



FEED THE FUTURE

The U.S. Government's Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative

Vol. 1 (2)

Our Fish. Our Coast. Our Future.

Campaign against Child Labor and Trafficking Yields Results

...as Victims Speak Out



Child labor victim-turned Advocate (Kojo Mensah), at home with his grandmother in Moree, a coastal fishing village in Central Region - Ghana

Kojo Mensah was only 12 years old when he was trafficked from Moree in the Central Region of Ghana to neighboring Liberia; a distance of about 1200km by flight. He had to endure hard labor and was thrown overboard into the deep seas by his crew captain at 3:00 AM, during a fishing trip. "I swam for a long time and was fortunately rescued and brought back to Ghana by a Ghanaian fishing boat that came passing by," said Kojo. "I am now an advocate; thanks to this fisheries project and sharing my story on different platforms." Three children have been rescued as at September 2016, owing to his advocacy. Experience is indeed the best teacher!

USAID Awards 5 Full Scholarships for Higher Education at Rhode Island

Five Ghanaian professionals have benefitted from full scholarships to pursue Doctoral and Masters Degrees in marine fisheries sciences, marine policy and fish genetics at the University of Rhode Island (URI), USA. See full story on page 2



President of URI – Dr. Dooley (middle) in a pose with scholarship beneficiaries during a trip to Ghana to strengthen academic ties with Ghanaian universities



Ambassador Jackson (3rd from left) in a pose with child labor advocates in Elmina coastal fishing community. With him are: USAID Mission Director (Andy Karas -left); Kojo Mensah; Araba Takyiwaa (Advocate from Elmina – 3rd from right); Mrs Jackson and Adjetey Annang – Ghanaian movie star and project Anti Child Labor Icon.

The US Ambassador to Ghana – Robert P. Jackson, has added his voice to the campaign against Child Labor and Trafficking calling on parents to provide a conducive environment for children to access basic education and develop well instead of trafficking them to labor in dangerous environments in the name of poverty. **Cont'd on page 4**

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October, 2016

Bi-Annual Newsletter



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



USAID Awards Five Full Scholarships

(Cont'd from front page)

The awards were given under the auspices of two USAID-funded projects – the Ghana Sustainable Fisheries Management Project (SFMP) and the University of Cape Coast (UCC) Fisheries and Coastal Management Capacity Strengthening Project; both projects fall under the US Government's Feed the Future Initiative.

The awardees were selected from a pool of applicants by a five-member selection committee established by SFMP and UCC to review, evaluate and select the qualified candidates and will spend between 2 and 4 years in Rhode Island for their graduate studies beginning September 2016.

The committee selected Mr. Evans Arizi from University of Cape Coast (UCC) to pursue a PhD in Fisheries Stock Assessment; Mrs. Vida Osei of the Fisheries Commission's Fisheries Statistical Survey Division to pursue a Masters' degree in the same area of study. In addition the committee awarded two scholarships for Masters' degree in Marine Affairs to Mrs. Rosina Cobbinah from the Fisheries Committee of the West Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC) and to Ms. Ivy Gyimah from UCC, Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences. Lastly Ms. Evelyn Takyi of UCC, Department of Molecular Biology was selected to pursue a Masters' degree in fish genetics.

Fisheries Watchdog Committee Pilot Program Ready for Launching

A community Fisheries Watchdog Committee (FWC) program being piloted in two focal areas – Ada and James Town fishing communities, in Greater Accra, will launch early 2016. A total of 50 volunteers, who are fisher folk, selected from 18 communities in the two pilot sites, have been trained will aid law enforcement agencies in educating fisher folk on fisheries regulations and their rationale and provide eyes and ears on the ground to assist in detection and response to illegal fishing activities. The FWC is an initiative of the Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development and the Fisheries Commission in collaboration with USAID/Ghana SFMP. The pilot initiative is being modeled

Closed Season in August for All Fisheries is Ideal for Rebuilding Stocks

A Scientific and Technical Working Group (STWG) formed under the USAID/Ghana SFMP to provide science-based fisheries management advice to the Fisheries Commission (based on the best available scientific information), has proposed that a closed fishing season in August for all fisheries except Tuna, is an ideal management solution to Ghana's collapsing fishery. The month of August was found to be crucial for pelagic fish stocks because it coincides with the peak of their breeding period which is known to increase reproductive success without fishermen's disturbances.

The STWG is composed of members from the Fisheries Commission, scientists from the University of Ghana and the University of Cape Coast as well as members of the artisanal and industrial fishing sectors.

The recommended proposal stems from recent work by the group, which examined existing data and studies on small pelagic fish stocks (*sardinella*, anchovies and mackerel). The studies revealed that in the month of August, large schools of fish aggregate and migrate close to the shores making fish vulnerable and more abundant in all around fish markets. The price often goes down due to the large supply and limited processing capacity. Women processors claim that they prefer to avoid smoking small pelagic fishes during the month of August when fish are full of eggs due to their low meat quality and market value.

The STWG estimated that if the closure is implemented for one month, we should see substantial benefits for rebuilding depleted fish stocks and will eventually increase production, revenues and create a healthy fishing businesses in the long-term.

after the successful Philippine *Bantay Dagat* (Guardians of the Sea) program; an outcome of a high-level study tour to the Philippines, funded by USAID SFMP and the World Bank West African Regional Fisheries Project, WARFP. Upon the launch, FWC volunteers, will be mandated to conduct seaborne and land-based patrols; community education campaigns against illegal fishing and report illegal activities to enforcement agencies, while collecting evidence for arrest and prosecutions.

SFMP IN PICTURES

USAID/Ghana SFMP Donates Vehicles to Strengthen Enforcement



A total of 4 vehicles were donated to the Fisheries Commission's Fisheries Enforcement Unit, Ghana, in May 2016, to enhance enforcement and compliance of Fisheries Laws.

Minister of Fisheries (Mad. Sherry Ayittey) in a handshake with Environmental Specialist - USAID/Ghana Economic Growth office (Mr. Justice Odoi). Looking on: Director of Fisheries Commission (Mr. Samuel Quaatey – left) and Chief of Party, SFMP (Dr. Brian Crawford).

USAID/Ghana SFMP Participates in Elmina 'Bakatue' Festival



The Elmina Festival is popularly referred to as Bakatue (literally meaning 'draining of the lagoon'). It is celebrated every first Friday in the Month of July to offer sacrifices to deities for a bountiful fishing season. The festival ushers the people into the fish bumper season - July/August.

USAID SFMP made a pronounced presence at the Elmina Festival 2016. Fisheries management messages displayed at the event were the highlight of the day, moving some dignitaries to address fisheries issues in their speeches. Participation in the festival is intended to build more stakeholder support for project goals of rebuilding Ghana's marine fisheries stocks, which are important to local food security.

Photo Description (Top left & right – Fisher folk parade on the water in rich traditional clothes. Lower left – Placard walk by fish processors. Lower right – Regatta on lagoon in project-branded canoes.) Photo Credit: Yooku Atta-Bedu, (USAID/Ghana) and Patricia Aba Mensah (SFMP)

High Profile SFMP Visits



President of the University of Rhode Island – USA, Dr. David Dooley (left) and team visit Ghana to strengthen academic ties with the University of Cape Coast and others; signs MOU with UCC's Department of Fisheries. Vice-Chancellor of UCC – Prof. D. D. Kuupole in handshake with Dr. Dooley after signing MOU



U.S. Embassy Chargé d'Affaires in Ghana (2nd left), visits Elmina focal area. A pupil from the CEWEFIA NGO Fish Processors School welcomes her. Also in the photo are Kevin Sharp – Director, USAID/Ghana Economic Growth Office (3rd left) and the CEWEFIA team.

U.S Ambassador Advocates against Child Labor and Trafficking... *(Cont'd from front page)*

“As it is with fish, so it is with children. Big is Good; Small is Bad! Just as we should not harvest the juvenile fish, so must we leave children in their home environment with their families to enjoy all the basic necessities of childhood; so they can develop well instead of sending them away into child labor,” he stressed. Ambassador Jackson made the call during a visit to Elmina; an important fishing port in the Central Region and a focal site of the USAID/Ghana funded Sustainable Fisheries Management Project (SFMP). The project is implemented by the Coastal Resources Center (CRC) at the Graduate School of Oceanography, University of Rhode Island.

As of 2016, Ghana has for two years in a row been classified as a Tier 2 Watch List Country by a US State Department as detailed in the most recent Trafficking in Persons Report; which concluded that the Government of Ghana does not meet all the minimum requirements for the elimination of trafficking in persons. Under US law, a classification for a third year in a row could result in significant reductions in US foreign assistance to Ghana.

Answers to Crossword Puzzle Vol I (I)

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Fisheries Reportage shoots up as Ghana Journalists Set the Pace for Africa

The average percentage change of media publications on fisheries issues, is about a whopping 390 per cent between the period of October 2015 and same period in 2016. This is according to project monitoring of both electronic and print media



Publications on fisheries. This breakthrough is largely owed to consistent engagement of journalists under the USAID-funded Sustainable Fisheries Management Project (SFMP). Consequently, a Network of Ghana Journalists for Sustainable Fisheries has been formed with about 40 members who are part of the group’s social media platform. Hitherto, fisheries issues were given low priority in the media.

Ten of the journalists participated in an African Journalists for Sustainable Fisheries Conference, hosted in Ghana in March 2015 and shared their experiences with about 100 participants, drawn from 50 African countries. The conference, organized by the African Union Inter-African Bureau of Animal Resources and the World Bank, culminated in the creation of a social media platform for the African Journalists. A committee was also formed and tasked to develop modalities for formalizing the existence of the African platform, drawing experiences from other relevant groups such as the Ghana network. A member of the Ghana network serves on the Committee. The Ghana journalists’ network is a highly motivated group that has engendered the generation of diverse media publication on fisheries in recent times.

