



INFO-FLASH

the SFLP... on the move...

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Involvement of fishing communities in decentralization and local development SDAR and SFLP work on a training guide

The SFLP and the FAO Rural Institutions and Participation Service (SDAR) are currently working on a training guide that will promote the involvement of fishing communities in the decentralization process that is ongoing in most African countries today.

Within this context, a partnership agreement has been signed between the two parties to conduct joint activities in five countries, the objective of which will be to analyse the situation of fishing communities, in the light of the ongoing decentralization process, and the question of integration of small-scale fisheries in local development.

Five comparative studies will be conducted to determine how fishing communities' local dynamics are affected by the decentralization process in Burkina Faso, Niger, Senegal, Cameroon and Cape Verde. These studies will be followed by a regional restitution and results validation workshop scheduled to hold from 27th June to 1st July 2005. Three representatives of each of the five countries will participate at the workshop, during which the outline for an appropriate training methodology will be prepared. A CD-ROM will also be produced for dissemination to other countries.

Revision of the *FAO Gender sensitive micro-finance guide incorporating HIV/AIDS impact considerations* Preparation of a fisheries annex underway

A consultation is underway in Benin and The Gambia to ensure the full capitalization of SFLP experiences on small-scale fishing communities' access to micro-credit. The objective is to prepare a fisheries annex for the *FAO gender-sensitive micro-finance guide incorporating HIV/AIDS impact considerations*. The exercise will be conducted by two consultants: Francesca Lulli (gender and micro-finance institutions) and Chantal Gnimadi (gender).

In 2004, the SFLP tested the socio-economic and gender analysis tools developed by the Gender and Population Division (SDW) of the FAO in the small-scale fishing communities of Agbodjèdo and Kétonou in Benin, Tanji in The Gambia, and Tafouka in Niger. The peculiarities of the fishing sector made it necessary to adapt these tools, and to combine them with the analysis tools of other commodity and fish marketing chains and grass roots community organizations.

Lessons learned from these case studies, the experience acquired from the analysis of the commodity and marketing chains, as well as the lessons drawn from developing micro-finance mutual schemes in the Senegalese fisheries sector, will make it possible to design an analysis tool specifically for the fisheries sector.

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 (Bénin).

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

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Three questions for ...
Gerard Gnakadja, PAFDSP Coordinator and former Monitoring Officer of the RSU/SFLP.
9 short and medium term priorities

***Infotflash:** You have just been appointed as the Coordinator of the Participatory Artisanal Fisheries Development Support Programme (PAFDSP) in Benin. How do you plan to run the Programme?*

Gerard Gnakadja : The PAFDSP was created in response to the problem of overexploitation of fisheries resources; it is part of the effort to reduce poverty and improve the living standards of fishing-dependent communities. Management will be participatory, responsible and transparent, by adopting a community-based planning and programming process. The participatory approach seems to me to be a relevant way of inciting all the stakeholders to action so that their ideas and strategies can be taken on board.

What will be your short and medium term priorities?

Our short term priorities will be to:

1. Recruit service providers like NGOs and private operators who will be entrusted with the implementation of PAFDSP activities in the field.
2. Set up a coherent and functional communication system.
3. Repair the public image of the Programme so as to restore the confidence of the beneficiaries and partner institutions.
4. Do everything we can to stimulate and increase partnership with similar programmes, and most especially with the SFLP.

In the medium term we will seek to:

1. Restore fisheries resources of water bodies in a sustainable manner.
2. Strengthen the capacities of targeted communities and diversify their livelihoods.
3. Strengthen community-based institutions - NGOs and service providers.
4. Draw up fisheries resources management plans.
5. Improve production and processing tools with due respect to regulations and ecologic balance.

What aspects will you pay special attention to in order to ensure that fishing communities derive maximum benefit from the partnership between PAFDSP and the SFLP?

Before answering your question, I would first like to point out that the SFLP has been providing important support to Benin since 2000. This support has covered such areas as supervision and strengthening of socio-professional organizations of the small-scale fishing communities at the Cotonou Port, improvement of the fishing communities' access to micro-finance services, improvement of the gender integration process, and more recently, implementation of a local response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic in fishing communities.

Since the PAFDSP intervention strategy is based on a combination of the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA) and the Land Management Approach (LMA), SFLP assistance will be of great value, especially in such areas as advisory support in the establishment of a training and exchange system between stakeholders, strategic planning of activities, the implementation of a participatory monitoring system, the promotion of a participatory natural resources development policy, as well as the definition and implementation of policies and strategies that are likely to guarantee a better supply of quality products in the markets. Apart from these few examples, other areas of support and collaboration will naturally come up as we go along.

I believe that if the necessary measures are put in place to establish partnership in the real sense of the word, fishing communities in Benin will benefit a lot from it.

Burkina Faso - Ghana - Mali

Local FM radio stations support fishing communities

The Information and Communication Officer of the Regional Support Unit (RSU) of the SFLP recently undertook a mission to Burkina Faso, Ghana and Mali where the Pilot Project on the "*improvement of policy and institutional environment for the development of inland fisheries co-management systems*" is providing support in the implementation of the co-management plans of the three biggest lakes. During his stay in these three countries, he visited some local FM radio stations that lakeside communities, and most especially, members of fishing communities listen to.

Six FM radio stations broadcast to communities along Lakes Bagré and Sélingué in Burkina Faso and Mali respectively. Four of these are commercial radio stations, one is a confessional radio, while the last is a community radio. In Ghana, three FM radio stations cover the districts south of Lake Volta. All the three are community radios and some are affiliated to the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC).

Discussions with the heads of the radio stations and some of their audience made it possible to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the different radio stations. The mission sought to understand how these radio stations could be made to serve the fishing communities better, and most especially, how they can back up the implementation of the co-management plans in Lakes Bagré, Sélingué and Volta.

As a follow up to this mission, the RSU is considering a series of projects to support the radio stations, especially the community radios around the zones covered by the three Pilot Projects. These projects will aim to make local FM radio stations more useful to fishing communities by encouraging them to address appropriate topics in their programmes, and also to grant some airtime to the fisherfolk themselves to have their say. This would enable the communities to discuss themes directly linked to fisheries (the current situation of the resource, banned fishing gears, responsible fisheries, co-management of resources ...). Other themes of priority interest like poverty reduction, local development, and social issues linked to education, health and gender could also be addressed by the community radio stations.

In order to meet the information needs of fishing communities in a sustainable manner, it would be necessary to strengthen the interaction between the radio stations and their audience. The radio broadcasters will also need training in public broadcasting and field reporting, and some radio stations will require assistance to improve their equipment. The projects to support these radio stations are likely to be in these three areas.

The next edition of the SFLP Liaison Bulletin will feature an article on Radio Ada, the first independent community radio in Ghana, which is also sited in a fishing community.

Fisheries Committee (COFI-2005)

Participants thank DFID

During the 26th session of the FAO Fisheries Committee (COFI), held in Rome from the 7th to the 11th of March 2005, several members from West and Central Africa thanked the Department for International Development (DFID) of the United Kingdom for funding, since 1999, the regional Sustainable Fisheries Livelihoods Programme (SFLP) and FAO for assisting the 25 countries of the region in its implementation. Members were provided with successful examples of activities carried out in favour of poverty reduction and sustainable management in small-scale fisheries. The importance was stressed of this regional approach for the benefit of small-scale fishing communities in their respective countries, and the donor community was requested to extend the Programme beyond its present phase ending in October 2006.

Burkina Faso
NCU information bulletin goes to press...

The NCU of Burkina Faso and the Management Team of the Pilot Project on co-management on Lakes Bagré and Kompienga have concluded arrangements for the printing of *Pêche!*, the first edition of their information bulletin. This edition will treat different topics including community surveillance of the two lakes, co-management, adult literacy programmes, savings and loan schemes, fishing communities' access to potable water, etc.

More specifically, this quarterly bulletin will promote better information flow between the NCU and local and national decision-makers, donors, other NCUs and the Sustainable Fisheries Livelihoods Programme (SFLP). The bulletin will also serve as a lobbying tool for the SFLP, as well as a vehicle to ensure full capitalization of the results of the Pilot Project on inland fisheries co-management.

The initiative of the Pilot Project, which is also financing it, the bulletin is being produced in collaboration with the Fisheries Resources Department of Burkina Faso. The latter will be expected to take over after the first four editions, with a view to sustaining its production. The first four editions will be produced at a cost of 4 million francs CFA¹.

To the new smiling baby in the media world, we say: "*More grease to your elbow, and may you live long!*"

Benin - Fighting against HIV/AIDS
Fisheries Department and the PPLS sign a financing agreement

On the 26th of April 2005, the Beninese Fisheries Department and the Plurisectorial Project on HIV/AIDS control (*Projet plurisectoriel de lutte contre le VIH/SIDA - PPLS*²) signed a financing agreement for the implementation of seven community action plans³ to control HIV/AIDS in four fishing villages - Sô-Zounko, Hio, Kétonou and Ayiguinnou.

According to the terms of the agreement which was signed by the Director of Fisheries, Mr. Simplicite Sogan, and the National Coordinator of PPLS, Dr. Olivier Capo Chichi, the financing will be provided over a period of three years by the PPLS. Present at the signing ceremony were representatives of fishing communities, support NGO's, the National Committee for HIV/AIDS control, the National Coordinating Unit and the Regional Support Unit of the Sustainable Fisheries Livelihoods Programme (SFLP).

Supported by the SFLP, the action plan preparation process is in its final stages, with its validation by the communities.

The different plans highlight the HIV/AIDS factors that are peculiar to fishing communities. One example of high risk factor is the seasonal migration by men and even some women, to countries like Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Ghana, Nigeria and Togo. Another is the provision of first aid care to those wounded during fishing expeditions without taking any precautions.

The programming of activities takes these peculiarities into consideration to ensure that all the members of the community, migrants included, can participate fully. Activities will range from prevention strategies, to the provision of psychosocial and medical care, as well as voluntary testing.

¹ About 7,913 USD (exchange rate at April 2005).

² A project co-financed by the World Bank and the Government of Benin.

³ The annual budget of each plan is not more than 1,500,000 FCA being 2,966 USD.

Fishing communities launch a radio programme on HIV/AIDS

As a follow up to the creation and presentation of *Litoni*, a play on HIV/AIDS in the Base-Agip fishing community (read the article titled: "*An awareness-raising survey - social communication and mobilization of a fishing community around HIV/AIDS*" published in No 17-18 of the September-December 2004 edition of the SFLP Liaison Bulletin), the Congolese have just started a public broadcast recorded and aired by Radio Pointe-Noire. The programmes are presented every fortnight by the famous journalist, Nzenga Mambu.

Apart from the radio programmes, the two major television channels in Pointe-Noire (DRTV and TV PN) are also broadcasting the video recording of the community drama.