

# PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY INCREASE EARNINGS FROM SELLING HIGH-VALUE SEAWEED

## INDONESIA

In 2011, Indonesia ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, reasserting that all people with all types of disabilities are entitled to all human rights and fundamental aspects of life, which include access to education and employment opportunities. In line with this, Indonesia has mandated companies and government institutions to allocate 1% employee capacity for people with disability.

However, it was recorded in 2021 that from the total of 17.7 million (working age) people with disability, only 7.8 million or 44% are employed, indicating that this '1% capacity' has not been implemented optimally as mandated by law. Social inequalities, marginalization and discrimination towards people with disability will continue to escalate if no action is taken and subsequently will leave vulnerable people in poverty.

The GQSP Indonesia—in collaboration with Fisheries Centre (BBPBAP) Jepara, Central Java—has developed the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) in Enhancing the Shelf Life and Packaging Techniques of Caulerpa spp. (often called sea grapes), one of the most popular consumed seaweed species in Indonesia. To upscale this SOP, and as an initiative to support disabled community empowerment, GQSP Indonesia and BBPBAP organized a training series on preservation and packaging techniques of fresh Caulerpa


spp. for the disabled community in Jepara, called SADIFA. Within two days, 41 community members were trained on how to improve the shelf life of fresh Caulerpa as well as on packaging methods to increase the selling value of raw Caulerpa products. Participants were also provided with market access information.

SADIFA is now receiving requests for preserved Caulerpa from BBPBAP, which has helped them to earn additional income. In order to gain a wider market for this product, assistance and support from local government and other stakeholders are necessary. Ultimately, improving the skills of people with disability enables them to explore their interests and potential, and provides them with increased opportunities to improve their economic and social welfare. The GQSP Indonesia may help to generate not only skillful human resources, but also small and medium-sized enterprises for the disabled community.

The Global Quality and Standards Programme (GQSP) is a global initiative to strengthen the export competitiveness of twelve partner countries, supported by Switzerland through the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO).



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