SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PROJECT (SFMP)

Hownam Dialogue: Conflict Management Training Report

DECEMBER, 2016
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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: Participant in a yarn exercise as a form of introduction in the hownam dialogue. (Photo by 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

Maurice Knight    Chief of Party  maurice@crc.uri.edu
Kofi Agbogah      Senior Fisheries Advisor  kagbogah@henmpoano.org
Nii Odenkey Abbey Communications Officer  nii.sfmp@crcuri.org
Bakari Nyari      Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist  hardinyari.sfmp@crcuri.org
Brian Crawford    Project Manager, CRC  brian@crc.uri.edu
Justice Odoi      USAID Administrative Officer Representative  Jodoi@usaid.gov

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

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

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

Peter Owusu Donkor Spatial Solutions
                    powusu-donkor@spatialdimension.net
                    #3 Third Nautical Close,
                    Nungua, Accra, Ghana
                    233 020 463 4488

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

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

Lydia Sasu
                    daawomen@daawomen.org
                    DAA
                    Darkuman Junction, Kaneshie Odokor
                    Highway
                    Accra, Ghana
                    233 302 315894

Gifty Asmah
                    giftyasasm@Daasgift.org
                    Daasgift Quality Foundation
                    Headmaster residence, Sekondi College
                    Sekondi, Western Region, Ghana
                    233 243 326 178

For additional information on partner activities:
CRC/URI:  http://www.crc.uri.edu
CEWEFIA:  http://cewefia.weakly.com/
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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION
The Hownam dialogue is a group development strategy that has been designed by SNV under the Sustainable Fisheries Management Project (SFMP) to help women and women groups to understand leadership, and develop the important skills needed in taking up leadership roles.
It is also to help understand group dynamics, and encourage informal discussions at their meetings on issues affecting the group and communities and to solicit support from each other.
The focus for this training was conflict management in four communities trained in hownam dialogue in Elmina, Moree, Anlo and Sekondi. The table below shows the number of participants by gender

SECTION 2: GROUP DEVELOPMENT TRAINING (HOWNAM DIALOGUE)

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<tr>
<th>NAME OF COMMUNITY</th>
<th>MALE</th>
<th>FEMALE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
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<td>ELMINA</td>
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<td>22</td>
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<td>MOREE</td>
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<td>ANLO</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEKONDI</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>134</td>
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SECTION 3: METHODOLOGY
Interactive training
Each participant was considered as both a student and a teacher. They had the opportunity to work in groups and took active part in the training.
Practical learning
The Participants gave practical examples on conflict and how they were able to resolve it.

SECTION 4: ROLE PLAY
Rope exercise:
This is to help members in the group to understand that it is good to compete, but there is the need to compromise with each other in order to reach the targeted objective.
It also helps the group to appreciate the effect of conflict and how it can lead to the collapse of the group
Orange exercise:
The orange exercise helps the group to come to a common decision when there is a conflicting situation.
SECTION 5: OUTCOME OF THE TRAINING

The Participants experienced and trained on group dynamics. Participants understood how power, authority and leadership play out in a group. Participants understood group conflict management. Participants leadership ability and conflict management skills were developed. The participants were made to know what conflict management is its benefits. Through discussions and role play they realized that conflict is: An active disagreement between people with opposing opinions or principles

Also conflict refers to some form of friction, disagreement or discord arising within a group when the beliefs or actions of one or more members of the group are either resisted by or unacceptable to the one or more members of another group.

The participants were made to know that conflict can sometimes support organizational goals. Indeed, too little conflict may lead to apathy, lack of creativity, indecision and missed-out deadlines. Clashes of ideas about tasks also help in choosing better tasks and projects.

The following were the common ways of dealing with conflicts:

- Conflict is pretty much inevitable when you work with others.
- People have different viewpoints and under the right set of circumstances, those differences escalate to conflict.
- How you handle that conflict determines whether it works to the team's advantage, or contributes to its demise.
- You can choose to ignore it, complain about it, blame someone for it, or try to deal with it through hints and suggestions; or you can be direct, clarify what is going on, and attempt to reach a resolution through common techniques like negotiation or compromise.
- It's clear that conflict has to be dealt with, but the question is how? It has to be dealt with constructively and with a plan, otherwise it is too easy to get pulled into the argument and even create larger mess.
- Every resolution of a conflict can also feed a new conflict in a group.
- How effectively a group deals with conflict management largely affects the efficiency level of its functioning.
Figure 3 shows conflict handling intentions. The participants resolved to use accommodating (friendly helper) and collaborating (problem solver) to handle conflict in their groups.