

Mangrove Crabs Make Me Happy

In September 2004, Skillshare International placed development worker Sarojakshan on a placement as a Fisheries Technical Adviser at the Institute for the Development of Small Scale Fisheries (IDPPE) in Mozambique.

As a result of new equipment provided by IDPPE, with Sarojakshan's support, mangrove crab fishermen in the small village of Mithuco in Angoche district have more than doubled their daily income.

IDPPE is a small scale fisheries institute under the direct responsibility of the government. Skillshare International works in partnership with IDPPE to build their capacity to deliver rural development and economic empowerment programmes. We do this through development worker placements and the participation of IDPPE's senior staff in Skillshare International's leadership development programme.

In addition to growing agricultural produce such as cassava, maize and peanuts, the fishermen of Mithuco depend on mangrove crabs for their livelihood. Each fisherman usually uses five or six hand lines without hooks to fish the crab, and takes home an average of 15 crabs (7 to 9 kilos) per day. Sarojakshan explains, *"the prices in the local landing centre are low compared to Angoche; fishermen receive just 4 - 5 Meticaís per kilo"* (approximately eight pence).



He visited the villages with his colleagues from IDPPE and then developed a funding proposal for new fishing gear which would increase the daily catch and therefore also the income of Angoche's small-scale fishermen. The Province Head of IDPPE approved the proposal and three fishermen in each village (Mithuco, Namamme, Muchaca and Mirrepe) received new gear in August 2006. They now have gaiola traps, gango traps and long lines without hooks for catching crab. Sarojakshan has also provided technical training on different fishing methods and technologies both to the fishermen and to IDPPE technicians of IDPPE.

"I am satisfied with this gear and I am earning more catch than I had earlier", said Braimo Jacinto, one of the proud new owners of the equipment introduced in Mithuco, *"the crabs make me happy"*. Sarojakshan explains that Braimo's income from crab fishing *"has doubled to an average of 32 crabs each day (15-20kgs) now that he has the new long line. He also collects the catch of other fishermen from his village and sends it with his own catch to Angoche, where they earn a higher price for their catch; 8-10 Meticaís per kg"*. IDPPE is now working with other fishermen in the village to make more equipment and is extending its programme to the neighbouring district of Moma.

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