

Atebubu-Wiase Forest Landscape Restoration Project



Report of 5th Multistakeholder Platform Meeting; 2nd March, 2023, Atebubu

Introduction

The Atebubu-Wiase Forest Landscape Restoration Project aims at improving the livelihoods of participating farmers while restoring degraded land areas. Active stakeholder engagement is essential for the implementation of any landscape restoration action. The multi-stakeholder platform (MSP) established under this project is generally acknowledged as being essential to the project's effective execution. Nature and Development Foundation has led and organized four (4) MSP meetings to address urgent issues on the project. This report covers a one-day multi-stakeholder platform (MSP) meeting organised on the 2nd of March 2023, at the Assembly Hall of the Atebubu-Amantin Municipal Assembly.

Attendance

The turnout to the meeting was excellent. This is as a result of constant reminders and follow ups on participants prior to the meeting. The Assembly members' announcements and facilitation also contributed to the excellent turnout. In all, 49 participants turned up for the meeting; 39(80%) males and 10(20%) females. The number of females increased significantly as compared to previous meetings. Participants represented key stakeholders from the Forestry Commission, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Municipal and District Assemblies for Sene-West and Atebubu-Amantin, sub-chiefs from three traditional areas, farmers from communities within Atebubu and Wiase traditional areas, and also representatives of NGPTA, APSD and NDF.

Welcome Address

Honorable Anthony Owusu, the Assemblyman for Bantama community and Chairman for the MSP welcomed participants to the meeting after a short prayer delivered by a participant from Mframa community. According to Hon. Anthony Owusu, majority of participants present especially farmers have benefitted and still benefitting from the 5-year project through the planting of cashew and other crops. Therefore, there is a need for the various stakeholders to act together to ensure the sustainability of the project for both present and future generations. The project, he added, involves among others, local communities in the landscape planting agroforestry trees such as cashew, mango, and timber trees on their plots which will increase the resilience of vulnerable communities to climate change and restore the degraded landscape through the incorporation of trees on their farms. He finally encouraged all participants to pay maximum attention to every detail discussed and contribute fully to make the meeting successful.



Figure 1: MSP Chair welcomes participants to the meeting

Purpose of Gathering

Mr. Glen Asomaning, the Operations Director for the Nature and Development Foundation (NDF) briefly introduced the concept of the project to the participants and emphasized on the objective of the Atebubu-Wiase Landcape Restoration project. The project, according to him, is implemented to help combat climate change by increasing carbon sequestration through the planting of trees. He mentioned that, bushfires is a threat to the environment and sadly, bushfires either intentional or due to mere negligence is a reoccurring issue in the Sene West and Atebubu Amantin. Therefore, the multistakeholder platform is set to address issues on bushfires, and other concerns pointed out in the meeting.



Figure 2: Mr. Asomaning provides purpose of gathering

Presentation on project progress

The first presentation was on a report on the project's progress by Mr. Abraham Yelley who mentioned the three aspects of the project as;

1. Natural Forest Restoration aspect led by APSD
2. Agroforestry aspect implemented led by communities with the supervision of NGPTA
3. Multistakeholder platform and community engagement facilitated by NDF

According to him, the project's target for 2022 was to plant 900,000 trees. To date 891,995 trees have been planted under the natural forest restoration aspect. Also, under the agroforestry programme 222,000 fruit and timber trees have been distributed and planted by local farmers in 13 communities. Presently, the survival rate for mangos planted in 2022 are at 84%, cashew at 90% and timber trees at 43%. He added that, a total of four MSP meetings and community engagements has been organized and facilitated by NDF.

He reported the following as challenges facing the project.

- low interest of farmers in planting timber trees.
- Poor handling and mismanagement of timber tree seedlings after distribution
- lack of rain during the distribution of the trees reflected in the low survival of trees
- Low participation of females

- Land tenure issues
- Incidences of fire outbreak



Figure 3: Abraham Yelley of NGPTA presents on project progress

After his presentation, the following Suggestions were Made by Participants.

1. Mr. Eric Kontomah, the new MOFA Director for Sene West Municipality suggested that, farmers under the project in addition to the provision of cashew and mango, should also be provided with specific tree species such as *Senna siamea* , which would serve as woodlot and windbreaks. The response was that the provision of timber and woodlot species is a major component of the project.



Figure 4: A participant makes a suggestion after the presentation

2. He again argued that the management of the particular variety of mango being distributed to farmers is quite costly and therefore, if possible, project implementors should consider providing the farmers with the specific local variety of mango they have interest in. The response was that the variety will be considered for the next planting season even though the market for those are limited to local consumption and not commercial processing.

3. Finally, he added that, project implementors should consider partnering with MOFA in organizing programs during which best performing farmers would be awarded to motivate other farmers. The response was that the project by its nature supports farmers in whole as the project implementors will take no share in the final produce. The award system will be tabled however.

4. A farmer from Garadima community pleaded with project implementors to bring suppliers to purchase their produce and also engage with government to standardize cashew prices. The response was that the government has set up the Tree Crop Development Authority which has cashew as one of the crops. A floor ceiling was however set for the previous year's purchases.

PRESENTATION BY APSD

Mr. Sledge Adokoh, a Community Liaison Officer at APSD, gave a short presentation on the natural forest restoration aspect of the project. He mentioned that, in 2022, 423 hectares of land was prepared for the establishment of one million indigenous species (Ofram, Ceiba, Papao, Dawadawa, Senya etc.) due to obstacles beyond their control, the goal was not fully met. More than 840, 000 trees were successfully planted. This year, plots are again being cleared for planting. He concluded by stating that, the three components of the project are interdependent therefore there is the need to help each other to collaboratively achieve the objectives of the project.



Figure 5: Representatives of APSD give updates on their component of the project

Questions and Responses

Questions	Responses
Why have you adopted strip planting? Is there any reason? (Farmer, Mframa Community).	This method is used for large scale restoration where the interest is usually in a particular commodity. The method can also enhance natural regeneration. The weeds would however be cleared in due time
Are we (farmers) being encouraged to plant the same species planted by APSD? (Farmer, Bantama Community)	Response; Yes. you can also decide to plant similar species because of its benefits to you and future generations

Presentation on Fire Management

Mr. Zakaria Kabore, the rural fire coordinator from the Ghana National Fire Service – Atebubu, made a presentation on fire management. He made it known to the participants that the control and prevention of bushfires Act 1990, PNDCL 229, bans bush burning activities in the dry season, a law which has been widely accepted. He urged all participants to comply with the bush fire law in the dry season (November to March) to protect and keep the farmlands from fire outbreaks which can cause massive destruction to properties. He added that when the laws governing bush burning are obeyed, the incidences of fire outbreak would significantly be reduced. He then emphasized on the fact that, increase in fire incidences have been recorded in other regions especially the Western Region, however due to the privilege of having training on fire management in the Atebubu Amantin and Sene West Municipalities, there has been a reduction in fire incidence cases as compared to previous years. He concluded by urging farmers to create Fire belts in their farms between August to September in preparation for the fire season in order to preserve and protect their valuable investments. He concluded his presentation with a short demonstration on how fire extinguishers are used in extinguishing fires.



Figure 6: Atebubu-Amantin Rural Fire Coordinator gives a lesson on fire prevention and management

After the presentation, a participant asked if the control and prevention of bushfires Act 1990, PNDCL 229, only limited to bushfires? what about domestic fires? Mr. Kabore responded in the negative and highlighted the dangers with domestic fires also and by demonstrating the use of fire extinguishers as well.

Discussions On the Land Tenure Issue

Mr. Glen Asomaning, the Operations Director of Nature and Development Foundation, informed participants on certain conditions established by the Wiase Traditional Council members governing land tenure. The conditions, according to Mr. Glen Asomaning applies only to migrant farmers in the Bantama community who were prevented from planting cashew and mango in the previous planting season. This may however extend to other migrant farmers in the Wiase traditional area in the coming years. The following are the conditions proposed.

1. Before a migrant farmer will be permitted to receive cashew seedlings from the project to plant, the farmer will have to submit a receipt of payment of Gh¢100 being contribution towards the annual festival of the traditional council. Other conditions such as the provision of a number of tubers of yams is also included. This is an age-old tradition which migrant farmers are already aware of. It must however be noted that farmers
2. Upon maturity (i.e. in about 5 years) and harvesting of the planted trees (emphasis on cashew), it is proposed that migrant farmers will pay a total sum of GH¢ 500 per acre from their proceeds to the traditional council.
3. Migrant farmers will only have access to one hectare (two and a half acres) of land area for farming. However, based on the relationship between the migrant farmer and his/her chief, this condition can be subjected to change. Also, migrant farmers requiring large plots of land for large scale plantation purposes, upon consultation with the chiefs, can be granted lands but under different conditions.

It must be noted that all of these are proposals which is expected to be communicated to the leadership of the different migrant communities. They are expected to meet, deliberate on these proposals and approach the Traditional Council for discussions on them. The Traditional Council is willing to engage to discuss further.



Figure 7: A participant asks a question during the discussion on land tenure

Conclusion

The workshop was well-organised and successful. Participants were highly interested in the topics discussed and the measures identified and adopted in dealing with the current or pending issues on land tenure. Participants also pledged to put in their maximum efforts to protect the farmlands from bush fire.

Issues Log and Action Points

Issue	Status	Actions until the next MSP meeting
Communication	Ongoing	<p>How can members help communicate better on project objectives</p> <p>The project resolved to use Community Information Centers to educate and spread information about the project</p>

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 to select their representatives to the MSP
Land Tenure	Ongoing	Criteria defined to make possible for migrant farmers to have a higher participation in the project.
Low participation of migrant Farmers	Ongoing	To be solved following the criteria definition mentioned above
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

List of participants



Atebubu-Wiase Forest Landscape Project
 5th Multi-Stakeholder Platform Meeting
 2nd March, 2023 Venue: Municipal Assembly Hall, Atebubu

No.	Name	Institution/Community	Position	Telephone No.	Signature
1	Comfort Amoskor	Boniago	Farmer	0552344565	
2	Osei K. Joseph	Boniago	Farmer	0552888652	
3	Baffa-Fordjour Gabriel	Bantams	Ddikano	024347012L	
4	Abubakar Ibrahim	APSD	Community liaison	0540102571	
5	Hon Bi Peter	MFranga	Assemblyman	0552029498	
6	Yaa Bi	MFranga	Farmer	-	
7	Nyame Joseph	MFranga	Farmer	-	
8	Kotab Koabibi	MFranga	Farmer	0240029838	
9	Mary Bebra	Kwame Danso	Farmer	0545059504	

No.	Name	Institution/Community	Position	Telephone No.	Signature
10	Cleber Knapoulla	Kwame Danso	Farmer	0550335412	
11	^{Kwaku} Nana Daka Atta	Mframa	Chief	0557347933	
12	Osie Kofi	Bantama	Farmer	0550246844	
13	ALI ZARAU	NYOMASE	FARMER	0546581024	
14	TAKUBU ADAMS	NYOMASE	FARMER	0541616535	
15	Adokoh Sledge	APSD	staff	024102924	
16	John Larbi	APSD	staff	0510107821	
17	Kwaku Asiado	Garadima	Farmer	0592202344	
18	Gyimeso T	^{Atebubu} Dept. of Agric	MBO Extension	0543443689	
19	Hon Anthony Omuor	Bantama	Chairman	0546374330	
20	Tuah Diana	Wildlife Division	Adm	0558033588	
21	DANIEL BINGAYE	GARADIMA	FARMER	0551962146	

No.	Name	Institution/Community	Position	Telephone No.	Signature
22	Elizabeth Kamea	Bantama	Farmer	0550244352	
23	Fammanet Tetteh	^{Kwame Danso} GNFS	2/c	0541276471	
24	Takyi Stephen	Kokofu	Farmer	0248230574	
25	Philomina Owusu	Kokofu	Farmer	0248230574	
26	^{Asare, Atebubu} Nana Kwaku Asare	Kokofu District	Farmer	0556486098	
27	Sarfo Paul K	Akyemmede	farmer	0240260629	
28	Tinkpings David	Praprabon	Farmer	0542649266	
29	Jeffrey Kofi Tebeal	Namtu	ADP	024841507	
30	Hon Kai Kwasi Tzekwi	Assembly, Nam. Kibi	Assembly man.	0543717127	
31	Ofori Eric	Kibi	Farmer	0556758884	
32	Grace Klayice	WLEB	Farmer	0240574226	
33	Abdul Aziz Toyebi	AAMA	MBO	02449267306	

No.	Name	Institution/Community	Position	Telephone No.	Signature
34	Benjamin Gyau	Kumfia	Farmer	0559435829	
35	Alasua Frakaa	Kumfia	Farmer	0540475692	
36	Nana K Gyau	Boniffo Odikuro	Odikuro	0544954422	
37	I. K. A. Obeng	Garadima	odikuro	0206348425	
38	Nuhu Jibril Ramzi	SNDA Durc	Director	024462378	
39	ERIC KONIOMAH	DEPT. OF STATE GENEVA	DIRECTOR	0242772894	
40	Zakaria Kabore	Atabulm	GRFS	0244585225	
41	Kwarteng Emmanuel	NGPTA	CLO	0264557724	
42	Abraham Yilly	NGPTA	CLO	024923490	
43	Eric A. Ameyaw	Foresby Commission	R. Manager	0545407469	
44	Kwadwo Asumah	Assemblyman Akyemansa/ID		0542919972	
45	Mono Seidu	NGPTA	CLO	0208902900	

No.	Name	Institution/Community	Position	Telephone No.	Signature
46	Eric Asumah Aidu Asumah	NDF	Operation Director	0244597935	
47	Kwame Yemah	NDF - Accra	Operation Dir.	0244597935	
48	Amponsah Gideon	AAAMA	Assoc. Planning	0249367063	
49	Godwin Gyamerah	AAAMA	AD1	0248944307	
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