

Official Report to IFSA on
Major Groups - Led Initiative in Support of the United Nations Forum on Forests

Theme: Applying sustainable Forests Management to Poverty Reduction: Strengthening the Multi-Stakeholder Approach within UNFF

1st July 2010
Accra, Ghana

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From the 26 – 30 July, 2010. The representatives from Major Groups involved in the United Nations Forum on Forests met in Accra, Ghana for a five days multi-stakeholder workshop to support the goals of sustainable forest management and the poverty eradication.

The international workshop was hosted by the government of the Ghana and was supported financially by the governments of Norway, Finland, United Kingdom, Austria, and Canada, as well as by the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO).

The workshop cover different topics of present objectives of UNFF which engage participants in discussions and brainstorming to come-up with recommendations for improving UNFF processes. The workshop is coupled with other fun and educational field trips to national parks.

The four key objectives of the workshop are:

- Develop concrete recommendations for UNFF 9 (24 January-4 February, 2011) which has the theme of “Forests for people, livelihoods and poverty eradication”;
- Identify strengths and weaknesses of the Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue process associated with the UNFF, and create specific recommendations for increasing its effectiveness;
- Identify specific activities for Major Groups’ contribution to the UN International Year of Forests (2011)
- Foster alliances, partnerships and networking within Major Groups and between Major Groups and other key players in the UNFF process

The meeting brought together approximately 70 key representatives from 30 different nations representing Major Groups, as well as representatives from governments and intergovernmental organizations. Five IFSA delegates representing Youths and Children Major Groups were present they include

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| ✓ | Tolulope Daramola (Nigeria) | IFSA head of sub commission to UNFF |
| ✓ | Chavdar Zhelev (Bulgaria) | Head of IFSA IPC commission |
| ✓ | Choiriatun Nur Annisa (Indonesia) | IFSA IPC Commissioner |
| ✓ | Yasemin Ozturk (Turkey) | IFSA Head of EP |
| ✓ | Julius Adewopo (USA) | IFSA - CFA Liaison officer |

The central goal of the event was to actively engage Major Groups and support the UNFF process by developing input and policy recommendations for the 19th session of the UN Forum on Forests on the theme “Forest for people, livelihoods and poverty eradication”

Participants recognize the many attempts to date of member governments and other stakeholders to advance SFM through the UNFF, and developed key recommendations linked to the themes of

- Tenure Rights,
- Access and Benefit sharing
- Traditional Forest Related Knowledge
- Community Based Forest Enterprises and
- Leadership for SFM among women, Indigenous peoples and Other Marginalized Groups.

To build on the gains so far made, the meeting produced a number of key initial recommendations including:

- Further concrete steps should be taken to ensure meaningful participation from all stakeholders, including especially Women, **Youths** and Indigenous Peoples, in order to strengthen policy frameworks.
- Forest policy must address issues associated with equity in terms of access, rights, land and resources tenure, and benefits generated from forests. Reforms should be made undertaken where necessary to ensure rights and responsibilities are upheld.
- Case studies that demonstrate innovative practice (such as participatory mapping) and successful implementation, should be highlighted, shared, and used to inform a policy decisions
- Forest dependent peoples must have reliable access to forest resources, and must have a role in the decision making structures that decide how the resources are to be used, and to whom the benefits from those resources will accrue.

- Policies must take into account local contexts in order to ensure that they are equitable and promote the livelihoods of forest dependent peoples
- Efforts of capacity building must be strengthened at all levels and among all groups (including Indigenous Peoples, Women, **Youths** and other marginalized groups) in order to effectively implement policies related to sustainable forest management (livelihoods, poverty reduction, etc)
- Community based forest enterprises that focus on sustainable, valued added goods and services should be promoted and supported, and payment for ecosystem services must be a viable option
- National and international forest related policies, laws and institutions should recognize that importance and legitimacy of Traditional Forest Related Knowledge (TFRK) and local knowledge in maintaining forests and livelihood security for forest dependent peoples, and take steps to incorporate TFRK in planning implantation
- Research and knowledge generation that emphasizes the needs of forest dependent communities must be encouraged, supported and enhanced. TFRK must be documented in close collaboration with knowledge holders and individuals and communities must receive fair compensation for use of their knowledge
- More work should be done to integrate the achievements of other UN fora on issues that are vital to forest dependent communities. Connections between the work of the UNFF and other related UN bodies must be strengthened and enhanced.

After presentation of recommendation by each working groups participants divided into their Major Groups to come up with their plans and Strategies for celebrating the International Year of Forests (IYF) in January 2011.

We (Youths and Children Major Group) came up with four major plans to adopt for the IYF to;

1. Sensitize LCs towards town-wide/campus-wide awareness campaign
 - IFSS 2010
 - LC meetings
 - Regional meetings
 - Posters and souvenirs (t-shirts, caps, sticky notes e.t.c)
2. Provide elaborate information on IYF within and outside our current network
 - Dedicated page on IFSA website
 - Presentation at IFISO
 - Inclusion of IYF logo & theme in official docs and e-signatures
 - IFSA Newsletter

3. Raise individual students' interest to participate in IYF
 - Picture contest
 - Poem/ Prose Contest
 - Video Clip Contest
 - Catchy phrases
 - Website exhibition

4. Demonstrate the theme of IYF in practical term "Forests for People"
 - Tree planting
 - Draft a support letter (funding, demo land, service)
 - Mentors for high-school students
 - Field trips
 - GAPFE Launch

The effective participation of Major Groups is critical to the success of the UNFF process, and this workshop has helped us take an important step in enhancing our effectiveness.

At the end, youths and children concerns was at the top of discussions at the workshop this is an indication that more attention has been drawn to the youths as a result of active participation and contribution of our delegates during working group discussions.

Part of the outcome of the workshop is a strategy for the major groups to come-out collectively with an umbrella proposal to seek for funds. This will help and strengthen the major groups' participation in UNFF activities and our two years project plans

The proposed points of action for the International Year of Forest is open for IFSA7 perusal, all actions are still on hold until the approval of IFSA7.

