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SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PROJECT (SFMP)

Report on Multi-Stakeholders Meeting for Elmina, Moree, Anlo- Beach and Sekondi



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THE
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For more information on the Ghana Sustainable Fisheries Management Project, contact:

USAID/Ghana Sustainable Fisheries Management Project

Coastal Resources Center

Graduate School of Oceanography

University of Rhode Island

220 South Ferry Rd.

Narragansett, RI 02882 USA

Tel: 401-874-6224 Fax: 401-874-6920 Email: info@crc.uri.edu

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Cover photo: Cross section of Stakeholders at the Meeting (Credit: CEWEFIA)

Detailed Partner Contact Information:

USAID/Ghana Sustainable Fisheries Management Project (SFMP)
10 Obodai St., Mempeasem, East Legon, Accra, Ghana

Telephone: +233 0302 542497 Fax: +233 0302 542498

Raymond Babanawo	Chief of Party	Email: raybabs.sfmp@rcuri.org
Enoch Appiah	Deputy Chief of Party	Email: eappiah.sfmp@rcuri.org
Kofi Agbogah	Senior Fisheries Advisor	Email: kagbogah@henmpoano.org
Perfectual Labik	Communications Officer	Email: perfectual.sfmp@rcuri.org
Mary Asare	M&E Officer	Email: mary.sfmp@rcuri.org
Brian Crawford	Project Manager, CRC	Email: bcrawford@uri.edu
Ellis Ekekpi	USAID AOR	Email: eekekpi@usaid.gov

Hen Mpoano
38 J. Cross Cole St. Windy Ridge
Takoradi, Ghana
+233 312 020 701
Kofi.Agbogah
kagbogah@henmpoano.org
Stephen Kankam
skankam@henmpoano.org

Resonance Global
(Formerly SSG Advisors)
182 Main Street
Burlington, VT 05401
+1 (802) 735-1162
Thomas Buck
tom@ssg-advisors.com

SNV Netherlands Development
Organisation
#161, 10 Maseru Road,
E. Legon, Accra, Ghana
+233 30 701 2440
Andre de Jager
adejager@snvworld.org

CEWEFIA
B342 Bronyibima Estate
Elmina, Ghana
+233 024 427 8377
Victoria C. Koomson
cewefia@gmail.com

Friends of the Nation
Parks and Gardens
Adiembra-Sekondi, Ghana
+233 312 046 180
Donkris Mevuta
Kyei Yamoah
info@fonghana.org

Development Action Association (DAA)
Darkuman Junction, Kaneshie Odokor
Highway
Accra, Ghana
+233 302 315894
Lydia Sasu
daawomen@daawomen.org

For additional information on partner activities:

CEWEFIA: <http://cewefia.weebly.com/>
CRC/URI: <http://www.crc.uri.edu>
DAA: <http://womenthrive.org/development-action-association-daa>
Friends of the Nation: <http://www.fonghana.org>
Hen Mpoano: <http://www.henmpoano.org>
Resonance Global: <https://resonanceglobal.com/>
SNV: <http://www.snvworld.org/en/countries/ghana>

ACRONYMS

AAK	Abura Aseibu Kwamankese
CCM	Centre for Coastal Management
CEWEFIA	Central and Western Region Fishmongers Improvement Association
CR	Central Region
CRC	Coastal Resource Center
CSLP	Coastal Sustainable Landscape Project
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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
KEEA	Komenda Edina Equafo Abrem
MESTI	Ministry of Environment Science and Technology
MMDAs	Metropolitan, Municipal, District Assemblies
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
TOT	Training of Trainers
UCC	University of Cape Coast
URI	University of Rhode Island
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VSLA	Village Savings and Loan
WARFP	West Africa Regional Fisheries Development Program
WR	Western Region

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACRONYMS	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iv
LIST OF FIGURES	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
BACKGROUND	2
Purpose of the Meeting	2
Attendance	2
Objectives	2
Expected Outcomes	2
OUTCOMES.....	3
The Meeting Process.....	3
Implemented Activities from Year One to Year Four	3
Child Labor and Child Trafficking	3
Natural Resources management.....	3
Post- Harvest Value Chain Improvement	3
Presentation on Year Five Project Activities	4
Deliberations on Closed Season.....	4
OPEN FORUM.....	6
Recommendations.....	7
Challenges.....	7
Lessons learned.....	7
Conclusion	7

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Miss Hannah Antwi addressing the stakeholders at the meeting	5
Figure 2. A Cross-section of the stakeholders at the meeting.....	5
Figure 3. Mr. Kwame Damoah, (Fisheries Commission) leading a discussion on closed season.....	6

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On the 28th day of August, 2018, CEWEFIA under USAID/Ghana/ SFMP organized a one-day meeting with key stakeholders from the project communities; Elmina Moree, Anlo-Beach and Sekondi at Cape Coast Pension House, Conference Room. The meeting was designed to bring together all the heads of department of government institutions in the project communities such as Social Welfare, Forestry Commission, Fisheries Commission Ghana Education Service, Gender Desk, Environmental Health, Food and Drugs Authority; Opinion Leaders, Fishermen and Fish processors. Seventy four (74) stakeholders took part in the meeting consisting of thirty-three (33) men and forty-one (41) women. The meeting provided opportunity for stakeholders to share their insight in the fisheries activities and challenges from Year one to date. Year Five activities was also shared with the participants. The stakeholders in their recommendation entreated the government through Fisheries Commission to be independent enough to strictly enforce the fisheries laws to save the fisheries industry. The meeting ended on a note that the stakeholders pledged to own and support the project goal for sustainability of activities. The cordial relationship between CEWEFIA and the stakeholders was also strengthened.

BACKGROUND

One day stakeholders' meeting was held with all the stakeholders who have interest in the project or can influence change in the USAID/Ghana/SFMP project. The meeting was designed to bring together all the project key stakeholders at both district and regional levels from Elmina, Moree, Anlo-Beach and Sekondi. The workshop took place at Cape Coast Pension House, Conference Room on Tuesday, 28th August 2018.

Purpose of the Meeting

The meeting aimed at bringing together all relevant stakeholders of the project to share with them the previous year's (**especially Year Four**) implemented activities, successes, challenges and lessons learnt. The meeting was also to discuss with them, the Year Five activities and to solicit their ideas for the effective implementation of Year Five activities. It was expected that, recommendations from the stakeholders will be included in the implementation of activities to improve upon the project performance in the subsequent year.

Attendance

The meeting was attended by Departmental Heads, Officers and Representatives from MMDAs. They were: Social Welfare District Director, KEEA, Environmental Health, Ghana Education Service (KEEA, AAK), Coordinating Directors, Planning Officers, Food and Drugs Authority representatives, Cape Coast, Zonal Officer, Fisheries Commission (C/R), Forestry Commission Officer (W/R), Assembly Members from KEEA/AAK.

Also in attendance were Chiefs and Queen mothers of Elmina, Moree, Sekondi and Anlo Beach, Market queens, chief fishermen, Advocates, Community Child Protection Committee (CCPC) representatives, Fish Processors, Child labor and Trafficking survivors, Executive Director of CEWEFIA, CEWEFIA Board members and CEWEFIA staff. In all a total number of seventy four (74) participants took part in the meeting.

Objectives

The objectives of the meeting were to:

- Share the project implementation update with the stakeholders
- Develop new strategies and plans to enhance project implementation
- Solicit the stakeholders' support and ownership of the project.

Expected Outcomes

Expected outcomes of the event included:

- Constituencies built.
- Strategies for effective project implementation developed.

OUTCOMES

The Meeting Process

The meeting was opened at 10:00am with introduction of participants. Nana Adjoa Kweigyewah II, the Queen Mother of Bantuma – Elmina, was the chairperson for the meeting. In the chairperson's opening remarks, she charged the participants to feel free to share their ideas.

The Executive Director, Mrs. Victoria C. Koomson gave a welcome address after the chairperson's opening remark. According to her, she hoped that the meeting will bring out new ideas and recommendations to address the implementation challenges. Miss Hannah Antwi, (Communication Officer, CEWEFIA), coordinated the meeting.

The meeting focused on presentations on the previous project activities, achievements, successes and challenges from Year one to Year Four. Mr. Nicholas Smith presented on the project update. He highlighted the previous activities CEWEFIA has undertaken through SFMP categorizing them under the three thematic areas; Child labor and Trafficking (CLaT), Post-harvest Value Chain Improvement, and Natural Resources management.

Implemented Activities from Year One to Year Four

Child Labor and Child Trafficking

Under Child Labor and Trafficking, he highlighted on trainings of Anti-CLaT Advocates and CCPCs in Elmina and Moree, Training of Church Ambassadors on CLaT, visitation of churches and Mosques to talk on CLaT issues in Elmina and Moree. He explained that the Anti-CLaT Advocates and CCPCs are the community champions to create awareness on CLaT through house to house visitation whilst the trained church ambassadors were to serve as points of contact on CLaT issues in churches. He further explained that the staff of CEWEFIA undertake churches and mosque visitation to double up the awareness level of people in churches. He said, this method was adopted because more people can be reached with CLaT messages.

Natural Resources management

Under the Natural Resources Management, much emphasis was laid on mangrove conservations and environment. According to Mr. Smith, Mangroves serve a great purpose in fisheries management; however, despite its importance, people are indiscriminately harvesting it for fish smoking especially in Anlo-Beach. CEWEFIA knowing its importance found it expedient to promote its protection. In light of that, CEWEFIA provided an alternative source of firewood to reduce the over dependency on the mangroves. Ten 10 acres of cassia plantation have been established at Anlo Beach, one of the project communities where majority of fish processors use mangroves to smoke fish. The plantation is hoped to be ready for harvesting soon to be used as firewood in place of mangroves.

Aside the cassia plantation, awareness creation campaigns have also been held on mangroves to increase people's knowledge on the importance of mangroves and the need to conserve it. Sanitizations on sanitation and environmental hygiene have also been hammered in the project communities.

Post- Harvest Value Chain Improvement

According to Mr. Smith, Hygienic Fish Handling Campaigns, Training on the Use and Maintenance of Ahotor Oven, Training of Local Artisans on the Construction of Ahotor Oven, Awareness Campaign on Ahotor oven were undertaken. In addition, Business Development Training and Fish Value Addition training have also been organized for Micro,

Small and Medium Enterprises. Mr. Nicholas Smith encouraged the stakeholders to strictly patronize hygienic fish since it will motivate the fish processors to practice hygiene.

Presentation on Year Five Project Activities

The SFMP year five project activities were presented to the stakeholders. Some of the activities included Hygienic Fish Handling, Ahotor oven, awareness creation on mangroves, Fisherman to fisherman meeting.

Deliberations on Closed Season

The Zonal Officer for Fisheries Commission, Cape Coast, in the person of Mr. Kwame Damoah, led the discussion on closed season. In his opening message, he gave a highlight of the role of Fisheries Commission as well as the activities done over the years. He said, Fisheries Commission is mandated to ensure effective implementation of fisheries laws and the management of the fisheries sector for sustainability of the sector. He went further to mention some of the activities the Fisheries Commission has done so far which include but not limited to these; canoe/boat registration, research, fisheries education, Monitoring of fish landing.

According to Mr. Damoah, MOFAD/FC over the years have conducted research and monitoring in Ghanaian fish landing beaches. The research findings over the years revealed that, there is decline in marine fish stock which calls for intensive management. These findings and other research influenced the need for the declaration of the 2018 closed season. He further explained that the fisher folks kicked against the closed season observation with the view that August is a bumper harvest month where they will get more income to pay their unpaid loan. He then asked the fisher folks among the stakeholders whether they harvested the quantity of fish they claimed to harvest and have been able to pay their loan as they said after the observation of closed season was postponed? The Fish Processors indicated that they did not harvest the quantity of fish they expected and therefore could not repay their loans. They indicated that they had wished the observation of the closed season had taken place.

Mr. Damoah further revealed that those who were previously engaging in transshipment were now undertaking aquaculture as their alternative livelihood. Bringing his speech to an end, he strongly pleaded with the stakeholders to continue to support SFMP through CEWEFIA's programs for an improved fisheries sector.



Figure 1. Miss Hannah Antwi addressing the stakeholders at the meeting
Behind Miss Hannah Antwi is Mrs. Victoria Churchill Koomson, (Executive Director, CEWEFIA)



Figure 2. A Cross-section of the stakeholders at the meeting

OPEN FORUM

A forum was opened for members to share their views and to seek clarification on issues. The following were some of the questions and contributions made by the participants:

- One of the participants, Agya Kwame Amissah, a fisherman from Elmina asked whether illegal fishing activities would be allowed after the 2019 closed season.
- Auntie Abbam, a Fish processor from Moree advised that, all the chief fishermen and women fisher folks should share the message with their colleague fishermen in their community for them also to be informed on fisheries issue.
- A participant inquired whether the next year closed season would come off as planned. if so, then the sensitization message on closed season should be done earlier to avoid a situation where the fisher folks might claim they were unaware.
- Dr. Yahaya asked what measures the Fisheries Commission was putting in place to ensure the sustainability of the fish catch and mangrove forest.
- A participant wanted to know what actually influenced the postponement of the closed season to 2019 and whether the one month closed season was enough to replenish the fish.



Figure 3. Mr. Kwame Damoah, (Fisheries Commission) leading a discussion on closed season

Recommendations

The following were recommended by the participants:

1. The Fisheries Commission should intensify their education on fisheries issues. Also there should be video shows of other countries' good fishing practices to motivate the fisher folks to emulate.
2. The indigenous fishermen should be included in the fishing study tour.
3. The fishermen themselves should be ready to protect their sea and not wait upon government.
4. There should be collaborative effort devoid of political influence for good decision making.
5. There should be monitoring devices such as cameras and recorders at the landing beaches to monitor fish catch.
6. The media houses present were charged to support the protection of mangroves through their programmes.
7. Protection of sea turtles should be included in the fisheries education

Challenges

- Not all the invited stakeholders attended the meeting

Lessons learned

1. Meetings always serve as a platform to gain new ideas from stakeholders.
2. Stakeholders' meetings enhance the cordial relationship between CEWEFIA and the stakeholders.
3. Engaging stakeholders boosts their sense of responsiveness.

Conclusion

The stakeholders realized the need for the fishing closed season and urged the Fisheries Commission and the Government to be firm in the implementation of the 2019 fishing closed-season. They further commended SFMP and CEWEFIA for their effort to protect the marine fish stocks through their interventions the fisher folks and the general public support the entire project to achieve the needed results.