



The ANWF adopts roadmap in Rabat

Rabat / Participants to the workshop on feedback and diagnosis of the network structure and the strengthening of the capacity of African women in fisheries in the realms of networking, lobbying and advocacy ended their work Thursday evening in Rabat with the adoption of a roadmap to strengthen their network and achieve its objectives.

The three-day technical meeting was held October 18-20 under the auspices of the Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation among African States Bordering the Atlantic Ocean (COMHAFAT) by the Network on Fishery Policies in West Africa (REPAO/NFPWA) and the Gender and Development Unit (UGED) of the Moroccan Ministry of Fisheries for the benefit of representatives of the African Network of Women in Fisheries "RAFEP/ANWF."

At the end of the workshop activities devoted to participative organizational diagnosis of the women network and initiation by experts in the techniques of lobbying, advocacy and networking, network members have approved a series of measures to help strengthen ANWF, improve its performance and give more visibility and weight in the public fishing policies.

Participants who welcomed the initiative and the relevance of this first workshop said their group has gained cohesion, knowhow and maturity and that they make a point of relaying on the ground in their respective countries lessons and results of this training, especially at the level of setting up of structured national networks to be closely linked through the ANWF.

The president of the network of women in fisheries, Ms. Ndoye Seynabou, welcomed the progress and the outcomes of the workshop stressing the need for the establishment of efficient networks in ATLAFCO Member States to coordinate efforts, share expertise and harmonize action in the region. This meeting greatly helped participants to understand and master the techniques that will enable them to set up or re-organize networks in their countries, she said.

Ms. Ndoye paid tribute to those involved in organizing the meeting, mainly ATLAFCO which initiated the setting up of ANWF and which is providing seamless assistance to its structuring process and to the development and implementation of an action plan for women in the fisheries sector.

The Executive Secretary of "NFPWA", Mr. Papa Gora Ndiaye, welcomed the active participation of representatives of the dynamics of fisheries in Africa which helped address the flaws in the birth of the network last year in Senegal. Improved capacity for advocacy and lobbying will definitely strengthen the women's network and make it a major player in the fisheries sector, he said.

For Mr. Ndiaye, this upgrade of the network is necessary to enable its members meet the challenges of quality, hygiene, traceability and marketing so that the African fish production can meet standards and gain access to markets.

In his closing remarks, the Executive Secretary of ATLAFCO, Mr. Hachim EL AYOUBI, hailed the work completed in three days and underlined the role of women in the fisheries sector in the Member States of the regional organization.

The Rabat workshop was the stage for defining ANWF priorities and the development of a real roadmap for the network, EL AYOUBI said adding now is the time for action and realization before he stressed the importance of quality and hygiene and the need to put these norms on top of the list of priorities for the next 3 to 4 years.

Mr. EL AYOUBI commended "NFPWA" and "UGED" for the success of the workshop organized with the help of Japanese cooperation and further encouraged ANWF women to maintain and strengthen contacts between them and redouble efforts to ensure that the network can stand on its own and become the major partner ATLAFCO means it to be.

He also assured the women's network of the continued support of the regional organization and promised to submit the results of the workshop to the Conference of Ministers so that their needs are factored in.

Participants who received certificates for having duly completed the training in networking, lobbying and advocacy at the closing session of the workshop have also agreed to meet in Agadir, Morocco, in 2012 for a second workshop with the Women's Forum for Fish (FFP) of Japan. /