

ATEBUBU-WIASE FOREST LANDSCAPE RESTORATION PROJECT



13TH MULTI STAKEHOLDER PLATFORM MEETING REPORT

@ SENE WEST DISTRICT ASSEMBLY HALL

10TH APRIL 2025





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SENE WEST DISTRICT ASSEMBLY HALL

A REPORT SUBMITTED

BY

NATURE AND DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION



TO

INOVALAND

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Overview

This report provides a summary of the outcomes from a one-day multi-stakeholder platform meeting held on April 10, 2025, at the Sene West District Assembly Hall in Kwame Danso. Organized by the Nature and Development Foundation (NDF) in collaboration with the New Generation Plantations Technical Assistance (NGPTA) and African Plantations for Sustainable Development (APSD), the meeting is an activity under the Atebubu Wiase Forest Landscape Restoration Project. The report captures key presentations, highlights from group discussions, and recommendations shared by participants.

1.0 Background

The Atebubu Wiase Forest Landscape Restoration Project, launched in 2021, is a 10-year initiative implemented by the New Generation Plantation Technical Assistance (NGPTA), Nature and Development Foundation (NDF), and African Plantations for Sustainable Development (APSD) with funding from AstraZeneca and coordinated by the Circular Bioeconomy Alliance (CBA). The project's primary goal is to build community and ecological resilience to the impact of climate change. The project combines forest restoration, agroforestry, and regenerative agriculture to combat land degradation and climate change while improving livelihoods.

One key component of the project, the Multi-Stakeholder Platform, functions as an interactive forum where stakeholders come together to review implementation progress, address emerging challenges, and explore new opportunities for restoration. It brings together all relevant actors to collaboratively influence the direction and success of the project.

Ahead of 2025, project partners recognized the need to address low female participation in Multi-Stakeholder Platform (MSP) meetings. To promote gender inclusivity, it was agreed that one female farmer from each project community would be included in the MSPs, increasing the total number of participants to around 100, too many for effective interaction. As a result, from 2025 onward, three separate MSP meetings will be held each in Atebubu and Kwame Danso, with participants attending only in their respective districts.

The first MSP meeting for Atebubu was held on 27th February 2025, involving stakeholders from the Atebubu-Amantin Municipality. This report covers the first MSP meeting for Kwame Danso, held on 10th April 2025, with participation from stakeholders in the Sene West District.

1.1 Meeting Objectives

1. To provide updates and facilitate discussion on current project activities and related developments.
2. To engage participants and gather their feedback to enhance project implementation.
3. To share the survival monitoring report with stakeholders for input.

2.0 Meeting Details and Attendance

The Multi-Stakeholder Platform (MSP) meeting was held on 10th April 2025 at the Sene West District Assembly Hall, with a total of 76 participants (59 males (77.6%) and 17 females (22.4%)). This impressive turnout was made possible through the dedicated efforts of the organizers, who employed a mix of communication channels, including emails, WhatsApp, personal phone calls, and consistent daily reminders to ensure active participation from all stakeholders. Compared to the earlier meeting in Atebubu, where males made up 78% (36 participants) and females 22% (10 participants), this meeting reflects progress toward achieving more balanced gender representation. Although female participation is still relatively low, the numbers indicate a positive trend. Continued improvement is expected in future meetings as the affirmative action policy, ensuring automatic representation of at least one female farmer per community, is fully implemented across all participating areas. Participants represented a broad array of relevant sectors, including:

- Government Agencies: Coordinating Directorate of the District Assembly, the District Planning Officer, Ghana Police Service, Ghana National Fire Service, Department of Agriculture, the Wildlife Division of the Forestry Commission, Environmental Protection Agency.
- Traditional Authorities: Sub-Chiefs from local Traditional Councils.
- Assembly Members from project communities
- Farmer Groups: Farmers from the participating communities.
- Fulani Herdsmen
- Project Partners: Representatives from the Nature and Development Foundation (NDF), NGPTA, and African Plantations for Sustainable Development (APSD).

Table 1: Stakeholder Representation and Gender Segregation

Stakeholders	Males	%	Females	%	Total
Farmers	21	58.3	15	41.7	36
Government Officials	8	88.9	1	11.1	9
Assemblymen	13	100.0	0	0.0	13
Subchiefs	12	100.0	0	0.0	12
Fulani Reps	2	100.0	0	0.0	2
Project Implementing Partners	3	75.0	1	25.0	4
Total	59	77.6	17	22.4	76

3.0 Welcome Address – Sene West District Coordinating Director

Mr. Shakuru Braimah, the District Coordinating Director for Sene West, delivered a brief but heartfelt welcome to all participants at the Multi-Stakeholder Platform (MSP) meeting. He began by recalling his earlier participation in one of the previous quarterly MSP sessions and expressed his delight at being part of the meeting once again. “I remember attending one of these meetings before, and I must say, we are very pleased to see how the project is progressing,” he remarked. He reiterated that the Atebubu Wiase Forest Landscape Restoration Project is not just the responsibility of the implementing partners but belongs to the communities themselves. “This project is yours,” he emphasized. “It is our collective responsibility to ensure it succeeds.”

Mr. Braimah encouraged all stakeholders to actively contribute their ideas, concerns, and suggestions to help improve the project’s implementation. He stressed that meaningful impact can only be achieved through joint effort, saying, “We need to bring our thoughts together on how to make this project even better.”

He further mentioned the importance of commitment and seriousness, noting that the long-term benefits of the project, such as improved livelihoods, environmental restoration, and climate resilience, can only be sustained through dedication by stakeholders. “Let us take this project seriously,” he urged, “so that we do not risk losing it. If we all put in our best, the benefits will continue to be felt in our communities for years to come.”

He concluded by encouraging everyone to remain involved and supportive, reaffirming the district’s readiness to play its part in ensuring the success of the initiative.



Figure 1. Mr. Braimah addressing participants at the MSP meeting

4.0 Statement – MSP Chairman

Mr. Anthony Owusu, the Chairman of the Multi-Stakeholder Platform (MSP), warmly welcomed all participants to the meeting and expressed his appreciation for their presence and ongoing commitment to the Project. He began by acknowledging the significant progress made so far and emphasized the value and growing recognition of the project within the district. He cautioned participants not to take the initiative for granted and encouraged lead farmers to share the insights and knowledge gained from the meeting with others in their communities. This, he stressed, would ensure that all beneficiaries, especially those unable to attend, remain informed and aligned with the project's goals.

He noted that even when the project will eventually come to an end, its impact should continue to be visible in the lives of the people and the landscape. "If we work hard and take ownership now, we will continue to see the benefits of this project long after it is gone," he added. He called on participants to view the project as their own and to contribute ideas and energy toward its long-term success.

He also stressed the importance of proper farm maintenance and fire prevention as key components of successful project outcomes.

Mr. Owusu concluded by urging everyone to stay committed, to participate actively in all project-related activities, and to share the knowledge and skills gained with others in their communities. This, he said, would ensure that the restoration work being done today leaves a lasting legacy for future generations.



Figure 2: The MSP Chairman, Mr. Anthony Owusu, urging participants to own the project

5.0 Statement – Nature and Development Foundation (NDF)

Mr. Kingsley Twumasi, a Senior Project Officer from the Nature and Development Foundation (NDF), presented an update on the NDF led activities of the Atebubu-Wiase Forest Landscape Restoration Project. He began by welcoming all participants and emphasizing the importance of their presence and contributions to the success of the project. He explained that the project was born out of an urgent need to address increasing fire outbreaks and widespread land degradation in the Atebubu-Wiase landscape.

He noted that prior to the launch of the project, a baseline study was conducted to understand community needs and farmer preferences. During this process, farmers were consulted on their preferred species for cultivation. The majority indicated a strong interest in cashew and mango crops, seen as both economically viable and adaptable to local agroecological conditions. These species were integrated into an agroforestry model alongside indigenous timber trees, offering communities both short-term economic returns and long-term environmental resilience.

Mr. Twumasi stressed that the project not only provided planting materials but also technical training and continuous support to farmers on site selection, planting techniques, pruning, and farm maintenance. He reiterated the vital role of trees in absorbing carbon dioxide (CO₂), thereby mitigating climate change impacts that have become evident in the form of erratic rainfall and low crop yields.

A key issue highlighted in the presentation was the recurring threat of bushfires, which continued to destroy farms and jeopardize the project's success. To combat this, a partnership with the Ghana National Fire Service was initiated to deliver extensive fire safety education, including workshops on Ghana's fire laws. As part of this effort, NDF led the training and inauguration of community fire volunteers in Atebubu. These volunteers were equipped with protective clothing, water sprayers, beaters, and other firefighting tools.

Mr. Twumasi further spoke about the creation and importance of the Multi-Stakeholder Platform (MSP). The MSP according to him, serves as a space to exchange ideas, share implementation progress, identify challenges and co-develop solutions. It also plays a role in promoting transparency and collective ownership of the project.



Figure 3: Mr. Kingsley Twumasi making a presentation at the meeting

In addressing the issue of gender representation, he acknowledged that women's participation had been limited in the past. However, as a corrective measure, the project had now institutionalized affirmative female representation, mandating that at least one woman from each project community be included in MSP activities. Mr. Twumasi then expressed concern over findings which will be presented by NGPTA indicating that many project farms in Atebubu had been either abandoned or poorly managed. He stressed that while implementing partners were fulfilling their roles, the project's sustainability ultimately depended on the farmers' ownership, accountability, and commitment.

He emphasized that the Atebubu-Wiase Forest Landscape Restoration Project is not merely a tree-planting initiative—it is a comprehensive strategy for climate resilience, economic empowerment, and landscape regeneration.

He called on all stakeholders—farmers, chiefs, local authorities, government institutions, and civil society—to continue working together in a spirit of cooperation and shared responsibility. Only through such collective action, he noted, could the landscape be restored and secured for future generations.

6.0 Presentation by NGPTA

During the meeting, Mr. Abraham Yalley, representing the NGPTA, provided a comprehensive update on the project's progress and implementation status for the first quarter of 2025. He noted that NGPTA had carried out several key activities across all project sites, with a strong emphasis on community engagement, fire prevention, agroforestry monitoring, and stakeholder collaboration.

As part of fire prevention efforts, NGPTA reported the training and formal inauguration of community fire volunteers across six communities. These volunteers received training in fire control, emergency drills, and fire prevention protocols. The trained volunteers are expected to serve as frontline responders during fire incidents, particularly in the dry season.

He further mentioned that, in collaboration with the NDF, NGPTA facilitated stakeholder engagement sessions on fire prevention and management which brought together critical institutions, including the Ghana National Fire Service, Ghana Police Service, traditional authorities (Nananom), Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Implementing Partners, and the District Assembly. The engagements focused on strengthening coordination, promoting awareness of fire laws, and fostering joint action to manage bushfires effectively.

Further updates revealed that NGPTA had completed survival monitoring of agroforestry plots established in 2022 and 2023. According to Mr. Yalley, of the 1018 farms visited, 259 had been

abandoned, 313 were poorly maintained, and 133 had been affected by fire, while only 61 farms were rated excellent and 252 as good. NGPTA also conducted a 2024 Project Satisfaction Survey involving 225 farmers, which revealed that 80% of participants viewed the project as well-implemented and positively impactful. However, farmers also identified major challenges, including frequent fire outbreaks, the destructive activities of Fulani herdsmen, and the growing impact of climate change, especially erratic rainfall patterns affecting food crop yields.

Mr. Yalley acknowledged several implementation challenges experienced which included limited farmer commitment, harsh climatic conditions leading to high seedling mortality. He also mentioned that some farmers were not adhering to planting protocols.

On the matter of recruitment and planning for 2025, Mr. Yalley confirmed that registration and mapping of new plots were ongoing. Mr. Yalley closed by outlining key activities planned for the second quarter of 2025, including:

- The continuation of farmer registration and plot mapping;
- Organization of the next Multi-Stakeholder Platform meeting;
- Execution of further community engagement activities;

Attached as Annex_2 is the PowerPoint presentation delivered by NGPTA during the meeting.





Highlights for the Activities for Q1










Building a Sustainable Future Together

- Community Engagement
- Stakeholder Engagements
- Agroforestry updates
- Monitoring – 2022/2023 AGF PLOTS
- Project Satisfaction Survey
- Natural Forest Restoration
- Trainings and Inauguration of Comr Fire Volunteers
- Main Challenges/Achievement

Figure 4: Mr. Abraham Yalley updating participants on ongoing project activities

7.0 Group Discussion

As part of the MSP meeting, participants were divided into three groups for a focused breakout discussion session facilitated by Mr. Kingsley Twumasi. Each group was carefully composed to ensure representation from all stakeholder categories. The objective of the group work was to analyse the causes of low performance identified during the survival monitoring exercise of agroforestry plots and to propose actionable solutions that could enhance outcomes in subsequent planting seasons. Specifically, groups were asked to explore reasons for farm-level failures and suggest interventions to improve survival rates, farmer participation, and general project success.

Table 2:

CHALLENGES	SOLUTIONS
GROUP 1	
Poor seedling quality, which stemmed from unsuitable soil media used during nursery stages.	Nursery practices should be improved by adopting suitable soil media compositions
Late supply of seedlings, limited successful establishment.	Ensure the early supply and timely planting of seedlings
Destruction of farm produce by other farmers	Conduct regular joint monitoring involving all stakeholders
Lack of enthusiasm or commitment by some farmers	Provide motivational packages to farmers who demonstrate commitment.
Group hunting activities in project areas caused damage to young plantations.	Enhance community sensitization to minimize destructive practices like group hunting
Interference from tractor operators sometimes led to unintentional destruction of planted trees.	Training for tractor operators on how to plough without destroying farm produce
Unpredictable and harsh weather conditions significantly affected seedling survival.	
GROUP 2	
A general lack of commitment among some farmers	Strengthen engagement and communication with farmers
Limited financial support, which discouraged farmer participation.	Introduce financial incentives for well-performing farmers
Untimely distribution of seedlings	Align seedling distribution timelines with planting windows to enhance survival.
Adverse weather conditions, including inadequate rainfall.	Expand the training and deployment of fire volunteers

Frequent bushfires, which destroyed planted areas.	Intensify community education on bushfire prevention.
Damage caused by cattle, particularly those belonging to Fulani herdsman	Engage and educate Fulani herders
Some farmers had vast land holdings, making it difficult for them to manage all plots.	Until farmers' commitment and seriousness are verified, project implementers should allow only smaller portions of land
Lack of fire management practices, making the farms vulnerable during the dry season.	Intensify community education on bushfire prevention.
GROUP 3	
Delayed supply of seedlings	Ensure timely distribution of seedlings
Insufficient monitoring mechanisms allowed some farmers to neglect their planted trees.	Implement punitive measures on farmers who neglect their farms
There was inadequate farmer education on agronomic practices	Continues Sensitization on good agronomic practices.
Poor land preparation prior to planting reduced the ability of seedlings to take root and survive.	Before planting material is supplied, NGPTA to make sure that the land is well prepared for planting.

Each group emphasized that improving performance in future agroforestry interventions would require a combination of timely logistical support, consistent community engagement, and stronger accountability mechanisms would overcome the identified challenges.



Figure 5: Participants interacting during the group breakout session

8.0 Statement – Ghana National Fire Service

Mr. Zaato Adams Bruce with the Ghana National Fire Service, Sene West, emphasized the significant investment of time, energy, and resources that both the project and farmers commit to establishing and maintaining their farms. He expressed concern over the devastating impact that bushfires have on these efforts, noting that it is disheartening to witness farms built over many years being destroyed within minutes by preventable fires.

He stressed that all farmers have been trained in basic fire prevention and management techniques, and it is now their responsibility to put this knowledge into practice. He urged farmers to construct fire belts around their farms as a primary protective measure and to strictly avoid burning during the dry season, when conditions are most volatile.

He highlighted that fire is impartial—it recognizes no boundaries, ownership, or effort. Once it starts, it destroys everything in its path without discrimination. “Don’t let your hard-earned work go to waste,” he warned, “All your five or more years of investment can vanish in seconds if you are not vigilant.”

The officer specifically addressed the Fulani representatives present at the meeting, calling on them to educate their fellow herdsmen about the dangers of setting fires during the dry season. He pointed out that farmers themselves are sometimes to blame, as some resort to burning as a shortcut to land clearing instead of following proper weeding practices.

He reassured all stakeholders that the Fire Service is committed to supporting communities and that their door remains open to everyone. However, he appealed for mutual cooperation. “When we visit your communities, please listen to us,” he urged. “We are here to help, and we all want the same outcome: to protect your farms, your livelihoods, and your future.”

In closing, he reiterated that fire safety is a shared responsibility and that everyone—farmers, herders, and service providers—must do their part to protect the landscape. He left the participants with a powerful reminder: “Don’t become a victim of negligence. During the dry season, do not burn.”



Figure 6: Fire Service Officers cautioning participants to avoid bush burning during the dry season

9.0 Community Concerns Shared with Fulani Herders

During the interactive session of the MSP meeting, participants were given the opportunity to voice their concerns directly to the Fulani herders who were present. This open dialogue allowed for constructive engagement between farmers and herders.

Several participants expressed concerns about the impact of free-ranging cattle on their farms. One farmer stated, *“Don’t let your property destroy someone else’s property,”* emphasizing the need for herders to take responsibility for the actions of their animals. Another participant acknowledged the value of livestock to the community, noting, *“We need the meat, but herders must be careful not to let their animals destroy our crops.”*

A recurring concern was the behavior of the young boys often assigned to manage the herds. Participants observed that these children are frequently distracted or inattentive, leading to damage on farmlands. One participant urged, *“Please talk to your children or those you entrust with the cattle. They need to be more responsible.”*

In closing, community members respectfully admonished the herders to educate and supervise their children better, encouraging them to ensure that livestock management practices do not lead to conflicts with farmers. This exchange was seen as a critical step toward improving communication and promoting shared responsibility for sustainable land use.

10.0 Recommendations

At the latter part of the meeting, participants again were given the opportunity to make recommendations and raise issues which have not been captured. Here are some issues raised and recommendations made:

Table 3: Recommendations and Issues Raised by Participants

	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
1	Concerns were raised about the underrepresentation of Fulani herders in MSP discussions, with only two individuals currently representing all Fulani communities involved in the project.	Ensure more inclusive representation by inviting at least one Fulani representative from each community to MSP meetings.
2	Delays in the delivery of planting materials have affected the planting schedule for farmers.	Timely Supply of Planting Materials
3	Reporting Fire Cases	Farmers should report fire cases to the police station, enabling prompt action to be taken to prevent further damage and protect farm properties
4	Cattle destroying farm crops	A committee made up of both farmer and Fulani leaders should be formed to draft byelaws that outline procedures for addressing cases of livestock destroying farm produce, including compensation measures, with the goal of discouraging herders from allowing such incidents.

11. Conclusion

The meeting served as a forum for reviewing progress, addressing ongoing challenges, and shaping the next steps of implementation. It offered participants the opportunity to voice their insights, concerns, and practical suggestions to strengthen the project's impact. Recommendations made are essential to advancing project goals and ensuring long-term sustainability. Continued cooperation among all stakeholders will be vital to overcoming obstacles and delivering meaningful outcomes for the communities involved.

Issues Log and Action Points

Issue	Status	Actions until the next MSP meeting
Communication	Done	Almost all stakeholders in the landscape are aware of the project activities. All the paramount chiefs and their Odikros are involved. The project uses Community Information Centers to educate and spread information about the project
Better gender representation	In progress	More women now participating because of the affirmative action. 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 mediated the impasse between the chiefs and the migrant farmers. However, new communities are being added and the issue reappears
Low participation of migrant Farmers	Done	This is no longer an issue

Annexes

Scanned Participant Sheet



PARTICIPANT SHEET
13TH MSP AWFLR CoI

PowerPoint Presentation



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Pictures



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