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A FISHING TEAM AT WORK ON LAKE NANGBÉTO, TOGO
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Is GAFSP reaching
small-scale food
producers in Togo?

Introduction: The GAFSP-supported PASA in Togo

In 2011, 58.7 percent of the total population of Togo, and 73.4 percent of its rural population, lived under the national poverty line¹. Sixty percent of Togolese live in rural communities², which account for more than three quarters of the country's poor³. Agriculture accounts for about 40 percent of GDP⁴, and employs more than 50 percent of the labor force⁵. In 2013, exports of food products and cotton amounted to slightly more than fifteen percent of the country's trade exports, with cotton remaining one of Togo's main exports⁶. Even though no precise figures are available, it is believed that the majority of Togolese agriculture relies on small-scale farms combining food crops (maize, sorghum, millet, yams, cassava, etc.) for self-consumption and cash crops such as cotton, and to a lesser extent coffee or cocoa⁷. It is estimated that only 45 percent of the country's arable land is actually used⁸, with less than one percent of it being equipped for irrigation⁹. However, only about two hectares of land, on average, were available for each person employed in agriculture in 2012¹⁰.

The Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP) Multi-Donor Trust Fund supports the implementation of two programs in Togo, the 2011-2016 Agricultural Sector Support Project (Projet d'Appui au Secteur Agricole, PASA) and the 2011-2016 Togo Agricultural Development Support Project (Projet d'Appui au Développement Agricole au Togo, PADAT). The PASA and the PADAT are, together with the West Africa Agricultural Productivity Program (Programme de Productivité Agricole en Afrique de l'Ouest, PPAAO), the main components of Togo's national agriculture and food security investment program (Programme National d'Investissements Agricoles et de Sécurité Alimentaire, PNIASA).

The PASA aims to rehabilitate and reinforce the productive capacity of targeted producer partners in selected agricultural and livestock sectors, and to encourage an enabling environment for agricultural development in Togo, with a combination of short-term emergency interventions for the livestock sub-sector and long-term interventions for agriculture. The GAFSP accounts for \$19 million (35 percent) of the project's total cost of \$53.9 million. The PASA targets around 60,000 farmers, 13,000 livestock raisers, 1,600 fisherfolk and 500 fish traders as direct partners¹¹ in the five regions of Togo. Up to forty percent of the partners are youth or women. In addition, 650,000 households are expected to benefit from large-scale livestock vaccination campaigns. The PASA is made up of the following elements:

¹ <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.NAHC/countries/TG?display=graph> and <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.RUHC/countries/TG?display=graph>

² <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.RUR.TOTL.ZS/countries/TG?display=graph>

³ <http://www.afdb.org/en/countries/west-africa/togo/togo-economic-outlook/>

⁴ <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NV.AGR.TOTL.ZS/countries/TG?display=graph>

⁵ http://faostat.fao.org/CountryProfiles/Country_Profile/Direct.aspx?lang=en&area=217

⁶ <http://data.un.org/CountryProfile.aspx?crName=TOGO>

⁷ See for example Kokou Koumagli Djagni, "L'agriculture togolaise face à des mutations environnementales multiples: nécessité d'un ensemble d'innovations techniques et organisationnelles cohérentes", 2002: <https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/hal-00131038/document>

⁸ <http://newsite.landcoalition.org/base-country/togo>

⁹ Estimates based on FAOSTAT, see http://faostat.fao.org/CountryProfiles/Country_Profile/Direct.aspx?lang=en&area=217

¹⁰ http://faostat.fao.org/CountryProfiles/Country_Profile/Direct.aspx?lang=en&area=217

¹¹ "Partner" and "producer partner" are the terms we are using in place of the more traditional concept of "beneficiary."

COMPONENT	SUB-COMPONENT	DESCRIPTION
Promotion of strategic food crops, export crops and freshwater fish production	Support to food crop cultivation	Support three productive sub-sectors through improved productivity and value-added of key commodities chosen for their growth potential and poverty reduction impact
	Support to export crop cultivation	
	Support to freshwater fish production	
Recovery of the livestock sub-sector	Support to animal health and disease control programs	Provide emergency short term support to rehabilitate small ruminant and poultry production
	Support to the provision of enhanced traditional farm animal housing	
	Re-stocking herds	
Support for capacity building and sector coordination	Reform and capacity building of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries Sector coordination and program management	Enable the institutional setup
	Management of financial support instruments	Implement sound agricultural investments through PNIASA (National Agriculture and Food Security Investment Program / PNIASA), while preparing for the transition to a sector wide approach in the future

ActionAid's study on the PASA in the Nangbéto area

ActionAid commissioned a study to examine the PASA implementation model and impact, with a focus on small-scale food producers; women producers; the engagement and participation of producer and civil society organizations; and climate resilience. Even though women's empowerment and climate resilience are not explicit objectives of the PASA, ActionAid considers such goals as key to any successful attempt at enhancing food security and poverty alleviation in the long term. The study was conducted around Nangbéto, where the construction of the Nangbéto dam for power production on River Mono led to the creation of Lake Nangbéto. The lake is located around 160km north of Togo's capital city Lomé, and is surrounded by small-scale fisherfolk communities. Inland freshwater fish production accounts for about fifteen percent of the 28,000 tons of fish captured in Togo in 2010.

The study interviewed individually sixteen fisherfolk, fish processors and fish traders (including seven women), and conducted focus group discussions with 172 people from four of the five fisherfolk committees – one fish trader cooperative and two fish processor cooperatives around Lake Nangbéto – in order to hear directly from female and male partners about how the PASA is addressing their needs. One FAO staffer, six Togo government staffers, the Mayor of Atakpamé and one PASA staffer, were also interviewed for the study, as well as a representative from the Togolese farmers' organization Coordination Togolaise des Organisations Paysannes (CTOP).

Key findings on the PASA implementation

1. Does the project target small-scale food producers?

The proposal submitted to the GAFSP by the Government of Togo explicitly mentions 1.5 million small-scale food producers cultivating 45,000 hectares of land and around 1 million livestock herders, as producer partners of both the PADAT and the PASA. The GAFSP funds are expected to support – among other areas – the increase of agricultural production of food crops and export crops, the intensification of livestock production through the intensification of traditional livestock production and promotion of related small and medium scale enterprises, and the development of freshwater fish farming¹².

¹² http://www.gafspfund.org/sites/gafspfund.org/files/Documents/Togo_proposal.pdf



The proposal to the GAFSP explicitly mentions that the Project to Support Agricultural Development in Togo (PADAT) will primarily target small-scale food producers (for more details on the PADAT, see box on page 5). On the other hand, the PASA's target group is approximately 60,000 crop farmers, 13,000 animal herders, 1,600 fish producers and 500 fish merchants, with the addition of about 650,000 households that will benefit from livestock vaccination campaigns. The objectives and outcomes of the PASA also include strengthening the capacity of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries to implement the national agricultural investment plan (PNIASA), and the increase in production of food crops (maize, rice, cassava), export crops (cotton, coffee, and cocoa) and freshwater fish production (tilapia and catfish). While it is likely that the livestock and food crop farmers that are to benefit from the PASA are small-scale food producers, there is no written evidence in the project design documents. In the case of support to the cotton, coffee and cocoa sectors, it would seem that there is some diversity in the land holdings and income of the farmers concerned.

The following factors qualify all of the fisherman on Lake Nangbéto as artisanal fishermen and small-scale food producers: the owners take part in the fishing operations, their wooden canoes are small – five to eight meters, the invested capital is low and their fishing techniques rely on rather simple technologies and use little energy. Besides, the study found that the Nangbéto fishermen's income lies below the regional poverty line. The 2012 Nangbéto census recorded 1,137 fishermen, including 690 that own a boat, 54 fish traders and 642 fish processors. All in all, around 2,000 people (fishermen and their family, boat makers, traders, fish processors, etc.) live in about fifty settlements in precarious conditions, without any access to drinking water, health services or electricity. Aside from fishing, they farm and raise

A FISHERMAN CARRIES FISH CAUGHT FROM LAKE NANGBÉTO BACK TO HIS VILLAGE.

CREDIT: RUTH MCDOWALL/ SHOOT THE EARTH/ ACTIONAID

Focus on the PADAT

The 2011-2016 Togo Agricultural Development Support Project (Projet d'Appui au Développement Agricole au Togo, PADAT), is the other agricultural project supported in Togo by the GAFSP. It aims to enhance small farm productivity in the short term and build rural infrastructure (rural roads, water management infrastructure such as irrigation schemes, post-harvest storage facilities, etc.). The project explicitly targets small-scale food producers, (with less than 3 hectares of land, either individually or through their producer organizations), and growing one of three focus staple food crops identified (rice, maize or cassava). Small-scale food producers, women, youth and most vulnerable groups, such as chronic food insecure households, are defined as subgroups within the target group. About 107,500 small-scale food producers are expected to be direct partners of the project.

Farmers' and civil society organizations have been much more involved in the PADAT than in PASA. For example, the CTOP took part in the processes of identification of needs, formulation of the project, selection of implementing NGOs, creation of the monitoring and evaluation handbook, and the creation of the project communication plan. The CTOP was also provided with financial support from the PADAT, to build its own capacities and knowledge of the GAFSP-supported projects, to inform farmer organizations about the projects, and to take a more active role in the implementation of the PADAT, and the selection process for projects to be supported.

Other civil society organizations are also involved in the PADAT, as partners in the coordination cell of the PADAT and conducting some of the project activities, because the PADAT implementation relies less on the ministries and public agencies than the PASA.

small ruminants and poultry, mostly for self-consumption. The fish processors and traders also have small trading activities on the side, especially during the lake's three-month biological recovery period, when no fishing is allowed.

2. How does the project reach small-scale food producers?

a. Increased productivity, better working conditions

The PASA introduced equipment that has allowed women traders and processors to save time and reduce costs, and therefore improve working conditions. Thanks to the purchase of two ice making machines partly funded by the project, the fish traders of the Katche-ire cooperative do not have to go around the city to buy ice, but can get it directly from the cooperative. The improved ovens also enable the processors from the Lolonyo cooperative to smoke fish faster and with less wood, resulting in reduced production costs and more fish processed in the same amount of time. **The improved ovens release less smoke, enhancing working conditions and reducing the health risks from smoke fumes.**

b. Market opportunities development

The increase in fish processing and trading resulting from the PASA implementation has led to the development of the motorbike ("zemidjan") transportation of fresh or smoked fish from the fishing camps by Lake Nangbéto to the market places in Atakpamé city.

Given that the national demand for fish exceeds the current national production, and that the country's consumption of animal proteins remains far below the FAO minimum

threshold¹³, there are potential high value market opportunities – beyond selling at the fish market or by the side of the road in Atakpamé – for fisherfolk, fish processors and fish traders from Nangbéto in the big cities of the country. This dimension has not yet been considered through the PASA activities in Nangbéto. Identifying higher value markets at the regional and national level could quickly contribute to increasing their income, if the fisherfolk were able to sell to buyers other than the fish traders and processors that have financed their fishing equipment and boats. This should, however, be considered within a wider fish sector market development strategy that would also look at supply and marketing opportunities for women fish traders, smokers and fryers during the Nangbéto fishing season, as well as the off-season.

c. Increase in income

Fish traders have reported an increase in income due to the PASA's support, especially because of the purchase of two ice making machines by the Katche-ire cooperative, with partial financial support from the PASA (57 percent of the total costs—the rest is being covered by the cooperative members and a bank credit). The fish traders have reported a ten percent decrease in ice costs compared to when they had to buy ice from other traders in Atakpamé. Reduced production costs and reduced fish waste (by more than twenty percent according to the producer partners interviewed) due to better refrigeration, have led to an increase in sales and a subsequent increase in income by fifteen to twenty-five percent, as reported by the fish traders.

“With the ice making equipment that we got from the project, my activity has improved and so has my income. I have been able to build a permanent house in which I now live with my children.” — Abla Akoda, female fish trader and member of the Katche-ire cooperative, Lake Nangbéto

Like Abla, Kossiwa Adepeke has decided to save some of the additional income generated thanks to the project to open a savings account at the COOPEC-ILEMA microfinance institution.

Fish smokers have seen their production costs reduced by five to twelve percent because the new improved smoking ovens provided by the PASA need less charcoal or firewood than traditional ovens, leading to an increase in income. In the case of fish fryers Afi Amouzou and Amah Adoh, they use part of their additional income to deposit weekly savings to their savings account at the FUCEC microfinance institution.

“I take better care of my six children's health and education thanks to the PASA that provided me with an improved oven. It has increased my income and has even allowed me to build two more brick wall bedrooms for my family.” — Maimouna Mamoudou, Female fish smoker in Albarkaïze, Lake Nangbéto

The impact of the PASA implementation on the income of fish fryers is much less clear, given that women have expressed discontent with the new selling boxes that were provided by the project.

As far as the fisherfolk are concerned, the main activity conducted by the PASA has been to set up a fish resource management plan for Lake Nangbéto and encourage fishermen to respect new fishing rules with standard large-meshed nets and a three-month no-fishing

¹³ According to the World Bank's project appraisal document for PASA, “animal protein production remains below country needs (covering 40 percent for meat and 50 percent for fish) and country consumption is estimated at 19 kg per inhabitant per year, where the FAO minimum threshold is 29.2 kg”: http://www.gafspfund.org/sites/gafspfund.org/files/Documents/WB_Togo_PAD.pdf



period every year. While the fish resource management plan is working towards the long-term preservation of the fishermen's main source of income and setting a level-playing field in terms of fishing nets and practices, it appears that the project implementation has so far not resulted in increased income for fisherfolk. Only a minority (eleven percent) of fisherfolk interviewed have declared that the new standard fishing equipment allows them to catch more big fish and sell fish at a higher price. One fisherman, Arouna Moussa, used part of his additional income to invest in livestock. However, a majority of fisherfolk expressed concern that the new standard large-meshed fishing nets provided by the PASA, along with the enforcement of stricter fish management regulations, has led to lower quantities of fish caught, and therefore lower income.

"The prohibition of our traditional fishing practices by the fisheries service has made my benefits decrease. It's now more difficult to support my family." — A. E., fisherman in Atchintchi, Lake Nangbéto

FISH FROM LAKE NANGBÉTO IS COOKED AND SOLD IN THE LOCAL MARKETS.

CREDIT: RUTH MCDOWALL/ SHOOT THE EARTH/ ACTIONAID

The 2011 project appraisal report states that fishing activity on Lake Nangbéto suffers from a downward spiral of lack of enforcement of minimum mesh size and closure dates, leading to more catches of small fish that are sold at low prices, pushing fishermen to keep fishing and use even smaller-meshed equipment, and fueling ever-decreasing fish catches. The report points out that the enforcement of standard large-meshed nets and a three-month recovery period on Lake Nangbéto would lead to an increase in catch weight in the long run, with the condition that the market for small fish disappears. The report also recognizes that, in the short term, fish catches would be reduced by the use of large-meshed nets, so fishermen and fish traders need to be supported with a fall back activity during the transition time.

The challenge faced by the PASA in increasing fisherfolk incomes is a major concern for long term poverty reduction in the area. The detailed economic analysis of the fish sector in Nangbéto showed that fisherfolk's average annual income amounts to 152,450 CFA Franc, more than twenty-five percent lower than the poverty level of 206,968 CFA Franc of the Plateaux region¹⁴. Based on the economic analysis made on site in Nangbéto, the fisherfolk's income is by far the lowest in the fish trade chain, with fish fryers and fish smokers earning more than ten times as much per year – 1,538,500 CFA Franc on average for fish fryers and 1,935,550 CFA Franc for fish smokers – while the fish traders earn more than twenty times as much as the fisherfolk – 3,364,000 CFA Franc. In order to effectively reduce extreme poverty and prevent rising inequality, it is important that the PASA increases the income of the fisherfolk while maintaining the fish resource in the long term. An income diversification and development strategy is needed, which includes supporting fisherfolk to access credit and be able to finance their own fishing gear and boats, without getting locked into trading arrangements that prevent them from seeking new market opportunities.

d. Food security enhancement

One of the general aims of the PASA is to promote food crops and support that strengthen the partners' food security. Partners have reported improvements in food security as a result of the increased incomes generated through fish trading and fish processing, but also through greater availability of fish. The purchase of two ice making machines and the distribution of ice boxes have decreased fresh fish waste during transportation from the fishing camps to the Atakpamé fish market.

The delivery of hygiene trainings for fish traders and fish processors, and the distribution of equipment (iceboxes, fried fish boxes, etc.) that improve food safety, also contribute to food security. As a result of the training received and as a sign of the women's interest in this issue, the fish traders from the Katche-ire cooperative set up new hygiene rules (compulsory uniform and gloves) for members of the cooperative.

To encourage fishermen to respect the three-month biological recovery period for the fish resource preservation – during which no fishing is allowed – and to support the fishermen's livelihoods, the PASA provided them with equipment for improved traditional poultry house building, packages of one rooster and five hens, and training in poultry farming. This income-generating activity support can also be considered as a food security measure to develop a source of animal protein consumption when no fish are available. Although the concrete implementation of the activity has not fully satisfied the fisherfolk's needs in terms of income generation, discussions at the sites showed that there is interest for this measure to

¹⁴ See "Tableau 4: Evolution des seuils de pauvreté entre 2006 et 2011 (FCFA)" in *Stratégie de Croissance Accélérée et de Promotion de l'Emploi*, p.25 http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Togo/Togo_SCAPE_2013-2017_version_finale.pdf

be extended to a larger number of producer partners beyond the initial 255 fisherfolk households.

As a complementary activity that would both help improve food security and the biological recovery of Lake Nangbéto, support in the form of trainings and equipment for short cycle food crops – such as maize, vegetables or beans – could be considered in the future.

e. Strengthening of fishermen, trader and processor organizations

Women groups in the Nangbéto fish sector are well organized through the Katche-ire fish trader cooperative, the Lolonyo fish smoker cooperative and the Gbénodou fish fryer group. The PASA implementation has enabled the further strengthening of these groups through increased incomes for their members, renewed interests from other women to join them, as well as supporting Katche-ire to formally become a simplified cooperative society, and supporting the ongoing transformation of the Gbenodou group into a cooperative.

On the other hand, the study showed that the fisherfolk suffered from a lack of influence and power in the Nangbéto fish value chain, partly due to their weak level of collective organization. One key factor of change lies in the ability of fisherfolk to organize collectively as the other stakeholders have already succeeded in doing, and become a more influential constituency in the Nangbéto fish sector. The PASA pushed the fisherfolk to start organizing collectively, albeit informally. The creation of five fishing committees that each cover nine to ten fishing camps in Adoubélan, Yoromé, Albarkaizé, Atchinin and Atchinindji around Lake Nangbéto has resulted in the possibility for an intermediary body of representatives, grouped in the “intercommunality”, to consult with the regional services of agriculture, livestock and hydraulic works, and therefore improve the fisherfolk’s involvement in the management of the lake. The newly-launched bimonthly patrol boat monitors the lake, with the joint participation of representatives from the fishing committees and from the service of fisheries, and is evidence of the progress achieved in the collective mobilization of fisherfolk on public issues related to Lake Nangbéto.

3. How does the project engage small-scale food producers, farmer organizations and civil society organizations?

a. Engagement and participation of small-scale food producers, especially women

The study shows that the producer partners were not particularly involved in the design of the project. Producer partners are consulted more in the implementation of activities of the project than they were during the design phase, but a number of them still feel that their needs should be better heard. Most of the producer partners interviewed for the study know about the PASA, even though many of them do not know about the project duration or other details.

In the course of implementation of the project, producer partners are regularly consulted through community meetings with the technical staff of the Ministry of Fisheries. All stakeholders of the fish sector in Nangbéto participate in such meetings, which usually take place in the fishing camps on the shore of the lake. Alongside these general meetings, fish processors and traders are also consulted directly on the location of their activity in the neighboring city of Agbonou. Producer partners are also involved in making a survey of



inhabitants, defining the producer partner selection criteria, selecting producer partners and distributing equipment to the fisherfolk, fish processors and fish traders. The meetings with the project staff usually aim to provide information about, and discuss, specific project activities, and get feedback from the producer partners on the challenges they are facing, and their capacity building or financial needs. However, some producer partners mentioned that in spite of being given the opportunity to make suggestions and express their point of view during the meetings, their requests are seldom taken into account in the project implementation.

The boxes distributed to fish fryers to improve sanitary conditions are a good example of the need to take producer partner feedback into account in project design. The fish smokers are dissatisfied with the boxes because they cannot be moved easily when the women have to hurry around or get in the buses by the side of the road to sell fried fish to the passengers, making them more sanitary but less efficient.

The example of the support to raise chickens provided by the PASA shows, however, that the project can be flexible enough to address needs and issues as they appear when the producer partners' inputs are taken into account. When asked to respect a three-month no-fishing biological recovery period, the fisherfolk objected that their main source of income was threatened. Discussions around the need to support fisherfolk to face the economic loss of preserving the fish stocks led to the distribution of roosters and hens, alongside trainings and support to build poultry houses.

The PASA has initiated the creation of five fishing committees (representing fisherfolk from the

KOFFI NOUFONDJI AND HIS TEAM PULL IN AN ILLEGAL FISHING NET ON LAKE NANGBÉTO. REGULAR PATROLS ON THE LAKE ARE FUNDED BY THE PROJECT AND AIM TO PROTECT FISH STOCKS.

CREDIT: RUTH MCDOWALL/ SHOOT THE EARTH/ ACTIONAID

five main fishing areas around Lake Nangbéto) to be the representative bodies to engage with the regional services of agriculture, livestock and hydraulic works, and to participate in the management of the lake. Representatives from fishing committees also take part in the patrols set up by the PASA to ensure that the lake fishing rules are followed, and that only authorized fishing equipment is used by fisherfolk.

The project partners are also involved in the monitoring and evaluation activities of the PASA by facilitating access to people and information to support data collection. Fisherfolk, fish traders and fish processors are often consulted during these operations, but producer partners reported that the results and outcomes of the project monitoring and evaluation are only partially reported back to them.

b. Engagement and participation of farmer and civil society organizations

The PASA aims – among other objectives – to build the capacity of the government of Togo to implement and monitor the national agricultural and food security investment plan (PNIASA), and its supporting projects. The implementation of the PASA is therefore fully in the hands of the ministries' national and regional services, with little room for farmer and civil society organizations. The Coordination Togolaise des Organisations Paysannes (CTOP), the umbrella body of farmer organizations in Togo, has not been very involved in the PASA, while it has taken a much more active role in the PADAT, the other program supported in Togo by the GAFSP (see Box 1 Focus on the PADAT).

The CTOP was consulted along with civil society organizations on the design of the PASA. In the implementation phase, the federation of cocoa and coffee producer organizations, and the federation of cotton producer organizations – sector-specific members of the CTOP – have been engaged in annual conventions with the PASA regarding the activities implemented in their specific sector. Support to the strengthening of cotton, coffee and cocoa producer organizations and improvement of coordination in these sectors is an explicit part of the activities aiming to increase the production of export crops, as detailed in the PASA project documents.

In 2013, the CTOP facilitated a meeting between producer organizations and the PASA implementation team to foster discussions on the PASA plans and the space allowed for producer organizations in the project. In 2014, in the context of the citizen's control of a public action initiative in Togo, the CTOP took part in evaluation visits of the PNIASA-supported projects, including the PASA. These visits were financially supported by the PASA. The CTOP now takes part in the supervision visits and in the national-level PASA steering committee for competitive funds, where calls for proposals are discussed and selected. CTOP members also take part in the steering committees at the regional level through the regional coordination of farmer organizations and agricultural producers (CROPPA) that represent farmers at the regional level.

The CTOP would have liked, however, to formally engage with the PASA on the work on the reinforcement of legal and institutional frameworks to support agricultural production and trade. The CTOP was consulted when a review was conducted on the subject, but has not been involved in the concrete work that followed the report.

At a more global level, the CTOP initiated a consultation framework with farmer organizations and civil society organizations in 2012. The CTOP still facilitates a discussion forum that has since been recognized by the government and global donors as a valuable mechanism to better consult with Togolese farmer and civil society organizations on plans relating to the

national agricultural investment plan (PNIASA) – including the GAFSP-supported PASA and PADAT – and to better support them in the implementation of GAFSP-supported projects, especially for activities relating to sensitization and advocacy towards farmers.

Even though the CTOP and CSOs have not been formally integrated in the steering bodies of the PASA and PADAT, the existence and support of the consultation framework of farmer organizations and civil society organizations, as well as the participation of CSOs and the CTOP in the expert evaluation committee of the PNIASA, shows progress in the involvement of farmer organizations and civil society organizations in agricultural development projects in Togo.

CSOs were also consulted during the design phase of the PASA, and took part in the PNIASA evaluation visits that included the PASA project in 2014, but are otherwise not very involved in the PASA implementation that remains mainly in the hands of the ministries' services and departments.

4. How does the project reach and benefit women?

Women benefit from an unusually advantageous position in the Nangbéto fish sector as they undertake the most profitable activities – fish trading and fish processing – and are collectively organized, while the fisherfolk – who are the poorest and least organized category in the Nangbéto fish sector – are men. The Nangbéto female fish traders are organized into the 25-member Katche-ire cooperative, just like the fish smokers – all women – in the 45-member Lolonyo cooperative, and the fish fryers – also all women – in the 60-member Gbénodou group, which is in the process of turning into a cooperative. On the contrary, the Nangbéto fisherfolk – all men – are not organized into a cooperative, which gives them less trading and investment power.

Some men have other sources of income such as food crop cultivation or motorbike transportation, but in general women are well-positioned in Nangbéto, partly because they have an access to credit from microfinance institutions that men cannot access due to their weak economic power. It is general practice that the male fisherfolk's fishing boats and equipment are funded by female fish traders and fish processors, in return for supply arrangements that impose a predetermined fish price to fisherfolk and prevent them from seeking other buyers. In this specific context, the PASA implementation in Nangbéto has benefited various categories of people in a different way, but fisherfolk (all of them men) appear to have benefited the least in terms of increases in income, while fish smokers and fish traders (all of them women) have benefited the most when it comes to increases in productivity and income.

The PASA has supported female fish traders, fryers and smokers with equipment and trainings for capacity building. Women producer partners, especially fish traders and fish smokers, reported that the PASA implementation allowed them to increase their income and improve their working conditions by saving costs and time. They also reported having used this additional income for various purposes, including to open savings accounts, fund the building of permanent houses, and to increase their financial contribution to household expenses.

The compulsory three-month biological recovery period for the lake does not only affect fisherfolk, but also the rest of the value chain, including the women that sell or process fish. Fish fryers and smokers usually buy fresh from Lomé to continue their activity during this three-month no-fishing period in Nangbéto, while most fish traders have other small trading



activities. Their access to credit allows them to invest in other trades during that time, which is not possible for fisherfolk who are in debt to traders and processors, and earn less income. It should be noted that the support of the PASA to food security and income diversification through the promotion of poultry farming – however mixed the results are – targeted fishing families, with the activity seemingly tailored to address the need to support fishermen, not explicitly female fish traders. While it may have been considered that female fish traders would benefit from the activity because they are married to fishermen or would have the means to cope with three months without fresh fish trading, there is a lack of specific strategy to support their income during the biological recovery period of the lake.

The PASA implementation also resulted in further development of the existing women's groups and cooperatives. Members of the fish frying group in Gbénodou and the fish smoking cooperative in Lolonyo reported that the positive outcomes of the project have increased other women's interest in their group and cooperative, and resulted in new membership requests. With the collective purchase and management of two ice making machines, the fish traders' cooperative in Katche-ire has increased its autonomy, as well as enhancing its ability to manage collective assets. The Katche-ire group was also supported by the PASA to formally create a simplified cooperative society.

ADOH AMA SELLS FISH IN THE TOWN OF ATAKPAME, TOGO. LOCAL WOMEN UNDERTAKE THE MOST PROFITABLE ACTIVITIES – FISH TRADING AND PROCESSING – AND ARE COLLECTIVELY ORGANIZED.

CREDIT: RUTH MCDOWALL/ SHOOT THE EARTH/ ACTIONAID

5. Does the project enhance climate resilience?

Natural resource management and protection of the environment, in general, are key to the climate resilience of small-scale food producers because environmental degradation, loss of soil fertility, loss of biodiversity and genetic variability in seeds and livestock, and poor quality or availability of water, all hinder the capacity of affected communities to anticipate, absorb and recover from shocks and stresses. In this sense, the PASA activities implemented around Lake Nangbéto that focus on the preservation of the lake's fish stocks, contribute to the long term climate resilience of the communities.

One of the main effects of the PASA implementation in Nangbéto is the growing awareness of the population, especially the fisherfolk, of the need to collectively manage the fish resource of the lake. The PASA supported the development of a management plan for the Nangbéto fisheries to stop the growing depletion of the fish resource on the lake, due to growing demographic pressure, large amounts of fisherfolk, unsustainable fishing practices that did not distinguish between juvenile and adult fish, and the impact of weather trends on the lake's water levels. The management plan has provided the fisheries' service with a guide to mobilize the communities around the need to preserve the lake as a resource, while the PASA has provided the equipment – especially large-meshed fishing nets and equipment for patrol guards – and support to encourage the shift in fishing practices and the respect of the three-month biological recovery period for the fish stocks. The development of poultry livestock activities has also encouraged fisherfolk to seek alternative income sources during the three months of no fishing.

Sustainable management of the fish resource of Lake Nangbéto remains a challenge, as illustrated by the dissatisfaction expressed by the fisherfolk with the imposed standard large-meshed nets and no-fishing period. The challenge is all the more difficult because the fisherfolk are the least collectively organized and poorest group of the Nangbéto fish sector. Economic development must therefore be promoted on a par with natural resource management and adaptation to the impact of climate change on Lake Nangbéto.

The initiatives such as the imposition of the biological recovery for fish stocks, the development of alternative income generating activities, the distribution of large-meshed nets and prohibition of harmful fishing practices should eventually contribute to the long-term sustainability of the fish sector in Nangbéto in a context of growing pressure on the water resource.

Finally, through the distribution of improved ovens for the fish smokers, the PASA has also helped reduce the need for charcoal and firewood to process the fish.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on the findings of the study of the implementation of the PASA in Nangbéto, including interviews with producer partners. The PASA is coming to an end in 2016 so it may not be possible to take the recommendations regarding implementation of activities on board, but the insights from the field work provide valuable inputs for the preparation of the evaluation and closing of the project, and for elements that can be improved or considered for future planning.

On participation in the PASA

- Support the participation of CTOP and civil society organizations in the PASA and in other future programs, from the design phase through to implementation.
- Improve the feedback to the producer partners on the outcomes of monitoring and evaluation activities.
- Systematically identify and take into account the needs of producer partners, especially the fisherfolk and the fish fryers.

On the income and living conditions of the Nangbéto fisherfolk

- Support the fisherfolk in organizing collectively to increase their influence in the fish sector.
- Support the fisherfolk to set up microfinance schemes to fund the purchase of costly equipment.
- Broaden the producer partner base for fishing, storage and processing equipment distribution as well as for capacity building activities.
- Provide all of the fisherfolk with standard large-meshed fishing nets and ensure the standard metrics are maintained.
- Continue to mobilize the fisherfolk on the need to respect sustainable lawful fishing techniques.
- Support fisherfolk to access more lucrative markets, including at the national level.
- Support the fisherfolk with livestock raising and short-cycle crop cultivation activities, especially during the biological recovery period of the lake.
- Provide capacity building and training to ensure that poultry farming activities are profitable and contribute to food security enhancement.

On women's empowerment in Nangbéto

- Extend the existing technical and material support to all fish smokers and fish traders.
- Encourage income diversification for women relying on the fish sector, especially for female fish traders that do not have alternative livelihoods during the biological recovery period of the lake.

- Engage with fish fryers to identify their needs and plan specific support activities aiming to increase their income.
- Continue supporting the strengthening and capacity building of women organizations and cooperatives.

On food security enhancement in Nangbéto

- Assess the activities supported against food and nutrition security benchmark indicators to measure their possible impact in this area.
- Use a participatory approach with fishermen and women organizations and cooperatives to identify the challenges to food and nutrition security.
- Assess the relevance and quality of the project activities and interventions, including income diversification and generation activities, according to their potential food and nutrition security impact.
- Continue the development and diversification of livestock raising and crop cultivation activities to increase food production around Lake Nangbéto.

On climate resilience and natural resource management in Nangbéto

- Mobilize the producer partners on the objectives and content of the fish resource management plan of Lake Nangbéto.
- Continue mobilizing the fisherfolk on the need to follow the imposed fishing rules and to only use authorized equipment.
- Set up public toilets to preserve the water quality of the lake.
- Continue the development of alternative income generating activities for the fisherfolk.

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