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preface

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VOICES ON SUSTAINABLE PORTS IN AFRICA

STORIES FROM TEMA PORT, GHANA

Baukje Bee Kothuis & Jill Slinger (Eds.)

The Sustainable Ports in Africa program is a collaborative multidisciplinary
NWO Urbanizing Deltas of the World research project



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ACCRA

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FORTY-SEVEN STORIES IN ONE BOOK

PREFACE

This book is a storybook. Forty-seven stories from people that are in one way or another connected to the port of Tema. Some live right next to it, or work at the port or in the direct environment. Others are involved in businesses or organizations that provide services, goods, knowledge or research for ports and their facilities, economics or development. Some in Ghana, some in the Netherlands.

All are stakeholders, in their own specific way and with their own specific story. These are the people we have drawn into our academic research project 'Design of Sustainable and Integrated Ports within an African Context.'

It all started in the first year when we played a serious game "Sustainable Ports" with a group of port business leaders. Many ideas and incentives arose from this endeavor. The year after, a design workshop was convened and attended by a large group of local and regional stakeholders. Multiple inspiring design options and visions were brought to the table. New connections were established and ideas were shared. And now, this very large group of interviewees helped to make this book possible by telling their stories, allowing us to listen to their voices. These pages intend to connect many stakeholders, hopefully not only on paper but also in real life.

This book

On the next page, the three professors heading that academic research project, will start by explaining the project and its vision and philosophy. The book is then arranged in three sections.

In the first section, the people that live and work in the direct environment of Tema Port tell their stories: about daily life near the port, about their fears and hopes, dreams and expectations for a future connected to the new port development. These interviews provide an intimate glimpse into people's lives and ideas.

The second section focuses on businesses and organizations in Ghana and in The Netherlands. These stakeholders explain how or why they got involved with Tema Port, and share their business and organizational views on the port development. Again their stories are revealing and their ideas can incite us to sustainable action.

The final section is somewhat different. It presents the perspectives of the academics involved in the research project. Researchers from multiple Ghanaian and Dutch universities and from diverse backgrounds form our team. In their interviews they tell us about their specific expertise and how they envision a sustainable port. It is captivating to read what they have learned from this project and the range of people involved.

What's next?

We bring this book back to you, the people that we interviewed in Tema, Accra and The Netherlands. And expect that you will be inspired hearing the stories of other stakeholders. We trust that you will not only read your own words, but also hear the voices of other individuals, communities, organizations and businesses. And we hope you will convey these inspirations and stories to many others in your daily life and working environments.

By telling stories, listening and informing each other of different perspectives and values, people can learn new or unexpected points of view. We hope that this book can be part of that and creates opportunities to rearrange opinions and behaviours and of course inspires the design of sustainable ports within an African context!