SGP Focus



NEWSLETTER OF THE GEF SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME (SGP) IN SIERRA LEONE; VOL.1; JUNE 2013



 $Participants\ at\ the\ launch\ of\ the\ GEF\ Small\ Grants\ Programme\ in\ Sierra\ Leone.\ Photo\ \&\ story\ by:\ Abu-Bakar\ S.\ Massaquoi\ and\ Sierra\ Leone.\ Photo\ Bakar\ S.\ Massaquoi\ Abu-Bakar\ S.\ Massaquoi\ Abu-Bakar$

SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME LAUNCHED

June 5 marked the commemoration of the World Environment Day and official launch of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), Small Grants Programme (SGP). The occasion attracted officials from various Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), the Government of Sierra Leone, INGOs, donor agencies and the private sector.

Making the opening statement, the chairman, Dr Joseph M. Macarthy, Lecturer, School of Environmental Sciences and member of the GEF SGP National Steering Committee (NSC) emphasized the need to bring together different partners at different levels to contribute in terms of funds, expertise and reach. He urged participants and all stakeholders to provide absolute support for the promotion and strengthening of local and community-based experiences, innovations, skills and knowledge through the GEF Small Grants Programme.

The GEF Operational Focal Point and Executive Director, Environment Protection Agency Sierra Leone, lauded the GEF SGP approach of using solid evidence about reality on the ground and timeframes that allow consequential participation by stakeholders for awarding grants to CSOs. He advised all stakeholders to stick to the SGP model of comanagement and joint learning, to make the collaboration relevant and effective.

Other speakers included Mr Syril Jusu, Mr A. R Kamara, Mr Momodu Bah and Mr A. Jalloh-Focal Points for the UNCCD, UNFCCC (CDM), UNCBD and the Stockholm Convention respectively.

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The GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP) wishes to announce the 3rd call for proposals targeting local NGOs, CBOs, research institutions, women's groups, grass root organizations, and youth groups with projects focusing on one or more of the GEF focal areas of biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation, protection of fresh water and marine resources, prevention of land degradation and elimination of persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and other harmful chemicals.

More details on the GEF SGP together with guidelines for application and copies of the CPS and project proposal template can be obtained from: The National Coordinator (NC), GEF SGP, UNDP Country Office, 55 Wilkinson Road, Freetown; email: abu-bakar.massaquoi@undp.org abubakarsm@unops.org

Deadline for submission of full proposals is Friday, July 26, 2013.

MANAGING POLLUTANTS AT BORMEH & GRANVILLE DUMPSITES



'Managing the unintentional release of Persistent Organic Pollutants (UPOPs) at two dumpsites in Freetown' is a GEF SGP-funded project implemented by the Action for Environmental Protection & Sustainable Development (AEPSD).

UPOPs describe the unintended and undetectable release of harmful, chemical substances that remain in the environment for years without degrading or losing 'harmful potential'. This makes susceptibility to their harmful effects more likely as to cumulative exposure of populations. Albeit the persistence and level of accumulation, the level of awareness and strength of positive action is low-key. This toughens the promotion of preventive and mitigation strategies, especially when opportunistic infections and/or toxicities make the headlines.

The 2008 national inventory on uPOPs inculpated open burning as the major route of uPOPs release. Most people have testified persistent health problems associated with exposure to smoke. One lady lives close to the Bormeh dumpsite at kingtom and has been exposed to smoke for over 30 years. She has persistently experienced itching, persistent coughs, and more commonly also, hygiene sanitation-related illnesses. Her condition has persisted for decades. Her condition is often attributed to common diseases like Malaria, Typhoid etc and witchcraft. She has been diagnosed of typhoid and Malaria several times, even though she drinks pipe borne water and sleeps under treated bed nets. She has judiciously administered all the drugs prescribed for her all of the time, vet the problem has persisted. She is confused and needs help.

So many stories of this nature have been recorded. Some are desperate. One community member informed AEPSD of their intention to litigate the Government of Sierra Leone for establishing and poorly managing a dumpsite in their locality. He blames the government for not taking waste education and management issues seriously.

With support from the GEF Small Grants Programme, AEPSD is developing a risk register for the largest dumpsites in Freetown- Bormeh at Kingtom and Granville Brook to identify and quantify chlorinated waste materials as sources of uPOPs; develop locally appropriate decontamination measures and technologies to prevent and mitigate uPOPs release; and, advocate for domestication of the Stockholm Convention on POPs in Sierra Leone.

So far, AEPSD has established and operationalised two community-level uPOPs management committees and is collaborating with Njala University and the University of Sierra Leone for technical support throughout the research exercisethat will inform the development of a practitioner's handbook, the application of decontamination measures and transfer of waste minimization technologies and the development of an incident command system in the long term.

This project team is using UNEP's standardized toolkit as a guide throughout the process. The activities and the perceived outputs will inform a robust advocacy campaign at the community and policy levels.



Photos & story by: Abubakarr S. Mansaray (AEPSD)



SGP DESK

Abu-Bakar S. Massaquoi,
National Coordinator, GEF/SGP
Thank you for reading the 1st volume of our newsletter. This volume is dedicated to introducing our wider audience to the implementing partners and communities through the first 4 months on the ground.

The GEF Small Grants Programme in Sierra Leone started in October 2012 with a focus on supporting local, community-based initiatives as a way of building consensus on the key issues that should frame environmental sustainability considering key inter-linkages, drivers and enablers in the country. We have remained critical in enhancing dialogue, outreach and innovative thinking as needed, to continue to build consensus and develop a constituency of leading and emerging thinkers from CSOs across the country. This has created visibility and awareness around environmental sustainability issues for moving towards the country we want.

UNDP, UNOPS and other players have been central in bringing together different partners at different levels; their commitment to empowering local stakeholders with fairness and sustainability has shaped programme in terms of funds, expertise, influence and reach. We are happy for sustaining an approach that is broad and flexible enough to accommodate local diversity and change. The next 5 years forward, we will work at the local level, learn from experience and then scale up. We will use these experiences to be effective, to be efficient and to expand. Throughout the process, GEF SGP Sierra Leone will build capacity & enhance ownership.



Photos & story by: Edward Aruna (RAP)

RARE SPECIES IN PROPOSED NATIONAL PARK

The Freetown Long-fingered Frog Cardioglossa aureoli, was first recorded in Sierra Leone in 1964 by Arne Schiøtz in the Western Area Peninsula Forest Reserve (WAPFR). Its second sighting was in 2004 by Mr. Abdulai Barrie, а renowned Environmental Biologist in Sierra Leone and Ted Pattenffouss, a herpetologist from the USA. Since then, no announced sightings have been made until June 2013 when staff from Reptiles and Amphibian Programme (RAP-Sierra Leone), in a survey of reptiles and amphibians of the Western Area, funded by the UNDP Small Grants Programme, saw the frog at Congo Dam the Tacugama Chimpanzee around Sanctuary.

On the IUCN redlist, *Cardioglossa aureoli* is listed as an endangered species based on the fact that its extent of occurrence is probably less than 5,000 km² and its area of occupancy is also probably less than 500 km². It occurs only at fewer than five locations, though there is a claim that similar species have been recorded in neighbouring country – Guinea. This is yet to be confirmed. The extent of *C. aureoli* forest habitat in the Freetown Peninsula is declining as the expansion of settlements, logging, fuelwood collection, farming and road construction continues to threaten the remaining cover of WAPFR.

The second amphibian species that is of conservation concern documented recently by the RAP survey is the Sierra Leone Water Frog - *Petropedetes natator*. This frog is listed as a Near Threatened species since it depends on streams in rainforest, and so its

area of occupancy is probably not much greater than 2,000 km², and the extent and quality of its habitat is declining, thus making the species close to qualifying for vulnerability status (IUCN, 2012). RAP-SL has confirmed that this species was first recorded in Sierra Leone based on the common name accorded it.

Through GEF SGP support, and in the first month of implementation, RAP has documented 14 amphibian and 6 reptile species around the Congo Dam. It is hoped that over the next eight months, more species will be added to the reptile & amphibian register. This will confirm or change IUCN records on Sierra Leone; that is, 55 amphibian species. The reptile species number and geographic biomes have not been recorded but Wikipedia assumes that there are 67 reptile species.

Locally, there are no comprehensive reports on the number of reptile and amphibian species that inhabit the Western Area of Sierra Leone. Therefore, the result of this survey will serve as a basis for policy formulation and conservation planning for herpeto-fauna



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They stressed on the need to use SGP resources to negotiate and craft effective institutions and realistic policies from the ground-up and improve the efficacy of national level processes and relationships by finding the right balance between state action and other institutional actors.

his address, the National Coordinator of GEF SGP, Abu-Bakar S. Massaguoi thanked all stakeholders for their support since the inception of the programme in October 2012. He stressed that the GEF SGP believes that externally driven actions are less likely to have a lasting impact unless they are championed by strong domestic actors and maintained that they are willing to keep their approach broad and flexible enough to accommodate local diversity and change. He moved that the country team will support a process that starts at the local level, teaches them to learn by doing and then scale up. This, he said, will help them learn how to be effective, efficient and expand, while building their capacity and enhancing ownership.

Launching the event, the Deputy Country Director (Programmes) and Acting Country Director for the UNDP Country Office in Sierra Leone, Mr Mohamed Abchir expressed their commitment to continue using the SGP to encourage maximum country and community initiative and ownership and urged all stakeholders to give maximum support so that the programme can deliver outputs and create fair, equitable and lasting outcomes.

Mr Abchir asked participants to treat the SGP as more than simply a fund

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FROM 'BANDA' TO ENERGY-EFFICIENT STOVES

The coastal communities of Sierra Leone are predominantly fishing communities, relying heavily on fish products for their livelihoods. Fish processing and marketing is the main traditional economic activity of women population in communities, which depend heavily on mangrove forests as a source of fuel wood for fish smoking. Post-harvest losses of fish products are pervasive problems in the fishing processing industry, mainly as a result of the absence of access roads to the fishing villages, and the lack of other means of preservation coupled with the absence of electricity supply.

Fish-smoking can be an effective processing and preservation technique to reduce post-harvest losses, but in these coastal communities, it is the traditional high-energy intensive and low-fuel efficient Smoke Systems referred to as 'banda' that are used to smoke fish. In addition to poor quality preservation and the potential danger of particulate emissions that cause diseases and suffering particularly among women and children, the traditional 'banda' fish processing has far-reaching environmental consequences in terms of poor fuel-wood economy and its direct impact on mangrove deforestation.

In an effort to minimize the environmental consequences of mangrove deforestation along the coast, a local non-governmental organisation, Green Future, through the UNDP-GEF Small Grants Programme is implementing a project to introduce innovative and improved, energy-saving fish smoking systems (chorkors) in poor rural coastal communities in Ribbi Chiefdom to replace the traditional high energy-intensive fish smoking systems (banda), so as to particularly provide an

alternative to mangrove deforestation, and in general promote a sustainable utilization of mangroves occurring along the coastline of Yawri Bay, and provide a sustainable income generation activity for the communities.

A successful implementation of this project will help largely to decelerate mangrove deforestation, reduce poverty and contribute to economic growth by helping women who rely on mangrove forest ecosystems for their livelihoods to adapt and adopt a profitable and safer fish preservation technology that will reduce the demand for mangrove wood as fuel for fish smoking. It will, at the same time, decrease post-harvest losses and increase income generation by augmenting the quality of fish supplied to the market.

More than 500 women are engaged in fish processing/marketing in the project area. Protecting the mangrove forest they depend on needs no further justification for their future. As a result, the project is implemented in collaboration with the Ribbi Coastal Community Women's

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Mohamed Abchir, CD a.i (UNDP SL)

that provides small grants to CBOs and NGOs for environmental and community improvement, and advised that it can make a good platform for building partnerships and networks across civil society, promoting policy dialogues with government at all levels and incorporating the needs of poor communities and marginalized sections of society.

He affirmed that the UNDP Country Office will utilize SGP resources to foster an enabling environment within the country for addressing environmental issues and ensuring sustainable development goals.



High table(L-R): Momodu Bah (FP-UNCBD); A.R Kamara (FP-UNFCCC/CDM); Syril Jusu (FP-UNCCD); J.M Macarthy (Chair); Mohamed Abchir (CD a,i-UNDP SL); K.A Bangura (GEF OFP)

ACCESSING SGP FUNDS

To qualify for a grant through the GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP), your organisation should meet the following requirements:

- You are an NGO, CBO, research institution or grass root organisation;
- You are able to formulate a project addressing one or more of the GEF focal areas of biodiversity conservation, land degradation, climate change mitigation, community-based adaptation, international waters and chemicals;
- Your project addresses cross-cutting GEF themes of knowledge management, gender mainstreaming, policy advocacy, sustainable livelihoods, community empowerment and capacity development; continues on page 5



Cross-section of CMC members at Benquema in the Western Area Rural District. Photos & story by: Alie Sesay (IDEAL)

BIO-ENERGY FROM ECO-SANITATION TOILETS

IDEAL Sierra Leone, as a Grantee of the GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP), is working on the implementation of the Project "Waste to Energy: Reducing Energy Poverty and **Promoting** Sustainable Land Management through ECOSAN Toilets". The project is based on sustainably managing land to deliver multiple social, environmental and economic benefits. The project will be implemented in Benguema and Grafton Communities in the Western Area Rural District.

Baseline studies have been carried out to document baseline information against which project progress will be tracked. More importantly, the exercise led to a significant project management decision. The initial proposed pilot sites for this project were the Marbella Community in the Western Area Urban and Benguema in the Western Area Rural District. However, findings from the baseline studies revealed that the full potentials of the technology will not be maximized in Marbella because of congestion and limited land space and the proposed location (closer to the sea) of the technology was inappropriate since the area is often flooded. Based on these findings, it was unanimously agreed that the site be changed. After few community consultative meetings, Graton was finally identified as a more suitable project site on the basis of maximized benefits and sustainability.

Thus the decision to swap Marbella for Grafton was entirely based on relevance, feasibility and sustainability. Considering the complexity of the project, stakeholder meetings have been held to fully understand issues around ease of testing and sustainable livelihoods. These sessions have made the various project components even more comprehensible and IDEAL has seen extended community interest and involvement.

As a way of facilitating ownership and passing out targeted capacity building to community representatives, Community Management Committees (CMC) have been formed. The CMCs will lead in communityoutreach events, and revenue level collection and management. Other key outputs include, profiling and mapping of priority sites, formulation documentation of by-laws, clearing of construction sites, architectural designs and preliminary construction work on the ECOSAN facility.

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FROM 'BANDA' ...

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Organisation, which is a Community-Based Organisation comprising of women in the coastal villages in Ribbi Chiefdom, Moyamba District.

The project is innovative in the sense that it combines local knowledge, techniques and skills into a new set of activities that aims at conserving marine biodiversity and improving rural women's livelihoods. It directly addresses issues expressed by the vulnerable groups themselves and is grounded on a solid understanding of local context, supported by the technical expertise of the implementing NGO.

The global significance is that it will improve the sustainability of the Yawri Bay Marine Protected Area through the sustainable utilization, thus conservation, of its mangrove ecosystem by introducing an efficient mechanism to reduce over harvesting of the mangrove resources through the community-based actions of introducing less fuel wood consumption stoves for fish smoking.

Through the initiative of the introduction of less wood consumption stoves, it mainstreams the conservation of the Yawri Bay MPA biodiversity and sustainable use into its terrestrial mangrove areas. It also promotes the demonstration, development and transfer of low carbon technologies the community level.

ACCESSING SGP FUNDS (from page 4)

- Your project is aligned with the Country Programme Strategy (CPS) & demonstrates capacity for up-scaling/replication;
- Your organisation is based and functional in Sierra Leone;
- You have implementation experience in one or more of the GEF focal areas above; and
- You can develop a 3-page concept explaining your project idea, the strategy, sustainability plan and the local, community-based issues that you want to address.

Contact the National Coordinator (<u>abu-bakar.massaquoi@undp.ora</u>) at the UNDP Country Office, 55 Wilkinson Road in Freetown for more information and guidance.



Cross-section of participants at training workshop at No 2 River. Photo & story: Daniel Macauley (RECTOUR)

TACKLING THE PENINSULA WASTE CRISIS

With the lack of facilities and capacity for waste management in the Western Area Responsible Peninsula, **Eco-Tourism** Community Organisation (RECTOUR) has benefited from the UNDP/GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP) with cash co-financing from Welthungerhilfe (WHH) for an ecotourism-based waste management drive in seven coastal communities in the proposed Western Area National Park, namely: Lakka, Sussex, Baw Baw, No. 2 River, Tokeh, Bureh and Kent. The initiative will improve ecotourism and revenue for these communities and will critically enhance community and ecological health, create jobs and sustain conservation efforts in the area.

The waste management project was initiated due to the critical waste conditions in these communities and the implications it has had on livelihoods, health and the environment. Tourism revenue has generally declined over the years due to the low-key, poorly kept attraction sites in the peninsula- the country's top tourist attraction. This has principally affected tour guides and resorts that depend on tourist visits throughout the year.

With GEF SGP support, the communities will benefit from a targeted waste management capacity development programme that will engage youth and other vulnerable groups in skills training for reusing and recycling waste products; an innovative financing mechanism for other community development projects that sources revenue from waste collection processes; the promotion of ecological goods and services that warrant increased tourist attention through various media and the training of tour guides as a

sustainable means to creating employment for the people.

To date, the waste management units of seven villages have been established after a two-day training workshop. The sites for constructing concrete dump stations have been identified and cleared. Tour guides have also been trained and mobility support (1 motor bike) has been procured to enhance engagement community and knowledge management. biodiversity exposition is also being planned, that will show case attraction spots among the many ecological goods and services of the proposed National Park.

These activities will complement the sustainable livelihood activities of the Western Area Peninsula **Forest** Reserve (WAPFoR) project managed by WHH in 7 of more than 20 communities. The project is critical as it comes at a time when the tourist influx will increase with the completion of the micro-hydro dam and other dam projects within the reserve. It will clearly show that coastal community electrification projects renewable environmental resources can achieve greater impacts with improved coastal community and ecosystem health, jobs, capacity and extended information and education (promotional) services, which the GEF SGP-funded project seeks to achieve.

To conclude, the two projects practically show that more people can benefit more creatively over the long term with such strategic partnerships.

BIO-ENERGY FROM ECOSAN TOILETS

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With at least 3000 target beneficiaries, the project will explore possible alternatives to the following over the course of the next 8 months in the two pilot sites:

- Uncontrolled discharge of more than 60% of human and biodegradable waste;
- Pollution of waters by organics, nutrients, hazardous substances, residues, hormones, etc.
- Unbearable health risks and spread of disease;
- Severe environmental damage and eutrophication of the water cycle;
- High dependence on wood and charcoal for energy and its impact on climate change and biodiversity conservation;
- Loss of valuable nutrients and trace elements contained in excrements due to discharge into waters;
- Impoverishment of agricultural soils; and
- Increased dependence on chemical fertilizers.

The project clearly exemplifies SGP's method of addressing problem sheds through multifunctional, replicable, scalable and impactful local, community-based initiatives. The ECOSAN project is the first in the country, and its integration of bioenergy, organic agriculture and community ad ecological sanitation components may be a novelty altogether across the region.



IDEAL and community representatives at Grafton during a consultative forum



Before

Now

Photo & story by: Patrick M. Koroma (HEED)

WATER HARVESTING AT GWENT-HEIGHT

With a \$7,000 grant from the GEF Small Grants Programme, people of the Gwent-Height community and its surroundings will soon get a safer drinking water dam, ECOSAN public toilet, microcredit scheme, garbage disposal point and laundry pool among other benefits.

Located in a valley surrounded by hills along the hill-cut road in the west end of Freetown, the Gwent-Height community and its surroundings with an estimated population of about 3500 people lack all the basic amenities including safe drinking water. The community just like other slum communities was opened at the end of the rebel war and has sprawled ever since. Gwent-Height among other areas has remained a catchment area for rural-urban migrants in Freetown, thus increasing pressure on the limited social amenities and environmental resources- especially water.

Being a hill-valley community, Gwent height before now was blessed with some forest and natural spring waters. But with more houses being built and more people coming into the budding community, deforestation and other environmental hazards are weighing down the once pristine community. As the community lacks basic amenities like pipe-borne water, its people heavily rely on the running water from the rocky hills for both domestic use and drinking. Since the community is a catchment area in the city and quite unplanned, deforestation and poor hygiene practices are having effect on even the only source of water for the people. As the forest continues to dwindle due to human activities, so do the streams.

The environment of the Gwent-height community is polluted with the rampant disposal of domestic wastes and with its burning too, which almost all of the time is done haphazardly. The land continues to loss its quality; with landslide occurring at a lot of points in the community. Since the community lacks clear cut-out streets with no properly developed run-ways for water during the rains, land erosion is fast robbing the top-soil of some of its qualities. In all, the environmental degradation is negatively impacting the community.

In as much as water resources are important to both society and ecosystem; sustainable health and livelihood of any man depends on a reliable and clean supply of drinking water. With the available GEF SGP support, Health Education and Environmental Development (HEED) Sierra Leone is constructing a reservoir for harvesting water for various purposes & providing training in rain harvesting techniques and water banking. HEED is also working with community groups towards formulating and applying by-laws as well as supporting women and youth groups through a microcredit scheme.

The benefits of this project upon completion include will sustainable ecological sanitation, alternative livelihoods, water supply, waste management, capacity development and disease prevention. The project is an intervening opportunity for reforesting the buffer areas of the community and promises long term financing mechanisms. Revenue from the use of the ECOSAN toilet, water supply and waste collection will be used to support a revolving fund from which the community can benefit even after the project's term elapses.



OCTOBER 2012

GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP) starts in Sierra Leone.

DECEMBER 4-5

GEF regional sensitization meetings organised in Makeni and Bo (northern and southern capitals of Sierra Leone).

DECEMBER 28

Country Programme Strategy (CPS) approved by GEF SGP Global Office; 1st grant allocation letter received.

FEBRUARY 14

National Steering Committee (NSC) constituted and approved by GEF SGP Global Office.

FEBRUARY 21

1st NSC meeting organised.

MARCH 21

2nd NSC meeting organised. 13 projects approved.

MAY 17

2nd grant allocation letter received.

JUNE 5

GEF SGP Sierra Leone launched on World Environment Day at the British Council in Freetown.

JUNE 27

3rd NSC meeting organised. 14 projects approved.

Upcoming Events

1st GEF SGP Roundtable Event- The SGP Forum

The 1st quarterly GEF SGP forum will be organised in August 2013. This will see 3 grantees presenting on their accomplishments so far to invitees from CSOs, government and donor agencies. The forum is a major effort for visibility creation and resource mobilization.

Bi-monthly Radio Magazine Show

The bi-monthly SGP radio magazine show will hold again in July at STAR Radio in Freetown. The topic and time will be communicated in good time.

Grantee Radio & TV Programmes

Stay tuned to our regular grantee radio and TV programmes across the country. Details on the time of the programmes will be communicated in good time.

14 NGOs and CBOs to Benefit from 2nd Round of SGP Grants

14 NGOs and CBOs from all over the country have been approved for cycle 2 of GEF SGP funding through 2014. They will officially start implementation in July 2013. Another set of 10-15 projects will be approved in September for various local, community-based, environmental management initiatives across the country.

Editorial Team

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Submissions:

The SGP Country Team welcomes articles, news stories, upcoming events and other materials for publication in the next volume of the SGP Focus, coming up in November. Please address all correspondences to the National Coordinator at the address below:







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