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SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PROJECT (SFMP)

National High Level Engagement Meetings



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Friends of the Nation

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Cover photo: A cross section of the participants (Credit: EWUR Nana Efua FoN)

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ACRONYMS

CLaT	Child Labor and Trafficking
CR	Central Region
CRC	Coastal Resources Center (of Graduate School of Oceanography); University of Rhode Island
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DA	District Authorities
DSW	Department of Social Welfare
FC	Fisheries Commission
FoN	Friends of Nation
MOFAD	Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Child Labor and Trafficking (CLaT) is a major global problem that governments, civil society and development partners shown grave concern about because of its devastating impact on society. The ILO's 2008 estimates asserts that about 60 percent of the 215 million boys and girls engaged in child labor occur in the agricultural sector (including fishing, aquaculture, livestock and forestry) while UNIDOC reports that a total of 161 countries are identified to be affected by human trafficking by either being a source, transit or destination country. US Department of State data indicates that an estimated 600,000 to 820,000 men, women and children are trafficked across international borders yearly, with approximately 50 percent being minors.

The CLaT situation is worrying for Ghana. The Ghana Statistical Service (GLSS) Round 6 estimated that 2.7 million children were engaged in child labor. Out of this, 1.9 million minors were involved in child labor and 1.2 million in hazardous forms of child labor. The US Department of State Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report (2016) identifies Ghana as a source, transit and destination country for men, women and children who are subjected to forced or sex trafficking and the exploitation occurs more within Ghana than across countries. The TIP report categorizes countries into tiers, based on their governments' efforts to adhere to standards and measurements according to United States' anti-trafficking policies. In total, there are three tiers and since the inception of the TIP reports, Ghana has continuously ranked in the second Tier, despite national legislation and efforts to combat human trafficking (www.state.gov). In 2015, Ghana was placed on the Tier 2 Watch List, which means that the country risks dropping to the third tier. The reason is that the government failed to provide evidence of increasing anti-trafficking efforts compared to the previous year's report (www.state.gov).

Records from Ghana's Ministry of Gender and Social Protection indicates that Child Labor and Trafficking (CLaT) practices are severe in Ghana and about 2 million children are estimated to be trafficked into child labor.

CLaT issues are one of the blotched areas of Ghana's fisheries contributing to Ghana spiraling down on the US State Department Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report Watch-list in June 2016 after two consecutive years which meant the country's authorities were not doing enough in combatting human trafficking, therefore risking sanctions from the donor community, especially the U.S Government (USG).

Ghana in 2018 was upgraded from Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Tier 2 Watch-List to Tier 2 by the US State Department; in its recent report indicating acknowledgement of government and stakeholder efforts to reduce Trafficking in Persons including CLaT. However, human trafficking issues still pose socio-economic challenges to the country with dire implications on national development; particularly Child Trafficking and slavery within the fisheries sector.

USAID-SFMP through its partners FoN, CEWEFIA, DAA and SNV have been implementing anti-child labor and trafficking (CLaT) interventions since 2014 which has contributed to institutional strengthening and awareness raising towards addressing CLaT in coastal districts of the Central Region. Notably, the milestones achieved include:

- Strengthening of District Child Protection Committees/Panels.
- Mobilization and training of community Anti-CLaT Advocates.
- Massive behavior Change communication including Radio and media events, stakeholder sensitization meetings, film shows, community durbars, etc.

- Support to the ten (10) Coastal District of the Central Region to develop anti-CLaT actions in the Medium Term Development Plans (MTDPs 2018 - 2021).

To consolidate the above gains, FoN organized a National level engagement meeting in collaboration with ten Coastal Districts of the Central Region, MOFAD and Department of Social Welfare (DSW). The workshop was designed to assist the Assemblies to design effective "messages" for their outreach programs on CLaT.

At the workshop Chief Executive Officers of District Assemblies along coastal-fishing areas of the Central Region of Ghana have resolved to work with civil society, the National Steering Committees against Child Labor, and Child Trafficking and all other relevant stakeholders to reduce Child Labor and Trafficking (CLaT) in the area.

The National Steering Committee (NSC) advised all stakeholders who aim to implement interventions to combat CLaT to always liaise with them and the Assemblies to increase chances for success, and also be captured as the overall national efforts to combat human trafficking.

1.0 BACKGROUND

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has committed funds to the implementation of the Sustainable Fisheries Management Project (SFMP) in Ghana for five years. The objective is to rebuild marine fisheries stocks and catches through adoption of responsible fishing practices. The project will contribute to the Government of Ghana's fisheries development objectives and USAID's feed the Future Initiative.

As part of the project, partners embark on anti-Child Labor and Trafficking activities to help reduce and subsequently eliminate CLaT activities in the fisheries sector of Ghana.

To consolidate the above gains, FoN organized a National level engagement in collaboration with ten Coastal Districts, MOFAD and Department of Social Welfare (DSW). The workshop was designed to assist the Assemblies to design effective "messages" for their outreach programs on Child Labor and Trafficking in Coastal District in Central Region

1.1 Objectives for the training

The workshop is part of the behavioural change communication campaign (BCCC) to make CLaT practices socially unacceptable. The objective is to specifically provide the platform for the design of communication messages for active implementation of the Anti-CLaT actions proposed in the Medium Term Development Plans of the various assemblies (MDTPS 2018-2021).

1.2 Outcome of the workshop

- Participants especially the Metropolitan, Municipal and the District Chief Executive were enlightened on root causes of child labor and trafficking at source communities in central region.
- Participants were also enlightened on the National Action Plan for Combating Child Trafficking and even requested for copies of the Plan.
- Key messages for anti-CLaT campaign for the anti-CLaT outreach activities were developed.
- Through a film show, participants appreciated the fact that CLaT is a serious issue and that there should be intensive sensitization of CLaT to help eradicate it.

1.3 Engagement approach

A PowerPoint presentation on various topics was developed to guide the process. It was used to allow participants to learn as well as contribute ideas and experiences from their various districts. The National Engagement adopted a participatory and responsive approach that allowed interactive discussion of critical CLaT issues in the fisheries sector. This promoted an enabling and empowering atmosphere for learning and sharing. All participants had an equal chance to participate actively and contribute their views and perspectives in the discussions.

1.4 Participants

The workshop was attended by forty one (41) participants, thirty two (32) male and nine (9) Participants were from the 10 coastal Districts in Central Region namely:

1. Komenda-Edina-Eguafo-Abirem Municipal Assembly (KEEAMA);
2. Cape-Coast Metropolitan Assembly (CCMA);
3. Abura-Asebu-Kwamankese District Assembly (AAKDA);
4. Mfantseman Municipal Assembly MMA);

5. Ekumfi District Assembly (EDA);
6. Gomoa-West District Assembly (GWDA);
7. Effutu Municipal Assembly (EMA);
8. Awutu-Senya District Assembly (ASDA);
9. Gomoa-East District Assembly (GEDA); and
10. Awutu-Senya East Municipal Assembly (ASEMA).

2.0 DETAILED SESSION

2.1 Opening statement

The Executive Director for Friends of the Nation, Mr. Donkris Mevuta welcomed participants to the workshop. He was delight of meeting participants once again after the last workshop on August 2018 to develop Action Plans. He said, Ghana has been listed for three unprecedented” times (3 years) consecutively (2014 and 2016) on the global US Department of State’s Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Watchlist Tier Two (as not doing enough to combat human trafficking – specifically prosecuting and convicting offenders). But due to the efforts of all especially the 10 coastal Districts in Central Region, Ghana has been removed from the watch list. He applause all especially for the actions taken to eradicate CLaT especially incorporating CLaT issues into their MTDP for 2018-2021.

Mr. Donkris mentioned that the workshop aimed at developing key message which is in line with the root cause of CLaT for outreach programs towards implementation of CLaT activities in the Medium Term Development Plans.

2.2 Film show

The film was a documentary of child labor and trafficking in the central region and was put together by Christian Council and international organization for migration (IOM). The film was titled the ‘Fisher Boys’ and was put together in 2008. According to the video, it was evidence that, in the coastal communities in Central Region, children were engaged in fishing from one location to the other. Many of these children were taken from the central region in the coastal community to Yeji to be used as divers to remove tree stumps, canoe paddlers, amending nets etc. Many of these children as shown in the video have been affected by these fishing activities which led to loss of lives and others deformed.

Most participants described the pain they went through when they were watching the film. A participant said “I cannot carry a child for nine months and let him go through this trauma”

2.3 Overview of SFMP Anti-CLaT intervention: Community – District – National levels

Mr. Kwesi Johnson (Anti CLaT Advocacy Officer at FoN) then gave on update on the five years of the Sustainable Fisheries Management Project (USAID-SFMP) from October 2014 to September 2019. He said that though it is fishing project, it has Anti-CLaT component as a Behavioral Change Communication (BCC) prevention program to make the issue and its practice socially unacceptable applying evidence-based information.

The project has engaged the Assemblies and other relevant stakeholders in training programs to support communities in dissemination of information to reduce and eventually eliminate CLaT. Through the assistance of the project, a total of ten (10) Metropolitan-Municipal-District Assemblies (MMDAs) have incorporated CLaT issues into their Medium Term Development Plans (MTDPs 2018-2021).

A number of officers from the Marine Unit of the Ghana Police Service have also been sensitized on CLaT in fisheries issues (these police personnel have been vetted and cleared of any violation of human rights therefore making it officially possible to train them with US Government funds. These police officers in turn have been sensitizing their colleagues, assisting in anti-CLaT enforcement in the coastal-fishing communities especially in the Greater-Accra and Western Regions, and also on the Volta Lake.

The ten Assemblies now have allocated budget for anti-CLaT related activities in their Medium Term Development Plans (2018-2021)



Figure 1. Mr. Kwesi Johnson making a presentation



Figure 2. Mrs. Elizabeth Akanbombire, Head of Child Labour Unit at MELR, giving her presentation

2.4 Presentation on National Action Plan 2 (2017 – 2021): Opportunities for local Government Actors

In a presentation Mrs. Elizabeth Akanbombire of the Labour Department of Ministry of Employments and Labour Relation (MELR), representing the National Steering Committee and Child Labor (NSCACL) spoke on the need for stakeholders to coordinate their activities. She urged participants to place emphasis on action at the community level.

Madam Elizabeth Akanbombire said the main objective of National Plan of Action (NPA) is to reduce the rate of child labor and to promote Integrated Area-base Approach (IAA) towards the creation of child labor-free zones. She reiterated that the NPA1 had some flaws and therefore there was the need for NPA2.

Mrs Akanbombire said in 2000, Ghana signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the ILO for technical support to build national capacity to eliminate the WFCL. This MOU resulted in the establishment of a focal point, National Committee for coordination and designing strategies to facilitate the elimination process. Several state agencies came together with collaborative programs which were implemented leading to the development of NPA1 and now NPA2. She said significant gains were made during the implementation of NPA1. The plan provided an all-encompassing framework that linked the various policies, legal and institutional elements designed to improve the welfare of children. Again both the process of its development and implementation fostered an accelerated collaboration among government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs). It enhanced coordination thereby improving synergies among public institutions tasked with the responsibility of child protection and development. It also provided a focus for government partnership with civil society, Social Partners and international organizations working to improve the wellbeing of children. Very importantly, NPA1 helped to enhance awareness and established child labor as a topical national issue. She said the main Challenges of NPA1 includes; Inadequate resources, weak coordination, weak monitoring etc. and hoped that this challenges will be minimize during the implementation of NPA 2. She concluded that the various district should collaborate with the national office to help reduce child labor and trafficking in the country at large.

Questions, comments, clarification:

- A participant requested the need for resending document on the NPA2 to the Assembly because some officer have been transferred.
- A suggesting was me to steering committee to purchase motor bike if they do not funds to purchase 4wheel drives.
- There is the need to categorized district/ communities so that communities from far end can be reached.

2.5 Strategy on anti-child labor and trafficking in fisheries (towards the eradication of CLaT in Ghanaian fishing communities) – Mr. Damoah FC

Mr. Kwame Damoah the Deputy Regional Director of Fisheries Commission made a presentation on the activities of his outfit that inures to the combatting of CLaT. The Commission has been supported by the USAID-SFMP to assist female fish processors in their business. Women have been trained in resource management, and also been provided the energy-efficient stoves and trays (dubbed “Ahotor Stove”) for smoking and keeping their fish hygienically safe. He also said, in the next three (3) years, the Commission will expect everyone to smoke their fish on the stove (for hygiene purposes) else their fish will not be permitted on the market. The Ministry also plans to support coastal inhabitants to diversify their livelihood activities starting 2019 to go into salt production (with the District

Assemblies providing the “salt pans” and the Commission support with the technical training).

Since it has come out clearly that CLaT in the fisheries sector is linked to dwindling fish harvest induced poverty, if the above programs are implemented well, and also implemented in consonance with “Strategy on Anti-Child Labor and Trafficking in Fisheries” document produced by the USAID-SFMP, CLaT will be drastically reduced and eventually eliminated from fisheries in Ghana he added.

Mr. Kwame Damoah concluded that statistics indicate that fishing business has reduced in the coastal area resulting in child labor. He said the Ministry will employ educational campaign on social media as one of its strategies to combat CLaT in fisheries.

Commenting on Mr. Damoah’s presentation, Madam Victoria Natsu of the Ministry of Gender Children and Social Protection and a member of the NSCACL urged MMDCEs to be abreast with CLaT issues. She advised them to assist in the fight and required of them to provide transportation (e.g. motorbikes and motor-tricycles) to help the process. Fishing is one of the worst forms of child labor and is a definite “no-no” for children in all jurisdictions globally.

Questions / comments/ clarification:

- What is the meaning of MSC patrol boat?

Answer: Monitoring Control Surveillance Unit.

- Based on your staff strength and logistical issue and other challenges, we were still able to implement all your activities. Was it by magic?

Answer: All wasn’t achieved by magic but by perseverance and hard work. Fisheries Commission are working with NAPCO and National Service Person.

- How far has Fisheries Commission collaborated with other stakeholders?

Answer: The collaboration is centered at the Regional level and not District. This is because Fisheries Commission is not decentralized.

- How do you support people on aquaculture?

Answer: Fisheries Commission gives them education and assists them in the selection of appropriate site.

2.6 Underlying issues driving CLaT at source communities (in Central Region)

Mr Kwesi Johnson took participants through this session. He said FoN and partners under the auspices of the USAID-SFMP conducted comprehensive assessment of the problem between October 2014 and July 2015. Underlying factors through surveys, community interaction and stakeholder engagements has come out clearly as:

- Large family sizes.
- Negative cultural practices.
- Illiteracy.
- Poor parenting.
- Weak community leadership.
- Depleting fish harvests (poverty and deprivation).
- Institutional and regulatory inadequacies (capacities, logistics, motivation, etc.).
- Inadequate service provision (e.g. GHS, GES, enforcement).

- Ignorance (e.g. of the law and availability of social services at the Assemblies like LEAP).

Teenage pregnancy in the coastal-fishing areas (through fish for sex phenomenon) is rampant. Access to and utilization of sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services is negligible. Large family sizes causes poverty in the face of “many mouths to feed”.



Figure 3. Mr. Johnson and cross session of participants listening with rap attention.

2.7 Message development: drafting of key messages for communication outreach

Participants were taken through how to develop key message for outreach programs by Madam Sarah Agbey. She made participants understands that communication is the transmission of ideas and information. Participants were also taken through strategies for good messaging and basic message.

Under the basic message, she said one has to identify what the message intends to achieve and its target audience. She narrow it down to developing messages under CLaT. She explained that the message should be positive and inspiring, provide evidence to back the need for change. The message should have tell the target group specific things that needs to be change. At the end of her presentation, participants were urged to craft culturally sensitize messages and make sure it is clear to the audience using the nine underlying causes of CLaT that was highlighted in Mr. Johnson’ (i.e. poor parenting, large family size, illiteracy etc.).

2.8 Collation and review of communication messages (for outreach programs in 2019 and beyond).

All participants were tasked to develop communication message based on the nine underlying causes of CLaT in central Region.

Various district group leaders were called upon to present their messages. This session gave others the opportunity to help shape the communication messages of various groups that presented.



Figure 4. A participant making a presentation on the District Key message



Figure 5. Participants from Abura Aseibu Kwawmankese presenting their key messages

Table 1 Messages Developed by the Ten Coastal District In Central Region

S/N	ISSUES	MESSAGES							
1.	Institutional and regulatory irregularities	Strengthen institutions to implements regulation	Bad leadership retard community development	Weak institution encourage wrong doing	Empowered institution and good regulation builds society	Protecting us is your responsibility	Police is your friend report CLaT		
	Fanti								
2.	Negative cultural practices	Our culture must protect our future	Right to life is not an option	Bad cultural practices affect future leaders negatively	Our cultural practices must promote socio-economic developments	My rights my future	Our way of life must make our children better	Negative cultural practices is a bane to development	
	Fanti	Hen ammambr3 maa hen daakye pa		Amanbr3 b)ne sie mbofra abrabo pa					
3.	Large family size	More children more burden	Small family size quality life	Small family size enhance success	Fewer children well manage	More children more troubles	Quality in children and not quantity	More children abstract developments	Plan your family
4.	Fanti	Awododo dze)haw ba	Abusua ketiwa ma asetenapa		Won mba sua, wonsa kora hun do				

S/N	ISSUES	MESSAGES							
5.	Institutional and regulatory irregularities	Strengthen institutions to implements regulation	Bad leadership retard community development	Weak institution encourage wrong doing	Empowered institution and good regulation builds society	Protecting us is your responsibility	Police is your friend report CLaT		
	Fanti								
6.	Negative cultural practices	Our culture must protect our future	Right to life is not an option	Bad cultural practices affect future leaders negatively	Our cultural practices must promote socio-economic developments	My rights my future	Our way of life must make our children better	Negative cultural practices is a bane to development	
	Fanti	Hen ammambr3 maa hen daakye pa		Amanbr3 b)ne sie mbofra abrabo pa					
7.	Large family size	More children more burden	Small family size quality life	Small family size enhance success	Fewer children well manage	More children more troubles	Quality in children and not quantity	More children abstract developments	Plan your family
	Fanti	Awododo dze)haw ba	Abusua ketiwa ma asetenapa		Won mba sua, wonsa kora hun do				

S/N	ISSUES	MESSAGES							
8.	Illiteracy	Be able to read, write and function	Education our future	Lack of knowledge children perish	If education is expensive try ignorance	Education is the key to life time opportunities	Say no to illiteracy say yes to education	My education my future	Knowledge open doors
	Fanti								
9.	Inadequate service provision	Poor servers delivery hinders developments	Support parent to protect children	Inadequate service provision retard developments					
	Fanti								
10	Depletion of fish	Depletion of fish brings poverty	Catch matured fish leave the fingerlings for future	Fight illegal fishing to fight CLaT	Bad fishing practice depletes the fish	Work had catch for your children	Sustainable fishing the best practice		
	Fanti								
11	Poverty and Deprivation	Poverty affect good lifespan and developments	Giving your children away does not take away poverty	Think you are poor and you will be poor, think you are rich and you will be rich	Fight poverty with your talents	You are what you think	Protect your children you matter what happens	Poverty is not an excuse	Poverty deprives better future for the children
	Fanti								

S/N	ISSUES	MESSAGES							
12	Poor parenting	I stand for good parenting	Better care for children good foundation for developments	Secure your future with your children	Children our future to success	Good quality parenting key to success	Responsibly parenting benefits society	Children's values reflect parents values	Children our greatest assert
	Fanti								
13	Weak community leadership	The future of our children is in our own hands	Good governance bring developments	Be a role model	Save our children save our future	A good leader protect children	Strong leaders breeds confidence and developments	Protect us we are the future	Bad leadership retards community developments

3.0 CONCLUSION

The meeting concluded that there was the urgent need for stakeholders to work to support government to implement the Anti-child labor policy for the fisheries sector to ensure that CLaT practices become socially unacceptable.

The meeting also emphasized the need for District Assemblies to collaborate with the National Steering committees on CLaT, the Social Welfare Department and the security agencies to implement the anti-CLaT actions in their MDTP to contribute to combat all forms of Child Labor and Trafficking in the respective Districts.