

Justice Atla & Peter Mesah

## FISHING BY CANOE

### TEMA FISHING HARBOUR



*Image above:  
Mr. Justice Atla &  
Mr. Peter Mesah.*

We meet Mr. Justice Atla and Mr. Peter Mesah in the Tema fishing harbour on Saturday, when they're just leaving the fishing boat area, to go home after a day's work.

#### **What is your job?**

We are fishermen, we fish from the ship called 'Shining Star' from Chemu Beach. We have been fishing here in Tema for the past three years now, but we are only in the port for berthing. When we go fishing, we take the boat to the beach and from there we pull the nets into the sea with our boat and then pull them back to the beach. The fish are then hauled onto the beach.

#### **Will your work change with the expansion of the port?**

I don't think the expansion of the port will change much for us. The big ships don't catch the fish we want to catch, because they go much further out to sea than we do. The big tuna-boats also use different hooks, we fish with nets, and we fish with canoes. So when there are more big boats, it will be good for us fishermen, there will be more opportunities for employment. We will have more work.

The containerships sail into the port, but they work with cargo, not with fish, so they do not threaten our jobs. But these ships do make it difficult for the fish. The fish stay very much further down because of the big tankers and container ships, and that makes it more difficult for us to catch them, because we cannot reach that deep with our nets.

#### **Could your work be made better or easier?**

It would be great if we could also fish in the port area, because there is much fish there, but we are now not allowed to fish there.

#### **How do you think this place will look in 20 years time?**

That is a difficult question to answer. You will have asked the canoe owners. I think it will have changed a lot. There will be different canoe owners and different canoes. Probably also plenty canoes, as there will be big ones, just as well as smaller ones needed.