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SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PROJECT (SFMP)

Report On Illegal, Unreported And Unregulated (IUU) Fishing Video Screening



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THE
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Cover photo: IUU video screening at Dixcove (Credit: Hen Mpoano)

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ACRONYMS

FC	Fisheries Commission
HM	Hen Mpoano
IUU	Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated
MOFAD	Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development
SFMP	Sustainable Fisheries Management Project
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The USAID-funded Ghana Sustainable Fisheries Management Project (USAID/SFMP) implemented by the University of Rhode Island is working through local and international partners to rebuild marine fisheries stocks and catches through adoption of responsible fishing practices. This work goes to support the work of Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development (MOFAD) and the Fisheries Commission (FC). It aims to rebuild Ghana's small pelagic fish stocks to enhance the socio-economic conditions of fishing communities, create employment, and improve food security.

To contribute to efforts by the SFMP, Hen Mpoano organized beach level community outreach meetings in the Western, Central, Greater Accra and Volta Regions of Ghana. Meetings were held in a total of fifteen (15) communities. The communities visited in the Western Region were Metika, Axim, Dixcove and Shama. In the Central Region, Hinii, Dago, Mumford, Gomoa Fetteh, Senya Bereku and Nyanyano were the communities visited.

Hen Mpoano also visited three communities each in the Greater Accra (Tema Newtown, Prampram, and Ada) and Volta (Atorkor, Denu and Kedzikope) regions respectively.

Videos produced in local language (Fante, Ga and Ewe) on Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing were screened in these communities and viewed by hundreds of community members.

1.2 Objectives of the IUU Video Screening

The objectives of the joint community outreach program were to:

- Sensitize and educate fishers on the negative impacts of bad fishing practices
- Foster beach level behavioral change
- Promote voluntary compliance with fisheries regulations
- Initiate the adoption of best fishing practices and create consensus on the way forward
- Get inputs and feedback from communities on issues of fisheries.

The IUU video contained scenes on;

- Activities of trawling
- Chemical fishing
- Use of unapproved nets and mesh sizes
- Transshipment
- Light fishing
- Role of women and other stakeholders in the fight against IUU fishing

This report summarizes by Region the approach used, quotation and comments by fishers, suggestions on way forward and highlights some challenges.

SECTION 2: WESTERN REGION

A documentary on Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (I.U.U.) fishing was screened to fisher folks in the Metika, Axim, Dixcove and Shama communities in the Western region of Ghana. The screening of the video and discussion of issue lasted from 7:00 pm to 10:30 pm in each community. The language used in video was in the local dialect (Fante) to enhance proper communication, better understanding of the video and promote effective participation during discussions after the screening. Peer mentoring was done for one community member from each of the community before the screening to facilitate the whole process of screening

the video. This brought about satisfaction to the hundreds of viewer's being led by one of them in the fight against IUU fishing.

Below are some quotations from Chief fishermen and fishers from the Western Region;

“Growing up as a young boy, I used to fish with ordinary basket in my community. The fishes came close to the shore so no canoe was needed to catch what to eat. But now, one has to go very far in search of fish and normally will come home with empty net ”

Ernest Whajah, Chief of Metika

“If Personnel from the Ghana Navy are deployed to major landing sites, these IUU fishing practices will be a thing of the past. We, the Chief fishermen also need some powers from the government to enable us perform our duties efficiently”.

Nana Essel, Chief Fisherman of Uppur Dixcove

“The government should stop the illegal fishing the same way illegal mining (galamsey) on the land has been halted”.

Nana Bassaw, Rep. for Chief Fisherman of Shama Apo



Figure 1: IUU video screening at Axim

Community members called for cooperation among fisher folk, the government, law enforcement agencies and non-governmental organizations in order to end bad fishing practices.



Figure 2: IUU video screening section at Dixcove

Fishers from Western Region are ready to support the government if there is the political will to enforce the fisheries laws. They called for an anti IUU fishing campaign from the government since similar campaign against illegal mining is working.



Figure 3: IUU video screening section at Shama

SECTION 3: CENTRAL REGION

A documentary on Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (I.U.U.) fishing was initially scheduled to be screened to fisher folks in the Hinii, Dago, Mumford, Gomoa Fetteh, Senya Bereku and Nyanyano communities in the Central region of Ghana. The screening of the video was cancelled for Nyanyano due to some agitations arising from some pre-existing issues among fishers in this fishing community. However, screening of the IUU video and their resulting discussions were successfully carried out in the remaining communities. The screening of the video and discussions lasted an average of 3 hours from 7:00 pm to 10:30 pm in each community.

The same video which was produced in the fante dialect was used in these communities visited to enhance communication, ensure that fisher folk had a better understanding of the video and promote effective participation during discussions after the screening. The use of community member from each of the community as field assistants to help facilitate the video screening and discussion was well received and appreciated by the audience. This brought satisfaction to the hundreds of fisher folk who patronized the video screening event and could relate very well with the facilitators.



Figure 4: IUU video screening at Hinii

Some quotations from fishers from the Central Region are below:

“I used to engage in light fishing but when I realized the quantity of small dead fishes which sunk to the bottom of the sea, I advised myself not to engage in light fishing again since it is very destructive”.

Egya Boat, Fisherman at Hinii

“There should be an “anti-sea galamsey” policy by government and other stakeholders to strengthen the fight against IUU fishing. I am always sad when I see the large quantities decayed fish in the sea causing the area to smell and hence pushing fishes further offshore”.

Nana Bobo Ewusie, Chief Fisherman of Dago

“Fish caught using light are soft and do not last long. They easily go bad after buying from the fishermen. This has brought a lot of financial crisis to us”.

Aunty Aba, Fishmonger – Senya Bereku

“My people and I have vowed to fight IUU and all fishers engaged in this destructive practice. We do not allow fishers who engage in light fishing to land at Gomoa Fetteh and do not accept fish from them.

Nana Obrenu Dabum III, Chief Fisherman-Gomoa Fetteh



Figure 5: IUU video screening at Dago

Community members called for cooperation among fisher folk, the government, law enforcement agencies and non-governmental organizations in order to end bad fishing practices.



Figure 6: IUU video screening at Mumford

Fishers from the Central Region are ready to support the government if there is the political will to enforce the fisheries laws. They called for an anti IUU fishing campaign from the government since similar campaign against illegal mining is working.



Figure 7: IUU video screening at Senya Bereku



Figure 8: IUU video screening at Gomoa Fetteh

SECTION 4: GREATER ACCRA REGION

A documentary on Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (I.U.U.) fishing was produced in the local language (Ga) and screened to fisher folks in the coastal communities of Tema Newtown, Prampram, and Ada in the Greater Accra region of Ghana. The screening of the video and discussion of the issue lasted from 7:00 pm to 10:30 pm in each community. The use of the Ga dialect in the video enhanced proper communication, better understanding of the video and promoted effective participation during discussions after the screening. A community member from each of the fishing communities visited was peer mentored to facilitate the whole process of screening the video and leading discussions after the video was screened.



Figure 9: IUU video screening at Tema New Town

The audience, which included fishermen, fish mongers and community members, made quotations which have been documented below:

“If we fishers do not come together to fight against bad fishing practices and say no to IUU fishing, then there will be no future for the fishing sector in Ghana. This will result in millions of fishers being out of job and the consequences of this will be unimaginable”

Alhijd Sahid Adjeiteh, Chief Fisherman-Tema Newtown

“Due to the illegalities in the fishing industry, we the women do not get enough fish to process and sell to make profit. This is affecting our business negatively and we now own the banks because we burrow money to invest in the fish processing ventures”.

Dede Amartey, Fishmonger – Tema newtown

Community members called for cooperation among fisher folk, the government, law enforcement agencies and non-governmental organizations in other to end bad fishing practices.



Figure 10: IUU video screening at Prampram

Video clips of the engagement with the Tema Newtown fishers were shown on Ghana Television during a morning show which sought to sensitized and educate fishers and the general public on the effects and impacts of IUU fishing on Ghana’s fisheries resources.

Fishers indicated their readiness to support the government if there is the political will to enforce the fisheries laws. They called for an anti IUU fishing campaign from the government since similar campaign against illegal mining is working.



Figure 11: IUU video screening at Ada

SECTION 5: VOLTA REGION

A documentary on Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (I.U.U.) fishing produced in the Ewe dialect was screened to fisher folk in the coastal communities of Atorkor, Denu and Kedzikope in the Volta region of Ghana. The screening of the video and discussion of issue lasted from 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm in each community. The use of the Ewe language throughout the video enhanced proper communication, better understanding of the video and promoted effective participation during discussions after the screening. Community members were selected from each community visited and peer mentored to facilitate the screening of the IUU video and also to lead discussion. This brought about satisfaction to the hundreds of viewer's being led by one of their own in the fight against IUU fishing.



Figure 12: IUU video screening at Atorkor



Figure 13: IUU video screening at Denu

Radio discussions on both IUU and the closed season were aired on Jubilee FM at Keta during a morning. This sought to sensitize and educate fishers and the general public on the effects and impacts of IUU fishing on Ghana's fisheries resources and the importance of the proposed closed season for Ghana's fisheries.



Figure 14: IUU video screening at Kedzikope

Fishers are ready to support the government if there is the political will to enforce the fisheries laws. They called for an anti IUU fishing campaign from the government since similar campaign against illegal mining is working. Questions about the Closed Season also came up during discussions after the video screening. Most fishers were supportive of the idea. However, the issue of the timing for the closed season was not very clear to the fishers. Intensive sensitization and education on the closed season should be done before, during and after the date set for the sea to be closed.

SECTION 6: WAY FORWARD

Suggestions on the way forward proposed by fishers include the following:

1. Fish landings should be inspected before the sale of fish is allowed. This would reduce IUU prevalence at the landing beaches.
2. Fisheries Law enforcement should be intensified.
3. The marine police should work effectively.
4. Government should do something to reduce light fishing and enhance good fishing practices.
5. Fisheries watchdogs should be included as part of national youth employment.
6. Fisheries watchdogs should be included as part of national youth employment to ensure effective enforcement and compliance of the fisheries law.
7. Fisheries Laws should leave the books and be enforced to the letter at the beaches.
8. Fishermen to report colleagues who indulged in IUU fishing to ensure the law is enforced and to serve as deterrent.
9. Enforcement of the no fishing day on Tuesday and Sunday approved by fishermen at meetings.
10. The Ghana Navy should be involved in the arrest of fishermen who engage in IUU fishing.
11. Public education on fishing regulations should be backed by strict law enforcement by the FEU.
12. Government should seize unapproved nets sold at fishing input shops.
13. Chief fishermen should be given the mandate to arrest fishers who engage in any form of IUU fishing.
14. Government should check the continuous destruction of fishing gears of fishers who fish for crabs and lobsters by trawlers.
15. Arrests should be made and culpable fishers jailed to serve as deterrent.
16. Equipment like binoculars, identification cards and relevant legal documentation should be made available to support voluntary fisheries watchdogs at community level.
17. Fishing communities making conscious effort to fight IUU fishing should be given incentives to motivate them and compare other to do same.

SECTION 7: CONCLUSION

There should be more action in the form of law enforcement by government relevant agencies in the fight against IUU fishing in the country. Enforcement of the fisheries law is now the song sheet of fishers. Fishers have indicated their willingness to support the government if there is the political will to enforce the fisheries laws.

SECTION 8: CHALLENGES

The team was nearly beaten at Dixcove. It took the intervention of the chief fishermen to calm the nerves of the fisher folk. The fishers complained angrily that, there had been too much talk with less action from the government and the ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture development including the Fisheries commission.

Existing skirmishes and agitations among fishers and different fishing groups at Nyanyano led to cancellation of the program by the team together with the chief fisherman and council after two attempts to screen the IUU video was not successful. The team however recommends that, the tensions and conflict should be properly addressed before screening of the IUU video could take place.