

FROM AFRICA/ Ghana**Together we build**

Getting together has helped the women in the Central and Greater Accra Regions of Ghana

by Lydia Sasu, Project Coordinator of the Freedom from Hunger Campaign/ Action for Development (FFHC/AD) project in Ghana.

The FFHC/AD project, a small project with a grass-roots base, operates in the Central and Greater Accra Regions of Ghana. It covers 13 village associations, of which six are fishing villages. One of the many objectives is to help the associations grow into self-sustaining groups.

All the members of the associations meet regularly to exchange ideas, to discuss problems and find solutions. At one of these meetings, women from Bortianor, Faana and Chokomey villages (in the Greater Accra Region) complained that fishermen were collecting five handfuls (instead of the customary one handful) of anchovies from each basket of anchovies that they carry for the women from the boats, at Bortianor beach. The women complained to the chief fisherman of Bortianor, who tried unsuccessfully to solve the problem.

The women of Bortianor then invited other women from the village associations of Oshiyie and Kokrobite, as well as the chief fishermen from these villages, to help them resolve the problem. At this meeting, held at the house of the chief fisherman of Bortianor, the practice of collecting five handfuls of anchovies was prohibited and the earlier practice of collecting one handful was reverted to.

Women in these associations have also begun to take other initiatives. Aware of the decline of fish resources over the years, they have collectively decided not to buy fish caught through the use of explosives.