



INFO-FLASH

the SFLP... on the move...

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Sub-regional workshop on participatory surveillance

The representatives of countries participating in the SFLP¹ Pilot Project on the participatory management of fisheries in coastal zones in Congo, Gabon, Guinea and Mauritania came together in Conakry, Guinea from the 5th to the 10th of February 2006 for a sub-regional workshop on participatory surveillance.

The official opening ceremony of the workshop was presided over by the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture. Present on the occasion were the Representative of the FAO and the Ambassador of Great Britain in Guinea. The Minister, on behalf of the Government of Guinea and of the other countries participating in the Pilot Project, thanked the partners and the SFLP for their support in the efforts to alleviate poverty in fisheries dependent communities in the said countries. In the solemn ceremony, he presented the legal instruments on the regulation of small scale fisheries recently adopted by Guinea to the audience. These instruments establish legal recognition for community involvement in fisheries management.

This meeting made it possible for participants to exchange their experiences on participatory surveillance, and to make linkages with fisheries management and local development. At the end of their deliberations, strategies were proposed for each country with a view to institutionalizing participatory management. The report of the meeting is being prepared and will be made available along with national reports on the Programme's website.

The setting up of a monitoring & evaluation mechanism completed in eight countries

The process for setting up a mechanism to monitor and evaluate the changes recorded after SFLP interventions has been completed. The exercise, which started in June 2005, focused mainly on the eight countries² participating in the Pilot Projects on the participatory management of fisheries in coastal zones, and on the small-scale fisheries post-harvest sector. The monitoring mechanism put in place is composed of monitoring relays and local monitoring committees.

The relays and local monitoring committees collect the data which they then regularly dispatch to the Regional Support Unit of the SFLP in Cotonou. The information is collected directly from the communities with the help of forms prepared using a grid that had earlier been validated in each country.

¹ Sustainable Fisheries Livelihoods Programme

² Cameroon, Chad, Congo, Gabon, Guinea, Mauritania, Senegal and The Gambia.

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).

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The Regional Support Unit of the Programme is currently working on a computerized database that will facilitate real time access to all the necessary information on the changes that have occurred in the daily life of the communities, as well as at institutional and policy levels.

The database is called the SFLP change monitoring system, SYSCHAP for short. It will take into consideration, not only the data from the two Pilot Projects mentioned above, but also the data obtained from the Pilot Project on inland fisheries co-management and the various Community and Institutional Support Projects.

For want of a permanent monitoring system, the data on the Pilot Project on inland fisheries co-management will be obtained from the results of the impact studies undertaken, while data on Community Projects and Institutional Support Projects will be extracted from the different progress reports and, eventually, from information gathered during visits to the countries concerned.

Lusaka: An international meeting on HIV/AIDS in Africa's fisheries sector

With the support of the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), the WorldFish Center, the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) organized a seminar on *"Responding to HIV and AIDS in the Fishery Sector in Africa"* in Lusaka, Zambia, from the 21st to the 22nd of February, 2006.

The SFLP was represented at this important meeting by two experts from the Regional Support Unit, and the representatives of partner countries, including Benin, Congo, Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Senegal. About sixty participants from the civil society, government administration, development organizations, as well as researchers and international experts participated at the meeting.

As its contribution to the seminar, the SFLP was able to share its experience in responding to HIV/AIDS in fisheries communities in Benin and Congo with participants. In their recommendations, participants were unanimous in expressing the need to work more closely with the IOM and the WorldFish Center to strengthen efforts at lobbying organizations in charge of HIV/AIDS reduction programmes to give better consideration to the fisheries sector in their programmes. Participants also concluded among others, that research findings should be transformed into information packages targeting decision makers at all levels; that aspects that have to do with migration should be given more consideration, and that national action plans should integrate regional and international initiatives. As a result of this workshop, the WorldFish Center will facilitate a network between those who participated at the seminar, by creating a website that will enable them to obtain easy access to relevant information, and to exchange information on interesting and useful experiences.

Most of the countries participating in the Pilot Projects now have a gender strategy

The preparation of a gender strategy to support two Pilot Projects³, has been finalized in many of the countries concerned, namely, Cameroon, Congo, Gabon, Mauritania, Senegal and The Gambia. The process is ongoing in the other countries covered by the Pilot Projects, i.e. Guinea and Chad.

The execution of these strategies will guarantee that gender is considered a cross-cutting issue in the implementation of the Pilot Projects. In order to ensure that the different partners of the project are well informed about this latest development, information to this effect was shared with them and with the different stakeholders.

³ Participatory management of fisheries in coastal zones and Small-scale fisheries post-harvest sector.

Using practical activities to analyse the impact of gender, the stakeholders and most especially local authorities (opinion leaders, mayors, heads of police brigades, religious leaders, principals of schools, heads of social centres and community leaders in the villages concerned by the projects) made an undertaking to work towards ensuring that there is more equity in the participation of men and women in the implementation of the Pilot Projects. Gender indicators to be integrated in the monitoring-evaluation grids of the Pilot Projects were therefore drawn up.

Guinea: A communication plan to support the Pilot Project

The management team of the Pilot Project on the participatory management of coastal fisheries of Guinea benefited from an information and communication plan in January 2006, to support its activities during the last year of the project.

The information and communication plan has three objectives, namely, (i) to publicize the ministerial decree and the application texts that the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture of Guinea recently promulgated on fisheries management in all the sites covered by the Pilot Project ; (ii) to strengthen the technical and organizational capacities of socio-professional organizations, and of all other organizations involved in the participatory management of fisheries, and (iii) to inform national institutions and development cooperation partners on the impact of participatory management of fisheries in Guinea.

To implement this information and communication plan, the project management team feels it is important to settle some preliminary issues, in this case, to conclude discussions on a service delivery contract with a national information and communication consultant, and to train 20 male and female facilitators on the basis of 4 facilitators for each area of intervention of the project.

The communication plan will ensure complementarity between the use of mass communication media and interpersonal communication.

Mali: Preparation of the second generation of Poverty Reduction Strategy Framework (2007 - 2011): Fisheries to be taken on board

The process for the preparation of the second generation of Poverty Reduction Strategy Framework (*Cadre stratégique de lutte contre la pauvreté - CSLP*) for Mali was launched in Bamako during a national workshop held on the 16th and 17th of January 2005. Present at the occasion were development partners and civil society representatives. The second CSLP is to cover the 2007 - 2011 period.

The institutional environment recently put in place (Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries, National Fisheries Department) as well as the results of the studies recently conducted by the SFLP on the contribution of the sector to national economy, have helped to promote the need for fisheries to be taken into consideration in the new CSLP.

Three questions for Fabien Tallec

You are temporarily based at the Regional Support Unit of the SFLP in Cotonou as a consultant to work on the Programme's website. What do you understand your mission to be in this exercise?

The general objective of this mission is to compile the latest reports produced as part of the activities of the Programme, summarize them, and present them in a form that will make it possible for them to be integrated on the Programme's website (www.sflp.org). At the same time, and with the technical support of the webmaster, the consultation will also aim to "rethink" the Internet portal of the Programme in such a way as to make it more reader-friendly, and facilitate quicker access to the latest results.

What are the major weaknesses of the site as it exists today, and what improvements do you plan to make?

Over time, the site has been stifled by new web pages and link sites, making navigation more and more cumbersome and complicated. Its original structure and the organization of menus no longer correspond to what we find on similar sites. Today, visitors are used to surfing through headings like <sitemap>, <contact>, <current events>... all of which are absent on the current site.

Communication by Internet is double-edged; it facilitates rapid dissemination of current information all over the world, but seeks to replace them quickly with other even more "current" information. If this does not happen, the information available quickly become obsolete. Headings like <Info flash> and <Liaison Bulletin > on the Programme's website are regularly updated. But such is not the case with other parts of the site. It would appear necessary today to revise each of the web pages and link sites on the Programme's website in order to come up with a generally "current" site that will also conform to what we find on the sites of other organizations like the SFLP.

How does this exercise benefit the Programme?

Since its creation, the Programme's website is being visited more and more. In our multimedia environment, it has become the indispensable showcase of the SFLP. It should align as closely as possible with the activities of the Programme. Furthermore, SFLP partners (institutions, governments, donors ...) would appreciate rapid access to the latest documents and results of the SFLP. This exercise therefore aims at meeting the expectations of all the people who regularly visit the SFLP website.

New directions in fisheries

Recently, the SFLP has been publishing a series of Policy Briefs on development issues referred to as: **NEW DIRECTIONS IN FISHERIES**. These Policy Briefs present new orientations in fisheries, in other words, policies aimed at strengthening the livelihoods of fisheries communities, improving the contribution of fisheries to poverty reduction, and ensuring sustainability for fisheries resources. They are currently available on the SFLP website: www.sflp.org

- No. 1: *Reducing fisherfolk's vulnerability leads to responsible fisheries*
- No. 2: *Impact of HIV/AIDS on fishing communities*
- No. 3: *Contribution of fisheries to national economies in West and Central Africa*
- No. 4: *Microfinance helps poverty reduction and fisheries management*

Other Policy Briefs are being prepared.