. Each case study will provide a detailed analysis of the technological solutions implemented, the challenges faced, and the outcomes achieved, thereby offering a comprehensive understanding of how technology can lead to tangible improvements in the functioning of SSFs.

### 3.7.1 Case Study 1: Mobile-Based Fisheries Management in Southeast Asia

SSFs in Southeast Asia face significant challenges, including limited access to market information, fluctuating fish prices, and inefficient supply chain management. A regional fisheries management organization tackled these issues by partnering with local governments, NGOs, and commercial enterprises to introduce a mobile-based fisheries management solution (Piazza, 2017; Saka et al., 2021, Donnelly, 2018).

The introduction of mobile-based fisheries management systems in Southeast Asia has brought significant improvements to small-scale fisheries (SSFs) by addressing challenges such as limited market access, fluctuating prices, and inefficient supply chain management. These technological interventions have revolutionized how fishers interact with the market and manage their fishing operations, improving transparency, data accuracy, and profitability. Table 8 highlights the key elements of this case study, focusing on the pre- and post-adoption scenarios, the system's overall impact on the fishing communities, and the challenges encountered during implementation. By examining this case in detail, the table underscores the transformative potential of mobile-based solutions in SSF while acknowledging the need for addressing socio-economic disparities and ensuring equitable access to technology across all fishing communities.

*Table 8: Impact of Mobile-Based Fisheries Management on Small-Scale Fisheries in Southeast Asia*

<u>Aspect</u>	<u>Details</u>
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Pre-adoption Scenario	SSF communities relied on outdated methods for market information, leading to inefficiencies. Fishers lacked real-time price data and faced uncertainties, making them vulnerable to exploitation. Communication at sea was minimal.
Post-adoption Scenario	A mobile-based management system was introduced, providing fishers with real-time price updates, weather forecasts, and demand projections. This encouraged ethical fishing and improved decision-making for targeting species and optimizing fishing efforts.
Impact Assessment	Fishermen could now negotiate better prices and report catches more accurately, improving their earnings and reducing harvest waste. Market transparency improved, and supply chain management became more effective. Collaboration among stakeholders enhanced.
Challenges	Key challenges included poor internet access, expensive mobile devices, digital literacy issues, and socioeconomic disparities. Affluent fishers benefited more, potentially widening the gap between communities.
Lessons Learned	Mobile-based systems enhanced decision-making and productivity, contributing to economic and environmental health. However, governance issues and social impacts, such as inequalities and pressures on fish stocks, require deeper investigation.

Pre-adoption Scenario: Traditionally, SSF communities relied on outdated methods to receive market information, often leading to inaccuracies and inefficiencies. Fishers needed help obtaining real-time price data, creating uncertainties and inefficiencies in the market. Market updates were inconsistent and delayed, frequently relying on rumors or intermediaries' declarations. Due to a lack of transparency, fishermen were unable to negotiate reasonable rates for their catch, leaving them open to exploitation. During extended voyages, it was challenging to notify crises or even just stay in touch with family members because there were few means of communication at sea other than flags or flares.

Post-adoption Scenario: The implementation of the mobile-based management system provided fishers with an app that delivered real-time price updates, weather forecasts, and demand projections. The gathering of this data was essential in encouraging ethical fishing methods. This tool enabled fishers to monitor fish movements effectively, receive guidance on optimal fishing times and locations, and make informed decisions about what species to target, thereby enhancing the success and profitability of their fishing activities.

Impact Assessment: The adoption of this technology has significantly enhanced SSF operations. Access to real time market data and price updates gave fishermen the ability to bargain for better terms and increase their earnings. As a result, the market system became more transparent, guaranteeing that their labors would be fairly compensated and improving lives overall. By allowing fishermen to electronically record their catch data, this program made it possible for them to report to fisheries authorities more accurately and on time. Fishermen have reported improved earnings, reduced harvest waste, and better market access. The system also improved collaboration and alignment among stakeholders, including fishermen, buyers, and government agencies, resulting in more effective supply chain management and robust resource utilization.

Challenges: The difficulties that Southeast Asian mobile-based fisheries management systems face include those pertaining to digital literacy, technology uptake, and socioeconomic disparities. There are major obstacles to the successful adoption of real-time market data and enhanced communication, notwithstanding the potential advantages. Many fishers may not be able to utilize these systems due to poor internet availability and expensive mobile device prices. Additionally, the adoption and efficient use of these tools may be hampered by older and less educated fishermen's lack of computer literacy. Furthermore, the introduction of mobile-based systems can inadvertently exacerbate existing socio-economic inequalities, as more affluent fishers are better

positioned to leverage these tools, potentially widening the gap between different fishing communities. Ensuring that these technologies are accessible, affordable, and inclusive is crucial for their sustainable integration into small-scale fisheries management.

**Lessons Learned:** This case study demonstrated the transformative impact of technology in SSF. Mobile-based fisheries management systems provided timely and relevant information that empowered fishermen to make informed decisions, enhancing their operations' productivity and sustainability. This approach not only improved the livelihoods of individual fishers but also contributed to the fishing community's broader economic and environmental health.

While this case study highlights significant advancements in market access and operational efficiency for small-scale fisheries (SSFs), it overlooks deeper governance issues and the broader social impacts such as community displacement and out-migration. These factors are critical as they influence the fisheries communities' long-term sustainability and social fabric. For instance, technological solutions like mobile apps enhance data access and decision-making. However, they may also increase competition and pressure on fish stocks if not managed within robust regulatory frameworks.

Moreover, the social implications of such technologies, including the potential to exacerbate inequalities within fishing communities or alter traditional fishing cultures, demand a thorough investigation. Out-migration, often driven by economic pressures and environmental degradation, could be influenced by the rapid shifts in industry practices due to technology. These aspects underscore the necessity of a comprehensive governance approach that not only facilitates technological adaptation but also safeguards the community's socio-economic interests.

Analyzing this case through the theoretical lenses previously discussed, such as the importance of inclusive and participatory technology deployment, could provide a more nuanced

understanding of its impacts. This approach would help ascertain whether the governance structures effectively address the complex dynamics of SSFs and their communities. By integrating these theories, we can better evaluate how to balance technological advancement with preserving community livelihoods and environmental conservation. This comprehensive analysis is essential for developing strategies that ensure the resilience and sustainability of SSF communities facing rapid technological and environmental changes.

### 3.7.2 Case Study 2: Community-Based Monitoring in Latin America

SSFs in Latin America are increasingly utilizing community-based fisheries to enhance sustainable fishing and conservation efforts. These efforts are commonly supported by partnerships with community guidance committees and local NGOs, which play a crucial role in their success (Carolina et al., 2020; Salas et al., 2007).

The implementation of community-based monitoring systems in Latin America has led to notable advancements in sustainable fishing practices and the governance of SSFs. By empowering local communities to monitor, collect, and manage fisheries data, these participatory initiatives have fostered greater ownership over conservation efforts, significantly reducing illegal fishing and enhancing regulatory compliance. Table 9 summarizes the key aspects of this case study, outlining the pre- and post-adoption scenarios, the impact on local fishing communities, and the challenges faced during implementation. Through this examination, the table highlights the critical role of community-driven approaches in SSF management, while also addressing the need to overcome infrastructural, social, and environmental barriers to ensure the long-term success and sustainability of these initiatives.

*Table 9: Impact of Community-Based Monitoring on Sustainable Fishing Practices and Governance in Small-Scale Fisheries in Latin America*

<u>Aspect</u>	<u>Details</u>
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Pre-adoption Scenario	Subsistence SSF communities lacked tools and equipment for effective monitoring and management, leading to illegal fishing and resource overexploitation.
Post-adoption Scenario	Community-based monitoring empowered SSF communities to collect and analyze fisheries data, enforce regulations, and engage in conservation efforts through participatory approaches like patrols and citizen science.
Impact Assessment	Enhanced management, elimination of illegal fishing, increased local law adherence, and empowered marginalized groups through community integration.
Challenges	Major obstacles include insufficient infrastructure, social/cultural resistance, and environmental factors like habitat degradation and climate change.
Lessons Learned	Community involvement in monitoring increases governance effectiveness, conservation, and socio-economic conditions, but broader governance structures are needed for long-term success.

Pre-adoption Scenario: Before implementing community-based monitoring programs, subsistence SSF communities needed more tools and equipment to monitor and manage their fishing activities effectively. This shortfall led to prevalent illegal fishing and resource overexploitation, jeopardizing long-term sustainability.

Post-adoption Scenario: Implementing community-based monitoring enabled SSF communities to develop the capacity to collect, analyze, and monitor fisheries data and activities and enforce local regulations. Participatory approaches such as community patrols, citizen science projects, and community wardens empowered local fishermen to take ownership of resource protection. This shift fostered active local involvement in conservation efforts.

**Impact Assessment:** Establishing community-based monitoring systems, including coastal surveillance initiatives, significantly enhanced the management and governance of SSFs. These systems contributed to eliminating illegal fishing practices and reinforced the strict adherence to local laws. Additionally, the programs promoted community integration and collaboration, enhancing social networks and empowering marginalized groups within SSF areas.

**Challenges:** In Latin America, there are a number of major obstacles to overcome before community-based fisheries management may be implemented. First, it's common for there to be insufficient infrastructure and resources to enable efficient management and monitoring. Numerous small-scale fisheries lack the tools, resources, and funding required to regularly collect and evaluate data. Second, the adoption of innovative management methods may be hindered by social and cultural hurdles. Participation and compliance may be hampered by local people's resistance to new techniques and mistrust of them because of their conventional fishing habits. Finally, environmental variables that can make sustainable fishery management more challenging include habitat degradation and climate change. A diverse strategy is needed to address these issues, one that involves boosting infrastructure, bolstering governance frameworks, increasing community engagement, and creating capacity.

**Lessons Learned:** This case study highlights the importance of community involvement and participatory methods in fisheries' conservation and sustainable management. By engaging SSF communities in the monitoring and decision-making processes, community-based monitoring programs can increase governance effectiveness, enhance the conservation of natural resources, and improve socio-economic conditions for vulnerable communities. This approach preserves fisheries resources and builds resilient and economically sustainable community structures.

While this case study effectively illustrates the positive impacts of engaging local communities in sustainable fishing practices, it may need to fully address specific, nuanced

governance challenges and broader social impacts crucial for such initiatives' long-term success. The governance structure necessary to support and sustain community-driven conservation efforts often requires robust frameworks that can adapt to various political and socio-economic conditions across different regions. These frameworks should facilitate effective conflict resolution and equitable resource distribution to prevent potential power struggles between local groups and traditional authorities.

Furthermore, the social dynamics of community integration, including potential issues like out-migration due to insufficient economic opportunities or environmental degradation, might require more in-depth exploration. These dynamics can profoundly affect community cohesion and the availability of skilled labor, which are critical for maintaining the effectiveness of community-based management.

Similar to the first case study, there is a need to these initiatives through the lens of participatory governance and community empowerment. Further insights might be revealed about the scalability and adaptability of these models. Such analysis could help identify key factors that contribute to the resilience and sustainability of small-scale fisheries, ensuring that these programs not only address immediate ecological or economic challenges but also support long-term community development and social stability. This approach underscores the importance of a comprehensive governance model that not only empowers communities but also ensures sustainable and equitable management of fisheries resources, emphasizing the crucial role of participatory governance and community empowerment in the success of sustainable fisheries management.

### 3.7.3 Case Study 3. GPS Monitoring in Philippines' Davao Gulf Small-Scale Fisheries

Lack of accurate tracking and management tools has long plagued small-scale fisheries in the Philippines' Davao Gulf, leading to inefficiencies and unsustainable fishing techniques. By

offering real-time data on fishing activities, GPS monitoring technology was implemented in an effort to address these problems, benefiting both the management of marine resources and the operational effectiveness of fishermen (Macusi et al., 2023).

The introduction of GPS monitoring technology in the small-scale fisheries of the Philippines' Davao Gulf has significantly improved both resource management and operational efficiency. Prior to its adoption, fishermen relied on traditional methods for navigation and record-keeping, leading to inaccurate data and difficulties in enforcing sustainable fishing practices. The implementation of GPS tracking provided real-time data on fishing activities, enabling better monitoring and decision-making for sustainable fisheries management. Table 10 summarizes the key aspects of this case study, detailing the pre- and post-adoption scenarios, the impact of GPS monitoring on the fishing communities, and the challenges encountered during the project. This table underscores the transformative potential of GPS technology in SSFs, while also highlighting the need to address technical, financial, and infrastructural barriers for broader adoption.

*Table 10: Impact of GPS Monitoring on Resource Management and Operational Efficiency in Small-Scale Fisheries in the Philippines' Davao Gulf*

<b><u>Aspect</u></b>	<b><u>Details</u></b>
Pre-adoption Scenario	Fishermen in the Davao Gulf relied on manual record-keeping and traditional navigation, resulting in incomplete and inaccurate data on fishing locations and activities. This limited authorities' ability to manage marine resources and enforce regulations.
Post-adoption Scenario	A GPS tracking experiment using 30 devices was implemented, providing real-time data on fishing activities and locations. Despite some technical issues, the data gathered offered better insights into fishing patterns and helped authorities manage resources more effectively.
Impact Assessment	GPS tracking allowed accurate mapping of fishing grounds, improved management of

	marine resources, and ensured sustainable fishing practices. Fishermen also benefited from enhanced safety and navigation, with authorities better able to monitor and enforce fishing restrictions.
Challenges	Challenges included technical malfunctions due to saltwater exposure, high data plan costs, and the need for continuous technical support, limiting the wide-scale adoption of GPS technology.
Lessons Learned	Early community engagement is crucial to tailor technology solutions to local needs. Robust, affordable technology that can withstand maritime conditions is necessary for success. Affordability and ongoing support are essential for widespread adoption.

Pre-adoption Scenario: Fishermen operating in the Davao Gulf relied on manual record-keeping and traditional methods for navigation prior to the advent of GPS technology. This frequently resulted in incomplete and erroneous data regarding fishing locations and activities. It was challenging for authorities to properly manage the marine ecosystem and enforce fishing regulations in the absence of trustworthy tracking mechanisms. Additionally, efforts to combat overfishing and save important habitats were hampered by the absence of data.

Post-adoption Scenario: A trial experiment was initiated in February 2020, wherein thirty GPS tracking devices (Reachfar RF-V20) were dispersed to small-scale fishing vessels operating in the Davao Gulf. Every ten minutes, these gadgets sent location signals to an internet central database. At the study's conclusion in August 2020, 13 GPS trackers were still functional despite a few technical difficulties, such as equipment malfunctioning because of exposure to saltwater. By offering useful information on boat movements and fishing patterns, these gadgets allowed for a more thorough comprehension of fishing operations.

Impact Assessment: The advent of GPS tracking had a number of noteworthy effects on SSF. Accurate mapping of fishing grounds and identification of overfished areas were made possible by the GPS devices' real-time data collection. Better management of marine resources and well-informed decision-making to guarantee sustainable fishing practices were made possible by this. Furthermore, as their vessels were accurately tracked, fishermen were able to enjoy enhanced safety and navigation. This improved their capacity to identify areas that are safe to avoid and places where fishing is productive. Also because GPS tracking made fishing restrictions more transparent, authorities were better able to keep an eye on fishing activity.

Lesson Learned: A number of important lessons for adopting technology in comparable settings can be learned from the case study on GPS tracking in Philippine small-scale fisheries in the Davao Gulf. It emphasizes the value of early community interaction, especially with fisherman, in order to comprehend their unique needs and concerns. This involvement makes sure that technical solutions are customized to meet the particular operational difficulties and environmental requirements of small-scale fishing. The study also emphasizes how crucial it is to implement robust technology that can survive the challenging maritime environment in order to reduce technical malfunctions and guarantee reliable data collection. In order to promote the broad acceptance and continued use of technological interventions, it is also essential to address concerns related to affordability, such as high data plan costs and continuous technical assistance. Such programs can significantly improve resource management, environmental sustainability, and operational efficiency in small-scale fishing communities by fusing contemporary technology with traditional knowledge and practices.

The GPS tracking program in the Philippine Davao Gulf is a striking illustration of how technology may greatly enhance the sustainability and day-to-day operations of small-scale fishing. The initiative addressed a number of important difficulties that the fishing community

faced, including ineffective management, safety concerns, and regulatory compliance, by incorporating GPS technology. The sustainability of maritime ecosystems was enhanced by the accurate monitoring and improved resource management made possible by the real-time data gathering on fishing activities and boat movements.

Improved administration and monitoring were one of the biggest advantages seen. With the use of GPS trackers, fishing grounds might be accurately mapped, aiding in the identification of overfished areas and facilitating better-informed decision-making to support sustainable fishing methods. Furthermore, the project enhanced fishermen's safety and navigation by giving them precise vessel locations through real-time tracking, which made it easier for them to locate productive fishing regions and steer clear of dangerous ones.

Nevertheless, the project encountered certain obstacles that must be resolved for wider adoption. Technical problems such device faults brought on by exposure to saltwater brought attention to the need for more resilient and long-lasting technology fit for hostile maritime situations. The high cost of data plans and the ongoing requirement for technical help hindered small-scale fishermen's ability to use GPS tracking widely. The long-term viability of these technologies depends on assuring their affordability and sustainability.

The case study emphasizes how crucial it is to combine technology solutions with ongoing assistance and community involvement. It is vital to involve fishermen in the process of designing and executing the technology to guarantee that it fulfills their unique requirements and promotes adoption and efficient utilization. Enhancing operational efficiency and resource management can be achieved by fusing traditional knowledge with contemporary tools. Moreover, continuing technical assistance and training are essential for assisting fishermen in adjusting to new technology. In short, the GPS tracking project in the Davao Gulf shows how technology may revolutionize small-scale fishing. GPS trackers can help with improved resource

management, increased sustainability and efficiency, and improved regulatory compliance by delivering precise and timely data. Technological breakthroughs that help fishermen and the maritime environment are contingent upon community engagement, sustainable deployment, and ongoing support.

#### 3.7.4 Case Study 4: Timor-Leste using real-time data systems in small-scale fisheries by implementing the PeskAAS system.

PeskAAS is an open-source, near-real-time monitoring and analytics system designed to improve small-scale fisheries data collecting, analysis, and visualization. PeskAAS, a pilot program in Timor-Leste, uses digital technologies to deliver timely, useful information to promote sustainable fisheries management (Tilley et al., 2020).

The implementation of the PeskAAS real-time data system in Timor-Leste's small-scale fisheries has brought significant advancements in fisheries management, sustainability, and economic resilience. Before PeskAAS, data collection was manual and unreliable, leading to inefficiencies and overfishing. With PeskAAS, real-time data on fishing activities, collected through 3G-capable tablets and analyzed via a centralized dashboard, allowed fishermen to optimize their operations while helping fisheries managers enforce regulations and monitor resources more effectively. Table 11 summarizes the key aspects of this case study, including the pre- and post-adoption scenarios, the impact on governance, sustainability, and the economy, as well as the challenges faced. This table highlights how technology can transform fisheries management while addressing the need for infrastructure, continuous support, and community engagement for sustainable long-term success.

*Table 11: Impact of the PeskAAS Real-Time Data System on Fisheries Management and Sustainability in Small-Scale Fisheries in Timor-Leste*

<b><u>Aspect</u></b>	<b><u>Details</u></b>
Pre-adoption Scenario	Before PeskAAS, data gathering was manual, irregular, and unreliable, leading to inefficient

	fishing operations and overfishing. Fisheries management lacked real-time data, which made resource monitoring and enforcement difficult.
Post-adoption Scenario	PeskAAS used 3G-capable tablets to record catch data, which was uploaded to a central database. Real-time analytics via a web-hosted dashboard helped fishermen improve efficiency, reduce costs, and fisheries managers enforce regulations.
Impact Assessment	The system improved catch efficiency, lowered costs, and stabilized market prices. It enhanced sustainability through better resource management and reduced overfishing, while improving governance and regulatory compliance.
Challenges	Challenges included unreliable internet and mobile network coverage, high upfront costs for infrastructure, ongoing technical support needs, and financial difficulties in installation and upkeep.
Lessons Learned	User education and support are critical for the system's success. Community engagement helped tailor the system to local needs, encouraging broader adoption. Flexibility and adaptability are key for replicating the system in other regions.

Pre-adoption Scenario: Data gathering in Timor-Leste's fisheries was manual, irregular, and frequently unreliable prior to PeskAAS. Because fishermen relied on customary methods, fishing operations were ineffective and fish supplies were overfished. Fisheries management found it difficult to adequately monitor resources in the lack of real-time data, which led to overfishing and unstable economies for fishing communities.

Post-adoption Scenario: Significant advancements in fisheries management were achieved with the introduction of PeskAAS. The system records catch data using 3G-capable Android tablets, which KoBoToolbox then uploads to a central database. A web-hosted R Shiny

application, the PeskAAS dashboard offers real-time analytics and visualizations. Fishing operators can maximize their efforts, cut expenses, and increase revenue with this data-driven strategy. The ability to monitor stocks and enforce laws is made possible by reliable, real-time data for fisheries management.

**Impact Assessment:** Significant impacts have been observed in Timor-Leste in the areas of governance, sustainability, and the economy since the implementation of the PeskAAS system. In terms of the economy, it has increased market prices and stability by increasing catch efficiency and lowering expenses for fishermen through improved data quality and operational procedures. The advantages of sustainability encompass the encouragement of more environmentally friendly fishing methods and improved resource management, made possible by real-time monitoring systems that efficiently reduce overfishing and implement conservation activities. PeskAAS has also given fisheries managers access to timely data, which has improved decision-making and regulatory compliance and strengthened governance in fisheries management. PeskAAS shows great promise to transform small-scale fisheries management through the integration of technology to promote economic resilience, sustainability, and efficient governance, despite obstacles such as infrastructure constraints and startup costs.

**Challenges:** The PeskAAS system's implementation in Timor-Leste has presented a number of noteworthy difficulties. In isolated coastal areas, dependable internet and mobile network coverage continues to be an ongoing challenge that affects system functionality and real-time data transfer. Financial obstacles have been created by the upfront expenditures related to establishing a technological infrastructure and providing management and fishermen with comprehensive training. Getting enough money for installation and continuous upkeep is important yet difficult. In addition, maintaining system dependability, addressing operational problems, and providing updates all depend on continual technical assistance. Maximizing the

long-term advantages and sustainability of PeskAAS in small-scale fisheries management depends critically on how well these issues are resolved.

Lesson Learned: Timor-Leste's adoption of the PeskAAS system provides substantial knowledge for efficient small-scale fisheries management. First and foremost, the system's efficacy is increased when managers and fishermen are able to understand and use real-time data with ease. This is made possible by ongoing user education and assistance. Subsequently, community engagement turned out to be crucial; by involving regional players in the system's creation, PeskAAS was customized to regional requirements, encouraging wider adoption and support. Finally, the system's capacity to adapt to different cultural and regional circumstances highlighted its scalability and potential for replication in related scenarios. These lessons emphasize how crucial flexibility, community involvement, and education are to implementing sustainable fisheries management techniques.

In conclusion, even though the PeskAAS system has demonstrated a great deal of promise to improve Timor-Leste's small-scale fisheries management, a number of obstacles need to be overcome before it can be widely implemented. To maintain the system's operation and efficacy, infrastructure, startup expenses, and continuing technical support challenges must be resolved. In addition, increasing internet access in isolated locations and obtaining sufficient money are essential measures in optimizing the system's influence on various coastal communities. Notwithstanding these difficulties, PeskAAS has demonstrated advantages in improving economic results, advancing sustainability, and fortifying governance, which emphasize the significance of this technology as a tool for sustainable fisheries management. Stakeholders can guarantee that PeskAAS continues to positively impact community livelihoods and fisheries conservation in Timor-Leste by proactively tackling these issues. It may also be able to serve as a model for similar efforts around the world.

### 3.7.5 Case Study 5: Enhanced Fish Market Information Service (EFMIS) Initiative and M-Fish app, Kenya and Uganda, Africa.

The Enhanced Fish Market Information Service (EFMIS) initiative, launched in 2009, aimed to address the critical economic and operational challenges faced by small-scale fishers (SSF) in Kenya and Uganda, particularly around Lake Victoria and other prominent landing sites across East Africa. Fisheries in this region serve as a primary source of livelihood and food security for rural and peri-urban communities, contributing significantly to local economies. Despite their importance, these fisheries have been hindered by challenges such as limited access to real-time market data, inequitable pricing structures, and high post-harvest losses, which ultimately restrict fishers' income potential and the sector's growth (Aura et al., 2019).

To tackle these issues, the EFMIS initiative, in collaboration with the Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute (KMFRI), developed a mobile-based Information and Communication Technology (ICT) system. Central to this system is the mobile application known as M-Fish, which operates via SMS, providing direct access to critical market information for fishers, traders, and cooperatives. Between 2009 and 2017, M-Fish enabled fishers to access data on fish prices, quantities, and demand trends through SMS queries. This real-time information, transmitted from a centralized data center located at KMFRI in Kisumu, allowed fishers to identify the best locations and times to sell their catch based on up-to-date market data. The development of M-Fish was driven by the inequities in fish trade, where a lack of market transparency often left fishers dependent on intermediaries who controlled access to information and pricing. This intermediary dominance led to reduced income for fishers and increased market inefficiencies. By delivering real-time data on over 20 major markets and covering popular fish species such as Nile perch and Nile tilapia, M-Fish empowered fishers with essential insights for negotiating fair prices and avoiding exploitative practices. Furthermore, the direct access to market data supported the sustainability objectives of the “Blue

Economy” framework by aligning fishing practices with responsible and sustainable resource management principles (Aura et al., 2019).

Since its implementation, the M-Fish app has demonstrated significant positive impacts, including increased income stability, reduced post-harvest losses, and decreased reliance on intermediaries. However, the initiative also faced challenges, such as inconsistent mobile network coverage in remote areas and the financial costs associated with SMS queries. Despite these challenges, EFMIS and M-Fish serve as pioneering models for integrating mobile technology within artisanal fisheries, showcasing the transformative potential of digital solutions in fostering economic resilience and sustainability in resource-limited communities. Table 12, below, summarizes the key aspects of this case study, including the pre- and post-adoption scenarios, the impact on governance, sustainability, and the economy, as well as the challenges faced.

*Table 12: Impact of the Enhanced Fish Market Information Service (EFMIS) and M-Fish App on Small-Scale Fisheries in Kenya and Uganda*

<u>Aspect</u>	<u>Details</u>
Pre-adoption Scenario	Prior to EFMIS and M-Fish, data collection in Kenya and Uganda’s fisheries was inconsistent and often unreliable. Fishers depended heavily on intermediaries for market information, restricting their access to fair prices and increasing their vulnerability to market fluctuations. The lack of real-time data hindered informed decision-making regarding market timing and pricing, creating economic instability and resource mismanagement.
Post-adoption Scenario	With EFMIS and M-Fish, fishers gained access to real-time data on fish landings, prices, and demand across 20+ markets via SMS. This information enabled fishers to optimize market timing, negotiate fairer prices, and reduce post-harvest losses. The centralized data system also supported more

	informed resource management and regulatory decision-making, promoting sustainable practices in fisheries management.
Impact Assessment	EFMIS and M-Fish have led to a significant shift in market interactions, with SMS-based real-time communication empowering fishers to make informed decisions, reducing reliance on intermediaries. The 24/7 automated response system facilitates timely access to market data, fostering a competitive, transparent marketplace that enhances income stability, sustainability, and effective governance in fisheries.
Challenges	Key challenges included limited internet and mobile network coverage, especially in remote areas, and high initial setup costs. Financial barriers for SMS services, as well as ongoing needs for technical support and training, were significant. Addressing these issues is critical to ensuring the long-term success and sustainability of EFMIS and M-Fish in small-scale fisheries.
Lessons Learned	The EFMIS initiative highlights the importance of user education and community involvement in the adoption of new technology in fisheries. Early training enabled fishers to adapt to the system, while community engagement ensured EFMIS was tailored to local needs, fostering a sense of ownership. The adaptability of the SMS-based model supports scalability to other regions with similar technological constraints.

Pre-adoption Scenario: Before the adoption of the Enhanced Fish Market Information Service (EFMIS) and the M-Fish mobile app, fisheries in Kenya and Uganda faced significant challenges related to data management and market access. Data collection at landing sites and markets was irregular and often unreliable, leading to inefficiencies in fish trading and operational challenges in fisheries management. Fishers relied heavily on intermediaries for market information, which limited their access to fair pricing and increased their vulnerability to market fluctuations. Furthermore, the absence of real-time data left fishers ill-equipped to make

informed decisions about market timing and pricing, resulting in economic instability and over-dependence on exploitative practices by intermediaries. Consequently, these structural inefficiencies contributed to resource mismanagement and had adverse economic impacts on fishing communities.

**Post-adoption Scenario:** Following the introduction of the Enhanced Fish Market Information Service (EFMIS) and the M-Fish app, small-scale fisheries in Kenya and Uganda experienced transformative improvements in market access, pricing transparency, and operational efficiency. The EFMIS system, operating via SMS, allows fishers to access real-time data on fish landings, prices, and demand across more than 20 major markets. This system, coupled with the M-Fish app, enables fishers to receive accurate, timely information directly on their mobile phones, enhancing their decision-making capabilities and enabling them to sell catches at the best available prices. By leveraging these tools, fishers have minimized reliance on intermediaries, negotiated fairer prices, and optimized their market timing to reduce post-harvest losses. Furthermore, EFMIS has provided fisheries managers and policymakers with a centralized data platform, enabling more informed resource management and regulatory decisions. This post-adoption scenario marks a significant shift towards sustainable fisheries management, economic stability, and equitable trade practices in East African fisheries.

**Impact Assessment:** Since the introduction of the Enhanced Fish Market Information Service (EFMIS) and the M-Fish app, small-scale fishers in Kenya and Uganda have experienced a profound shift in their market interactions and decision-making processes. EFMIS, leveraging SMS-based mobile communication, allows fishers to access real-time, location-specific data on fish prices and landings across major market sites. This access has empowered fishers to make informed decisions, minimizing their reliance on intermediaries and enabling them to negotiate better prices. The automated query response system, active 24/7, allows users to receive updates

on fish prices and demand patterns within seconds of sending a query. This system has also fostered a more competitive and transparent marketplace, improving profit margins and stability for fishers. Additionally, EFMIS has facilitated better governance through centralized, accessible market data, offering fisheries managers insights into trade patterns for informed policy-making and resource management decisions. Overall, EFMIS and M-Fish have enhanced the economic resilience and sustainability of East African fisheries, supporting a fairer, more efficient trade model in alignment with "Blue Economy" principles.

**Challenges:** The EFMIS and M-Fish systems in Kenya and Uganda encountered several notable challenges during implementation. Key obstacles included limited internet and mobile network coverage, which constrained the effectiveness of real-time data transfer, especially in remote areas where fishers operate. Financial constraints also presented a significant barrier, with high initial setup costs for infrastructure, mobile devices, and recurring expenses for SMS services impacting both accessibility and sustainability. Additionally, fishers required ongoing technical support and training to utilize the system effectively, as many had limited digital literacy. The financial and technical support necessary for system maintenance, including troubleshooting issues and handling equipment malfunctions, proved essential for long-term viability. Without sufficient funding and consistent technical assistance, the EFMIS and M-Fish systems faced difficulties in delivering the full spectrum of their intended benefits, making it critical to address these challenges to achieve sustained adoption and impact.

**Lesson Learned:** A key lesson from the Enhanced Fish Market Information Service (EFMIS) and M-Fish app deployment in East Africa is the critical role of user education and community involvement in achieving sustainable technology adoption in small-scale fisheries. Early and ongoing education efforts ensured that fishers understood the system's functions, empowering them to make informed decisions on market timing and pricing. This approach also

supported a gradual adaptation to digital tools among fishers with limited technical experience. Community engagement throughout the design and implementation phases allowed EFMIS to be customized to the unique socio-economic and environmental contexts of East African fisheries, fostering a sense of ownership and broader adoption among stakeholders. Additionally, the adaptable structure of EFMIS illustrates its scalability potential, as the SMS-based model could be replicated in other regions where mobile coverage is widespread, but internet access remains limited. This experience underscores the importance of flexibility, ongoing education, and local engagement as foundational elements for implementing sustainable and impactful fisheries management solutions.

Overall, the Enhanced Fish Market Information Service (EFMIS) and M-Fish app have demonstrated substantial potential to reshape small-scale fisheries management in Kenya and Uganda, promoting transparency, economic resilience, and sustainable practices. However, several challenges remain that must be addressed to ensure widespread and sustained adoption. Key issues include improving infrastructure to support reliable data transmission, reducing initial and ongoing costs for fishers, and providing continuous technical support, particularly in remote areas with limited digital literacy. Expanding mobile network coverage and offering financial support or subsidies are essential to optimizing the system's impact on rural fishing communities. Despite these challenges, the benefits EFMIS has provided in promoting equitable market access, stability in fisher incomes, and informed resource management highlight its importance as a valuable tool for sustainable fisheries. By addressing these obstacles, stakeholders can strengthen EFMIS's influence in East African fisheries and set a precedent for similar technology-driven initiatives in small-scale fisheries globally.

### 3.8 Barriers to Technology Adoption and Solutions

The adoption of beneficial technologies in SSFs is impeded by significant barriers that curtail the enhancement of fishing practices and the livelihoods of fishing communities worldwide.

These barriers arise from economic, social, and institutional challenges (Tilley et al., 2024) and are highlighted in Figure 8 below. Such complexities hinder the ability of small-scale fishing operations to adopt innovative technologies that could otherwise be economically viable.

Consequently, recognizing and addressing these barriers is crucial for policymakers and implementers tasked with designing programs that effectively solve the technology adoption challenges in SSF communities.

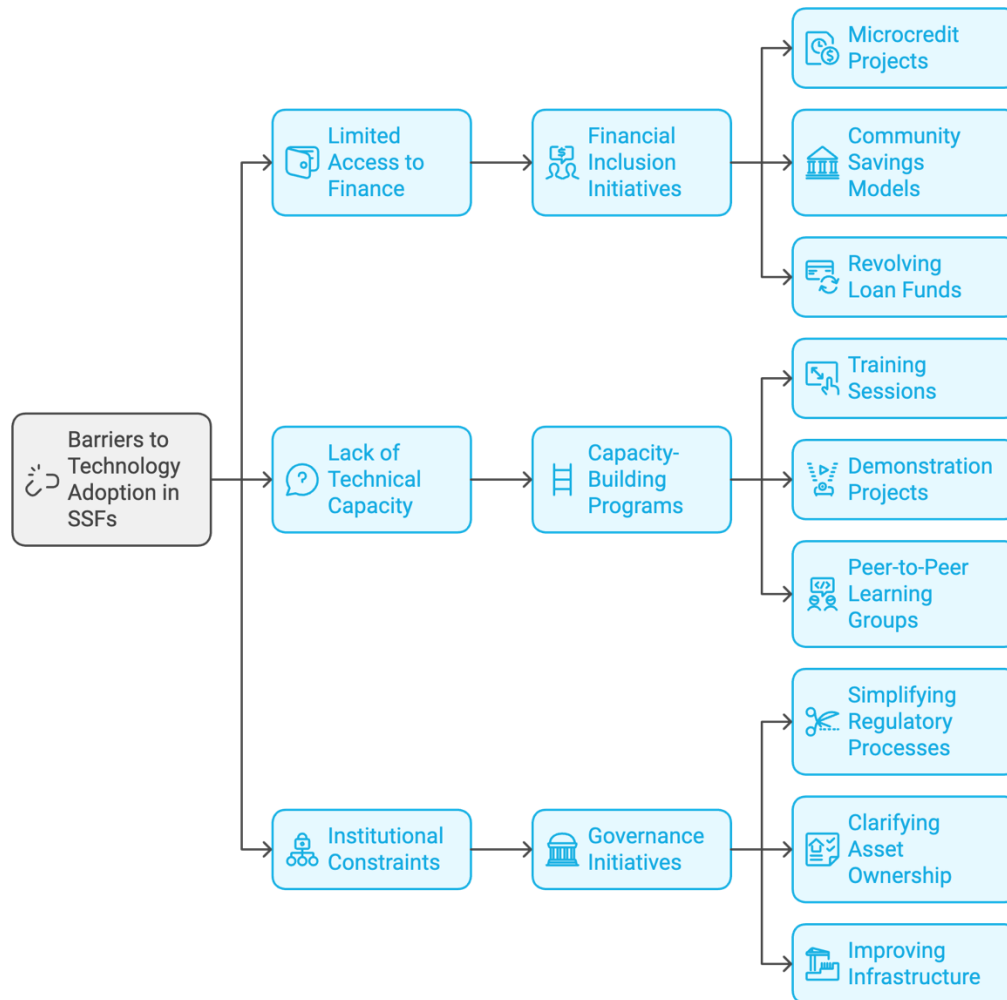


Figure 8: Barriers and Solutions to Technology Adoption in Small-Scale Fisheries: Addressing Financial, Technical, and Institutional Challenges

### 3.8.1 Limited Access to Finance:

Financial barriers significantly hinder technology adoption in SSFs, especially in the Global South where fishing communities often face economic hardships. These operators typically need more financial resources to invest in new technologies and equipment, which limits their ability to improve production and efficiency (Pomeroy et al., 2020).

To overcome these financial hurdles, policymakers and development organizations focus on implementing financial inclusion initiatives designed explicitly for SSF communities. These initiatives include microcredit projects, community savings models, and revolving loan funds that provide fishermen access to loans at fair and affordable rates. Such financial support is essential for equipping them with the necessary technology and equipment to enhance their operations. Additionally, forming strategic partnerships with financial institutions and impact investors can help attract additional capital and create momentum for technology adoption within the SSF sector.

### 3.8.2 Lack of Technical Capacity:

Another significant barrier to technology adoption in SSFs is the need for more technical capacity among fishermen and their communities. Many fishers need more knowledge and experience to fully harness modern technology's benefits and are often unprepared to manage its potential negative consequences (Bradley et al., 2019).

Various capacity-building and technical training initiatives have been launched to tackle this challenge. These programs are meticulously crafted to equip fishermen with the skills and knowledge needed to effectively utilize technology. Training sessions, demonstration projects, and peer-to-peer learning groups are instrumental in educating fishers about new technologies and how they can be adapted to their local environments. Furthermore, the involvement of educational institutions and vocational training centers in these initiatives is strengthening

technical education and increasing technology skills among coastal communities. These collective endeavors, in which all stakeholders are actively involved, are crucial for empowering fishermen to optimize the use of advanced technologies, thereby improving their productivity and sustainability.

### 3.8.3 Institutional Constraints:

Institutional constraints significantly hinder technology adoption in SSFs. These barriers include bureaucratic red tape, unclear asset ownership, and a lack of supportive infrastructure, complicating the transition to innovative fishing methods and technologies (Fu et al., 2018).

To address these issues, governance initiatives that encourage innovation and entrepreneurship within the SSF sector are critical. Simplifying regulatory processes, clarifying land and asset ownership, and improving infrastructure can significantly reduce SSF communities' obstacles. Additionally, fostering collaborations between local governments, nonprofit organizations, and private sector players can ensure a more efficient exchange of information and a cohesive integration of efforts to address institutional deficiencies.

Drawing on successful examples from around the world, specialists and policymakers can develop tailored interventions to address the unique challenges faced by fishing communities specifically. Investment in financial inclusion, capacity building, and institutional reform are vital strategies to facilitate technology adoption in SSF. Such initiatives will empower communities and pave the way for implementing sustainable fisheries management and advancing community development.

## 3.9 Future Directions for Technology in SSFs

The future of technology in SSFs looks promising, with significant potential to support sustainable development goals, enhance productivity, and bolster resilience and environmental stewardship. As technology evolves, it offers myriad solutions to various global challenges local

communities face. This technological progress not only opens up opportunities for economic empowerment, food security, and ecosystem conservation but also emphasizes the importance of innovation within the technological sphere.

However, as we embrace this technological revolution, it is imperative to reflect on the ethical, social, and environmental implications to ensure technology's responsible and fair application. Balancing technological advancements with these considerations will be crucial to achieving sustainable outcomes that benefit the communities involved and the broader ecosystems they depend on. This balanced approach represented in Figure 9 below will help ensure that the benefits of technology in SSF are realized fully and equitably across different regions and communities.

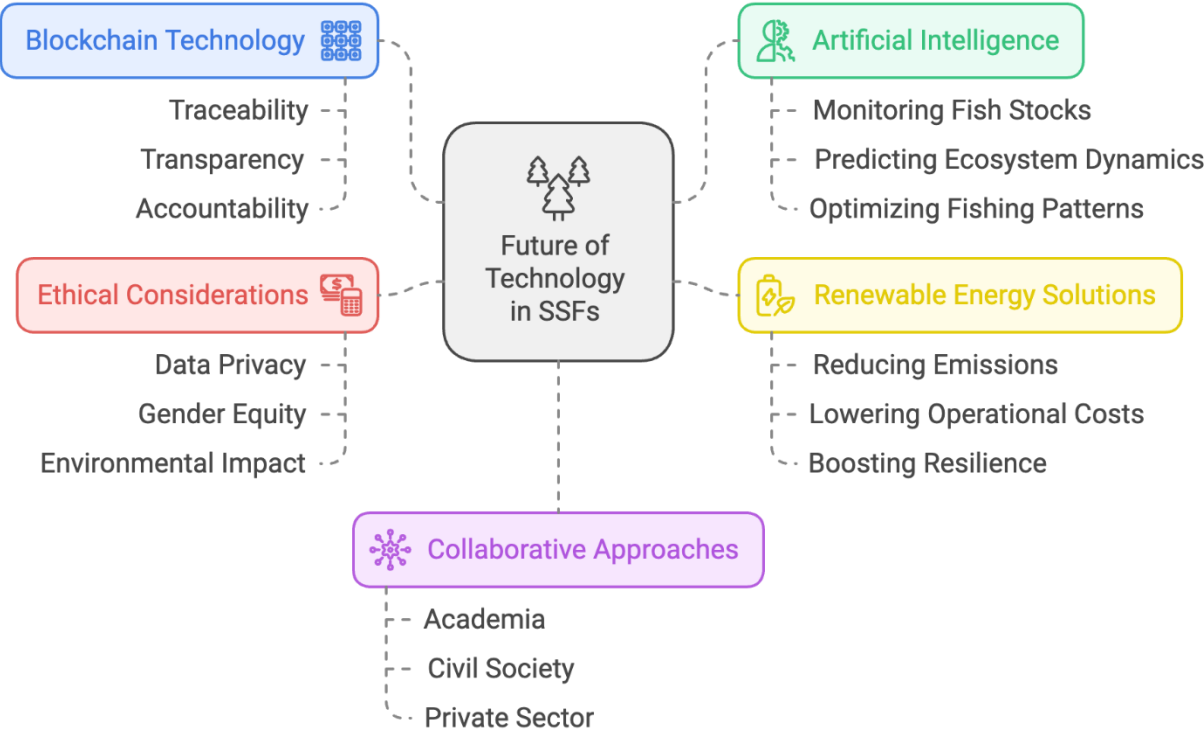


Figure 9: Future Directions for Technology in SSF

### 3.9.1 Blockchain Technology for Traceability:

Applying blockchain technology for traceability in SSFs is increasingly viewed as a promising future direction. Blockchain offers a secure, transparent, and verifiable means of tracking seafood products from the point of catch to the consumer. This technology enables the capture of detailed information about fishing areas and methods used in fishing and processing; all recorded on a distributed ledger. Such traceability enhances transparency, accountability, and trust within seafood supply chains, offering significant benefits. This innovation is precious for combating illegal fishing and enforcing fair labor practices while helping consumers make informed and responsible buying decisions.

### 3.9.2 Artificial Intelligence for Resource Management:

Integrating artificial intelligence (AI) in resource management of SSFs is a significant advancement. AI tools are adept at handling vast amounts of data, including satellite imagery, oceanographic data, and fisheries statistics, to synthesize knowledge and predict aspects like fish well-being, fishing behavior, and ecosystem dynamics. Researchers utilize machine learning algorithms for critical tasks such as stock assessments, developing adaptive management strategies, and spatial planning. In this context, AI enhances monitoring, control, and surveillance (MCS) systems by automating data acquisition, analysis, and the implementation of regulatory measures, vastly outperforming traditional human-led efforts. This technological advancement optimizes resource management and ensures more sustainable fishing practices and ecosystem conservation.

### 3.9.3 Renewable Energy Solutions for Aquaculture:

Renewable energy solutions are catalyzing a shift from traditional energy sources to sustainable alternatives in aquaculture operations. Adopting solar, wind, and hydroelectric power helps reduce reliance on fossil fuels, cut greenhouse gas emissions, and potentially lower

operational costs for SSFs communities. Off-grid renewable energy systems provide a vital resource for rural and remote communities or those with unreliable electricity infrastructures, supplying reliable power for water pumps, aeration systems, and fish processing facilities. This enhances the revenue and resilience of these communities and supports the sustainable growth of aquaculture. Furthermore, integrating innovative technologies like floating solar panels and tidal energy turbines in coastal and marine environments points towards a sustainable future, promoting long-term growth in the sector.

#### 3.9.4 Ethical, Social, and Environmental Considerations:

While introducing new technologies in SSFs offers significant opportunities, it is imperative to consider the ethical, social, and environmental implications to ensure their fair and responsible deployment. Ethical issues such as data privacy, consent acquisition, and ownership rights need careful consideration to protect the rights and interests of individuals and communities involved in SSF. Moreover, it is essential to address social factors, including gender equity, community participation, and cultural sensitivity, during the development and planning of technologies. This approach will support inclusive and participatory decision-making. Additionally, environmental considerations should be integral to designing new technology solutions for the marine ecosystem. Attention should be focused on reducing impacts on ecosystems, conserving biodiversity, and enhancing climate resilience to minimize adverse effects on marine ecosystems and species.

#### 3.9.5 Collaborative and Multidisciplinary Approach:

Addressing the challenges associated with new technologies in SSFs necessitates a collaborative and multidisciplinary approach. Stakeholders from academia, civil society, and the private sector must co-create innovative solutions that cater to the unique needs of SSF communities and are relevant to their regional contexts. This collaborative effort enables the

exchange of knowledge and the mobilization of resources, empowering all involved parties to enhance and adapt technology to transform SSF into sustainable and thriving sectors.

Technological advancements such as blockchain, artificial intelligence, and renewable energy hold significant potential to contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), facilitating a resilient transition for SSF communities. These technologies can pave the way for poverty reduction, food security, and ecosystem conservation. However, addressing ethical, social, and environmental considerations is vital to ensure that technology deployment is responsible and that benefits are distributed fairly. By fostering collaboration and harnessing innovation, the potential of technology to make SSFs more sustainable and inclusive can be fully realized.

### 3.10 Summary of the Chapter

The transformative potential of technological advancements in SSFs worldwide is unparalleled. They are poised to drive the development of new production methods, enhance sustainability, and bolster resilience. This chapter provides a concise overview of the key technologies employed in SSF, examining their impact across various domains, including governance, policymaking, sustainability, social dynamics, and economic viability. Each area is explored to highlight how technological innovations are reshaping SSF, offering insights into the broader implications for these communities globally.

When exploring technological impacts on SSFs, a stark contrast is evident between traditional fishing tools and modern technologies, which are increasingly tailored to meet current needs and challenges. The adoption and penetration of these technologies are deeply influenced by factors such as geographic location, resource availability, and socio-economic conditions. Understanding these factors is crucial, as they can either facilitate or hinder the integration of

new technologies. This understanding is essential for achieving seamless and sustainable development in the fisheries sector.

Technology is critical in designing SSFs specifically for monitoring, control, and surveillance activities. Constantly improving innovations, such as Global Positioning System (GPS) tracking devices, remote sensing technologies, and electronic monitoring systems, enable authorities to observe ongoing fishing activities precisely. This capability is crucial for effectively enforcing regulations against illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing. Implementing such technologies facilitates sustainable fisheries management by providing real-time data on fish stocks, the number of fishing vessels, and their movements, which supports informed decision-making and efficient resource allocation.

Digital data from monitoring equipment supports policy decisions for SSFs, marking a significant advance toward evidence-based management approaches. Policy frameworks have been designed to encourage the adoption of beneficial technologies by promoting innovation among SSF communities, urging them to start and develop new business ventures. However, adopting these technologies often encounters challenges, such as limited access to capital and issues within financial institutions. These challenges necessitate specific measures and reforms to overcome these barriers and ensure the widespread implementation and utilization of technology in SSF.

Technologies that focus on resource conservation, reduction of environmental footprints, and enhancement of ecosystem performance are pivotal in making SSFs sustainable. Advances in technology provide humanity with the opportunity to adopt more sustainable lifestyles. However, it is crucial to assess the long-term implications these technologies may have on marine biodiversity to ensure they do not adversely affect marine ecosystems. This evaluation is essential for balancing technological benefits with environmental stewardship, aiming to

maintain or improve the health of marine environments while pursuing sustainable fishing practices.

Technological advancements in SSFs significantly affect social dynamics, influencing community structure, traditional societal norms, and gender inequality. Technology's impact can be both positive and negative, as evidenced by various case studies that explore how technological interventions have reshaped social interactions within fishing communities. It is crucial, therefore, to emphasize that any development or implementation of technology must adopt an inclusive and participatory approach to support equitable social change.

On the economic front, technology plays a vital role in enhancing the viability of SSF. It provides improved access to markets, better financial management, and more significant opportunities for income generation. Innovations that increase productivity, efficiency, and value addition are particularly beneficial, fostering economic growth within coastal communities. By integrating these technological solutions, SSF can not only enhance their operational efficiency but also contribute to broader economic development, significantly impacting the livelihoods of those involved in the sector.

Case studies on the application of technology in (SSF) provide insightful revelations on the practical use of tech solutions to address industry challenges. By analyzing scenarios before and after technology adoption, researchers can understand its effects on various aspects of SSF operations. These insights contribute to a more affluent knowledge base, informing best practices and lessons that guide future technology adoption efforts.

The barriers to technology adoption in SSF, such as limited access to financial resources, insufficient technical capacity, and restrictive institutional policies, continue to challenge the sector. To overcome these obstacles, targeted measures such as skill improvement programs,

financial relief initiatives, and policy reforms are necessary to create an environment conducive to innovation and practical application of new technologies.

Emerging technologies have the potential to revolutionize SSF, enhancing productivity, resilience, and environmental sustainability. Innovations like blockchain for traceability, artificial intelligence for resource management, and renewable energy solutions for aquaculture demonstrate how technology can significantly improve the efficiency and sustainability of fisheries operations. However, it is crucial to consider ethical, social, and environmental factors to ensure that deploying these technologies is responsible and equitably benefits all stakeholders.

Ultimately, familiarity with prevalent technologies in SSF and understanding their broader implications are crucial for fostering sustainable development and resilience in coastal communities. By addressing the barriers to technology adoption and harnessing the potential of emerging technologies, stakeholders can create new opportunities for economic equality, social inclusion, and environmental stewardship in small-scale fisheries worldwide.

## 4 SSFs Technology Adoption through the lens of innovation diffusion theories

The adoption of technology in small-scale fisheries (SSFs) represents a complex interplay of socio-economic, cultural, and institutional factors that determine its success or failure. Building on the discussions in the previous chapters, this chapter seeks to analyze the various case studies introduced earlier through the lens of key theoretical frameworks such as Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), and Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT). These frameworks provide a structured approach to understanding the patterns and determinants of technology diffusion in marginalized communities, particularly in SSFs, where access to resources and institutional support is often limited.

The objectives of this chapter emerge from the need to address the intricate dynamics influencing technology adoption in vulnerable settings. In doing so, it aims to answer critical questions about how these technologies are perceived, adopted, and adapted in different cultural and geographical contexts. By systematically applying the theoretical frameworks to the case studies, this chapter explores the factors that either facilitate or hinder technology diffusion. This analysis is crucial for understanding the broader implications of technology integration in SSFs, particularly in terms of governance, sustainability, and economic resilience.

The importance of addressing these objectives lies in the broader goal of achieving sustainable fisheries management through the adoption of innovative technologies. As small-scale fisheries contribute significantly to livelihoods, food security, and local economies, ensuring that these communities can harness the benefits of technology is essential. Through a comparative analysis of the case studies, this chapter seeks to identify common barriers and enablers to technology adoption, providing valuable insights that can inform future policy recommendations and practical interventions.

#### 4.1 Case Study 1: Mobile-Based Fisheries Management in Southeast Asia

This case study explores the implementation of a mobile-based fisheries management system in Southeast Asia, analyzed through the lenses of three theoretical frameworks: Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations Theory, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), and the Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT). Table 13 provides a summary of the success and failure factors as articulated by these theories.

*Table 13: Case Study 1. Success and Failure factors of the three theories*

	<b>Roger's DITT</b>	<b>TAM</b>	<b>IDT</b>
<b>Success Factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Compatibility</li> <li>▪ Trialability</li> <li>▪ Communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ease of Use</li> <li>▪ Usefulness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Networks</li> <li>▪ Leaders' Support</li> </ul>
<b>Failure Factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Complexity</li> <li>▪ Lack of Infrastructure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Literacy rate</li> <li>▪ Cost</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Literacy</li> <li>▪ Governance</li> </ul>

In the context of mobile-based fisheries management in Southeast Asia, Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations Theory offers a comprehensive perspective on the factors that influenced the successful and failed aspects of this technology adoption. The mobile-based fisheries management system provided significant benefits compared to traditional methods. Fishermen gained access to real-time market data, weather reports, and demand forecasts, enabling them to negotiate better terms and make more informed decisions. This clear advantage led to rapid adoption by early adopters and the early majority. The system's compatibility with fishermen's needs for better communication and timely information was a key factor in its sustainability. It addressed specific challenges such as the lack of real-time information and irregular market updates, making it more desirable and easier to integrate into their routines.

Moreover, the option to test the technology in small batches before full implementation reduced perceived risks and allowed fishermen to experience its benefits firsthand. Pilot programs and free trials facilitated system acceptance and adoption. Effective communication

through peer networks and local governments played a significant role in disseminating information about the technology. Workshops, demonstrations, and peer-to-peer experience sharing fostered awareness and trust, accelerating adoption.

However, the complexity of the mobile-based system posed a significant barrier for elderly fishermen or those with limited digital literacy. Despite efforts to simplify the user interface and provide training, some individuals found the technology challenging to use, slowing diffusion among these groups. The technology also presented challenges for fishermen who heavily relied on traditional practices. Older fishermen and those deeply rooted in conventional fishing techniques exhibited reluctance and slower adoption rates, finding it difficult to integrate the new approach. Socioeconomic differences influenced the unequal uptake of the technology. Wealthier fishermen could afford mobile phones and internet access more readily, while less fortunate fishermen struggled with these costs. This disparity widened the gap between different fishing communities and led to uneven benefits. Unreliable internet connectivity in remote areas hindered the system's effectiveness. Fishermen in regions with poor connectivity faced challenges in accessing real-time data, reducing the system's overall appeal and utility. Resistance to change, particularly among the late majority and laggards, further hindered the technology's diffusion.

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) helps develop an understanding of user perception and adoption by investigating how attitudes toward technology, perceived usefulness, ease of use, and behavioral intentions influence adoption decisions. The mobile-based fisheries management system's real-time market data, weather forecasts, and demand projections enabled fishers to increase their operational efficiency and profitability. The system's design prioritized usability, making it accessible to individuals with varying levels of digital literacy, and its simplicity led to widespread acceptance among fishermen. Fishermen who understood the system's advantages and found it user-friendly were more likely to adopt and consistently use it.

Training programs, local government support, and NGO initiatives shaped positive attitudes toward the technology, facilitating its acceptance.

Nevertheless, some fishermen, particularly the elderly or those with low digital literacy, found the technology difficult to use despite efforts to ensure user-friendliness, hindering adoption. Additionally, poor internet infrastructure, high mobile device costs, and socioeconomic disparities significantly impacted the perceived ease of use and utility of the technology, limiting its widespread adoption.

The efficacy of the mobile-based fisheries management system in Southeast Asia can be attributed to the utilization of social networks and opinion leaders. The involvement of NGOs, commercial businesses, and local governments played a crucial role in promoting the innovation, influencing the technology's acceptance. By leveraging social networks, the mobile-based system facilitated knowledge exchange and the sharing of best practices among fishermen. The cooperation of stakeholders, including consumers, government agencies, and fishermen, enabled a participatory approach, a core principle of IDT.

However, the lack of digital literacy among certain fishermen hindered the adoption of the mobile-based system, highlighting the need to address the digital divide. The mobile-based approach did not adequately address how existing socioeconomic disparities among fishermen would be exacerbated, giving wealthier fishermen a greater advantage. Furthermore, the case study failed to adequately address the governance frameworks required to ensure the long-term uptake of the mobile-based solution.

#### 4.2 Case Study 2: Community-Based Monitoring in Latin America

This case study examines the implementation of community-based monitoring in small-scale fisheries (SSF) in Latin America, analyzed through three theoretical frameworks: Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations Theory, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), and the Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT). Community-based monitoring systems have played a crucial role in

empowering local communities to manage and conserve their fishing resources through participatory approaches. Table 14 provides a summary of the success factors, challenges, and lessons learned, as articulated by these theoretical frameworks, to assess the impact of community involvement in resource governance and sustainability.

*Table 14: Case Study 2. Success and Failure factors of the three theories*

	<b>Roger's DITT</b>	<b>TAM</b>	<b>IDT</b>
<b>Success Factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Relative benefits</li> <li>▪ Compatibility</li> <li>▪ Trialability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Perceived usefulness</li> <li>▪ Perceived ease of use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Beneficial Innovation</li> <li>▪ Cultural alignment</li> </ul>
<b>Failure Factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Complexity</li> <li>▪ Communication gap</li> <li>▪ Opposition to change</li> <li>▪ Infrastructure and financial barriers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Complexity</li> <li>▪ Lack of training and support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Implementation complexity</li> <li>▪ Communication obstacles</li> </ul>

In Latin America, the uptake of community-based monitoring systems in small-scale fisheries offers a rich field for analysis through Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations theory. This theory provides a systematic framework for examining the diffusion of innovations within these communities, emphasizing elements such as perceived benefits, compatibility with existing practices, and the feasibility of pilot testing programs. The community-based monitoring systems enabled small-scale fisheries to actively manage and observe their resources, offering significant advantages such as reduced illegal fishing activities, improved resource sustainability, and enhanced enforcement of local regulations. This alignment with the sociocultural environment of Latin American small-scale fishing communities, leveraging local knowledge and involving community members in the monitoring efforts, was crucial for the initiative's success. Through pilot programs and participatory efforts, the communities had the opportunity to test these monitoring systems, reducing uncertainty and fostering broader adoption by allowing firsthand experience of the benefits. The observable advantages of reduced illegal fishing and better

resource management were effectively communicated to the local populations, further promoting adoption and engagement.

However, the implementation of community-based monitoring faced several challenges. The complexity of establishing these systems, requiring technological know-how and financial resources, posed significant barriers. Some communities struggled with effective management and maintenance of the monitoring systems due to these technical and financial demands. Additionally, inadequate outreach and communication about the benefits and procedures of community-based monitoring hindered its implementation in certain areas. Poor communication techniques often led to misinformation or skepticism among community members. Resistance to change due to deeply rooted traditions and cultural norms also played a role in the slow adoption of these monitoring practices. Some local authorities and fishers were hesitant to alter long-standing customs, which impacted the widespread acceptance of the new systems. Furthermore, a lack of adequate infrastructure, including technological and logistical resources, hampered the implementation and effectiveness of these projects in certain regions.

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) offers another lens through which to evaluate the adoption of community-based monitoring systems in small-scale Latin American fisheries. This model aims to understand how perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use influence the successful adoption of these technologies within small-scale fishing communities. The perceived usefulness of community-based monitoring was a significant factor in its adoption, as the system helped improve sustainability and resource management. The ability of the monitoring system to empower local communities in data gathering and regulation enforcement increased its perceived value. Additionally, the user-friendly design of the community-based monitoring systems, coupled with the training and support provided, facilitated their successful adoption. The simplicity of the technology reduced resistance and promoted participation among fishers in the community.

Despite these advantages, certain disadvantages hindered the adoption of community-based monitoring. The technological demands and complexity of the systems, along with inadequate training, posed significant barriers. Less educated users were often discouraged by the perceived complexity of the system, impacting its broader acceptance. Furthermore, the effectiveness of these monitoring systems was compromised by insufficient training and continuous support for users. Without adequate instruction and support, it was challenging for users to fully utilize the technology and derive its maximum benefits.

Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT) provides a comprehensive framework for assessing the adoption of community-based monitoring systems in small-scale fisheries in Latin America. This theory helps identify the factors that facilitate the successful integration of these technologies, such as perceived benefits and cultural alignment with local practices. The beneficial innovation of community-based monitoring significantly enhanced reliability and regulatory compliance in fisheries management and conservation. The strategy's successful integration of local knowledge and participative techniques aligned well with the cultural and social norms of small-scale fishing communities in Latin America, further supporting its adoption.

However, the complexity of implementation posed significant challenges. Establishing and maintaining community-based monitoring systems was difficult due to the intricate processes and the lack of necessary resources and technological requirements. Communication obstacles also impeded adoption. Inadequate communication regarding the advantages and procedures of community-based monitoring led to resistance and skepticism among stakeholders. The lack of clarity in communication and low awareness among interested parties further hindered the effective spread and sustainability of these monitoring efforts.

Overall, while community-based monitoring in Latin America offers substantial benefits in terms of resource management and sustainability, its successful adoption and long-term viability are contingent upon overcoming significant barriers related to complexity, communication, and

infrastructure. By addressing these challenges and leveraging the theoretical insights from Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations, the Technology Acceptance Model, and Innovation Diffusion Theory, policymakers and practitioners can enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of community-based monitoring systems in small-scale fisheries.

#### 4.3 Case Study 3. GPS Monitoring in Davao Gulf, Philippines' Small-Scale Fisheries

This case study examines the implementation of GPS monitoring systems in small-scale fisheries (SSF) in the Philippines, analyzed through three theoretical frameworks: Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations Theory, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), and the Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT). GPS monitoring has significantly contributed to improving resource management and promoting sustainable fishing practices by providing real-time data on fishing locations and activities. Table 14 presents a summary of the success factors, challenges, and lessons learned, as interpreted through these theoretical frameworks, to assess the role of GPS technology in enhancing transparency, regulatory compliance, and sustainability in SSF operations.

*Table 15: Case Study 3. Success and Failure factors of the three theories*

	<b>Roger's DITT</b>	<b>TAM</b>	<b>IDT</b>
<b>Success Factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Relative Advantage</li> <li>▪ Compatibility</li> <li>▪ Trialability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Perceived utility</li> <li>▪ Ease of use</li> <li>▪ External Assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Innovative communication approach</li> <li>▪ Social framework</li> <li>▪ Reinvention</li> </ul>
<b>Failure Factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Financial constraints</li> <li>▪ Technical complexities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Technological complexities</li> <li>▪ Financial concerns</li> <li>▪ Resistance to change</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Adaption rate</li> <li>▪ Influence and resistance from peers</li> <li>▪ Limited resources</li> </ul>

The adoption of GPS tracking technologies in the small-scale fisheries of the Davao Gulf, Philippines, can be comprehensively analyzed using Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations theory. This framework helps to understand the success and challenges of this technological intervention

by examining factors such as relative advantage, compatibility, trialability, and complexity. GPS tracking technology provided precise, up-to-date information on fishing activities, significantly outperforming traditional methods. This led to better resource management, higher operational efficiency, and enhanced safety for fishermen. The technology was well-aligned with the operational needs and practices of small-scale fishermen, integrating seamlessly into their daily routines. The initial trial experiment, where thirty GPS tracking devices were distributed, allowed fishermen to experience the benefits of the technology firsthand, promoting broader adoption.

However, several challenges impeded the widespread adoption of GPS tracking technology. The high cost of data plans necessary for real-time GPS tracking and the constant need for technical support posed significant financial barriers for small-scale fishermen. Additionally, exposure to harsh maritime conditions led to frequent malfunctions of the GPS devices, highlighting the need for more robust technology. These technical setbacks caused frustration among fishermen and, in some cases, led to the abandonment of the innovation.

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) offers a structured approach to understanding the factors influencing the adoption of GPS tracking technology among small-scale fishermen in the Davao Gulf. This model focuses on key determinants such as perceived usefulness and ease of use, providing insights into how fishermen integrated this technology into their daily operations. The real-time information provided by the GPS monitoring system was highly valued by fishermen, as it enhanced safety, improved navigation, and facilitated better resource management. These perceived benefits significantly increased the technology's usage and acceptance. Despite some technical challenges, many fishermen found the GPS devices relatively easy to use, especially after receiving initial training and support. This ease of use facilitated quicker adoption and integration into their routines. Moreover, the training and maintenance support provided by NGOs and local government agencies played a crucial role in

easing the adoption process. This external assistance reduced the learning curve for fishermen and helped build their confidence in using the technology.

Nevertheless, several disadvantages hindered the adoption of GPS monitoring. The technological complexities associated with the GPS devices, such as issues with exposure to seawater and maintenance requirements, negatively impacted the perceived ease of use. The high cost of data plans required for real-time GPS tracking and ongoing technical support also posed significant barriers. These expenses reduced the perceived value and feasibility of sustained use. Additionally, some fishermen were resistant to adopting new technologies due to familiarity with traditional methods and apprehension towards new systems. This resistance affected the perceived usability and overall acceptance of the technology.

Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT) provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the adoption of GPS tracking technology in the small-scale fisheries of the Davao Gulf. By analyzing factors such as social structures, communication channels, and adoption rates, IDT illuminates the benefits and drawbacks of implementing this technology. The adoption of GPS technology was significantly aided by the use of community gatherings, demonstrations, and peer recommendations. These platforms were effective in informing and persuading the community about the advantages of the new technology. The social structure and norms of the small-scale fishing communities supported the adoption of GPS technology, with leaders and early adopters playing a key role in influencing others. The ability to customize and modify the GPS technology to better suit local fishing practices also increased its acceptability. Fishermen were able to tailor the use of GPS devices to meet their specific needs, enhancing the technology's relevance and utility.

However, the adoption of GPS tracking technology faced several challenges. The adoption rate was slower than expected due to various obstacles, making it difficult to observe widespread, immediate benefits. Peer pressure and skepticism about the technology's advantages

caused some fishermen to resist adopting new practices, hindering broader adoption.

Additionally, limited technical and financial resources restricted the ability to sustain and scale the use of GPS devices. The cost of data plans and replacing malfunctioning equipment posed significant challenges for fishermen, impacting the long-term viability of the technology.

In conclusion, while GPS tracking technology offers substantial benefits for small-scale fisheries in the Davao Gulf, its successful adoption and sustained use are contingent upon overcoming significant barriers related to financial costs, technical complexities, and resistance to change. By addressing these challenges and leveraging theoretical insights from Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations, the Technology Acceptance Model, and Innovation Diffusion Theory, stakeholders can enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of GPS monitoring systems in small-scale fisheries.

#### 4.4 Case Study 4: Timor-Leste using real-time data systems in small-scale fisheries by implementing the PeskAAS system.

This case study explores the use of real-time data systems in small-scale fisheries (SSF) in Timor-Leste, analyzed through the lenses of Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations Theory, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), and the Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT). Systems like PeskAAS have been instrumental in enhancing the collection and management of fisheries data, improving decision-making processes, and supporting more sustainable fishing practices. Table 16 provides an overview of the key success factors, challenges, and insights drawn from these theoretical frameworks, assessing how real-time data technology contributes to operational improvements and the long-term sustainability of SSF communities.

*Table 16: Case Study 4. Success and Failure factors of the three theories*

	<b>Roger's DITT</b>	<b>TAM</b>	<b>IDT</b>
<b>Success Factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Relative Advantage</li> <li>▪ Compatibility</li> <li>▪ Trialability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Perceived utility</li> <li>▪ Ease of use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Networking effects</li> <li>▪ Support from leadership</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Training and support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Customization</li> </ul>
<b>Failure Factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Communications barriers</li> <li>▪ Economic barriers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Infrastructure constraints</li> <li>▪ Economic obstacles</li> <li>▪ Governance issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Resistance to Technology</li> <li>▪ Implementation Challenges</li> <li>▪ Lack of resources</li> </ul>

The implementation of the PeskAAS system in Timor-Leste's small-scale fisheries can be comprehensively analyzed through various theoretical lenses, as illustrated in Figure 4. Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations Theory provides a systematic method to understand the adoption patterns and impacts of the PeskAAS system. This theory highlights critical elements such as relative advantage, compatibility, trialability, the efficacy of communication, and resource availability, all of which significantly influence the diffusion of innovations. By using Rogers' framework, we can dissect how these factors influenced the implementation and challenges faced by PeskAAS, thereby enhancing our understanding of fisheries management and sustainability practices.

The PeskAAS system offered clear advantages over traditional manual data collection techniques by providing real-time analytics and monitoring. This relative advantage encouraged fisheries managers and small-scale fishermen to adopt the system. Its compatibility with existing processes and infrastructure, like 3G-capable Android tablets and KoBoToolbox for data collection, facilitated smooth integration and uptake. Additionally, the pilot project allowed stakeholders to test the system, reducing perceived risks and enabling modifications based on feedback. However, communication issues in areas with poor internet connectivity and infrastructural challenges might have hampered the dissemination of information regarding the benefits and functionality of PeskAAS. Moreover, the high startup costs, including building technical infrastructure and acquiring devices, posed economic barriers for some small-scale fishermen and fishery managers, making adoption more difficult.

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) provides another lens to evaluate PeskAAS implementation, emphasizing perceived utility and usability. Fishermen and fisheries managers found PeskAAS beneficial due to its potential to increase data accuracy, facilitate better decision-making, and support sustainable fishing methods. Its intuitive interface, aided by web-based dashboards and 3G-capable tablets, made the system easy to adopt and navigate. Continuous training sessions and technical assistance further improved users' comprehension and efficiency with PeskAAS, enhancing its acceptability and usefulness. However, issues with cell network coverage and internet connectivity in remote coastal areas impeded real-time data transfer and system stability. High initial costs for technology setup, such as tablets and data subscriptions, also presented financial obstacles. Periodic problems with the system, including equipment breakdowns from seawater exposure, disrupted data collection and posed challenges for consistent use.

Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT) offers a comprehensive framework for examining how PeskAAS was implemented in Timor-Leste's small-scale fishing. This theory highlights elements such as network effects, leadership support, customization, and implementation complexity, all of which influence adoption success. Strong collaborations and community networks promoted the adoption of PeskAAS and facilitated information exchange. Endorsements from local leaders and fisheries management authorities enhanced credibility and encouraged system adoption. Customizing PeskAAS to meet regional requirements and preferences increased stakeholder perception of its utility and value. However, technological resistance from individuals wary of digital solutions and unwilling to deviate from traditional practices impeded broader adoption. The difficulties of maintaining and debugging technology in maritime conditions hampered the system's reliability and efficacy. Insufficient financial resources and technical expertise further hindered the expansion and durability of PeskAAS in various fishing communities.

In conclusion, while the PeskAAS system offers substantial benefits for small-scale fisheries in Timor-Leste, its successful adoption and sustained use are contingent upon overcoming significant barriers related to communication, financial costs, technical complexities, and resistance to change. By addressing these challenges and leveraging theoretical insights from Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations, the Technology Acceptance Model, and Innovation Diffusion Theory, stakeholders can enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of real-time data systems in small-scale fisheries. This comprehensive approach ensures that technological advancements contribute to improved fisheries management and sustainable practices, benefiting both local communities and the broader marine ecosystem.

#### 4.4.1 Case Study 5: Enhanced Fish Market Information Service (EFMIS) Initiative and M-Fish app, Kenya and Uganda, Africa.

The Enhanced Fish Market Information Service (EFMIS) initiative, launched in 2009, aimed to improve market access and economic stability for small-scale fishers in Kenya and Uganda. Through the M-Fish mobile app, an SMS-based tool, EFMIS provided real-time market data on fish prices, quantities, and demand trends, empowering fishers to make informed decisions about where and when to sell their catch. By reducing dependency on intermediaries and supporting sustainable practices, EFMIS contributed to both economic resilience and resource conservation, aligning with the “Blue Economy” framework. Table 17 presents a summary of the success factors, challenges, and lessons learned, as interpreted through these theoretical frameworks, to assess the role of GPS technology in enhancing transparency, regulatory compliance, and sustainability in SSF operations.

*Table 17: Case Study 5. Success and Failure factors of the three theories*

	<b>Rogers' DITT</b>	<b>TAM</b>	<b>IDT</b>
<b>Success Factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compatibility with existing practices and SMS infrastructure</li> <li>• Trialability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High perceived usefulness due to real-time market data</li> <li>• Ease of use with</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong social networks and trusted community leaders championing</li> </ul>

	allowing gradual testing • Observability through visible economic benefits	SMS interface reducing the digital learning curve	adoption • Opinion leaders reinforcing credibility through peer influence
<b>Failure Factors</b>	• Complexity for less tech-savvy fishers • Limited support in adapting existing practices to a new digital tool	• Potential for users to underestimate benefits due to limited digital literacy • Incomplete utilization of the app's features	• Resistance in some areas where community leaders were slow to adopt • Reliance on interpersonal networks delayed full adoption in remote areas

The Enhanced Fish Market Information Service (EFMIS) and M-Fish app case study provides a rich basis for analysis through the three established theoretical frameworks—Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations Theory, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), and Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT)—to gain nuanced insights into the factors influencing technology adoption in small-scale fisheries (SSF) in Kenya and Uganda. *Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations Theory* is especially relevant here, as it identifies critical attributes influencing the rate and success of innovation adoption: compatibility, trialability, relative advantage, complexity, and observability. Compatibility was a fundamental factor, as M-Fish integrated well with the existing SMS infrastructure and aligned with fishers' practices, minimizing disruptions to their routines. Trialability also played a role, as fishers could test M-Fish's features and benefits without immediate, full-scale adoption. Moreover, observability, or the visibility of results, allowed fishers to see direct economic benefits through improved market access and reduced reliance on intermediaries, creating a feedback loop that spurred further interest and uptake. Together, these attributes addressed the main concerns of SSF communities, making M-Fish more approachable and relevant to their socioeconomic context.

TAM further clarifies the adoption dynamics by evaluating perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEOU), which directly influence users' attitudes and intentions toward adopting new technology. The PU of M-Fish was apparent as it offered real-time market insights, enabling fishers to make data-driven decisions that enhanced income stability and economic resilience. M-Fish's provision of essential pricing, demand, and market location data addressed a critical gap, thus positioning the app as a valuable tool in fishers' day-to-day operations. PEOU, achieved through the simplicity of the SMS-based interface, made M-Fish accessible to users with minimal digital literacy, an important consideration in rural, resource-constrained regions. This straightforward design minimized the learning curve, facilitating adoption even among older fishers or those new to technology. TAM's application here underscores that for a technology to gain traction, it must align closely with the perceived needs and abilities of its user base, which in the case of M-Fish translated to rapid and sustained engagement with the app.

IDT highlights the role of social structures, opinion leaders, and community influence in the technology diffusion process. In the EFMIS and M-Fish case, local cooperatives, community leaders, and early adopters were critical in championing the technology, validating its effectiveness through firsthand experiences, and encouraging broader community trust. These early adopters, often seen as opinion leaders, shared their success stories, thus amplifying M-Fish's perceived value and reducing uncertainties for other fishers who were hesitant to adopt the app. Through community gatherings and word-of-mouth communication, trusted figures promoted the app's benefits and provided informal support networks that helped new users overcome initial barriers. The IDT framework elucidates the power of peer networks in rural SSFs, where close-knit social bonds and trust are crucial for the spread of innovations. This social cohesion enabled the M-Fish app to gain credibility rapidly and positioned it as a sustainable, scalable solution for other fisheries facing similar challenges. The interplay of these

theoretical perspectives showcases M-Fish as a transformative tool in SSFs, with its adoption significantly shaped by both technological design and socio-cultural integration.

The implementation of the Enhanced Fish Market Information Service (EFMIS) and M-Fish app in Kenya and Uganda faced several notable challenges that impacted the adoption and effectiveness of this mobile-based system in small-scale fisheries (SSF). First, digital literacy emerged as a significant barrier, as many fishers had limited familiarity with mobile technology and SMS-based systems, particularly older fishers, or those in remote regions with less exposure to digital tools. This lack of technical skills created a learning curve that slowed initial adoption rates and limited the full utilization of the app's features. Additionally, cost constraints posed financial hurdles. Although the SMS-based approach minimized the need for advanced devices, the recurring costs associated with SMS queries and data access presented ongoing expenses for fishers with constrained incomes. The high initial setup costs for infrastructure, such as the central data center at KMFRI in Kisumu, also represented a considerable financial burden for project stakeholders. Finally, infrastructure limitations—especially in remote areas with unreliable mobile network coverage—restricted the app's reach and effectiveness, as real-time data could not be consistently accessed in all locations. These infrastructure gaps not only limited access to market information but also exacerbated inequalities between well-connected and poorly connected regions, affecting the overall efficacy of the initiative.

Despite these challenges, the EFMIS and M-Fish initiative offers valuable insights into the conditions that support successful technology adoption in SSFs. One crucial factor is community engagement throughout the design and implementation phases. Involving fishers, local leaders, and cooperatives from the outset fostered a sense of ownership and ensured that the system was tailored to local needs, which enhanced its relevance and acceptance. This approach underscores that participatory design not only aligns the technology with community expectations but also

builds trust, a critical factor in technology adoption in resource-limited settings. Local governance also played a key role, as partnerships with organizations like the Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute (KMFRI) strengthened the system's credibility and provided a reliable framework for data management and dissemination. Furthermore, continuous support—including technical training, troubleshooting, and community-based assistance—was essential in maintaining system functionality and ensuring fishers could utilize the app's features effectively over time. These insights suggest that sustained investment in community engagement, local governance structures, and support systems is fundamental for the long-term success of mobile technology initiatives in SSFs. Addressing these factors can help optimize EFMIS and M-Fish's impact and provide a model for similar projects aiming to integrate technology in rural, resource-constrained fisheries.

#### 4.5 Comparative Analysis of Case Studies and Key Lessons for Technology for SSFs viability.

This chapter has undertaken a thorough examination of the implementation of various technological innovations in small-scale fisheries (SSF) across different geographic and socio-economic contexts. By analyzing the case studies of mobile-based fisheries management in Southeast Asia, community-based monitoring in Latin America, GPS monitoring in Philippine small-scale fisheries, and the PeskAAS system in Timor-Leste, through the lenses of Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations Theory, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), and Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT), we have gleaned significant insights into the dynamics of technology adoption and its implications for fisheries management. Tables 18, 19 and 20 below summarize the common themes, challenges and opportunities as well as key insights that can be gleaned from this analysis.

Table 18: Common themes from the case studies

<b><u>Common Themes</u></b>	<b><u>Mobile-Based Fisheries Management (Southeast Asia)</u></b>	<b><u>Community-Based Monitoring (Latin America)</u></b>	<b><u>GPS Monitoring (Philippines)</u></b>	<b><u>PeskAAS System (Timor-Leste)</u></b>	<b><u>EFMIS and M-Fish (Kenya and Uganda)</u></b>
<b>Perceived Advantages and Utility</b>	Real-time market data, weather reports, and demand forecasts	Sustainability and decreased illicit fishing	Enhanced resource management, safety, and navigation	Accurate data collecting and improved decision-making.	Real-time market data, reduced reliance on intermediaries, income stability
<b>Compatibility with Existing Practices</b>	Adjusting to the customs and communication requirements of fishers	respecting regional knowledge and customs	compatibility with regular schedules and navigation techniques	Adherence to defined procedures for gathering data.	SMS-based system accessible and compatible with local fishing practices
<b>Assistance and Instruction</b>	Demonstrations and workshops	Training for community members	Governmental and non-governmental organizations' assistance.	Continuous training sessions and technical support.	Community engagement, training on SMS usage and data interpretation

Table 19: Common Challenges from the case studies

<b><u>Common Challenges</u></b>	<b><u>Mobile-Based Fisheries Management (Southeast Asia)</u></b>	<b><u>Community-Based Monitoring (Latin America)</u></b>	<b><u>GPS Monitoring (Philippines)</u></b>	<b><u>PeskAAS System (Timor-Leste)</u></b>	<b><u>EFMIS and M-Fish (Kenya and Uganda)</u></b>
<b>Technical and Financial Barriers</b>	The intricacy of the mobile system and the expense of mobile devices	Funding requirements and technological expertise	GPS gadget technical issues and data plan costs	Elevated initial setup expense and Equipment malfunction	SMS costs for data access, high setup costs, and limited network infrastructure
<b>Resistance to Change and Digital Literacy</b>	Challenge of technology for elderly fishermen	opposition because of customs and cultural norms	Certain Fisherman's reluctance to use new technologies.	Skepticism of digital solutions and inclination toward customs	Limited digital literacy, especially among older fishers, resistance due to reliance on traditional methods

<b>Infrastructure Restraints</b>	Internet connectivity issues in rural places	Inadequate logistical and technological facilities	Issues with GPS devices exposed to seawater.	Problems with cell network coverage and system stability	Inconsistent mobile network coverage, especially in remote fishing areas
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Table 20: Key Insights from the case studies

<b>Aspects</b>	<b>Key Insights</b>
<b>Perceived Benefits &amp; Use</b>	Improved resource management, sustainability, and real-time data
<b>Compatibility</b>	Respect for local expertise, traditions, and customs and alignment with established protocols
<b>Support and Training</b>	Vitality of instruction, demonstrations, and ongoing assistance
<b>Barriers</b>	Cultural conventions, financial expenses, difficulties with digital literacy, and technical complexity
<b>Infrastructure Resistance</b>	Strong infrastructure and consistent connectivity are essential.
<b>Lesson Learned</b>	Overcoming the digital literacy gap and guaranteeing dependable technology, efficient stakeholder involvement, and communication

Across all case studies, certain commonalities emerged that underscore the essential elements of successful technology adoption. First, the relative advantage provided by new technologies—such as increased operational efficiency, improved resource management, and enhanced safety—was a critical factor in encouraging adoption among SSF communities. Compatibility with existing practices and the ability to trial the technology before full-scale implementation also played pivotal roles in easing the transition and reducing perceived risks. Moreover, effective communication, training, and external support were consistently highlighted as key facilitators of technology adoption.

However, each case study also revealed significant barriers that hindered the diffusion of innovations. Financial constraints, such as the high initial costs and ongoing expenses associated with technological tools, emerged as a recurring obstacle. Technical complexities and

infrastructure limitations, particularly in remote and resource-poor areas, further impeded the widespread use and sustainability of these innovations. Additionally, resistance to change, stemming from entrenched cultural practices and skepticism towards new technologies, posed challenges to broader adoption.

While Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations Theory provided a robust framework for understanding the stages and factors influencing technology adoption, it sometimes fell short in addressing the deeper socio-economic and infrastructural challenges that uniquely affect SSF communities. Similarly, while the Technology Acceptance Model effectively elucidated the importance of perceived usefulness and ease of use, it often overlooked the broader systemic issues that influence these perceptions. Innovation Diffusion Theory offered valuable insights into the social dynamics and network effects critical to adoption, but it too struggled with the complexities of maintaining and scaling technological interventions in challenging environments.

To forge a more comprehensive understanding of technology adoption in SSF, it is imperative to synthesize these theoretical perspectives, acknowledging their strengths while addressing their limitations. An integrated theoretical model should emphasize the multifaceted nature of technology diffusion, incorporating economic, technical, social, and cultural dimensions. This model would not only consider the relative advantage, compatibility, trialability, and communication channels highlighted by Rogers but also integrate TAM's focus on perceived usefulness and ease of use, while addressing the social structures and leadership influences underscored by IDT.

Such a hybrid theory would advocate for a participatory approach to technology implementation, ensuring that SSF communities are actively involved in the design, trial, and scaling phases of technological projects. It would stress the importance of tailoring interventions to local contexts, leveraging existing social networks, and securing sustained financial and technical support. Moreover, this integrated model would underscore the necessity of addressing

broader systemic barriers—such as infrastructural inadequacies and socio-economic disparities—to create an enabling environment for sustainable technology adoption.

In conclusion, while each theoretical framework offers valuable insights, their integration provides a more holistic approach to understanding and facilitating technology adoption in small-scale fisheries. This comprehensive perspective is crucial for developing strategies that not only enhance the operational efficiency and sustainability of SSF but also empower these communities to thrive amidst evolving technological landscapes.

#### 4.6 Recommendations for Policymakers, Practitioners, and Researchers

Theoretical evaluations of small-scale fisheries case studies suggest that policymakers should boost digital literacy among fishermen while simultaneously investing in improved remote region infrastructure for better technology access and cost. To honor customs, practitioners should streamline technological interfaces, offer continuing assistance, and test innovations in small-scale settings. To find customized solutions, researchers should concentrate on long-term effect assessments, identifying context-specific hurdles, and participating in participatory research. These initiatives seek to improve livelihoods in small-scale fisheries worldwide and promote the adoption of sustainable technologies.

##### 4.6.1 Future Implications

To improve the uptake of technology and sustainability, future studies in small-scale fisheries should concentrate on several crucial areas. Understanding the long-term impacts of technology on fisheries management and socioeconomic results requires long-term impact evaluations. Research that is tailored to the specific context is required to pinpoint and resolve obstacles such as infrastructural constraints and a lack of digital literacy that impedes the adoption of technology in various urban and rural contexts. Developing customized technology solutions that fit regional needs and customs will be made possible by participating in participatory research. For this industry to develop sustainably, it is also critical to investigate

methods for modifying technology to the operational realities of small-scale fisheries, evaluate the efficacy of policies, analyze the effects on the environment, and guarantee economic sustainability.

## 5 Summary and Conclusions

The central aim of this thesis is to investigate how technology diffusion can support the sustainability and viability of small-scale fisheries (SSF), particularly in vulnerable communities. This research addresses the significant role technology plays in overcoming challenges such as inefficient resource management, overfishing, and socio-economic instability within SSFs. The objective is to assess the transformative impact of technological solutions such as GPS monitoring, mobile applications, and real-time data systems on these fishing communities. The scope of the study spans multiple geographic regions and examines a variety of technologies, focusing on how they improve economic, ecological, and social outcomes for SSFs. This research is particularly relevant because SSFs, though responsible for a significant portion of global fish production, often operate in marginalized contexts, where access to resources and governance is limited. By identifying barriers to technology adoption and evaluating the success of technology integration efforts, the study provides insights that contribute to improving livelihoods and promoting sustainable practices within SSFs.

The integrated theoretical framework showcases multiple perspectives, including Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), and Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT). These theories offer a lens through which the adoption of technology in small-scale fishing communities can be understood, particularly in terms of perceived benefits, ease of use, and the role of social networks. Case studies from regions such as Southeast Asia, Latin America, Philippines and Kenya are used to ground these theories in real-world examples, showcasing both the potential and the challenges of technological diffusion in these communities.

The spatial and temporal nature of technology diffusion reveals the complex dynamics of how innovations spread and are adopted within small-scale fisheries (SSFs) across diverse

regions. Spatially, the diffusion of technology is influenced by differences in infrastructure, socio-economic conditions, and cultural contexts, which determine how accessible and applicable new tools are to specific communities. For instance, regions with robust digital infrastructure and greater economic resources, such as urban fishing hubs in Southeast Asia, experience a more seamless adoption of mobile applications and GPS systems. In contrast, remote areas with limited connectivity, such as certain coastal regions in Kenya, face significant challenges in adopting the same technologies due to inadequate infrastructure and lower digital literacy rates. These disparities underscore the critical importance of designing spatially tailored interventions that address the unique challenges of each geographic context.

Temporally, the rate of technology adoption evolves over time, shaped by external factors such as funding availability, policy changes, economic stability, and environmental pressures. Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations theory provides a valuable lens for understanding these temporal dynamics, particularly its emphasis on early adopters and the role of time in reaching critical adoption thresholds. Early adopters, often located in regions with favorable conditions, serve as catalysts for the diffusion process by demonstrating the benefits of the technology and influencing subsequent adopters. However, in regions with systemic barriers such as financial constraints or weak governance frameworks, the adoption process is more prolonged, requiring sustained support and iterative interventions to overcome these hurdles.

Case studies discussed highlight these spatial and temporal dynamics, illustrating how the context-specific conditions of SSFs shape adoption trajectories. For example, urban fishers in Southeast Asia benefit from better internet coverage and government-supported mobile-based fisheries management systems, leading to quicker uptake and integration of technology. On the other hand, small-scale fishers in remote Kenyan communities face delayed adoption due to limited infrastructure, higher costs, and the need for additional capacity-building programs.

These temporal disparities emphasize the necessity of long-term planning, where technology diffusion strategies are adapted to evolving conditions and continuously monitored for progress.

By tying these insights to Rogers' framework, it becomes evident that both spatial and temporal dimensions are pivotal in shaping the success of technology diffusion. Policymakers and practitioners must not only consider the geographical and socio-economic diversity of SSFs but also recognize that adoption is a dynamic, time-sensitive process that requires iterative adaptation. Addressing these spatial-temporal disparities ensures that technology adoption efforts are inclusive and equitable, bridging the gap between regions with varying levels of readiness and resources.

In understanding the nuances of technology diffusion in small-scale fisheries (SSFs), it is critical to consider the spatial and temporal dimensions of diffusion, the processes of adoption and adaptation, and the role of feedback loops within the integrated framework. These elements provide a deeper understanding of how technologies evolve within specific contexts, how communities integrate these tools into their existing practices, and how iterative processes of learning and adjustment can enhance the sustainability and effectiveness of technology adoption. By examining these dynamics, this section seeks to highlight the interconnectedness of spatial, temporal, and adaptive factors, illustrating their critical role in shaping the outcomes of technological interventions within SSFs.

Technology plays a critical role in enhancing the sustainability and viability of small-scale fisheries (SSFs) by addressing inefficiencies and fostering better resource management. In SSFs, the adoption of GPS systems, mobile applications, and real-time monitoring technologies like PeskaAS has significantly improved operational efficiency and data accuracy. For example, GPS technologies aid in navigation and monitoring fishing zones, helping to prevent overfishing,

while mobile applications provide fishers with essential real-time information on weather conditions, market prices, and regulatory updates. These technological advancements not only boost catch efficiency but also lower costs, promote safety, and contribute to better conservation practices. Furthermore, the introduction of real-time data systems has had far-reaching economic, ecological, and social impacts on SSFs. Economically, these technologies reduce operational costs and improve market access, thus increasing fishers' income. Ecologically, they promote sustainable fishing practices, which help conserve marine resources and prevent overfishing. Socially, technology empowers marginalized communities by improving their ability to manage fisheries and access vital information for better decision-making.

However, the adoption of technology in SSFs is not without challenges. Financial constraints remain one of the primary barriers, as many fishers and communities lack the capital to invest in necessary technologies. Additionally, technical capacity is often limited, with many fishers lacking the training or knowledge to effectively use advanced tools. Institutional obstacles also play a role, including unclear regulatory frameworks, inadequate infrastructure, and bureaucratic inefficiencies that slow down technology adoption. Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach. Community involvement is essential, as local engagement can help ensure that technologies are tailored to specific needs and are more readily adopted. Strengthening governance frameworks and providing financial and technical support are also crucial for overcoming these barriers. Training programs, capacity-building initiatives, and partnerships with financial institutions can significantly ease the transition to a more technology-driven approach in SSFs.

The process of technology adoption in small-scale fisheries (SSFs) is not linear but often requires significant adaptation to align with local contexts. Adoption depends on the extent to which technologies resonate with the cultural practices, existing workflows, and unique needs of

the communities they aim to serve. For marginalized SSF communities, where traditional fishing methods and socio-cultural norms play a dominant role, technology adoption succeeds only when the innovations are perceived as compatible with these entrenched practices. The iterative nature of this process underscores the need for adaptive solutions that evolve alongside the communities' capacities and requirements.

Adaptation often involves refining or modifying technologies to address challenges such as technical complexity, infrastructure limitations, or resistance due to socio-cultural factors. For instance, in Southeast Asia, the introduction of mobile applications for fisheries management highlighted the need to simplify interfaces and offer localized content in regional languages. Similarly, in the Philippines, the implementation of GPS systems required sustained community engagement to address early skepticism and ensure that the tools complemented the fishers' existing navigation practices. These examples demonstrate how technology adaptation, guided by community feedback, can mitigate barriers such as digital illiteracy, technical malfunctions, and cultural resistance. Community champions and intermediary organizations play a pivotal role in facilitating the adaptation process. Champions—often respected figures within the community—serve as role models, demonstrating the benefits of new technologies and fostering trust among hesitant users. Intermediary organizations, such as NGOs and cooperatives, act as enablers by providing resources, training, and ongoing support to bridge the gap between technology providers and end-users. Their involvement ensures that adaptation efforts remain community-driven and context-sensitive, building a sense of ownership that is critical for long-term adoption.

Co-creation practices are central to successful adaptation, as they allow for technologies to be tailored to meet user needs more effectively. By engaging fishers and other stakeholders in the design and implementation process, co-creation fosters a collaborative environment where

technologies are not imposed but developed in partnership with the community. This participatory approach ensures that solutions address specific challenges while leveraging local knowledge, thereby increasing the likelihood of sustained adoption. Ultimately, the integration of adoption and adaptation processes highlights the dynamic relationship between communities and technological innovations. Rather than viewing adoption as a one-time event, this iterative approach acknowledges that adaptation is an ongoing process, shaped by community feedback and evolving conditions. By emphasizing community involvement, intermediary support, and co-creation practices, the adoption process becomes more inclusive, responsive, and sustainable, ensuring that technological solutions have a meaningful and lasting impact on SSF communities.

Theoretical frameworks such as Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations (DIT), the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), and Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT) provide valuable insights into the patterns of technology adoption in SSFs. Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations focuses on how communication and social networks influence the adoption process, while TAM emphasizes the perceived usefulness and ease of use of new technologies. IDT highlights the importance of interpersonal communication, social networks, and the role of change agents in the adoption process. These frameworks help explain the varying rates of technology adoption in marginalized SSF communities. For instance, technologies that align with local needs and are seen as easy to use are more likely to be adopted. Additionally, the presence of opinion leaders or community champions can accelerate diffusion, while structural barriers like limited infrastructure or socio-cultural resistance can hinder the process. By integrating these theories, a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing technology adoption in SSFs can be achieved.

In Southeast Asia, mobile-based fisheries management systems have been implemented to address the significant challenges faced by small-scale fisheries (SSF), such as limited access

to market information, fluctuating prices, and inefficient supply chain management. Before adoption, fishers relied on outdated methods for market data, which led to inefficiencies and poor bargaining power. The introduction of mobile applications allowed fishers to receive real-time information on market prices, weather forecasts, and fishing demand projections. This greatly enhanced decision-making processes, improving efficiency and enabling fishers to negotiate better prices. These mobile solutions also facilitated ethical fishing practices by providing data on optimal fishing times and species. However, the adoption of these technologies also presented challenges, including digital literacy gaps, internet access issues, and socio-economic disparities that favored wealthier fishers. Overall, mobile-based technologies increased productivity and profitability but highlighted the need for more inclusive access.

In Latin America, community-based monitoring systems have been crucial in promoting sustainable fishing practices and enhancing governance in SSFs. Before implementation, local communities struggled with illegal fishing and overexploitation due to a lack of monitoring tools. The introduction of community-based monitoring allowed these communities to collect and analyze fisheries data, enforcing local regulations and engaging in conservation efforts. This participatory approach, which included citizen science projects and community patrols, fostered greater ownership and accountability among fishers, empowering them to actively protect resources. These systems not only improved adherence to laws but also strengthened community ties and integration. Nonetheless, challenges such as limited infrastructure and resistance to new practices due to deeply rooted traditional fishing methods hindered broader adoption. The success of these programs emphasizes the importance of community engagement in sustainable resource management, though they require more robust governance frameworks for long-term success.

In the Philippines, the implementation of GPS tracking systems in SSFs within the Davao Gulf provided significant improvements in resource management and operational safety. Before adopting this technology, fishers relied on manual methods, leading to inaccurate data and poor enforcement of regulations. The GPS tracking system allowed authorities to monitor fishing activities in real-time, accurately mapping fishing grounds and identifying overfished areas. This data-driven approach also improved navigation and safety, reducing risks at sea. Despite these positive outcomes, technical challenges such as equipment malfunctions due to seawater exposure, high data plan costs, and the need for continuous technical support limited the broader adoption of GPS systems. Early community involvement and the development of affordable, resilient technology were key lessons from this case, underscoring the need for continuous support and education to ensure sustained adoption.

In Timor-Leste, the PeskAAS real-time data system was implemented to address inefficient data collection and resource management in SSFs. Prior to this system, data gathering was manual and often unreliable, which contributed to overfishing and economic instability. PeskAAS provided fishers with 3G-enabled devices to record catch data, which was uploaded to a central database and analyzed via a web-hosted application. This system improved operational efficiency, increased market stability, and promoted sustainable fishing practices by providing fisheries managers with real-time data to enforce regulations. Despite its success, the system faced challenges related to infrastructure, including unreliable internet coverage in remote areas and the high initial setup costs. However, PeskAAS demonstrated the potential to transform fisheries management by promoting economic resilience and sustainability through technology.

In Kenya and Uganda, the Enhanced Fish Market Information Service (EFMIS) and M-Fish app were introduced to address the lack of real-time market data and the economic challenges facing small-scale fishers. Before EFMIS, fishers heavily relied on intermediaries for

market information, leading to inequitable pricing and reduced income stability. The SMS-based M-Fish app enabled fishers to access up-to-date data on fish prices, demand, and optimal selling locations, empowering them to make informed decisions and negotiate fairer prices. This initiative significantly enhanced market transparency, operational efficiency, and income resilience for fishers while supporting sustainable fishing practices aligned with the "Blue Economy" principles. Despite these successes, EFMIS faced challenges, including limited mobile network coverage in remote areas, digital literacy barriers, and ongoing SMS costs. Nonetheless, the EFMIS initiative showcased the transformative potential of mobile technology in fostering economic resilience and sustainability in artisanal fisheries.

Across all case studies, the adoption of technology in SSFs provided substantial benefits in terms of resource management, sustainability, and economic outcomes. However, common challenges such as financial constraints, technical barriers, and resistance to change were observed. These case studies highlight the importance of early community engagement, continuous technical support, and the development of tailored solutions that align with local needs and traditions. They also underscore the need for comprehensive governance structures to support the long-term success of technology-driven solutions in small-scale fisheries.

Across the case studies, several common themes emerged regarding the impact of technology adoption in small-scale fisheries (SSFs). Improved resource management and operational efficiency were consistent outcomes, with technologies such as mobile applications, GPS tracking, and real-time monitoring systems enhancing fishers' abilities to navigate, track, and conserve fishing resources. Economic stability also improved across case studies, with technologies enabling fishers to make more informed decisions, reduce costs, and improve their access to markets. However, variations in outcomes were observed based on regional and socio-economic contexts. For example, in some regions, fishers with better financial resources adopted

technologies more readily, whereas in others, socio-cultural resistance or infrastructure limitations posed significant challenges.

Common challenges across the case studies included financial constraints, technical capacity limitations, and infrastructural barriers. In many cases, the high initial costs of purchasing and maintaining technologies such as GPS devices or mobile systems were a significant hurdle for SSF communities. In regions with poor infrastructure, unreliable internet connectivity or limited access to electricity compounded these challenges, making it difficult for fishers to use these technologies consistently. Additionally, socio-cultural resistance was a recurring barrier, particularly in communities where traditional fishing methods were deeply ingrained. Fishermen in these areas were often reluctant to adopt new technologies, fearing that they would disrupt their traditional practices or fail to deliver the promised benefits.

From these case studies, several key lessons were learned. One critical insight is the importance of early and sustained community engagement. Involving fishers in the design and implementation of technological solutions ensured that the technologies were tailored to their specific needs and were more likely to be adopted. Effective governance structures were also crucial, as they provided the necessary regulatory frameworks and institutional support to facilitate the adoption and use of technology. Additionally, the need for ongoing technical support and training was highlighted as essential for ensuring long-term success. These lessons underscore the importance of flexibility, capacity building, and community-driven approaches in the successful diffusion of technology in SSFs.

Policymakers play a crucial role in facilitating the adoption of technology in small-scale fisheries (SSF) by creating supportive governance frameworks and addressing the systemic barriers that prevent widespread implementation. Strengthening regulatory systems and improving coordination between government agencies and local communities are essential to

ensure that policies support the integration of innovative tools. Building reliable infrastructure is equally important, especially in remote regions where limited access to electricity and the internet inhibits the use of digital tools. Policymakers should also prioritize providing financial aid through microcredit initiatives and subsidies that help fishers invest in new technology. Offering ongoing technical training to fishers can further ensure that they can effectively use these tools, thus boosting both efficiency and sustainability in their operations.

For practitioners, including NGOs, community leaders, and local organizations, fostering community participation is key to successful technology diffusion. Practical steps involve engaging fishers in decision-making processes to ensure that the technologies being implemented address their specific needs. Practitioners should focus on designing simple, user-friendly interfaces and ensure that ongoing technical support is available. Additionally, organizing peer-learning programs and demonstration projects can help build trust and accelerate the adoption of new technologies. By fostering strong community engagement and collaboration, practitioners can bridge the gap between technological innovations and the traditional practices of SSF communities.

The integrated framework for technology adoption in small-scale fisheries (SSFs) presented is inherently dynamic, which incorporates feedback loops that facilitate continuous learning and adaptation. These feedback loops play a crucial role in refining interventions, ensuring that they remain responsive to the evolving needs, challenges, and contexts of SSF communities. By integrating feedback from stakeholders—such as fishers, community leaders, and intermediary organizations—into the policy, design, and implementation processes, the framework ensures that technological solutions are not only sustainable but also equitable and effective.

Feedback loops address barriers by creating an iterative process in which community input informs adjustments to technologies, training programs, and governance frameworks. For example, fishers in Kenya using mobile applications for market information reported challenges with digital literacy and high SMS costs. This feedback led to the development of simplified interfaces and alternative pricing models to make the technology more accessible. Similarly, in Timor-Leste, the PeskAAS real-time data system was enhanced to include robust offline functionality after fishers highlighted issues with unreliable internet connectivity in remote areas. These examples illustrate how feedback loops ensure that technologies evolve to meet user needs more effectively, addressing unforeseen challenges and enhancing adoption rates.

The interplay between the sociocultural, cognitive, political-economic, and contextual dynamics layers of the framework is central to how feedback loops function. For instance, feedback from the sociocultural layer, such as community preferences or cultural norms, can inform the design of training programs and outreach strategies. At the same time, insights from the psychological-cognitive layer, such as perceived ease of use or usefulness, may guide adjustments to the technical features of a tool. Political-economic feedback, such as policy gaps or financial challenges, can shape interventions like subsidies or microloans, while contextual dynamics, such as regional infrastructure disparities, can guide the localization of technologies.

Incorporating feedback loops into the framework also fosters stronger governance frameworks and promotes sustained adoption. By institutionalizing feedback mechanisms—such as community consultations, participatory monitoring, or regular user surveys—stakeholders can identify and address barriers in real-time. These mechanisms also enhance trust and engagement among users, as fishers see their input reflected in tangible changes to the technologies and programs they rely on. For example, iterative consultations in Southeast Asia led to the

integration of region-specific weather forecasting features into mobile-based fisheries management systems, increasing their relevance and usability for local fishers.

Ultimately, feedback loops transform the integrated framework into a living system that evolves with the communities it serves. They ensure that technology diffusion is not a one-size-fits-all approach but a responsive, adaptive process grounded in real-world experiences. By linking community input with actionable changes across all layers of the framework, feedback loops drive more inclusive and effective outcomes, strengthening the overall impact of technology adoption efforts in SSFs.

Researchers have a significant role in identifying emerging challenges and future research areas that can enhance the adoption of technology in SSFs. One key area for future studies is long-term impact evaluations to assess how technologies influence both fisheries management and socio-economic outcomes. Additionally, more case studies focusing on gender-specific challenges in technology adoption are needed, particularly in areas where women play a crucial role in SSF operations but face cultural or economic barriers to accessing technology. Technological innovations such as artificial intelligence (AI), blockchain for traceability, and advanced monitoring tools offer promising avenues for further exploration. Researchers can also investigate how these new technologies could be adapted for SSF contexts to ensure they promote sustainability and resilience in vulnerable communities.

## 5.1 Limitations of the Study

This study focuses on the diffusion of technology in small-scale fisheries (SSF), but there are several limitations that must be acknowledged. One primary limitation is the regional focus of the case studies, which are centered on specific geographical areas such as Southeast Asia, Latin America, the Philippines, Timor-Leste and Africa. While these regions provide valuable

insights, the findings may not fully represent the diversity of challenges and opportunities faced by SSFs globally. Additionally, data availability was sometimes restricted, as consistent and comprehensive data on technology adoption and its long-term impacts were not always accessible for all regions. This limitation may have influenced the depth of analysis, particularly in areas where data was incomplete or unreliable.

The scope of the study is also limited by the number of case studies examined. While the selected case studies offer a range of perspectives, they may not capture the full spectrum of technology applications in SSFs, especially in areas with differing socio-economic and environmental conditions. The study also encountered challenges in assessing long-term impacts, as many of the technological interventions are still in their early stages, making it difficult to draw conclusions about their sustainability or overall effectiveness.

To overcome these limitations in future research, broader geographic coverage should be sought to include more diverse SSF contexts. Additionally, expanding the number of case studies would provide a more comprehensive view of how technology is adopted and adapted in different regions. Future studies should also prioritize longitudinal research to track the long-term impacts of technology adoption on both resource sustainability and economic resilience. Collaborating with local organizations to improve data collection and access could help mitigate issues related to data availability, ensuring that future analyses are more robust and inclusive.

## 5.2 Conclusion

This thesis has highlighted the critical role that technology plays in the sustainable development of small-scale fisheries (SSF), particularly in marginalized and vulnerable communities. Through the adoption of technological solutions such as mobile applications, GPS systems, and real-time data platforms, SSFs can improve operational efficiency, resource management, and market access, contributing to both economic resilience and ecological

sustainability. The research demonstrates that technology can empower SSF communities by enhancing their capacity to adapt to the evolving challenges posed by environmental degradation, overfishing, and climate change. While the benefits of technology adoption in SSFs are evident, this research also acknowledges the complex barriers that impede widespread technology diffusion. Financial constraints, lack of technical capacity, and inadequate infrastructure remain significant challenges, particularly in under-resourced regions. The study underscores the importance of addressing these barriers through targeted policy interventions, capacity-building initiatives, and improved governance frameworks. Moreover, community engagement and participatory approaches are essential to ensure that technology adoption is inclusive and responsive to the specific needs and traditions of SSF communities.

The broader implications of this research extend beyond the realm of SSFs. The findings emphasize the importance of technology diffusion in fostering sustainable development in marginalized communities more generally. By addressing systemic inequities and ensuring equitable access to technological tools, policymakers, practitioners, and researchers can contribute to the creation of resilient, self-sustaining communities. As technology continues to evolve, its potential to drive positive social, economic, and environmental change in vulnerable populations remains significant. Moving forward, ongoing research and collaboration will be essential to ensure that technology adoption supports both sustainability and equity in these critical global sectors.

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