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SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PROJECT (SFMP) SOCIALIZATION MEETING WITH DQF AND BENEFICIARIES



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THE
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Cover photo: A cross section of chiefs and assembly staff at the socialization event at Axim (Michael Takyi).

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SNV: <http://www.snvworld.org/en/countries/ghana>

ACRONYMS

CCM	Centre for Coastal Management
CEWEFIA	Central and Western Region Fishmongers Improvement Association
CRC	Coastal Resource Center
CSLP	Coastal Sustainable Landscape Project
DAA	Development Action Association
DFAS	Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Science
DMFS	Department of Marine Fisheries Sciences
DQF	Daasgift Quality Foundation
FtF	Feed the Future
GIFA	Ghana Inshore Fishermen's Association
GIS	Geographic Information System
GNCFC	Ghana National Canoe Fishermen's Council
HM	Hen Mpoano
ICFG	Integrated Coastal and Fisheries Governance
MESTI	Ministry of Environment Science and Technology
MOFAD	Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development
NDPC	National Development Planning Commission
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
SFMP	Sustainable Fisheries Management Project
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
SNV	Netherlands Development Organization
SSG	SSG Advisors
STWG	Scientific and Technical Working Group
UCC	University of Cape Coast
URI	University of Rhode Island
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WARFP	West Africa Regional Fisheries Development Program

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A one-day socialization meeting was organized by CEWEFIA in collaboration with Daasgift Quality Foundation for four communities (Asanta, Ankobra, Shama and Axim) on Thursday 22nd February 2018, at Axim in the Western Region of Ghana. The purpose of the meeting was to officially introduce CEWEFIA to the communities and to enable CEWEFIA to carry out hygienic fish handling activities there.

The program was well attended. Participants included staff of Daasgift, Friends of the Nation, chiefs, chief fishermen, market queens, fishermen, Assembly members, planning officers, Fisheries Commission representative, Social Welfare and representative from the Environmental Health Department. A total of 190 people partook in the program, consisting of 78 men and 112 women.

The Chairman for the program (Nana Bentsir, the chief fisherman of Axim) appreciated the effort of Daasgift Quality Foundation for empowering its beneficiaries in hygienic fish handling and functional literacy. He charged CEWEFIA to work hard to improve upon the achievements made by Daasgift. Solidarity messages from officials touched on the need for fisher folks to observe best fishing and fish handling practices, and comply with the fisheries laws and regulations. Achievements, challenges and lessons learnt by Daasgift were also shared by Daasgift's project officer.

The participants pledged their support for CEWEFIA and promised to participate in all programs and events that would be organized by CEWEFIA and other SFMP partners in the various communities.

SECTION 1

1.1 Background

CEWEFIA organized a one-day socialization meeting for four communities (Asanta, Ankobra, Shama and Axim) that were assigned to CEWEFIA for implementation of hygienic fish handling activities. The socialization meeting was held on Thursday 22nd February, 2018 at Axim in the Western Region. The meeting was held to introduce CEWEFIA to the beneficiary communities so as to officially commence work there. The meeting was also to enable CEWEFIA to share with community members the activities to be carried out with them.

Present:

The meeting was massively attended by chiefs, chief fishermen, market queens (Konkohon), fishermen, assembly members, Shama District Assembly representatives, Fisheries Commission representatives (Western Region), Department of Social Welfare, Environmental Health representatives, planning officers of Shama and Ellembele, as well as representatives from Friends of the Nation (FON) and Daasgift Quality Foundation.

In all, 190 people participated in the program consisting of 78 men and 112 women.

1.2 Workshop objectives

- To introduce CEWEFIA and the activities to be carried out to the beneficiary communities.
- To establish contact and relationship between CEWEFIA and the communities.
- To officially hand over Daasgift's beneficiaries to CEWEFIA for the implementation of hygienic fish handling activities.

1.3 Expected outcomes

It was expected that

- At the end of the meeting effective relationships would have been established between CEWEFIA and the communities.
- CEWEFIA's hygienic fish handling activities would be communicated to the community members.
- There would be a successful handing over ceremony.

SECTION 2

2.1 Outcome of the meeting

Opening:

The program started at 9:30 am with an opening prayer by a participant. Mr. Kwao, the project officer of Daasgift Quality Foundation welcomed the participants to the program. In his speech he indicated that the main purpose of the meeting was to officially introduce CEWEFIA to the beneficiary communities formerly under the jurisdiction of Daasgift for the implementation of hygienic fish handling activities under the USAID/Ghana Sustainable Fisheries Management Project.

2.2 Solidarity message from dignitaries

The dignitaries contributed to the program. Their messages focused on healthy fish handling, good fishing practices and compliance with the Fisheries regulations and laws.

The Environmental Health Department representative from Shama reiterated some of the regulatory rules and practices which the Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development and Fisheries Commission had put in place to enhance regulation of fishing businesses. These include declaring Sunday as a second fishing holiday aside Tuesday, licensing of fishing canoes and monitoring of fishing vessels and canoes at sea. She explained that the regulations were in parliament awaiting being passed. She indicated that licensing would help to regulate the number of fishing vessels in order to reduce over capacity of fleet, control the activities at sea to prevent illegalities, and also help in monitoring and identification purposes. She entreated all fishermen to comply with the regulations for the betterment of their fishing work, as they are meant to revamp the marine fish stocks for sustainable use.

The Environmental Health representative commended CEWEFIA for accepting to work with Daasgift and to teach them healthy fish handling and business development. She further encouraged the participants to avail themselves whenever the need arose to ensure successful implementation of project activities.

The issue of transshipment (locally known as saiko business) was also highlighted. The discussion indicated that saiko business had been negatively affecting the fishing work and must be stopped. The chiefs and assembly members made a plea to government, CEWEFIA, FON and Daasgift to help stop the saiko business and other bad fishing practices which negatively affect the marine stock.

One of the chief fishermen who partook in the fisheries stakeholders' consultation meeting on the Fisheries Act assured the public that the laws and regulations were already in parliament and that they would soon be enacted for stringent enforcement. He emphasized that collective effort was needed in the management of the fisheries resources.

2.3 Solidarity message from Market Queens (Konkohen)

Representative of the market queens (locally called Konkohen) lauded Daasgift for empowering them to maintain personal hygiene. She indicated that the teachings by Daasgift had brought positive improvements in their fish processing businesses. She urged all fish processors and fishermen to handle fish well, ensure environmental hygiene, improve their kitchens and adopt the use of Ahotor stove for improved health.

A representative from FON also added that the participants should avail themselves for all the programs and education that partners of SFMP organize in their communities.

SECTION 3

3.1 Achievements of Daasgift under SFMP

The Project Officer for Daasgift highlighted some of the achievements Daasgift had made over the years, such as training in healthy fish handling, personal savings, functional literacy, microfinance for women fish processors and radio discussions on child labor and trafficking. He indicated that the main challenge they faced during project implementation was that the women sometimes did not avail themselves for programs, especially during the bumper harvest season. According to him a key lesson he had learnt was that, “planning with association members foster success of the programs”. He concluded that Daasgift would continue to work hand in hand with CEWEFIA to further educate the members; and assured the members that Daasgift would continue to seek funds to support them to improve upon their fishing businesses.

3.2 Chairman’s closing remarks

The Chairman expressed gratitude to CEWEFIA for a successful program. He said that Daasgift had set a good and high standard for the members and was therefore very hopeful that CEWEFIA would work hard to improve upon Daasgift’s achievements. He spoke against the unclean beaches and landing sites at Axim and its neighboring communities; and pleaded for the supply of dustbins and other sanitation equipment by the Axim District Assembly. He stressed on the need for all fisher folks to comply with the fisheries regulations and rules, and urged them to observe good fishing and fish handling practices. Consequently, a taskforce would be formed to ensure compliance to good fishing practices. He appealed to CEWEFIA and other NGOs to support the women financially to remain in business all the time.

Closure:

The program closed at 12:50 pm.

3.3 Recommendation

It was recommended that CEWEFIA should intensify its sensitization on hygienic fish handling practices.

3.4 Lessons learned

Early planning of program ensures its success.

SECTION 4

4.1 CONCLUSIONS

The program was highly successful. It started on time and closed on time. The attendance was massive, with participants very enthused. The chiefs and all present were very appreciative of the program and hoped for more programs and fisheries education.