LASU-ICSF-FAO-WORLDFISH

FINAL REPORT FOR REGULAR ENGAGEMENT WITH REGIONAL ADVISORY GROUPS OF GLOBAL STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Report

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INTRODUCTION

In 2016, the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) recommended the development of a Global Strategic Framework in support of the implementation of the SSF Guidelines (SSF-GSF). The SSF-GSF is a global partnership mechanism that helps ensure the implementation of the SSF Guidelines is carried out in a coherent way. It allows for participation of small-scale fisheries actors and other stakeholders in finding and sharing good practices, and in combining efforts to advocate for change and mobilize resources. Therefore, a key objective of this partnership mechanism is to give small-scale fishers and fish workers an opportunity to advise others on how *they* would like to see the SSF Guidelines put into action.

The International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty (IPC), took the bold initiative to form an African Advisory Group in support of the implementation of the SSF Guidelines. The African Advisory Group is composed of representatives of global and regional civil society networks having small-scale fisheries organizations in the African continent as their members such as the World Forum of Fisher People (WFFP), World Forum of Fish Harvesters and Fish Workers (WFF), Indigenous Peoples of Africa Coordinating Committee (IPACC), La Via Campesina (LVC), Federation of Indian Ocean Artisanal Fishers (FPAOI), African Women Fish Processors and Traders Network (AWFishNET), Réseau des organisations paysannes et de producteurs de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (ROPPA), African Confederation of artisanal fishing professionals (CAOPA), Plateforme Régionale des Organisations Paysannes d'Afrique Centrale (PROPAC). The African Advisory Group will exchange information with an already existing Advisory Group on global level, which is part of the Global Strategic Framework.

In February 2020, Masifundise organised a workshop in Zimbabwe to bring together representatives from regional organizations to map priorities for the implementation of the SSF Guidelines. This meeting set a goal to ensure that a coherent set of polices, strategies and actions are taken. The meeting also developed a Terms of Reference for an African Advisory Group (AAG) to support implementation of the SSF Guidelines, and nominated Masifundise to provisionally host the group's Secretariat in South Africa.

In November 2021, Ms. Lena Westlund initated contact with the AAG through Ms. Mishumo Madima, the Secretary of the <u>SSF-GSF</u> regional <u>African Advisory Group</u> at Masifundise to introduce Prof. S.L. Akintola and Dr. K. A. Fakoya who were working in collaboration and support with ICSF, WorldFish and FAO to hold a multi-stakeholder workshop. The AAG was requested to share

experiences and how the African SSF-GSF AG could possibly support this process and introduce members in Nigeria,

After a series of email exchanges and the Christmas/New Year break, a meeting was scheduled and finally held in February, 2022. The meeting with the Group acknowledged the lack of awareness of the SSF Guidelines on the continent and particularly among the fishers, fish workers and fishing communities as well as the Governments which affected the pace of implementation.

The AAG has no members based in Nigeria but had contacts of two members of the Regional African Group organizations who from were not well acquainted with the works or programmes of the AAG a brief conversation. Consequently, Mr. Alieu Sowe, a member of the Group from the Gambia was nominated to attend the workshop.

Mr. Alieu Sowe, a member of The Africa Advisory Group and World Forum of Fisher People (WFFP) Chapter, Gambia Fisher Folk Association presentation was focused on the "African Advisory Group implementations of SSF Advocacy on the the **Guidelines:** The Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines)": an important tool for sustainable development of small-scale fisheries". In his opening statements, He introduced the African Advisory Group I as a regional body of the Global Strategic Framework composed of representatives of global and regional civil society networks having within themselves small-scale fisheries organizations in the African continent. He described the group as performing and advisory role to the Advisory Group of the Global Strategic Framework in Support of the Implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (AG SSF-GSF). And, this is achieved by working with all the regional processes relevant to the implementation and monitoring of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines). He stated that the objective of Information sharing sessions was to bring awareness to the challenges, needs and opportunities to sustainably develop small-scale fisheries on globally and at the African continent.



Mr.Sowe narrated the history and background of the development of the SSF Guidelines with the Global conference on small-scale fisheries o-organized by FAO and the Royal Government of Thailand in collaboration with the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC) and The World Fish Center in Bangkok in October (13–17) 2008 reinforced the claim that small-scale fisheries have yet to fully realize their potential and reaffirmed that human rights are critical to achieving sustainable development and called for an international instrument on small-scale fisheries. Leading up to the conference, he reported that social movements, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and fish workers representatives organized a preparatory workshop which was attended by more than 100 participants. From this conference, a statement with recommendations was produced as the outcome and emphasized the indivisibility of the human rights of small-scale fishers and indigenous people and also called for a guarantee of access rights of small-scale and indigenous fishing communities to territories, land, water, which is indispensable for their life and livelihood. He indicated that in 2009, the 28th Session of the global Committee On Fisheries (COFI) reaffirmed the need for such an instrument on small-scale fisheries and in support of this, the FAO facilitated three regional consultations on bringing together responsible fisheries and social development, including one for Asia and the Pacific in 2010.

He reported that from 2011 to 2013, a CSO platform organized more than 20 national and regional consultations, while FAO held three additional regional consultations to support the drafting of the first draft of the SSF Guidelines. This process brought together more than 4000 representatives of

small-scale fishing communities, CSO, governments, and regional organizations from over 120 countries. The national-level consultations were organized primarily by CSOs, who play a major role in shaping the structure and content of the SSF Guidelines. From May 2013 to February 2014, the FAO held a technical consultation to negotiate the content of the SSF Guidelines. This process included States' delegations, regional organizations, CSOs and other observers. The result of the consultation was the SSF Guidelines which were endorsed by the 31st Session of the COFI on June 10, 2014 COFI. He described the Guidelines as a "breakthrough tool that will promote the implementation of national policies that will help small scale fishers thrive and play an even greater role in ensuring food security, promoting good nutrition, and eradicating poverty."

Furthermore, Mr. Sowe gave an overview of the contents of the Voluntary Guidelines as composed of three parts under which are thirteen chapters. Part 1 is the introduction and outlines the objectives, nature and guiding principles and relationship with other International Instruments. Part 2 of the revolves on responsible fisheries and sustainable development under which topics such as governance of tenure in small scale fisheries, responsible governance of tenure, sustainable resource management, social development, employment and decent work, Value chains, post-harvest and trade, Gender Equality and Disaster risks and Climate Change. Part 3 is explicit on ensuring an enabling environment and supporting implementation under which topics such as policy coherence, institutional coordination and collaboration; information, research and communication; capacity development; and implementation support and monitoring. He discussed the chapters under six main themes: tenure, social development, employment and decent work, value chains, post-harvest and trade, gender equality, disaster risk and climate change and ensuring an enabling environment and supporting implementation. The sixth theme explicitly points to addressing monitoring and awareness raising needs through a global programme of assistance - the Global Strategic Framework, with regional plans of action to support the implementation of these Guidelines; strengthening capacity development for SSF communities (especially women) to be part of decisionmaking progress; work towards policy coherence approaches in legislation to recognize and support SSF, using cooperative governance mechanisms such as co-management at local, national, regional and international level and strengthening information, research and communication for effective decision-making. He was emphatic that monitoring and awareness raising needs brought to bear the African Advisory Group in support of the implementation of the SSF Guidelines with members in a handful of African countries.

On the advocacy realities, he listed steps must be taken to include promotion of the effective participation of fishing communities, especially women and youth, in the community and local development processes. Next, he mentioned strengthening technical and political capacities of organizations of artisanal fisheries in the continent; promoting the rational and sustainable exploitation of fisheries resources, especially at the level of artisanal fisheries resources; improving the living conditions of fishing communities, especially in access to essential social infrastructure and supporting concrete evidences of co-management and participatory governance of fisheries in the African countries and their disseminations.

He identified diverse actors ranging from fisheries associations at community, national, regional and global levels, government fisheries institutions; women and youth entities; private sectors; UN Agencies; NGOs; training and education institutions; media fraternity; network of fisher organizations to consumers among others and encouraged collective efforts to work earnestly towards the successful implementations and realities of the Small Scale Fisheries Guidelines at all levels to help advance the livelihood development of the Small Scale Fishers. He concluded that although much has been done over the years, collaboration and partnership in the African context has been indeed limited and little or no action taken towards the implementations of the SSF Guidelines in some African countries.

The AAG has not had another meeting with Nigerian team but through its representative pledged commitment to assist and give advice on how Nigeria should move forward with the implementation process.