



INFO-FLASH

the SFLP... on the move...

Issue 34 – March/April 2004

Sao Tomé and Príncipe - *Taking stock*

At the end of the gender-oriented community project in Angolares, improvements have been noted in the capacity of beneficiaries (two women fish sellers groups (NGOPA and MENGAI) and a fisheries association, *Groupement d'Intérêt Economique des Pêcheurs et Palaiés Artisans- GIEPPA*) in organising and managing their fish marketing system. Moreover, both men and women in the community now have more equal access to micro-credit institutions and their facilities. The women now participate more actively in community development activities because their workload has reduced considerably, thanks to the two freezers acquired as part of the project to preserve their fish. With more time on their hands, women now spend quality time with their children, and a larger number of them are enrolling in the adult literacy sessions.

The community project has also highlighted the need to bring solar dryers closer to the homesteads. This became obvious after a cost-effectiveness analysis conducted on their management showed that easy access would help improve the management of the solar dryers. Consequently, ten individual solar dryers are to be constructed in the community, three out of which will be done with the funds left over from the community project and contributions from the women fish processors organisations. The community is also now working successfully with some relevant institutions. The Ministry of Education, for example, has taken over the adult literacy programme in fisheries communities, and NGO MARAPA, NCU member is currently helping to promote the use of individual solar dryers.

Democratic Republic of Congo - *More support for APIM*

Having successfully established a fisheries inputs shop and a revolving fund shortly after its constitution through a donation of inputs under the FAO emergency assistance project, the *Association des Pêcheurs de l'Îles Mimosa - APIM*) felt more confident to approach other donors in its efforts to improve members' livelihoods. One of these, the *Mission de Coopération et d'Action Culturelle* of the French Embassy, responded positively by making a grant of 28.700 Euros available to the association to among others, implement a project in support of the production, conservation and marketing of fish along the Congo river. APIM worked closely with a research and technology exchange agency, *Groupe de Recherche et d'Echanges Technologiques* (GRET) on the project. After the first phase of the project, improvements have been noted in the working environment, transportation of fish to the market, and revenue from the sale of fish.

SFLP Info-Flash

The overriding objective of the **Sustainable Fisheries Livelihoods Programme** is to provide the 25 member countries with the most up to date information on the activities of the Programme. Info-Flash is produced by the Regional Support Unit based in Cotonou (Benin).

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Congo - Consultation on co-management of the Conkouati-Douli National Park

A consultation session was organised as part of the SFLP-assisted project to diversify the livelihoods of fisherfolk and promote co-management in the marine area of the Conkouati-Douli national park. The 2-day meeting gathered together representatives of the local government, village heads and organisations, the national park management, as well as national fisheries, forestry and environmental Departments.

Available reports and data were analysed against the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF) and the status of the proposed local fisheries council within the park was reviewed. Other issues raised include the incursion of trawlers into the zone reserved for small-scale fishers and the accompanying loss of fish and fishing gears, bad fishing practices, environmental pollutions from oil spillage etc. Participants stressed the need to speed up the process of formalising the status of the local fisheries committee which is to oversee the management of the marine area of the Park. They also resolved to draw the attention of the administration to the illegal practices noted in the area.

Nigeria - Lessons from new structure

Only a few months after the Nigeria National Coordinating Unit (NCU) established Local Co-ordinating Units (LCUs), lessons have emerged on the effectiveness of the new structure. In addition to improving interaction between the communities and local authorities, information exchange with the NCU has also increased considerably. The NCU is now able to better appreciate the communities' priorities. The NCU also now has increased knowledge of interesting traditional fishing practices in the different parts of the country (*see SFLP website on Nigeria*).

This development informed the NCU's decision to invite community leaders to preside over the last NCU quarterly meeting. Discussions focused on the specific problems of the fishing communities which ranged from environmental issues (dwindling fish stock in the waterbodies), to inadequate fish-processing, transportation and marketing systems, as well as lack of access to loans, schools and health services.

At the end of the meeting, it was generally agreed that the first step in addressing these issues was the preparation of an integrated action plan for the communities, which, if properly implemented would help to improve the fisheries communities' livelihoods and reduce poverty.

Senegal - Diversification for regular income

A new community project has been approved for 7 villages bordering the Djoudj National Bird Park in Senegal. The objective is to help local people improve their livelihoods in a more sustainable manner. In the first instance, a marketing system for fresh and processed fish is to be set up on two landing sites. The organisation of ice supply and the collection, storage and transportation of fish to the main markets is also to be improved. The second phase will involve the fattening of cattle for sale with the aim of diversifying their source of income and improving meat consumption. By so doing, it is expected that fishermen and fishmongers will be able to generate income throughout the year, which will put them in a better position to set money aside for the maintenance and replacement of their equipment.

Togo - Consensus on Nangbeto community project

The NCU of Togo recently organised a consultation meeting on the community project to strengthen the organisational capacity of 3 villages (Akodesseva, Odé et Olèssè) around the Nangbeto dam. The meeting was

attended by national stakeholders including the local representative to the National Assembly and representatives of the Internal Affairs, Defence, Justice and Environment ministries, local government and civil society.

In-depth discussions were held on the objectives of the community project, its contributions to the development of the area around the dam, the methodology to be adopted, and the role of each stakeholder in its implementation. By the end of the exchanges, all stakeholders present reconfirmed their commitment to the objectives of the project. NGO CARE-International, Togo will back up the local NGO that will eventually work with the communities on the project, and help explore other partnership possibilities. The company managing the dam, *Communauté électrique du Bénin*, undertook to provide an office space for the project management team. The heads of the different security forces and local government officers also expressed their readiness to collaborate with the NCU in ensuring the success of the exercise. The NCU of Togo has contacted the Special Programme for Food Security (SPFS) of the FAO to explore possibilities for further collaboration.

Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, The Gambia, Gabon, Ghana and Niger - *Latest on adapted action plans*

In line with the country strategies adopted by participants at the meeting held in December 2004, National Coordinating Units are finalising their action plans to integrate the new orientation of the Programme. Entry points have been identified on the basis of the achievements and failures of the more promising projects (completed or ongoing) in the countries. Strong linkages are made with gender, microfinance, partnership development and the pilot projects where relevant. Other considerations are easy replication of positive experiences and potentials for lessons learned in relevant areas, as well as meso-macro linkages.

Some of the results of the exercise according to countries are as follows: (i) In **The Gambia**, the Tanji community project will receive further assistance in documenting lessons learned to date and actions to be undertaken to improve gender sensitivity in microfinance schemes and project replication. (ii) The community project in Sandogo was selected in **Burkina Faso** because of the positive changes noted in the way the communities operate, work and relate with local institutions. The community will be assisted to integrate soil management in their fishing activities. This will involve the systematic and controlled use of the natural resources of the communities with the aim of preserving them. Linkages will be made with the SFLP studies and the World Bank funded national soil management programme. (iii) In **Gabon** the Milembié project was selected because of its potentials for generating important lessons in income generation, development of new marketing outlets, organisational development and strong partnership base. (iv) The 2 community projects on the Mapé reservoir were selected in **Cameroon**. Focus will be on adult literacy, bookkeeping, and replication opportunities in 4 other major waterbodies through a project funded under the Highly-Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative. (v) In **Benin**, the organisational capacity project for small-scale fishers at the Cotonou Port was selected for further assistance. It will be linked to the participatory and efficient management of the infrastructures to be put in place as part of a Japanese-funded project to rehabilitate the artisanal fishing harbour. Based on the results of the previous community projects, entry points were identified in **Niger** to move the promotion of the Tabalak fishmongers forward, and to establish a fishmongers association at the Niamey small market.

Ghana, Mali - Monitoring Workshop

The importance of monitoring during the second phase of the SFLP cannot be over-emphasised. In recognition of this fact, the SFLP organised a participatory monitoring skill-building training in Akosombo, Ghana from 2 to 6 February. The workshop was attended by NCU representatives from Burkina Faso, Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire. The training covered key concepts of (i) participatory monitoring; (ii) monitoring planning framework; (iii)

mechanisms, processes and institutional arrangements, and (iv) stakeholder analysis. Other aspects covered are monitoring indicators (outputs, outcomes, impacts), including identification, selection, sensitivity and possible uses, data collection and analysis for establishing indicator levels, and preparation of monitoring reports and feedback mechanisms/strategies. A set of practical field guidelines on participatory monitoring has been prepared, taking into account the observations, comments and discussions which occurred during the workshop.

Chad - Yao gets a Local Coordinating Unit

Borrowing a leaf from the experience of the NCU of Nigeria, the NCU of Chad has set up a Local Coordinating Unit in Yao, the capital of Fitri Department (about 400 km east of N'djamena). Represented in the Local Coordination Unit are men and women groups, the administration and local authorities. Care was taken to promote a gender-sensitive atmosphere through the appointment of the President of the Laguna Women's group as Vice Chairman of the Unit. The role of the LCU in assisting the community project management committee was also clearly outlined by the NCU.

CALL FOR INTEREST ON GENDER ISSUES IN FISHERIES COMMUNITIES

In collaboration with IDDRA, the SFLP is inviting all gender stakeholders interested in contributing to an information sharing, action and support network on the following themes: (i) improved literacy and capacity building; (ii) peculiar health needs of women; (iii) credit policies and gender; (iv) HIV-AIDS; (v) institutions. For more information, please contact Bennett@iddra.org or Katrien.Holvoet@sflp-pmedp.firstnet.bj

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The International Foundation for Science (IFS) and the United Nations University Institute of Advanced Studies (UNU/IAS) are calling for proposals for research on the theme of "Agriculture for Peace". Researchers awarded a fellowship will: (i) receive up to USD 12,000 for the period of one year to carry out their research; (ii) be invited to participate in a mentorship programme that includes a one-month research stay at the United Nations University Institute of Advanced Studies in Japan, and (iii) benefit from a range of other supporting services provided by IFS and UNU/IAS. All applications must be received by IFS no later than June 30 2004. For more information about eligibility criteria, research topics, the application form and guidelines, please visit: http://www.ifs.se/Special_Programmes/AgPeace.htm

New Community Projects

Benin, Gambia and Niger: Institutional support to conduct three case studies on gender and credit in small scale fisheries.