

## NEWSLETTER

Project Update – June to November 2021

Issue 05

### INTRODUCTION

The Power to the Fishers (PTF) project seeks to enhance the socio-economic livelihood of fishing communities within selected districts of the coastal savannah zone of Ghana. Welcome to the June–November 2021 newsletter which presents updates on the activities and progress of the project.

For further information about the PTF project, visit:

[www.powertothefishers.com](http://www.powertothefishers.com)

### GREEN GHANA DAY



*Tree planting at Muni-Pomadzie Ramsar Site to commemorate the Green Ghana Day.*

In June, the Power to the Fishers project joined in the commemoration of the Green Ghana Day (GGD). The Government of Ghana (GoG), as part of national efforts to mitigate the effects of climate change, organized a nationwide afforestation campaign dubbed: “Green Ghana Day”. This campaign was to plant no less than 5 million trees in a day (i.e., Friday, 11 June 2021).



*Cross section of participants at MPRS for the Green Ghana Day*

GGD tied in strongly with one of project’s expected outcomes — enhancing coastal resilience to climate change. In line with this, the PTF team joined the Forestry Commission at Winneba (a beneficiary community) to plant some 5,000 tree seedlings within the Muni-Pomadzie Ramsar Site (MPRS). Participating in the exercise were the community folk and other well-meaning institutions: Effutu Municipal Assembly, Effutu Traditional Council, National Disaster Management Organization (NADMO), University of Education Winneba (UEW), among others.

### EDUCATION ON THE 2021 FISHERIES CLOSED SEASON

The project collaborated with the Fisheries Commission (FC) to carry out a week-long community awareness and public sensitization on the 2021 fisheries closed season. The activity, carried out in June, was to orient fisherfolk on the impending season.

The closed season, which was scheduled and observed from 1<sup>st</sup>-31<sup>st</sup> July, is in line with government and stakeholders' efforts at salvaging Ghana's collapsing fisheries and replenishing fish stock.



*Radio broadcast at Kingdom FM on the impending closed season.*

The sensitization commenced with a radio discussion and phone-in session on Kingdom FM (a local radio station). This was followed with an information van moving through the principal streets of the coastal communities announcing the impending closed season. Groups of fisherfolk along the coast were engaged and educated on the relevance of the closed season, its span, and misconceptions about the management intervention. The activity was concluded with the dissemination of communication materials (fliers and posters) on the closed season.



*Closed season sensitization within the community of Dago.*

An estimated 680 households were reached across 15 project communities in the Central Region.



*Posting of 'closed season' stickers at vantage points in Apam community.*

## **MID-TERM EVALUATION OF THE PTF PROJECT**



*Mid-term evaluation session at Woarabeba community*

The project team, through a competitive tender process, engaged the services on a third-party entity to conduct a mid-term evaluation of the project. The exercise, carried out in June, was to assess the level of completion, results & impacts attained, and proffer recommendations for the remaining term of the project.

The independent evaluation was carried out by the Centre for Learning & Studies (CLS), and engaged beneficiaries across the 5 project districts. Providing information for the evaluation were the lead fisherfolk, fishmongers, members of the project's learning groups, and members of the PTF-formed village savings & loans associations (VSLA). The evaluation also reached out to



institutions collaborating with the project, which include the Fisheries Commission (FC), Centre for Coastal Management (CCM), and the Gomoa West District Office of the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA). Feedback from the evaluation will guide the project team's next line of actions towards the realization of expected results.

## **PREMIX RESEARCH & DATA COLLECTION**



*Premix data collection at Senya Bereku*

The team carried out a data collection exercise towards a research study on premix administration and access. Using purposive sampling, the team engaged 114 canoe owners and fish mummies in some 8 vibrant fishing communities.



*Premix data collection at Shama Apo*

Expert interviews were also conducted with personnel from the National Premix Authority (NPA), Canoe and Fishing Gear Owners Association, Friends of Nation (FoN), Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF), and

the (now-ended) Sustainable Fisheries Management Project (SFMP)

Prior to the data collection, preliminary engagements were held with fisherfolk in James Town. This was followed by the development of data collection tools, and a pre-test of the questionnaire was done in Nyananor, a fishing community in the Central Region.

Data collected will be analyzed, and the resulting report published and shared with stakeholders.

## **PTF COLLABORATES WITH THE GREEN PROJECT**



*Enterprise development training at Amenano community.*

PTF partnered with the GrEEn Project to carry out enterprise development training for communities in the Shama District. In minimizing issues of effort duplication and with Shama District being a target area for both interventions, the PTF project and the GrEEn project (also with funding from the EU) teamed up to offer joint training (from June to September) to beneficiaries, especially women and youth, on enterprise development.

The GrEEn project seeks to enhance the entrepreneurial prowess of the youth of the Western and Ashanti regions of Ghana, as well as contribute to the reduction of unemployment in Ghana. The training covered

time management, good records keeping, and financial management. Numbers trained, within this period, under the collaboration are 292 community folk.



*Training on enterprise development with the people of Anlo Beach.*

## INTERACTION WITH STUDENT RESEARCHERS



*Interaction session with the PTF student researchers.*

In August, the project team had its first interaction session with student researchers from CCM. In line with the collaboration between CDO and CCM, CCM advertised, interviewed and recruited 5 graduate (M.Phil) students for research funding. The research funding is being provided by the PTF project.

The meeting allowed for first-hand interaction between the project team and the recruited student researchers. The selected research topics and anticipated outcomes were discussed, as well as the project's expectations

of the students. The project team further made inputs to the respective research studies. The research outcomes will contribute to the body of knowledge, as well as incorporated into project implementation.



*Group picture with personnel of CCM and the student researchers*

The table below shows the list of students and their respective research topics.

Research Topic	Student Researcher
Assessing the contribution of traditional fish smoking to climate change	George Raymond Eshun
Climate adaptation strategies among fisherfolks in coastal communities of Ghana	Iddrisu Salifu
Assessment of livelihood vulnerability in selected districts of coastal Ghana	Nana Obeng Adu-Agyei
A study of the shelf-life & economic incentives for fishes smoked using improved oven and traditional oven in coastal Ghana	Samuel Bridge Nkansah
An investigation into the microbiology of fishes smoked using improved oven and the traditional oven in coastal Ghana	Jefferson Abeiku Ikediuba

## TRAINING ON FISH HANDLING

Within the period under review, the project team continued with its training of fishmongers on appropriate fish handling. The training, which were fully hands-on,



were carried out in the newly built PTF fish smoking centers.



*Fish handling training with fish processors of the Ekumipoano community.*

Participants were taken through hygiene practices prior to processing fish, prepping & utilization of the ovens, packaging of the smoked fish, and safety concerns around open flames. Participants were further trained on proper disposal of fish waste.



*Training on good fish packaging with Otuam fish processors.*

The training, which was carried out in Senya Bereku, Winneba, Mankoadze, Dago, and Kesewokan saw 101 fishmongers trained.

## **ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION WITH MoGCSP**

The team had a roundtable discussion with the Ministry of Gender, Children & Social Protection (MoGCSP) on a communique submitted to the Ministry. The roundtable discussion, held in August, was a result of a panel discussion on social protection for fisherfolk held earlier in the year. The panel

discussion was on the theme: “*Consolidating gains in social protection coverage within fishing communities in the wake of COVID-19 and beyond*”.

The feedback from stakeholders present at the panel discussion were put into a communique which was published and further shared with MoGCSP.



*Roundtable discussion with MoGCSP on social protection concerns within fisheries.*

The roundtable discussion sought to bring to the Ministry’s attention the recommendation proffered by stakeholders and affirm the Ministry’s support in realizing these recommendations. The Ministry assured the project team of incorporating the recommendations into its programming, as well as collaborating with the PTF project in this regard.

## **ORIENTATION ON FPCs & DEVELOPMENT OF MANAGEMENT REGIME**

In facilitating the efficient use of the smoking centres, an orientation of the fish processing centres (FPC) was conducted for the learning groups and community fish processors. The orientation was to acquaint community folk on the set-up of the facility and prescribed activities within the center.

The FPCs, built to ensure unidirectional flow of commodities, have 4 separate entry/exit doorways for specific use. The unidirectional flow is to safeguard the integrity of finished products by averting

cross contamination. There are 2 entry doorways – fish entry and operator entry. The centers also have 2 exits – waste exit and finished product exit. The centers are equipped with a fish reception room and ice chests which receive and provide cold storage to the fish.



*Development of the management regime with fish processors of Otuam community.*

As part of the engagement and employing participatory rural appraisal (PRA), the team discussed with participants management protocols to guide the communal utilization of the centers. Among the things discussed and agreed on were the facility user fee to be charged, days that the center should be open to communal use, and general conduct within the facility. A total of 120 fish processors across 6 project communities participated in the engagements.



*Community members being oriented on the various parts of the FPC at Kesewokan.*

## **EU WORKSHOP ON COMMUNICATIONS & VISIBILITY**

The PTF project team joined other EU-funded interventions to participate in a Communications and Visibility Workshop hosted by the European Union Delegation. This was held at Accra City Hotel. The workshop sought to train EU implementing partners on EU's visibility rules & expectations, disseminate best practices, and strengthen networks between the projects.



*EU communication and visibility workshop. © EU*

The 2-day event – 1 & 2 September 2021 – took participants through requirements for EU communication & visibility, techniques in enhancing social media engagements, use of some IT tools & resources (including Canva), and strategies to awareness creation.

## **OPERATIONALIZATION OF SMOKING CENTRES**

The last week of October saw the operationalization of PTF-inaugurated smoking centres. Under the first phase of operationalization, the project team is piloting 3 centres out of the 6 that have been built. These 3 centres are those located in the Senya Bereku, Winneba, and Kesewokan communities.



To identify workhands to man the facilities, headhunting of suitable candidates was carried out. Interested candidates were then vetted.



*Workhands smoking fish at the Kesewokan FPC.*

The smoking centres are running a commercial model that has seen the recruitment of 6 personnel as workhands. The workhands are provided with funds to purchase and smoke fresh fish, as well as ensure fish sale. Remuneration is on a commission basis. Revenue realized is reinjected into the smoking venture to ensure continuity of operations.

Lessons learnt from the pilot will inform the full-scale operationalization of the 6 centres.

## **VSLA MONITORING ACTIVITIES & DATA COLLECTION**



*Share purchase meeting of 'Abotare' VSLA at Otuam*

Within this reporting period, the project team embarked on several scheduled visits to the formed VSLAs to monitor activities

of the groups. The team joined the VSLAs to observe some meetings of theirs and these included select share purchase meetings and loan meetings. These visits were to assess the organization of meetings, capture of entries within record books, and prescribe needed corrections & corrective actions



*Data capture on 'Nyame Nti' VSLA at Senya Beraku.*

In addition to that, the team visited the groups at the 90-day and 180-day of VSLA formation. These defined quarterly visits were to capture data on inflows (share purchase, social fund, and fines) and outflows (loans) made by the groups. Data obtained is used to determine the financial performance or health of the groups.

At the end of 180 days, the 15 VSLAs had raised a cumulative figure of over GHS 75,000. The highest performing VSLA as at the end of the 180 days, Nyame Nti VSLA (in the Senya Bereku community), had raised GHS 13,505.

## **EU VERIFICATION MISSION OF THE PTF PROJECT**

In the first week of November, the European Union Delegation conducted a verification of the PTF project. This was to provide the EU with firsthand information on the PTF

implementation status and collect necessary feedback from project beneficiaries. Representing the EU were Christopher Ackon and Valerie Hairson.



*EU representative interacting with members of the learning group in Dago community.*

The week-long evaluation started with an office verification which saw the PTF team make a presentation to the team from EU on the project implementation status. The 1-day office verification also saw the team from EU reviewing the project's financial books. The office verification was followed by a 4-day field assessment that took the EU team through Senya Bereku, Effutu, Gomoa West, Ekumfi, and Shama districts. The field assessment afforded the EU team the opportunity to inspect the 6 FPCs, engage with a section of project collaborators, and interact with community beneficiaries.



*Group picture with the EU representatives and the NHIA district manager for Gomoa West.*

Project collaborators engaged include the CCM, Gomoa West District NHIA office, and the Ekumfi Zonal FC office. Community beneficiaries interacted with included members of the 'Kesewokan' VSLA in the

Kesewokan community, stove hosts within the Mumford community, and members of the learning group in Mankwadze community, among others.

## **COMMUNITY LEARNING SESSION ON PTF IMPLEMENTATION STATUS**



*Learning session with community members at Dago.*

Also in November, community learning sessions (CLS) were organized for project beneficiaries. The CLS was organized to orient community leadership, direct project beneficiaries, and community members on the PTF journey from its commencement in June 2019 to date. The set of engagements was targeted at reigniting communal interest and commitment to the PTF project by walking beneficiaries through the activities carried out, realized outcomes, and intended impacts of the project. Since the communities are key project stakeholders, it is advantageous to bring them up to date on the progress status of the project.

As part of the CLS sessions, participants were once again taken through project's objectives, targets, and result areas. Activities engaged in over the period were called to memory. Additionally, a snapshot of milestones attained and successes realized were brought to the attention of the communities. This is of great import since



some beneficiaries are not privy to attained milestones in the other project communities.



*Learning session with community folk at Woorabeba.*

CLS are avenues that the project team engages community folk to share key lessons and findings relating to project implementation. A prior CLS organized was on the baseline findings.

## **SHARE-OUT FOR 'EBENEZER' AND 'KUROYE' VSLAs**

Of the 15 formed VSLAs, 2 observed their 'end of cycle' in November. At formation, the 2 VSLAs - 'Kuroye' and 'Ebenezer' VSLAs – agreed to run their first cycle for 9 months, and November marked their ninth month.



*'Ebenezer' VSLA share-out at Mankwadze community.*

The Ebenezer VSLA is based in the Mankwadze community with a membership strength of 16 and a share value of GHS 5. On the other hand, Kuroye, a fishermen-only group, is based in the Dago community, had 12 members, and a share value of GHS 10. After diligently conducting share-purchase meetings for 9 months (as well as generating interest on loans issued), Ebenezer and Kuroye VSLAs raised GHS 9,140 and GHS 4,830 respectively.



*'Jkyeso' VSLA share-out in the Dago community.*

For the Ebenezer VSLA, the highest contributors received GHS 970, whilst Kuroye saw the highest contributors getting GHS 750 at share-out. Both groups are excited to commence their next cycle such that the groups have appointed executives in wait of the coming cycle. Additionally, the Kuroye VSLA has decided to utilize its social fund (from the just-ended cycle) as seed capital for the second cycle.

## **RECONNAISSANCE VISIT BY RESERARCH STUDENTS**

To finish of the reporting period, the student researchers from CCM embarked on a reconnaissance visit to the PTF project communities.



*Student researchers interacting with community members in Mumford.*

The reconnaissance visit was to provide an opportunity for the students to familiarize and interact with the community leadership, fisherfolk, and members of the project's learning groups. The visit further provided an avenue for the students to explore the project landscapes.



*Interaction between the students and community members of Anlo Beach*

Interactions between the students and the community folk centered on fisherfolk livelihoods, post-harvest practices, technology adoption, and impacts of climate change. Feedback garnered from the visit will guide the research methodologies and sampling techniques that will be utilized by the student researchers.

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