

The European Union's Programme on Tropical Forests and other Forests in Developing Countries

# Towards Sustainable Chainsaw Milling in Ghana and Guyana

## District Level Meetings Report, Ghana



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# Developing alternatives for illegal chainsaw lumbering through multi-stakeholder dialogue in Ghana and Guyana

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## District Level Meetings Report, Ghana



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## **1.0 Background**

The EU Chainsaw milling project seeks to use multi-stakeholder dialogue for 'Developing alternatives' for illegal chainsaw milling in Ghana and Guyana. The project focuses on forest governance issues in these countries which have high incidence of illegal chainsaw milling. In many local and indigenous forest dependent communities in Ghana and Guyana, chainsaw milling is an important component of livelihoods, yet the conflict and illegality associated with it are high. The conflicts characterize interactions between chainsaw millers, transporters and lumber brokers with other stakeholder groups like government, traditional sawmill industries, conservationists and owners of tree and forest resources.

The Project is being piloted in eight high forest districts in Ghana and three communities in Guyana. Result 3 of the project activities aims at creating a mechanism for stakeholders to interact on a platform. This approach will target the stakeholders concerned with or affected by chainsaw milling and use focus group meetings and stakeholder workshops that enable direct communication. The rationale is that issues will be examined using a structured dialogue that will mitigate existing levels of conflict between stakeholders.

In Ghana, stakeholder analysis was conducted during the latter part of the projects first year to identify the interest of each stakeholder group in chainsaw milling. In December of that same year, an inception meeting was held to inform stakeholders about the project and to agree on some roles and responsibilities of the project. In early May of the second year of the project, a facilitators training programme was held to enhance the capacity of project staff to effectively implement activities aimed at establishing the multi-stakeholder dialogue platform. One of the outcomes of these activities was the need to hold district level meetings following the sensitization programme. This report highlights the outcome of the district level meetings.

## **2.0 Objectives**

Following the institutional and community sensitization programmes, district level meetings were held in all eight pilot districts from the 12<sup>th</sup> August 2008 to 1<sup>st</sup> September 2008. Each stakeholder group from the community level stakeholders to the institutional stakeholders were represented in the meeting.

The objectives of the district level meeting are:

- Identify stakeholders' perceptions about chainsaw lumbering.
- Assess the extent to which stakeholders differ in opinions.
- Propose acceptable means to bridge the divisions using participatory strategies to collect unbiased, objective and relevant information.

### 3.0 Stakeholder Representation

A total of three hundred and seventy three (373) participants across more than twenty political districts within the eight pilot forests districts participated in the district level meetings. Stakeholder representation varied from one forest district to the other. However, across the eight districts, the following stakeholders were represented due to their direct interest and involvement in chainsaw lumber production enterprise:

- Forestry Commission
- District Assemblies
- Traditional Authorities
- Police/Military
- Ministry of Agriculture
- Judiciary

The details of stakeholder representation and the number of participants are presented in the table below

District	Stakeholders	Participants
Assin Fosu	Table saw millers, Timber markets, Chainsaw operator associations, Traditional rulers, farmers, District Assembly	37
Akim Oda	Table saw millers, Timber markets, Chainsaw operators, Traditional rulers, farmers, communities, BNI, NADMO, GTA, GES, Media	47
Begoro	Table saw millers, Chainsaw operators, Traditional rulers, farmers, communities, BNI, NADMO, GTA, Media, C,BAGs, FC	45
Goaso	Chainsaw operators, Traditional rulers, communities, farmers, Media, DA, MoFA, FC	40
Juaso	Chainsaw operators, Traditional rulers, communities, farmers, Media, DA, MoFA, FC	60
Kade	Table saw millers, Timber markets, Chainsaw operator associations, Traditional rulers, farmers, communities, Forestry Forum, MoFA	44
Nkawie	Chainsaw operators, Traditional rulers, communities, farmers	55
Sunyani	Chainsaw operators, Traditional rulers, communities, farmers	45
Total		373

**Table 1: Stakeholder representation at District level meetings**

#### **4.0 Proceedings**

The opening sessions of the meetings varied across the districts in terms of presentations made by the forest district managers. Five of the pilot site had a welcome address presented by the forest district managers, followed by a short address by the District Chief Executives in two pilot districts after the introduction sessions. The remaining three went straight into the purpose of the meetings presented by the National Facilitator or the Project coordinator.

#### **4.1 Welcome presentation**

The welcome presentations outlined the need for forest protection and sustainable forest management, the role of chainsaw lumber production in the socio-economic development of the nation, and the timely intervention by the project especially the need for the Multi-stakeholder dialogue. Participants were then encouraged to participate actively in the meetings.

#### **4.2 Presentation by Facilitator**

The presentations emphasized on the objectives of the project, Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue and the district level meetings. It explained the alarming rate of forest degradation and activities of chainsaw operation and its impacts, government measures to control chainsaw operation and its failure. The presentations also explained the VPA and the commitment of government to ensure that there is legal lumber on the domestic market. The presentation finally asked participants to actively participate in the meeting by contributing effectively to the discussions.

#### **4.3 Groups Discussions**

Participants were put into three groups to discuss the following issues:

- Advantages and disadvantages of chainsaw lumber production
- The root causes of chainsaw lumber production.
- The situation of present and future in terms of demand and supply
- The expectation and fears of the stakeholders

The groups were internationally mixed with all stakeholders to ensure that a good working relationship starts building up in the district and ensure active participation of all stakeholders at the MSD. This was also to build the confidence of stakeholders and ensure that there is little or no antagonism against any stakeholder groups.

#### **5.0 Outcome of Discussions**

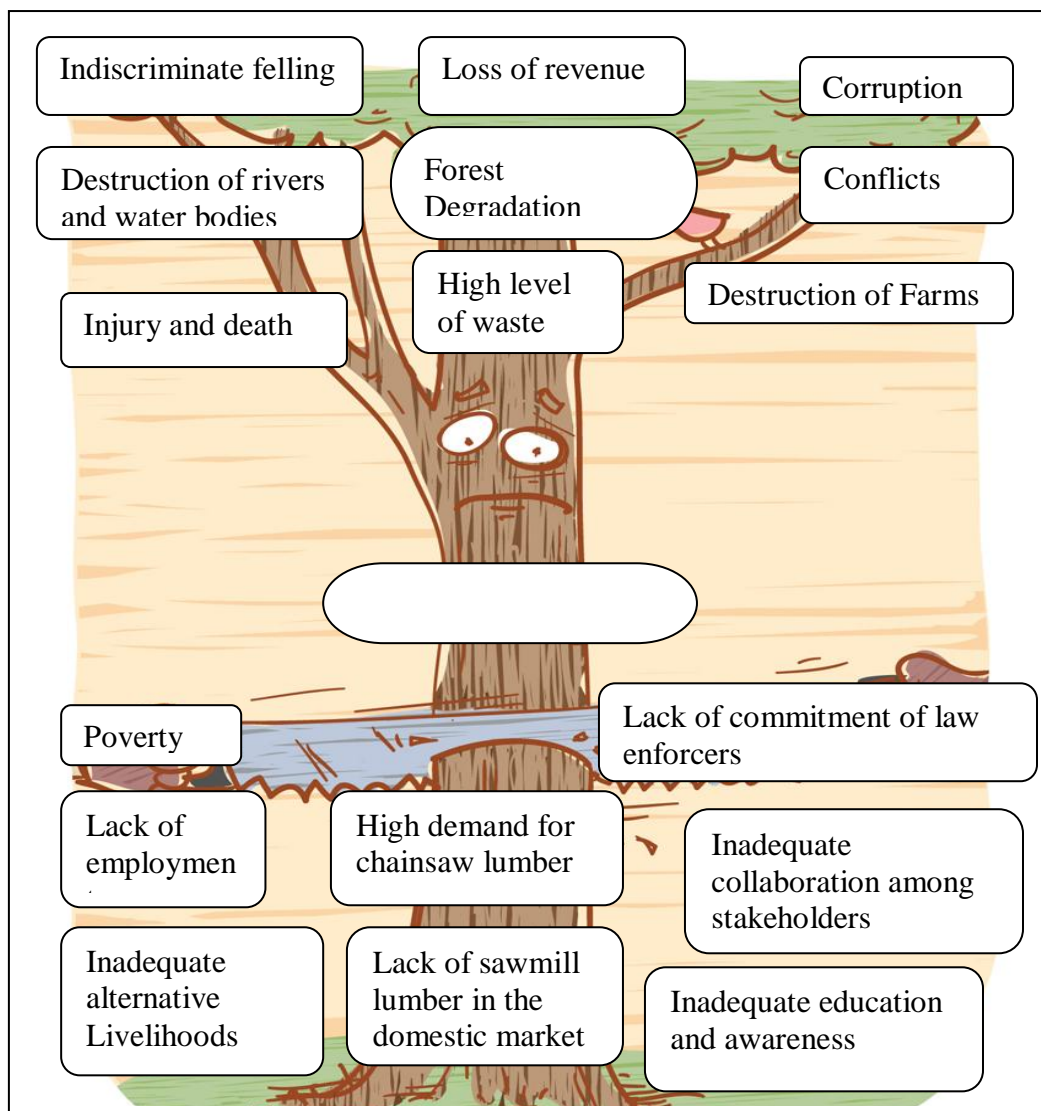
The purpose of this discussion was to conduct a problem tree analysis of the chainsaw issues as perceived by the stakeholders with different interest concerns and expectation about chainsaw lumber production. The advantages were to be formulated into the causes of the chainsaw lumber production and the disadvantages formulated into the effects.

The table below provides a summary of some of the key advantages and disadvantages.

<b>Advantages/causes of chainsaw production.</b>	<b>Disadvantages of chainsaw production.</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides lumber for community and individual projects.</li> <li>• Provides employment for those engaged in the operation.</li> <li>• The machine is used to remove unwanted trees from farms.</li> <li>• Chainsaw operators pay farmers for the trees they fell more than the sawmills.</li> <li>• Chainsawn lumber is less expensive as compared to sawn lumber.</li> <li>• Less destruction to farmers' crop than the operations of sawmills onsite.</li> <li>• Income is spent in the local economy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The activity causes degradation to the forest.</li> <li>• The trees destroy farm lands.</li> <li>• Sawdust from the operation is washed into rivers and water bodies and kills aquatic bodies.</li> <li>• High level of waste/low recovery rate.</li> <li>• Some chainsaw operators set fire to wood and causes bush fires.</li> <li>• Loss of revenue to the state.</li> <li>• Indiscriminate felling of trees</li> </ul>

**Table 2: Assessment of advantages and disadvantages of chainsaw lumber production**

Participants were asked during the group discussions to think through the advantages and disadvantages of chainsaw lumber production and develop a problem tree. The problem tree analysis resulted in the following



**Figure 1: stakeholders' perception of chainsaw problem analysis**

As a first meeting of multi-stakeholders it was necessary for the group to have a picture the current situation of chainsaw operations in terms of present demand and supply as against future scenarios. The purpose of this was to allow participants discuss and agree within the group a situation where there is no dialogue and all stakeholders pretend that chainsaw operation is 'banned' while each stakeholder group continues their operations (enforcement illegal felling, etc). This situation was compared with one where there is the MSD which creates a platform for stakeholders to discuss chainsaw lumber issues for further policy recommendation and action. The outcome of this discussion is presented below.

	Present	Future
<b>Demand</b>	Demand for the lumber is high.	Demand is likely to be very high.
	Demand is being met by chainsaw	Ability to meet demand will be a bit



	lumber.	dicey.
<b>Supply</b>	Dealers are able to supply the market.	Dealers may not be able to supply to meet demand as the timber is likely to finish in few years.
		Dealers may import to supply the market.

**Table 3: Perceptions on demand and supply of chainsaw lumber in present and future scenarios**

### **Reasons for ineffectiveness of Chainsaw ban**

According to the participants present during the district level meeting, a number of factors has contributed to the failure of the ban on chainsaw lumber production. The critical ones outlined are:

- It offers employment to a great number of people in the country.
- There is high demand for chainsaw lumber in the domestic market.
- Forestry and law enforcement personnel condone and connive with those involved in chainsaw operations.
- Reasons for the ban are not well understood by people in the chainsaw operation.
- Alternative livelihoods for the past years are not lucrative enough to sustain the desire to quit the chainsaw operations.
- There was no education on the ban before, during and after promulgation of the law.
- Fines to offenders, not deterrent enough.
- Non availability of sawn lumber in the forest fringe communities.
- Some traditional authorities are themselves chainsaw lumber contractors.
- Connivance of law enforcers and FC staff with operators by way of bribery.
- No alternatives for the use of forest based products.
- Lack of logistics to fight well armed chainsaw operators.
- Political influence on law enforcers to deal leniently with offending chainsaw operators.
- Support by communities to prevent arrest of offended chainsaw operators.
- No or little motivation to fight chainsaw operations.

### **Expectations from the project**

- Proper management of the forest.
- Legalization of the chainsaw operations and measures put in place to monitor it.
- Help operators to form associations.
- Provision of alternatives sources of livelihood.
- Utilization of project outcomes.
- Registration of chainsaw operators.
- Forestry Commission to provide seedlings of all timber species rather than teak only.
- Give chiefs authority to form task force to arrest waywardness.

- Help in sustainable forest management. Example reforestation.
- Issue license to operators and regulate their activities.
- Extensive education to manage the forest.
- Sustainability of the project to create platform for more discussions on forest degradation.
- Continuous training for chainsaw operators.

### **Composition, Representation of Stakeholders, Date and Venue of District Level Meetings**

The meeting agreed on fifty participants at the district level stakeholder meetings. Participants agreed that the meetings are held quarterly at the District Assembly Conference Halls. .

### **6.0 Conclusions**

The district level meetings were very successful in analyzing the chainsaw lumber production and its associated problems by a multi-stakeholder group. Interestingly the problems were common to all the sites. Already issues were identified for the national level multi-stakeholder dialogue and stakeholders were very eager to see the outcome of the MSD and for that matter the project.