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# SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PROJECT (SFMP)

## Media Outreach Event



MARCH, 2018

THE  
UNIVERSITY  
OF RHODE ISLAND  
GRADUATE SCHOOL  
OF OCEANOGRAPHY



**Hen Mpoano**



Friends of the Nation

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**Citation:** Ampong, F. (2018). Media Outreach Event. The USAID/Ghana Sustainable Fisheries Management Project (SFMP). Narragansett, RI: Coastal Resources Center, Graduate School of Oceanography, University of Rhode Island. GH2014\_COM091\_CRC 10 pp.

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Prepared for USAID/Ghana under Cooperative Agreement (AID-641-A-15-00001), awarded on October 22, 2014 to the University of Rhode Island, and entitled the USAID/Ghana Sustainable Fisheries Management Project (SFMP).

This document is made possible by the support of the American People through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The views expressed and opinions contained in this report are those of the SFMP team and are not intended as statements of policy of either USAID or the cooperating organizations. As such, the contents of this report are the sole responsibility of the SFMP team and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

**Cover photo:** SFMP Data

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## **ACRONYMS**

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| CBFMC   | Community Based Fisheries Management Committee                 |
| CEWEFIA | Central and Western Region Fishmongers Improvement Association |
| DAA     | Development Action Association                                 |
| DDT     | Dichlorodiphenyl trichloroethane                               |
| DoF     | Department of Fisheries  |
| FoN     | Friends of the Nation  |
| GIFA    | Ghana Industrial Fishers Association                           |
| GITA    | Ghana Inshore Fishers  |
| GNCFC   | Ghana National Canoe Fishermen Council                         |
| GoG     | Government of Ghana  |
| LI      | Legislative Instrument   |
| MMA     | Metropolitan and Municipal Assemblies                          |
| MoFA    | Ministry of Food and Agriculture                               |
| MOFAD   | Ministry of Food and Aquaculture Development                   |
| MoFi    | Ministry of Food and Industry                                  |
| MSME    | Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises                            |
| NAFPTA  | National Association of Fish Processors and Traders            |
| NGO     | Non-Governmental Organization                                  |
| SFMP    | Sustainable Fisheries Management Project                       |
| SNV     | Netherlands Development Organization                           |

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## **SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION**

USAID has committed approximately \$24 million US Dollars to the implementation of the 5 year USAID/Ghana Sustainable Fisheries Management Project (SFMP) from October 2014 to October 2019). This Project is to rebuild marine fisheries stocks and catches through the adoption of responsible fishing practices. The project contributes to the Government of Ghana's fisheries development objectives and USAID's Feed the Future Initiative.

As part of the communication strategy, SFMP organized the media outreach event in Ghana to afford Journalists the opportunity to speak directly to technical people in the field to enrich their knowledge on the fisheries sector and also help them understand and appreciate the deeper issues facing Ghana to be able to report effectively on them. This event was also aimed at promoting a sound working relationship between the Fisheries Ministry, the Commission and the media to work closely together towards improving targeted marine fisheries stock and food security. It also stressed on the need for the media to prioritize reportage in the fishing sector. This is to help put relevant issues in the fisheries sector in the spotlight to generate discussions in the media landscape. In view of this, SFMP in collaboration with the Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development and the Fisheries Commission organized the three-day media outreach event Takoradi, the western region of Ghana to give the media first-hand information and to familiarize them with the issues in SFMP project areas.

This three-day workshop brought together media personnel who are part of the SFMP media network to also deliberate on how to foster stronger media relations and also to have a first-hand understanding on the realities in the fishing communities particularly the Ankobra mangrove restoration site, the Pra estuary/woodlot plantation site and the CEWEFIA fish processing facility.

SFMP was represented by Mr. Maurice Knight, Kofi Agbogah, Nii Odenke Abbey, Fanny Nana Ampon, Abdul-Mumin Ahmed and David Acquaye; while MoFAD/FC was represented by its Public Relations Officer, Karimatu Anas. Partners of the project such as, CEWEFIA, Hen Mpoano, and FoN were all present for the media workshop, to serve as resource persons.

### **1.1 Objectives of the workshop**

- To reconnect with media after a long break
- Familiarization visit to SFMP projects sites
- To bridge gap between media and fisheries stakeholders
- Deepen ties with media for improved food security

### **1.2 Some expectations from participants**

- Deeper understanding of fisheries issues through the familiarization
- Understand the Co-management policy in order to help with media advocacy
- Understand and find ways to sustain the fisheries sector
- Talk to fisher folk to help influence policy in the fisheries sector
- Have renewed strength to report on fisheries issues
- Learn more to inform future reportage
- Understand the issues surrounding Ghana's dwindling fish stocks

## **SECTION 2: PRESENTATION ON SFMP**

The Chief of party of SFMP Mr. Maurice Knight welcomed participants to the media outreach event in Takoradi. He expressed how delighted he was that the media is zooming on fisheries issues along the coastal regions of Ghana. He emphatically stated that he was happy the media network platform is making information flow to the media participants on the project very timely.

In his welcome address, he stated that the essence of the sustainable fisheries management project was to help re- build the fisheries stocks and catches through the adoption of responsible fishing practises. He further reiterated that the focus of the project was the small pelagic fish stocks such as sardinella, anchovies, mackerel etc. Mr. Knight also added that the project was working with the Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development (MOFAD) and The Fisheries Commission (FC) to rebuild stocks and reduce poverty and hunger.

### **2.1 THE NEED TO SPECIALISE IN FISHERIS REPORTING**

The Deputy Minister for Information, Ms Ama Dokuaa Asiamah Agyei who represented the Minister for Information urged Journalists to use their platform to sell the economic opportunities and success stories in the fisheries sector. She explained this would ensure sustainable fisheries. Ms Agyei intimated that despite the setbacks of dwindling fish stocks due to illegal fishing activities, the sector was making headway and helping to provide a source of livelihood to the over two million of Ghanaians who depend on the fisheries sector.

## **SECTION 3: PRESENTATION ON CO-MANAGEMENT POLICY AND IMPLEMENTATION**

Mr Kofi Agbogah, the Senior Advisor of SFMP gave a detailed presentation on the Co-management policy and stressed on the need for government to amend the fisheries act in order help with the implementation of the Co-management policy that has been identified globally as an international best practice in fisheries management. He added that sustaining fisheries resources is particularly important for the most vulnerable of Ghana's population. Currently, fisheries are estimated to contribute over 60% to total protein uptake nationally, and much higher in coastal communities. He also appealed to the Journalists to help to increase advocacy for the implementation of the Co-management policy.

Mr Agbogah in his presentation stated clearly that by regulation LI 1968 of 2010, majority of fishermen are involved in illegality. He said the challenges in the fishery sector include;

- New Boats being built
- Fishing still remains open access
- Weak enforcement of the laws
- Management measures being flouted
- Stocks are overfished

MOFAD/Government is coming out with a new and ambitious fisheries management plan (2015-2019) to address the myriad of issues in the sector.

## **SECTION 4: PRESENTATION ON MONITORING AND SURVEILLANCE OF VESSELS IN GHANAIAN WATERS**

The head of Monitoring, Control and surveillance division of MoFAD, Mr Godfred Tsibu in his submission said that fishing vessels are licenced according to the sort of fish they intend to catch. But occasionally, these vessels catch different types of fish which the law requires must be discharged back into the ocean unharmed. As such catches originally did not have commercial value to these vessels. They initially started giving them out to local fishermen who wanted them free of charge but as the demands of the fishermen grew, they started selling the unwanted fish – which has come to be known as Saiko. The journalists wanted to know the steps MoFAD was taking to combat illegal fishing activities in Ghanaian waters after his presentation. Mr Tsibu answered that government has already rolled out various interventions such as the establishment of the Fisheries Enforcement Unit of the FC and the Marine Policing Unit which are all part of measures to ensure sanity in the fisheries sector. He also there were other plans in the pipeline which will be shared with them soon.

## **SECTION 5: PRESENTATION ON HYGEINIC FISH HANDLING AND PROCESSING**

The head of the post-harvest unit of the fisheries commission, Mr. Samuel Manu underscored fish processing as the single most important process within the fish production food chain. Mr. Manu appealed to the media to join the advocacy for appealing to fish processors to adopt the use of the Ahotor oven as it offers more market opportunities, with less fuelwood, less smoke, less health risk and produces quality smoked fish

### **5.1 UPDATE ON ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE FOUNDATION**

As part of the event, partner projects were given the opportunity to share with the Journalists what their respective projects were about and what it sought to archive to help improve the fisheries sector. Care International Ghana and the Environmental Justice Foundation were invited but Care could not make it. Mr. Antione Rougier, of EJJF told Journalists that EJJF works to protect the natural environment and that in Ghana, the foundation works to improve sustainable fishing by helping to combat illegal fishing activities to safeguard the lives and livelihoods of people living in coastal communities.

### **5.2 FIELD VISIT TO ANKOBRA MANGROVE RESTORATION SITE.**

One of the objectives of the media workshop was to take journalists to the Ankobra Mangrove Restoration site for them to experience progress of work and to make them appreciate the issues which will further inform their reportage. The media network engaged with members of the Co-management committee at Sanwoma to understand the issues pertaining to the fishing industry in that part of the country and efforts being made to help rebuild fish stocks. They also interacted with VSLA members who enlightened them on how the VSLA concept has helped to improve standard of living by providing an additional source of financial support. Paul Nato, a member of the VSLA at Sanwoma shared with Journalists how VSLA the loan he took form the association helped to expand his snail farm and also enabled him to buy fertilizer for his vegetable farm.

The Deputy Director of Hen Mpoano Stephen Kankam and the Program Officer, Barlethey Gormey were on hand to explain to media persons the rationale behind the Ankobra mangrove restoration plan and what has been achieved so far. Journalists also interviewed co-



management committee and VSLA members who shared with them how the replanting scheme is helping to restore the crab/shrimp and catfish fisheries in the community.

### **5.3 FIELD VISIT TO THE PRA ESTUARY/CASIA WOODLOT PLANTATION.**

In the Pra Estuary, Friends of the Nation (FoN) received support from SFMP to catalyze an active community conservation effort that includes restoration of both mangroves and fisheries resources. The MIS officer of FoN, Mr. Philip Prah told the Journalists that community members have formed a local management committee to work directly with stakeholders to ensure that there is fish for the future. He said as part of the process a comprehensive fisheries co-management plan was developed, facilitated by FoN in consultation with all local stakeholders and district government. The plan is now being implemented with the active participation of the locals. Mr. Pra was also available to speak to the Journalists and answered questions on how illegal mining upstream is affecting fishing in the Pra estuary. The communications officer of CEWEFIA, Ms Hannah Antwi explained to the Journalists that the goal of the woodlot plantation is to reduce stress on the mangrove harvesting and provide sustainable fuel wood source for the community.

## **SECTION 6: FIELD VISIT TO THE CEWEFIA FISH PROCESSING FACILITY**

Ms Hannah Antwi, the communications officer of CEWEFIA led Journalists through a tour of the CEWEFIA fish processing facility. She disclosed to members of the inky fraternity that CEWEFIA is a women oriented association committed to improving the socio-economic status of rural fishmongers and farmers and the well-being of their children and their communities. Ms Antwi said that a primary objective of the facility includes reducing post-harvest fish losses and ensuring improvement in the value chain of smoked fish, a resource important to tens of thousands of women fish processors in Ghana. To achieve this objective, SFMP works with its local partners to support adoption of hygienic fish handling practices. Members of CEWEFIA also granted interviews to the Journalists where she shared with them how hygienic fish handling and processing is helping put food on their tables and keeping their children in school.

### **6.1 SOME OBSERVATIONS FROM THE FIELD TRIP BY THE NETWORK**

- Fisher folks are aware of the problems along the coast
- Women are unhappy about the lack of fish
- Fish processors in Elmina are appreciative of the CEWEFIA fish processing facility.
- Need to empower the Chief Fishermen for regulation purposes
- Poor environmental sanitation
- Fisherfolk are ready/willing to collaborate with the government to implement the Co-management policy
- Partisan politics has distorted the fishing industry
- In the Pra estuary, it was observed that there are no mechanisms to regulate illegal fishing
- In Axim, Pre-mix fuel percentage used to build a clinic
- Weak governance in the fishing front.

## **SECTION 7: DISCUSSION ON HOW TO DEEPEN RELATIONSHIP WITH THE MEDIA/ AWARD FOR REPORTERS ON FISHERIES**

The discussion on ensuring effective collaboration with the media was led by Mrs Fanny Nana Ampon of SFMP. In her presentation she expressed SFMP's appreciation to the media for their support since the beginning of the project. She further reiterated that for Ghana's fishery sector to be effective, the media needs to educate citizens on their roles and responsibilities in the sector. She further asked for their input on how to deepen the relationship. The Journalists suggested that the project supports them with logistics in the form of facilitating fisheries reportage in the four coastal regions by providing them with transportation, accommodation and resource persons to cover fisheries stories. They also advocated the institution of an awards scheme to reward journalist who excel. They were however emphatic that any such award should be spearheaded by SFMP and not the Ghana Journalists Association (GJA).

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| <b>How do we call the Awards</b>                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Best Fisheries Journalist Award</b></li></ul>   |
| <b>Should this award be Yearly</b>                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Yes</b></li></ul>   |
| <b>What should be the indicators of a good story</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Stories that make impacts</b></li><li>• <b>Compelling visuals</b></li></ul>                   |
| <b>Should Photo Journalists qualify for the Awards</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Yes but there should be separate categories for photo journalists and reporters</b></li></ul> |
| <b>What should be the price tag</b>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Recognition and appreciation</b></li><li>• <b>Trip abroad for scholarship study</b></li></ul> |

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