



Atebubu & Wiase

Forest Landscape Restoration Project



2022 ANNUAL REPORT
FEBRUARY 2023



iNovaLand

Atebubu and Wiase FLR in Numbers

Natural Forest Restoration - APSD:

891,995
Planted Trees
in 2022

595
ha restored¹
(2021 and 2022)

Agroforestry Programme – Community:

450
Farmers

13
Communities
Engaged

475
Farms

820
ha of
Agroforestry

222,000
Tree Seedlings
Planted
(Mainly Mango and
Cashew)

Multi-stakeholder Platforms:

4
Meetings Held
During 2022

152
People Participated

From 1 to 8
The Increase in the
Number of Women
Participating in
Meetings

Community Capacity Building:

24
Sensitization
Sessions

697
People at 8
Wildfire Prevention
and Management
Training Events

250
People at 11
agroforestry training
events

¹ Areas restored are areas that have been planted with seedlings and/or with seeds. They are at the start of the restoration journey.



NGPTA Director Statement

The achievements of the project in 2022 is due to the close working relationship which has been developed with local farmers, communities and project partners, and the hard work of NGPTA colleagues.

Andrew Heald,
NGPTA Director

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Community Feedback



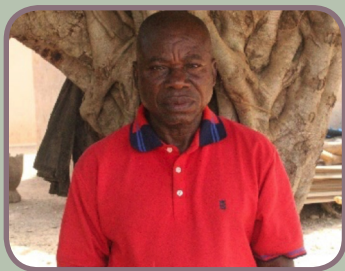
Monica Nkrumah
Farmer, Mframa

“I didn’t believe until the day I was given my mango seedlings, because in the past there are organizations promised but it was not realized. Giving chance for women inclusion during registrations, training and supplying of tree seedlings is great milestone, because there are other women who are benefiting from the intervention. I will take care of the seedlings because of the double benefits I will get, take care of my children such as paying school fees and more than ever to diversify my livelihood.”



Nana Amo Kwasi IV
Wiase Traditional Council

“Giving the maximum reverence to us as Custodian (Nananom) of the land is positive, ranging from engagement at our communities, MSP and Advisory Board clearly shows the project has come to stay. The interventions have given smile to some folks within Wiase Traditional Council for the support to create more resilient communities. Despite the few challenges we face last year, we hope to work in harmony with the project team in order to meet goals and objectives.”



Hon. Anthony Owusu
MSP Chairperson

“The MSP brings us different stakeholders together including farmers, traditional chiefs, public servants and interest groups that would otherwise have no space to get together. Our role is to guide and oversee the implementation of the project to ensure that community needs and nature are at the heart of the project. I am honoured to be the chair of such a platform.”



Celestina Nsor
APSD

“2022 was an important year for APSD, and we were able to significantly increase tree production in the nursery and the number of trees planted. The permanent sample plots mean that we can easily monitor the survival of the young trees. Fire management is a key issue for the region and we want to continue to work with local partners to minimise the risk to the young trees and farms.”

Overview

Atebubu and Wiase Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) project: “A ‘Living Lab’ for Community and Ecological Resilience” is a ten-year community-led project located in the Bono East region of Central Ghana.

Living Labs are an initiative established by the **Circular Bioeconomy Alliance (CBA)** which was created by His Royal Majesty King Charles III under the Sustainable Markets Initiative. CBA aims to catalyse investments for creating resilient landscapes and sustainable markets powered by nature. The Atebubu and Wiase project was the world’s first Living Lab to be established, and is funded by **AstraZeneca**.

The project seeks to address issues of land degradation, declining soil fertility, low agriculture productivity, deforestation, nature loss, unemployment, and climate change. Our primary goal is to build community and ecological resilience through forest landscape restoration:

- **Natural forest restoration:**
3,000 hectares of restoration in degraded areas
- **Agroforestry programme:**
3,280 hectares of agroforestry and regenerative agriculture to reduce pressure on natural forests, improve land productivity and boost incomes for smallholder farmers

There will be a total of 3.9 million trees planted by 2025:

- **Natural Forest: 3.0 million trees**
- **Agroforestry and Woodlots: 0.9 million trees**

This is made possible by working with project partners and the Multi-Stakeholder Platform (MSP).



Building a Sustainable Future Together

Progress and Achievements in 2022

In 2022 a total of 1.1 million trees have been planted in about 1,350 ha of degraded forest landscapes and farmlands located in the Atebubu-Amatin and Sene West districts.

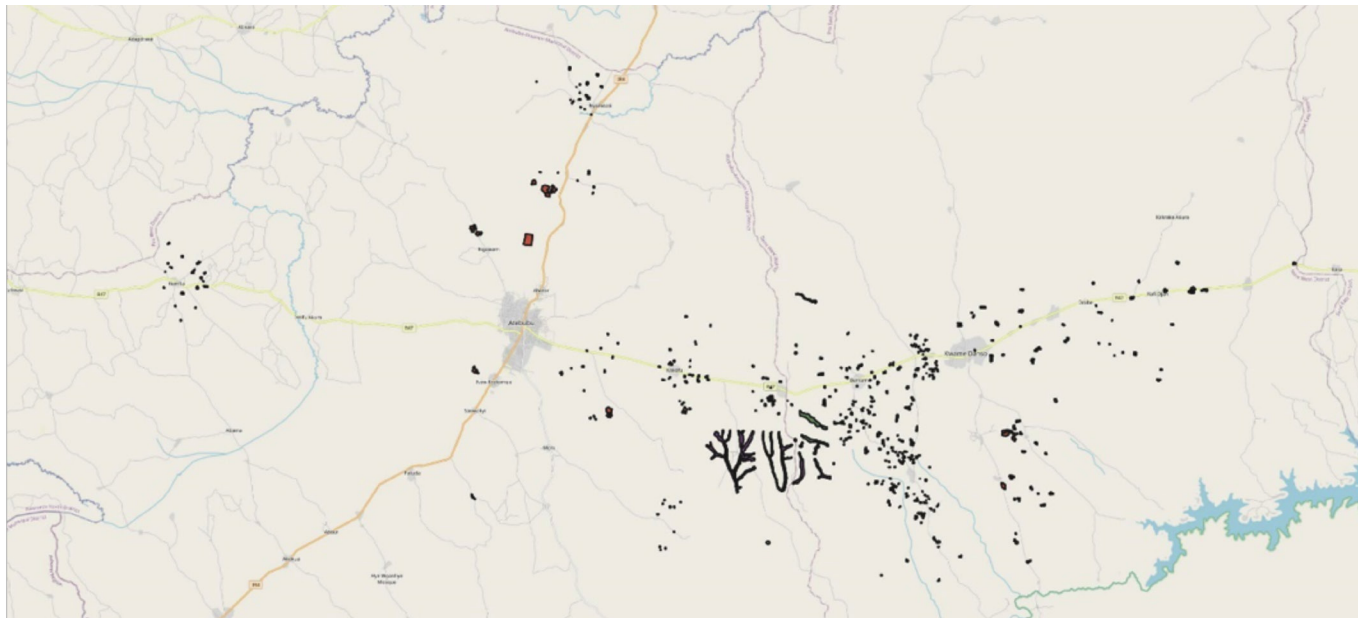


Figure 1. Areas planted in 2021 and 2022.

In the Agroforestry Programme 220,000 trees were distributed and planted during 2022 (145,000 fruit trees and 87,000 timber trees) under the agroforestry programme, initial survival rates show mango 84%, cashew 90% and timber (mix of native and exotic species) trees 43%.

Natural Forest restoration within African Plantations for Sustainable Development (APSD) reached to 891,995 planted trees. Initial survival rate assessments at the end of November average was 95%.

During the year, 4 multi-stakeholder platform (MSP) meetings took place led by Nature and Development Foundation (NDF) and 24 individual engagements at the community level occurred facilitated by NGPTA's community liaison officers. Overall, 152 people attended the MSP meetings and a variety of issues have been discussed (Table 3). Gender is one of the main topics been addressed and many efforts have been made to increase the participation of women in the project. As part of the community engagement, several training events on agroforestry (before the planting season started) and fire management (post-planting and before the dry season kicked in) took place at the community level.



Figure 2. Planting line at Permanent Sample Plot² No 2 during monitoring in November 2022

The fire management trainings are part of a wider strategy, to reduce the impact of fire in the landscape and protect all planted trees during this year, this has been developed from within the MSP and with the support of the project Advisory Board (Table 1).

By the end of the year, an office space was rented in the centre of Atebubu to increase the projects presence in the landscape and allow for the community to visit and speak with the project implementers more easily.

² Permanent Sample Plots – 0.2 ha plot per every 20 ha planted to measure survival rates and use to calculate biomass growth models.

Table 1. Members of the Advisory Board by the end of 2022

Name	Entity
Yitagesu Tekle	Circular Bioeconomy Alliance / European Forest Institute (CBA/EFI)
Mustapha Seidu	Nature and Development Foundation
Nana Owusu Sarpong	Atebubu Traditional Authority
Bantama Honourable Anthony Owusu	Multistakeholder Platform Chair
Nana Amo Kwasi IV	Wiase Traditional Authority
Yakubu Mohammed	Forestry Commission of Ghana
Prof. Daniel Ofori	Forest Research Institute of Ghana

Table 2. Project Board Members

Name	Entity
Yitagesu Tekle	Circular Bioeconomy Alliance / European Forest Institute (CBA/EFI)
Mustapha Seidu	Nature and Development Foundation
Andrew Heald	NGPTA
Finn Jacobsen	APSD
John Atkinson	AstraZeneca



Figure 3. Permanent Sample Plots for monitoring of survival rates established in 2022 (dots) within the 422ha planted at APSD's concession



Figure 4. Wildfire management training in Bantama with the Ghana National Fire Service

Table 3. MSP issues and actions log

Issue	Status	Actions until the next MSP meeting
Communication	Pending	How can members help communicate better on project objectives. The project resolved to use Community Information Centers to educate and spread information about the project.
Better gender representation	Ongoing	Women empowerment plan Bring in more female speakers to address their issues.
Farmer representatives	Done	NGPTA field staff to help farmers to select their representatives to the MSP
Land Tenure	Pending	NDF, Assembly members and NGPTA team to mediate the impasse between the chiefs and the migrant farmers. Meetings scheduled for February 2023
Low participation of migrant Farmers	Pending	Pending
Bushfire management and control	Implementation is ongoing. It is a recurrent activity.	Development of Bushfire management plan including MSP recommendations to be agreed and start implementation in the next MSP meeting.

Target Indicators

The project’s target for 2022 was to have 900,000 trees planted and 600,000 surviving trees. To date 891,995 trees have been planted in natural forest restoration, and 222,000 fruit and timber trees have been distributed and planted by local farmers under the agroforestry programme.

At this stage, initial survival number for 2022 indicate in the agroforestry programme that mangos are at 84%, cashew at 90% and timber trees at 43%. In Natural Forest initial monitoring show an average of 95% survival rate.

Natural forest and fruit trees survival rates are within expected boundaries at this stage of the year, still early in the dry season. Timber trees are significantly lower than expected. This reflects the low interest that most of the farmers have in the timber trees, they were poorly handled after distribution, in some cases not marked with canes as the fruit trees were, and lack of rain during the distribution of the trees is reflected in the low survival rate.

Survival rates will be reassessed after the dry season (end of March 2023).



Figure 5. Photo of tree in Permanent Sample Plot 15

Main Objectives Indicator (July 2021 to December 2022)

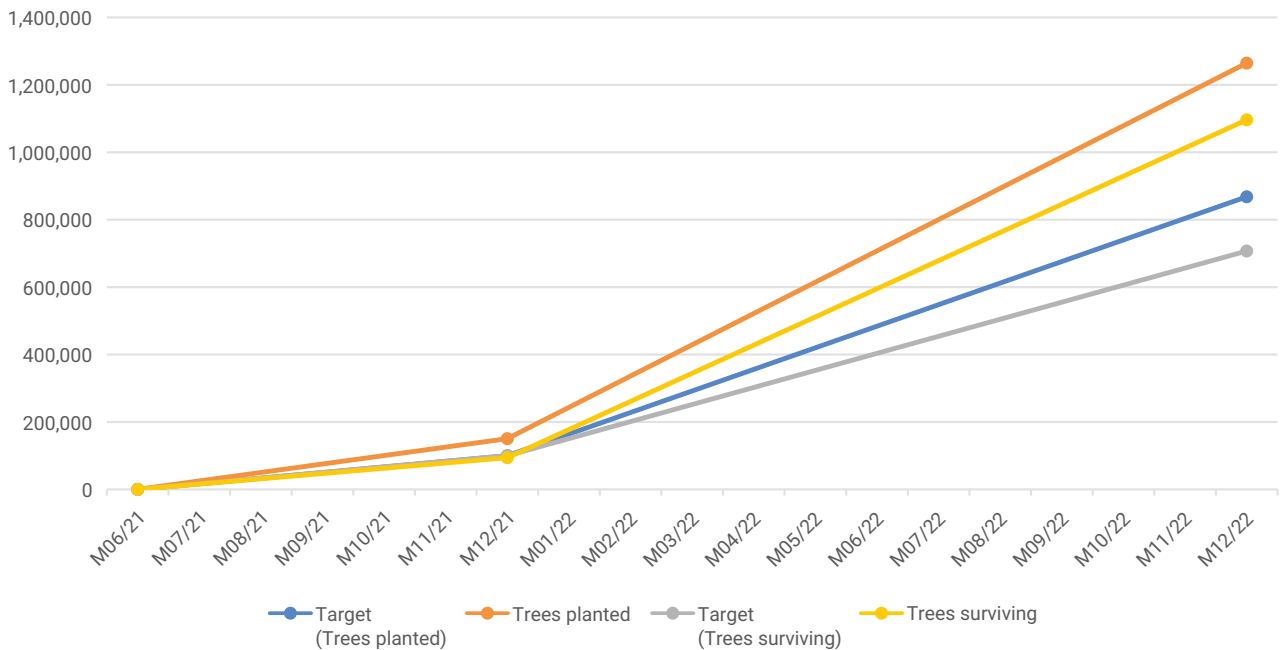


Figure 5. Comparison between targets and actuals of trees planted and trees surviving until December 2022

Challenges and Lessons

There is no project without challenges. What is important is continuous reflective learning to do things better.

Communities' involvement:

1. One of the key lessons learnt from the project was that failure by some groups (such as women, migrant farmers and others) to access secure tenures, can discourage and limit their engagement in agroforestry. Secure tenure encourages investment, assures farmers of tree ownership rights and helps deliver equitable agroforestry benefits to farmers. To try and solve this, NGPTA Community Liaison Officers called for more continuous engagement with traditional councils, as securing land use rights is essential to ensure equitable benefits. Also, about 80% of the land is held by the customary landowners³, hence a need for awareness raising about the benefits of conserving forests and adopting agroforestry. Customary landowners must also understand the implications of their actions or inactions on the landscape and future generations.

2. There is a need to improve the connections and knowledge sharing between the agroforestry and natural forest restoration parts of the project. This should also help strengthen relations between project partners, and support shared ambitions around fire management, successful tree establishment and overall community resilience.

Lessons:

1. There is limited interest and awareness of the potential of wood and timber trees in supporting livelihoods and reducing pressure on natural forests. This was evident from the early stages of the project and also confirmed during post-planting monitoring as there was less interest in planting timber species. There is a need to better engage communities and farmers to be more aware of the importance of woody and timber trees within their plots, by this we hope farmers can have a more varied income and more diverse farms.

2. Farmer-focused, equitable governance and partnering with communities, and local and national entities remain crucial. Having everyone participating in the project is crucial to steer it correctly. From the frequent community engagements through meetings, training, and radio talk shows, to the MSP that oversees the project, to the Advisory board and to working closely with other stakeholder groups such as the Forest Research Institute, Crops Research Institute, Forestry Commission, Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Nature and Development Foundation (NDF), Ghana Fire Services (GFS), APSD among others, we are seeing good representation and mobilize a wider range of opinions and expertise in favour of the project.



Communications

To improve communications, the project partners developed a communications strategy for local and international purposes with the objective of:

- Facilitate the development of impactful communication materials to achieve the project objectives.
- To share and showcase success stories, good practice and lessons of the FLR Living Lab for community and ecological resilience in the Atebubu district.
- Increase the intended audience's awareness of the project and project partners.
- Encourage and facilitate the active participation of diverse stakeholders and policymakers and pose calls to action.
- Secure the commitment of stakeholders to the project objectives.



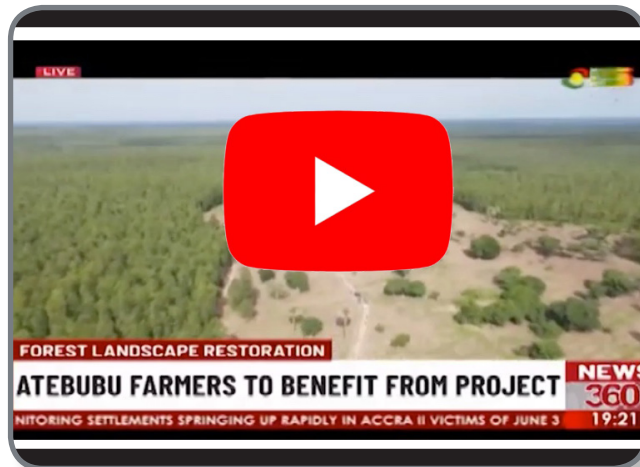
Figure 6. AstraZeneca and CBA visits to Bantama community



Figure 7. Project partners during AstraZeneca's visit

AstraZeneca visit

Astra Zeneca Visit 31st May to 2nd June 2022 was a very important moment that was used to increase understanding of the project. The visit received significant media attention in Ghana and more widely internationally.



Barbara Nel's Post

To view online-
(Click Here)



Barbara Nel
Global Head - Forxiga
10mo · Edited

As part of [#AZForest](#), our global tree planting initiative, I'm pleased to announce a new [#reforestation](#) programme in Central Ghana, in partnership with the Circular Bioeconomy Alliance, the Nature and Development Foundation, Africa Plantation for Sustainable Development (APSD), New Generation Plantation Technical Assistance (NGPTA), and [One Tree Planted](#).

Co-designed with local stakeholders in Atebubu and Wiase, the Ghana AZ Forest programme will restore 2,500 hectares of dry and savannah forest and demonstrate the benefits of biodiversity regeneration to the local economy, through the creation of local jobs. The project will be part of a pioneering global network of Living Labs, helping to build ecological and community resilience.

[#astrazeneca](#) is firmly committed to supporting a healthy environment and socioeconomic development in Africa and has been working with stakeholders in Africa for over three decades. For example, Healthy Heart Africa is active across Kenya, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, Uganda and Ghana, helping to tackle hypertension and the increasing burden of cardiovascular disease (CVD).

See Appendix

For more media links relating to the AstraZeneca Visit.
(To view - [Click Here](#))

Virtual Visit

In 28 June the project was presented at **New Generation Projects Developers Virtual Tour Around the Globe**. This was used to present the project and showcase what is being done, but most importantly to discuss challenges together with developers from other projects around the globe.

Website

During 2022, a website for the project was created. Its aim is to serve as a simple and clear presentation of the project and also to make available all relevant documents to ensure the project is as transparent to the community as possible.

The Atebubu and Wiase FLR page can be accessed through the following link:

atebubu.newgenerationplantations.org

Social Media

Many notes about the project were posted on **NGPTA's Twitter** account.

A new approach to communication was tested using a Twitter Space:

<https://twitter.com/i/spaces/1eaKbrDPOvZKX?s=20>
in 3 November 2022

Radio Shows

NGPTA's CLOs participated in 3 radio shows in 2022. The 1st was during AstraZeneca visit to promote the project in the region. In addition, as part of the fire prevention training, two radio shows were organized in local Atebubu and Kwame Danso radio stations.

Additional radio shows are scheduled for 2023.

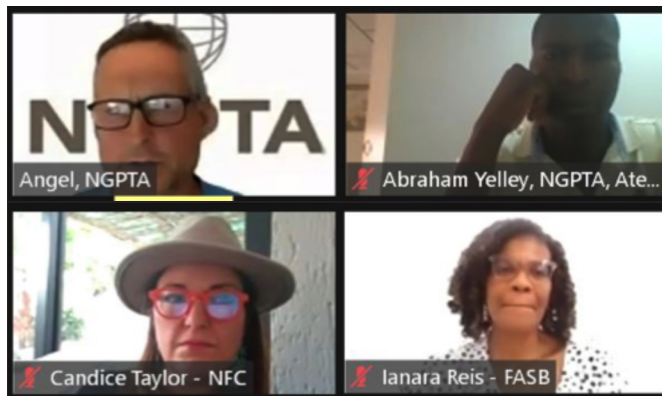


Figure 8. Virtual Visit

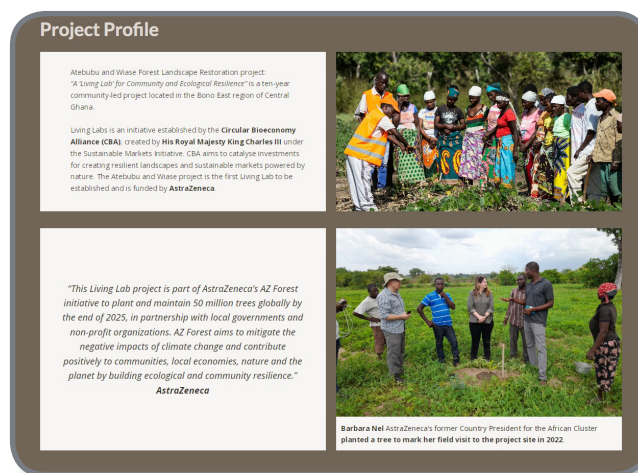


Figure 9. Radio show in Atebubu local radio with members from NGPTA, Ghana National Fire Service, NDF and a local farmer.

Reflections

This project was designed as a Living Lab, which means it uses iterative feedback from partners and communities throughout its lifecycle.

Communities and all partners are supported to provide feedback that can be used in steering and improving the project. The multistakeholder platform has pivotal importance in this process. On top of this, all relationships built in the communities by the team on the ground are a simple way to hear and give real-time feedback.

In Atebubu & Wiase FLR, this led to a significant change in the agroforestry programme, following the limited interest from the communities to plant timber trees in woodlots and their interest in planting cashews and mangos because these are recognized as cash crops. After one year of implementing the agroforestry programme, we've revised the targets and redesigned the approach to focus more on training and to enable conditions for farmers to be better equipped for long-term resilience.

This was possible because there has been an effort to have all stakeholders onboard and creating confidence for people to share their views and express their concerns. The project's multi-stakeholder platform, the continuous community engagement and sensitization were crucial in building this confidence and creating the safe space.



Figure 10. 4th MSP meeting group photo – November 2022

Targets for 2023 – 2025

In 2022, targets have been revised based on the 1st year of implementation. The table below reflects the current project targets for the coming years.

Table 4. Tree and area targets for 2023 to 2025

	Total			Natural Forest			Agroforestry Programme		
	Area (ha)	Trees Planted	Trees Surviving	Area (ha)	Trees Planted	Trees Surviving	Area (ha)	Trees Planted	Trees Surviving
2023	1,586	1,041,667	812,890	766	815,667	611,750	820	226,000	201,140
2024	1,622	970,167	759,265	802	744,167	558,125	820	226,000	201,140
2025	1,622	1,020,167	796,765	802	794,167	595,625	820	226,000	201,140
Total	6,280	3,900,000	3,076,000	3,000	3,000,000	2,275,000	3,280	900,000	801,000

2023: Targets and Main Activities

This year is another opportunity for us and our partners to showcase the potential of FLR in building community and ecological resilience. We will continue supporting the 400+ farmers implementing agroforestry to better manage the trees already planted and expand to new farmers within the 13 main communities. Our targets⁴ include:

- Restore circa **766 hectares of degraded natural forest** within APSD’s concession using native tree species.
- Improve food and timber production in circa **820 hectares of agricultural lands** through a smallholder-led agroforestry programme.
- Continue providing technical, practical and **peer-to-peer capacity building for farmers** in climate change adaptation, agroforestry, land use and fire management.
- **Monitoring, evaluation and learning** to ensure better survival rates for planted trees and long-term community impact.

⁴ This includes project expansion agreed with AstraZeneca

Key Dates

- **March to May**
Farmers mapping and agroforestry trainings:
- **May to September**
Natural forest planting:
- **June to August**
Agroforestry tree distribution and planting
- **March, June, September and November**
Multi-stakeholder Platform meetings (4):
- **October to March 2024**
Wildfire management:



Appendices

Key project people implementing the project.

Company	Name	Role in the project
NGPTA	Abraham Yelley	Senior Community Liaison Officer
NGPTA	Andrew Heald	NGPTA Director Project Lead
NGPTA	Emmanuel Kwarteng	Community Liaison Officer
NGPTA	Moro Seidu	Community Liaison Officer
NGPTA	Rose Kobusinge	Community Liaison Officer
NGPTA	Rui Barreira	Project Coordinator
NDF	Mustapha Seidu	MSP facilitator Advisory Board Chairman
	Bantama Honourable Anthony Owusu	MSP Chairman
APSD	Finn Jacobsen	Natural Forest Restoration
APSD	Celestina Nsor	Natural Forest Restoration

Relevant media coverage of AstraZeneca's visit – 31 May to 1 June

- **Ghanaweb.mobi** June 1, 2022.
- **Ghanaweb.com** June 2, 2022.
- **Graphic.com** June 2,2022.
- **Dailyviewgh.com** June 2,2022.
- **Ghana News247** June 3,3022.
- **Epicghana.net** June 3,2022.
- **Africa News Arena** June 3, 2022.
- **Ghana24.Org** June 3, 2022.
- **Africanewsvibe.com** June 4,2022.
- **News Ghana24**, June 4, 2022.
- **Africanewsgh** June 4, 2022.
- **Capital News** June 4,2022.



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Concerns about the project can be raised via this independent helpline: ([Click Here](#))



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