

# SETTING PRIORITIES FOR ACCESSIBLE COMMUNICATIONS@SEA SOLUTIONS FOR SMALL-SCALE FISHERS WORKSHOP

under the ITU/CTU/TATT Smart Seas Toolkit for Disaster Resilience ("Smart Seas") Project

## Overview of Agenda for Accessible Communications@Sea 4 SSF Activity

Fishing is one of the world's most dangerous jobs. Small-scale fishers (SSF), who comprise over 90% of the world's capture fisheries fleet and ply their trade in small, undecked crafts, are highly vulnerable to disasters while at sea which include, inter alia, piracy, adverse weather, and disasters resulting from climate change. Recognizing that information and communications technologies (ICTs) may be beneficial to all four phases of the disaster management cycle, and that gaps to accessible communications at sea solutions exist for SSF, the Smart Seas Project sets out to co-develop, with an international community, an *Agenda for Accessible Communications at Sea Solutions for SSF*, thereafter referred to as the "*Agenda Report*".

The Agenda Report outlines multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder priorities to bridge gaps to accessible communications at sea for SSF, considering accessible communications to be a multi-dimensional problem which required multi-dimensional solutions. The report will be drafted over the period Dec 2023 - Mar 2024, concluding with an in-person Setting Priorities for Accessible Communications at Sea Solutions for SSF Workshop thereafter referred to as "*Priorities Workshop*" in Trinidad and Tobago, to review, and finalize the Report, for onward publishing to the international community.

## Background

### The Smart Seas Project

The Smart Seas Toolkit for Disaster Resilience ("*Smart Seas*") Project is a joint initiative of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), Caribbean Telecommunications Union (CTU) and the Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (TATT), supported by the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. It sets out to increase the resilience and ultimately preserve the lives of Caribbean small-scale fishers (SSF) through information and communications technologies (ICTs), with emphasis on the enabling environment. Its three-dimensional scope covers:

1. *Geographic area*: Trinidad and Tobago's Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre (MRCC), which covers Barbados, Grenada as well as St. Vincent and the Grenadines
2. *Problem space*: maritime communications
3. *Beneficiary sector*: fisheries, with emphasis on SSF

The Project's activities include:

1. Conducting a *Gap Analysis of the Maritime Communications Enabling Environment*, from which gap-filling recommendations are produced under consultation with key stakeholders
2. Developing an online toolkit (*Smart Seas Toolkit*), to strengthen the maritime communications enabling environment
3. Virtually *training* agencies within the Project's beneficiary countries on the Toolkit
4. Co-developing, with agents and agencies from an international community, an *Agenda for Accessible Communications @ Sea Solutions for Small-scale Fishers (Agenda Report)*

### An Agenda for Accessible Comms@Sea for SSF

Recognizing that there may be a number of barriers to accessible communications at sea (comms@sea) solutions for SSF, the *Agenda for Accessible Comms@Sea Solutions for SSF* activity sets out to co-develop, with an international, multi-stakeholder community, a tiered list of priorities to enable accessible comms@sea for SSF, thereby reducing the risks associated with gaps in access to comms as well as necessary lifesaving as well as livelihood supporting data. These priorities will be captured over the period Dec 2023 - Mar 2024 through synchronous as well as asynchronous engagement with stakeholders, leading up to a hybrid, "*Setting Priorities for Accessible Comms@Sea Solutions for SSF*", workshop on 11-12 Mar 2024 in Trinidad and Tobago. During this Workshop, the Agenda Report will be finalized and submitted to the Project Partners for their approval and publishing to the international community.

## Aim and Objectives

The *Agenda for Accessible Comms@Sea Solutions for SSF* activity sets out to assemble a loose, global community to develop a tiered list of priorities across multiple stakeholder groups, to improve the accessibility of comms@sea for SSF. Its specific objectives are to:

1. Consult with multi-sectoral stakeholders on the issues, interests & possible solutions to increase the accessibility of comms@sea for SSF
2. Assess the state of accessible comms@sea and data for SSF
3. Co-author & publish international priorities for accessible comms@ sea for SSF, following 2-day hybrid workshop (Trinidad; 11-12 Mar 2024)

## Contributing Stakeholder Groups

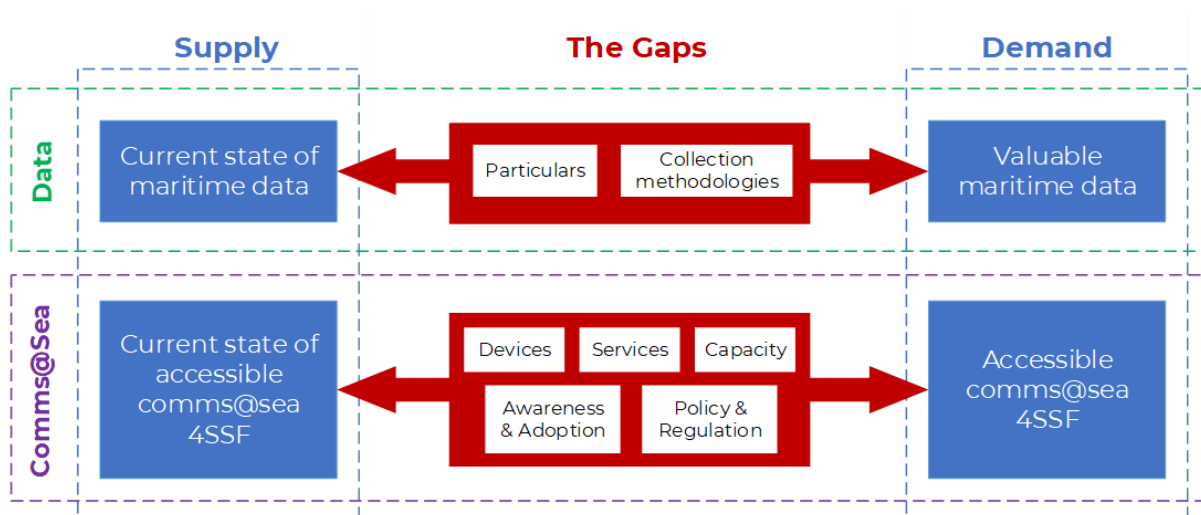
- Research institutions
- Standards bodies
- Manufacturers
- Service providers
- Fisheries authorities
- Meteorological (MET) services
- Entrepreneurs
- Policy makers
- Spectrum management agencies (SMAs)
- Maritime administrations (MARADs)
- MRCCs & coast stations
- Fisheries organizations (orgs)
- Disaster management agencies (DMAs)
- Other relevant agents & agencies

## Scope of Work

The Agenda Report recognizes that assessing accessible communications and its supporting data are multi-dimensional in nature, and proposes the following dimensions of focus:

- |             |                                    |             |
|-------------|------------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Devices  | 2. Services                        | 3. Capacity |
| 4. Adoption | 5. Policy & Regulatory Environment |             |

These dimensions draw on existing evaluations of accessible, affordable communications and connectivity from the ITU<sup>1</sup>, Alliance for Affordable Internet (A4AI)<sup>2</sup>, Broadband Commission on Sustainable Development<sup>3</sup>, etc. As such, the gaps between what currently exists (the supply side) and what is required for accessible comms@sea (the demand side) are represented the figure below.



<sup>1</sup> ITU. 2020. Manual for measuring ICT access and use by households and individuals 2020 edition. Available at [https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Documents/publications/manual/ITUManualHouseholds2020\\_E.pdf](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Documents/publications/manual/ITUManualHouseholds2020_E.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> A4AI. 2021. Affordability Drivers Index (ADI). Available at <https://a4ai.org/research/affordability-drivers-index/>

<sup>3</sup> Broadband Commission on Sustainable Development. Make Broadband Affordable. Available at: <https://www.broadbandcommission.org/advocacy-targets/2-affordability/>

## Workshop Plan

<b>Name:</b>	Setting Priorities for Accessible Communications at Sea Solutions for Small-Scale Fishers Workshop	
<b>Date:</b>	11 - 12 Mar 2024	
<b>Times:</b>	09:00 AM - 16:30 PM (AST)	
<b>Modality:</b>	Hybrid (Hyatt Regency, Trinidad and Tobago)	
<b>Aims &amp; Objectives:</b>	<p>To assemble a loose, global community to develop a tiered list of priorities across multiple stakeholder groups, to improve the accessibility of comms@sea for SSF. Its specific objectives are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consult with multi-sectoral stakeholders on the issues, interests &amp; possible solutions to increase the accessibility of comms@sea for SSF</li> <li>• Identify priorities for accessible comms@sea for SSF</li> <li>• Co-author &amp; publish international Report for accessible comms@ sea for SSF, following 2-day hybrid workshop</li> </ul>	
<b>Provisional Agenda:</b>	<p><b>Day 1: 11 Mar 2024</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registration &amp; badging</li> <li>• Welcome remarks</li> <li>• Agenda overview</li> <li>• Working Group sessions</li> <li>• Day 1 summary &amp; consensus</li> </ul>	<p><b>Day 2: 12 Mar 2024</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Day 2 opening &amp; Day 1 recap</li> <li>• Working Group sessions</li> <li>• Agenda sign-off</li> <li>• Closure</li> </ul>

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