

# FAO VG-SSF REPORT

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

## Mfantse & Nzema Local Workshop

11 December 2018, SSNIT House Takoradi



TECHNICAL SERVICES  
FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



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

### **Takoradi, Western Region**

11 December 2018, Social Security & National Insurance Trust (SSNIT) House



### **Background**

Since the mid-1990s, the once vibrant small-scale fisheries economies of the Central and Western Regions have been on the decline. Various governmental interventions have proved ineffective in reversing the decline. The two regions have high incidence of illegal transshipment of fish on sea [saiko] and illegal pair trawling. Other lesser unsustainable fishing methods such as the use of light, and chemicals [DDT, carbide] are reported to be on the increase. However, both regions have distinct challenges as well.

The Central Region [population of 2,201,863 -2010] is viewed as the hub of Ghana's tourism and elite education but it is amongst the poorest regions in Ghana. It is also a major source of children who are trafficked for child labour on the Volta Lake. On the other hand, Western Region [population of 2,376,021 -2010] is endowed with mineral and timber resources. In 2010, offshore oil production began in the region and fishers were denied access to their fishing grounds for posing a danger to the oil installations.

In accordance with the implementation of the FAO VG-SSF in Ghana, the Fanti/Nzema language workshop was organized on 11 December 2018 at SSNIT House, Takoradi. It brought together stakeholders from GNCFC, CEWEFIA, Fisheries Commission and major fishing communities including Axim, Shama, Elmina, Moree and Sekondi.

## Welcome and Introductory Remarks



Benjamin Nyampong, a Trade Unionist with extensive work in SSF welcomed all participants to the Workshop and offered them the opportunity to introduce themselves. He explained that, the Takoradi programme was the second in a series of three local language based workshops geared towards the implementation of the FAO Voluntary Guidelines in Ghana. He acknowledged that; the two regions have considerable challenges in small-scale fishery and these were evident in the many interventions by central and local government authorities besides several initiatives by non-governmental organizations. He assured the participants that the Takoradi Workshop was designed mainly to directly engage fishers and fishworkers on the FAO VG–SSF and deliberate on how they can proactively use it to address their challenges and expectations in their work and communities.

### **Current Interventions in Small Scale Fishery**

The Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development [MOFAD] was represented by Mr. Ransford Nartey of the Fisheries Commission, Western Region. However, he explained that he was in attendance as an observer and did not make any presentation; though he did acknowledge the challenges faced by fishworkers and recorded their grievances.



## Organisational Challenges and Achievements in SSF [GNCFC]

The secretary of the Western regional branch of the GNCFC, Mr. Mike Abaka-Edu was designated to offer this presentation. He emphasized that as an organization that represents the interests of small-scale fishing communities, the livelihoods of their members and sustainability of the SSF sector are of utmost priority. He averred that; to understand the challenges of the small-scale fishery sector, one needs to go back to the mid-1990s. He recounted that; prior to 1996, small pelagic fish stocks were abundant in the two regions. The main challenge that confronted the fishery, he pointed out, was the use of undersized monofilament nets which affected the natural breeding cycle of the small pelagic and consequently, the beginning of their decline.

As the fish stocks declined, Mr. Abaka-Edu noted that; the largely isolated cases of light and carbide fishing intensified and worsened to the more destructive pair trawling and transshipment of fish on sea [known in local parlance as 'saiko']. He stated that; but for the pressure and nation-wide demonstration against pair trawling that was brought to bear on MOFAD and the central government, the practice would have gained tacit support of the regulators. Although the central government responded with the enactments of the Fisheries Act 625 in 2002, he observed that from the perspective of GNCFC and fishworkers at large, the general consensus is impunity in the sector because of ineffective enforcement and political interference. He commended ICSF and TESCOD Ghana for a 'local-content' workshop and pledged their support to disseminate the contents of the Voluntary Guidelines.



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

Peter Adjei began his address by expressing appreciation to the Workshop participants and the support TESCOG Ghana received in organizing the event. He mentioned in particular the role played by ICSF in seeking funding from the FAO alongside the support from TESCOG Ghana's founder – Mr. David Eli, the Chief Director of MOFAD, Prof F.K.E Nunoo, Nii Abeo Kyerekuandah, [national chairman of GNCFC] and Nana Kojo Kondua [Western regional chairman of GNCFC].

After expatiating on the pioneering work of Human Rights advocacy in SSF by John Kurien, Chandrika Sharma and other founding members of ICSF, Peter Adjei recounted that; the idea of an international guidelines on Human Rights in SSF gained wide international acceptance and later, other CSOs such as the World Forum of Fish Harvesters & Fish Workers [WFF] and World Forum of Fisher Peoples [WFFP] joined the campaign. He pointed out that the FAO VG-SSF were adopted after an extended period of international consultations and highlighted some key facts:

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

Peter Adjei explained that; since the adoption of the VG-SSF by FAO in 2014, events have been organized to promote their awareness. He mentioned that in Ghana, the Takoradi programme was the second after the first local workshop held in Accra on 27 November 2018 and a third workshop which will be held in Keta in Ewe. After the local workshops, a national workshop will be organized with a broader national and stakeholder focus. He outlined the objectives of the Takoradi Workshop as follows:

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

## Video Documentary on the FAO VG-SSF



In line with the Workshop's objectives, video documentaries were shown to highlight the relevance of the FAO Voluntary Guidelines and other key issues and dimensions in Small-Scale Fishery in Tanzania, India and Costa Rica.

- *FAO Policy Series on Sustainable Small Scale Fishery*: Nicole Franz and Yvette Diei Ouadi draw attention to the importance of SSF and livelihood and challenges. They also offer compelling reasons why governments, FWOs and CSOs need to support the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines.
- *ICSF's 'The Sea of Change'*: The video does not only documents traditional fishworkers perspective of Climate Change in India but, also offers food-for-thought on the socio-economic, political, cultural and technological factors affecting the sea ecology; applicable to the Ghanaian SSF context.
- *Women in SSF- Tanzania*: This striking video provides a clear picture of the role of women in the fish value chain in Tanzania, their challenges and opportunities and the need to valorize their contribution to Food Security.
- *FAO-CoopeSolidar R.L Video*: The short documentary highlights the social and economic importance of women shrimp fishers in Barra del Colorado in Costa Rica. Particular emphasis is also placed on the importance of capacity building and alternative income generating activities in the face of changing regulations.

## Highlights of the FAO VG-SSF

As a key feature of the Workshop, the highlights of the VG-SSF were keenly anticipated. The preceding speakers and video documentaries have not only shown the significance of SSF in Food Security, but also underscored the human-rights case for small-scale fisheries across the globe.

The Team Leader for the Fanti/Nzema translation, Mr. Japheth Kojo Menlah led all the participants through the 11 page abridged document by first highlighting and explaining the guiding principles of the FAO VG-SSF, i.e., human rights and dignity, respect of cultures, non-discrimination, gender equality and equity, equity and equality, rule of law, consultation and participation, transparency, accountability, economic, social and environmental sustainability, holistic and integrated approaches, social responsibility, feasibility and social and economic viability.

After the guiding principles, he read the entire thematic portions of the document as the participants followed along with the reading in their personal copies. As with the case of the Accra workshop, Mr. Menlah had to pause occasionally to explain the meaning or context of an expression and to modify the text to reflect the understanding of participants.





## Priority Areas and Open Discussion



After the highly participatory highlights of the FAO VG-SSF and lunch break, the second half of the workshop commenced with an open discussion to identify challenges and opportunities for solutions and/or innovation in the light of the Guidelines. This followed the pattern adopted in the Accra workshop where all the participants took part in an open discussion.

The session was facilitated by Mr. Ben Nyampong, Mr. Japheth Kojo Menlah and Mr. Albert Aryeh. Peter Adjei [TESCOD Ghana/ICSF] acted as Resource Person on the FAO VG-SSF whereas Mr. Ransford Nartey [MOFAD/Fisheries Commission, Western Region] noted down complaints and grievances of the participants.



## Thematic Areas of Concern

All the participants of the Takoradi workshop identified with the five major themes of the FAO VG-SSF and said it covered the wide range of issues on the ground in their respective communities.

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



## Summary of Discussions

The Workshop participants, through the five identified themes in the Guidelines discussed necessary areas of concern and offered their submissions for addressing the identified challenges and concerns. A summary of the discussions across the thematic areas is presented below.

### Governance & Tenure

Participants said they had grave concerns about security of tenure regarding management and access to the fishery resources particularly – fishing grounds, landing and processing sites:

- Fishers and fishworkers are sidelined in the management of fishery grounds and resources even though they are the traditional custodians of the fishery [grounds]
- Fishers from Jomorro, Ahanta West, Ellebelle, Western Nzema, Shama and Sekondi-Takoradi have been displaced from their fishing grounds due to offshore commercial production of oil since 2010
- Frequent conflicts between fishers and security personnel on the so-called 'no fishing zone' whereby fishing equipment are sometimes confiscated
- Over 30 wooden canoes have been crushed by oil supply vessels since 2015. In most instances, the canoes are destroyed beyond repair and fishing crew drown but these accidents are underreported;
- Proliferation of beach resorts and properties with neither proper ecological planning/environmental assessment nor involvement of fishing communities;
- Increase in trawling activities in the Inshore Exclusive Zone [IEZ] by large vessels.

*Participants outlined the needed actions as follows:*

- Intensify campaign for the Co-Management Bill to be passed in Parliament so local communities can participate in decision-making, management and enforcement of mutually agreed regulations and by-laws;
- Fishers, central government and oil companies must use dialogue to address issues of access, manhandling of fishing crew and destruction of gears with a view to compensate and/or support alternative livelihood arrangements;
- Marine accidents must be seriously addressed by the Ghana Ports & Harbors Authority - both fishers and oil supply vessel operators must be educated on safety at sea, offenders must be prosecuted;
- The Environmental Protection Agency and Municipal/District authorities must enforce the requirement for environmental impact assessment of all beach developments in addition to working with fishing communities on land use planning, zoning regulations and enforcement;
- Vessels that trawl in the IEZ must be sanctioned [including withdrawal of license] by the Fisheries Commission and MOFAD to serve as a deterrent.

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

Participants were unanimous that matters affecting their living and working conditions have received much publicity in recent times but very little action has been taken to address them. They insist that social development in fishing communities is poor, far below the national average:

- There are few social amenities such as clinics, schools and portable water in fishing communities;
- There is a general shift by fishworkers, [in particular fish processors] towards adopting good hygiene standards but more education and sensitization is needed to realise community-wide results.

- Fishworkers are living on the fringes of poverty as work opportunities in small-scale fishery are fragile, unpredictable and unsecured.
- Retired fishers and fishworkers including the aged and women have no access to pension or suitable insurance cover.

*Participants outlined the needed actions as follows:*

- The urgent need for the provision of adequate and functional social amenities informed by present and future needs and with participation of fishing communities;
- The need to fine-tune local community priorities with policies of central and municipal government with a view to support local community leaders, CBOs, and youth groups to address identified problems;
- Undertake awareness campaigns to build local support for the need for appropriate social protection programmes such as pensions and life/healthcare insurance.

### **Value Chains, Post-Harvest & Trade**



Participants pointed out that the preceding theme, i.e.; *Social Development, Employment & Decent Work*, is closely linked with Value Chains, Post-Harvest and Trade and one cannot discuss either one of them in isolation. They contend that; lack of basic infrastructure and appropriate policies have a bearing on fishing methods, storage/processing, marketing and trade:



- Lack of well-developed landing sites and fish handling facilities
- High post-harvest losses
- Health risks associated with hazardous processing methods and unhygienic working environment
- Lack of credit limits access to improved processing and storage methods
- Capacity building initiatives have mostly focused on technical aspects such as fish handling and processing but other ancillary service linkages such as access to credit, market and transportation difficulties have been ignored.

*Participants outlined the needed actions as follows:*

- By virtue of taxes derived from small-scale fisheries and its contribution to national economy, central government must act urgently to provide suitable landing ports/harbours in all major fishing communities [for a start] and extend to others within a reasonable period of time;
- Education on post-harvest activities must be broadened to include all activities within the post-harvest value chain so as to truly empower all fishworkers;
- Intensify education in improved processing, storage, packaging, transport and marketing with participation of communities, youth groups and FWOs/ CSOs;
- Capacity building programmes should be skillfully designed together with fishworkers to bring about real-world change and not just the transfer of knowledge and award of certificates.

### **Gender Equality**

The views of the Takoradi workshop participants mirrored those of the Accra workshop participants - *availability of favorable national level policies that promote gender equality and equity but which do not translate to gender equality and equity [outcomes] at the local community level:*

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



*Participants outlined the needed actions as follows:*

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

#### **Disaster Risks & Climate Change**

The discussion by participants on *Disaster Risks and Climate Change* was quite alarming. They concede that because disaster risks and climate change is more visible over time or through calamities, they are often eclipsed by the more visible daily challenges such as IUU and destructive fishing methods. Nevertheless, they had worrying concerns:

- Recent deaths of whales and other marine mammals on the coast. They consider that the deaths are caused by industrial pollution and mining.
- Increase in the frequency and intensity of tidal waves, made worse by beach development and sand mining.
- Increase in the volume of plastic garbage and debris in the sea and coastal communities
- Lack of education and sensitization on climate change and disaster coupled with lack of information and training on disaster preparedness programmes.
- Absence of early warning mechanisms.

*Participants outlined the needed actions as follows:*

- The need for maritime study into the cause of the death of whales and other marine mammals;
- Intensification of education on climate change and disasters together with disaster preparedness programmes;
- The Ghana Meteorological Services must establish a clear channel of communicating relevant weather forecasts and early warning reports with fishing communities;
- The need to involve communities in [plastic] waste management, monitoring and assessment of climate change indicators and post-disaster rehabilitation;
- Closer coordination of sector stakeholders [Ghana Meteorological Services, Environmental Protection Agency, National Disaster Management Organisation etc] with fishing communities.

### **Concluding Remarks**

Mr. Nicholas Smith, Programmes Director of Central and Western Region Fishmongers Association [CEWEFIA] drew the attention of the participants to the importance of understanding the Guidelines and applying it in both community and national engagements. He noted that; the Guidelines can be used as a diagnostic tool to map out the challenges in SSF for actionable interventions.

Nana Odwiri, chief fisherman at Shama thanked ICSF and TESCOD Ghana for taking the trouble to translate the Guidelines into 4 local languages and local content workshops. He observed that one needs to have a broader outlook when tackling SSF issues and narrated his past experiences of arresting several fishers engaging in 'light fishing' but were never prosecuted. He underscored the need to own the Guidelines to engage and lobby Parliament to expedite action on the co-management bill.

Nana Odwiri's submission resonated with the Workshop participants and Madam Ama Kappu, a fish processor and market queen at Elmina, made a passionate appeal to the workshop participants to familiarize themselves with the Guidelines to be agents of change. She noted that; fishworkers have a clear role in promoting responsible fisheries and should not negate that role. Mr. Abaka-Edu thanked ICSF and TESCOD Ghana for a rich local content workshop and appealed to TESCOD Ghana to provide educational materials and resource persons for community sensitization campaigns. Peter Adjei congratulated the participants and speakers who contributed to the animated discussion on how small-scale fishing communities can be part of decision making and assume the responsibility for sustainable use of fishery resources taking into account their needs and priorities.



**WORKSHOP ON THE INTRODUCTION OF THE FAO VOLUNTARY GUIDELINES ON SMALL SCALE FISHERIES IN MFANTSE & NZEMA**

**DATE: Tuesday 11 December 2018**

**VENUE: Social Security & National Insurance Trust (SSNIT) House, Takoradi**

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

ANNEX 1 B: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS – MFANTSE/NZEMA (TAKORADI) LOCAL WORKSHOP

<b>Name</b>	<b>Institution/Organisation</b>	<b>Address</b>
Ama Kapu	Market Queen/Takoradi	Takoradi//Tel:N/A
Asi Akyerenema	GNCFC/CR	Moree/Tel:0507037066
Grace Ahor	GNCFC/CR	Cape Coast/Tel:0507037066
Akua Attah	GNCFC/CR	Cape Coast/Tel:0507037066
Mary Kumson	CEWEFIA Elmina	Elmina/Tel: 0555044284
Nicholas Smith	CEWEFIA Elmina	Elmina/Tel: 0559456776
Rose Affel	CEWEFIA Elmina	Elmina/Tel: 0244738209
Diana Otuteye	CEWEFIA Moree	Moree/Tel: 0207489360
Mike Abaka-Edu	GNCFC W/R	Takoradi/Tel: 0271315494
Addo-Blankson	GNCFC W/R	Takoradi/Tel: 0274903439
Nana Odewur	GNCFC W/R	Takoradi/Tel: 0578096060
David Kotane Kaku	GNCFC W/R	Axim/Tel: 0208250025
Moro Mensah	GNCFC W/R	Axim/Tel: 0544123746
Albert Ackah	GNCFC W/R	Axim/Tel: 0546572073
Kwabena Asie	GNCFC W/R	Tel: 0241435139
Annor Miezah	GNCFC W/R	Axim/Tel: 0241302252
Nana Odwire	GNCFC W/R	Shama/Tel: 0245065869
John Eshun	GNCFC W/R	Axim/Tel:0240749611
Nana Kofi Aman	GNCFC W/R	Axim/Tel: 0208225201
Nana Effirina	GNCFC W/R	Shama/Tel:N/A
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Evans Tackie	GNCFC W/R	Sekondi/Tel: 0243861912
Japheth Menlah	Translator/Linguist	UCC/Tel: 0247417436
Albert Aryeh	Translator/Linguist	Accra/Tel: 0243173441
Richard Kyei	Translator/Linguist	Accra/Tel: 0272131252
Benjamin Nyampong	TUC Ghana	Accra/Tel: 0540106647
Patience Tetteh	TESCOD Ghana	Accra/Tel: 0246529154
Peter Adjei	TESCOD Ghana	Accra/Tel: 0261464481
Kingsley Amenson	TESCOD Ghana	Winneba/Tel: 0264401104
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