

## Programme Strategy

To reduce poverty and its incidence on fisheries communities, it will be necessary to support them at the grass-root level. However, their active participation in activities aiming at improving livelihoods will depend on their own perception of poverty or vulnerability to poverty, its causes and the opportunities available to them to cope with.

From this standpoint, the SFLP promotes an approach placing people at the centre, as beneficiaries and actors in the development process.

Taking these factors into account it will help creating the necessary conditions for communities to be able to assess their environment and their situation. To promote this awareness, the SFLP will carry out sensitization and capacity building activities to develop reflection, analysis and debate within existing community structures.

The SL approach will also require the development of an effective monitoring system to ensure constant supply of information, early identification of problems and rapid extraction of lessons learned from experiences during the execution of projects.

## Programme Activities

The SFLP will carry out activities for the sustainable improvement of livelihoods in fisheries communities by the promotion of local and regional initiatives in fisheries, which are respectful of the natural environment. These initiatives will be articulated through (i) national execution of Small Projects under the responsibility of the National Coordinating Units (NCU) and (ii) Pilot Projects at a sub-regional or regional level.

Small Projects are low cost community initiatives focused on small-scale activities designed to respond to locally significant issues. These projects will serve to strengthen the assets and improve the structures and processes of the community, which influence livelihoods.

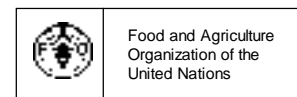
Pilot Projects are large investment initiatives (although, in principle, not infrastructure development activities) to address significant regional or sub-regional issues or constraints, which are clearly related to livelihood security of many poor fisheries communities. The stakeholders and governments would identify these issues through a participatory process and should demonstrate clear commitment to address them. The solutions to such issues should not only be realistic and achievable but must also be environmentally, socially, institutionally and economically sustainable, after the project ends.

## Expected Situation at the End of the Programme

The Programme is expected to achieve lasting impact in governance at central and local levels, and in policy at both national and international levels. Sustainability within the area of government policy and planning will have been facilitated after the successful incorporation of relevant elements of the CCRF into national fisheries development and management plans. Sustainability at the local level will be enhanced with local communities participating in the planning and management of the aquatic resources. The livelihoods of poor-dependent people will be secured and in many areas, improved. The experience and knowledge will have been disseminated elsewhere in the region and in the wider international sphere with beneficial consequences.

## Implementation Arrangements

The activities of the Programme are oriented and monitored by the Programme Steering Committee (PSC), which is composed of representatives from Governments of the region, DFID and FAO. The activities are implemented and carried out by the National Coordinating Units (NCUs) set up in each of the 25 participating countries and assisted by the Regional Support Unit (RSU) based in Cotonou, Benin. The administration and coordination of the Programme are the remit of the Programme Coordination Unit based in FAO Headquarters, Rome.



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



DFID  
Department for  
International  
Development

## Sustainable Fisheries Livelihoods Programme (SFLP) in West Africa



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# SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES LIVELIHOODS PROGRAMME (SFLP) IN WEST AFRICA

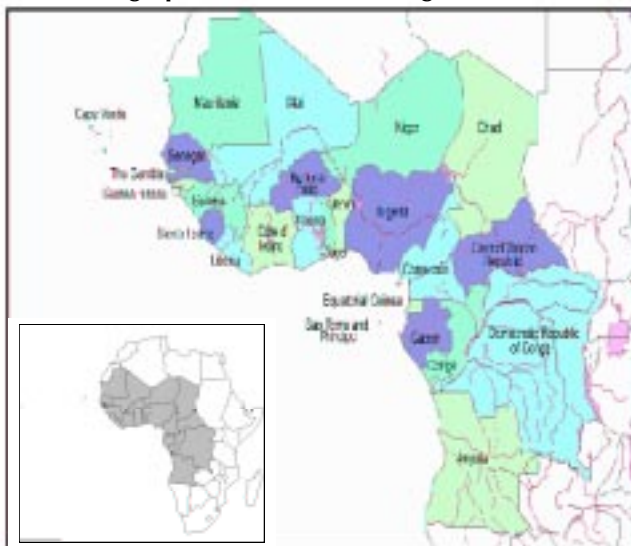
## What is the SFLP?

The Sustainable Fisheries Livelihoods Programme (SFLP) – GCP/INT/765/UK - represents a partnership between the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), the Department for International Development for the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (DFID) and 25 participating countries of Western Africa. The SFL Programme is seeking to reduce poverty in coastal and inland fisheries communities by improving the livelihoods of people dependent on fishery and aquatic resources.

It will do this primarily through (i) the development of social and human capital in fisheries-dependent communities (ii) the enhancement of the natural assets of those communities and (iii) the development of appropriate fisheries policy and institutional environments.

The Programme, which started its activities in November 1999, is financed by DFID for a period of five years and is implemented by FAO. Headquarters are located in the Department of Fisheries, FAO (Rome, Italy) with a Regional Support Unit in Cotonou (Benin).

## Box 1. Geographical Area of the Programme



## Participating Countries

Twenty five countries participate in the Programme: Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Chad and Togo (Box 1). In this region there are almost 7 million people whose livelihoods are directly dependent on the use of marine and freshwater resources.

## Beneficiaries

The Programme's primary beneficiaries will be the resource-users in artisanal fisheries communities, focusing on the most vulnerable groups: fishermen and small-scale traders and fish processors, most of whom are women.

The secondary beneficiaries will include the Fisheries Departments, plus other related government services, NGOs, national and regional sectoral planners and others who have overall responsibility for proper management of the fisheries sector.

## Programme Approach

The Programme will use two main tools: the Sustainable Livelihoods (SL) approach and the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF).

The SL approach recognizes that individuals draw upon at least five characteristics capital assets (human, natural, physical, social and financial) to build their livelihoods, and these assets are intrinsically considered in the implementation of the CCRF.

Presented in the form of a pentagon, consideration of all five assets forces users to think holistically rather than sectorally about the basis of their long-term resource-use and

of their livelihoods (Box 2).

The SL approach is a new way of thinking about the objectives, scope and priorities of development with the aim of poverty reduction. It can help communities to improve their livelihoods in a sustainable way by re-enforcing their own strengths. The beneficiaries will be encouraged to play an active and essential role in the identification and implementation of decisions that will influence their lives.

The CCRF is a policy instrument whose objective is to contribute to the realisation of sustainable benefits in the fishery sector in terms of employment, economic welfare and food security. The Code also states the principles and criteria applicable to the conservation, management and sustainable development of all fisheries.

The combined application of the SL approach and the CCRF will be used to secure long-term sustainable fisheries management and sustainable livelihoods.

It is also envisaged that there will be many opportunities to establish close collaboration and partnership with other organisations during the implementation of the Programme.

## Box 2. SL Analytical Framework

