



POWER TO THE FISHERS PROJECT

# POWER TO THE FISHERS PROJECT (PTF)

## COVID-19 COMMUNITY SENSITIZATION



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European Union



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- *The Power to the Fishers Project*  
<http://powertothefishers.com/>
- *CERATH Development Organization*  
<https://cerathdev.org/>

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### **Disclaimer**

The views expressed and opinions contained in this report are those of the PTF team and are not intended as statements of policy of the EU. The contents of this report are the responsibility of the PTF team and do not necessarily reflect the views of the EU.

### **Cover Photo**

A project team member demonstrating to participants of the sensitization session the effective way to wear a nose mask (Photo Credit: CDO).

## **Acronyms**

EU	European Union
CDO	CERATH Development Organization
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CSO-RISE	Civil Society Organization in Research and Innovation for Sustainable Development
MoH	Ministry of Health
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
PTF	Power to the Fishers
WHO	World Health Organization

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## **I.0. Introduction**

### **I.1. Project Summary**

CERATH Development Organization is implementing a project titled “Power to the Fishers” funded by the European Union under the Civil Society Organization in Research and Innovation for Sustainable Development (CSO-RISE) programme. The Power to the Fishers project (PTF) is a four (4) year project being implemented in five (5) coastal districts aimed at enhancing the socio-economic livelihood of fishing communities in the coastal savanna zones of Ghana. Under this goal, the project is being steered by a number of objectives, which includes:

- Engage stakeholders and value chain actors to disseminate information on climate change and other contemporary issues affecting the fishery sector and coastal ecosystems.
- Enhance the knowledge and adoption of improved, environmentally friendly and cost-efficient fuels and fish processing technologies.
- Build the capacities of target groups on appropriate fishing and business practices, environmental protection, climate change, health and safety.
- Forge strategic partnerships between social protection entities (mainly health insurance, credit and pensions) and the target groups
- Document project outcomes and disseminate for learning and scaling.

The target beneficiaries of the project are fishmongers and fishermen in the fishing communities of Effutu Municipal, Awutu Senya, Ekumfi, Gomoa West and Shama districts of Ghana. This project contributes to the overall objective of the CSO-RISE programme through community empowerment and capacity building towards inclusive growth and reduction of social inequalities.

In March 2020, Ghana recorded her first coronavirus case and since then, there has been an increase in the number of recorded and active cases. Commentary about the pandemic has been diverse and contradictory. The Ministry of Health (MoH) and other state agencies have made frantic efforts to dispel myths (about coronavirus) and provide the right education (to the general public) on the virus and means of keeping safe. Despite the government’s strong attempts, civil society will have to compliment these efforts.

Due to migratory demands of the fishery industry, the project has identified fisherfolk – both fishmongers and fishermen – as high risks persons and could easily contract the coronavirus disease. In response to this risk element, it will be crucial to provide direct education and the needed protective equipment to the project’s beneficiary communities.

### **I.2. Activity Brief**

The project team engaged coastal community folks across the five PTF districts. The exercise afforded participants education on the coronavirus disease and means of protecting oneself. Also, informational posters (on COVID-19) were pasted at vantage points within the communities. In addition, the project team donated relief items and personal protective equipment to the communities – to provide some support due to the economic impact of the disease and enhance the safety of community folks. A total of 562 fisherfolk were sensitized on COVID-19 safety protocols and received relief donations.

The goal of this COVID-inspired activity was to help curb the spread of the coronavirus in the target communities of the Power to the Fishers project. The specific objectives for this exercise were to:

- Increase awareness of COVID-19 through community education and public awareness (CEPA) campaigns.
- Enhance access and adoption of personal protective equipment (PPE) to mitigate spread and infection of the disease.

## **2.0. COVID-19 Sensitization**

### **2.1. Sensitization Content**

COVID-19 sensitization content, based on the guidelines issued by WHO and Ministry of Health (Ghana), was developed by the project team. This sensitization content informed the sessions delivered to the community folks.

#### Background to COVID-19

- The novel coronavirus is a new strain of coronavirus. The disease was first identified in Wuhan, China and has been named coronavirus diseases 2019 (COVID-19). COVID-19 is linked to the same family of viruses as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and some types of common cold.
- The virus is transmitted through direct contact with respiratory droplets of an infected person (generated through coughing and sneezing) and touching surfaces contaminated with the virus. It may also survive on surfaces for several hours but simple disinfectants can kill it.
- The symptoms of the coronavirus are also similar to flu or common cold. This is why testing is required to confirm if someone has COVID-19. Some of the symptoms include fever, cough, shortness of breath.

#### Impact of the COVID-19 on the fishery sector

- Self- isolation (and restriction of mobility) has reduced the demand for fish and fish products affecting the industry negatively
- Women fish vendors may be exposed to a greater risk in markets due to close contacts and limited sanitation and hygiene in the market place.
- Women are vulnerable to sexual exploitation and abuse in times of crises.

#### Avoiding the risk of infection

- Wash your hands frequently using soap and water or make use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers when your hands are not so dirty (this is to kill the viruses that may be on your hands).
- Cover your mouth and nose with a flexed elbow or tissue when coughing or sneezing and throw the tissue away, into a closed bin (you protect the people around you from the viruses).
- Avoid close contact with anyone who has cold or flu-like symptoms to protect others.
- Worn disposable masks should be disposed of properly to avoid any increased risk of transmitting the virus.
- Maintain at least 1 m (3 feet) distance between you and others.
- Avoid crowded places
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth.
- Stay home and self-isolate even with minor symptoms such as cough, headache, mild fever until you recover. If you need to leave the house, wear a mask to avoid infecting others.

### **2.2. Community Sensitization and Relief Donation**

With the assistance of the community leadership, the project team organized community members for the sensitization sessions. The use of nose masks was insisted before participation, as well as the observation of other COVID-19 safety protocols.

For each engagement, participants were made to share their knowledge, experiences, and myths about the virus. Subsequently, the project team took community folks through the sensitization content and educated them on the following:

- Coronavirus and history of the pandemic
- Current COVID-19 situation in Ghana
- Its mode of transmission
- Symptoms associated with coronavirus infection
- Coronavirus safety protocols (as per the directives of WHO and the Ministry of Health)



Figure 1: A team member sensitizing the project beneficiaries on COVID-19 at Narkwa community.



Figure 2: The team sensitizing participants on COVID-19 at Apam community.

Demonstrations were also made on good respiratory hygiene, appropriate hand washing, and the use of PPEs. Participants asked questions and sought answers to their myths and notions concerning the virus. At the end of the respective sessions, flyers with COVID-19 safety protocols were shared among participants.



Figure 3: A participant posing a question to the project team at Senya Bereku community.



Figure 4: A community member in Mumford demonstrating appropriate handwashing



Figure 5: Flyers on COVID-19 safety protocols being shared to participants at Mumford.



Figure 6: A team member pasting COVID-19 sensitization posters at a vantage point in Otum.

The project team further donated relief items and PPEs – which include bags of 50 kg rice, nose masks, boxes of hand sanitizers, and handwash stations – to the community folks. The team, with support from some community members, went through the communities to stick posters (with COVID-19 information) at vantage points. In all, 562 fisher folks across twenty (20) communities were engaged and sensitized.



Figure 7: The team donating relief items and PPEs to community folks at Winneba community.



Figure 8: The team donating relief items and PPEs to project beneficiaries at Anlo Beach community

**Table 1: List of communities engaged**

	<b>Awutu Senya</b>	<b>Effutu</b>	<b>Gomoa West</b>	<b>Ekumfi</b>	<b>Shama</b>
Communities that benefitted from the sensitization and donation	Senya Bereku	Winneba	Apam	Narkwa	Apo
		Akosua Village	Mumford	Otuam	Anlo Beach
		Woarabeba	Dago	Akra	Kese wo kan
			Mankwadze	Edumafa	Amenano
			Abrekum	Asaafa	Abuesi
					Aboadze

### **3.0. Conclusion**

The community folks present at the meeting expressed gratitude to the project team for the knowledge imparted about the coronavirus. Some communities indicated that the sensitization was the first they had received since the pandemic broke out. Participants thanked the project team and affirmed that the information received will be integrated into their day-to-day activities as they protect themselves from coronavirus. They also expressed gratitude for the relief items donated.

The project team has developed a COVID-inspired approach to PTF implementation. This approach will guide all engagements with project beneficiaries and target communities. The project will ensure that, for all subsequent engagements, COVID safety protocols are observed by both beneficiaries and project team members – thereby minimizing the spread of the virus. This will include a strict observance to wearing of nose masks, hand washing or application of hand sanitizers, and social distancing with seats spaced in a 3ft by 3ft seating arrangement.

## Appendix

### Pictures Gallery



Figure 9: A team member taking attendance of participants at Abuesi community.



Figure 10: Flyers with COVID-19 information shared amongst participants.



Figure 11: A community member participating in the pasting of COVID-19 sensitization posters at Narkwa community.



Figure 12: The project team in a group picture with participants of the sensitization session at Winneba.



Figure 13: A project beneficiary asking a COVID related question during the sensitization event at Senya Bereku.



Figure 14: A participant in Shama Apo posing a question on COVID-19