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SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PROJECT (SFMP)

Farmers Day Celebrations in Apam and Winneba.



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THE
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Development
Action Association

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Cover photo: Participants displaying the theme banner with the inscription “Say No to Bad Fish”

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

ACRONYMS

CEWEFIA	Central and Western Region Fishmongers Improvement Association
CRC	Coastal Resource Center
DAA	Development Action Association
DQF	Daasgift Quality Foundation
FtF	Feed the Future
HM	Hen Mpoano
MOFAD	Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
SFMP	Sustainable Fisheries Management Project
SNV	Netherlands Development Organization
URI	University of Rhode Island
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

Acronyms.....	iii
LIST OF FIGURES	v
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	vi
SECTION 1: Background.....	1
1.2 Expected outcomes.....	1
SECTION 2: CELEBRATIONS AT THE VARIOUS MUNICIPAL AND DISTRICT ASSEMBLIES	1
2.1 Ga south municipal assembly, greater accra.....	1
2.2 Efutu Municipal assembly, Central Region.....	2
2.3 Gomoa west district assembly, Central Region	3
SECTION 3: CONCLUSIONS.....	4

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Madam Cecelia Agbeshie receiving her certificate as best fish processor in the Ga South Municipal from Rev. Samuel Quaye	2
Figure 2: Madam Ama Esalkaldo, best fish processor in the Efutu Municipal Assembly	3
Figure 3: Mr. Peter Edzie receiving his award for best fish processor in the district.....	4
Figure 4: Cross section of some items on display at the Farmers' Day program in Winneba ...	4

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National Farmer's day was instituted by the Government of Ghana to recognize the hard work of persons in the agricultural sector. The day is observed on the first Friday in December. In view of this Development Action Association (DAA) which is a farmer based organization and a local implementing partner on the Sustainable Fisheries Management Project (SFMP) participated in the farmers' day event organized by the Ga South Municipal, Efutu Municipal and Gomoa West District Assemblies in the Greater Accra and Central regions of Ghana respectively.

In observing the day. DAA admonished all actors in the agricultural sector especially fisher folks to adopt responsible fishing practices and support the government's efforts to replenish the dwindling marine fish stocks and "SAY NO TO BAD FISH".

The theme for this year's event was "Agriculture: a business response to economic growth". The theme emphasized the importance of agriculture as an enterprise that can accelerate the economic growth improve living standards of all.

SECTION 1: BACKGROUND

The government of Ghana has instituted the first Friday in December every year as a public holiday to recognize the contribution of stakeholders in the agricultural sector. It is estimated that 10% of Ghana's population are employed by the fisheries sector, yet their contribution to the country's economic growth is threatened by numerous challenges. The dwindling fortunes of this sector means that the livelihoods of these people will be adversely impacted if steps are not taken to reverse the trend.

SFMP'S implementing partner, Development Action Association is a farmer based organization that is made up crop producers and fish farmers. And so on the 32nd farmer's day event, DAY seized the opportunity to recognize its members and also to sensitize the communities on the SMFP.

The association also used the occasion which was attended by fisher folk on the continuous use of crude methods in trapping fish, a situation that has greatly contributed to the dwindling fish stocks. DAA also awarded some of their fish processors who have adopted the hygienic fish handling technologies they have been trained on.

DAA's objective for participating and supporting the Farmers and Fishers Day celebrations were to;

- Educate the fisher folk on the tenets of the SFMP project
- Sensitize the fisher folk on the effects of IUU fishing.
- To appreciate and reward the outstanding fisher folk
- Provide a platform for fish processor members of DAA to exhibit their hygienically produced fish to the public.

1.2 Expected outcomes

The expected outcomes of DAA's participation in the Farmer's Day celebrations are;

- Stakeholders in the fisheries sector will step up efforts to address the challenges in the fisheries sector especially on illegal marine fishing practices.
- Promoting and creating market for products produced by the various Fish Processor Groups working with DAA.

SECTION 2: CELEBRATIONS AT THE VARIOUS MUNICIPAL AND DISTRICT ASSEMBLIES

2.1 Ga south municipal assembly, greater accra

DAA participated in the farmer's day celebration at Tuba in the Ga Municipal Assembly of the Greater Accra Region. The event was chaired by Municipal Chief Executive (MCE) of the Ga Municipal Assembly Hon. Nii Akwei Thompson and attended by fisher folk, farmers, and staff of the assembly, civil society organizations and the general public.

In his address the MCE, expressed his anger the use of irresponsible methods used by fishermen to harvest fish from the sea, especially on the use of light, dynamite and small sized nets. According to him these dangerous practices are the major reason why Ghana's marine fish stocks are dwindling. He admonished the fishermen to stop these practices as it will ultimately affect their live hoods. He asked the fisher folk to set up their own watchdog

committee at the landing sites so that fisher folk who are breaking the law can be arrested and prosecuted.

A fish processor who also addressed the participants at the event pleaded with stakeholders and resource users in the fisheries' value chain to ensure that bad fishing practices are curbed. She asked all to say 'No to Bad Fish' and Bad Fishing Practices. A member of DAA, Madam Cecelia Agbeshi was adjudged the best fish processor in the Ga Municipal.



Figure 1: Madam Cecelia Agbeshie receiving her certificate as best fish processor in the Ga South Municipal from Rev. Samuel Quaye

2.2 Efutu Municipal assembly, Central Region

The Farmer's day event in the Winneba was held at the Challenging Heights Park.

The Efutu Municipal Director of the Department of Agriculture Mr. Hope Kuma chaired the occasion. He encouraged the farmers and fishermen to see themselves as entrepreneurs and should be proud of that they contribute to the national income and ensure food security in Ghana.

According to him, agriculture contributes between 6% and 8% to Ghana's GDP and asked for the support of to establish strong commodity value chains with emphasis of value addition and improved to access local and international markets and improve the incomes of farmers.

The Administration and Communication Assistant of Development Action Association (DAA), Miss Adwoa Agyeiwaa Akoto attended the event and addressed the participants. According to her ever though the fishery sector is one of the important sectors of the Ghanaian economy, there has been a drastic decline in fish stocks in the last decade due to illegal and unsustainable fishing practices such as the use of light, undersized mesh and

chemical fishing. This she said results in the harvest of unwholesome fish which is dangerous for human health, loss of income on the part of fish processors. She therefore entreated the public to ‘say no to bad fish’

Madam Ama Esalkado was adjudged the best fish processor in the Municipal. She is a member of the Osakam Fish Processors group who are members of DAA and has benefited from the hygienic fish handling training under the SFMP.



Figure 2: Madam Ama Esalkado, best fish processor in the Efutu Municipal Assembly

2.3 Gomoa west district assembly, Central Region

The District Chief Executive (DCE) of the Gomoa West District Assembly, Honorable Theophilus Aidoo-Mensah chaired the farmer’s day event in the Gomoa West District.

In his speech, the DCE congratulated farmers and encouraged them to take Agriculture as business since it is root for economic growth at Gomoa Mankesim in the central region. He also entreated the farmers to apply chemicals appropriately to ensure healthy food for market. The Chief Executive used the platform to encourage the youth to take farming as business to help reduced unemployment in the country.

He assured that he will ensure proper attention is given to fisheries sector in the district, and pleaded with the fisher folk to totally “say no to illegal fish”.

Mr. Peter Edzie a member of the Adom Nsa Fish Processors group who are members of DAA, was adjudged the best fish processor. Mr. Edzie and his group have benefited from the hygienic fish handling training funded by the SFMP.



Figure 3: Mr. Peter Edzie receiving his award for best fish processor in the district.



Figure 4: Cross section of some items on display at the Farmers' Day program in Winneba

SECTION 3: CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion DAA through the celebration was able to communicate sensitize all the stakeholders in the agricultural sector on the effects of Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported (IUU), and push the government of Ghana to hasten efforts to improve the marine fish stock and improve livelihood of fishers.