

# FAO VG-SSF REPORT

Activities on the Implementation of the FAO Voluntary Guidelines on Small-Scale Fisheries in Ghana

## Ga Local Workshop

27 November 2018, TUC Accra



TECHNICAL SERVICES  
FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



## **One- Day Workshop for Fishworkers and Fishworker Organisations**

### **Accra, Greater Accra Region**

27 November 2018, Trade Union Congress of Ghana



### **Background**

Accra is the capital of Ghana and houses the judicial, executive and legislative arms of government. A major economic hub, with business and transportation network across Africa, it remains the homeland of Ga and Adangme people. Fisheries play an important social, economic and cultural role in Ga-Adangme communities along the coast.

However, fishworkers in Accra have not been spared the many challenges in small-scale fisheries and the consequent economic reversal. Despite many interventions from the central government, fish worker and civil society organisations, these have mostly focused on economic, legislative and enforcement aspects.

Informed by the local social, cultural and economic context of SSF in Accra, a one-day workshop was held in the Ga language on 27 November 2018 at the Ghana Trade Union Congress headquarters. Participants were drawn from the local and national chapters of the Ghana National Canoe Fishermen Council [GNCF], Ministry of Fisheries & Aquaculture Development [MOFAD] and other stakeholders across the fish value chain. [Appendix 1A lists participants of the Accra Workshop]

## **Introduction and Climate Setting**

Mr. Benjamin Nyampong, a Trade Unionist with extensive work in SSF welcomed all participants to the Workshop and offered them the opportunity to introduce themselves. He explained that, the Accra programme was one in a series of three local language based workshops geared towards the implementation of the FAO Voluntary Guidelines in Ghana. He stated that the Workshop was a concerted effort to directly engage stakeholders on the FAO VG–SSF and deliberate on how they can play an active role in disseminating and implementing the Guidelines in their native language to safeguard their livelihood and future.

## **Current Interventions in Small Scale Fishery [MOFAD]**

Mr. David Sackey, a representative of the Ministry of Fisheries & Aquaculture Development [MOFAD] opened his presentation by providing an overview of the mandate of MOFAD, the importance of the Small Scale Fisheries to the Ghanaian Economy and Food Security. He noted that, whereas the traditional mandate of MOFAD's has revolved around policy direction and oversight of the fishery sector, the focus now is to harness fishery and industry for socio-economic development, significantly enhancing the livelihood of actors in the value chain.

Outlining the importance of fishery to employment and income generation, he stated that as many as two and half million Ghanaians are dependent on fisheries for their livelihood, of which an estimated 135,000 fishers from 340 fishing communities work in the marine sector which stretches from Aflao to Half Assini. He pointed out that, while women are not generally referred to as fishers, their contribution is invaluable as an estimated 27,000 women in SSF are engaged in full-time processing of fish.

Mr. Sackey observed that, without adequate supply of fish, Ghana will face a critical food security crisis as the country is among the highest per capita consumption of fish in the world, consuming about 20kg in 2015. Further, over 60% of animal protein consumed in Ghana is derived from fish and for this reason; MOFAD is committed to working with fishing communities to address all the teething challenges in the sector.

According to Mr. Sackey, there are many unsustainable fishing methods and irregularities in the sector and his outfit is rolling out rigorous measures to sanitise the sector and reverse the declining stock of the fishery. To this end, MOFAD is registering all small scale fishers who will be required to emboss their registration numbers on their canoes. Fishers will also be issued with identification cards to enable them benefit from fishing quota hours and subsidized pre-mix fuel, he added.

## **Organisational Challenges and Achievements in SSF [GNCFC]**

Nii Ayebli II, a chief from the Sempe Royal Family and a prominent member of the Greater Accra branch of the Ghana National Canoes Fishermen Council [GNCF] provided useful insights into the GNCFC and its role in contributing towards livelihood security and a secured SSF in the future. Before delving into his substantive address, Nii Ayebli expressed appreciation to ICSF and TESCOD Ghana for the opportunity. He observed that; programmes of such important nature are usually conducted in English with attendees being the usual suspects from academia and CSOs who purport to speak for the indigenous small-scale fishers and fishworkers.

According to Nii Ayebli II, the GNCFC has been a stabilizing anchor in the face of the several challenges militating against the SSF sector. The GNCFC, he emphasized, as the largest SSF organization in Ghana is very concerned about harmful practices of fishers and processors particularly, 'light and carbide fishing' and the chemical adulteration of processed fish. He attributed these harmful practices to pair trawling and transshipment of fish at sea [saiko] which is rapidly depleting fish stocks. He warned that unless there is strict enforcement of the fisheries regulations and prosecution of perpetrators behind pair trawling and saiko, the livelihood of approximately 2.7 million or 10% of Ghana's population that depend on fishery will be worsened.

Nii Ayebli II pledged the commitment of the GNCFC to continually collaborate with MOFAD and the Fishery Commission to fashion out policies that will promote sustainable fishing practices. However, he noted that; without stringent enforcement of the laws to curb IUU by the big players, depleted fish stocks will not be recovered. Besides, it will be difficult for MOFAD to implement the proposed Close Season since fishers will flout the directive and get away with it.

## **Introduction of the FAO VG-SSF and Workshop Objectives [TESCOD Ghana]**

Peter Linford Adjei opened his address by expressing appreciation to the Workshop participants and the international and local support TESCOD Ghana received in organizing the event. He mentioned in particular the role played by the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers [ICSF] in seeking funding from the FAO alongside the support from TESCOD Ghana's founder - Mr. David Eli, the Chief Director of MOFAD, Prof F.K.E Nunoo and Nii Abeo Kyerekuandah, the national chairman of GNCFC.

After expatiating on the pioneering work of Human Rights advocacy in SSF by John Kurien, Chandrika Sharma and other founding members of ICSF, Peter Adjei revealed that; the idea of an international guidelines on Human Rights in SSF gained wide international acceptance and later, other CSOs such as the World Forum of Fish Harvesters & Fish Workers [WFF] and World Forum of Fisher Peoples [WFFP] joined the campaign.

He pointed out that the FAO VG-SSF were adopted after an extended period of international consultations and highlighted some key facts:

- FAO VG-SSF represent a major achievement towards ensuring secure and sustainable small-scale fisheries
- FAO VG-SSF are the result of a bottom-up participatory development process
- FAO VG-SSF are the result of a consultative process – TESCOD Ghana participated in the initial consultations in 2013 at Grand Bassam, Ivory Coast
- FAO VG-SSF were facilitated by FAO - involved more than 4000 representatives of governments, small-scale fishers, fish workers and their organizations, researchers, development partners and other relevant stakeholders from over 120 countries in six regional and over 20 civil society organisation-led national consultative meetings.
- FAO VG-SSF were endorsed by the 31st Session of COFI in June 2014.
- FAO VG-SSF are voluntary, global in scope and with a focus on the needs of developing countries.



Peter Adjei explained that; since the adoption of the VG-SSF by FAO in 2014, local and international events have been organized to promote awareness about the Voluntary Guidelines. He mentioned that in Ghana, two additional workshops will be held in Takoradi and Keta in Fanti/Nzema and Ewe respectively. After the local workshops, a national workshop will be organized with a broader national and stakeholder focus.

He outlined the objectives of the Accra Workshop as follows:

- To inform participants from the Ga fishing communities about the guiding principles of the VG-SSF within the local context.
- To contribute towards understanding how the VG-SSF seeks to address the various problems and issues in SSF with special reference to gender, child labour, trade, resource management and tenure rights and access.
- To identify practical ways in which the VG-SSF can be implemented at the local community level.

### Video Documentary on the FAO VG-SSF



A video documentary session was provided to highlight the relevance of the FAO Voluntary Guidelines and other key issues and dimensions in Small-Scale Fishery in Tanzania, India and Costa Rica.

- *FAO Policy Series on Sustainable Small Scale Fishery*: Nicole Franz and Yvette Diei Ouadi draw attention to the importance of SSF and livelihood and challenges. They also offer compelling reasons why governments, FWOs and CSOs need to support the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines.
- *ICSF's 'The Sea of Change'*: The video does not only documents traditional fishworkers perspective of Climate Change in India but, also offers food-for-thought on the socio-economic, political, cultural and technological factors affecting the sea ecology; applicable to the Ghanaian SSF context.

- *Women in SSF- Tanzania*: This striking video provides a clear picture of the role of women in the fish value chain in Tanzania, their challenges and opportunities and the need to valorize their contribution to Food Security.
- *FAO-CoopeSolidar R.L Video*: The short documentary highlights the social and economic importance of women shrimp fishers in Barra del Colorado in Costa Rica. Particular emphasis is also placed on the importance of capacity building and alternative income generating activities in the face of changing regulations.

### **Highlights of the FAO VG-SSF**

This session was keenly anticipated. The preceding speakers and video documentaries have not only highlighted the significance of SSF in Food Security, but also underscored the human-rights case for small-scale fisheries across the globe.

The Team Leader for the Ga translation, Mr. Richard Kyei led all the participants through the 10 page abridged document by first highlighting and explaining the guiding principles of the FAO VG-SSF, i.e., human rights and dignity, respect of cultures, non-discrimination, gender equality and equity, equity and equality, rule of law, consultation and participation, transparency, accountability, economic, social and environmental sustainability, holistic and integrated approaches, social responsibility, feasibility and social and economic viability.

Next, he read the entire thematic portions of the document as the participants followed along with the reading in their personal copies. In many instances, Mr. Richard Kyei had to pause to explain the meaning or context of an expression and to modify the text to reflect the understanding of participants.

### **Priority Areas and Open Discussion**

After the highly participatory highlights of the FAO VG-SSF and lunch break, the second half of the workshop commenced as an open discussion to identify challenges and opportunities for solutions and/or innovation in the light of the Guidelines. This was a slight modification from the original programme which was intended to be a breakout session for smaller focus group discussion.

The session was facilitated by Mr. Ben Nyampong, Mr. Ose Poku, and Mr. Richard Kyei. Mr. David Sackey [MOFAD] and Peter Adjei [TESCOD Ghana/ICSF] acted as Resource Persons on government policy and FAO VG-SSF respectively.

## Thematic Areas of Concern

The majority of participants identified with five major themes of the FAO VG-SSF and thought other fishworkers in their communities could relate with them as well.

- Theme 1: Governance and Tenure
- Theme 2: Social Development, Employment & Decent Work
- Theme 3: Value Chains, Post-Harvest & Trade
- Theme 4: Gender Equality
- Theme 5: Disaster Risks & Climate Change



## Summary of Discussions

Participants through the five identified themes in the Guidelines discussed necessary areas of concern and offered their submissions for addressing same. A summary of the discussions across the thematic areas is presented below.

### Governance & Tenure

Participants said they have unrestricted access to the fishery resources – fishing grounds, landing and processing sites etc. but they have worrying concerns:

- Fishing grounds and beaches are vested in the State and fishers and fishworkers are not directly involved in management and decision-making



- Livelihood is threatened by large-scale beachfront tourism development. They cited the USD 1.2 billion, 240 acre Accra Marine Drive project as a possible threat
- The space for pre and post-harvest activities is shrinking as real-estate companies are developing landing and processing sites
- Encroachment of the 30m depth zone by industrial vessels/trawlers which results in destruction of juvenile fishes, nets and other fishing gears of SSF.

*Participants outlined the needed actions as follows:*

- Lobby for the Co-Management Bill to be passed in Parliament; [the Bill is currently being studied by Parliament]
- Seek ways of engaging government and developers to be more accountable;
- Zoning laws must be strictly enforced and real estate developers who flout the laws must be prosecuted;
- Fishers must build their capacity to gather and share evidence of encroachment, MOFAD must prosecute offenders, fishers must be compensated if they suffer loss.

### **Social Development, Employment & Decent Work**

Participants commended central government, CSOs, FWOs and international donors for showing interest in their work and welfare but contend that; modest achievements tend to be over-embellished, thus masking pressing social infrastructural needs:

- Policies for addressing social infrastructure are generic and focus more on developing the Central Business District than fishing communities
- Social amenities such as clinics, schools, pipe-borne water delivery are old and overstretched resulting in inefficiencies
- Squalid and insanitary working and living conditions exacerbated by plastic waste from the Accra Metropolis
- Poverty is on the rise due to declining stocks [caused mainly by transshipment of fish at sea- 'saiko']

*Participants outlined the needed actions as follows:*

- The need for a more fine-tuned policy framework for fishing communities taking into account their infrastructural needs, usage and growth;
- Provision of adequate and functional social amenities informed by present and future needs and with participation of fishing communities;
- Central and municipal government must truly decentralize – to support local leaders, CBOs, youth groups etc to address identified sanitation problems;
- Central/municipal government must work with communities with clearly defines roles in monitoring and reporting IUU activities, particularly 'saiko'

## Value Chains, Post-Harvest & Trade

Participants concurred that; the existing fish value chain is generally functional but is fraught with many bottlenecks and in spite of many governmental and non-governmental interventions, the challenges still persist.

- Few well-developed landing sites/ports resulting in poor handling practices
- High post-harvest losses
- Low by-product utilization
- Health risks associated with hazardous processing methods and unhygienic working environment
- Lack of credit limits access to improved processing and storage methods
- Capacity building programmes are not carefully planned with support for practical application or innovation

*Participants outlined the needed actions as follows:*

- Explore new ways of engaging central and local government to develop a plan for developing simple and functional, cost-effective landing sites;
- Improved sensitization of post-harvest handling standards;
- Intensify education in improved processing, storage, packaging, transport and marketing with participation of communities, youth groups and FWOs/ CSOs;
- The need to encourage fishworkers to form credible and accountable cooperatives/groups for collective negotiation and credit;
- Capacity building promoters should work with beneficiaries to orient programmes to be problem-based with the requisite technical and ancillary support and linkages.



## **Gender Equality**

Participants felt that there are favorable national level policies that promote gender equality and equity but at the community level, women, in particular face the brunt of age-old cultural practices that define separate roles and expectations for men and women.

- Participation in decision-making by women in fishery governance and management is very low; except in the post-harvest value chain that tend to be dominated by women
- Appropriate legislation exists against all forms of gender-based discrimination, but there is a general lack of awareness about them
- Hidden marginalization of women by the presence of powerful women financiers who owns post-harvest infrastructure and finance operations along the value chain. These influential women are the first point of call for policy makers, researchers and CSOs.

*Participants outlined the needed actions as follows:*

- Improve sensitization on gender rights and responsibilities;
- Formation of community-based women's groups to train and build capacity;
- Policy makers, academia, research institutions, CSOs and media must strive for 'all-inclusive', evidence-based research to avoid potential bias.

## **Disaster Risks & Climate Change**

Participants made the following submissions:

- Tidal waves are becoming more frequent in recent times destroying canoes, nets, and outboard motors
- Early warning mechanisms institutions are not well equipped to give timely warning in advance
- Government interventions in disaster risks have been typically reactive and limited to post disaster efforts - distribution of relief items and healthcare assistance for affected persons
- The commissioning of the Lavender Hill Fecal Treatment Plant in 2016 ended the dumping of raw sewage into the sea in the Accra Metropolis, but dumping of raw sewage in the sea goes on clandestinely outside the Metropolis
- The volume of plastic garbage in the sea and around the beaches is alarming
- Various initiatives and schemes to rid the coastal communities off plastics have had limited success due to lack of resources and proper coordination and apathy

*Participants outlined the needed actions as follows:*

- The Ghana Meteorological Services must establish a clear channel of communicating relevant weather forecasts and early warning reports with fishing communities;
- Communities along the coast must be educated about disaster preparedness and management;
- Since programmes to finding lasting solution to plastic waste and other forms of urban and industrial pollution have not been effective, there is an urgent need for re-assessment of existing approaches with a view to build well-resourced and well-coordinated bottom-up approach.
- The Accra Metropolitan Authority with the Environmental Protection Agency must take steps to revoke licenses and/or sanction companies that flout the acceptable standards of waste management.

### **Concluding Remarks**

In bringing the Workshop to a close; conclusions, recommendations and observations were made by participants with the hope that the implementation of the FAO Voluntary Guidelines at the community level will strengthen the capacity of fishers and fishworkers to contribute meaningfully towards sustainable and responsible fisheries.

Madam Christiana Sackey and Esther Addo of Prampram Cooperative Fishmongers Society said they participated in one of the consultative meetings on the draft Guidelines and believed the Guidelines have done justice to their concerns. Nii Ayetey I, a traditional chief of Asere Ga Mashie [James Town] was full of praise for ICSF and TESCOD Ghana. He noted that; the Workshop had given them deeper insight into the human-rights based approach in SSF than any other event on the subject. He mentioned that he will work with his officials and other stakeholders to determine how to incorporate the Guidelines into their traditional fishing regulations and by-laws.

Mr. David Sackey, on his part urged all the participants to adopt the Guidelines, build their capacity with it to become better fishworkers and decision-makers. He further advised that; the adversarial ‘me-verses-you’ approach of resolving conflicts is giving way to shared agendas and mutual negotiations – and the Guidelines just represent that in the SSF front.

Peter Adjei thanked all the participants, facilitators and resource persons and assured them that their comments and recommendations will be given much consideration in the implementation of the FAO VG-SSF in Ghana. He informed them that; some of the participants will be invited to the national workshop after the Fanti/Nzema and Ewe local workshops but TESCOD Ghana’s office was open for visits, suggestions or questions on the FAO VG-SSF.

ANNEX 1 A: PROGRAMME – GA (ACCRA) LOCAL WORKSHOP

**WORKSHOP ON THE INTRODUCTION OF THE FAO VOLUNTARY GUIDELINES ON SMALL SCALE FISHERIES IN GA**

**DATE: Tuesday 27 November 2018**

**VENUE: Trade Union Congress Hall, Accra**

<b>TIME</b>	<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>
8:30 – 9:00	Arrival and registration	Ms. Patience Tetteh
9:00 – 9:30	Introductions and climate setting	Mr. Benjamin Nyampong
9:30 – 10:00 9:30 9:40 9:50	<b>Presentation 1:</b> MOFAD/FC – Current interventions in SSF GNCFC – Challenges & Achievements ICSF – The Human Rights Approach in SSF	MOFAD/FC Representative GNCFC Representative ICSF Representative
10:00 – 10:30	<b>Presentation 2:</b> Introduction of the SSF Guidelines & Workshop Objectives	Peter Adjei
10:30 – 11:00	Video Documentary	
11:00 – 11:30	Snack Break	
11:30 – 12:30	<b>Presentation 3:</b> Highlights of the SSF Guidelines (with questions & answers)	Mr. Richard Kyei Mr. Osei Poku Peter Adjei Mr. David Sackey
12:30 -1:00	Lunch	
1:00 – 3:00	Open Discussion/ Plenary & Way Forward	All
	Group photograph	
	Departure	

ANNEX 1 B: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS – GA (ACCRA) LOCAL WORKSHOP

<b>Name</b>	<b>Institution/Organisation</b>	<b>Address</b>
Christiana Sackey	PCFS, Prampram	Prampram/Tel:0577323951
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Janet Kokor Doku	PCFS, Prampram	Prampram/Tel: 0543035599
Esther Addo	PCFS, Prampram	Prampram/Tel: 0245116682
Rebecca Doku	PCFS, Prampram	Prampram/Tel: 0549039174
Nii Okosu	GNCFC, Greater Accra	Ga Mashie/Tel: 0277666991
Nii Ayebli II	GNCFC, Greater Accra	Ga Mashie/Tel: 0274017756
Nii Adjetey	GNCFC, Greater Accra	Ga Mashie/Tel: 0276903628
Nii Adjei Quaye	GNCFC, Greater Accra	Ga Mashie/Tel: 0271012939
Nii Amu	GNCFC, Greater Accra	Ga Mashie/Tel: 0247006001
Nii Ayetey I	GNCFC, Greater Accra	Ga Mashie/Tel: 0576483249
Nii Adu	GNCFC, Greater Accra	Ga Mashie/Tel: 0271900726
Nortey Amu	GNCFC, Greater Accra	Ga Mashie/Tel: 0240275882
Samuel Annan	GNCFC, Greater Accra	Ga Mashie/Tel: N/A
Emmanuel Pappu	GNCFC, Greater Accra	Ga Mashie/Tel: 0577301798
William Lartey	GNCFC, Greater Accra	Ga Mashie/Tel: 0571637071
Samuel K. Okai	GNCFC, Greater Accra	Ga Mashie/Tel: 0273415632
Nii Komi	GNCFC, Greater Accra	Ga Mashie/Tel: N/A
Daniel Tetteh	GNCFC, Greater Accra	Kokrobite/Tel: N/A
David Sackey	Fisheries Commission	Accra M./ Tel: 0244856305
Japheth Menlah	Translator/Linguist	UCC Tel: 0247417486
Albert Aryeh	Translator/Linguist	Accra Tel: 0243173441
Richard Kyei	Translator/Linguist	Accra Tel: 0272668660
Francis Amani	TUC Ghana	Accra Tel: 0247768491
Benjamin Nyampong	TUC Ghana	Accra Tel: 0277776399
Osei Poku	GAWU TUC Ghana	Accra Tel: 0243986827
Anwar Sadat Muhammad	Fondjo Images	Kumasi Tel: 0246786949
Patience Tetteh	TESCOD Ghana	Accra Tel: 0246529154
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