



International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF)

MEL4SSF Piloting

Ghana

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning 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

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Sekondi-Takoradi

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Cape Coast



List of Acronyms

AfCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Area		
CAP BuSS	Coronavirus Alleviation Programme Business Support		
CBFMC	Community-Based Fisheries Management Committees		
CBO	Community-Based organization		
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women		
CLaT	Child Labour and Trafficking		
COFI	Committee on Fisheries		
CPESDP	Coordinated Programmes for Economic & Social Development Policies		
CRC	International Convention on the Rights of the Child		
CTR	Customary Tenure Rights		
DAA	Development Action Association		
ECOSOC	Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights		
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States		
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization		
FASDEP	Food and Agriculture Sector Development Policy		
FC	Fisheries Commission		
FDA	Food and Drugs Authority		
FGD	Focus Group Discussion		
FIA	Fisheries Impact Assessment		
FLEC	Fisheries License Evaluation Committee		
FRI	Food Research Institute		
FWO	Fish Worker Organization		
GMet	Ghana Meteorological Agency		
GNCCAS	Ghana National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy		
GNCCP	Ghana National Climate Change Policy		
GNCFC	Ghana National Canoe Fishermen Council		
GSA	Ghana Standards Authority		
HLCFA	Hook and Line Canoe Association of Ghana		
HRBA	Human Rights-Based Approach		
ICCAT	International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas		
ICSF	International Collective in Support of Fishworkers		
IEZ	Inshore Exclusive Zone		
IND #	Indicator number		
IUU	Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing		
		PRM	Peer Review Mechanism
		LBC	Landing Beach Committees
		MASLOC	Microfinance and Loans Centre
		MCS	Monitoring, Control and Surveillance Systems
		MDA	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
		MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
		MMDA	Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies
		MoFA	Ministry of Food and Agriculture
		MoFAD	Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development
		MoGCSP	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection
		MTDP	Medium-Term Development Policy
		MWC	International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families
		NADMO	National Disaster Management Organization
		NAFPTA	National Fish Processors and Traders Association
		NDPC	National Development Planning Commission
		NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
		NPS	National Premix Fuel Secretariat
		OMC	Oil Marketing Company
		PPP	Polluter Pays Principle
		SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
		SSAF	Safe Sea Access Framework
		TEN	Tweneboa Enyenra Ntomme
		TESCOD	Technical Services for Community Development
		TOR	Tema Oil Refinery
		UNCLOS	UN Convention on the Law of the Sea
		VNR	Voluntary National Review

Executive Summary

At its 31st session in 2014, FAO's Committee on Fisheries (COFI) adopted the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines); with the overarching goal of promoting a human rights-based approach to address the aspirations, needs and challenges of fishers and fishworkers across the small-scale fisheries value chain.

Towards promoting greater ownership and democratization of the SSF Guidelines, between 2020 – 2021, FAO initiated the development of a monitoring, evaluation and learning framework (MEL4SSF). The MEL4SSF is a framework that can be used to evaluate progress, identify gaps and challenges; and understand impact and outcomes in implementing the SSF Guidelines.

This report details a pilot of the MEL4SSF in Ghana: 42 officials and SSF leaders were interviewed, 13 focus group discussions (FGDs) with 227 participants were conducted; and over 20 major legislative and policy documents were reviewed. The pilot prioritized pre-identified key indicators of relevance; and offers useful lessons and recommendations for improving the MEL4SSF.

On the whole, the pilot study was positively received by SSF stakeholders as they could relate to the principles and issues. They noted that both the MEL Handbook and Indicators cover the relevant issues that need to be addressed in the small-scale sector. A summary of the prioritized indicators of relevance, from the five the MEL4SSF thematic chapters, is highlighted below.

With respect to tenure rights and governance; existing legislation and policies generally recognize SSF. The Co-Management Policy of 2020 represents the most significant milestone in SSF rights in Ghana and lays the foundation for compliance with the SSF Guidelines. The SSF stakeholders placed high priorities on: the need for legal recognition of

customary tenure rights; sale of shore lands for real estate/tourism development; non-inclusion of SSF interest in third-party resource agreements; frequent incursions into the Inshore Exclusive Zone (IEZ) and weakening grievance and conflict resolution mechanisms. Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) (also known as saiko) fishing; dangerous fishing practices; denial of access to fishing grounds and inadequate information on co-management implementation plans were also highly prioritized.

Regarding social development, employment and decent work, and due to the general deprivation, multi-dimensional poverty and lack of infrastructure, the SSF community prioritized investment in essential services, working conditions and social protection, including:

- Essential services: access to education, infrastructure and quality issues; road network and accessibility; quality and affordable healthcare; water and sanitation hygiene; decent housing; affordable and reliable energy; and access to savings and credit.
- Working conditions: occupational health and safety; child labour and trafficking (CLaT); and livelihood diversification.
- Social protection: access and availability of fisheries inputs subsidies including pre-mixed fuel, nets, and outboard motors.

Concerning value chains, post-harvest and trade, the priorities include: urgent need for market infrastructure to be tailored to the needs of SSF; improving processing technologies; capacity building across the fish value-chain; and transparent, accountable and democratic fishworker organizations (FWOs).

In relation to gender equality, priorities for ensuring gender equality in SSF focus on: enforcing legislation and policies on gender; providing adequate work resources to more vulnerable women in SSF; addressing health needs of fish processors and traders; and providing gender-equitable support for alternative and supplementary work.

Regarding disaster risks and climate change, the identified priorities include: effective consultations of SSF in developing climate change policies; providing support to SSF to reduce negative impacts of climate change; and using holistic and integrated approaches to address issues in climate change policies and adaptation plans.

Drawing on the feedback and lessons from the piloting; a set of recommendations for improving the MEL4SSF include:

- In terms of the SSF Guidelines and MEL4SSF, successful implementation will depend on defining indicators in local contexts, addressing existing policy gaps and disaggregating and harmonizing data on SSF. The inclusion of SSF Guidelines chapters 10 (Policy coherence, institutional coordination and collaboration) and 11 (Information, research and communication) into the MEL4SSF is suggested on the basis that this would provide a more unified framework for implementing the SSF Guidelines.
- In terms of the MEL Handbook, it is recommended that both detailed and simplified versions should be developed. The detailed version should contain the original unabridged content with the addition of chapter summaries; while the simplified version should be written in an easy-to-understand, simple language with illustrations.
- In terms of Results and Progress Indicators, the users' knowledge of the SSF Guidelines, local legislation and policies is identified as crucial for effective implementation. The need for identifying core indicators, establishing compliance criteria and peer review mechanisms for a universal and uniform progression is recommended.
- In terms of Country Level Adoption, keys to effective adoption include: identifying committed stakeholders; providing training within a local context; managing expectations of stakeholders; effective communication and knowledge sharing; and monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the MEL4SSF.
- Finally, in terms of Digitalization of the MEL4SSF, identifying interested stakeholders to adopt and disseminate the digitized MEL4SSF is emphasized. In addition, creating a sense local ownership, designing a simple user interface, and regularly testing and reviewing the digitalized MEL4SSF are recommended.

* * *

1. Introduction

At its 31st session in 2014, FAO's Committee on Fisheries (COFI) adopted the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines); with the overarching goal of promoting a human rights-based approach to address the aspirations, needs and challenges of fishers and fishworkers across the small-scale fisheries value chain. Towards promoting greater ownership and democratization of the Guidelines, FAO is introducing a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Framework for small-scale fisheries, also known as MEL4SSF.

Guidelines and its main thematic areas (Chapters 5-9), while also considering already existing indicators included in other relevant monitoring frameworks, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Following an expert workshop convened by WorldFish in September 2021 that reviewed and improved the Indicator List; the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF) took up the process in March 2022, in order to refine and finalise the Indicator List, draft a Handbook that provides guidance on how to use the framework, and lead a piloting process in two FAO member countries—Ghana and the Philippines.

1.1. Background and rationale

In harmony with the SSF Guidelines, the MEL4SSF seeks to provide a coherent and systematic structure that can be used to “evaluate progress in implementing the SSF Guidelines; identify gaps and challenges in meeting the principles and practices in the SSF Guidelines; and understand the impact and outcomes that arrive from their successful and widespread implementation”.¹

This report details the piloting process in Ghana. It examined the MEL4SSF in real-world setting through document review, key informant interviews and surveys of relevant actors in the small-scale fishery sector. It also contextualised and prioritised identified key indicators of relevance from the stakeholders' perspective, and offers useful lessons and recommendations for improving the framework.

Toward that end, between 2020 – 2021 a draft Indicator List was developed by WorldFish based on a close examination of the SSF

1. Background to the MEL4SSF, ICSF

1.2. Piloting objectives

The objectives of the pilot study include:

- To introduce the MEL4SSF to fishers, fishworker organizations, NGOs, and relevant SSF policy and regulatory bodies, academic institutions, and media houses;
- To identify key indicators of relevance to stakeholders within the SSF subsector, with special focus on the vulnerable and marginalised groups;
- To contextualise and prioritise the identified key indicators of relevance from the stakeholders' perspective, covering governance and tenure, social development; value chains, post-harvest and trade; gender equality; disaster risks and climate change issues;
- To discuss and identify options for effective implementation of the MEL4SSF.

1.3. Scope and focus

This pilot study focuses mainly on the MEL4SSF Indicator List and Handbook as the primary piloting tools, as they effectively cover the major issues in small-scale fisheries—namely tenure rights and governance; social development, employment and decent work; value chains, post-harvest and trade; gender equality; and disaster risks and climate change. To ensure a truly consultative and participatory process, the piloting was conducted with national fishworker organizations (FWOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs); community-based organizations (CBOs) and SSF groups; ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs); urban and rural fishing communities in both marine coastal and freshwater inland fisheries; academic/research institutions and

media houses. A detailed analysis of the SSF primary stakeholders and methodology deployed for the pilot is discussed in the Approach and Methods section.

1.4. Structure of report

The report is structured in four main sections. This first section has introduced the background and rationale of the pilot study including the objectives, scope and focus. The second section outlines the approach and methodology deployed for the study and reviews the data collection techniques and tools. The third section discusses the results of the pilot study in-depth, based on inputs from the key stakeholders. The fourth section presents the recommendations with specific references to SSF Guidelines and MEL4SSF; Handbook; Indicator List; country-level adoption; and digitalization of the MEL4SSF.

* * *

2. Approach and Methods

The approach of the piloting process focused on: using the MEL4SSF as a convergent tool to draw out the issues and priorities of regulatory stakeholders (*duty bearers*); an informal, participatory approach for fishers and fishworkers (*rights holders*) to share their perspectives; the use of qualitative questions to bring greater meaning to data; and the need to highlight gaps for future implementation. To this end, a five-step methodology was deployed as follows:

- Formal stakeholder engagements with the Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development (MoFAD), Fisheries Commission (FC) and FAO country/regional office;
- Review of legal and policy documents on small-scale fisheries in Ghana;
- Interviews with representatives of national FWOs, NGOs, academia, and the media;
- Community-based piloting, including interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) with fishers and fishworkers in urban and rural fishing communities; and
- Synthesis of primary data, follow-ups and finalizing the pilot report.

2.1. Data collection

Both primary and secondary data were used for the pilot study. Primary data was generated through interviews and structured questionnaires with ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs), FWOs, academic/research institutions and media houses; key informant interviews with small groups of fishers/fishworkers (3-5) to introduce the MEL4SSF and explore their perspectives and priorities; and FGDs with larger groups of fishers/fishworkers (20-30) to elicit issues of relevance from the various groupings within a fishing community. In addition to the MEL4SSF Indicator List and Handbook, relevant legislation and policies on small-scale fisheries were reviewed. Overall, 42 leaders/officials were interviewed, 13 FGDs with a total of 227 participants were conducted; and over 20 major documents were reviewed.

2.2. Review of existing literature

The pilot team reviewed relevant legislation, policies, journals and case studies prior to the primary data collection for an updated understanding of the state of small-scale fisheries in Ghana. These include: Fisheries Act, 2002 (Act 625); Fisheries (Amendment) Act, 2014 (Act 880); Fisheries Regulations, 2010 (L.I.1968); Fisheries (Amendment) Regulations, 2015 (L.1.2217); Local

Government Act, 1993 (Act 462); Local Governance Act, 2016 (Act 936); National Premix Fuel Committee Regulations, 2016 (L.I.2233); Food and Agriculture Sector Development Policy (FASDEP II); The Ghana Co-Management Policy, 2020; Marine Fisheries Management Plan (2022-2026); Sector Medium-Term Development Plan (2022-2025); and reports/studies from MDAs and UN agencies.

For details of national legislative and policy framework; fisheries regulatory institutions, and structure of the fisheries sector, see Annex A, B and C respectively.

2.3. Primary data collection

Below is a list of primary data sources engaged with for the study.

INTERVIEWS

A: Regulatory & Intergovernmental Agencies:

- **Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development (MoFAD):** Mr. Kwesi Armo-Himbson (*Chief Director*); Mr. Samuel Quartey (*Technical Advisor to the Minister*); Ms. Jaqueline Ahetor (*Secretary to the Chief Director*).
- **Fisheries Commission (FC):** Mr. Paul Bannerman (*Ag. Executive Secretary, FC*); Ms. Yaa Tiwa Amoa (*Post-Harvest Unit, FC*).

- **Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO):** Mr. Ndiaga Gueye (*Senior Fisheries Officer*); Ms. Abigail Kanyji; and Ms. Yaa Danso.

B: Fishworker organizations (FWOs) and NGOs:

- **Development Action Association (DAA):** Ms. Emely Nortey (*Executive Member and Director, DAA Training Centre*); Ms. Lydia Sasu

(*Executive Director*).

- **National Fish Processors and Traders Association (NAFPTA):** Ms. Anamua Mensah (*Vice President, NAFPTA Central Region*); Ms. Agnes Yankah (*Organiser NAFPTA, Central Region*); Ms. Georgina Mensah (*Treasurer, NAFPTA Central Region*).

- **Ghana National Canoe Fishermen Council (GNCF):** Nii Dzamlodza VI, (*National Executive Member*); Mr. Mike Abaka-Edu (*Secretary, GNCF Western Region branch*).

- **National Inland Canoe Fishermen Council (NICFC):** Mr. Jacob Tetteh Agekeh (*National President*).

- **Hook and Line Association of Ghana (HLCA):** Nii Annan (*National Chairman*); Mr. Evans Tackie (*National Secretary*).

- **Traditional heads of small-scale fisheries:** Nii Odarmetey II (*Chief Fisherman of Awudum, Tema*); Nii Mator III (*Chief Fisherman of Ashamang, Tema*); Nana Obrenu Dabum III (*Apofohene of Gomoa Fetteh*); Mr. Nyamekye (*Secretary to Nana Kra, Apofohene, Cape Coast*); Mr. David Ablesu (*Dafor Tornu*); Mr. Kwesi Addo Joshua (*Kpando Torkor*); Mr. Matthew Dornu (*Tapa Abotoase*); Stephen Kutatsror (*Linguist of Tapa Alavanyo*); Nana Kwaw Akyen (*Headman of Fanteakura*); Nornosour Solomon and Kedzi Godwin (*Headmen of Jaklai*);

C: Media Houses:

- Mr. Fiifi Koompson—News Editor Joy FM Multimedia Group

D: Academic/ Research Institutions:

- Prof. F.K. Nunoo—Department of Marine Science & Oceanography, University of Ghana; Chairman of the Board of Fisheries Commission of Ghana

- Prof. Benjamin Betey Campion—Faculty of Renewable Natural Resources, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science & Technology

QUESTIONNAIRES

A: Fishworker Organizations (FWOs) and NGOs:

- **Mr. Jojo Solomon**—President, Ghana National Canoe Fishermen Council
- **Mrs. Lydia Sasu**—Executive Director, Development Action Association
- **Mr. Jacob Kabore Tetteh Ageke**—President, National Inland Canoe Fishermen Council

- **Mrs. Regina Solomon**—President, National Fish Processors & Traders Association

- **Mr. Evans Tackie**—Secretary, Hook and Line Canoe Fishermen Association

- **Mrs. Churchill Koomson**—President, Central & Western Fishmongers Association

- **Ms. Elsie Debrah**—Environmental Justice Foundation

- **Mr. Kyei Yamoah**—Friends of the Nation

B: Ministries, Departments & Agencies (MDAs):

- **Chief Director**—Ministry of Land & Natural Resources

- **Chief Director**—Ministry of Employment & Relations

- **Chief Director**—Ministry of Education

- **Chief Director**—Ministry of Energy
- **Chief Director**—Ministry of Finance & Economic Planning

- **Chief Director**—Ministry of Gender, Children & Social Protection

- **Chief Director**—Ministry of Health

- **Chief Director**—Ministry of Works and Housing

- **Chief Director**—Ministry of Science, Technology & Innovation

- **Chief Director**—Ministry of Justice and Attorney General's Department

C: Media Houses

- **Joy FM**, Multimedia Group

- **Ghana Broadcasting Corporation**

D: Academic/Research Institutions:

- Department of Marine Science & Oceanography, University of Ghana

- Centre for Coastal Management, University of Cape Coast

- Faculty of Renewable Natural Resources, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science & Technology.

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS (FGDS)

A: Urban fishing communities:

- **Sekondi, Western Region:** FGD held 31 fishers and fishworkers. The Chairman and

Secretary of the Hook and Line Canoe Fishermen Association (HLCFA); Nii Annan and Mr. Evans Tackie assisted in facilitating the discussions.

- **Axim, Western Region:** FGD held with 4 fishers and 1 fish processor/trader. Mr. Mike Abaka-Edu (*Western Regional Secretary of GNCF*) assisted in facilitating the discussions.
- **Cape Coast:** FGD held at Abrofo Mpoano with representatives of Nana Krah (*Apofohene*) - Mr. Nyamekye (*secretary to Nana Kra*); Nana Kojo Attah (*Nana Kra's staffer*) and Mr. Esson. FGD also held with Ms. Georgina Mensah, (*Regional Treasurer, NAFPTA*); Ms. Agnes Yankah, (*Regional Organiser NAFPTA*); and Ms. Anamuah Mensah, (*Regional Vice President NAFPTA*).
- **Tema, Greater Accra:** FGD held at Tema Canoe Basin with 7 elders of the Woleiatse (*Chief Fishermen of Ashamang and Awudum*).
- **Tapa Abotoase, Oti Region:** FGD held with 42 fishers, and fishworkers drawn from C.K Kope, Klagbokope, and Abotoase. Mr. Victor Adri (*Zonal Manager of the Fisheries Commission*) Mr. Matthew Dornu (*Zonal Chairman of NICFC*); Mr. Johnson Yaokumah (*Zonal Secretary of NICFC*); Mr. Jacob Kabore Tetteh Agekeh (*President of NICFC*) assisted in facilitating the discussions.

B: Rural fishing communities:

- **Kpando Torkor, Volta Region:** FGD held with 44 fishers and fishworkers drawn from Kpando Torkor, and Agama Tornu. Three executives of NICFC; Mr. Kwei Addo Joshua (*Zonal Chairman*); Mr. Eric Osabutey (*Zonal Secretary*); Mr. Jacob Kabore Tetteh Agekeh (*President*), assisted in facilitating the discussions.

- **Dafor Tornu, Volta Region:** FGD held with 33 fishers and fishworkers at Dafor Tornu. Mr. David Ablesu (*Youth Leader*); Mr. Kakraba Samuel (*NICFC Secretary*) and Mr. Jacob Kabore Tetteh Agekeh (*President of NICFC*) assisted in facilitating the discussions.

- **Alavanyo, Oti Region:** FGD held with 23 fishers, and fishworkers at Tapa Alavanyo. Mr. Matthew Dornu (*Zonal Chairman of NICFC*); and Mr. Jacob Kabore Tetteh Agekeh (*President of NICFC*) assisted in facilitating the discussions.

- **Gomoa Fetteh, Central Region:** FGD held with 4 elders of Nana Obrenu Dabum III, Apofohene (*Chief Fisherman*) of Gomoa Fetteh.

- **Fanteakura, Bono East Region:** FGD held with 57 fishers and fishworkers. Nana Kwaw Akyen (*Headman*); Hon. Ibrahim Yahaya (*Ex Assemblyman and Coordinator of NICF, Yeji*) and Mr. Enoch Kwetey (*Secretary of NICFC, Yeji*) assisted in facilitating the discussions.

- **Jaklai, Bono East Region:** FGD held with 43 fishers and fishworkers at Jaklai Number 3. Nornosour Solomon and Kedzi Godwin (*Headmen*); Hon. Ibrahim Yahaya (*Ex Assemblyman and Coordinator of NICF, Yeji*) and Mr. Enoch Kwetey (*Secretary of NICFC, Yeji*) assisted in facilitating the discussions.

- **Makango, Savannah Region:** FGD held at Makango Port with 23 fishers, and fishworkers drawn from Makango Gonja, Makango Abelelope, Soldierakura and Awagyakura. Tette Torkornyo (*Headman of Makango*); Hon. Ibrahim Yahaya (*Ex Assemblyman and Coordinator of NICF Yeji*) and Mr. Enoch Kwetey (*Secretary of NICFC, Yeji*) assisted in facilitating the discussions.

2.4. Description of the study communities

Community-based piloting of the MEL4SSF was carried out in 13 fishing communities in seven regions of Ghana; comprising 5 urban and 8 rural fishing communities.

Urban fishing communities:

Sekondi-Takoradi: The twin city of Sekondi-Takoradi is the administrative and commercial capital of the Western Region. Located 280km east of Accra and 130km west of La Cote D'Ivoire, it has the second largest deep seaport in Ghana and a major fish landing and trading hub with port facilities for industrial, inshore and artisanal fishers. In 2010, offshore oil production began in the region. It has a population of 245,382.²

Axim: Axim is located in the Western Region of Ghana; 280km west of Accra and 85km east of La Cote D'Ivoire. A notable fishing town with a population of 27,719³ but also has a vibrant local economy based on subsistence farming, tourism and coconut and rubber plantations. Ghana's offshore Jubilee; and deep water Tweneboa Enyenra Ntomme (TEN) oil fields are 90km and 110km respectively from Axim.

Cape Coast: Cape Coast is the capital of the Central Region with a population of 189,925.⁴ It played a major role in the trans-Atlantic slave trade and was at various times controlled by the Portuguese, Danish, Swedes, Dutch and British. The economy is

metropolitan but fishing is the backbone of local economies along the coast including Bakaano, Ekon and Abakam. The Kotokoraba (crab village) is a major regional market.

Osu: Osu is one of the most urbanized fishing suburbs in Ghana with a population of 68,633.⁵ Located 3km from Accra's CBD, it has developed from a fishing settlement, colonial town and seat of government⁶ into cosmopolitan neighbourhoods. Despite being referred to as the West End of Accra with busy commercial and nightlife activities, fishing and related trades remain the main source of livelihood for the indigenes.

Tema: Tema is located 25km east of Accra and both cities are linked by highway and rail. A harbour city and an industrial enclave, it was constructed on the site of a small fishing village in the 1960s. It has a purpose-built fishing harbour for industrial trawlers, semi-industrial vessels, and artisanal canoes. Small-scale fishery accounts for 70% of the catch in the fishing harbour.⁷ Tema has a population of 161,612.⁸

Tapa Abotoase: Tapa Abotoase is located 244km from Accra; in the Biakoye District of the Oti Region. A notable fishing and farming town with a population of 8,790;⁹ Tapa Abotoase has a 4-day periodic market which draws small and micro businesses from overbank fishing communities and urban districts in Krachi, Sene, Afram Plains, Tema and Accra. It is the main source of revenue for the Biakoye District Assembly.

2. Ghana Statistical Service; 2021 Population & Housing Census

3. <https://www.wikiwand.com/en/Axim>

4. Composite Budget for Cape Coast Metropolitan Assembly 2022-2023

5. Ghana Statistical Service; 2021 Population and Housing Census

6. Fort Christiansborg built by Denmark-Norway in the 1660s became the seat of government in 1902 until it was moved to the Golden Jubilee House in 2008.

7. Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority

8. <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/geography/tema.php>

9. [https://www.getamap.net/maps/ghana/ghana_\(general\)/_tapaabotoase/](https://www.getamap.net/maps/ghana/ghana_(general)/_tapaabotoase/)

Rural fishing communities:

Kpando Torkor: Located 198km from Accra with a population of 6,800 in the Kpando Municipality is Kpando Torkor, a strategic point to cross the Volta Lake to the Afram Plains. It is famed for its fish market, clay production and farming and serves not only the municipality of 58,552 residents¹⁰ but also regional markets in Ho, Dambai, Kumasi and Accra. It also caters for hundreds of overbank and island communities in the Volta Lake.

Dafor Tornu: Dafor Tornu is a small rural fishing community with an estimated population of 2,003 located along the banks of the Volta Lake. Small-scale fisheries play an important role in the socio-economic development of the community as over 80% of households are predominantly engaged in fishing, processing and trading of fish products. Other minor occupations include farming, animal husbandry and hunting.

Tapa Alavanyo: Tapa Alavanyo is one of the 48 overbank fishing communities in the Biakoye District of the Oti Region. The residents of the community are mostly migrants comprising Ewes, Dangmes and Fantes with a population of approximately 2,000.¹¹ The economy is based predominantly on artisanal canoe fishing and processing and in the fishing lean season, subsistence farming and petty trading.

Gomoa Fetteh: Gomoah Fetteh is a coastal fishing town located 35km east of Accra in the Gomoa East District of the Central Region. In addition to its small-scale fishing and household fish processing, Gomoa Fetteh is

known for its long stretch of clean white beach. Some of Ghana's exclusive, high end beach resorts and clubs are located in Gomoa Fetteh. It has a population of 5,188.¹²

Fanteakura: Fanteakura is a lakeshore fishing community located in the Pru East District of the Bono East Region. Yeji with a population of 35,000 is the capital of the Pru East District.¹³ As one of Ghana's largest inland fishery trading centres with a major transport hub across the county, Yeji's market is pivotal for Fanteakura fishers, processors and traders; and Fanteakura, in turn an important revenue basket of the district assembly.

Jaklai: Jaklai is located approximately 470km north of Accra on the shoreline of Lake Volta in the Pru East District. A migrant settlement community at the eastern end of Yeji township, it has a long history of fishing and fish processing; a key source of revenue for the district. Yeji's strategic location and fish market provide not only market access, but also job opportunities for petty traders, artisans and transport operators from Jaklai.

Makango: Makango is a fishing community located approximately 500km north of Accra and 30km south of Salaga; the capital of the East Gonja District of the Savannah Region. Its ferry port connects Makango and Yeji on the northern and southern shore of the Volta Lake respectively. Fishing and trading in processed fish (smoked, fried, salted, dried) is the predominant occupation of the community. Makango has a population of 4,000.¹⁴

* * *

10. 2021 Population and Housing Census

11. 2010 Population and Housing Census

12. 2010 Population and Housing Census

13. https://ghana.peacefmonline.com/pages/tourism/other_sites/yeji/

14. <https://www.ghanachristianmission.com/post/getting-to-know-makango-clinic>

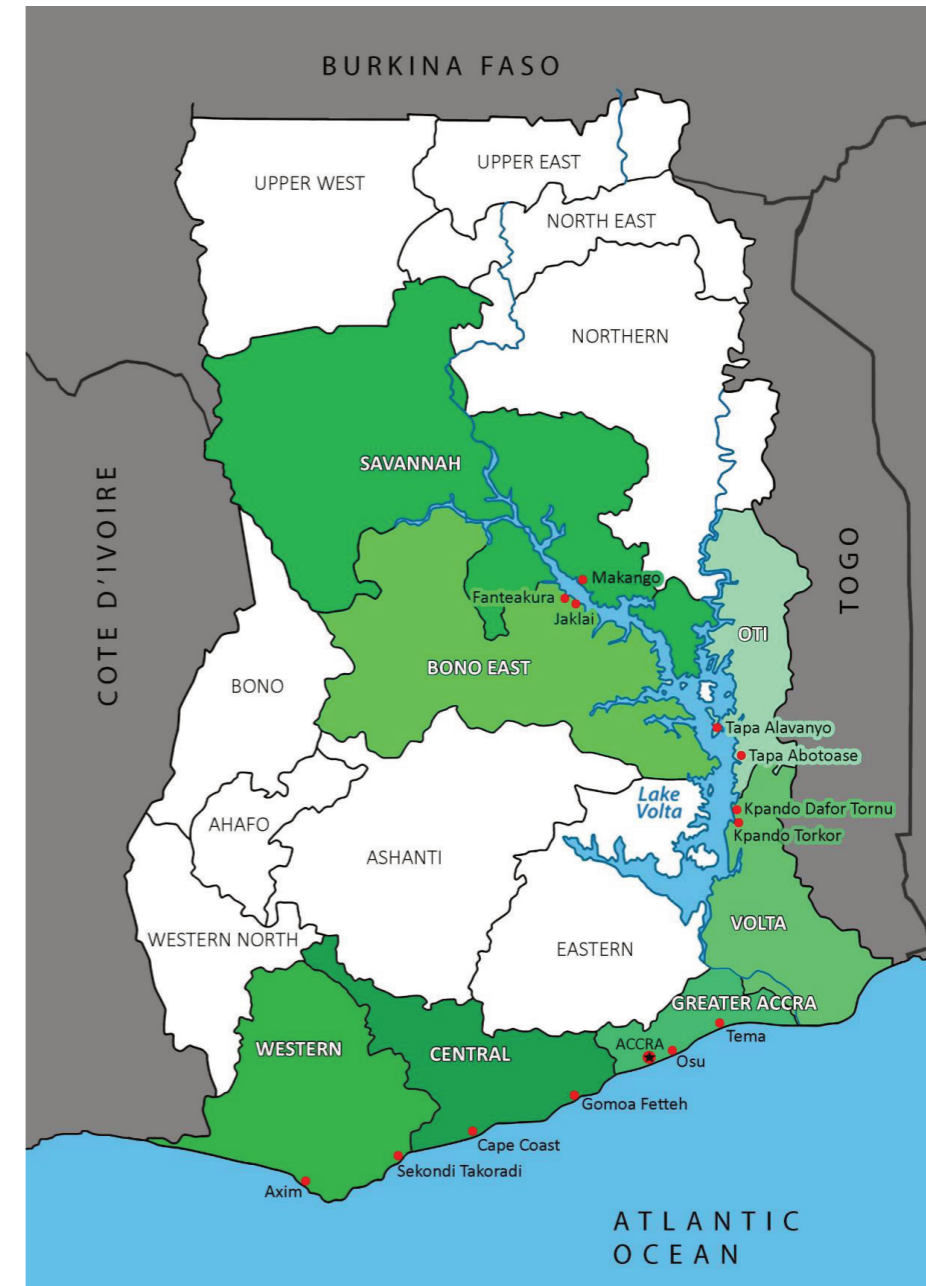


Figure 1: Map of Ghana showing the pilot study communities

3. Results and Analysis

This section presents the results of the piloting process and an in-depth analysis of the secondary and primary data. It also highlights the key indicators of relevance based on the MEL4SSF Indicators by the main stakeholder groups consulted (fishing communities, FWOs, NGOs, MDAs, academia and the media) in three sub-sections:

- Policies and programmes;
- Key informant interviews; and
- Introduction of the MEL4SSF.

3.1. Policies and Programmes

Responsible Governance of Tenure (Chapter 5a)

The existence of secure tenure rights is fundamental to responsible management, without which fishing communities would not be able to fully participate in decision-making processes that impact their lives and livelihoods. An effective policy on tenure rights would not only recognize and promote secure and equitable tenure rights of fishers and fishworkers, but would also seek to remove the barriers to inclusion in tenure governance. In general, the customary tenure rights of SSF in Ghana is recognized by the state, reflected in a number of legislative and policy documents.

The Fisheries Act, 2002 (Act 625) gives recognition to the small-scale fisheries sub-sector, and distinguishes between artisanal fishing¹⁵ and semi-industrial fishing vessels¹⁶ through separate licensing and operational

requirements. Section 81 of the Fisheries Act, 2002 establishes the Inshore Exclusive Zone (IEZ) of six nautical miles or 30 metre isobaths, whichever is further; to “be used exclusively by small-semi-industrial vessels, canoes and recreational fishing vessels”.¹⁷ The Fisheries Act, 2002 and FASDEP II also give indication of developing the artisanal fisheries though not specifically defined in implementation frameworks. In Section 2 of the Fisheries Act, 2002 for instance; it enjoins the Fisheries Commission to “advance the development of artisanal fishing”;¹⁸ and “take the action that it considers necessary to protect and promote artisanal and semi-industrial fishing”, including “the provision of extension and training services” and “the giving of priority to artisanal and semi-industrial fishing in the allocation of fishing licenses or quotas”. Similarly; FASDEP II states that “the canoes sector will remain the heart of the Ghana fishing industry”.¹⁹

15. Section 52, The Fisheries Act, 2002

16. Section 46, The Fisheries Act, 2002

17. Section 81 (2) The Fisheries Act, 2002

18. Section 52 (1) The Fisheries Act, 2002

19. FASDEP II - Food and Agriculture Sector Development Policy, 2007

The existence of secure tenure rights is fundamental to responsible management, without which fishing communities would not be able to fully participate in decision-making processes that impact their lives and livelihoods.

In relation to the MEL4SSF Indicators, while existing legislation makes specific references to “recognition of artisanal fisheries” (IND#1); establishment of inshore “exclusive zones” (IND#24) and “protection” and promotion of artisanal fishing (IND# 18 &19); there are also general declarations with no implementing mechanisms; and a number of policy gaps. These include:

- **Impact studies of large-scale development projects involve effective and meaningful consultations with small-scale fishing communities (IND# 6-10):** The Fisheries Act, 2002 (Act 625) Section 93 states: “a person or government department or any other agency planning to conduct an activity other than fishing, which is likely to have a substantial impact on the fishery resources..., shall inform the Commission of the plans prior to the commencement of the planned activity with a view to the conservation and protection of the resources.”²⁰ The Commission may make or require reports and recommendations by those conducting the planned activity regarding the likely impact of the activity on the fishery resources ... and possible means of preventing or minimizing adverse impacts, which shall be taken into account by the person, government department or other agency in the planning of the activity and in the development of means of preventing or minimizing any adverse impacts”.²¹ The Fisheries Act, 2002 thus provides for FIA,²² but it is at the sole discretion of the FC; what constitutes substantial impact is not defined; and is silent on prior consultative processes with fishers

and fishworkers.

- **Small-scale fisheries are given due consideration before agreements on resource access are entered into with third countries and third parties (IND# 11-17):** Article 268 of the Constitution of Ghana states, “any transaction, contract or undertaking involving the grant of a right or concession by or on behalf of any person including the Government of Ghana, to any other person or body of persons howsoever described, for the exploitation of any mineral, water or other natural resource of Ghana ... shall be subject to ratification by Parliament”;²³ Section 43 of the Fisheries Act, 2002 “ a Fishery Plan shall determine the amount of the fishery resource to be made available to licensed foreign fishing vessels”²⁴ and “shall take into account relevant artisanal fishing methods or principles”;²⁵ Section 70 of the Fisheries Act “the Director shall on an application being submitted to the Commission refer the application, where applicable, to a fishery license evaluation committee established under section 11”.²⁶ The legislative/policy texts stated above neither make SSF interests a requirement nor a pre-condition before agreements on resources access as: SSF representatives are not included on parliamentary committees that authorize third party international agreements; or FLEC²⁷ to grant license to industrial vessels. Also, in the preparation of the Fisheries [Management] Plan, it is at the sole discretion of the FC whether or not to consult SSF stakeholders; whom it consults; and how it does so.

- **Tenure rights of small-scale fishing communities along transboundary resources that are granted are protected (IND#18-19):** Section 2 of the Fisheries Act, 2002 provide for the promotion of “subregional, regional and international cooperation in fisheries management”²⁸ and Section 45; consultations by the Minister on the advice of the [FC] Council with ‘foreign governments, and in particular with governments of states sharing the same or interrelated fish stocks”²⁹ on matters of international fisheries management, including bilateral or (sub-)regional reciprocal fishing rights, and joint (sub-)regional fisheries management plans. While Section 45(2) states that “consultations may be undertaken directly with the governments or persons concerned, or through existing appropriate regional or sub-regional organizations or international agencies,” it does not address whether or not tenure rights of SSF communities along transboundary resources shall be protected; or involvement of SSF communities in the consultation/negotiation process if interests are affected.

- **Mechanisms to support fishing communities affected by disasters and/or conflict (IND#25-26):** Existing legislation/policies do not provide explicit mechanisms to support fishing communities affected by disaster and/or conflict. While the Ghana National Climate Change Policy (GNCCP) (2014)³⁰ seeks to address potential impacts of climate change and associated disasters; and National Disaster Management Organization (NADMO) “to manage disasters and similar emergencies and to develop the capacities of communities to respond effectively to disasters and emergencies;”³¹ SSF

stakeholders are neither involved in climate change remedial measures nor policies on early warning mechanisms; disaster risk management or post disaster rehabilitation. Despite Ghana’s 550km stretch of coastline with over 200 climate sensitive fishing communities, there is no provision for the Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development (MoFAD) or other SSF stakeholders to be included in the NADMO Council.

- **Laws on & accommodation of constitutional or legal reforms that strengthen the rights of women (IND# 27):** While the Constitution³² and subsidiary legislation/policies including National Gender Policy of 2015 promote gender equality and rights of women, there are no time-bound and measurable implementing mechanisms at the SSF community level.
- **Local norms and practices are recognized, respected and protected (IND#27-28):** The Fisheries Act, 2002 recognizes SSF and devotes Section 51 of the Act to “development of artisanal fishing”, yet there are no legislative or policy provisions for protecting the local norms and practices of small-scale fisheries.
- **Impartial and competent judicial and administrative bodies exist and are available to small-scale fisheries actors (IND# 30-31):** In spite of the constitutional guarantee of equal access to justice and equal treatment before the law, the lack of the basic units of the justice delivery system such as police stations, legal aid services, magistrate/circuit courts and judicial personnel in many fishing communities remain a barrier to justice.

20. Section 93 (1) The Fisheries Act, 2002

21. Section 93 (2) The Fisheries Act, 2002

22. FIA - Fisheries Impact Assessment

23. Article 268 (1) 1992 Constitution of Ghana

24. Section 43 (a) The Fisheries Act, 2002

25. Section 43 (h) The Fisheries Act, 2002

26. Section 70 (1) The Fisheries Act, 2002

27. FLEC - Fisheries License Evaluation Committee

28. Section 2 (2f) The Fisheries Act, 2002

29. Section 45 (2) The Fisheries Act, 2002

30. GNCCP -National Climate Change Policy of 2014

31. Section (2) NADMO [National Disaster Management Organisation] Act 927, 2016

32. Article 27 (3) 1992 Constitution of Ghana

Other major barriers include high cost of legal fees and slow pace in getting judgment; and the lack of technical training and know-how to handle specialty cases [including small-scale fisheries] among judges and state attorneys.³³

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Sustainable Resource Management (Chapter 5b)

The key elements for sustainable resource management in SSF are knowledge and power sharing. The SSF Guidelines argue that the state, as the main duty bearer, is required to share knowledge and power with fishing communities; and fishers/fishworkers in turn, are to take responsibility for designing and implementing participatory management systems, in accordance with legitimate tenure rights and national laws.³⁴

The concept of delegating power to fishing communities to co-manage fishery resources in Ghana dates back to the 1990s through the community-based fisheries management committees (CBFMCs); promoted by the then Fisheries Department. Mensah et al (2006) reported that, out of 189 marine fishing communities, 126 had formed CBFMCs with constitution and by-laws by the end of 2001.³⁵ According to MoFAD (2019), the CBFMCs had limited success due to lack of clear legislative framework and definition of authority, lack of administrative clarity to draw interest of key

stakeholders, inadequate capacity development, and inadequate resources.³⁶ The Fisheries Act of 2002; which established the Fisheries Commission (that replaced the Fisheries Department), and was amended in 2014; promotes aspects of participatory management as it states among others that in the performance of its function ... it shall take the action that it considers necessary to protect and promote artisanal and semi-industrial fishing including the provision of extension and training services.³⁷ However, the Fisheries Act, 2002 and Fisheries [Management] Plan do not focus specifically on sustainable resource management since they are derived from larger policy obligations of “development of the artisanal fisheries sector” and “management of the fishery resources”.³⁸ The Co-Management Policy for the Fisheries Sector, approved in November 2020, represents a significant milestone in the fisheries sector and lays the foundation for compliance with the SSF Guidelines.

In relation to the MEL4SSF Indicators, the Co-Management Policy generally addresses: training, facilitation and support to SSF to participate in and take responsibility for co-management (IND#47); roles and responsibilities within the context of co-management arrangements of concerned parties and stakeholders are clarified and agreed through a participatory and legally supported process (IND# 48-52). It also addresses aspects of representation of SSF in relevant local and national professional

associations and fisheries bodies; and participation in relevant decision-making and fisheries policymaking processes (IND# 54-56). However, both the Fisheries Act of 2002 and 2014 (amended); and Co-Management Policy of 2020 do not make specific provisions for addressing participatory monitoring, control and surveillance systems (MCS) applicable to and suitable for SSF (IND# 57-60); fisheries management systems recognize the requirements and opportunities of SSF (IND# 66-67); policies and financial measures that may contribute to fishing overcapacity avoided (IND# 68-71).

- **Small-scale fishing communities facilitated, trained and supported to participate in and take responsibility for the management (co-management) of the resources on which they depend for their well-being and that are traditionally used for their livelihoods (IND# 47):** The Co-Management Policy makes provision for awareness creation, capacity building and formation of management committees and community watch volunteer committees before [the policy] is fully rolled out.³⁹ The Policy specifically states as one of its objectives; to “create and develop the capacities of co-management units to empower the units to develop and implement management plans and enforce national fisheries laws” but without giving details.

- **Roles and responsibilities within the context of co-management arrangements of concerned parties and stakeholders are clarified and agreed through a participatory and legally supported process (IND# 48-52):** The Co-Management Policy, 2020, identifies large and small-scale fishery management

units; and provides for the formation of co-management committees for the management areas or units “based on the need and demand as well as the capacity of both the resource users and the FC to operate the committees”.⁴⁰ The policy stipulates that; “the co-management committee will be responsible for developing Operational Co-Management Plan for the fishery management area and fish stock under its jurisdiction; and must follow the guidance provided in the Fishery Act, 2002 for fishery management plans, based on the best available scientific information and local knowledge”. It further states that; “once the co-management plan is approved [by the FC] the co-management committee has full authority to implement management measures, such as close season and close areas within the guidance of the Plan”.⁴¹

- **Small-scale fisheries are represented in relevant local and national professional associations and fisheries bodies (IND# 54-56):** There is no specific provision in the Fisheries Act, 2002 and 2013 (amended) to represent SSF in professional associations and bodies, however, the Co-Management Policy, 2020 sets the circumstances for SSF representation in both small and large-scale co-management committees. For instance; community-based co-management committees are to consist of stakeholders directly engaged in and benefitting from the fishery concerned, must have women representation, should not exceed 15 members, and may include representatives from fishermen from the subsectors involved, fish processors, traders and marketers and other stakeholders with an interest in or some level of jurisdiction (to be considered in advisory capacity).⁴²

33. Government of Ghana (GoG). 2017. The Coordinated Programme of Economic and Social Development Policies (CPESDP) 2017-2024. An Agenda for Jobs: Creating Prosperity and Equal Opportunity for All. Accra, Ghana.

34. Kurien, J. 2021. Involving the People. Democratizing the implementation and monitoring of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication. FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Circular No. 1242. Rome.

35. Mensah, M. A., Koranteng, K. A., Bortey, A., Yeboah, D. A. 2006. The State of World Fisheries from a Fishworker Perspective: The Ghanaian Situation. ICSF Chennai.

36. Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development (2020) Co-Management Policy for the Fisheries Sector, Government of Ghana

37. Section 51 (a) The Fisheries Act, 2002

38. Ibid.

39. Ghana Co-Management Policy, 2020 (3.2)

40. Ghana Co-Management Policy, 2020 (3.12.1)

41. Ibid.

42. Ghana Co-Management Policy, 2020 (3.9.1)

- **Small-scale fisher organizations actively take part in relevant decision-making and fisheries policymaking processes (IND# 54-56):** See above.
- **Participatory monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) systems applicable to and suitable for small-scale fisheries established or promoted (IND# 57-60):** Section 94 of the Fisheries Act, 2002 makes specific provision for the establishment of MCS and Enforcement Unit; and Section 95 specifies the “authorized officers” which includes: personnel of the enforcement unit, personnel of the Ghana Navy, the air crew and personnel of the Ghana Air Force deployed for fishery duties, officers of the Water Research Institute and fishery officers of the secretariat of the Commission. While the Fisheries Act, 2002 and 2013 (amended) do not make provisions for SSF to be involved in MCS; the Co-Management Policy, 2020 advocates for the establishment of Fisheries Watch Volunteer Committees for purposes of fisheries surveillance and enforcement of national laws or rules.⁴³
- **Fisheries management systems recognize the requirements and opportunities of small-scale fisheries (IND# 66-67):** The Fisheries Act, 2002 stipulates that in the preparation of fishery [management] plan by FC; it “shall be based on best scientific information available, ensure the optimum utilisation of the fishery resources but avoid over exploitation, and shall be consistent with good management principles”.⁴⁴ In addition, it “shall take into account relevant artisanal fishing methods or principles”⁴⁵ but does not provide further details. The Co-Management

Plan of 2020 makes provision for the preparation of Operational Co-Management Plan by SSF; based on not only “best scientific information available”; but also “local knowledge”.

- **Policies and financial measures that may contribute to fishing overcapacity avoided [(IND#68-71):** Legislative and policy texts do not make explicit provisions for addressing policies and financial measures that may contribute to fishing overcapacity. However, the Fisheries Management Plan (2022-2026) specifies measures related to addressing “excessive fishing efforts” and these include: full roll-out of canoe identification card; re-classification of canoes and inshore vessels; development and implementation of a new licensing regime; implementation of closed season for all vessels; implementation of new gear regulations; improved data collection and analysis; strengthening of fisheries enforcement and implementation of co-management policy”.⁴⁶

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Social Development, Employment and Decent Work (Chapter 6)

Social development is one of the four major component of Ghana’s national development; the three others being economic, environmental and institutional development. The long-term objective of social development as defined in the current CPESDP⁴⁷ (Agenda for Jobs: Creating Prosperity and Equal Opportunities for All II (2021-2024)) is “to create a safe, peaceful, and sustainable

communities where in accordance with the Constitution, Ghanaians can live productive, prosperous, and fulfilling lives in freedom and in peace”. The current social development framework addresses many of the social inequities of fishing communities as it is geared towards reducing geographical disparities, creating a new social order of social justice and equity, inclusion of excluded and marginalized people, particularly the poor, the underprivileged and persons with disabilities. However; it is universal in scope and implementation plans are disjointed across several MDAs; and thus, not effectively responding to the peculiar social development needs of fishing communities. In relation to the MEL4SSF Indicators, several key issues are highlighted below.

- **States invest in essential services (IND#78-80):** Government expenditure and policy implementation are defined by subsidiary legislation and mandates of various social development MDAs. Investments in education, health and social protection for instance are guided by the Education Strategic Plan (2018-2030); National Health Policy; and Ghana National Social Protection Policy and implemented by the Ministry of Education; Health; and Gender, Children and Social Protection respectively. While the above policies underscore the need for intersectoral coordination and collaboration; in practice, there are limited mechanisms for intersectoral decision-making, coordination, monitoring and review with MoFAD and the FC.
- **The full range of pre- and post-harvest activities along the small-scale fisheries value chain (whether in an aquatic**

environment or on land) promoted as decent work & recognized as economic and professional operations (IND# 81-83): Section 51 of the Fisheries Act, 2002 mandates the Fisheries Commission to “take the action that it considers necessary to protect and promote artisanal and semi-industrial fishing”,⁴⁸ including “the provision of extension and training services;⁴⁹ and promotion of the establishment and development of fishing, processing and marketing co-operative societies.⁵⁰ The Co-Management Policy, 2020 makes provision the formation of co-management committees with the inclusion of SSF stakeholders directly engaged in and benefitting from the fishery concerned. However, both the Fisheries Act, 2002 and Co-Management Policy, 2020 do not make explicit provisions for addressing decent work and social protection of SSF.

- **Professional and organizational development opportunities provided, in particular for more vulnerable groups of post-harvest fishworkers and women in small-scale fisheries (IND# 85-87):** The Fisheries Act, 2002 provides for the “provision of extension training and services” to protect and promote artisanal SSF but with no particular emphasis on “more vulnerable groups of post-harvest fishworkers and women”. However, the Co-Management Policy, 2020 makes it mandatory for women representation on community-based co-management committees.
- **Inclusive, non-discriminatory and sound economic policies for the use of marine, freshwater and land areas (IND# 88-92):** The FC is enjoined by the Section 43 Fisheries Act, 2002 to develop Fisheries [Management]

43. Ghana Co-Management Policy, 2020 (3)2

44. Section 42 of the Fisheries Act, 2002

45. Section 43 (h) of the Fisheries Act, 2002

46. <https://www.businessghana.com/site/news/general/256169/Stakeholders-approve-draft-fisheries-management-plan>

47. CPESD: Coordinated Programmes for Economic & Social Development.

48. Section 51 (1) The Fisheries Act, 2002

49. Section 51 (1a) The Fisheries Act, 2002

50. Section 51 (1d) The Fisheries Act, 2002

Plans among other considerations; “shall take into account relevant artisanal fishing methods or principles”⁵¹ and on consultations and approval it states: “[FC] shall, during the preparation of each fishery plan, carry out the consultations it considers appropriate with organizations, authorities and persons affected by the fishery plan”.⁵² The Co-Management Plan, 2020 on the other hand; goes beyond the discretionary power of the FC (on deciding whom and how it consults) by making provision for SSF to constitute co-management committees with the responsibility for developing operational co-management plans for the fishery management area and fish stock under its jurisdiction; and to implement management measures.⁵³

- **Integrated, ecosystem and holistic approaches to small-scale fisheries management and development that take the complexity of livelihoods into account (IND#93-94):** The Co-Management Policy of 2020 states that; the policy has been developed based on guiding principles of ecosystem-based management, FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication; but the policy is yet to be fully operationalized to translate these guiding principles to the benefit of SSF.
- **Already existing complementary income generating activities maintained and alternative income generating opportunities created (IND# 95-98):** Existing legislation and policies do not make explicit provisions for

addressing employment and decent work in SSF. See IND# 81-83 above.

- **International coordination and frameworks developed to address migration of fishers and fishworkers in small-scale fisheries across national borders (IND# 99-101):** Ghana is a signatory to the ECOWAS Protocol⁵⁴ which provide for the free movement of goods and services but in practice ECOWAS citizens [including migrant fishers and traders] are subjected to national immigration, customs and trade laws of ECOWAS member states.
- **Measures instituted to eliminate crime, violence, organized crime activities, piracy, armed conflict, theft, sexual abuse, corruption, abuse of authority, forced labour, and debt-bondage (IND# 102-104):** A number of legislative and policy instruments exist to address these issues including: Criminal and other Offences Act, 1960 (Act 29); Children’s Act, 1998 (Act 560); Juvenile Justice Act 2003 (Act 653); Human Trafficking Act, 2005 (Act 694); Domestic Violence Act, 2007 (Act 732) National Plan of Action on Child Labour and the Worst Forms of Child Labour, National Domestic Violence Policy and the Plan of Action; the Commission for Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) and Economic and Organized Crime Organisation (EOCO).
- **States provide and enable equal access to schools and education facilities that meet the needs of small-scale fishing communities (IND# 105-110):** The Education Strategic Plan (ESP) 2018-2030 has a major policy objective of “enhancing inclusive and

equitable access to, and participation in quality education at all levels”.⁵⁵

- **Coherent and integrated national strategies, laws, and regulations for safety-at-sea that are consistent with international guidelines, developed and implemented with the active participation of the fishers themselves and with elements of regional coordination (IND# 113-116):** Section 2 of the Fisheries Act, 2002 enjoins the FC “in collaboration with the competent authority, establish requirement for manning fishing vessels and boats, safety for crew and vessels and for fishing gears in use to avoid damage by other vessels”.⁵⁶
- **Laws and policies to address occupational health issues and unfair working conditions of all small-scale fishers and fishworkers (IND# 117):** Existing polices and laws do not explicitly address occupational health and working conditions in SSF.

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Value Chains, Post-Harvest and Trade (Chapter 7)

Improving post-harvest management is one of the key policy objectives of MoFAD. In its medium-term development policy (MTDP) for 2022-2025; post-harvest management focuses on “prolonging the shelf life of fish and fishery products through the transfer of appropriate fish processing technologies and create awareness on appropriate handling, processing and distribution of fish and fishery products”.⁵⁷ Amongst its objectives include: facilitate the dissemination and adoption of

improved fish processing and handling technologies; coordinate, strengthen and facilitate the operations of National Fish Processors and Traders Association (NAFPTA) and train staff and stakeholders on sub-sector specific issues. In relation to the MEL4SSF Indicators, several key issues are highlighted below.

- **Environmental, social and other relevant assessments are in place (IND# 157-158):** Existing laws and policies do not make it mandatory for environmental, social and other assessments in the post-harvest sector; although the Fisheries Act makes provision for FC to request for fisheries impact assessment (FIA) if a planned activity is likely to have a substantial impact on fishery resources.⁵⁸
- **Effective fisheries management systems, policies and procedures, including responsible post-harvest practices, policies, and actions, are developed consultatively (IND# 159-60):** There is no explicit legislative or policy provision for consulting SSF before policies are developed, but in practice, MoFAD and FC undertake some level of consultations with SSF stakeholder groups before Fisheries Management Plans are validated and adopted.
- **Investments in appropriate infrastructures to support the small-scale fisheries post-harvest subsector (IND# 161-164):** The Medium-Term Development Policy of MoFAD (2022-2025) makes provision for training fish processors on the use of improved processing technologies; distributing storage facilities to processors and trader groups; and certifying processing

51. Section 43 (h) The Fisheries Act, 2002

52. Section 44 (1) The Fisheries Act, 2002

53. Ghana Co-Management Policy, 2020 3 (9.1)

54. ECOWAS [Economic Community of West African States] Protocol—The Protocol confers rights of residence and establishment on community citizens in any members state provided they possessed a valid travel document and international health certificate.

55. Ministry of Education (MoE). 2018. Education Strategic Plan 2018 – 2030. Accra, Ghana. <https://www.globalpartnership.org/content/education-strategic-plan-2018-2030-ghana>

56. Section 2 (2m) The Fisheries Act, 2002.

57. Programme 5, Medium Term Expenditure Framework of MoFAD 2022 – 2025

58. Section 93 (1) The Fisheries Act, 2002

facilities under “Class 1 Recognition Scheme”.

- **Value addition, including building on existing traditional and local cost-efficient technologies, local innovations and culturally appropriate technology transfers (IND# 165-166):** See above
- **Timely and accurate market and trade information available to help small-scale fisheries stakeholders adjust to changing market conditions (IND# 167-168):** The MTDP of MoFAD (2022-2025) refers to market and trade information in broad terms.
- **Trade regulations, procedures, and marketing mechanisms (e.g. auctions) introduced that in particular support regional trade in products from small-scale fisheries (IND# 169-172):** Existing legislation and policies do not make explicit provisions to support SSF in regional trade.
- **Improvements supported to facilitate women’s participation in the post-harvest subsector, including amenities and services appropriate for women (IND# 173-176):** The Post-Harvest Unit of FC provides training and capacity building on improved fish processing, fish handling technologies and basic business management skills; but only a fraction of women fishworkers and groups benefit due to funding and logistical constraints. A number of government policy interventions such as MASLOC,⁵⁹ Ghana Enterprise Agency Funds, and Coronavirus Alleviation Programme Business Support Programme (CAP BuSS) also provide microcredit to the informal sector; however, access to credit still remain a major challenge to SSF.
- **Capacity development of small-scale**

59. MASLOC Microfinance and Loans Centre

60. Section 51 (a) The Fisheries Act, 2002

61. Section 51 (h) The Fisheries Act, 2002

62. Article 17 The Constitution of Ghana

fisheries post-harvest stakeholders, especially women, vulnerable and marginalized groups (IND# 177-178): See above.

- **Cooperatives, professional organizations of the small-scale fisheries sector and other organizational structures developed (IND# 179-182):** The Fisheries Act, 2002 mandates the FC to “take the action it considers necessary to protect and promote artisanal and semi-industrial fishing” including “the provision of extension and training services;⁶⁰ and the promotion of the establishment and development of fishing, processing and marketing co-operative societies”.⁶¹

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Gender Equality (Chapter 8)

National legislative and policy instruments in Ghana generally have gender equality dimensions. Gender equality is enshrined in the Constitution which stipulates among others that “all persons are equal before the law”, and “a person shall not be discriminated against on grounds of gender”.⁶²

In addition, the country has adopted several international gender conventions in its legal framework to promote gender equality. These include: Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948; Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) 1979; Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ECOSOC); Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, 1985; Vienna Declaration on Human Rights, 1993; Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 1995; African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights (ACHPR), 1989; UN Security Council

Resolutions 1325 and 1820 on Women Peace and Security and Violence Against Women; International Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) 1991 and International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (MWC) 1990.

However, there are significant barriers to gender equality including women’s limited access to economic resources and participation in public life; and low representation in decision-making spaces. The National Gender Policy of 2015 is the main policy framework on gender equality and declares its overarching goal: “to mainstream gender equality and women’s empowerment concerns into the national development process in order to improve the social, legal, civic, political, economic and cultural conditions of the people of Ghana; particularly women and men, boys and girls in an appreciable manner and as required by National and International Frameworks”.⁶³ The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP) has the mandate “to promote gender equality and safeguard the welfare and full participation of women in social, political and economic development process”.⁶⁴ A proposed Affirmative Action Bill is yet to be passed by Parliament. In relation to the MEL4SSF Indicators, several key issues are highlighted below.

- **Legislation, policies and measures that are not compatible (or gender blind) with gender equality are adapted, taking into account social, economic and cultural aspects. New policies and legislation are**

63. Chapter 4.2 National Gender Policy, 2015

64. Chapter 6.2 National Gender Policy, 2015

65. Article 17, Constitution of Ghana

66. Chapter 5 (1) National Gender Policy, 2015

67. Chapter 5.2.4 National Gender Policy, 2015

68. Chapter 7.2 National Gender Policy, 2015

established to realize gender equality (aligned with international conventions) (IND# 210-212): The Constitution of Ghana prohibits discrimination of persons on the basis of gender.⁶⁵ The National Gender Policy, 2015 makes explicit provisions to “mainstream gender equality, women empowerment concerns into national development processes for equitable livelihood for women and men, boys and girls”;⁶⁶ on five commitment value areas: women’s empowerment and livelihood; women’s rights and access to justice; women’s leadership and accountable governance; economic opportunities for women; and gender roles and relations.

- **Functional and participatory monitoring and evaluation systems to assess the impact of legislation, policies and actions for improving women’s status and achieving gender equality developed (explicit monitoring/indicators on gender/budgeting) (IND# 212-2015):** The National Gender Policy, 2015 provides for “reviewing and enforcing gender-responsive budgeting across all sectors”⁶⁷ and “coordinating a rigorous monitoring and evaluation system that will promote new learning around trends and concepts of gender equality and women empowerment from all sectors and disseminate to all for implementation”.⁶⁸ However, it does not make explicit provision for, or inclusion of SSF stakeholders in “participatory monitoring and evaluation systems”.
- **Better resources, including technologies, of importance and appropriate to women’s**

work in SSF developed (IND# 206): The National Gender Policy, 2015 addresses this issue in general terms without giving further details on the modalities for developing and equipping women with appropriate technologies for women's work.

- **Equal recruitment opportunities for men and women for positions such as extension staff (IND# 217):**

The Labour Act, 2003 (Act 651) makes explicit provision for the “right to equal pay for equal work without distinction of any kind”.⁶⁹ The National Gender Policy, 2015; under policy commitment 1: women's empowerment and livelihood; provide for “enforce[ing] the implementation of extension services to cover gender equality and women empowerment issues to benefit all, particularly vulnerable women in agricultural practices in all regions of Ghana”⁷⁰ and to “promote the regulation of activities regarding fisheries for both women and men”.⁷¹

- **Women are encouraged to participate in fisheries organizations, and relevant organizational development support is provided (IND# 218-221):**

The Co-Management Policy, 2020; on appointment and tenure of office of co-management committee; provides that: “the committee should be gender sensitive—a person of gender opposite to the gender of the chairperson should be considered for the co-chairperson or vice-chairperson position”.⁷² The National Gender Policy, 2015; under policy commitment 3 -women's leadership and accountable governance states that: “to enhance the participation of women in Leadership, Governance, and Decision making at all levels; a well-developed institutional

capacity and a healthy political environment based on the rule of law, government effectiveness, control of corruption, regulatory quality, will be promoted as necessary conditions for women's interest and rights”.⁷³ The policy further states; (without making explicit reference to SSF) among others to:

- › Review workplace and common area barriers to effective participation of women in governance processes;
- › Enhance the understanding of the implications of non-compliance in monetary and programmatic terms to gender mainstreaming policies and programmes;
- › Develop guidelines for mainstreaming women into decision making processes at MMDA levels and into all public structures;
- › Act on removing persisting barriers that militate against Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment by facilitating political declarations and political decisions for the inclusion of women; and
- › Implement the Affirmative Action Policy for the realisation of the at least 40% representation of women in all structures, while advocating for the passage of an affirmative Action legislation.
- › Promote political leadership mentoring for women at least from the tertiary levels of education.

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Disaster Risks and Climate Change (Chapter 9)

The national response to disaster risks and climate change revolves around the National Disaster Management Organization (NADMO) Act 517 (1996); Act 927 (2016) and the Ghana National Climate Change Policy (GNCCP) 2013. The NADMO Act, 2016 focuses on managing disasters and similar emergencies and to develop the capacity of communities to respond effectively to disasters and emergencies.⁷⁴ It defines its functions to include implementation of policies on disaster prevention, disaster risk reduction and climate risk management; and to prepare, coordinate, monitor and update disaster management plans.⁷⁵ However, it does not make explicit provision for involving SSF in disaster preparedness, management and/or rehabilitation.

The GNCCP 2013 is the main policy framework for coordinating issues of climate change in Ghana and is anchored on three objectives: effective adaptation, social development and mitigation. The GNCCP, 2013 identifies energy and infrastructure; natural resources management; agriculture and food security; and disaster preparedness and response as four thematic areas for addressing adaptation issues in Ghana.⁷⁶ The issue of disaster risks and climate change in SSF is implicitly acknowledged; as the policy seeks to build climate resilient infrastructure to protect inland and coastal communities; and develop climate resilient agricultural and food systems by providing support for adaptation in the fisheries sub-sector.⁷⁷ In addition, the Ghana

National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (GNCCAS), 2015; (which is based on the climate change policy) prioritizes designing and implementing programmes on fisheries management and disease control; as well as developing alternative sources of livelihoods for fisherfolks as key adaptation strategies.⁷⁸ Despite the climate-sensitive and livelihood dependent SSF however; both the GNCCP, 2013 and GNCCAS, 2015; neither provide for a well-defined climate change and adaptation strategy for SSF; nor provide for the involvement of fishing communities in the process and outcome of such policies and plans. In relation to the MEL4SSF Indicators, several key issues are highlighted below.

- **Support provided to SSF fishers, fishworkers, and their communities with regard to adjustment measures in order to reduce negative impacts that climate change and disasters may have on the post-harvest and trade subsector (IND# 238-243):**

The Fisheries Act, 2002; 2015 (amended) and Co-Management Policy, 2020 do not make explicit provisions for addressing climate change and disasters. The NADMO Act, 2016 provide for the “manage[ment] [of] disasters and similar emergencies and to develop the capacities of communities to respond effectively to disasters and emergencies”;⁷⁹ and the establishment of national disaster management fund - which amongst others; “provide finances for the development and operation of disaster prevention, disaster risk reduction, climate change risk reduction and other disaster management programmes”;⁸⁰ “shall be applied to relevant activities

69. Section 68 The Labour Act, 2003 (Act 651)

70. Chapter 5.2.11.5 (b) National Gender Policy, 2015

71. Chapter 5.2.11.5 (d) National Gender Policy, 2015

72. Chapter 3.11 (e) Co-Management Policy, 2020

73. Chapter 5.2.3 National Gender Policy, 2020

74. Section 2 National Disaster Management Act, 2016

75. Section 3 National Disaster Management Act, 2016

76. Section 2 Ghana National Climate Change Policy, 2013

77. Section 4 (1) Ghana National Climate Change Policy, 2013

78. Section 3 (2) Ghana National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy, 2015

79. Section 2 National Disaster Management Organization Act, 2016

80. Section 38 (1) National Disaster Management Organization Act, 2016

determined by the Council⁸¹ and “applied to provide strategic stocks for emergency relief for disaster victims”.⁸²

- **Transparent access to adaptation funds, facilities and/or culturally appropriate technologies for climate change adaptation made available to small-scale fishing communities (IND# 244-246):** The Ghana National Climate Change Policy, 2013; under programme area for focus area 1- developing climate-resilient agriculture food systems; states: “support to adaptation in the fisheries sub-sector” but without elaborating further.
- **Longer-term development objectives incorporated throughout the emergency sequence, including in the immediate relief phase, and rehabilitation, reconstruction and recovery phases (IND# 247-258):** The Ghana National Climate Change Policy, 2013 addresses long-term development objectives of climate change and adaptation in relation to five policy themes and strategic focus areas: Agriculture and Food Security; Disaster Preparedness and Response; Natural Resource Management; Equitable Social Development; Energy, Industrial and Infrastructural Development. However, it does not explicitly address these issues in the context of SSF needs.
- **Parties responsible for human-induced disasters impacting small-scale fisheries are held accountable (IND# 253-258):** Existing legislation and policies are silent on this issue although the National Climate Change Policy, 2013 includes the “polluter pays principle” as one of its 14 guiding principles.
- **Fishing communities effectively consulted, including indigenous peoples,**

men and women, paying particular attention to vulnerable and marginalized groups (IND# 259-263): There are no legislative or policy provisions for consultative involvement of fishing communities in developing climate change and adaptation policies and plans.

- **Integrated and holistic approaches, policies & plans to address disaster risks and climate change in small-scale fisheries, including cross-sectoral collaboration, and strategies for adaptation, mitigation as well as for building resilience and aid plans developed (IND# 264-269):** The Ghana National Climate Change Policy, 2013 and the Ghana National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy do not explicitly address disaster risks and climate change in SSF.
- **Energy efficiency in the subsector, including the whole value chain—fishing, postharvest, marketing and distribution—is supported (IND# 270-271):** Energy efficiency in SSF subsector is not explicitly addressed in existing policy documents.

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3.2. Key informant interviews

Responsible Governance of Tenure (Chapter 5a)

SSF Community:

Regarding responsible governance of tenure, the SSF Community placed high priority on legal recognition on customary rights of tenure; sale of shore lands for real estate/ tourism development; and non-inclusion of SSF interest in third-party resource agreements. The basis for these preferences is presented below.

• Lack of formal recognition for customary rights of tenure:

The SSF Community contends that; while the state generally acknowledges the culture and customs of fishing communities; there is no legal recognition of customary rights of tenure. For this reason, SSF, which revolves around the customary system, is not well regulated leading to abuses and excess.

Per the customary rights of tenure; the processes and protocols for obtaining access to the fishery, designated by various names such as mpoano amandze (Axim) and amba ntem sika (Makango) creates a contractual relationship between the fisher and traditional authority who exercise jurisdiction over the local fishery. As part of their obligations, migrant/non-native fishers are required to contribute toward the development of the community - participate in communal labour, and pay levies for annual festivals. Fishers in their native communities; (due to their ancestral/ inheritance rights) do not go through a formalization process to have access to the fishery; however, by convention, they also perform the applicable customary tenure rites as migrants or non-native fishers wherever

they work outside their native communities.

The lack of uniform fees (for access to fishing grounds) often results in arbitrary increases and introduction of new fees by host traditional authorities without prior consultation. At Jaklai for instance; in addition to paying the weekly fish levy, every household is also required to pay “housing fee” (ground rent) as well as boat fee to the host traditional ruler.

The call for formal recognition is also premised on a system of revenue collection that is considered as excessive. Besides universal tax obligations, fishers/fishworkers also pay market tolls, boat fees and other levies imposed by respective district assemblies; and levies exacted by traditional authorities. This parallel system of revenue collection is a source of resentment and often leads to disputes between fishers and revenue collectors and among fishers (who choose to pay and those who do not). A case in point is Yeji. In 2021, when the traditional authority increased the canoe fee from GHS 10 to 20; fishing communities such as Brekente and Fanteakura complied but Jaklai protested; leading to imposition of fine of GHS 1,000 on the community. The stalemate was settled only when Jaklai paid the fine and renegotiated the boat fee to GHS 15.

• Sale of shore lands for real estate/ tourism development:

The pilot study highlights the fact that encroachment of beach lands is widespread, both within urban and rural fishing communities and across the marine and inland sectors. Within the customary tenure and governance set-up; paramount and divisional chiefs play a major role in the sale

81. Section 38 (2) National Disaster Management Organization Act, 2016

82. Section 38 (3) National Disaster Management Organization Act, 2016

of shore lands to businesses and individuals. Fishers/fishworkers reported that encroachment of shore lands has deprived many communities of access to their traditional landing and processing sites; limiting the space for pre- and post-harvest fishing activities. Examples of such communities in the pilot include Gomoah Fetteh and Kpando Agama Tornu. While the former has lost a large stretch of shore lands to tourism developers; the buffer zone of the latter has been encroached upon for residential and tourism development.

- **Non-inclusion of SSF interests in third-party resource agreements:**

The majority of fisher/fishworkers in the pilot communities concluded their interests and concerns are overlooked or reduced to assurances when important decisions such as reducing or granting of fishing licenses to industrial vessel operators. They stressed the need for legislation to recognize their needs, concerns and interests; and factored into the decision-making and negotiation processes before third-party agreements are finalized.

- **Fishworker Organizations and NGOs:**

The main concern of FWOs and NGOs was the lack of legal backing for tenure rights of small-scale fishers/fishworkers. To address this; a two-prong solution was prioritized: the central government and parliament should enact appropriate laws and regulations on tenure rights; and small-scale fishers/fishworkers should develop site/spatial plans of fishing grounds and community lands in consultation with traditional authorities, family heads and the State (Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources). There was also a strong call for prosecuting all cases of Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) (also known as saiko) fishing; fast-tracking all cases under investigation and publishing all cases of completed cases.

- **Government Agencies:**

According to MoFAD, the full operationalization of the Co-Management Policy, 2020 is a top priority of the government, as it will address problems of representation in governance and decision-making in SSF. The policy advocates for co-management of fisheries resources so fishing communities can participate in decision-making and enforcement of mutually agreed regulations and by-laws.

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Sustainable Resource Management (Chapter 5b)

- **SSF Community:**

Based on what the SSF community reported, below is a list of issues considered as priorities for ensuring sustainable resource management: frequent incursions into the inshore exclusive zone (IEZ), weakening grievance and conflict resolution mechanisms, IUU/saiko fishing, unsustainable and dangerous fishing practices, denial of access to fishing grounds and inadequate information on co-management implementation plans and the modalities for implementation.

- **Frequent Incursions into the Inshore Exclusive Zone (IEZ):**

The piloting pointed out that a major concern and of utmost priority is finding a lasting solution to the frequent incursions into the IEZ by industrial trawlers. Stakeholders lamented that, the IEZ was established for artisanal fishers who harvest small pelagic fishes; whereas industrial trawlers are licensed to fish bottom-dwelling demersal fishes. Despite the clear-cut legislation, artisanal fishers complained of harvesting of pelagic fishes in the IEZ by industrial trawlers using prohibited undersized meshes; and depriving them of their livelihood. In spite of

petitions and demonstrations, fishers complained that the illegality persists. According to the fishers, MCS should be intensified and issues of violations should be fast-tracked. Also; compensation should be paid to them (i.e., fishers) whenever their nets, traps etc. are destroyed by industrial vessels.

- **IUU/Saiko Fishing:**

The SSF community respondents involved in the marine fisheries acknowledged improvements made by MoFAD and other state agencies in addressing IUU/saiko fishing. While there is general consensus among fishers that IUU/saiko fishing has declined; they claimed the practice still continues; and called for urgent and concerted efforts, with the involvement of SSF communities, to ensure stricter compliance to the fisheries regulations.

- **Weakening grievance and conflict resolution mechanisms:**

The role of the Chief Fishermen⁸³ is crucial to ensuring order and compliance to local fisheries regulations. The CF's office is regularly engaged in settling disputes among fishers and can authorize summons to his office, order seizure of fishing gears, and/or fine recalcitrant offenders. However, fishers/fishworkers expressed worry that, within the country's democratic dispensation, the CF's office is classified as "inferior courts" (lowest courts), and have no real powers to arrest or prosecute offenders, even though many fishers willingly cooperate with them. The lack of formal judicial powers, according to SSF has over time emboldened recalcitrant fishers, bred contempt for the customary tenure system, and encouraged unsustainable

fishing practices, particularly the use of lights, dynamite, and hazardous substances. The SSF community concurs that, by recognizing, respecting and protecting local norms (MEL4SSF IND# 27-28); the CF's office will be strengthened to resolve not only fisheries-related disputes, but also to ensure compliance.

- **Unsustainable and dangerous Fishing Practices (Mali-Mali):**

Considered as a hazardous fishing method, Mali-Mali⁸⁴ involves placing around 10 sharp hooks 2 inches apart on a line secured to tree stumps underwater. Due to the extensive number of tree stumps in the Volta Lake, fishing nets often get entangled and must be retrieved by divers. Divers who come into contact with Mali-Mali hooks underwater often sustain serious injuries; and there have been several reports of fatalities from bleeding and suffocation. The piloting in Volta, Oti and Bono East regions show that, the activities of the Mali-Mali fishers often lead to violent clashes with other fishers and often requires the intervention of the navy to restore calm. In 2019, the navy averted what would have become a full-blown conflict between fishers from Alavanyo and Mali-Mali fishers who were temporarily residing at Elolokpo No.2

- **Denial of access to fishing grounds:**

Commercial oil production in Ghana in 2010 led to displacement of fishers from their traditional fishing grounds which later became the Jubilee, TEN⁸⁵ and Sankofa oil fields. In 2019, the Petroleum Commission together with SSF stakeholders agreed to SSAF⁸⁶ to end the manhandling of fishers who made incursions into the oil production rigs.

83. The term Chief Fishermen is used in coastal SSF whereas "Headman" is used in the inland SSF; particularly the Volta Lake

84. Mali-Mali fishing is predominantly practiced on the Volta Lake

85. TEN: Tweneboa, Enyenra and Ntomme Oil Field

86. SSAF: Safe Sea Access Framework

However, fishers in Axim and Sekondi reported that they are frequently assaulted by security operatives even when their canoes drift to the “advisory zone”⁸⁷ by ocean currents; and on many occasions, their catch, premix-fuel and fishing gears were confiscated. Even though interventions by Ghana Maritime Authority, Ghana Navy, and Petroleum Commission, have led to a reduction of assault cases; the consensus on priority among fishers is to equip canoes with transponders; and involve SSF in participatory monitoring.

- **Inadequate information on co-management implementation plans and the modalities for implementation:**

The SSF community is generally in support of the co-management policy of 2020 and look forward to its full operationalization. However, fishers and fishworkers have a wide range of understandings on the concept and the modus operandi of the policy. The SSF community underscores the need for regular updates and training before the full implementation of the policy. The call will help build greater understanding of the policy and expected roles and responsibilities of SSF stakeholder groups.

- **Fishworker Organizations and NGOs:**

Regarding denial of access to fishing grounds (due to commercial oil and gas production); and encroachment of landing and processing sites; solutions were prioritized as follows: review of existing legislation to grant full access by fishers/fishworkers; demarcation of appropriate landing/processing sites and/or with improved processing technologies backed by site (spatial) plans and the use of dialogue to address oil/gas production and SSF grievances.

- **Government Agencies:**

The Safe Sea Access Framework (SSAF) was developed through consultations with SSF stakeholders; and consensus was reached for peaceful co-existence of fishers and other oil and gas industry players. Despite the SSAF successes in conflict prevention and reduction in tensions since 2019, MoFAD/FC, Petroleum Commission advocate for continuous stakeholder engagement and education; including SSF leaders taking the lead in educating their members on the SSAF.

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- **Social Development, Employment and Decent Work (Chapter 6)**

- **SSF Community:**

From the perspectives of the SSF community, social development, employment and decent work are fundamental elements in the socio-economic progress of a fishing community. Fisher/fishworkers unanimously agreed that social development play a large role in their ability to work for their households and the country more broadly. Due to general deprivation, multi-dimensional poverty and lack of infrastructure; the SSF community prioritized investment in essential services, working conditions and social protection. These three general priorities are further divided into eleven sub-priorities:

- › Essential services: access to education, infrastructure and quality issues; road network and accessibility; quality and affordable healthcare; water and sanitation hygiene; decent housing; affordable and reliable energy; and access to savings and credit.
- › Working conditions: occupational health

and safety; child labour and trafficking (CLaT); and livelihood diversification.

› Social protection: fisheries inputs subsidies (FIS) including pre-mix fuel, nets, outboard motors.

- **Access to education, infrastructure and quality issues:**

Overall, there is high enrolment of pupils in primary schools; a reflection that fishers/fishworkers appreciate education, since many of them had no formal education. However, there are disparities between urban and rural SSF; coastal and inland SSF in terms of access to education, infrastructure, and quality of teaching. While urban SSF communities such as Axim, Sekondi, Cape Coast and Osu have better school infrastructure and quality of teaching; rural SSF communities are least endowed with poorer quality of delivery. For instance, Makango and Alavanyo have classroom blocks but inadequate teachers. Jaklai and Fanteakura have inadequate classrooms and shortage of teachers; and Klagbo Kope and CK Kope have no schools; a pointer to the many hundreds of rural, overbank and island SSF communities that lack basic education facilities.

- **Road networks and accessibility:**

Access to motorable road networks remains a challenge to many fishing communities. Urban fishing communities, due to their close proximity to metropolitan areas tend to have access to well-maintained road networks; though within the fishing community itself, access may be limited, as is the case of Nkakeum and Torkor; suburbs of Axim and Kpando respectively. However rural SSF bemoaned poor road networks, many of which are dusty and untarred. Fishers/fishworkers in Kpando Torkor, Dafor Torny and Alavanyo, reported that in the rainy

season, their roads become unmotorable and vehicular breakdowns are a common occurrence. Kpando Torkor fish processors/traders complained that, due to poor roads, the volume of fish trade between Torkor and Kumasi and Koforidua has declined by half.

- **Quality and affordable healthcare:**

Access to affordable healthcare is a major concern for fishers/fishworkers in all the pilot study areas. From what the fishing communities reported, the NHIS⁸⁸ is not providing adequately for their health needs. According to fish processors/traders in Cape Coast, the NHIS is limited to consultation only, as patients have to pay for other services from private facilities such as the Kingsway Pharmacy. Similar situations exist at the Axim Central Hospital, Gomoa Fetteh and Makango clinics where despite the acceptance of the NHIS card; it is limited to basic medication, and prescription drugs are often in short supply. The fact that extra payments are required for healthcare, despite the existence of the NHIS, makes it a barrier to accessing affordable healthcare. Aside from cost; accessibility is another barrier as SSF in island and overbank communities, such as Dafor Torny and Alavanyo have very limited access to health facility.

- **Water and sanitation hygiene:**

While access to modern safe drinking-water, and sanitation systems remains a national challenge, the case of inland SSF is particularly concerning, especially given the health implications of water and sanitation hygiene. According to inland SSF, most fishing communities on the Volta Lake do not have access to potable water and improved toilet facilities. Entire communities drink untreated water directly from the Volta Lake and incidence of blood in urine (bilharziasis) and glaucoma are common. In spite of the

87. Advisory Zone - the area before the restricted “exclusive zone”

88. NHIS- National Health Insurance Scheme

preference for treated sachet water; cost is an issue, especially for large households. Fish traders/processors in Axim and Cape Coast reported that, despite the availability of potable water supply; oftentimes, they have to resort to untreated water from bore-holes and wells due to acute water shortages and high cost of supply from private water tankers. Plastic waste, was also reported to be a source of concern for both urban and rural SSF.

- **Decent housing:**

The pilot study highlighted the fact that decent housing in SSF communities is very limited; generally characterized by clustered communal houses with shared facilities; and inadequate utility services. Besides, there is a general lack of maintenance of houses; and due to the long and frequent fishing expeditions, some fishers do not stay at home very often. Others also fall in the category of migratory fishers/fishworkers who only need temporal housing. However, housing as priority focuses on tenure security, provision of improved social amenities and protection against severe weather conditions such as flooding, tidal waves and storms. For settler/migratory SSF, tenure security is of topmost priority as many traditional authorities arbitrarily determines the fee for ground rent and forbid constructing permanent structures.

- **Affordable and reliable energy:**

Fish processors and traders interviewed across the pilot study areas placed high priority on affordable and reliable energy. They presented the dwindling supply of firewood as a major challenge both in terms of cost and availability. Interviewees in Cape Coast, Jaklai, and Makango argued that since more than two-thirds of fish landed is smoked, firewood is needed, especially when there is a bumper catch to heat the ovens for smoking all day and night to reduce spoilage

and lower market value. The processors expressed concern that unless urgent steps are taken to ensure a steady supply of affordable firewood, it will increase the price of fish and reduce food security especially for the poor. While acknowledging the health hazards associated with traditional fish smoking, they lamented that cleaner alternatives such as LPG is more expensive, and requires different processing ovens that is not affordable or readily available to most processors.

- **Access to savings and credit:**

Access to savings and credit is the bane of processors and traders in the fish value chain across the pilot study areas. According to the SSF communities, despite several appeals to the government to earmark a dedicated fund to support SSF, it has not materialized. As a result, credit is very expensive. For instance; at Tapa Abotoase, a credit facility of GHS 100 attracts an interest of GHS 10 (10%) every market day. At Gomoa Fetteh, money lenders charge GHS 200 (20%) every week on GHS 1,000; while microfinance companies charge GHS 60 (6%) every week on GHS 1,000. Banks, on the other hand; have lower interest rates but typically require collateral which most fishers are unable to provide. However, a lower number of banks including Ahantaman and Lower Prah Rural Banks in Axim offer loans to women groups at 30% and 28% respectively for 6 months. There are also number of informal savings/loan groups in the pilot communities. One such group at Tapa Abotoase reported they were unable to raise significant capital for their work.

- **Occupational health and safety:**

Occupational health and safety as a priority focuses on both fishing and value-adding activities along the value chain. According to fishers/fishworkers across the pilot areas, despite having a general knowledge of occupational health and safety, they do not

pay much attention to it; conceding that fishers in particular do not go for regular health checks. Women processors noted that the unsanitary conditions they work in; coupled with the long exposure to heat and smoke are taking a toll on their health. They reported that eye and respiratory problems; as well as sudden illness and death were becoming frequent among fish processors/traders. Fishers also described recent premix fuel explosions⁸⁹ at Kormantse, Elmina and Cape Coast as a wake-up call to change attitudes towards safety.

- **Child labour and trafficking:**

Fishers and fishworkers particularly in the Bono East, Oti, Savannah and Volta regions expressed disapproval about the approach being used to combat child labour and trafficking (CLaT). All the pilot study communities along the Volta Lake complained that CLaT task force and Police; together with some NGOs arrest and detain fishers simply for having their children with them in their canoes. At Fanteakura, fishers called for the authorities to come clear on the conditions that can be classified as child labour as the definition is being stretched and abused by the CLaT task force. Fishers in Jaklai accused the CLaT task force and police of extorting money from fishers. At Dafor Tornu, fishers stated that CLaT is not practiced, but the task force has been arresting fishers on that charge.

- **Livelihood diversification:**

The majority of the fishers/fishworkers observed that proper diversification of livelihood would improve living standards by providing supplementary/complementary incomes. However, the main concern was not so much as to the type of livelihood

programmes, but rather whether or not proponents will be willing to support with requisite capital and infrastructure. At Axim, some fishers who ventured into pig-farming reported that the cost of feed was very expensive; leading to low returns which was later ploughed back into the business. Fishing households at Alavanyo noted that irrigation was a major setback to their dry-season gardening as basic set-up (such as pumps and pipes/canals) were lacking, and they had to manually draw water from the Volta Lake to irrigate their crops. Osu and Cape Coast fish traders/processors reported that given the limited alternative livelihoods opportunities; the common options included petty trading and hawking of groceries but margins were scant.

- **Fisheries inputs subsidies:**

Most fishers and fishworkers appreciated the support from the government's fisheries input subsidies (FIS) in the form of subsidized premix fuel, outboard motors, and nets. They indicated that in the past, the FIS proved to be a lifeline for the SSF sector; and even though there were minor difficulties in obtaining supplies, it did not present too many problems. However, fishers/fishworkers in all the pilot study areas contend that the current FIS is plagued with many problems including sporadic supplies, unfair distribution, and corrupt practices. Fishers in Dafor Tornu for instance, stated that while the price for subsidized outboard motors is GHS 6,000; it is only obtainable through middlemen at GHS 10,000 and on the black market at GHS 12,000. Similarly, at Cape Coast, fishers bemoaned that a drum of pre-mix fuel cost GHS 2,500, instead of the subsidized rate of GHS 800. In all the pilot communities, premix fuel was sold 2 to 3 times higher than the

89. Premix fuel explosions: Kormantse explosion occurred on 3 May 2019, 4 persons died; Elmina explosion occurred on 4 January 2020, 3 persons died; Cape Coast explosion occurred on 20 November 2020, 22 fishers were injured.

subsidized rates, and fishers attributed the exorbitant amounts to “diversion, “hoarding” and “artificial shortage” by political party kingpins and apparatchiks.

Fishworker Organizations and NGOs:

According to FWOs and NGOs, existing policies do not explicitly address the social development needs of SSF; and called for a policy on SSF that would have greater recognition of rights of small-scale fishers/ fishworkers, including processors and traders across the value chain. Other priorities include: improvement in living conditions of SSF through provision of essential services and infrastructure (construction of proper landing sites and processing sheds, schools, hospitals, safe drinking water, fish markets); training and capacity building on improved post-harvest processing and marketing of fishery products; regular supply of subsidized premix fuel and fishing inputs to recognized FWOs. On existing social protection schemes that generally favour formal-sector employees; they emphasized the need for education and investment in social protection tailored to the needs of SSF including retirement pension, healthcare and disability/ accident insurance.

Government Agencies:

The need for an intersectoral approach which aligns policies and resources to better respond to the social development of fishing communities is crucial. In addition, closer collaboration with development partners, intergovernmental agencies and NGOs will help better utilize scarce resources for the benefit of SSF. On child labour and trafficking (CLaT), the prioritized actions include: intensifying awareness, involving fishing communities and traditional authorities in campaigns; and strict enforcement of child protection laws.

90. FAO-Thiaroye Processing Technique oven.

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Value Chains, Post-Harvest and Trade (Chapter 7)

SSF Community:

- **Market infrastructure tailored to the needs of SSF:**

The establishment and management of market infrastructure is one of the major services operated by metropolitan, municipal and district assemblies (MMDAs). However, during the piloting, concerns were raised repeatedly that MMDAs place more emphasis on collecting revenue than on the welfare of fishers and fishworkers. Despite paying for monthly stall/shop rentals and daily market levies; fish processors/traders stated that modern facilities were lacking. For instance, Makango, Jaklai, and Tapa Abotoase have no potable water and toilet facilities within the market. According to the SSF community market infrastructure is a top priority and should focus on modernization and proper maintenance of existing markets; and developing new market facilities with a focus on SSF needs including child care, clinic, storage facilities and auditorium with audio-visual equipment for training.

- **Improving processing technologies:**

Despite the improvements in traditional fish processing systems, education and uptake remain slow and limited. According to fish processors/traders these modern practices are mostly introduced to executives or representatives of associations and groups who have limited logistics to disseminate the technology to the majority of fishworkers spread across several communities. Regarding fish processors who have been introduced to modern practices, such as the Ahotor and FTT ovens,⁹⁰ their main concern apart from cost is

speed and fuel efficiency. While Ahotor is promoted as an entry-level improved oven; it was reported to be slow; compared to the popular Chorkor oven which can smoke several stacks of fish within a relatively short time. In general, however, regarding awareness of new technologies, inland SSF lags significantly behind as interventions have largely focused on coastal/marine SSF.

- **Capacity-building across the fish value-chain:**

The need for capacity-building was repeatedly mentioned by fishers/fishworkers in both inland and coastal SSF during the piloting. From what the SSF community reported, capacity-building programmes are currently limited to training on hygienic fish handling by the FC, and a limited number of NGOs and intergovernmental agencies, including FAO. Although the number of training programmes have been increasing, fishers/fishworkers observed that the interventions repeatedly target the same people, organizations and communities, without widening the interventions to the benefit of more vulnerable and disadvantaged communities. There was also consensus that education should be more gender-sensitive (men and women) for fishers and fishworkers, and related trades, including truck/bus operators, input dealers (nets, outboard motors) and district assembly officials.

- **Transparent, accountable and democratic FWOs:**

The majority of the fishers/ fishworkers in the piloting communities presented the view that the current paradigm of managing fishworker organizations (FWOs) does not adequately address transparent, accountable and democratic governance. This may well account for fishers/fishworkers who stated

they do not identify with any FWO; the lack of strong local governance structures of FWOs (including GNCFC, NAFPTA, NICFC)⁹¹ in many fishing communities; and the preference for local-based structures, such as informal groups and cooperatives that respond to the local needs of fishers/fishworkers. Examples of such robust local structures include Adom Wo Wim Cooperative at Axim; Association of Fishmongers at Makango; and Fishmongers Association at Tapa Abotoase.

Fishworker Organizations and NGOs:

The need for specific provisions and interventions that address the bottlenecks in the SSF value chains, post-harvest and trade was identified as a key priority. To achieve this priority, government and development partners should focus on developing simple and cost-effective landing sites/harbours (to reduce poor fish handling practices); establishing dedicated funds for SSF (to promote better access to affordable capital); and expanding education/training in improved processing, storage, packaging, transport and marketing with participation of fishing communities, and FWOs (to reduce health risks associated with hazardous processing methods and ensure wholesome fish/fisheries products).

Government Agencies:

The prioritized actions include: improving sensitization on post-harvest handling standards; facilitating access to new and improved methods of processing and storage; encouraging fishers/fishworkers to formalize groups and unions into registered cooperatives and associations for collective negotiation; and application of credit facilities.

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91. GNCFC: Ghana National Canoe Fishermen Council; NAFPTA: National Fish Processors & Traders Association; NICFC: National Inland Canoes Fishermen Council

Gender Equality (Chapter 8)

SSF Community:

The priorities for ensuring gender equality based on the MEL4SSF Indicators, and the needs and perspectives of fishers/fishworkers, include: enforcing legislation and policies on gender; providing adequate resources for work to more vulnerable women in SSF; addressing health needs of fish processors and traders; and providing gender-equitable support for alternative and supplementary work.

- **Enforcement of legislation and policies on gender:**

Fishers/fishworkers noted that the country has appropriate legislation that promote gender equality, but there is a general lack of awareness and enforcement. Fish processors/traders at Cape Coast reported that gender-based violence was on the rise, particularly among polygamous fishing households. Overcoming the barriers to gender equality, according to fish processors and traders, would require moving beyond education on gender to affirmative action and stricter enforcement of laws on gender-based violence.

- **Adequate resources for work to more vulnerable women in SSF:**

Fish processors/traders reported that access to credit in terms of affordable interest is a major problem; and is heavily biased against vulnerable women. Processors noted that the lack of affordable credit means they cannot scale up their business beyond subsistence level. Fried fish vendors at Makango pointed out that profit margins would be higher using a 20-liter bottle of cooking oil at a cost of GHS 450; but many operate on a 4.5-litre capacity, which costs GHS 150. Likewise at Cape Coast, fresh fish vendors stated they operate at the lowest level and self-finance the cost of ice boxes, ice, and overnight refrigeration for a 2

to 3-day business cycle. Lack of affordable credit also means limited access to improved technology. Some fish processors at Axim noted that FTT ovens smoke at higher quality with a longer shelf life, but the cost is prohibitive, hence their preference for Chorkor ovens.

- **Health of women processors and traders:**

Despite improvements in the expansion of health facilities nationwide, and a pro-poor national health insurance scheme (NHIS) across the pilot study communities, the health needs of women (including reproductive and maternal health) were identified as a priority. This is particularly important because the entire value-chain is dominated by women fish processors and traders, and clinics/health posts do not specialize in women's healthcare. Although modern hospitals with specialized facilities exist, from the perspectives of women in the pilot communities, low incomes and poverty limit their access. Concerning the NHIS; the general observation according to fishers/fishworkers is its limitation to consultation and basic medication (as discussed above in relation to occupational health and safety).

- **Equitable gender support for alternative and supplementary work:**

Due to the significant decline of fisheries resources, and given that interventions aimed at rebuilding fish stocks can take several years, fishers/fishworkers reported that equitable gender support for alternative and supplementary work should be an immediate priority. Women fish processors/traders in particular noted that support for alternative and supplementary work should first focus on the needs and interest of beneficiaries before training programmes are developed. In addition, they also noted that the corresponding financial and logistical support must be available before such interventions

are rolled out.

Fishworker Organizations and NGOs:

The identified priorities include: continuous education and awareness creation on gender rights and responsibilities; promoting closer coordination and collaborations with policy makers, academia, research institutions, and media houses; and mandating (through legislation) fishing communities, FWOs, NGOs, district and municipal authorities to involve women and girls in community interventions and fisheries governance.

Government Agencies:

The priorities for consideration include: continuous awareness creation and education on gender; exchange programmes and best practices; and enforcement of national and sector gender mainstreaming policies and action plans.

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Disaster Risks and Climate Change (Chapter 9)

SSF Community:

The priorities of fishers/fishworkers in terms of disaster risks and climate change include: effective consultations of SSF; providing support to SSF; and using holistic and integrated approaches to address issues in climate change policies and adaptation plans.

- **Effective consultations of SSF in developing climate change policies/plans:**

Fishers/fishworkers consulted during the pilot study observed that given the increasing tidal storms and associated loss of lives and property, there is an urgent need to recognize SSF as important stakeholders in climate change policies with clear roles and responsibilities. They also suggested that for consultations to be effective, SSF must be involved not only in designing policies and

action plans, but also with a clear role in monitoring of climate change, disaster risk management and post-disaster rehabilitation.

- **Support to SSF to reduce potential negative impacts of climate change:**

Across the pilot study communities, fishers/fishworkers indicated that the responsible state agencies addressing climate change and disaster issues must prioritize providing adequate support to SSF, particularly communities most vulnerable to climate change impacts. However, some fishers/fishworkers remain sceptical of any substantial support from state agencies. At Sekondi, the general view was that, since state agencies have been unable to strictly enforce fisheries by-laws due to a lack of logistical arrangements, they wondered how SSF communities would be adequately equipped to respond to climate change and disasters. At Kpando Torkor; fishers/fishworkers observed that the navy, though resourceful, struggles to perform their duties on the Volta Lake due to inadequate vehicles, boats, life jackets, and the necessary machinery to operate effectively. They also recounted how the provision of life jackets could have saved 50 passengers who died in a boat disaster at Avorkope, Kwahu Afram Plains North.

- **Integrated and holistic approach:**

Fisher/fishworkers generally considered the need for integrated and holistic approaches, plans and policies for addressing disaster risks and climate change in SSF as a priority. They stated that one area where such an approach would be useful is the blending of traditional and scientific knowledge for disaster prevention. According to fishers they can interpret the clouds and wind, their direction and magnitude; as well forecast storms and how to navigate through severe weather conditions. However, the main challenge is the degree of accuracy or precision. They also reported that through

collaboration with GMet; fishers who owned smart phones were benefiting from weather information alerts.

Fishworker Organizations and NGOs:

From the perspective of FWOs and NGOs, the priorities for addressing disaster risks and climate change include: educating fishing communities on disaster preparedness and management; establishing channels of communicating relevant weather forecasts and early warning reports to SSF; capacity-building and training of youths in fishing communities to use more responsible fishing methods; and applying the “polluter pays principle” to individuals/organizations whose actions contribute to disasters and climate change impacts.

Government Agencies:

The priorities for addressing disaster risks and climate change include: collaboration of sector agencies with SSF; and sensitization and training of SSF communities on sustainable management of coastal ecosystems to safeguard small-scale fisheries and food security.

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3.3. Introduction of the MEL4SSF

On the whole, the pilot study was positively received by the small-scale fisheries stakeholders consulted. Fishing communities in particular appreciated the facilitated discussions and shared their perspectives within the thematic areas of the MEL4SSF. The stakeholder groups could relate to the principles and issues; and noted that; both the MEL4SSF Handbook and Indicators cover the relevant issues in small-scale fisheries that need to be addressed.

However, suggestions were made to reduce the number of indicators by merging overlapping indicators such as “essential services” (IND# 78-80; 105-109) to make them less bulky and easier to reference. It was also suggested that for implementation, some indicators be defined and/or expanded to reflect country contexts, for the generalized indicator to be better understood. For example, what constitutes “large-scale development projects” and who are considered “vulnerable and marginalized groups” in the local SSF.

A central theme that emerged from the piloting was the need for continuous training and capacity-building; not only for traditional stakeholders such as MoFAD, FC, and SSF organizations; but also social development ministries (including education, health, gender and social protection, energy, and housing), media houses, academic and research institutions). In this regard, FAO in Ghana underscored its support for the implementation of the SSF Guidelines. Previous support includes: training of some staff of MoFAD for the development of a national plan of action for the implementation of the SSF Guidelines; printing and dissemination of simplified versions of the SSF Guidelines by ICSF and TESCOD in six local languages; and translating educational videos on best practices of the SSF Guidelines in six local languages.

MoFAD also expressed support for the MEL4SSF as it fits into its mandate of developing SSF into a more profitable and sustainable sector. Through support from FAO, MoFAD stated it had provided number of centres in fishing communities, including Dzemeni, Tema, Elmina, and Axim for the dissemination of the SSF Guidelines.

The success of the MEL4SSF implementation will also depend to a large extent on the

capabilities of local SSF actors at the community level. The stakeholders consulted noted that, for the objectives of the MEL4SSF to be realized, local actors (champions) need to appreciate the importance of the SSF Guidelines and the MEL4SSF, and must be willing to mobilize local government and grassroots institutions to play meaningful roles. Community level actors could include chief fishermen, headmen, queen mothers, assembly members, teachers, CBOs, NGOs, opinion leaders, youth /development chiefs, and district assemblies.

The need for the formation of stronger collaborations and long-term partnerships for effective implementation of the MEL4SSF came up strongly. A major concern in this respect was that aside from the general camaraderie that exists within the SSF sector, collaborations tend to focus more on information sharing and short-term campaigns among project partners, rather than on long-term broader agendas and partnerships. The need for sector-wide collaboration beyond the traditional stakeholders was advised.

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4. Recommendations

The recommendations presented below are drawn from the results of the pilot study, with particular emphasis on the review of policies and programmes on the SSF Guidelines; and interviews and discussions on the MEL4SSF Indicator List and Handbook.

In general, Ghana's progress in implementing the SSF Guidelines has been modest, and limited to mainly national and regional-level SSF stakeholders. Greater effort is needed for wider and effective implementation in SSF communities. Existing legislation and policies for implementing the SSF Guidelines generally recognize small-scale fisheries, with a number of broad interventions aimed at promoting and protecting the sector. By far, the Co-Management Policy of 2020 represents the most significant milestone in small-scale fishers/fishworkers' rights in Ghana, and lays the foundation for compliance with the SSF Guidelines.

This pilot report reveals key indicators of relevance to stakeholders within the thematic areas of the MEL4SSF Indicator List, and highlights the basis for those preferences. To realize the impacts based on the MEL4SSF's outputs and outcomes, it is imperative to focus on results, and move away from a box-ticking approach during implementation. This requires local stakeholders to have ownership of the process by being provided with

adequate tools to fully understand it, as well as how they fit into the process in terms of their roles, responsibilities and commitments. Other considerations for successful implementation of the MEL4SSF are highlighted in the subsections below.

4.1. SSF Guidelines and MEL4SSF

Defining indicators in local contexts:

Understanding the meaning of indicators in local contexts is crucial to engaging SSF stakeholders in the implementation process. For this reason, it is recommended that key stakeholders involved in implementing the MEL4SSF first define indicators in the local socio-cultural context through a process of consensus. This process should involve the establishment of clearly defined roles, and dialogue between all SSF stakeholders, including MoFAD, FAO, FWOs, NGOs and CSOs. When indicators are first clearly defined, this can prevent differing interpretations among involved stakeholders and ensure effective ways of monitoring and measuring progress. For example, by defining "vulnerable and marginalized" in the local SSF context, it makes it more practical to identify who these specific groupings are, and whether or not they are directly benefiting from targeted interventions.

Addressing policy gaps:

Without addressing gaps in policies with appropriate legislative and policy reforms, successful implementation of the MEL4SSF will be limited. For instance, the Co-Management Policy 2020 provides for training, facilitation and support to SSF to participate in and take responsibility for co-management; as well as addressing aspects of representation in professional fisheries bodies. However, it does not make specific provisions for addressing participatory monitoring, control and surveillance systems (MCS). Similarly, the current social development framework addresses many of the social inequities of fishing communities as it is geared towards reducing geographical disparities, creating a new social order of social justice and equity, inclusion of excluded and marginalized people, particularly the poor, the underprivileged and persons with disabilities. Nevertheless, it is universal in scope and implementation plans are disjointed across several ministries, departments & agencies (MDAs), and thus, not effectively responding to the particular social development needs of fishing communities. Some cases call for formulating new guidelines or by-laws based on existing/new legislation. Regarding customary tenure rights (CTR) for instance, it is necessary to first develop guidelines (on CTR) in consultation with SSF to harmonize existing practices with human rights standards (paying attention to women rights, migrant fishers, and fishers with low economic/social status along the fish value chain) before being given formal legislative backing.

Disaggregating and harmonizing data:

It is strongly recommended that a clear-cut system for collecting and testing disaggregated data on small-scale fisheries be developed by national governments. FAO can also provide some guidelines for using the MEL4SSF to ensure uniformity within

countries and across regions, such as for budgets, expenditures, salaries, fuel, and per diems. The current data on SSF in Ghana is part of the agricultural, forestry and fishery work (AFF) category, and regional/district demographics of the Ghana Statistical Service national data system. While the FC and other research institutions collect data on SSF, they typically do not capture socio-economic aspects related to post-harvest and value chain actors, gender, youth, migration, and vulnerable and marginalized groups. The development of a consistent data system to accurately capture heterogeneous SSF households and situations is urgently needed.

Inclusion of Chapters 10 and 11 in the MEL4SSF:

This pilot report recommends the inclusion of chapters 10 and 11 (part 3) of the SSF Guidelines in the MEL4SSF. The current MEL4SSF is based on part two (chapters 5 to 9) of the SSF Guidelines, which focuses on issues relating to responsible fisheries and sustainable development. Chapters 10 and 11 deal with “policy coherence, institutional coordination and collaboration” and “information, research and communication” respectively. Their inclusion would provide a common and unified framework for the SSF Guidelines, and bridge part 2 with part 3’s attention to implementation, support and monitoring mechanisms. Implementation of the SSF Guidelines should not be only in the hands of duty bearers (MDAs, academia, media etc.); SSF communities and organizations must be involved in participatory monitoring, reviews and impact assessments to undertake course correction as necessary. It is thus extremely important to develop indicators to monitor, for example, how research institutions respond to problems in SSF with human rights-based approaches (HRBA), or how media houses build their capacities to give reportage that promote functional literacy education in SSF.

4.2. MEL4SSF Handbook

The MEL Handbook provides a good overview of the SSF Guidelines, as well as enough content for the handbook’s intended objectives, namely outlining, explaining, highlighting and exploring how the MEL4SSF can better support the implementation of the SSF Guidelines. In terms of the audience, it is best suited to the needs of policy makers, technocrats, and national level CSOs and NGOs, but not accessible to the majority of fishers/fishworkers who have limited literacy education. It is recommended that two versions of the handbook be developed: one detailed and one simplified.

MEL4SSF detailed version:

The detailed version of the MEL4SSF should contain the original complete content. In addition, it is recommended that chapter summaries should be included to help guide the reader through the text. Since the Indicator Template (Appendix 2) is central to inputting information, prioritizing and ranking (based on the three-tier methodology); an example of this in a real-world setting should be included. A completed Indicator Table (whether real or hypothetical) highlighting the case of a fishing community will make it easier to grasp the concept from a practical perspective.

MEL4SSF simplified version:

The simplified version should be written in an easy-to-understand, simple language, along the lines of John Kurien’s (2015) summarized version of the SSF Guidelines. Without sacrificing the integrity of the Handbook’s original content, the simplified version should be made interactive with illustrations or artwork that fishers/fishworkers can relate to in their local setting (see examples in Annex F). It may also contain links to short video clips that explain the details of the MEL4SSF in a less complicated, and clear manner. It is

recommended that the simplified version be field-tested in local SSF communities to determine its clarity before adoption.

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4.3. Results and Progress Indicators**Knowledge of SSF Guidelines, local legislation, and policies are crucial:**

To be effective in using the MEL4SSF, particularly when collecting data and prioritizing results and indicators, stakeholders should first and foremost be familiar with the SSF Guidelines, as well as having experience with the legislation, and policies related to the local SSF subsector. During the piloting process, stakeholders who were familiar with the SSF Guidelines could easily relate to the Progress Indicators and ranked them based on local relevance. However, the majority of participants found it difficult to establish Progress Indicators based on data availability and the three-tier methodology. This suggests that apart from regulations and by-laws that directly affect their work, many SSF stakeholders are not conversant with local fishery laws and policies. Effective implementation of the MEL4SSF therefore calls for all-round capacity building on both the SSF Guidelines and policy intervention contexts of local SSF.

Core Indicators of MEL4SSF needed for universal and uniform progression:

To ensure universal and uniform progression by FAO Members in implementing the SSF Guidelines; core indicators need to be defined from the 295 overall MEL4SSF indicators. The core indicators should serve as the cornerstone or building blocks upon which the other indicators emerge from, and should be prioritized in terms of policy intervention and funding available. The core indicators

should be universal regardless of the country, to establish some international linkages between MEL4SSF processes, but flexible enough to be adapted to country contexts, and local intervention priorities.

Compliance criteria need to be established for MEL4SSF core indicators:

To ensure that countries have effective frameworks (laws, policies, funding, MEL) to achieve the core indicators, international compliance criteria need to be developed to serve as a basis for implementing the core indicators of the MEL4SSF. FAO should take the lead role in developing such criteria, through dialogue with FAO Members that are supportive of this process. Without the political commitment of FAO Members to some sort of compliance criteria at national level, not much progress can be expected in SSF, especially considering the voluntary nature of the SSF Guidelines, and the current global economic difficulties, in which many governments prioritize macro and formal sector economic issues.

Peer review mechanism needed to review progress:

It is recommended that a peer review mechanism (PRM) should be established, in which a team drawn from MEL4SSF stakeholders reviews another country's progress in implementing the MEL4SSF core (and general) indicators. The PRM is necessary not only to ensure compliance, but also to review progress according to established compliance criteria. This will be a step further and more sensitive to SSF needs than the voluntary national reviews (VNR), where reports tend to be more sanguine in their outlook, but less critical of problems faced by SSF communities.

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4.4. Country Level Adoption

Identifying stakeholders and partners:

While many FWOs, NGOs, CBOs and fishing communities have some form of experience with participatory processes; only a fraction may be familiar with formal monitoring processes executed through multi-sectoral engagements and collaborations. It is therefore extremely important to identify stakeholders and partners who are interested in the process, and want to be involved in the entire process from beginning to end, or to participate in part of the process. Given that combating gender inequality is a key factor in reducing poverty, all identified stakeholders must be gender-sensitive and willing to promote gender equality. In addition to MoFAD, FC and FAO, it is recommended that a focal person in charge of the SSF Guidelines/ MEL4SSF process be nominated in each MDA participating in implementation.

Training - local context within a global framework:

To ensure ownership and full engagement with the implementation process, it is strongly recommended that all stakeholders be trained. The training process should not only equip stakeholders with the methods and tools to achieve the MEL4SSF's objectives; but also create the opportunity for knowledge sharing, and contribute to a sense of ownership. It is suggested that stakeholders should be provided with the necessary tools required to accomplish their roles and responsibilities during the training, including access to FAO specialist staff and consultants on the MEL4SSF.

Managing expectations:

To ensure the long-term sustainability and use of the MEL4SSF, it is extremely important to manage the expectations of stakeholders. Given the litany of problems that plague SSF, it is only natural for many fishing

communities to look to external benefactors for support and assistance. In the past, many SSF-focused interventions have created unrealistic expectations within communities and upon completion of a given project, gains made during the project process have eroded. As part of the training process, all stakeholders should be made aware of the fact that the long-term sustainability and use of the MEL4SSF rest on the commitment of local stakeholders—their ownership, commitment and capability to mobilize local and external resources.

Communication and knowledge sharing:

It is recommended that during training for the use of the MEL4SSF, the need for sharing expertise and experiences, as well as regular communication among stakeholders should be emphasized. In addition, stakeholders should be introduced to a range of cost-effective communication tools that would be appropriate to share information and best practices on the MEL4SSF with local and international stakeholders.

Monitoring and evaluating the MEL4SSF:

The long-term sustainability and use of the MEL4SSF cannot be guaranteed unless mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating progress are structured and presented in a way that allows all local stakeholders to have meaningful roles in the process.

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4.5. Digitalization of the MEL4SSF

To ensure effective digitalization of the MEL4SSF, specific challenges faced by fishing communities, which act as barriers to digital inclusion, must be taken into consideration, including: availability of digital infrastructure, digital literacy and appropriate content.

Digital infrastructure:

In general, there have been significant improvements in electricity and telecommunications infrastructure in Ghana, with 86.6% of the population having access to electricity, and 75.5% to mobile phone data. Despite these advances however, many rural and geographically isolated fishing communities lack access to electricity and internet services. The piloting revealed that most fishers/fishworkers owned mobile phones, even in communities with little or no network coverage. However, personal computers, tablets and smartphones were very limited, mainly due to higher costs and power issues.

Digital literacy:

Judging by the what small-scale fisheries stakeholders reported, digital literacy is seen as a necessity and most fishers/fish-workers have some knowledge and skills in operating mobile devices. However, this is limited to what fishers/fishworkers consider as necessary in their daily lives. These include: using mobile devices to make phone calls about family and work; for radio; and for torchlight. Hence, in order for fishers/ fishworkers to make use of a function or an application on a digital device, it must respond to their respective local needs.

Appropriate content:

The availability of good digital infrastructure and the skills to operate digital devices will not necessarily lead to the uptake of new information. This is premised on the observation that, in order for fishers/ fishworkers to use a new application, they must be made aware of, and appreciate the usefulness of the new application. In relation to the MEL4SSF, the purpose of the digitalization must be made clear to the targeted users, and respond to the local necessities of SSF so that the intended

beneficiaries do not get side-lined or neglected by technology. More specifically:

- It is not realistic to address all the issues of digital infrastructure and digital literacy before the digitalization of the MEL4SSF. Identifying individuals, communities and organizations that have the interest, and are willing to be trained to use and disseminate the digitized MEL4SSF is an important first step..
- A long list of digitalized indicators risks being perceived as another donor project, and could shift the focus to donor requirements and deliverables, rather than on building local knowledge to better fine-tune the MEL4SSF to deliver its objectives. Thus, attention needs to be given to training and knowledge sharing and the use of local terminology, wordings and graphics (where appropriate) to contribute to a sense of local ownership over the process.
- It is crucial to develop a user interface that is simple yet functional (with graphics and photographs) that can be navigated by the target audience without much difficulty.
- A proactive approach is needed to test and review the digitalized framework regularly, and adjust if necessary in response to field and operational needs.

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Conclusion

Ghana's Co-Management Policy 2020 represents a major paradigm shift from the top-down management approach to a more participatory approach, in which SSF communities can enact mutually agreed regulations and by-laws to manage a defined fisheries management area. While the policy can be used to drive a human right-based approach in SSF, especially when aligned with the SSF Guidelines, it is yet to be fully implemented.

However, the main finding of this pilot is that SSF stakeholders perceive that the MEL4SSF has the potential to deliver concrete results in SSF. First, in terms of policy, implementing the MEL4SSF demands addressing policy gaps with explicit provisions and clear implementation mechanisms that can be assessed. Second, the focus on progress indicators bring to light what SSF communities themselves consider as their priorities requiring attention. In this pilot, the major recurring priorities include: the need for formal recognition of customary tenure rights (CTR); providing essential services, social protection and improving working conditions of SSF; and providing support to women processors and traders to enhance

their roles and contributions to food security and alleviating household poverty.

The extent to which this pilot study can inform good practices during implementation will depend on the actions that are taken by FAO in-line with the recommendations outlined above. It will be especially important to train and build the capacity of all stakeholders involved in the MEL4SSF adoption process, and encourage local ownership for successful implementation.

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Annexes

Annex A: National Legislative & Policy Framework

Ghana operates a unitary democratic republic with separation of power among the executive, legislature and the judiciary. The country is divided into 16 regions, each administered by a regional minister appointed by the president upon vetting and approval of parliament. The 16 regions are further subdivided into 260 metropolitan, municipal and district assemblies (MMDAs).

In terms of hierarchy of laws, the Constitution is the supreme law of Ghana; followed by Acts of Parliaments, subsidiary legislation, customary law and the common law.⁹² The Constitution therefore provides the legal basis for inclusive national legislative and policy frameworks. It explicitly enjoins every President to "... within two years after assuming office, present to Parliament a co-ordinated programme of economic and social development policies (CPESDP), at all levels and in all the regions of Ghana."⁹³ The CPESDPs are developed through the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC);

which serves as an apex body for coordinating national policies.

As the CPESDPs provide national development frameworks with broad policy direction on four pillars: social development, economic development, environmental development and institutional development; the various ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) have oversight responsibility on sectoral planning, policy formulation, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation. By convention, the local government structure comprising; metropolitan, municipal, and district assemblies (MMDAs) are required to develop their medium-term programmes in line with the policies of the respective ministries.

Within the past two decades, Ghana has operationalized five medium-term CPESDP frameworks: Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (2003 – 2005); Growth & Poverty Reduction Strategy II (2006-2009); Ghana Shared Growth & Development Agenda I (2010-2013); Ghana Shared Growth & Development Agenda II (2014-2017) and

92. Section 38 (2) National Disaster Management Organization Act, 2016

93. Section 38 (3) National Disaster Management Organization Act, 2016

Agenda for Jobs: Creating Prosperity and Equal Opportunities for All (2018-2021). The current CPESDP framework is “Agenda for Jobs: Creating Prosperity and Equal Opportunities for All II (2021-2024). In addition to national policy frameworks espoused in the CPESDPs and Acts of Parliaments and subsidiary legislations; Ghana as a member of the United Nations, African Union and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is also a party to other international and regional protocols and treaties including:

- United Nations: - Convention on the Rights of the Child; Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW); Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS); International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT); Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (PSMA); Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication.
- African Union: - African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights; African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child; The Maputo Protocol; Africa Union Agenda 2063, “the Africa We Want”; African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)
- Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS): - ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement of People and Goods.

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Fisheries legal and policy framework

The fisheries sector of Ghana is governed by the Fisheries Act, 2002 (Act 625); the Fisheries (Amendment) Act, 2014 (Act 880); the Fisheries Regulations, 2010 (L.I.1968); the Fisheries (Amendment) Regulations, 2015 (L.I.2217); the Local Government Act, 1993 (Act 462); the Local Governance Act, 2016 (Act 936); and the National Premix Fuel Committee Regulations, 2016 (L.I.2233). Other applicable policies include: Food and Agriculture Sector Development Policy (FASDEP II); Marine Fisheries Management Plan (2022-2026); and the Sector Medium-Term Development Plan (2022-2025).

The Fisheries Act, 2002 (Act 625)

The Act makes provision for the establishment of the Fisheries Commission and defines its powers and functions and powers and organization structure, provides for the establishment of a Fisheries Development Fund and its use and regulates the management and conservation of fishery resources of Ghana including aquaculture and small-scale fishing.⁹⁴

The Fisheries (Amendment) Act, 2014 (Act 880)

The Fisheries (Amendment) Act 2014 (Act 880) was passed “to amend the Fisheries Act, 2002 (Act 625) to give effect to international conservation and management obligations, to empower the Minister to make Regulations to combat Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing in accordance with the international obligations of the Republic and to provide for related matters”.⁹⁵

The Fisheries Regulations, 2010 (L.I.1968)

The Fisheries Regulations, 2010 (L.I. 1968) was promulgated to “implement provisions of the Fisheries Act, 2002, and make provision with respect to a wide variety of matters regarding fisheries management and conservation, aquaculture and trade in fish products such as: fishery plans prepared under sections 42 to 45 of the Act; registration and marking of local, industrial and semi-industrial fishing vessels; use of fishing gear; fishing license; dumping or transshipment of fish; fishing in foreign waters; compliance measures and monitoring mechanisms; approval of aquaculture establishments; fish seed production certificates; fish breeding permits; import and export of live fish; sanitary control of fish landed in Ghana”.⁹⁶

The Fisheries (Amendment) Regulations, 2015 (L.I.2217)

The Fisheries (Amendment) Regulations 2015 (L.I. 2217) introduces additional requirement and procedure for the registration and operation of fishing vessels and combating IUU by “inserting new regulations 24A to 24DD and regulations 49A to 49D concerning measures to deter and eliminate Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing. Measures include international cooperation, access control (in respect to vessels previously registered as being involved in IUU fishing), record of fishing vessels flying the flag of Ghana and fishing outside Ghanaian waters, disclosure of information for purpose of complying with international obligations, more stringent requirements for the application for and granting of a (foreign) fishing authorization, vessel monitoring systems, control on the landing of catches, denial of use of a Ghanaian port”.⁹⁷

The Local Government Act, 1993 (Act 462)

Titled “an Act to establish and regulate the local government system in accordance with the Constitution and to provide for related matters”,⁹⁸ the Local Government Act, 1993 (Act 462); “makes provision for the administration of districts, i.e., an area under the authority of a district assembly, a municipality or metropolis. Existing districts shall continue as districts for the purposes of this Act and new districts may be declared by the President by Executive Instrument”.⁹⁹

The Local Governance Act, 2016 (Act 936)

The Local Governance Act 2016 (Act 936) repeals the Local Government Act, 1993 (Act 462). Among other things, the Act provides for the creation of district assemblies, metropolitan assemblies, district planning authorities, the Local Government Service, the District Assemblies Common Fund, Regional Co-ordinating Councils, and the Inter-Ministerial Co-ordinating Committee on Decentralisation. The President may, by Executive Instrument, create new districts. The Minister shall, by legislative instrument, establish a District Assembly for each district, municipality and metropolis. Functions of district assemblies are defined. The Act also provides for participatory governance at the local level. A District Assembly shall enable the residents and other stakeholders in the district to participate effectively in the activities of the District Assembly and the sub-district structures of the District Assembly.¹⁰⁰

The National Premix Fuel Committee Regulations, 2016 (L.I.2233)

The National Premix Fuel Committee Regulations (L.I. 2233) makes provision for the

96. Abstract of the Fisheries Regulations 2010 (L.I. 1968) FAOLEX, <http://faolex.fao.org/docs/pdf/gha151991.pdf>

97. Abstract of the Fisheries (Amendment) Regulations, 2015 (L.I. 22017) FAOLEX

98. Title of the Local Government Act of 1993 (Act 462)

99. Abstract of the Local Government Act of 1993 (Act 462)

100. Abstract, Local Governance Act 2016 (Act 936) <https://www.fao.org/faolex/results/details/en/c/LEX-FAOC177648>

94. Abstract of the Fisheries Act, 2002; FAOLEX, <https://www.fao.org/faolex/results/details/en/c/LEX-FAOC034737>

95. Title of the Fisheries (Amendment) Act, 2014 (Act 880)

establishment of the National Premix Fuel Committee (NPFC); with the mandate to oversee the efficient and effective administration and distribution of premix fuel.¹⁰¹ It defines the powers, composition and functions of the NPC as well as the establishment of the National Premix Fuel Secretariat (NPS) with oversight responsibility from MoFAD. Since premix fuel is significantly subsidized by the State, the NPS is required to check diversion; oversee the creation of landing beach committees in consultation with the District Assemblies and to use the proceeds from the sale of premix fuel for the development of fishing communities.

Food and Agriculture Sector Development Policy (FADEP II)

The primary policy framework on the agricultural sector in Ghana is documented in the Food and Agriculture Sector Development Policy II (FASDEP). The policy framework outlines the vision of the sector as “a modernised agriculture culminating in a structurally transformed economy and evident in food security, employment opportunities and reduced poverty”.¹⁰² The policy hinges on six objectives: food security and emergency preparedness; improved growth in incomes; increased competitiveness and enhanced integration into domestic and international markets; sustainable management of land and environment; science and technology applied in food and agriculture development; and improved institutional coordination. The Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA) is the lead implementing ministry.

Sector Medium-Term Development Plan (2022 – 2025)

The thrust of the current 2022–2025 medium-term development plan on Ghana’s fisheries sector is to “transform the fisheries and aquaculture sector into a viable economic segment to contribute to national development”.¹⁰³ The policy objectives include: ensure sustainable development and management of aquaculture; ensure sustainable development and management of fisheries resources; improve post-harvest management; mainstream science, technology and innovation in all socio-economic activities; strengthen plan preparation, implementation and coordination at all levels; enhance coordination among key institutions; and prevent and protect children from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Marine Fisheries Management Plan (2022 – 2026)

The Marine Fisheries Management Plan (2022-2026) builds on the achievements and setbacks of previous management plans. Overall, the plan recognizes “excessive fishing efforts, inadequate information on biology of the stocks and current biomass levels; inadequate information and regulations on gears used for fishing; low levels of protection of marine habitat; impact of climate change; socio-economic wellbeing of actors; and weak enforcement of fisheries laws and regulations” as major challenges. Among others; the plan outlines “full roll-out of canoe identification card; re-classification of canoes and inshore vessels; development and implementation of a new licensing regime; implementation of closed season for all vessels; implementation of new gear regulations; improved data collection and analysis; strengthening of fisheries

enforcement and implementation of co-management policy”¹⁰⁴ as the priority measures.

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Annex B: Fisheries Regulatory Institutions

The key regulatory institutions of the fishery sector in Ghana include: Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development (MoFAD); Fisheries Commission (FC); National Pre-mix Secretariat (NPS); Ghana Standards Authority (GSA); Food and Drugs Authority (FDA); and Food Research Institute (FRI).

Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development (MoFAD)

The Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development (MoFAD) has the overall oversight responsibility over the fisheries sector in Ghana. MoFAD’s mandate includes formulating and implementing policies and strategies resolve the challenges facing the fishing sector with the aim of achieving national food security, employment creation, income poverty reduction, improved foreign exchange earnings through reduction in fish imports, and transformation of the fisheries sector and industry into a viable economic segment to attract private sector investment.¹⁰⁵ MoFAD has oversight responsibility over the Fisheries Commission (FC) and National Pre-mix Secretariat.

Fisheries Commission (FC)

The Fisheries Commission (FC) is the main implementing agency of MoFAD. The

Commission is required by the Fisheries Law, Act 625 of 2002, to regulate and manage the use of fisheries resources and to coordinate the policies in relation to them. The key functions comprise monitoring, control, surveillance, evaluation, and compliance functions in all areas of fisheries development and management in Ghana, including fish health, post-harvest activities, safety, and quality assurance.¹⁰⁶

National Pre-Mix Fuel Secretariat (NPS)

Through the National Premix Fuel Committee Regulations (L.I. 2233); the National Premix Fuel Secretariat was established as the second agency of MoFAD to oversee the efficient and effective administration and distribution of pre-mix fuel to small-scale artisanal fishers. The Secretariat highlights its mandate of allocating and distributing pre-mix fuels as follows: “weekly requests for the distribution of pre-mix fuel are sent to the Tema Oil Refinery (TOR); TOR blends and loads the product into tankers of the assigned Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) for distribution to the various Landing Beach Committees (LBCs)”.¹⁰⁷

104. <https://www.businessghana.com/site/news/general/256169/Stakeholders-approve-draft-fisheries-management-plan>

105. <https://mofep.gov.gh/sites/default/files/pbb-estimates/2022/2022-PBB-MOFAD.pdf>

106. The Fisheries Act, 2002 (Act 625)

107. <https://www.mofad.gov.gh/agencies/national-premix-secretariat/>

Table 1: Structure of MoFAD and Agencies

Ministry	MoFAD PM	
Directorates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance and Administration • Human Resource • Research, Statistics, and Information Management (RSIM) • Policy Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation (PPMED) 	
Agencies	FISHERIES COMMISSION	NATIONAL PRE-MIX FUEL SECRETARIAT
Divisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marine Fisheries Management Division • Inland Fisheries Management Division • Fisheries Scientific Survey Division • Monitoring, Control, & Surveillance Division • Operations and Administration Divisions 	
Units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fish Health Unit (FHU) • Monitoring and Evaluation Unit (MEU) • Post-Harvest Unit (PHU) • Projects Unit (PU) 	

Source: Author's rendering based on field notes

Ghana Standards Authority (GSA)

The Ghana Standards Authority (GSA) mandate is to establish the standards, to undertake inspections on the agricultural and non-agricultural products and to run laboratory testing as well as to certify products. The GSA's Fish Inspection Department undertakes various fish tissue analytical work for testing, inspection and certification.¹⁰⁸

Food and Drugs Authority (FDA)

The Food and Drugs Authority (FDA) is the national regulatory authority mandated with the regulation of food, drugs as well as food supplements, herbal and homeopathic medicines, veterinary medicines, cosmetics, medical devices, household chemical

substances and tobacco. The FDA also enforces hazards analysis and critical control point (HAACP) standards as well as issue approvals for fish export.¹⁰⁹

Food Research Institute (FRI)

The Food Research Institute (FRI) is mandated to conduct applied market-oriented research into problems of food processing and preservation, food safety, storage, marketing, distribution and utilisation, and national food and nutritional security in support of the food industry and also to advise government on its food policy.¹¹⁰

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108. <https://www.gsa.gov.gh/fish-inspection/>

109. <http://www.fdaghana.gov.gh/food.php>

110. <https://www.foodresearchgh.org/about-us/about-food-research-institute>

Annex C: Structure of the Fisheries Sector

The fishery sector of Ghana is generally categorized into three subsectors: industrial; semi-industrial or inshore; and artisanal or small-scale. Of these three; small-scale fisheries contribute 70-80% from marine and inland waters. In terms of production structure; of total production of 452,679.30mt in 2018; the marine fisheries accounted for 302,431.50mt (67%); followed by aquaculture, 76,620.00mt (17%) and inland fisheries, 73,627.80mt (16%).¹¹¹ Altogether, the fisheries sector contributes to 60-70% animal protein intake of Ghanaians; contributes to 1.0% GDP and 5.1% to Agricultural sector GDP.¹¹² An estimated 3 million Ghanaians depend on the small-scale fisheries value chains for their livelihoods.¹¹³

The small-scale fisheries subsector

The small-scale fisheries subsector revolves around hundreds of coastal and inland fishing communities. The dug-out canoe is the main fishing craft deployed with an outboard motor up to 40hp, or sail and oars. The gears used include: purse seines, beach seines, trawl nets, gillnets and entangling nets (including set and drifting gillnets; trammel nets), traps (including pots, stow or bag nets, fixed traps) and hooks and lines. The main fish species landed include: small pelagics (sardinellas, mackerels and anchovies); large pelagics (tunas, sail fins and swordfishes) and demersal (sea bream, snappers). The Fisheries Commission estimates that; there are about 15000 canoes operating in the 550 km marine coastline and 24000 along the Volta Lake.

* * *

The role of women

Traditionally, men are assigned with direct fishing tasks while women perform the bulk of post-harvest activities; particularly processing, marketing and distribution. However, women fishers exist in the inland fisheries comprising a network of lakes, lagoons and riverine systems. The role women play in the fisheries value chain is critical to food security, employment and the local economy of fishing communities. These roles include sourcing for credit; prefinancing fishing business and fishing trips; fish processing (drying, smoking, salting, fermenting, frying) and fish distribution and marketing. There are an estimated 120000 processing ovens nationwide; and 117,000 fish processors in the marine and 72,000 in the inland fisheries.¹¹⁴

The role of traditional/customary management system

In addition to the state regulatory bodies; there exists the traditional or customary system. The chief fisherman; Apofohene (Fante), Woleiatse (Ga), Dortorwofia (Ewe) exercises jurisdiction in a coastal fishing community and the Headman in an inland fishing community. Assisted by a council of elders, they settle disputes; ensures peaceful coexistence of fishers and adherence to cultural norms and taboos. Fish queen mothers (Koknohemaa) perform similar roles and are well integrated into the value chain from landing, value addition and marketing.

111. Manu, S. D. 2020. Overview of the Small-Scale Fisheries and the Post-Harvest Sector of Ghana.

112. Ibid

113. Ibid

114. Ibid

Annex D: Key Officials and SSF Leaders Interviewed

SN	Name	ORGANISATION	Contact
1	Mr. Kwesi Armo-Himbson	MoFAD, Chief Director	+233302675155
2	Mr. Samuel Quartey	MoFAD, Technical Advisor	+233302675155
3	Ms. Jaqueline Ahetor	MoFAD Secretary to Chief Director	+233302675155
4	Mr. Paul Bannerman	FC, Ag. Executive Secretary	+233302676155
5	Ms. Yaa Tiwa Amoa	FC, Post-Harvest Unit	+233302676155
6	Mr. Ndiaga Gueye	FAO RAF	+233302610930
7	Ms. Abigail Kanyi	FAO RAF	+233302610930
8	Ms. Yaa Danso	FAO RAF	+233302610930
9	Prof F.K.E Nunoo	Chairperson, FC Board	+233242981547
10	Ms. Emely Nortey	DAA Executive Member	+233267144509
11	Ms. Lydia Sasu	DAA Executive Director	+233244431456
12	Ms. Anamua Mensah	Vice President, NAFPTA C/R	+233553557804
13	Ms. Agnes Yankah	Organizer, NAFPTA C/R	+233593115417
14	Ms. Georgina Mensah	Treasurer, NAFPTA C/R	+233557347954
15	Ms. Lydia Abaka-Edu	Member, NAFPTA, W/R	+233244880174
16	Nii Dzamlodza VI	GNCFC, Osu, National Executive	+233244748951
17	Mr. Mike Abaka-Edu	GNCFC, W/R	+233244880174
18	Mr. Jacob Tetteh Agekeh	NICFC, National President	+233243335598
19	Nii Annan	HLCFA National Chairman	+233278637281
20	Mr. Evans Tackie	HLCFA National Secretary	+233243861912
21	Nii Odarmetey II	Chief Fisherman, Awudum, Tema	+233275389872

SN	Name	ORGANISATION	Contact
22	Nii Mator III	Chief Fisherman, Ashamang, Tema	+233244696725
23	Nana Obrenu Dabum III	Apofohene of Gomoa Fetteh	+233543390930
24	Nana Kojo Attah	Elder, Gomoah Fetteh	+233249801789
25	Mr. Nyamekye	Secretary to Apofohene, Cape Coast	+233555873208
26	Nana Kojo Attah	Apofohene's Staffer, Cape Coast	+233558049293
27	Mr. David Ablesu	Youth Chief, Dafor Tornu	+233244334189
28	Mr. Kakraba Samuel	NICFC Secretary, Dafor Tornu	+233244334189
29	Mr. Kwesi Addo Joshua	NICFC Zonal Chair, Kpando Torkor	+233243335598
30	Mr. Eric Osabutey	Kpando Torkor	+233243335598
31	Mr. Matthew Dornu	Tapa Abotoase	+233243335598
32	Mr. Johnson Yaokumah	Tapa Abotoase	+233243335598
33	Mr. Victor Adri	Zonal Manager, FC	+233246331813
34	Mr. Stephen Kutatsror	Linguist of Tapa Alavanyo	+233243335598
35	Nana Kwaw Akyen	Headman of Fanteakura)	+233545749231
36	Hon. Ibrahim Yahaya	Ex Assemblyman, Fanteakura	+233545749231
37	Mr. Nornosour Solomon	Headman I of Jaklai	+233548478650
38	Mr. Kedzi Godwin	Headman II of Jaklai	+233548478650
39	Mr. Enoch Kwetey	NICFC Secretary, Yeji	+233548478650
40	Mr. Tette Torkornyoo	Headman of Makango	+233545749231
41	Mr. Fiifi Koompson	Multimedia Group	+233302216540
42	Mr. Isaac Ampofo	Ministry of Energy	+233240043271

Annex E: Summary of Prioritized Indicators and Concerns

SSF Guidelines	SSF Communities	FWO/NGOs	Government Agencies
<p>Chapter 5a</p> <p>Responsible Governance of Tenure</p>	<p>The need for formal recognition of customary rights of tenure as existing system has led to abuses and excess; [arbitrary fee increments by traditional authorities and excessive taxation]</p> <p>Sale of shore lands for real estate and tourism development has deprived many communities access to their traditional landing and processing sites; limiting the space for pre- and post-harvest fishing activities.</p> <p>Non-inclusion of SSF interest in third-party resource agreements and decisions such as reducing or granting of fishing licenses to industrial vessels operators. Need for legislation to recognize their needs, concerns and interests; and factored into the decision-making and negotiations before third-party agreements are finalized.</p>	<p>Lack of legal backing for tenure rights of small-scale fishers/ fishworkers a major concern.</p> <p>Government and parliament should enact appropriate laws and regulations on tenure rights.</p> <p>Small-scale fishers/ fishworkers should develop site/spatial plans of fishing grounds and community lands in consultation with traditional authorities, family heads and the State [Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources].</p> <p>Urgent call for prosecuting all cases of IUU/saiko fishing; fast-tracking all cases under investigation and publishing all cases of completed cases.</p>	<p>Full operationalization of the Co-Management Policy, 2020 is a top priority of the government as it will address problems of representation in governance and decision-making in SSF.</p> <p>The Co-Management policy advocates for co-management of fisheries resources so fishing communities can participate in decision-making and enforcement of mutually agreed regulations and by-laws.</p>

SSF Guidelines	SSF Communities	FWO/NGOs	Government Agencies
<p>Chapter 5b</p> <p>Sustainable Resource Management</p>	<p>Frequent Incursions into the Inshore Exclusive Zone [reserved for SSF] by industrial trawlers using prohibited undersized meshes; depriving SSF of their livelihood.</p> <p>SSF communities call for MCS to be intensified and issues of violations should be fast-tracked; also, compensation should be paid to SSF (i.e., fishers) whenever their nets, traps etc. are destroyed by industrial vessels.</p> <p>Despite decline of IUU/saiko, the practice still continues. Urgent and concerted effort with the involvement of SSF communities to ensure stricter compliance to the fisheries regulations.</p> <p>Weakening grievance and conflict resolution mechanisms due to lack of formal judicial powers by CF has emboldened recalcitrant fishers, bred contempt for the customary tenure system, and encouraged unsustainable fishing. State needs to formally recognize, respect and protect local SSF.</p> <p>Government must take immediate steps to end Mali-Mali fishing which often leads to death of divers and violent clashes with aggrieved fishers.</p> <p>Denial of access to fishing grounds has continued since commercial oil and gas production.</p> <p>The need for canoes to be fitted with transponders to avoid drifting into advisory zone of oil fields.</p> <p>The need to involve SSF in participatory monitoring to curb assault of fishers by security operatives of oil fields.</p>	<p>Denial of access to fishing grounds [due to oil and gas production]; and sale of landing and processing sites recognized as serious problems.</p> <p>The need for the state to review of existing legislation to grant full access by fishers and fishworkers.</p> <p>Government must demarcate appropriate landing/processing sites [with improved processing technologies backed by site spatial plans]</p> <p>Aggrieved parties must always use dialogue to address oil/gas production and SSF grievances.</p>	<p>The Safe Sea Access Framework [SSAF] was developed through consultations with SSF stakeholders; and consensus was reached for peaceful co-existence of fishers and other oil and gas industry players.</p> <p>Despite the SSAF successes in conflict prevention and reduction in tensions, MoFAD, FC, PC advocate for continuous stakeholder engagement and education; including SSF leaders taking the lead in educating their members on the SSAF.</p>

SSF Guidelines	SSF Communities	FWO/NGOs	Government Agencies
<p>Chapter 6</p> <p>Social development, employment and decent work</p>	<p>Access to education, infrastructure and quality issues: despite high enrolment of pupils in primary schools; limited school infrastructure [inadequate classrooms and teaching aids and equipment] and low quality of teaching especially in rural SSF communities remain major concerns</p> <p>Access to motorable road network remains a challenge in many fishing communities. Rural SSF in particular have very poor road network many of which are dusty, untarred and often unmotorable during the rainy season. Some fish processors/traders bemoaned of declining trade volume due to poor roads.</p> <p>Access to affordable healthcare is a major concern to SSF as NHIS is not providing adequately for their health needs. NHIS is limited to consultation and basic medication that is not always available. Accessibility is another barrier as SSF in island and overbank communities have very limited access to health facility.</p> <p>Access to safe drinking-water, and sanitation systems remains a major challenge in SSF. Some communities do not have access to potable water and improved toilet facilities. Incidence of bilharziasis and glaucoma are common in communities along the Volta Lake.</p> <p>Decent housing in SSF is limited; SSF generally characterized by clustered communal houses with shared facilities; and inadequate utility services. Other concerns include lack of tenure security, limited social amenities, frequent adverse weather - flooding, tidal waves and storms.</p>	<p>Existing policies do not explicitly address the social development needs of SSF.</p> <p>The need for a policy on SSF that would have greater recognition of rights of small-scale fishers/fishworkers, including processors and traders across the value chain.</p> <p>Key priorities for addressing challenges in social development, employment and decent work include: improvement in living conditions of SSF through provision of essential services and infrastructure [construction of proper landing sites and processing sheds, schools, hospitals, safe drinking water, fish markets]</p> <p>Training and capacity building on improved post-harvest processing and marketing of fishery products.</p>	<p>The need for intersectoral approach with alignment of policies and resources to better respond to the social development of fishing communities.</p> <p>Closer collaboration with development partners, intergovernmental agencies and NGOs will help utilize better scarce resources to the benefit of SSF.</p> <p>The prioritized actions on child labour and trafficking [CLaT] include: intensifying awareness, involving fishing communities and traditional authorities in campaigns; strict enforcement of child protection laws.</p>

Continued >

SSF Guidelines	SSF Communities	FWO/NGOs	Government Agencies
<p>Chapter 6</p> <p>Social development, employment and decent work</p>	<p>SSF placed high priority on affordable and reliable energy owing to dwindling supply of firewood and soaring prices with possibility of reduced food security for the poor. Processors observed that cleaner alternatives were expensive.</p> <p>Access to savings and credit is the bane of processors and traders in the fish value chain. They claim that the lack of dedicated fund to support SSF, has led to exorbitant interest rates on loans. Despite a number of informal savings/loan groups; they are unable to raise significant capital for their work.</p> <p>Occupational health and safety, a major issue in fishing and value-addition activities. Processors noted that insanitary working conditions and long exposure to heat and smoke result in eye and respiratory problems. Safety issues with storage of pre-mix fuel also raised.</p> <p>Child labour and trafficking is still prevalent despite a number of interventions from government and NGOs. SSF expressed disapproval about the approach being used to combat CLaT by task force as arbitrary.</p> <p>SSF communities observed that diversification of livelihood would improve living standards by providing supplementary or complementary incomes but support with requisite capital and infrastructure was lacking.</p> <p>Current fisheries input subsidies are beset with many problems including sporadic supplies, unfair distribution, and corrupt practices</p>	<p>Regular supply of subsidized premix fuel and fishing inputs to recognized FWOs.</p> <p>The need for education and investment in social protection tailored to the needs of SSF including retirement pension, healthcare and disability/accident insurance.</p>	

SSF Guidelines	SSF Communities	FWO/NGOs	Government Agencies
<p>Chapter 7</p> <p>Value Chains, Post-Harvest and Trade</p>	<p>Market infrastructure is a top priority and should focus on modernization and maintenance of existing markets; and developing new facilities with a focus on SSF needs including day-care, clinic, storage facilities and auditorium with audio-visual equipment for training.</p> <p>Despite improvements in traditional fish processing, education and uptake remain slow and limited as modern practices are mostly introduced to executives or representatives of associations and groups who have limited logistics to disseminate the technology.</p> <p>Aside cost, processing time and fuel efficiency of modern fish smokers are of concern; given that traditional ovens are faster and more fuel efficient.</p> <p>Regarding awareness of new technologies; inland SSF significantly lags behind as interventions have largely focused on coastal/marine SSF.</p> <p>The need for capacity building is of topmost priority since, capacity building interventions are currently limited to training on hygienic fish handling by FC and a limited number of NGOs and intergovernmental agencies including FAO.</p> <p>While the number of training programmes have been increasing; the interventions tend to target the same persons, organizations and communities repetitively without widening out to the benefit of more vulnerable and disadvantaged communities.</p>	<p>The need for specific provisions and interventions that address the bottlenecks in the SSF value chains, post-harvest and trade is a key priority.</p> <p>Government and development partners should focus on developing simple and cost-effective landing sites/harbours [to reduce poor fish handling practices]</p> <p>Establishing dedicated funds for SSF [to promote better access to affordable capital]</p> <p>Expanding education/training in improved processing, storage, packaging, transport and marketing with participation of fishing communities, and FWOs [to reduce health risks associated with hazardous processing methods and ensure wholesome fish/fishery products]</p>	<p>The prioritized actions include: improving sensitization on post-harvest handling standards; facilitating access to new and improved methods of processing and storage; canoe registration and digitization of pre-mix fuel subsidy; encouraging fishers/fishworkers to formalize groups and unions into registered cooperatives and associations for collective negotiation and application of credit facilities.</p>

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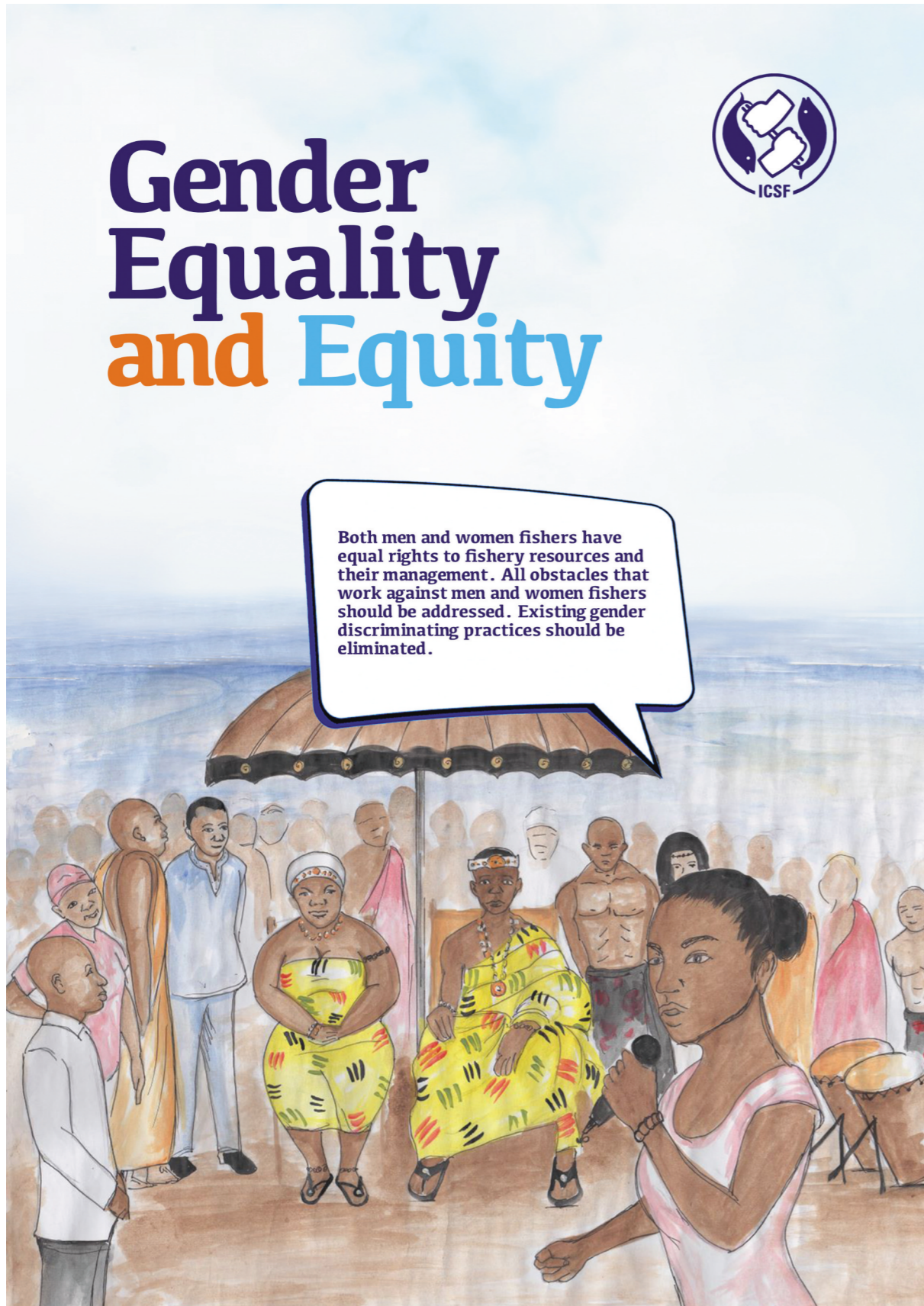
SSF Guidelines	SSF Communities	FWO/NGOs	Government Agencies
<p>Chapter 7</p> <p>Value Chains, Post-Harvest and Trade</p>	<p>There is general consensus that; capacity building should be gender-sensitive; [men with women] for both fishers and fishworkers, and related trades - truck/bus operators, input dealers [nets, outboard motors] and district assembly officials.</p> <p>The need for transparent, accountable FWOs, CBOs and traditional governance systems as the current paradigm does not adequately address transparent, accountable and democratic governance.</p>		

SSF Guidelines	SSF Communities	FWO/NGOs	Government Agencies
<p>Chapter 8</p> <p>Gender Equality</p>	<p>A major priority is enforcement of legislation on gender, given that; there are appropriate legislation that promote gender equality but there is a general lack of awareness and enforcement.</p> <p>Gender-based violence, a source of concern, as it is on the increase, particularly among polygamous fishing households.</p> <p>Overcoming the barriers to gender equality need to move beyond education on gender to affirmative action and stricter enforcement of laws on gender-based violence.</p> <p>Urgent need for adequate resources to more vulnerable women since access to credit in terms of affordable interest is a major problem; and is heavily biased against vulnerable women.</p> <p>The health needs of women [including reproductive and maternal health] a key priority; as value-chain is dominated by women traders and processors; and clinics/health posts do not specialize in women healthcare.</p> <p>Equitable gender support for alternative and supplementary work needs to be considered as an immediate priority since interventions aimed at rebuilding fish stocks can take several years.</p> <p>Support for alternative and supplementary work should first focus on the needs of beneficiaries before training programmes are developed. In addition, the corresponding financial and logistical support must be available before such interventions are rolled out.</p>	<p>The identified priorities include:</p> <p>Continuous education and awareness creation on gender rights and responsibilities.</p> <p>Promoting closer coordination and collaborations with policy makers, academia, research institutions, and media houses.</p> <p>Mandating [through legislation] fishing communities, FWOs, NGOs, district and municipal authorities to involve women and girls in community interventions and fisheries governance.</p>	<p>The priorities for consideration include: continuous awareness creation and education on gender; exchange programmes and best practices; and enforcement of national and sector gender mainstreaming policies and action plans.</p>

Continued >

SSF Guidelines	SSF Communities	FWO/NGOs	Government Agencies
<p>Chapter 8</p> <p>Gender Equality</p>	<p>Given the increasing tidal storms and associated loss of lives and property; effective consultations of SSF in developing climate change policies and plans with clear roles and responsibilities is a key priority.</p> <p>Addressing climate change and disaster issues must prioritize providing adequate support to SSF, particularly climate change-sensitive communities to reduce potential negative impact.</p> <p>The need for integrated and holistic approaches to address disaster risks and climate is considered as a priority. One area is a blend of traditional and scientific knowledge for disaster prevention in which fishers would benefit from more precise accurate weather information and warning than relying solely on traditional knowledge.</p>	<p>The priorities for addressing disaster risks and climate change include:</p> <p>Educating fishing communities, on disaster preparedness and management</p> <p>Establishing channels of communicating relevant weather forecasts and early warning reports with SSF communities and organizations,</p> <p>Capacity building and training of youths in fishing communities more responsible fishing methods</p> <p>Applying the "polluter pays principle" to individuals and organizations whose actions contribute to disasters and climate change.</p>	<p>The prioritized actions for addressing disaster risks and climate change include collaboration of sector agencies with SSF; and sensitization and training of SSF communities on sustainable management of the coastal ecology to safeguard small-scale fisheries and food security.</p>

Annex F:
Sample Of Illustrations Used In Piloting



Courtesy of ICSF

Annex G: Sample Of Pilot Communities



Image above: Makango



Image below: Sekondi-Takoradi



Alavanyo



Alavanyo



Sekondi-Takorad



Interview with reps of Nana Krah (Apofohene) at Abrofo Mpoano Cape Coast

Sekondi-Takorad



FGD with reps of NAFPTA Cape Coast



MEL4SSF Piloting
Ghana

