



Short Title: Baseline fish farming characteristics and practices in Ghana: the way forward

The CSIR-Water Research Institute, Ghana, implementing the HealthyFoodAfrica project's objectives, conducted a baseline fish farms survey in Accra Food System Lab covering Greater Accra Region and Asuogyaman District. Inter-interviews were conducted in 2021, using computer-assisted personal interviewing to assess households and practices of fish farmers and their production sustainability.

Male fish farmers dominated (96.4%) over females (3.6%). Middle aged farmers (35–49 yrs) were more (52.8%), while youth (18–34 yrs) were least (18.2%). 51% had more than 5 dependants. Over 75% households consumed fish daily. Majority of farmers (72%) produced fish commercially, others for home consumption or recreation.

Fish cultured were mainly Nile tilapia (*Oreochromis niloticus*) and African cat-fish (*Clarias gariepinus*). 11% of farmers cultured other fish species. Water resources used for fish farming ranged from natural water bodies to tap water. About 50% of fish farmers had marketing constraints due to unavailability of markets or poor connectivity to traders. This is a disincentive to existing and potential farmers.

Further improvement towards resilient fish production is needed for healthy diets and food systems. Improvement ways include:

- Attraction of more women and youth participation, through sensitizations, trainings and policy dialogues with respective stakeholders
- Reducing cost of production
- Water management strategies
- ICT tools for market connectivity.

These interventions will enhance investments in fish production, economic empowerment, nutrition security and overall resilience in food production systems.