



INFO-FLASH

the SFLP... on the move...

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Gabon - *In pursuit of self sufficiency*

A participatory review of the functioning of the fishers' association of the Milembié fishing community financed by the Sustainable Fisheries Livelihood Programmes (SFLP) has identified lack of motivation of members and non-cohesion of activities as the reasons behind their haphazard management style. A local consultant is currently working closely with the community to ensure the effective implementation of a six-month workplan drawn up in collaboration with the fishers on the basis of the recommendations of the exercise. Activities started in March 2004 with a series of awareness-raising campaigns on the importance and role of associations in communities. This activity has paid off as the fishers now recognise and freely admit their need to be more proactive in their efforts to develop their community. To demonstrate their commitment to the new process, members of the community have agreed to contribute FCFA 100 at every training session (Thursdays and Saturdays) to finance their activities pending a final decision on the issue at the next General Assembly.

The functioning and operations of existing organisations are now being reviewed for improvement. Members are also being trained on the roles of the different officers of organisations and the participatory process required to ensure sustainability and effectiveness. Well-adapted strategies and measures are also being put in place to promote mutual confidence among women so that they can come together to present a common front at meetings on issues affecting women in the community.

Benin - *UNAPEMAB scores a point*

The national union of coastal artisanal fishers and related workers, UNAPEMAB (*Union Nationale des Pêcheurs Marins Artisans et Assimilés du Bénin*), on 6th April embarked on a peaceful walk to the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (MAEP) to protest against the incursion of fishing trawlers into the zone reserved for the 5,000 small-scale fishers operating at the Cotonou Port. Initiated by the Board of the Union in reaction to the damages caused to small-scale fishers' gears by a particular fishing trawler which uses an illegal fishing technique ("*Chalut-boeuf*"), all the sections of the union were well represented at the demonstration.

In his address to the Minister and his cabinet, the President of the union demanded for urgent action on the total suppression of the illegal technique, and full compensation for all the victims of the trawler's illegal activities, 13 cases of which were recorded in September 2003 alone. The minister's immediate response was positive as the fishing licence of the boat concerned was immediately suspended. A commission was also set up to look into potential strategies for the sustainable management of the fisheries resources at the Port. The commission started work on 19th April 2004.

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).

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

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Niger - Pass mark for Tafouka community project

The NCU of Niger recently conducted a final evaluation of the community project in Tafouka which ended in February 2004. One of the more obvious results of the project is that participatory appraisal process has opened the eyes of the fishers to the major barriers to the development of their community. Their exposure and contributions to issues discussed at meetings, workshops, and exchange visits to other communities have challenged them to look beyond the surface for their development priorities. Also considered very encouraging is their current connection to the Fisheries Department through the NCU.

More concretely, community groups have been strengthened and now collaborate more. As a result, community assets are being managed better than they were when the project started in 2001. The fishers have successfully diversified their income generating activities by selling the seedlings obtained from the 50,000 plants nursery set up. The 80,000 fingerlings bred in the storage tanks constructed during the dry season have also helped to guarantee fish to introduce into the ponds during the rainy season and for sale during the lean period. The fishers now hope to concentrate more on aspects of the training yet to be fully exploited (production of improved ovens and construction of fish storage tanks) because of the limited resources at their disposal. They are also looking forward to the opportunity of a refresher course in bookkeeping and adult literacy, components of the training they claim not to have sufficiently assimilated because of its short duration. With the NCU's assistance, they also hope to explore partnership possibilities in microfinance, equipment and health facilities with the few development organisations operating in the country. Community project proposals will also be prepared within the context of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) for funding through the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) fund. It is hoped that these actions will help sustain and replicate the experience.

Congo - A challenge for women fish smokers in Base Agip

On the invitation of the NCU, NGO-Training which specialises in linking up rural production groups and helps them improve their business management, participated in an organisational development workshop held recently in Pointe Noire, Base Agip. Participants at the training included women fish processors and representatives of all socioprofessional organisations and NGOs in Pointe Noire, Makotipoko and Conkouati. At the end of the activity, a partnership arrangement was concluded with the Pointe Noire women processor's groups that use the salt-dry technique, two of whom participated in the training. The arrangement is for the women to produce 1,400 cartons of 9 kg salted-dried fish (skipper, bass, tuna, sole etc.) for sale through the NGO which also acts on behalf of other women's groups in Brazzaville.

To further encourage them and help them achieve their goal, the NGO donated 50.000 CFA to enable them make necessary purchases. A representative of the research and development institute (*Institut de Recherche et de Développement* - IRD) is also providing further support in conducting a cost-analysis of the production process and verifying the appropriateness of the methods used. The women have taken up the challenge and a test production has already been done. All hands are now on deck to deliver the required volume within the agreed date.

Cameroon - Institutional linkages strengthened

A Research Affiliate of the University of East Anglia in the United Kingdom is working in close collaboration with SFLP to conduct a 4-month scoping study on the Chad-Cameroon pipeline project. The study is expected to help create institutional linkages between SFLP and research centres, in particular, World Fish Centre and IRAD, local NGOs and local communities. The preliminary survey has already commenced in selected villages on Cameroon's

coastal zone (Kribi, etc.). The aim is to analyse the factors affecting fish production and flow of benefits to poor fishers, establish to what extent these factors and constraints are linked to the development of the oil industry, and make proposals on appropriate management options. The result of the survey will further inform the SFLP pilot project on coastal management in the participating oil producing countries (Gabon and Congo).

Mauritania - *General fine-tuning and partnership building*

The community project in Blawakh aimed at improving fisherfolks' access to social services (savings and loans and health facilities, adult literacy, etc) has commenced and is progressing as planned. The two NGO's providing support in the implementation of the project, ANADELP (adult literacy, awareness-raising on Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF) and the regulation and use of ice boxes) and *Mauritanie 2000* (organisation, management and microfinance) have started their activities on the field with the fishers whose response has been encouraging. However, because of the weak uptake of the participatory monitoring aspect, it was agreed that the NCU and the intervening NGOs will work together to produce well-adapted training modules that will strengthen the fishers' capacity to carry out the exercise. The National Women's Affairs Secretariat has also expressed interest in providing support to raise awareness among women's organisations on their need to participate more actively in project implementation, and to mobilise them around the project.

With regards to the Pilot Project on the participatory management of coastal fisheries, the centre responsible for the coordination and security of the coastal area (*Centre de Coordination et de Sauvetage Maritime - CCSM*) and the African Development Bank (ADB)-sponsored *Projet de Développement de la Pêche Artisanale Sud* (PDPAS) have expressed interest in collaborating in the relevant aspects of the project. Furthermore, a fisheries sector information system review conducted as part of the ADB multisectoral institutional support programme (*Programme d'Appui Institutionnel Multisectoriel - PAIM*), came up with a simplified and more effective data collection system. Because of its relevance to the Pilot Project implementation, the three other countries participating in the Pilot Project are to be invited to participate in a training workshop on the results to be organised by PAIM in October 2004.

Sao Tomé and Príncipe - *Concerted effort to consolidate achievements*

At the end of the community project in Angolares, the NCU is conducting a survey to obtain the views of the 2 women's groups (Mé Ngai, Ngopa) and 2 fishermen's associations that benefited from the activity, for incorporation into the final report. This is to ensure a more balanced evaluation of the project. The community project in Praia Campanha has been launched and the one in Príncipe is progressing as scheduled. The NCU has also been holding regular meetings (fortnightly) with MARAPA, the NGO overseeing the implementation of the projects in Santa Catarina and Campanha (construction of a fish-landing site and solar fish-dryers, training in safety at sea and improved fish processing techniques)

The NCU also organised a brainstorming session with the UNDP office in Sao Tomé to discuss the objectives and activities of the community project in Santa Catarina and explore partnership possibilities with UNDP, WHO and UNICEF. A series of meetings have also been held with the Department in charge of women and family affairs in the Ministry of planning to look into possibilities for support in the HIV/Aids, malaria and tuberculosis health component of the project.

Conference on *Women in Fisheries and Aquaculture*

A conference titled "*Women in Fisheries and Aquaculture : lessons from the past, current actions and dreams for the future*" is being organised by some universities from France, Spain, and Norway with financial support from General Directorate for Fisheries, European Commission, University of Western Brittany, CEDEM (Brest,

France) and the Fisheries Council of Santiago de Compostela (Galicia, Spain). The conference will be held from 10 to 13 November 2004 and is open to women within fisheries and aquaculture sectors and scientists working on women's issues in fisheries and coastal communities. A pre-conference excursion to local coastal communities in Galicia will be organised on November 10th. From 11th to 13th, fisherwomen and scientists will share and debate through oral presentations, posters and discussion forums. For further information please visit: <http://conference.fishwomen.org>

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.

New community projects

Nigeria: Training core trainers of the two Federal Colleges of Freshwater Fisheries Technology (FCFFT) New Bussa (Niger State) and Doro-Baga (Borno State) in the teaching of Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA) and the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries. An initial training of trainees will be held at New Bussa from 28 June to 27 July 2004.