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Welcome to the

SFLP Info-Flash

This new means of communication will be forwarded monthly through Internet to the National Coordination Units, FAO Representations, DFID and to the Fisheries Department of FAO.

The overriding objective of this **SFLP Info-Flash** is to provide the 25 member countries with the most up to date information on the Programme.

Please feel free to contact SFLP at any time you have any information on events in your country.

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Cape Verde – A new project for Pedra Badejo

A 2-week training course in the guiding principles of the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA) and the use of participatory tools with special emphasis on gender issues was organised in Praia by the Cape Verde National Coordination Unit (NCU). The workshop was facilitated by two experienced consultants specialising in SLA, Gender and Organisational Development. The participants included NCU members, representatives of government institutions, NGOs and members of the Pedra Badejo Social Technical Centre's Management Committee.

The workshop was followed by a practical field exercise undertaken in the Pedra Badejo fisheries community which led to the identification of priority actions and the elaboration of a community project: "*Capacity strengthening for improved livelihoods management by the Pedra Badejo*

fisheries community". The expected results include the establishment of a functional socio-professional organisation, a micro-credit facility and a better adapted financial system for the Fisheries Technical and Social Centre which will help revive their cold room, currently unused.

Steps have been taken to ensure that women and the poorest groups in the community participate actively in the decision-making and implementation of the project. Particular attention has been paid to identifying appropriate monitoring indicators that take gender issues into account. The NCU is currently sharing the results of the participatory appraisal with decision-makers and potential development partners to raise awareness of the community project and explore partnerships in implementing the non-fisheries aspects of the community's priorities.

Cameroon – Results of participatory monitoring

A team comprising representatives of Mapé fishers, the Fisheries Department, a government extension agent and the NCU recently conducted a participatory monitoring exercise in two SFLP community projects in Mapé. They were accompanied on the mission by the NGO, *Centre d'Appui aux Activités Féminines et de Formation au Dévelop-*

pement (CAFED) which works with the communities. The purpose was to review the progress of the two women's socio-professional associations in Matta-Barrage and Mbougam fisheries communities who had earlier been trained in fish-smoking, yogurt production, soap-making and elementary accounting.

The Democratic Republic of Congo – Assessment of professional associations' performance

Challenged by the results of a workshop organised by the Congo NCU, during which their experiences and lessons from setting up an umbrella organization were shared, the Democratic Republic of Congo decided to apply the experience practically in their country.

The exercise began with a participatory appraisal of the organizational development capacities of the 38 different socio-professional organisations in Malebo pool. The appraisal was coordinated by *Centre de Formation en Management et Développement Organisationnel (CEFORMAD)*, a national organizational management and development training centre. The objective was to obtain a clearer view of the capacities and performance of the associations and to assess their level of readiness for an umbrella organisation. A SFLP community project has been approved to support the establishment of the umbrella organisation.

Benin – ACP Fish II Workshop

The Fisheries Department of the FAO, in collaboration with the Support Unit for International Fisheries and Aquatic Research (SIFAR), organised the first in a series of consultative workshops on the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific Fish Programme (ACP Fish II), in Cotonou from 12 to 13 August 2003. Financed by the European Union, the workshop gathered together 21 participants representing the West and Central African ACP countries, most of which are involved in the SFLP. Representatives of the FAO and the SFLP Regional Support Unit (RSU) were also present.

The need for such a consultative process was informed by the results of the first phase of the Programme (ACP Fish I) which focused on strengthening fisheries management and biodiversity in ACP countries. A feasibility study on the best approach to adopt and issues to be taken into consideration in the second phase of the Programme had been conducted earlier in selected ACP countries. Discussions at the consultative meeting focused on the findings of the study in an

attempt to determine the appropriate implementation method for the second phase (ACP Fish II), which will focus on more effective management of fisheries.

Three other consultative workshops were held in Jamaica for Caribbean countries, Nuoma, New Caledonia for Pacific countries and Nairobi, Kenya for East and Southern African countries. The results and conclusions of the workshop are to be validated at a meeting in December 2003.

... Gender in Fisheries workshop...

The Institute for the Sustainable Development of Aquatic Resources (*Institut pour le Développement Durable des Ressources Aquatiques - IDDRA*), in collaboration with the SFLP, will be hosting a workshop in Cotonou from 1 to 4 December 2003. Titled "Room to Manoeuvre: Gender and Coping Strategies in the Fisheries Sector", the workshop is funded through the European Commission. Participants to attend the workshop will include decision-makers, researchers, extension workers, and government officials. Experienced gender specialists and stakeholders from the West African sub-region and Europe, including three national consultants involved in the SFLP case studies on gender and fisheries.

The objective of the workshop is to provide a forum for participants to share information and experience on the roles and social space occupied by women in the fisheries sector and to examine how these have changed. The outcomes of the workshop will be made available to decision makers to ensure that future poverty reduction policies are not gender blind. The workshop will serve as the basis of a network for those working on the topic.

... KAP study on AIDS

The Women and Population Division of FAO in Rome (SDWW) recently initiated a study on "*Small-scale fishing communities and the AIDS epidemic: the dynamics of the relationship and a strategy for response*" in collaboration with the Benin NCU. The study is financed by the GTZ (German Development Agency).

The aim of the study is to get a better understanding of the dynamics of small-scale fisheries communities' livelihoods and to map their vulnerability to the AIDS epidemic in order to design operational responses that effectively support these groups and in doing so, inform and possibly influence policies.

The results of a SFLP supported study conducted by a local NGO, *Alternative Communautaire* earlier in the year in close collaboration with the Benin NCU served as a reference to orient the new study. One of the major findings of this previous study was that the fisherfolk were aware that AIDS had affected their communities. Most of them also know how the epidemic is transmitted and how to protect themselves from infection. It was however observed that they generally make no effort to apply the recommended protective measure. One of the main recommendations of the study was that the fisheries communities be integrated in the national AIDS programme and be fully mobilized around the issue.

Central African Republic – Rapid response to a harmful practice

The impact of a well-targeted awareness-raising effort cannot be underestimated. This was clearly demonstrated by the experience of the NCU of the Central African Republic.

During a monitoring exercise conducted by the NCU in the Bouali fisheries community along the Mbali lake, the team observed a harmful fishing practice known as Ngôli. It is conducted around hatching/reproductive zones of two species of fish, one of which is the Tilapia. The females of these highly productive species lay their eggs (between 300 and 500 at a time) in nests in easily accessible parts of the lake where the males fertilise them. Children have discovered that setting a trap around the nest during the hatching period is a fool-proof method of catching the adult fish. But what they do not realise is that the females collect their eggs or fingerlings in their mouths for protection at the first sign of danger. In this way, if caught, one adult fish goes with between 300 and 500 fishes, seriously jeopardising the future of the lake's resources.

On discovering this practice, the NCU promptly embarked on an inexpensive and simple awareness-raising campaign. With the permission of school authorities in the area, a mathematical session was conducted with the pupils to demonstrate the danger of such a practice. On realising how harmful their fishing game was to the lake's resources, the children promised to abandon the bad practice. Since then, they have even become self-appointed "extension officers" on the issue in the community. This experience demonstrates how important it is to involve all groups in awareness-raising activities and development efforts in a community.

Congo – Fisheries communities sensitised on AIDS

The NCU of Congo, in collaboration with NGO *Médecins d'Afrique* initiated a SFLP-funded project to raise the awareness of fisheries communities on the need for AIDS prevention. The pilot phase of the project, during which decision makers and local authorities were also sensitised about the project, began in two coastal communities (Bas Kouilou and Base Agip) and Makotipoko.

Discussions with community leaders focused on the appropriate implementation method and communication strategy for each community. Some of these include: (i) training of extension workers to educate each community; (ii) facilitation of community discussion sessions on AIDS issues; and (iii) the promotion of measures to guarantee easy and affordable access to condoms. Subsequent phases will involve a Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) survey on HIV/AIDS and the implementation of preventive actions over a period of five months.

Representatives of *Médecins d'Afrique's* AIDS Programme, the *Regional Agency for Information and Prevention of AIDS* (RAIPA) and the Makotipoko Development Association (*Association pour le Développement des Collectivités de Makotipoko - ADCM*) will continue to work closely with the NCU on the project.

Sierra Leone – Development of first Fisheries Policy

The Cabinet of Sierra Leone has approved the country's first Fisheries Policy document. The cabinet requested that the policy be closely tied to the National Food Security Programme. The gender aspect attracted special attention and a specific request was made to the Ministry of Marine Resources to closely monitor women's participation in fisheries and present a quarterly report on this issue to the cabinet. This is an important achievement for the SFLP and the FAO Regional Office for Africa which have been instrumental in informing the development of the Fisheries Policy and raising awareness on gender issues in fisheries.

New projects

- **Gabon:** Institutional support for “Analysis, planning and follow-up of organisational development and gender strategies for the Milembié fisheries association”.
- **Sao Tome and Principe:** (i) Support in strengthening the organisational capacity of Santa Catarina fishers’ and fishmongers’ associations and in enhancing the added value of processed fish products; (ii) Support in establishing a marketing system for fisheries products and in strengthening the organisational capacity of Praia Campanha fishers and fishmongers.

Imminent events

- Work-launch of SFLP Pilot Project 1 on *Improvement of the Policies and Institutions for Fisheries Co-Management in Inland Waters*, Ouagadougou, 27-29 November 2003.
- National Coordinators meeting on MTE mission’s recommendations in December 2003.
- 3rd International Conference of the Pan-African Fish and Fisheries Association on “*African Fish and Fisheries: Diversity and Utilisation*”, Cotonou, Benin, 10 - 14 November 2003.
- FAO technical workshop on *Integrated Irrigation and Aquaculture for West Africa* from 3 to 7 November 2003 at Bamako (Mali).