



**USAID | GHANA**  
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# **SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PROJECT (SFMP)**

**ANTI CHILD LABOR AND TRAFFICKING IN  
FISHERIES POLICY SOCIALIZATION;  
CAPE-COAST METROPOLITAN AND  
KOMENDA-EDINA-EGUAFO-ABIREM MUNICIPAL  
ASSEMBLIES  
MEETING**



**OCTOBER 2017**

THE  
UNIVERSITY  
OF RHODE ISLAND  
GRADUATE SCHOOL  
OF OCEANOGRAPHY



**Friends of the Nation**

This publication is available electronically on the Coastal Resources Center's website at  
[http://www.crc.uri.edu/projects\\_page/ghanasfmp/](http://www.crc.uri.edu/projects_page/ghanasfmp/)

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## **ACRONYMS**

AHTU	Anti-Human Trafficking Unit
CCMA	Cape-Coast Metropolitan Assembly
CEWEFIA	Central and Western Region Fishmongers Improvement Association
CLaT	Child Labor and Trafficking
DCPC	District Child Protection Committee
DOVVSU	Domestic Violence Support Unit
DSW	Department of Social Welfare
FoN	Friends of the Nation
FtF	Feed the Future
GES	Ghana Education Service
GHS	Ghana Health Service
GIS	Ghana Immigration Service
GPS	Ghana Police Service
ICFG	Integrated Coastal and Fisheries Governance
KEEA	Komenda-Edina-Eguafo-Abirem (Municipal Assembly)
MCPC	Metropolitan/Municipal Child Protection Committee
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
SFMP	Sustainable Fisheries Management Project
SNV	Netherlands Development Organization
URI	University of Rhode Island
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

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## FORWARD

As part of the Sustainable Fisheries Management Project (USAID-SFMP) Year Four (4) anti-Child Labor and Trafficking (CLaT) program (dubbed Activity 4.5 - Reducing Child Labor and Trafficking in the Central Region of Ghana), Friends of the Nation (FoN) organized a meeting with an objective of increasing stakeholder awareness of the National Anti-Child Labor in Fisheries Policy, and foster smoother inter-agency and institution collaboration on **Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> October, 2017**.

The meeting which facilitated an engagement of officials of Metropolitan and Municipal Child Protection Committees (MCPCs) from **Cape-Coast Metropolitan (CCMA)** and Komenda-Edina-Eguafo-Abirem Municipal (**KEEA**) **Assemblies** were the main targets for the program. Other key stakeholder participants will come from

- the Ghana National Canoe Fishermen's Council (GNCFC) from CMMA and KEEA;
- the National Fish Processors and Traders' Association (NAFPTA) from CMMA and KEEA;
- the Ghana Police Service
- the Ghana Immigration Service
- the Department of Social Welfare, and
- Officials from the two assemblies (Planning and Coordinating Units).

Since stakeholders come from different backgrounds and have different though overlapping interests, there is the need to understand what other stakeholders are doing in order to collaborate without conflicts. There is also the need to pull resources together where possible to achieve efficiency on the part of state agencies.

Awareness creation of the consequences of CLaT became very critical for the whole nation in the period under report as Ghana as a country, has been listed for three (3) consecutive years (2014, 2015 and 2016) on the US Department of State Trafficking in Persons (TIP) worldwide Watch List as not doing enough to combat human trafficking. Magnanimously, the country has been given a grace period to redeem itself by December 2017.

Should Ghana remain on Tier Two, or slip to Tier Three at the end of December 2017 (findings will be published in June 2018), the country is likely to lose millions of dollars in development assistance which forebodes a dire situation for the country's socio-economic aspirations. It is therefore critical that government agencies stand up and let their voices be heard on their activities, educate the public, and solicit their assistance in combating child and human trafficking.

It was therefore important to intensify outreach on CLaT and its ominous implications for the country for both citizens and duty-bearers to sit up.

## **OBJECTIVE**

The main focus of the meeting was to let stakeholders see, understand the anti-CLaT Policy in Fisheries, and recognize areas of possible collaboration amongst themselves.

Coastal communities in the Central Region have been identified as a source area for child trafficking for purposes of fisheries in Ghana. This situation has been linked to poverty that has been induced by dwindling fishery livelihoods.

Working with the Assemblies since October 2014, it has been realised that adequate resources are not assigned on the local government front in addressing the issue of CLaT and Human Trafficking. This is partly due to the fact that the issue has not been paid adequate attention within the scheme of development practice and service delivery in the Assemblies, thus not receiving resources and support to address the problem sustainably.

The situation had and continues to have serious implications for the Assemblies and the Department of Social Welfare (DSW) in addressing the issue effectively. They have perennially depended heavily on Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to address the issues. However NGOs usually have their own focus areas within the issue which does not augur adequately in Assemblies and other relevant state institutions to holistically address the issue.

The history, and magnitude of Child Labour and Trafficking (CLaT) in fisheries within the coastal fishing communities in the Central Region has been determined through community interactions and studies clearly as a fishing activity linked issue. Children from the coastal fishing communities are relatively better swimmers compared to children from other areas of the country. Culturally, these are communities that are already steeped deep into fishing and everything revolved around fisheries.

It is important to note, in every country and every culture, children are made to carry out work in one form or the other. It is however the magnitude of work which is too heavy and bad for a child's welfare that is the subject under discussion here. While it is clear that the local authorities are committed to counter CLaT, there is still much to be done to eradicate this crime. The multifaceted and clandestine nature of CLaT poses a challenge for effective prevention, victim protection and prosecution related measures and policies. Its linkages with illegal migration, labor issues and health problems underline the complexity of the problem and demand different approaches from all actors.

The goal of the five-year USAID-Ghana SFMP is to rebuild targeted marine fisheries stocks through the adoption of sustainable fishing practices and exploitation levels. With a focus on small pelagic fisheries management along the entire coastal stretch of Ghana, the SFMP seeks to rebuild a fishery, which is near collapse. More than 100,000 metric tons of high quality low-cost animal protein that was traditionally available to poor and vulnerable coastal and inland households has been lost. SFMP is also contributing to the GOG's agriculture and fisheries development goals and the USAID's Feed the Future (ftf) development objectives to reduce poverty and hunger.



Lastly though the SFMP is about contributing to resuscitating Ghana's fisheries, managing the fisheries is actually about managing people efforts by Friends of the Nation (FoN) and partners to bring to fore the drivers of CLaT and propose actions that will contribute to a clean, and sustainable fisheries for now and the upcoming generations.

Therefore, taking children from poor families (who hardly are able to put food on the table on daily basis) because are good swimmers or conversant with fish processing, or both to go do same in other geographical areas for perceived rewards was a matter of course. Poverty and deprivation are the main causes. Declining fish harvest has seriously deepened poverty in the coastal fishing communities where there are hardly any other viable forms of livelihood activities.

## **1.0 OPENING**

### **1.1 Stakeholder participants present**

- Representative of Ghana Police Service;
- Officials from Department of Social Welfare (both CCMA and KEEA);
- Representatives from Ghana Immigration Service;
- Representatives from Fisheries Commission;
- Representative from National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE);
- Representatives from National Fish Processors and Traders Association (NAFPTA);
- Representative from MOSLEM COMMUNITY (of Cape-Coast);
- Representative from Central Regional Development Commission (CEDECOM);
- Representatives from Metropolitan and Municipal Assemblies (CCMA and KEEA);
- Representatives from USAID-SFMP partners FoN and CEWEFIA.

The meeting was called to order by the Mr. Kwesi Johnson of FoN at 9:00am. The opening prayer was said by Madam Elizabeth Nyamekye a retired social worker in KEEA and a member of the Municipal Child Protection Committee (MCPC). Mr. Johnson welcomed participants and after a round of self-introduction, encouraged all to fully participate in the deliberations.

### **1.2 OVERVIEW/PURPOSE OF THE MEETING**

An overview of the meeting was given by Nana Kwegya Isaac, an anti-CLaT advocate from Abandze (who is also a fisherman and a tutor at the Edinaman Senior High School in Elmina). He mentioned that in CLaT prevention efforts, all stakeholder agencies and institutions need to understand one another know the kind of work they are doing. There is also a critical need to synergize activities therein in the era of dwindling resources.

Mr. Kwadwo Kyei Yamoah from FoN dilated on Child Labor to participants. He said the meeting has an objective of identifying a joint way –forward of stakeholders in fighting CLaT by the various organizations.

### **1.3 OVERVIEW OF THE SFMP**

AS part of the introduction of program, an overview of the USAID-SFMP was provided, noting that it is an initiative that seeks to contribute to rebuilding targeted marine fisheries stocks and support the livelihood of about 100,000 fishers through the adoption of sustainable practices and exploitation levels. The nine implementing partners were mentioned.

Participants were informed that the USAID-SFMP which is a collaboration between the US Government and its Ghanaian counterpart (through the Fisheries Commission of the Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development ), it is a follow-up to a previous fisheries program - the Integrated Coastal and Fisheries Governance (ICFG) Initiative, which was implemented in the Western Region.

The current USAID-SFMP in contrast is national in scope (covering the whole coast of Ghana). It is estimated that, the country's total annual fish requirement is about 820,000 metric tons (mt) while annual production averages 400,000 mt. The annual deficit of 420,000 mt, the balance is made up through the importation of over US\$200 million worth of fish into the country yearly.

On the average, each Ghanaian consumes about 60% of his or her animal protein needs from fish (Department of Fisheries, 2004).

A major and legitimate concern therefore is the decline in fish stock, resulting in high prices of fish that affect protein intake, job losses in the fisheries industry and worsening poverty, especially in fisheries communities. The sector also provide livelihood for about 2.4 million people or 10 per cent of the population and accounted for 10 per cent of the animal protein consumed in Ghana.

These international standards make provisions for a broad statistical definition of child labor encompassing children between 5 and 17 years who had been engaged in any activity within the general production boundary as defined by the System of National Accounts (SNA). These are referred to as children in productive activities.

Section 90 of the Children's Act, 1998 (Act 560), sets the minimum age for light work at 13 years. However, the Hazardous Child Labour Activity Framework for Ghana (HAF) and the National Plan of Action (NPA) for the elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour, while acknowledging this Act, recommends a minimum age of 12 years.

Practices such as pelagic drift net fishing, which involves the use of large fishing nets tugged between two fishing vessels (pair trawling) to catch fishes that drift along their path, have been a major factor to the depletion of fish stock; and was cited as a critical link that has to be eliminated else the sector will continue to be lawless.

Scientific evidence has repeatedly pointed to the fact that Ghana's fisheries are in crisis. Declining volume of fish landed, coupled with increasing demand for fish for the increasing population growth, and had compelled Ghana to become a net importer of fish consumed.

Flowing from the above, fish has always had far-reaching implications for food security in Ghana. Fish supplies naturally augment food availability and ensuring good nutritional outcomes particularly for the poor and rural populations. The vast number of people engaged in the fishing industry earns incomes that improve upon their access to food.

To address this challenge, the collaboration and support from the Government and people of the United States through USAID-SFMP Coastal Resources Centre, University of Rhode Island, Graduate School of Oceanography and partners has come at an opportune time towards ensuring the sustainability of our fisheries resources; particularly, so the small pelagic fisheries could recover quickly within a few years once the right management measures are put in place.

Languages used in the session were both Fante and English to foster understanding and inclusiveness and participation.

## **2.0 STATEMENTS FROM STATE AGENCIES.**

### **2.1 Ghana Police Service**

The Central Regional Public Relations Officer (PRO) of the Ghana Police Service Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) Mrs Irene Oppong said the Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit (DOVSSU) and Anti-Human Trafficking Unit are there to investigate Child Labor and Trafficking. The units work closely with the Department of Social Welfare (DSW). She said if a child is found in illegal child labor, they investigate to find out about the background of the child and refer the issue to the DSW for sheltering of the child, and tracing of the family.

She added that the Ghana Police Service is having difficulty with their referral system, shelter and reporting system.

Mrs. Irene Oppong said some parents give their children out to blood-relatives to take care of them but these children are denied education and made to sell on the streets or put in hazardous ventures. These children are engaged in wrongful labor which is detrimental to their health and more. They children later come back to their parents with various diseases which tend to be another burden on families and society.

Some victims/suspects find it difficult to show their relatives and the police have problems with the medical bills of the children since they are taken to see a medical officers for examination of their health status to ascertain the effect the situation they had been indulged in had on them.

### **2.2 Ghana Immigration Service**

The representative from the Ghana Immigration Service (GIS) Ms. Diana Anyigbavor the agency's work starts from the border. Children are brought by the people in whose custody they are and taken to different countries to work, marry and also serve as sex workers.



**Pics 1 and 2:** Ms. Diana Anyigbavor of GIS engaging participant-stakeholders

She said the agency initiate investigation into such issues and forwards it to the DOVSSU to continue with the process to the logical conclusion.

She advised parents not to give their children out to people to travel with because no one knows exactly what the children are going to be used for. She advised parents to be wary of people

who come to them claiming to take the children abroad for better opportunities because some of these children are taken into prostitution, stealing and other kinds of criminal indulgence.

She advised parents to sacrifice to educate their children so that they can become useful and responsible citizens in future.

### **2.3 The Department of Social Welfare**

Mr. Daniel Wallace Akyeampong (Metropolitan Director of the Department of Social Welfare) explained that combatting CLaT is part of his outfit's work. The DSW work to identify whether a child brought to them was into child labor or had been trafficked. The agency also plays a role in rescuing and rehabilitation of victim-children; and also their re-integration.

Mr. Akyeampong said that if a child is denied access to education and made to work in the house it is also a form of child labor - thus child labor is when children are "engaged in labor that affects their health, education and development". He therefore appealed to parents and families to educate their children and stop giving them out to people to work with.

He added that it takes a step-by-step procedure to rescue a child who is into child labor. He added that when a child is brought to the department by DOVVSU, they give the child a place to stay before re-locating the child to their parents, relatives or guardian. Officers of the DSW follow-up on families of rescued children to monitor their living conditions.

### **2.4 CAPE-COAST METROPOLITAN ASSEMBLY PLANNING UNIT**

The Representative from the CCMA Planning Unit submitted that the assembly is in the process of reviewing by-laws and CLaT issues are included. Measures will also be taken to curb the situation. The Metropolitan Assembly will help to minimize child labor by including it into the laws of the assembly and assist various households who are in need financially to take care of their wards as a way of reducing their vulnerability.



**Pic 3:** Cross-section of participants



**Pic 4:** Ms. D. Anyigbavor addressing participants

### 3.0 PRESENTATION ON CLAT SITUATION OF THE C/R COASTAL-FISHING AREAS

#### 3.1 OVERVIEW

Mr. Kwesi Johnson (of FoN) in presenting explained that it is a “normal cultural practice” for children to learn their family’s vocation or trade from their parents and to support the home when necessary. However when these activities performed by the child are detrimental to the child’s development, it needs to be discouraged and stopped.

Child Labor denies the child education, right to play and more. The Children’s Act 560 (1998) defines a child as a person below the age of 18 years. Every parent has the right to parent their children. But if they fail to perform proper parental duties, the law permits the government to take the child away from them. The government aims at helping poor parents financially in taking care of their children – therefore vulnerable families must see state authorities for their cases to be looked at and assistance processed and provided.

For its anti-CLaT initiative, FoN operates with the ILO’s definition of Child Labor, and Child Trafficking. It states that

*‘Any work by a person who has not attained the legal working age of 18, that is hazardous and inimical to the persons health and or well-being and that is to benefit another; with the child is denied education, the right to play and the basic necessities of life.*

*The child is not directly or may not be paid at all, or another person may take the reward for that child’s work.*

According to the ILO, “Child Trafficking” is *“recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, and or receipt or both of a child for the purpose of exploitation”*.

It is with the above definition that the SFMP works in its anti-CLaT initiatives.

In investigating the causes for CLaT in the coastal-fishing areas of the CR, it was found that:

#### 3.2 CAUSES

- The children from the fishing communities know how to swim and also know how to process fresh fish.
- The children’s parents are negligent in taking proper care of them.
- Some parents are coaxed by the traffickers to willingly give away their children with the expectation of providing better living conditions for the children elsewhere.
- The school dropout children are also targeted
- High rate of teenage pregnancy is a contributory factor – as the mothers are not economically productive.
- Large family size
- Poverty
- Illiteracy

#### 3.3 EFFECTS

- Under developed national manpower.
- Insecurity.

- Poor educational.
- Entrenched poverty.

Mr. Johnson submitted that the government and other stakeholders are serious about combatting CLaT; however more needs to be done.

CLaT is criminal and should not be encouraged. All agencies must work together to fight and stop it.

#### **4.0 POLICY ON CHILD LABOUR IN FISHERIES**

The presentation was done by Mr. Kyei Kwadwo Yamoah (FoN)

#### **4.1 GOAL OF THE POLICY**

He elaborated on:

- Public Awareness and Advocacy
- Health, Welfare and Social Protection
- Education, Training and Capacity building
- Social Development, Decent work and Reintegration
- Governance, Legislation and Enforcement.

He said this Policy Document outlines strategies for eliminating CLaT. Specific outlined include:

- Withdrawal and Rescue
- Rehabilitation and Integration

#### **4.2 PREVENTIVE STRATEGIES**

- Community Awareness
- Behaviour Change Communication
- Investigation and Arrest

#### **4.3 POLICY ACTIONS**

- Community advocates
- Community durbars
- Traditional leaders engagement meetings
- Radio and TV Programs
- Religious meetings (church, mosque, etc.)
- Law enforcement (investigation and arrest)



## 5.0 OPEN FORUM

A participant from the fishing suburbs of Cape-Coast suggested that there should be an exhibition in the form of miniature festivals to increase awareness on CLaT and Human Trafficking. A member of the fishing community said such a “sensitization” and “socialization” programs should be organized for the anti-Child Labor Committees in the communities.

A participant from the DSW there should be a Child Protection Committee formed to monitor Child Labor and Anti-Human Trafficking in the communities. Critical areas noted for the menace of child labor and sexual exploitation of children and teenagers are Anafo, Brofoyedur, Ntsin, Castle, Victoria Park, Ola and Bakaano.

A participant from the fishing community said they can act as detectives to spot child labor. He appealed to FoN and other CSOs to help them announce to the general public and educate them about the menace and implications of child labor.

He further submitted that sensitization efforts for people engaged in economic activities in fishing communities will go a long way in helping spread awareness and fighting the canker.

Mr. Kyei Yamoah of FoN asked the members of the various communities to form their committees to facilitate local outreach activities (e.g. Community Durbars, film shows and Radio Programs). The names of the persons in the committees should be presented to the DSW for follow-up actions.

A representative of the KEEA Municipal Child Protection Committee (MCPC), Madam Nyamekye elaborated on the activities of the Committee and said financial assistance is needed to undertake some activities which would provide some children with some skill based knowledge, especially some of the trafficked children who find it difficult to return to formal education.

Kobina Aggrey from Cape-Coast, a fisherman by profession said some fishermen have obtained appreciable level of formal education and so they should be involved in the CLaT advocacy, sensitization and awareness creation programmes.

Mr. Aggrey also suggested that Child Protection Committees (CPCs) should be set up and strengthened in various communities and the right people should be selected to form the committee.

A representative from National Fish Processors and Traders Association (NAFPTA) asked what is done to children who are found attempting to cross the border. The representative of the Immigration Service explained that the children are questioned to ascertain the purpose of their attempt to cross the border. If it is determined that they have been trafficked, then the DSW is contacted to take necessary actions. In the event that the children were crossing with an adult, further information is gathered and prepared for prosecution.

Madam Gifty Anamoah-Mensah from the fishing area of Cape-Coast pleaded with parents to train their children well at home and added that some children below the ages of 18 years are into stealing and drugs at some coastal areas. Instead of being in school, they are also at game centres all the time.

The Chief fisherman from British-Komenda (Nana Ekow Mbeah) said a law should be put in place by the government to check both parents and children on CLaT issues.

Others also suggested that the government should stop the Chinese from operating game centres in the country because this also helps to in promoting child delinquency which facilitates dropping out of school in search of money.

Nana Duncan from (tutor and a fisher leader from Elmina) said the laws of the nation should be made to bite on both parents and children in order to bring change.

## **6.0 CONCLUDING STATEMENTS**

### **6.1 DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE**

We should all take part in the CLaT education program because these children will be a blessing to the nation.

### **6.2 GHANA IMMIGRATION SERVICE**

The GIS is going to do their best in combating CLaT and that we (all agencies) should sacrifice and commit efforts into the awareness raising programs.

Parents should be proud and value their children and culture.

### **6.3 GHANA NATIONAL CANOE FISHERMEN COUNCIL**

He said the training given in this meeting is very educative and we should all try every means to stop CLaT because we all know the difficult and unpleasant work these children are engaged in.

### **6.4 NAFPTA REPRESENTATIVE**

She said non-indigenes have been bringing their children into the fishing communities and these children are being denied education but made to work instead. This is therefore tantamount to Child Labor.

The assembly should make sure that these migrants send their children to school and take care of their children.

### **6.5 FRIENDS OF THE NATION**

All agencies should make sure that this meeting brings success and become useful to the nation by fighting against CLaT.

## APPENDIX

**PROGRAM:** Anti Child Labor & Trafficking in Fisheries Policy Socialization.

**VENUE:** Cape-Coast Metropolitan Assembly Hall (Cape-Coast).

**DATE:** Tuesday 24th October, 2017.

**TIME:** 8.30am - 2.00pm.

In attendance (to be invited participants) are

1. District Coordinators of AHTU & DOVVSU (Ghana Police Service).
2. The District Officer of Ghana Immigration Service respectively.
3. District Directorate of Fisheries Commission.
4. Two "respected" chief fishermen each from Cape-Coast Metropolitan, and Komenda-Edina-Eguafo-Abirem Municipal (KEEA) Assemblies (members of Ghana National Canoe Fishermen's Council – GNCFC).
5. Two "respected" female fisher leaders each from Cape-Coast Metropolitan, and Komenda-Edina-Eguafo-Abirem Municipal (KEEA) Assemblies (members of National Association of Fish Processors and Traders' Association - NAFPTA).
6. 7 persons each from representing the 2 respective District Child Protection Committees (Child Panels).
7. Coordinating Directors & Planning Officers the two Assemblies respectively.
8. An officer from the NCCE Officers from the two Assemblies respectively.

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### PROPOSED PROGRAM

#### Anti-CLaT Sensitization Program

<b>8.30am</b>	Arrival and registration		
<b>9.30am</b>	Opening prayer		
<b>9.40am</b>	Intro of participants		GWDA/DSW
	Welcome statement		
<b>9.55am</b>	Purpose of meeting		
<b>10.15am</b>	Statements from state institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Ghana Police Service;</li><li>- Ghana Immig. Service;</li><li>- Dept. of Social Welfare, Assemblies.</li></ul>	
<b>10.45am</b>	Snacks		
<b>11.00am</b>	SFMP-FoN presentation on CLaT situation of the Coastal-Fishing areas	FoN	Kwesi JOHNSON
<b>11.30am</b>	Presentation – Policy on Child Labor in Fisheries	FoN	Kyei Kwadwo YAMOAHA
<b>12.15am</b>	Open Forum		
<b>13.00pm</b>	Concluding statements	GPS; DSW; FoN	
<b>13.15pm</b>	Solidarity statements	GNCFC; NAFPTA; CEWEFIA	
<b>13.30pm</b>	Closing remarks	FoN	
<b>13.45pm</b>	Lunch; Administrative formalities; & Departure		