

PROJECT NAME: ATEBUBU WIASE FOREST LANDSCAPE RESTORATION



10TH MULTISTAKEHOLDER PLATFORM MEETING REPORT

5TH JUNE 2024



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ATEBUBU - AMANTIN MUNICIPAL ASSEMBLY HALL

A REPORT SUBMITTED

BY

NATURE AND DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

TO

INOVALAND

Overview

This report summarizes the outcome of a one-day multi-stakeholder platform meeting organized on the 5th of June 2024 at the Atebubu- Amantin Municipal Assembly Hall by the Nature and Development Foundation (NDF) in collaboration with the New Generation Plantations Technical Assistance (NGPTA) and African Plantations for Sustainable Development (APSD).

BACKGROUND

The consideration of social dimensions and inclusiveness in project implementation is desirable, especially in a landscape restoration project which necessarily involves some interaction with the local people. It is even more desirable when the intervention is geared towards building the resilience of the local people. Being in its third year, the multi-stakeholder platform under the Atebubu Wiase Forest Landscape restoration project has brought together different stakeholders in an inclusive arrangement that regularly discusses and shares knowledge, skills, and innovations among a range of actors in the project areas. The platform also seeks to represent all relevant stakeholders within the landscape to help identify key issues, opportunities, and prime areas for restoration by giving actors in the landscape a forum to talk about the project's practical implementation and how it will affect farmers and other stakeholders.

This report covers the proceedings of the 10th MSP which was organized on 5th June 2024 at Atebubu – Amanten Municipal Assembly. Below are the details of the proceedings.

MEETING AGENDA

- ✓ Presentation of project summary for the understanding of new participants. It will be recalled that Ghana conducted a District Level election in late 2023 which process saw the election of new members of the various assemblies. Members of the Assembly within the two districts of the project operations are members of the MSP. Many of the old assemblymen were replaced. Therefore, there was a need to give this summary.
- ✓ Understand and discuss persistent problems that were not resolved in previous MSP meetings. These were the issue of herdsmen and their representation in the MPS
- ✓ An update and preparation for the new planting season by iNovaland and NGPTA.

MEETING DETAILS AND ATTENDANCE

The MSP is a precursor to the Advisory Board and the Board meeting. This means that all things being equal, the MSP must be held before the Advisory Board and the Board meetings. Therefore, the MSP meeting was organized on the 5th of June 2024 at the

Atebubu Amantin Municipal Assembly Hall. A significant number of people attended the meeting as a direct result of phone calls, daily reminders, and invitation letters issued by email to representatives of the various stakeholders before the event. Participants invited to be part of the MSP include the coordinating Directorate of the two Municipal/District Assemblies, Directorate of the Department of Agriculture, Social Welfare Department, the Environmental Protection Agency(EPA), District Wildlife Division, Ghana National Fire Service stations in the two (2) district/municipality, Members of Assembly of the communities within the project area, Sub Chiefs from Traditional Council in the project area, Farmer representatives and project implementing partners. A total of 71 stakeholder representatives were present at the meeting. The overall number of male participants at the meeting was 64 (90%), as against 7 (10%) Females. *Attached as Annex_1 is a copy of the participant sheet.* It may be noticed that women's representation in the MSP meeting has been fluctuating, sometimes getting as low as 9%. More must be done to understand the gender relationships, and cultural and operational impediments to many women participating in the MSP.

OPENING STATEMENTS

In line with MSP protocols, the Chairman of the MSP, Hon. Anthony Owusu welcomed the participants by stating that the MSP is a platform that allows all representatives to convene and share their ideas and present issues that affect project success for resolution. He indicated that the instant MSP meeting would do the same and encouraged participants to actively participate.

To enhance familiarity and acquaintance among stakeholders, Mr. Mustapha Seidu, the Director of NDF led a self-introduction at the beginning of the meeting. He gave a speech on the purpose of the meeting indicating that it was the 10th MPS meeting of the participants. He further acknowledged project donors, implementors, and all stakeholders for playing major roles in ensuring the success of the project. For the sake of those participants who were participating for the first time as indicated in the introductory section, Mr. Seidu gave a brief speech summarizing the components of the project. He noted that the project is in two major parts: the planting of indigenous tree component led by APSD, and the agroforestry component led by NPTA. The third part which is a cross-cutting issue is the

community engagement led by NDF. According to him, NDF oversees the organization of quarterly MSP meetings, fire prevention, and fire management training aimed at building the capacity of farmers on how to manage bushfires, especially during the dry season, and agroforestry training for farmers on good agronomic practices.

The project is administered by iNovaland while the agroforestry component is implemented by NGPTA. The natural restoration of indigenous species is done by APSD within their existing concessions. He stated that the majority of the project's beneficiaries are locals and farmers in central Ghana's Bono East Region. He underlined the connection between tree planting, carbon sequestration, and climate change, emphasizing how the project attempts to significantly lessen the adverse impacts and vulnerabilities associated with climate change on farming and local livelihood. He alluded that, through the initiative, direct and indirect beneficiaries will be able to restore nature, increase their income, and have a more resilient food system.

In the latter part of his speech, he requested participants to table for discussion some of the persistent issues that have not been addressed by the MSP. Participants mentioned the issue of destruction of their farms including the cashews and mangoes planted by herds of cattle mostly owned by Fulanis. They indicated that, apart from bushfires, this is the most persistent issue affecting project success. Reacting to the concern raised, the Ghana National Fire Service representative, Mr. Kabore, indicated that the service has recognized the issue of Fulani herdsmen as a major cause of farm destruction and bushfire burning and that the regional secretariat has had several meetings with stakeholders on solutions to the problem. Mr. Kabore further noted that the service, in collaboration with the various district assemblies in the project area, has met the traditional authorities to regulate the activities of Fulani herdsmen in the districts. He noted in particular a case where the Paramount Chief of the Wiase Traditional Council has written a petition, based on demands from the people to the District Assembly to prevent all Fulani Herdsmen from settling within the jurisdiction of the Traditional Council. Based on that petition, there are currently no Fulani herdsmen in that traditional area.

The lessons and learning from this success story are that if the people form some groupings and demand from the Chiefs, the District Assemblies, and other institutions to institute actions to prevent Fulani herdsmen and bushfires, those actions will be implemented.

Concerning the above, it was mentioned the importance of having fire volunteers and farmer associations in each community or area as a way of increasing the voices of farmers and local communities.

PRESENTATION ON PROJECT PROGRESS AND ACTIVITIES

Mr. Moro Seidu of NGPTA gave an elaborate presentation focused on the project activities for 2024, activities implemented so far, main challenges, and achievements. According to him, five (5) community-level engagements have been conducted in Kofidjan, Kyeamekrom, Akyeremade, Abambo, and Mem with a total of 152 participants 28% of whom were female. He further mentioned that within the 2nd quarter, training was held for two (2) nursery operators to build their capacity to supply quality and healthy seedlings to the project. In that training, there were a total of 37 participants with 28 of them being women.

He also indicated that there was an engagement with Traditional Authorities in three traditional areas (Dwan, Wiawse, and Atebubu) on the benefit-sharing model of future carbon. In addition, the interaction with traditional authorities was done to build trust with the chiefs to enable free flow of communication and to find out if there are any restrictions on the land that is being used or will be used for the project.

It was further mentioned by Mr. Seidu that, agroforestry monitoring was conducted in 11 farms in 8 communities to collect carbon stock data. He again mentioned that recruitment of interested farmers for 2024 is ongoing with 483 farmers selected from 19 communities with a total of 707 hectares mapped. currently showing interest. Although the recruitment of farmers is ongoing, at the time of presentation, there were 104 females whose farms had been mapped. This represents 22% of the total farms mapped so far. He mentioned some challenges and achievements so far which have been listed below;

Main Challenges

- Low survival rates in some planted farms.
- Some farmers not adhering to the planting protocols of the project.
- Some farmers don't attach seriousness to their parcels.

Main Achievements

- New farmers have started signing up for the 2024 planting season.

- Opinion leaders in some communities trying to come up with initiatives to reduce fire

In conclusion, he stated that there will be continuous community engagement, Radio programs, tree monitoring, and Recruitment of interested farmers for 2024 planting.

PRESENTATION BY EPA

A representative from the EPA at the district gave an update on the EPA landscape restoration project called ‘the Ghana Landscape Restoration and Small-Scale Mining Project’, a World Bank-sponsored project under the Government of Ghana with a life span of 6 years (2021 – 2027). He indicated that there are several commonalities between the EPA project with the Atebubu-Wiase project. He further noted that the project also provides agroforestry trees for individual farmers who are interested in planting the same. However, there are community-level activities where they can supply seedlings of any quantity if the community can demonstrate the availability of land.

SELECTION OF A NEW CHAIRPERSON OF THE MSP

As a follow-up to the agreement of the platform to postpone the election of the new chairperson to the 10th MSP meeting, the nomination and election were carried out as part of the meeting. When the nomination was opened, there was only one person who expressed interest. Hon Anthony Owusu expressed interest to be selected to continue a second term as chairman of the MSP. He was acclaimed by the majority of the participants. And so, Hon. Anthony Owusu is retained as the chairman of the platform for the next two years.

CONCLUSION

The Multi-Stakeholder Platform Meeting allowed different stakeholders to share experiences, views, and challenges on the implementation of the project. Issues raised on the Fulani herdsmen were heavily discussed. Participants acknowledged the project’s contribution to creating better conditions for farmers and households in the district and municipal assemblies.

Issues Log and Action Points

Issue	Status	Actions until the next MSP meeting
Communication	On-going	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	On-going	Same as above

ANNEXES

Annex 1 - Participant Sheet



participant
list_10th_msp.pdf

Annex 2 –NGPTA’s Presentation



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