

REPORT ON THE 8TH MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PLATFORM MEETING



8th Multistakeholder Platform Meeting Report

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Background

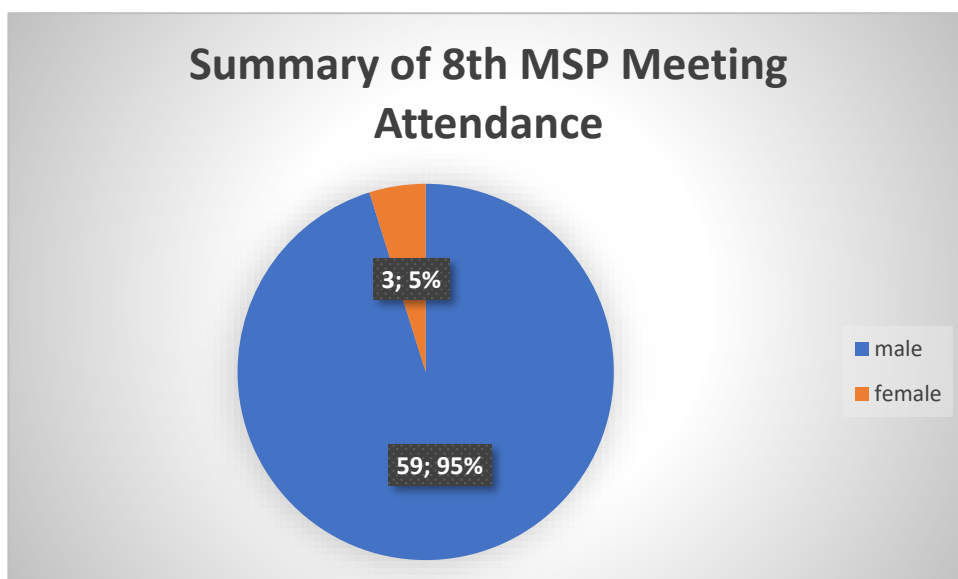
The Multi-Stakeholder Platform (MSP) was created under the project titled “Atebubu and Wiase: Forest Landscape Restoration to monitor the progress of the project implementation which is receiving funding from Astra Zeneca and implemented by NGPTA, NDF, and APSD. The 5-year project aims at restoring degraded land areas and improving the livelihoods of farmers engaged in the project. This platform gives the opportunity for the voices of the project beneficiaries (farmers) to be heard and address challenges encountered during the implementation phase of the project. Again, foreseeable hazards that may retard the success of the project are discussed to find practicable solutions. Previously, the NDF had organised seven (7) MSP meetings to address urgent issues on the project. This MSP meeting is organised to update and address issues of the project especially fire issues to protect the farms from fire outbreaks in the dry season (1st November to 30th April).

Introduction

This report covers the 8th session of the multi-stakeholder platform meeting. The meeting was organised on the 5th of December 2023 at the Kwame Danso District Assembly Hall. The focus was to address recurrent issues in the project such as fire management and prevention during the dry season and to give debriefing on the stakeholder event on carbon which was organised from the 7th – 9th November 2023 at Atebubu.

Attendance

The meeting was well attended by sixty-two (62) participants of whom fifty-nine (59) representing 95% were males and three (3) representing 5% were females. The participants were made up of the Farmers, District Assemblies, the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Wildlife Division, Ghana National Fire Service Atebubu-Wiase Stationed, Forest Service Division, APSD, NGPTA and NDF. **Attached as annexe_1 is a copy of the participant sheet. See the chart below for a summary of the attendance.**



Welcome Address

Mr. Ramzi Nuhu who is the Assistant District Coordinating Director of the Sene West District Assembly welcomed participants present at the meeting. He said that this meeting is another opportunity to come together for the 8th time to discuss and assess the progress of the ongoing project. He again said that this meeting is very crucial because fire outbreak in the Atebubu-Wiase enclaves during the dry season (November to March) is a big problem for farmers in the Atebubu-Wiase landscape. He further stated that this needs urgent interventions to bring a halt or minimise fire incidents. This meeting is to emphasize to all farmers and other key stakeholders who are part of the project on how to control and protect farmlands from fire outbreak and discuss other relevant issues related to the project implementation. He encouraged all participants to pay maximum attention every detail discussed and contribute fully to make the meeting fruitful.

Setting the Context by Mr. Mustapha Seidu

Mr. Mustapha Seidu, the Director of the Nature and Development Foundation (NDF) introduced the concept of the project to the participants by saying the objective of the Atebubu-Wiase Land Restoration project is to mitigate climate change and improve the livelihoods of the farmers engaged in the project areas. Continuing, he then informed participants of the purpose of the meeting which he mentioned that fire management in the Atebubu-Wiase landscape is still an issue to tackle as we are in the dry season. Also, he mentioned that there will be a debrief on the carbon event held on 7th – 8th November 2023. He added that climate change has disrupted food availability, quality, and quantity. It has also caused changes in precipitation patterns, changes in extreme weather events and reduction in water availability which result in reduced agricultural productivity. On the subject matter of the day, Mr Seidu said that the issue of fire outbreaks is a common sight during the dry season in the Atebubu-Wiase Landscape. Many farmers have lost farm properties due to fire outbreaks largely caused by careless bush burning by hunters, herdsman burning for fresh grass, cooking in farms, and slashing and burning. There is a need for farmers to devise ways to control and reduce fire outbreaks in the dry season.

Ending his statement, he said that this MSP meeting is purposely organised to remind and refresh stakeholders of the problem of fire management and prevention, a common problem to all farmers and also to discuss the carbon component of the project. Participants present will be educated on how to control and protect farmlands from fire outbreaks during the dry season.

Presentation on Carbon Event Results

Moro Seidu, one of the Community Liaison Officers for NGPTA presented the feedback from the carbon event held on the 7th – 8th of November 2023. In his presentation, he said that the carbon component of the project is very important to help farmers appreciate the concept of planting and nurturing timber trees on their farms. Mr Seidu said that the purpose of the carbon event was to allow farmers and other relevant stakeholders of the project to understand the purpose of planting timber trees on their farms and the benefits project beneficiaries stand to gain from the carbon sequestered from the atmosphere by the timber trees planted. The carbon workshop was held to create a long-term agreement to support the project and the community fairly and equitably. He said that during the carbon workshop, four topics were discussed which are:

- Stakeholder Mapping
- Theory of Change
- Grievance Mechanism and
- Benefit Sharing

Stakeholder Mapping

Mr Moro said that relevant stakeholders to the project were identified for the successful implementation of the project. The stakeholder mapping exercise was very important because it was stakeholders in the meeting who identified institutions that the project need to work with for a smooth and successful project implementation. He said that the stakeholders identified will be engaged when necessary to help make the project achieve its aim and impact. Key Stakeholder groups identified as having relevant rights to the project can be seen in the table below.

Stakeholder Group	Relevant Right to the Project
Chiefs and Traditional Authorities	Customary rights
Farmers	Ownership / Lease rights
Investors / Owners	Lease agreements to use the land
Communities	Owners and partners of the project
District and Municipal Assemblies	Enforcement of customary rights

Although this project through the MSP process is already working with most of the stakeholders, there were a few new ones identified during this exercise that the project may have to consider in subsequent engagement. Some of these include the Ghana Police Service, the Fulani Herdsmen, the charcoal burners and the hunters.

Theory of Change

Moro Seidu indicated that the theory of change was also important to discuss at the workshop. Stakeholders of the project present at the workshop were divided into groups to let the project implementors know the challenges encountered in the project implementation and how can they be solved to have positive progress in the project implementation. Moro indicated that aside from making known the challenges encountered and how to solve them, each group was also tasked to tell the risks associated with it. He presented to the participants the results of the theory of change developed after the carbon workshop.

Grievance Mechanism

The project has developed a grievance mechanism through which complaints are solved in the best interests of the project implementation. Mr Moro said that, from the discussions at the carbon workshop a grievance mechanism was adopted to solve issues. He indicated the grievance mechanism procedures to the participants as follows:

1. Firstly, the complaints should be submitted to the project officers.
2. Secondly, the evidence of the complaint should be reviewed by the officers.
3. Thirdly, the project officers will try to solve the issues amicably if possible.
4. If the solution to the complaint goes beyond amicable settlement, then it is submitted to be discussed and solved at the multistakeholder platform meeting.
5. If not solved at the MSP level, it will be submitted to arbitration for final and binding termination.
6. Finally, the project closes the case.

Benefit Sharing

Mr Moro ended his presentation with the benefit-sharing model of the carbon component of the project. He said that feedback from project stakeholders during the carbon workshop on how benefits should be shared from the carbon component of the project informed the draft of the benefit-sharing model. Mr Moro presented the benefit-sharing model draft to the participants present at the meeting. Find below the tabulated draft of the benefit-sharing model.

Key Beneficiaries	Responsibilities	Benefits split %
Farmers	Planting, protection, and maintenance of trees	40-60
Traditional Council	Landowners and make land available	10-20
Communities	Provision of fire volunteers' team	0-30
District Assembly	Enforcement of by-laws and provision of an administrative platform for the project.	0-10
APSD	Planting trees (Natural Forest Restoration)	10
NGPTA	Project Managers	10
Investors	Funding	10
Stool Landowners	Release lands for project development	10

Attached as Annexe_2 is the PowerPoint presentation of the carbon event results.

Presentation on Fire Management and Prevention

Mr. Zakaria Kabore and Mr Tierong Festus from the Ghana National Fire Service – Atebubu Municipal Assembly and Sene West District respectively, made brief presentations on fire management. They started with the types of fire which are domestic, industrial, and bushfire. In their presentation, they said that bushfire can be used as land management tools in many rural settings, even though they cause havoc to life, properties, land, and the environment if not controlled. The fire officers were excited to inform the participants that, since the meeting and training on bushfires the project, bushfire cases have reduced in the Atebubu-Wiase Landscape though there is room for improvement as far as fire issues are concerned. From the beginning of the project to now, the Project through NDF and in collaboration with the Ghana National Fire Service trains all participating communities on fire prevention and management. In 2023 alone, 1255 people from 20 communities attended the fire prevention and management trainings. These regular training has contributed massively to the reduction of fire incidents in the Atebubu-Wiase Landscape. The officers mentioned that the Control and Prevention of Bushfires Act 1990, PNDCL 229, bans bush-burning activities in the dry season. They elaborated that cooking in the farm, hunting of animals, possessing of any fire ignition tool in and around the farm during the dry season (November to April) are prohibited. Offenders of the bushfire law will be fined, jailed, or sentenced to communal labour. The fire officers educated the participants on the causes of bushfires in the Atebubu-Wiase enclave and how to control or prevent bushfires. Ending their presentations, they urged all participants to comply with the bush fire law in the dry season (November to April) to protect and keep the farmlands from fire outbreaks which can cause massive destruction to

properties. Farmers were asked to be each other's keeper at the time of the dry season to keep and protect farms free from fire outbreaks.

Causes of Bush Fire in Atebubu-Wiase Enclave

Three causes of bush fire in the Atebubu-Wiase enclave were identified during the meeting which are:

1. Slashing and burning
2. Animal hunting and
3. Herdsmen (Fulani) burn bushes for the growth of fresh grass to feed their cattle.

Measures Adopted to Control Fire Outbreak.

1. Fire volunteer teams are to be equipped with prescribed tools and skills to monitor farm activities during the dry season.
2. Banning all burning activities within the dry season period (November to April).
3. Creating fire belts 20 metres apart around farms to prevent fire from reaching the farmland.
4. District Assemblies in the Atebubu-Wiase landscape to collaborate with the Ghana National Fire Service in Atebubu and Kwame Danso to combat fire outbreaks.
5. The Ghana Fire Service in collaboration with the Ghana police service in Atebubu-Wiase will strictly enforce the ban on bush burning and sanction anyone who offends the law accordingly in the dry season.

Suggestions

Participants present made some key contributions that must be considered in the successful implementation of the project going forward. Below are some of the comments made by the participants:

- The participants suggested that Lead Farmers and Liaison Officers under the project should do random project farm monitoring to ensure that project beneficiaries plant the supplied seedlings in the right way and on time. It will also put farmers on their feet in terms of their fire prevention and management practices.
- The project should collaborate with the Ghana National Fire Service in Atebubu and Kwame Danso to inaugurate fire volunteer teams in project areas to tackle fire outbreak issues during the dry season. As far as possible, the project should endeavour to provide Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other relevant tools to the fire volunteers to ensure their safety in fighting against fire outbreaks in the project landscape during the dry season.
- The police service should be included as a stakeholder of the project and invited to the multistakeholder platform meetings to help in dealing with prosecution on fire incidents in the Atebubu-Wiase Landscape during the dry season.
- The project should invite leaders of the Fulani Herdsmen and Hunters to Multistakeholder Platform meetings to find solutions to bushfires caused by Fulani herdsmen and hunters in the dry season.
- The project should adopt community meetings at regular intervals to facilitate the progress of the project implementations before MSP meetings.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the workshop was well-organised and successful. Participants understood that fire outbreaks can cause massive loss of properties if care is not taken, and it is very important to practice fire management during the dry season. The carbon workshop was held to create a long-term agreement to support the project and the community fairly and equitably. Relevant topics discussed at the carbon event were stakeholders mapping, theory of change, grievance mechanism and benefit-sharing model. Participants were excited about the carbon workshop results presented and the measures identified and adopted to control bushfires in the dry season. Participants pledged to put in their maximum efforts to protect the farmlands from bush fire and the project as a whole.

Issues Log and Action Points

Issue	Status	Actions until the next MSP meeting
Communication	In progress	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	Done. But there is more room for improvement	Women empowerment plan Bring in more female speakers to address their issues
Farmer representatives	Done	NGPTA field staff to help farmers select their representatives to the MSP
Land Tenure	In progress	NDF, Assembly members and NGPTA team to mediate the impasse between the chiefs and the migrant farmers
Low participation of migrant Farmers	In progress	Same as above

Gallery



Annexes



8th MSP Participant
Sheet.pdf

Annexe_1



Atebubu FLR -
Carbon Event - Repor

Annexe_2