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Report: Activity 6.1 Conduct training for fisher folk on rights-based approaches



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Cover Picture: Josephine Opare-Addo welcoming participants to the workshop (Picture Credit: CEWEFIA, 2023)

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Project Summary

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Introduction

Gender-based violence is a trend that is deeply rooted in gender inequality and remains one of the most egregious human rights violations in all societies. Gender-based violence is defined as violence directed at a person based on their gender. Gender-based violence affects both men and women, but women and girls are the majority of victims.

Gender-based violence (GBV) in fishing communities should be addressed with urgency due to several compelling reasons. GBV is a direct violation of human rights, has severe physical, emotional, and psychological consequences for survivors, and hinders sustainable development efforts. It also perpetuates gender inequality, limiting the participation and empowerment of women and girls in social, economic, and political spheres. GBV is often interconnected with other social issues such as poverty, substance abuse, and unequal power dynamics. By addressing GBV urgently, we can begin to tackle the underlying root causes and contribute to a comprehensive and holistic approach to social change.

GBV is a humanitarian crisis that requires urgent attention and action. Governments have legal and ethical obligations to protect their citizens from violence, including GBV. Urgent action against GBV reflects a commitment to social justice and gender equality, challenging harmful societal norms and promoting a more inclusive and equitable society. Addressing GBV in fishing communities with urgency is essential to safeguard human rights, promote sustainable development, address interconnected issues, fulfill legal and ethical obligations, and strive for social justice and equality. By prioritizing and acting promptly, we can create safer, more equitable communities where everyone can thrive without fear of violence or discrimination.

The overall objective of the WIFVEs project is achieving gender equality in Ghana by advocating against gender-based violence (GBV), abuse and discrimination in Ghana's marine fisheries sector, building capacities of fisher folk and their leaders to prevent and respond to GBV in fishing communities, supporting law enforcement against GBV while improving access to social services

and livelihood opportunities by women at-risk and survivors of GBV. One key strategy is to involve the stakeholders in community.



Figure 1: Godfred Nyarko (facilitator) interacting with participants at the workshop

A Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) is a conceptual framework and methodology that places human rights principles and standards at the center of development, policymaking, and programming. It emphasizes universality and indivisibility, participation, accountability, non-discrimination and equality, empowerment, and legality. The implementation of HRBA involves assessing the specific human rights of rights-holders, identifying the corresponding obligations of duty-bearers, and addressing the underlying causes of rights violations. It also includes strengthening the capacities of both rights-holders and duty-bearers, monitoring and evaluating outcomes using human rights indicators, and promoting the participation of all stakeholders in the process. The implementation of HRBA involves assessing the specific human rights of rights-holders, identifying the corresponding obligations of duty-bearers, and addressing the underlying causes of rights violations. Adopting a Human Rights-Based Approach, policies, programs, and interventions are designed and implemented with a focus on the promotion and protection of human rights, contributing to more inclusive, equitable, and sustainable development.

On 25th May 2023, a training session was conducted on rights-based approaches towards tackling Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in fishing communities. The training aimed to equip Assembly members, Chief fishermen, and Konkohemaa from communities in the Central Region with the necessary knowledge and tools to address GBV using a human rights-based approach. Godfred Nyarko of the Department of Social Welfare facilitated the training session with support from staff from CEWEFIA.

Goal

The goal of the training was to enhance the understanding of participants regarding human rights and their application in addressing gender-based violence within fishing communities. By promoting a rights-based approach, the training aimed to empower participants to actively engage in the prevention of GBV, ensure accountability, and promote equality and non-discrimination.

Objectives

Specifically, the workshop sought to;

- Provide participants with a comprehensive understanding of human rights and their relevance to tackling GBV.
- Identify discriminatory practices and inequalities that undermine access to human rights in fishing communities.
- Familiarize participants with the principles and elements of a Human Rights-based Approach (HRBA) and their application in addressing GBV.
- Explore the roles and responsibilities of duty bearers and rights-holders in promoting and protecting human rights.
- Discuss strategies for demanding accountability from duty bearers in addressing GBV within fishing communities.



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Participants/Stakeholder Information

The workshops targeted community traditional leaders (Chief fishermen and Konkohemaas) and Community elected leaders (Assemblymen) from all communities in the Central Region where the project activities were being implemented.

Workshop Proceedings

Module 1. Introduction and Icebreaker Activity:

The training began with an introduction that provided an overview of the workshop's objectives and agenda. The facilitator emphasized the importance of addressing Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in fishing communities and the role of human rights-based approaches in promoting equality and social justice. An icebreaker activity was conducted to encourage participants to introduce themselves, establish rapport, and create a comfortable learning environment.

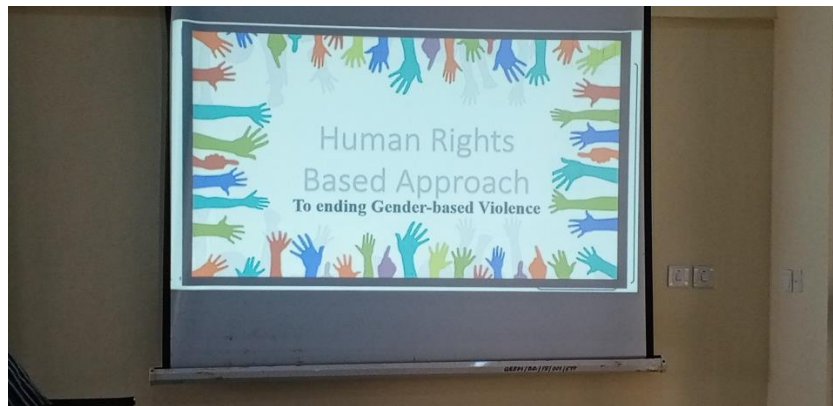


Figure 2: Title Slide of the Presentation on Human Rights Approach to Ending Gender Based Violence

Module 2. Understanding Human Rights:

The facilitator delved into the concept of human rights, emphasizing their universal nature and the inherent dignity and equality of all individuals. Participants were provided with a comprehensive understanding of human rights, including their definition, historical development, and international legal frameworks such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and relevant treaties. The characteristics of human rights, such as their inalienability,



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indivisibility, and interdependence, were explored through interactive discussions and real-life examples.



Figure 3: A cross-section of the participants during the presentation

Module 3. Identifying Discriminatory Practices and Inequalities:

In this module, participants engaged in a thought-provoking discussion on discriminatory practices and inequalities prevalent in their fishing communities. They shared personal experiences, observations, and challenges related to GBV. The facilitator facilitated an analysis of these practices and inequalities, exploring their underlying causes and consequences on access to human rights. Participants critically examined societal norms, cultural beliefs, and power dynamics that contribute to gender inequality and violence.

Module 4. Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA):

The facilitator introduced participants to the concept of a Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) as a framework for addressing GBV in fishing communities. The definition and applications of HRBA were discussed, highlighting its focus on promoting and protecting human rights principles and standards. The facilitator emphasized that HRBA is centered on principles such as participation, accountability, non-discrimination and equality, empowerment, and legality. Through interactive activities and group discussions, participants explored how HRBA can be applied to address GBV and promote gender equality within their communities.



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Module 5. Elements of HRBA:

This module focused on the essential elements of a Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA). Participants learned about the importance of conducting an assessment and analysis of specific human rights, identifying the corresponding obligations of duty-bearers, and understanding the underlying causes of rights non-realization. They also explored the significance of assessing the capacities of both rights-holders and duty-bearers to claim and fulfill their respective obligations. Additionally, the facilitator discussed the importance of monitoring and evaluating outcomes through a human rights lens, ensuring that the principles and standards are upheld.

Module 6. Role of Duty Bearers and Rights-Holders:

Participants engaged in an interactive discussion on the roles and responsibilities of duty-bearers and rights-holders in promoting and protecting human rights within fishing communities. The facilitator highlighted the importance of duty-bearers, such as Assembly members, Chief fishermen, and Konkohemaa, in creating an enabling environment and implementing policies and programs that address GBV. Participants also explored the role of rights-holders in asserting their rights, advocating for change, and actively participating in decision-making processes that affect their lives and well-being.



Figure 4: Godfred Nyarko (facilitator) guiding the participants through a role play to discuss the roles of various stakeholders in reporting GBV



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Module 7. Human Rights Enforcement:

This module provided participants with an overview of different mechanisms for enforcing human rights. The facilitator discussed legal frameworks, both at national and international levels, that protect individuals from GBV and uphold human rights. Participants learned about advocacy strategies, community mobilization, and the importance of collaboration with civil society organizations and relevant stakeholders. Case studies and success stories were shared to illustrate effective approaches to human rights enforcement and combating GBV.

Module 8. Demanding Accountability:

Participants engaged in practical discussions on strategies to demand accountability from duty-bearers in addressing GBV. The facilitator facilitated brainstorming sessions, group work, and role-playing activities to explore effective methods of holding duty-bearers accountable for their actions or inactions. Participants developed action plans and identified specific steps to be taken in their communities to ensure accountability, such as engaging in dialogue, raising awareness, and monitoring the implementation of policies and programs.

Outcomes and Comments from Plenary Discussions

The following were some take-home comments recommendations and lessons emanating from discussions at the workshop;

1. Raise Awareness and Provide Education

It was suggested that the Project conduct community-wide awareness campaigns on gender equality, human rights, and the negative impacts of GBV. It could organize workshops and training sessions for community members, including fishermen, their families, and local leaders, to promote understanding and recognition of GBV as a violation of human rights. Additionally, comprehensive education on gender equality and respectful relationships could be included into school curricula.

2. Strengthen Legal Frameworks and Implementation



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It was also recommended that the Project advocate for the development and implementation of strong laws and policies that address GBV, protect victims, and hold perpetrators accountable. The project could also contribute to ensuring access to justice for survivors of GBV by improving legal aid services and training law enforcement personnel on GBV issues.



Figure 5: Participants engaged in role play

3. Promote Gender Equality and Empowerment

Participants also advocated for the Project to engage men and boys as allies in promoting gender equality and preventing GBV through awareness campaigns, workshops, and support groups. It could also support economic empowerment initiatives for women in fishing communities to reduce their vulnerability to GBV and enhance their decision-making power.

4. Establish Support Services and Referral System

The participants also suggested the establish safe spaces, such as women's shelters or community centers, where survivors of GBV can seek refuge, access counseling, and receive support. Discussions indicated that. There was the need to develop a comprehensive network of referral services that includes medical facilities, legal aid organizations, counseling services, and helplines for survivors of GBV.

The discussions concluded that by implementing these recommendations, it would possible to create safer and more inclusive environments in fishing communities where GBV is actively prevented, and survivors are supported. These strategies emphasize the importance of raising awareness, strengthening legal frameworks, promoting gender equality, providing support services, fostering community engagement, and monitoring program effectiveness.

Next Steps

The training session on rights-based approaches towards tackling Gender-Based Violence in fishing communities was successfully conducted on 25th May 2023. Participants gained a comprehensive understanding of human rights, the principles and elements of a Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA), and strategies for demanding accountability. It is expected that the knowledge and skills acquired during the training will empower participants to actively address GBV, promote equality, and protect the rights of individuals within their fishing communities.



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