District Assemblies/Local government must work effectively to encourage the formalisation (registration) of all informal women livelihood groups and provide need-based capacity building. Traditional Authorities must do well to ensure increased participation of women in decision-making as a tool in highlighting and addressing gendered livelihood challenges.

Women’s groups must seek close collaboration with municipal and district level actors in supporting their activities including the provision of capacity support and opportunities.

Corporate Bodies/Private Sector (Financial Institutions, NGOs) must focus on capacity building components of livelihoods to make women directly responsible for the operations and management of their livelihood activities.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Project was led by the Regional Institute for Population Studies (RIPS) and the Institute for Environment and Sanitation Studies (IESS) of the University of Ghana respectively, in partnership with Pro-Link, a non-governmental organisation (NGO) promoting equitable development of the rural and urban poor, especially women and girls and in collaboration with Kulima Integrated Development Solutions, based in South Africa.

CORPORATE SPONSORS

The Project was led by the Regional Institute for Population Studies (RIPS) and the Institute for Environment and Sanitation Studies (IESS) of the University of Ghana respectively, in partnership with Pro-Link, a non-governmental organisation (NGO) promoting equitable development of the rural and urban poor, especially women and girls and in collaboration with Kulima Integrated Development Solutions, based in South Africa.

We are grateful to the South Tongu District and Keta Municipal Assemblies for their support in carrying out this project, specifically, the Department of Agriculture, National Board for Small-Scale Industries (NBSSI) and Department of Gender and Social Welfare as well as the Friends Land Secretariat, Sogakope.

PROJECT TEAM

Samuel Nii Ardey Codjoe (Prof) – Regional Institute for Population Studies
Kwasi Appeaning Addo (Prof) – Institute for Environment and Sanitation Studies
Gertrude Frimpomaa Owusu – Regional Institute for Population Studies
Bernice Myoro Gyakye – Pro-Link Integrated Development Programmes
Faustina Borklow – Keta Municipal Assembly
Mama Ku Agbi II – Queen Mother, Fievie/Land Secretariat (Sogakope)
Hon. Bernice Heloo – Pro-Link Integrated Development Programmes
Katharina Vincent (Dr) – Kulima Integrated Development Solutions
Prosper Adiku – Institute for Environment and Sanitation Studies

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Regional Institute for Population Studies, University of Ghana
College of Humanities, Post Office Box LG 96, Legon - Accra
Tel: +233 (0) 302 906800 ; +233 (0) 302 906801
Email: rip@ips-ug.edu.gh ; rip@rips-ug.edu.gh

This work was carried out with the aid of a grant from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada, as part of the Climate and Development Knowledge Network (CDKN) Programme.

This work was carried out with the aid of a grant from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada, as part of the Climate and Development Knowledge Network (CDKN) Programme.


The Project was led by the Regional Institute for Population Studies (RIPS) and the Institute for Environment and Sanitation Studies (IESS) of the University of Ghana respectively, in partnership with Pro-Link, a non-governmental organisation (NGO) promoting equitable development of the rural and urban poor, especially women and girls and in collaboration with Kulima Integrated Development Solutions, based in South Africa.
In the Volta Delta, coastal erosion, salinization of freshwater (lagoons and rivers) and declining soil/fertility have adversely affected fishing and agricultural livelihoods in the region. Limited opportunities for local livelihoods have driven many men to migrate out as a coping strategy; this has increased the number of women-headed households with the additional labour needs placed on women for taking care of their families. Basin surveys revealed that women are limited in their capacity to effectively use and manage their lands. The project aimed to fill this gap by providing women with opportunities as an intervention to raise their awareness of the importance of their lands as a way of enhancing access to microfinance. Similarly, in the Keta district, women are now in a good position to access microfinance for their businesses, repay their loans and effectively support their families. Following the training, a women’s group (Sogakope) have followed up on promises made by the Agave Rural Bank to support women’s groups due to their informal nature, formalizing these groups by registering them as cooperatives with the MMDAs would increase their credibility for financial access in the future. The involvement of governance structures such as the Municipal and District Assemblies provides a strong network for the women. In this project, officials of the Municipal and District Assemblies units were extensively engaged and contributed to the training processes to ensure their women have linkages for easy access of information and opportunities relating to their livelihoods in the future.

**ACHIEVEMENTS**

- The project has helped in providing skills training to over thirty-six women group leaders in the Keta Municipal and South Tongu Districts to earn a living from increased income levels and sharing knowledge gained with other women.

- The women are now in a good position to access microfinance to grow their businesses, repay their loans and effectively support their families.

- Following the training, a few women’s group (Sogakope) have followed up on promises made by the Agave Rural Bank to support women’s groups through applying for savings accounts. Through media engagements and publicity, the findings from the baseline survey as well as the alternative livelihoods and options for improved productivity have been shared with other women’s groups who were not directly involved in the project. This has been done through the women’s own initiatives and informal meetings among themselves.

**LESSONS LEARNED**

- Women’s empowerment requires a holistic approach in terms of activities and actors involved. Activities should include awareness creation, needs based capacity enhancement in livelihoods as well as advocacy. Actors that need to work together include traditional leaders, local government agencies (Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies - MMDAs) as well as women groups and individuals to ensure there is greater support for the empowerment of women.

- Care must be given to consider implications of activities: since women are key caregivers and home keepers additional activities may add labour burden; this may be offset by increased agency over their own livelihoods.

- Financing remains a major challenge to women’s groups due to their informal nature, formalizing these groups by registering them as cooperatives with the MMDAs would increase their credibility for financial access in the future.

- The involvement of governance structures such as the Municipal and District Assemblies provides a strong network for the women. In this project, officials of the Municipal and District Assemblies units were extensively engaged and contributed to the training processes to ensure their women have linkages for easy access of information and opportunities relating to their livelihoods in the future.