

Report on UNWTO/UNIDO STEP Training in Ada Foah, Ghana

STEP_UNIDO Workshop 15-18 November 2010

Training Report

Logistics

As can be seen from the course timetable below the course commenced late, this was due to logistical problems which delayed the arrival of the local organiser. I decided to begin the course prior to the arrival of the organiser because those who had stayed overnight on Sunday were becoming angry. There were problems over transport, power supply and the accommodation. Attendance was patchy. The workshop participants lacked adequate representation from the private sector and local government. A member of the District Assembly attended briefly after one of the fieldwork groups visited the District Assembly to speak to members.

Location: Ada Foah

Ada Foah is not a thriving destination. The destination should not have been selected for a tourism and poverty elimination initiative. There are very few overnight tourists. There is a popular annual festival at Ada but this is a long way from Ada Foah and not all accommodation in Ada Foah is occupied during the festival. There are currently two small closed resorts, both now surrounded by villas and chalets. There are estimated to be 75 villas and chalets owned by Ghanaians, British, and Lebanese. It seems likely that the resorts will reopen as upmarket suite hotels modelled on the Peace Report. There is little local employment in the industry.

Hotels

Mack's: 9 room guest house, 15 guests per month, mostly at weekends and Christmas and Easter
50/50 international/domestic local staff and local purchasing of fish.

Peace Resort: 9 3 room suites @ 300USD, additional single rooms being built. Not full during the festival, open 10 months, mainly weddings and funerals. 10 guests per month. 5 staff, most not local. Food and chef from Accra.

Ezme: German owned, Ghanaian managed. 5 rooms, internet booking mainly international. Students and volunteers, dive group once a year for 2/3 days. 3 staff, local. In October they had only one guest, in September less than 10. The guesthouse is full only when the dive group comes through.

Gardens Club Hotel: on the main road. Open since 1983, budget rooms, mainly couples staying one night, often passing traffic en route between countries. Full only during the Ada Festival, 2 casual

staff from Ada. In Oct/Nov they have one regular group of ± 20 birdwatchers who stay 5 days.

Average 5 guests per month. The restaurant is more significant than the accommodation for earning.

First Star 6 rooms budget road side stop with a thriving restaurant/bar serving Ghanaian food. Occasional international visitors who stay 2 days from Togo or Nigeria, less than 10 a year. Guests mainly Ghanaian perhaps 10 guest nights per month. No Europeans. 15 permanent staff. 6 of them from Ada. Tilapia and chicken purchased from Accra, eggs and vegetables purchased locally.

Late on Wednesday morning the group brainstormed the potential tourism products and services, the sale of which might benefit the economically poor. Four groups were formed. One group visited hotels and guest houses to identify the local tourism market. The results are reported above. Three other groups looked at potential products and services. One group looked at Palm Wine, another looked at the river and islands and a third group looked at wildlife. The river and islands PowerPoint was produced on the Ministry's computer. The computer had a virulent virus and I was unable to secure a copy.

ADA FOAH UNIDO Workshop for COAST Project

Technical inputs by UNWTO

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
Commences 09:00			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to PPT & STEP w/s1 & 2 • Thinking about an Intervention supply-side 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situation Analysis 1.4 • Future Opportunities 1.5 	Group work on initiatives
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning for group field work • Thinking about the market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STEP Proposal and Impact Measurement UNWTO presentation • 11:00 Group work developing a strategy and an action plan – preparing for field work w/s10 & w/s 11 	
13:00-14:00 Lunch			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 Mechanisms UNWTO presentation w/s13 & 14 • Role of Government 	Field Work	Group presentations and feed back Monitoring and evaluation
Introductions & introduction to the workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with stakeholders • Coffee trail example 		
Workshop ends 17:30			

The major challenge in Ada Foah is the absence of any viable tourism market. There are opportunities to provide goods and services to day excursionists from Accra.

Palm Wine palmwine.pptx

This group looked at opportunities on the beach and in the town. The beach is dirty and is used as their lavatory by villagers. The beach is eroding and the buildings which are adjacent to the beach are derelict and in the process of being abandoned. They reported little interest or knowledge of tourists by the villagers.

The Palm Wine and sugar cane alcohol proposal would require an investment in equipment. In the absence of a tourism market it is likely that the products would be sold primarily to locals or may fail to find a market.

River and Islands

These are attractive resources but it is not clear how the islands and views could create livelihoods. However, elements of the river and islands could be included in a programme of wildlife tours – flora and fauna, crabs, mangroves, bird watching.

Wildlife and Wetland UNIDO Workshop-Wildlife group.ppt

This group identified Different species of turtles, fish and birds; mangroves-white and red, coconut groves, monkeys, manatees, African pythons etc. Challenges include limited information on the availability of different wildlife species, insufficient knowledge of wildlife by canoe operators; language barriers and inadequate tour guides

Conclusion and Recommendations

Ada Foah is an inappropriate site for a ST-EP initiative, it lacks a tourism market. There are no appropriate local crafts (reed mats are produced but they are not suitable for sale to tourists). The best option is an extended wildlife tours building on and extending the existing Turtle Tours, which attracted 308 paying participants in 2009.

Ada Foah is not a good place to be seeking to implement a ST-EP initiative. A natural history experience would probably be attractive to day excursionists and raise awareness of the Ramsar site and its importance amongst the Ghanaian elite who are using Ada Foah as a weekend retreat.

Guides would need to be trained and itineraries designed which would enable adults and families to see and experience the flora and fauna of the wetland. This would create employment opportunities for guides and canoe paddlers. Signage should be used to create awareness of the wetland and what can be seen there. But there should be no signage within the reserve or to other sites as this will reduce the need and demand for wildlife guides.