

WORLD RURAL WOMEN'S DAY

MIDDLE ZONE

The celebration of the World Rural Women's Day (WRWD) was held at Ejura community center in the Ejura –Sekyere Domasi District of the Ashanti Region. Three hundred FONG Women's farmers from the Middle Zone and other women's organization such as the Christian women fellowship groups NALAG, among others participated in the celebration. The Queen mother of Ejura, Nana Akua Tiwaa II chaired the function. The officials presents were the District Chief Executive, Madam Marthar Brokina, the District Agric Director, the Director, would Vision, a representative of the Regional Minister and some of the staffs of the District Assembly.

In the welcome address, the District Chief Executive thanked people present for participating in that very important occasion. As a woman farmer herself, she addressed the participants on the various ways women contribute immensely towards the upkeep of families and also their contribution to the Ghanaian economy. She suggested that government should recognize and support women farmers through poverty reduction programmes.

The Queen, Nana Akua Tiwaa II, who charred the occasion talked about land tenure system that does not favour women farmers. She suggested that government should revisit the issues on land tenure system again in order that women could also benefit.

Madam Gladys Serwaa Adusah an executive of FONG read the message of the National President of IFAP on why we celebrate the WRWD before the World Food Day, which shows that they have recognized the role Rural Women play in the agricultural sector.

Mr. Frank Hilarious Nubuake of the Middle Zone read the message for the National President of FONG, Dr King David Amoah. He congratulated all those who participated in the cerebration.

The Zonal coordinator Madam Comfort Tetteh read plan of activities, recommendations and suggestions laid down by the Rural Women. She laid more emphasis on how specific training programmes should be organized for Rural Women to enable them contribute immensely towards development interventions in their lives. She stressed that women farmers should be made to have access to financial services with affordable rates to enable them expand their farms.

SOLIDALITY MESSAGES

Some of the invitees were given the chance to give solidarity messages to the audience. Some of the officials who spoke were, the District Agric Director, the Director World Vision, to mention a few. They were also happy to say that the role Rural Women play is also recognized.

ENTERTAINMENT

The various women groups attended, entertained the audience so much that they even did not want the occasion to close.

CLOSING

With determination and efforts and help from the executives of the Secretariat the middle zone groups, the celebration became a successful one. The vote of thanks was said by Madam Agnes Bachale and the occasion came to a close at 4:15pm.

SOUTHERN ZONE

The programme started at 10:00 am with an opening prayer by Madam Gladys Awuku. Introduction of participants and dignitaries was done by Madam Maria Salifu, the Vice President of Development Action Association and member of FONG. Rural representatives from 5 regions representing the southern zone of FONG totaling three hundred (300) were present. The celebration was held at the La, Trade Fair Centre on 15th October, 2010 on the theme "**Building a Sustainable Future for Rural Women.**"

After the introduction Mrs. Lydia Sasu, the Executive Director of Development Action Association and Women's Leader was called upon to introduce the dignitaries as follows:

- Hajia Hawawu Boya Gariba, Deputy Minister of Women and Children Affairs, (MOWAC)
- Mr. Kwesi Ohemeng-Adjei, Programme Manager of Action Aid Ghana
- Dr. Dale Rachebler, BUSAC Grants Manager
- Mr. Peter Argo, USAID/Ghana Deputy Mission Director
- Josephine Quagraine MOFA representing CAADP
- John Dziwornu representing CAADP (for farmers)

The Chairperson, Naa Osabea II, Queen of Onyansana was introduced by Honorable Jelila Quaye (Kpobiman women's leader).

Chairperson Remarks

The chairperson, Naa Osaabea II, the Queen of Onyansana in the Ga West District of the Greater Accra Region, in her response, thanked the organizers for the honor done her. She congratulated all the rural women and said their roles and involvement in the fight against world hunger has been recognized worldwide and that they should keep on with their fight against hunger for the betterment of the country. She went on to ask participants for a good cooperation for the success of the programme.

Welcome Address by Madam Beatrice Solaga

Madam Beatrice Solaga welcomed and appreciated the rural women and other dignitaries for attending the world rural women's day. She said the theme was chosen in order to help build the sustainability of rural women farmers and that the sustainability does not only consider nature but also regards social and economic factors. She urged the rural women to continue with the good work they have started, because without them, there will be no sustainable future for agriculture in the country.

CAADP

Comprehensive Africa Agriculture for Development Programme was discussed with representative of policy makers from MOFA and farmer organizations to identify and include rural women in the programme.

1st Statement by IFAP

Message from the women president of International Federation of Agriculture Producers (IFAP) was delivered by Mrs. Lydia Sasu.

2nd Statement

Madam Beatrice Solaga a farmer read the twelve (12) point recommendations from the rural women who participated in the programme and it was presented to the Deputy Minister for women and Children Affairs Honorable Hajia Gariba and all the dignitaries.

3rd Statement

Keynote Address was delivered by the Programmes Manager of Action Aid Ghana, Mr. Kwesi Ohemeng. In his address, he said the contributions of rural women to development covered all sectors of the economy, ranging from agriculture and the extractive sector to manufacturing and processing. Also they have contributed enormously to some research work of the Food Research Institute of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) for the innovation of fish smoker for the fish processors. He also mentioned the sand winning at the beaches which is affecting the environment. In conclusion, he therefore, called on the environment to put measures in place to help women in rural communities to continue with their good work.

4th Statement

The 4th Statement was delivered by madam Joyce Sampa a farmer from Sampa. She represented WILDAF / FONG programme operating at Sege and Amasaman area on women empowerment. She encouraged women to acquire land and register in their name to enable them to own a land for farming and other services.

5th Statement

The 5th statement was delivered by Mr. Peter Argo, the USAID/Ghana Deputy Mission Director. He congratulated all the rural women in Ghana, especially women in the farming sector for their good work. Research shows that, majority of people in Ghana live in rural areas, many of which are growing and processing food crops spends their income on feeding their families, and on their children's health and education. He said the United States Government and the Government of Ghana are committed to improving food security in Ghana through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to support rural farmers in Ghana in speeding the growth of farming, and improving nutrition, especially of women and children.

The USAID's approach emphasizes on improved innovations such as the use of high-yielding and drought tolerant crops that can dramatically

- improve food production;
- reduce post-harvest losses;
- enhance the nutritional base of the household and to increase rural incomes, particularly for women;
- ensure women have equal access to necessary assets, inputs and technology;
- prioritize labor-saving technologies;
- develop approaches that target both men and women with farming interventions;
- expand the involvement and participation of women and to
- improve targeting of financial services to women.

In conclusion, he commended all the rural women in Ghana, the organizers and other cooperating partners for their efforts in building a sustainable future for the rural women in Ghana.

6th Statement

The guest of honor speech was read by Honorable Deputy Minister for Women and Children Affairs, Hajia Hawawu Boya Gariba. In her address, she stated that, women living in the rural areas had contributed immensely to the socio-economic development of the country and needed to be celebrated and recognized for their enormous efforts.

She spoke on the theme “Building a Sustainable Future for Rural Women.” She said there was the need to make conscious efforts to develop the capacities of women living in the rural areas by giving them the needed recognition and support to enable them play more effective roles.

She said providing them with the necessary infrastructure and knowledge would help them go a long way in improving their livelihoods and help transform their lives and that of their children as well. She therefore stressed the need to develop strategies that would help promote and guide the implementation of the third goal of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which relates to gender equality and women’s empowerment.

In conclusion, she assured the rural women that, her outfit (MOWAC) will continue to do its best to support women where necessary and collaborate with other agencies to ensure that women take up their rightful positions in the society.

Chairpersons closing remarks

The chairperson, Naa Osabea II in her closing remarks thanked the Minister and the sponsors for their support and also thanked the participants for making time out off their busy schedules to participate in the celebration of the world rural women’s day and urged the rural women to continue with the good work they have started in order to help build a sustainable future for them and the country as a whole.

Vote of thanks by Ms. Rebecca Eshun

Ms. Rebecca Eshun a fish processor, thanked the donors for their support and the participants as well for making time out off their busy schedule to participate in the World Rural Women’s Day.