

# Poverty and fisheries. Anything to learn from the Norwegian experience?

Bjørn Hersoug  
Norwegian College of Fishery Science  
University of Tromsø



## Fisheries Forum 2009

- Three important starting points:
  1. Norway started with a misperception (based on Kerala): fishermen in the 3rd world are always poor, most often the poorest of the poor
- This is probably not right (compared to agriculture), but fishers are often vulnerable and marginalised for other reasons
- Lack of solid statistics and baseline studies

## Fisheries Forum 2009

2. Norwegian fisheries projects have seldom been chosen from strict fisheries considerations

- Norway has concentrated on poor countries, mainly in Eastern and Southern Africa, where fisheries normally play a modest role (Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Namibia, South Africa, Mozambique, Angola, Malawi)+ selected countries in Asia and Latin America  
(Bangladesh, Vietnam, Nicaragua, Sri Lanka)

3. When involved, Norwegian experts normally do what they are used to do at home
  - This has changed over time, in tune with fads and fashions in the general fisheries development debate
  - Technical improvements, training, management, laws and regulations, MCS, research, aquaculture, etc

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- Norwegian development assistance has always been poverty oriented on paper, but with a very weak understanding of strategies, entry points, interventions and the measuring of results.
- For years we had one strategy for all 3rd world countries!
- As pointed out by Tvedt, we never started development in Norway (when a poor backward nation) with specifically targeting the poor!

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- In fisheries we normally repeat the poverty orientation, without much consideration of the specific effects on the poor of our interventions
- We tend to believe in general trickle down effects
- In the end we anticipate that better management and more fish also will help the poor, BUT
- Fishing and aquaculture not specifically treated in many poverty reduction plans (not specifically mentioned in Mozambique, plays an important role in Vietnam)

## Fisheries Forum 2009

### Different ways of using fish in development:

1. Fish for food
  2. Fish for sale
  3. Fish for employment (processing industry)
  4. Fish for state income (Fisheries Agreements)
  5. All kinds of combinations
- It is an empirical question what is working where and how!
  - Fish for export may or may not help the poor, depending on a variety of structural factors (Kurien et al. 2004)

## Fisheries Forum 2009

- There are certain dilemmas involved in all fisheries development
- The cruel choices (all goals cannot be fulfilled at the same time)
- Trade-offs and compromises necessary
- Fortunately the dilemmas are not the same in all fisheries



Fisheries Forum 2009

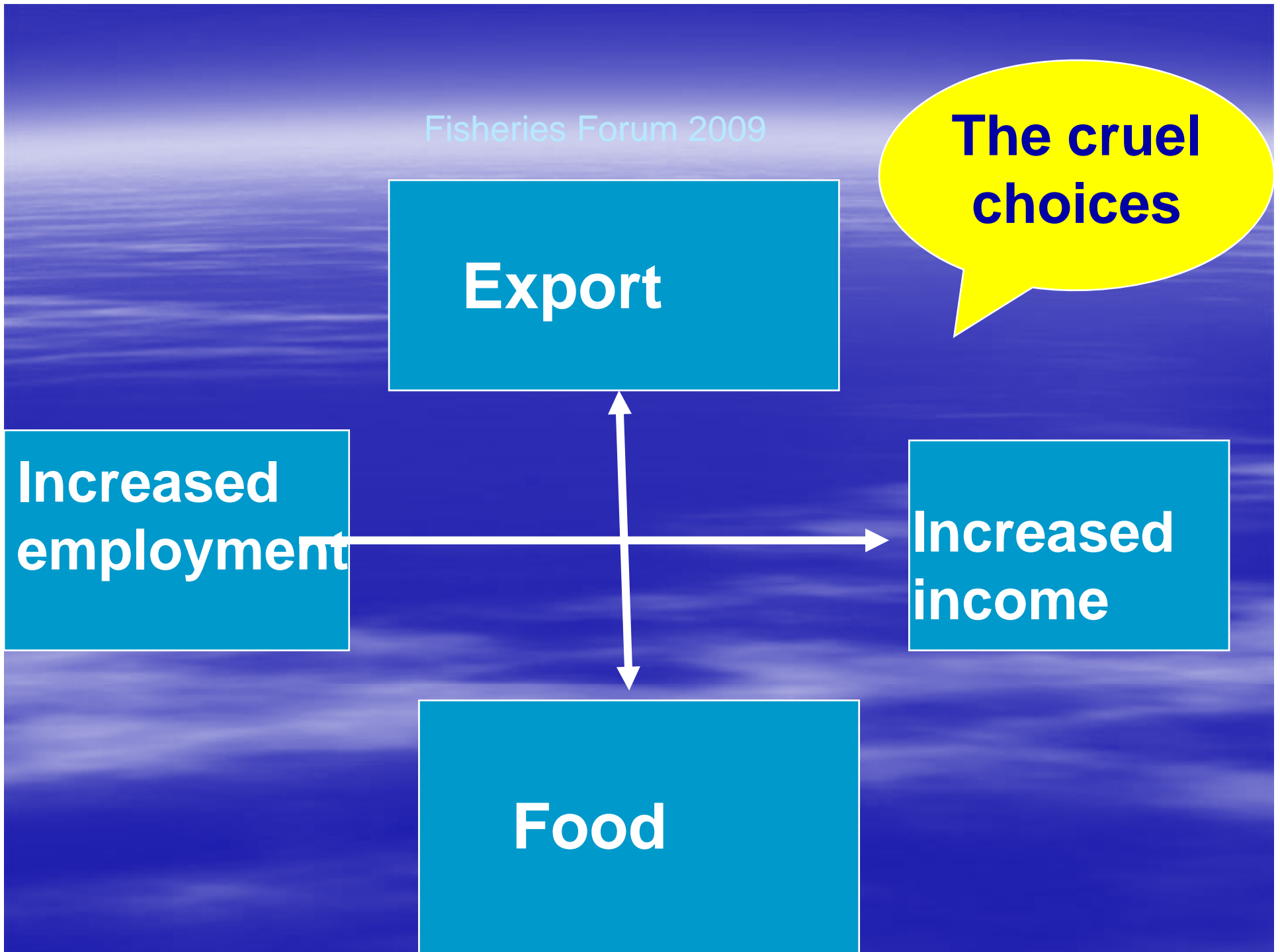
**Export**

**The cruel choices**

**Increased employment**

**Increased income**

**Food**

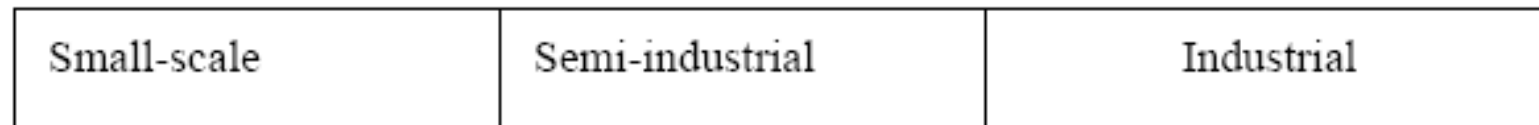


## Fisheries Forum 2009

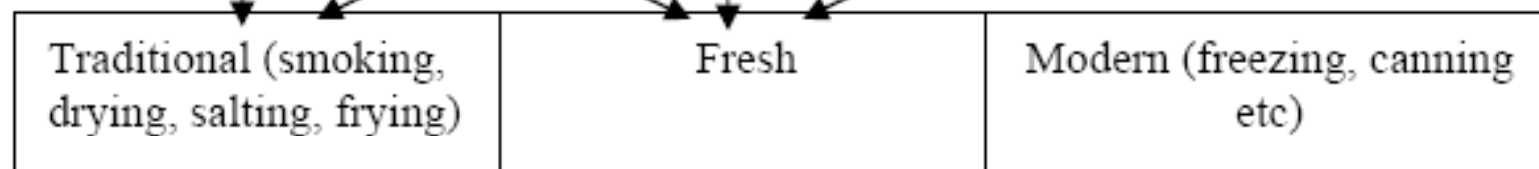
- Most countries have several fisheries:
- The case of Mozambique:
  1. Industrial DWF (tuna)
  2. Industrial national (shallow water shrimp)
  3. Semi-industrial (line fishing and trawl)
  4. Artisanal (artisanal commercial, artisanal food for own consumption)
- A need for different strategies and allocation of public resources, including development assistance

## Fisheries Forum 2009

Catching sector:



Processing sector:



Marketing sector:

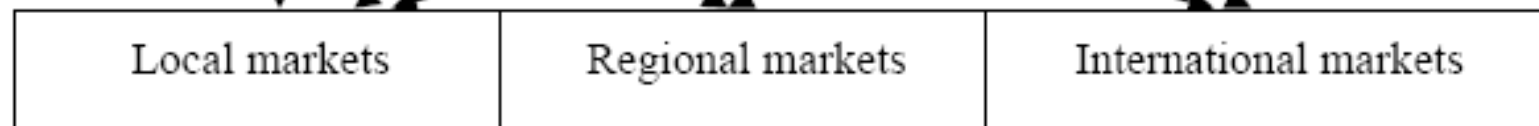


Figure 2.4: Possible fisheries development strategies (Hersoug 1995:303)

## Fisheries Forum 2008

- 3 general development strategies:
  1. A gradual modernization: Solving the numbers problem by a gradual transfer of people to:
    - (a) development outside the fisheries sector
    - (b) transferring fishers to aquaculture
  2. Reducing post harvest losses, better paying products and markets, etc., i.e. postponing the numbers problem
  3. Securing collective rights (leaving the exclusion problem to local institutions, e.g. loco in Chile)

## Fisheries Forum 2009

- What are the Norwegian experiences?
- Kerala: Unintended results - the shrimp millionaires!
- Ghana: loose connection
- Tanzania (MFDC): loose connection
- Kenya (Turkana): unintended effects
- Nicaragua: possible trickle down effects
- South Africa: no specific focus on the poor fishers but on the PDIs
- Namibia: indirect (developing the industry)
- Vietnam: indirect (positive effects through better management and increased aquaculture)

## Fisheries Forum 2009

- Lessons:
- Not all projects/programs need to be poverty oriented, or with an explicit poverty focus
- *If* poverty in focus we need more info on
- What is the actual situation (baseline studies)?
- Where to intervene?
- With what type of tools? (fisheries related or roads, health, and education)
- What was the result? (evaluation and feedback)
- (And not least: what was due to other factors!)

## Fisheries Forum 2009

- We have some *new* dilemmas:
- A lot of new info on the nature of poverty over the last 10 years
- Poverty no longer primarily=lack of money
- Multifaceted picture of poverty
- Different dimensions
- Need different strategies

# New poverty agenda: From “Understanding poverty...

- Income-poverty
- ILO “basic need” model
- Food Entitlement (Sen)
- UNDP Human Development Index
- Empowerment (Chambers)
- Gender development
- Livelihood approach
- Millennium Development Goals

... to understanding the different  
*dimensions of poverty*”





# Fisheries Forum 2009

- The dilemma can be illustrated in fisheries:

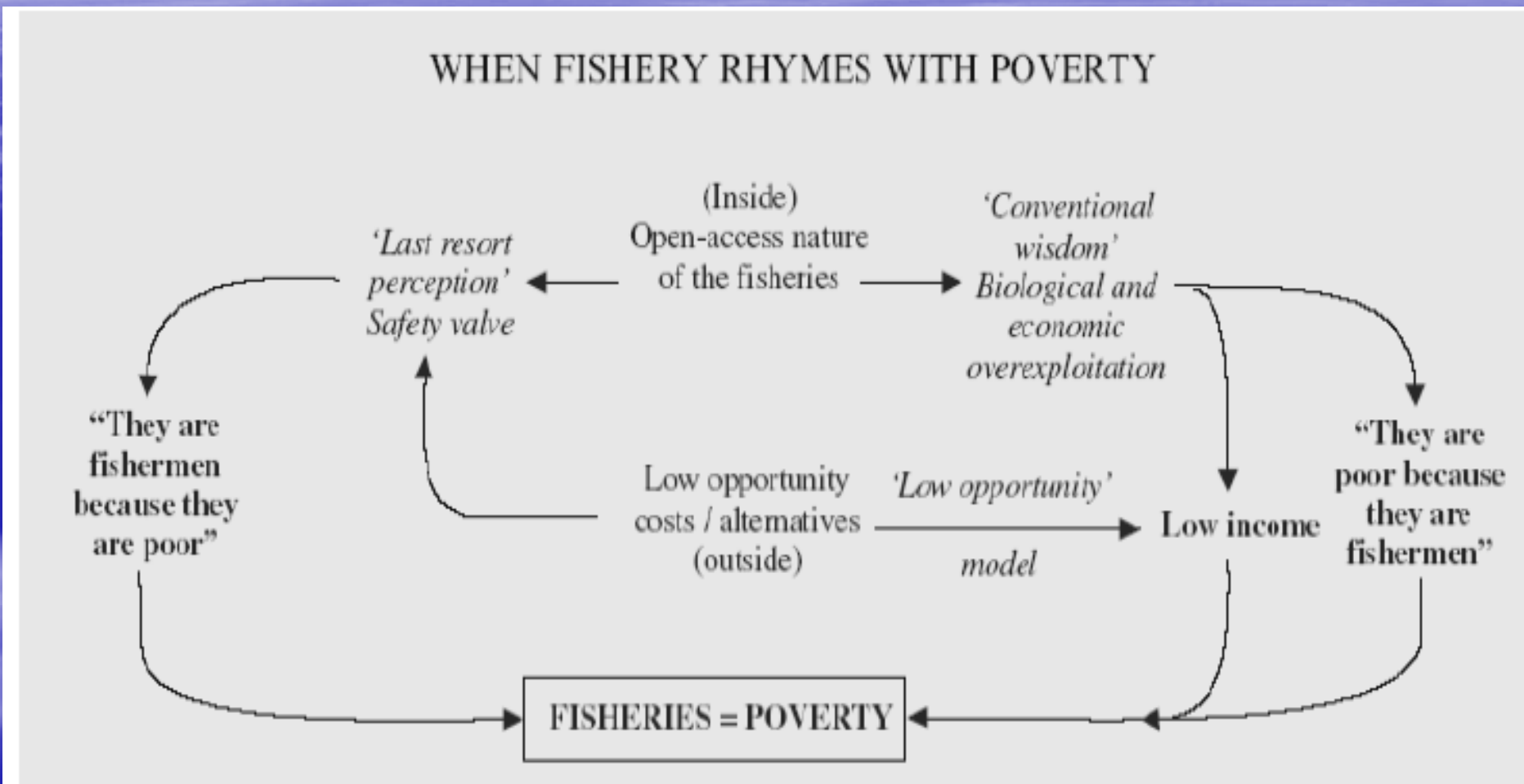


Figure 2.5: The two pillars of poverty in fisheries (Béné 2003:957).

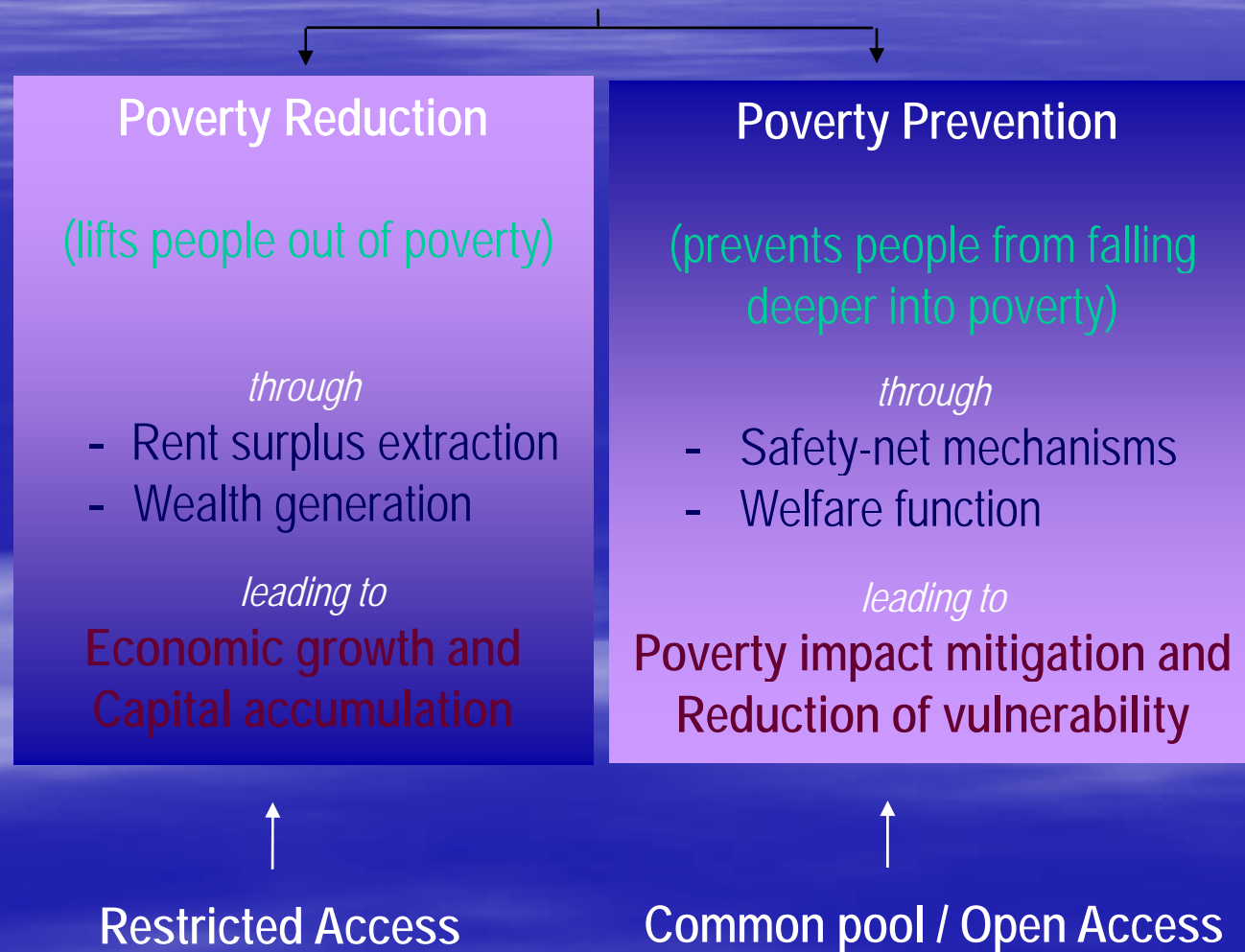
## Fisheries Forum 2009

- The dominant position: they are poor because they are fishers!
- Solution: limit access, increase the income of the prioritized bona fide fishers, sector-oriented
- Alternative position: they are fishers because they are poor! (fishing as an employer of last resort)
- Solution: alternative employment, multi-sectoral approach

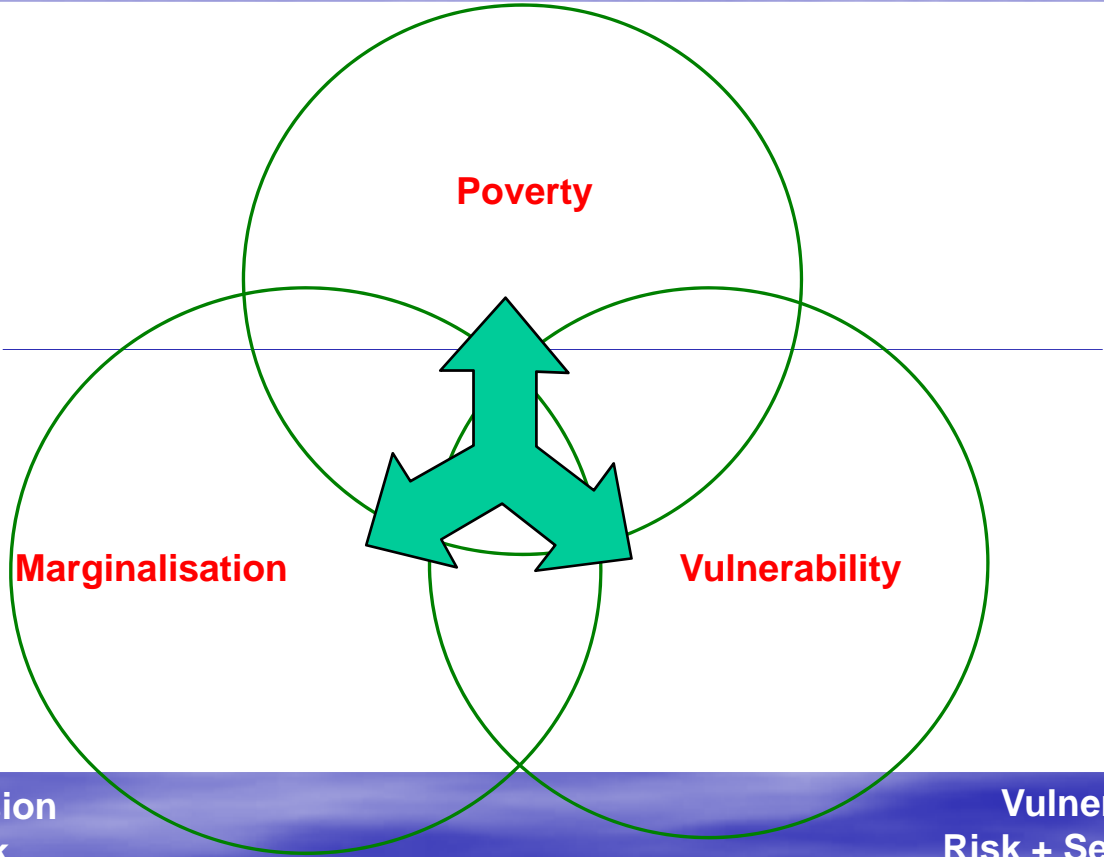
## Fisheries Forum 2009

- A question of terminology:
- *poverty reduction* (through wealth generation)
- *poverty prevention* (related to risk and vulnerability)
- Poverty alleviation is then used as an overarching concept covering both.

# Contribution of SSF to rural development



**Sustainable Livelihoods Approach**  
Capital + Capabilities



**Social Exclusion Framework**

**Vulnerability**  
Risk + Sensitivity +  
Adaptive Capacity

(SFLP, 2005; Béné et al 2006)

## Fisheries Forum 2009

Not only a question of terminology, but

- of focus
- of expertise (do we have such expertise?)
- of administrative follow-up (demanding!)
  
- In Mozambique the only part of the Norwegian support to the fisheries sector with an explicit poverty focus has been delegated through other donors



- **Fisherfolk not always the 'poorest of the poor' in income terms**
- **No clear linear relationship between poverty and resource level (degradation of the environment)**
- **Vulnerability due to insecure rights, uncertain production systems, high physical, economic and regulatory or institutional risks**
- **Political and social marginalisation (power), leading to poor access to services (e.g. health)**

Source : Béné (2007)

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- Based on own experiences we certainly have the experience and expertise for ***poverty reduction*** strategies
- Do Norway and Norad possess the expertise required for ***poverty prevention*** strategies?
- If not, what do we do about it???????



## Fisheries Forum 2009

*Amending the old adage that teaching people [to fish] is better than giving them a fish to eat, we should instead be teaching them to repair bikes, sewing machines and water pumps”*

D. Pauly (2005)



Am I a fisher because I'm poor, or poor because I'm a fisher?