

Project Brief

Preventing CLaT through Peer Learning and Exchange

Context and purpose of learning visit

In Ghana, as in other African countries, children have domestic responsibilities and chores often determined by gender. It is common to find children working alongside parents/ guardians in economic activities such as fishing, farming, mining and trading. However, this phenomenon is often exploited by traffickers who persuade low-income parents and guardians to offer their children as helping hands to other people in domestic or economic activities for yearly remittance. Though promised food, education and proper care, the situation often turns out sour for most of these children who end up as slaves at their destinations, such as is common along the Volta Lake in Ghana.

Securing Child Rights in the Fisheries Sector in the Central Region and along the Volta Lake in Ghana,

(SECRIFISE) is a 3-year European Union funded project that seeks to contribute to the prevention of child labour and trafficking (CLaT), protection of CLaT survivors and prosecution of perpetrators of the act in Ghana.

As part of the project's CLaT prevention strategies in source communities in the Central Region, SECRIFISE facilitated a learning visit by community leaders to a model community (Kpando- Torkor) along the Volta Lake, where anti-CLaT initiatives have proven successful and sustainable in reducing the practice to the barest minimum and where structures exist to systematically remove children from labour and other forms of bondage and reintegrate them into mainstream society. The learning visit offered an opportunity for participants to exchange knowledge on the Torkor model, including its main features and how it can be



A banner with illustration of the Torkor model ©SECRIFISE

adapted and replicated in the project's target source communities in the central region to prevent CLaT.

Highlights on the Torkor Model

The model is based on the recognition that informal workers in the rural economy are capable of addressing the challenges associated with their work, including the problem of child labour, when appropriately assisted. Thus, an inside-out approach is facilitated rather than an outside-in approach (that focuses on unsustainable external agents). Informal workers are organized through meetings of common interests and shared values are reinforced. Such meetings motivate the workers to protect and assert their rights, reaffirm their responsibilities including the responsibility of proscribing child labour and trafficking and improve productivity.

The creation of a child labour free zone involves all stakeholders like teachers, parents, children, unions, community groups and local authorities. All stakeholders are convinced that child labour is unacceptable and work together to ensure all children go to school. Some key elements of the model include the following;

- Social mobilization (organizing community-based groups; informal workers)
- Sensitization and capacity building
- All children in school
- Community systems promote education
- Livelihood empowerment for the parent of children susceptible to child labour and trafficking
- Community participation in teacher motivation
- Child labour monitoring on the lake using security cameras
- Bridge-in schools
- Alternative labour supply for child labour (eg. training of divers)



Group discussion by learning visit participants after a tour of Kpando Torkor community and an education session on the Torkor model ©SECRIFISE

Action Points for SECRIFISE in the Central Region

Action points for pilot community;

- The SECRIFISE project will adopt and pilot the key strategies of the Torkor model in Moree in the central region. The choice for this community hinges on its homogeneity and closely-knit community structure. Also, there is a high prevalence of child labour in the community which allows for effective response. The action for replicating the model in the target community will deploy the following;
- Leverage existing or potential community groups with common economic or social interest for community social mobilization.



A smoking shed with child labour free zones inscription on it as part of awareness creation by GAWU ©SECRIFISE

This will be the conduit for campaigning for increased support for the elimination of child labour and trafficking through addressing issues of common interests and shared values in relation to their work, social and/or economic gains. These groups will be formed in all adjoining sub-communities of the epicentre where individual meetings will promote initiatives and actions for anti-CLaT. Occasionally, joint meetings will be held at the epicentre to campaign for the elimination of child labour and trafficking with support from the traditional authorities and council of the area.

- Rekindle voluntarism at the community level by setting up or reinforcing existing community child protection committees (CCPC) and anti-child labour and trafficking advocates who function as community

watchdogs to scout working sites, homes and streets to ensure that no child works during school contact hours. This will ensure zero tolerance for absenteeism thereby increasing school enrolment and attendance in the community.

- Bridge-in schools; volunteering teachers from each of the community schools will be encouraged to help late learners catch up on lost time in school. Special attention and tailored approaches to teaching and learning will be offered to survivors of child labour/trafficking who have been out of school for a period of time and reintegrated with their families to catch up from where they stopped in an accelerated but systematic manner.
- Community radios will be greatly utilized to broadcast anti-CLaT campaign messages and programs. This will include playing of jingles, poetry recitals and audio plays/dramas as well as interactive, educative and informative sessions on child labour and trafficking.
- Using children as advocates for their rights and that of their peers through the formation of school clubs on child rights in all community schools. The clubs will initiate various activities and projects to campaign on child rights and the elimination of CLaT and also monitor the same.

Action points for district-level stakeholders

- The project will work with the Department of Social Welfare, the Directorate of Education and the District child protection committee. The Department of Social Welfare will provide education and information sessions on child rights protection, child labour and trafficking through frequent visits to the communities facilitated by community-organized groups.

- The Department of Social Welfare will also provide temporary shelters for children involved in intercepted cases in the community and survivors who have been rescued and needing rehabilitation.
- The Directorate of Education will intensify the school enrolment and attendance monitoring and teacher availability and punctuality to school and classroom lesson periods. The circuit supervisor will share his monitoring visit report and relevant information with the project for collaborative action where necessary. The District child protection committee, comprising all relevant stakeholders in the district assembly and chaired by the DCE will map out district referral systems for support of child labourers or trafficked children. Some components of the support system are referrals, NHIS, school feeding and educational support.

Action points for regional stakeholders

- At the regional level, SECRIFISE will complement the efforts of key stakeholders such as the Anti-human trafficking unit of the Ghana Police Service and the Regional labour office of the Ministry of Employment and Labour relations. The AHTU will provide education on child trafficking and effective reporting of suspected trafficking cases.
- The AHTU will provide swift responses to reported cases with investigations, arrest and prosecution as and when necessary. The Labour Department will monitor the entire pilot project and provide technical advice using the National plan of action (NPA II) and other national instruments as guidelines for the effective creation of a child labour free zone in the target area.



GAWU representative educating the learning visit participants on the Torkor model. ©SECRIFISE

Securing Child Rights in the Fisheries Sector in the Central Region and along the Volta Lake (SECRIFISE) is a three-year project implemented by **Hen Mpoano**, **CEWEFIA** and **Challenging Heights**, with financial support from the **European Union**



Project Funded by the
European Union

Implemented by

Hen Mpoano

info@henmpoano.org
+233 31 229 3869



info@cewefia.org
+233 24 427 8377



info@challengingheights.org
+233 24 451 5761