

REPORT 3 - LIATI WOTE COMMUNITY NEEDS IDENTIFICATION AND PRIORITIZATION

PART I

Date: Thursday, August 3, 2017

Venue: Community Market Square, Liati Wote

Present: LIATI WOTE COMMUNITY, CHIEFS AND ELDERS, STEPPING STONES FOR AFRICA (CINDY NOORDERMEER-PANO, JONATHAN KUMA GAVI, ANGELINA PANO), JOLINAICO ECO TOURS (APOLLO PANO)



INTRODUCTION

This is the third stage in the process of identifying the prime area of concern facing the Liati Wote community and to find ways of resolving it. The purpose of this community engagement was to undertake needs assessment and prioritization to ensure effective planning and implementation of community development projects.

COMMUNITY MEETING

Jonathan gave a brief review of the previous activities from the story telling through the transect walk when the resource map of the village was drawn. It emerged at this point that since the last meeting, there were no other community engagements to discuss the issues of development besides the routine communal meetings. Cindy also made it clear that Stepping Stones for Africa (SSFA) has no intentions of imposing any project on the community. Rather, it wants the community to identify their own areas of need and together come out with solutions that the majority will identify with.

IDENTIFICATION OF COMMUNITY POTENTIALS

The people were reminded that they already have all the resources needed for development and that the only thing needed was to be able to identify what they have before they can think of using them for development. The people identified the following as their potentials:

Tagbo Falls 2. Mountain Afadjato 3. The forest 4. CRAN compound 5. Community Guest house 6. Tourist office 7. Gobali Falls 8. Schools 9. The lands 10. Cocoa farms 11. Churches 12. Culture 13. Water sources 14. Wote Youth Association (WAYA) 15. Gbolo society 16. Akpi group 17. Football team 18. Akaye group 19. The Twin Mountains.

These were later grouped under five categories as:

1. NATURE PROTECTION

- ✓ Tagbo Falls
- ✓ Mount Afadjato
- ✓ Gobali Falls
- ✓ Forests
- ✓ Twin mountains

2. TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE

- ✓ Guest house
- ✓ Tourist office
- ✓ Culture

3. EDUCATION

- ✓ CRAN compound
- ✓ Schools

4. LAND USE

- ✓ Lands
- ✓ Cocoa farms
- ✓ Water sources
- ✓ Farming

5. SOCIAL GROUPS

- ✓ Churches
- ✓ Wote Afadjato Youth Association (WAYA)
- ✓ Gbolo society
- ✓ Akpi group
- ✓ Football team
- ✓ Akaye group



IDENTIFICATION OF COMMUNITY THREATS

The following were also identified as threats that could hamper the realization of the full potentials of the community namely:

1. Rubbish dumps 2. Deforestation (logging) 3. None existence of a local tourism committee 4. No market 5. Indiscipline 6. Poor communal organization (refusal of citizens to attend communal meetings) 7. Youth unemployment 8. Poor roads 9. Lack of funds to venture in business 10. Sand weaning and dumping of saw-dust into the water sources

These threats were categorised as follows:

1. SANITATION

- ✓ Two unsightly refuse dumps

2. DEFORESTATION AND LAND-MISUSE

- ✓ Logging
- ✓ Sand weaning
- ✓ Dumping into water sources

3. TOURISM MANAGEMENT

- ✓ No local tourism management committee

4. LAWLESSNESS AND LEADERSHIP

- ✓ Indiscipline
- ✓ Poor communal organization

5. LACK OF EMPLOYMENT

- ✓ No market
- ✓ Youth unemployment
- ✓ Lack of funds for business

6. POOR ROADS

FORMATION OF GENDERED GROUPS

Four gendered groups (Chiefs & Elders, Men, Women & Youth) were created to encourage and ensure broader participation in the assessment and prioritization of community needs. Each group had a leader and an assistant to guide discussions. At the end of their discussions, each group was asked to select four people to represent them in a needs prioritization committee.



PART II

Date: Wednesday, August 9, 2017

Venue: E. P. Chapel, Liati Wote

Present: Togbe Kodadza V, Togbe Adzotsomor III, Asafo Edward Gavi, Catherine Afeku (representatives of Chiefs & Elders); David Hovor, Cornelius Adagbledu, Emmanuel Gavi, Fidelis Avega (representatives of men); Freda Gavi, Gloria Osei, Zipora Agbezuhlor, Mary Agamaku (representatives of women); David Donkor, Sem Gavi, Justice Yeboah, Godsway Akoto, Judita Adagbledu, (representatives of the youth); Cindy Noordermeer-Panou, Jonathan Kuma Gavi, Apollo Panou, Naomi (representatives of SSFA)



GROUP REPORTS

The following were the areas of concern to the various groups in order of importance:

Chiefs	Men
<ul style="list-style-type: none">i. Tourism (3 points)ii. Nature protection (2 points)iii. Sanitation (1 point)iv. Land use	<ul style="list-style-type: none">v. Road maintenance and drains (3 pts)vi. Employment (2 points)vii. Poor tourism management (1 point)viii. Deforestation and land misuseix. Education
Women	Youth
<ul style="list-style-type: none">i. Tourism (3 points)ii. Education (2 points)iii. Employment (Youth and capital for business ventures) (1 point)iv. Lawlessness and leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none">i. Tourism (3 points)ii. Market (2 points)iii. Employment (1 point)iv. Educationv. Land use

NEEDS PRIORITIZATION

To arrive at the priority need of the community, the chosen needs of the various gendered groups were ranked by awarding 3 points to every first chosen area of need, 2 points for the second choice and 1 point for the third choice as indicated in the table. The area of need with the highest score is chosen as the priority area. The result was:

- i. Tourism – 10 points
- ii. Employment – 4 points
- iii. Road maintenance and drains – 3 point
- iv. Nature protection/education/market – 2 points each
- v. Sanitation 1 point

It is interesting that “Nature protection” with 2 points is also about tourism development (Tagbo Falls, Gobali Falls, Afadjato and the Twin mountains). In addition, none of the groups were aware of the choices of the other groups especially as the group of the chiefs, men and women worked concurrently. Thus tourism was chosen as the priority area of focus for development.



WHY TOURISM?

Each group was asked to assign reasons for selecting tourism among their top-three areas of need.

CHIEFS

The chiefs and elders argued that from their experiences with tourism so far, they see it as an “all inclusive” needs area that if carefully managed, could cater for the other needs. Examples cited were:

- ✓ Successful tourism is dependent on good roads infrastructure and transport. Tourism will help solve these problems.
- ✓ There were three attempts in the past to establish a market for the village. The site of the clinic was one of the places the market was established but it was not successful. A vibrant and well managed tourism industry will boost market activities.
- ✓ Tourism is a sure avenue for job creation and employment.
- ✓ To attract visitors require a clean environment.
- ✓ Since the community is engaged in ecotourism, it will push us to protect and conserve nature.



MEN

The men's group said they chose poor tourism management as one of their top-three priority areas because they recognize tourism as an avenue for community development. However, they are concerned about the following issues:

- ✓ The leadership of the tourism board are based in Accra. So they are not able to come home and organize board meetings as often as is required unless there is a funeral or other events.
- ✓ The original number of 23 members on the board has whittled down to only 3 making decisions.
- ✓ Landowners have not been paid royalties in about two years making landowners to use the land in the catchment area as they please.
- ✓ The guest house is in a poor state making many visitors reluctant to sleep there.

WOMEN

The women see tourism as:

- ✓ Avenue for income generation for generations to come.
- ✓ Source of capacity building and development as it afforded several of them the opportunity to attend capacity building workshops.
- ✓ Avenue for creating market for the community.
- ✓ Money from tourism receipts have been used to start or complete projects which otherwise would not have been possible.

YOUTH

While agreeing with all that the other groups have said, they also pointed out that tourism:

- ✓ Has put Liati Wote on the world tourism map.
- ✓ Festival could be a good means of fundraising
- ✓ Has given the people living in the village a lot of exposure to foreigners that increases their worldview.
- ✓ Is a source of income generation.

NEXT STEP

The question then was posed as what is the next step to be taken as we have identified our priority area. The following steps were suggested (not in any order of importance):

- ✓ Formation of a local management committee
- ✓ Review of the constitution to make it workable
- ✓ Writing of a proper business plan
- ✓ Instituting rules and regulations to govern tourism promotion
- ✓ Upgrading and proper management of the guest house to attract more customers
- ✓ Need for well-trained permanent tour guides to be supported by casual guides
- ✓ Provision of car park for visitors
- ✓ Constructing a proper trail to the mountain and Tagbo falls
- ✓ Creation of a buffer zone along the Tagbo river, protection and management of the tourism catchment area
- ✓ Placing of directional sign from Accra to the village
- ✓ Advertising Liati Wote on the internet.

WORKING COMMITTEE

Questions were being raised as to what relationship the local management committee, if formed, should have with the current board and those in Accra. SSFA made it clear that those issues are beyond the purview of the current meeting since those are issues to be considered and agreed on by a wider stakeholders meeting. It was therefore agreed that a working sub-committee be formed to further discuss, consult and draft how tourism should be done and managed to benefit the village. The selected members were:

1. Edward Gavi
2. Gloria Osei
3. Fidelis Agbelevo Avega
4. Cornelius Adagbledu
5. Judita Adagbledu
6. Freda Gavi
7. Sem Gavi
8. David Hovor

This committee is to submit its report by the end of September. Another meeting is to be schedule with citizens in Accra. At the end, a joint stakeholder meeting would be held to finally decide on the structure tourism development and management must take and also what particular project to be initiated.

CONCLUSION

The step-by-step community participation approach, though time consuming and strenuous, seems to be yielding good results in Liati Wote. There is an increasing passion and participation in discussing community development issues as many more people are willing to express their views. At this point, the community is clear on what their potentials are and what things are hampering how to harness these opportunities for development. Having realised the importance of tourism the community is seeing tourism as a great means to their development. There is still more work to be done as all stakeholder are to be brought on board for consensus building and agreement on what measures and projects that must be initiated for community development.

