

PROJECT NAME: ATEBUBU-WIASE FOREST LANDSCAPE RESTORATION

14TH MULTISTAKEHOLDER PLATFORM MEETING REPORT

27TH May 2025

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ATEBUBU AMANTEN MUNICIPAL ASSEMBLY HALL

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A REPORT SUBMITTED

BY

NATURE AND DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

TO

INOVALAND

Overview

This report summarises the outcome of a one-day multi-stakeholder platform meeting organised on the 27th of May 2025 at the Atebubu Amanten Municipal Assembly Hall @Atebubu 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 Atebubu-Wiase Forest Landscape Restoration Project, situated in Ghana's Bono East Region, exemplifies community-driven initiatives that foster ecological and social resilience. This project extends its impact beyond environmental benefits, prioritising the enhancement of local communities' livelihoods. By promoting agroforestry and sustainable agriculture practices, the project aims to bolster food security, increase income, and empower women and youth. This ambitious project has established a thriving Multi-Stakeholder Platform (MSP), bringing together diverse stakeholders to share knowledge, skills, and innovations.

The MSP serves as a dynamic forum for discussing project implementation, identifying key issues, and uncovering opportunities for restoration. By facilitating collaborative problem-solving and informed decision-making, the platform engages all relevant stakeholders to shape the project's future.

This report captures the 14th MSP meeting since project inception and the second meeting for the year 2025, held on May 27, 2025, at the Atebubu Amanten Municipal Assembly, where stakeholders gathered to shape the project's future.

Meeting Objectives

1. Review the 2022-2023 plots monitoring results.
2. Update stakeholders on the progress of the project implementation.

Meeting Details and Attendance

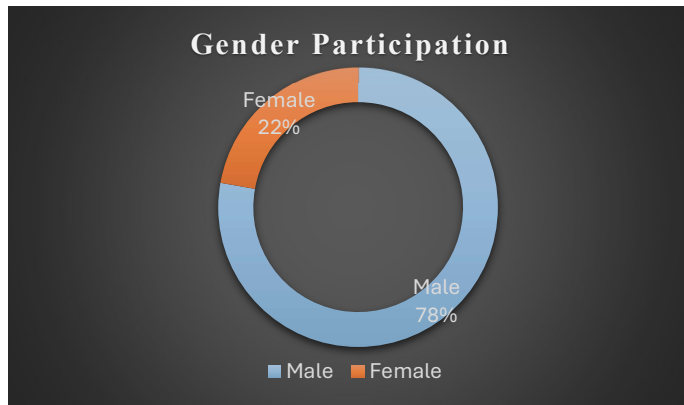
The Multi-Stakeholder Platform meeting held on May 27, 2025, at the Atebubu Amanten Municipal Assembly Hall was a success, with 54 stakeholders in attendance. To achieve this impressive turnout for the meeting, the NDF employed a multi-channel approach, sending out invitation letters via WhatsApp, making personal phone calls, and issuing daily reminders to ensure stakeholders don't miss the event. Attendees included representatives from various sectors:

- Government Agencies: Coordinating Directorate of Municipal/District Assemblies, Forest Services Division, Ghana Police Service, Ghana National Fire Service, Ghana Immigration Service, Ministry of Food and Agriculture and Wildlife Division.
- Community Leaders: Members of the Assembly, Sub Chiefs from Traditional Councils and the Fulani Herds Chief.
- Farmer Representatives: Lead farmers.
- Project implementing partners: NDF and NGPTA.

Stakeholders	Males	%	Females	%	Total
Farmers	13	54	10	46	24
Government Officials	8	89	1	11	9
Assemblymen	5	100.0	0	0.0	5
Subchiefs	6	100.0	0	0.0	6
Fulani Chief	1	100.0	0	0.0	1
Technical Assistants	3	100	0	0.0	3
Project Implementing Partners	5	83	1	17	6
Total	41	78	13	22	54

The meeting demonstrated progress in achieving a more balanced gender representation, with males accounting for 78% (42 attendees) and females comprising 22% (12 attendees). Below is a pie chart summarising the gender representation at the MSP meeting.

Attached as Annexe 1 is a copy of the scanned participant sheet.



Welcome Address

Mr Anthony Owusu, the chairman of the Multistakeholder Platform for the Atebubu-Wiase Forest Landscape Restoration Project, warmly welcomed all participants to the 14th Multistakeholder Platform (MSP) Meeting. He stressed that participants present at the meeting should pay maximum attention to the proceedings of the meeting. He asked that participants take the opportunity to ask questions about any challenges faced in the project implementation. Ending his statement, he stressed that participants present should transfer what is discussed, vital to the project implementation, to other project beneficiaries who couldn't have the opportunity to be part of the meeting. "I would like to thank you all for your participation and encourage you to work together to achieve the project's objectives", he concluded.

Setting the Context

Mr. Mustapha Seidu, Director of the Nature and Development Foundation (NDF), welcomed attendees to the 14th Multi-Stakeholder Platform (MSP) meeting. He introduced himself and facilitated the introduction of the participants, and noted the presence of new attendees. Mr Sedidu emphasised the importance of consistency in attendance to ensure knowledge transfer

and effective project implementation. Mr. Seidu explained that the MSP meets quarterly to review project progress, address challenges, and find solutions. The meeting brings together project beneficiaries and key stakeholders to facilitate open discussion and reflection on project implementation. He stated that the project is a collaborative effort between New Generation Plantation Technical Assistant (NGPTA), African Plantation for Sustainable Development (APSD), and Nature Development Foundation (NDF), funded by AstraZeneca. Its primary objectives are to improve farmers' livelihoods and mitigate climate change impacts. Continuing his statement, Mr. Seidu reviewed the monitoring results of the 2022-2023 established plots, presented earlier in February by Mr. Kofi Asante. The results showed a high number of poorly maintained farms, with 190 out of 245 plots (79%) classified as bad either because the farms were abandoned, burned, or poorly maintained. Mr. Seidu expressed disappointment, noting that farmers' lack of commitment to plot maintenance may jeopardise project funding. Ending his statement, Mr Seidu mentioned that the meeting aims to discuss the causes of these challenges and find practical solutions to ensure project success. Monitoring of 2024 established plots will be conducted and compared to the 2022-2023 results to assess progress. Mr. Seidu emphasised the importance of regular MSP meetings in addressing emerging challenges and informing project implementation decisions.

Presentation by NGPTA on Project Progress

Mr Abraham Yelley, the Project Coordinator from NGPTA, presented an update on project implementation. Mr Yelley mentioned that his presentation was to highlight project team expansion, community engagements, Project planting, Project monitoring and social survey.

Project Team Expansion

Mr. Yelley reported that the team has expanded from 4 to 12 officers. Key additions include 7 new field assistants to support plot mapping, monitoring, and seedling distribution and 1 officer for project office administration. These new recruits were selected through interviews and underwent thorough orientation to understand the project's background. This expansion aims to improve project outcomes, particularly after the poor results from the 2022-2023 agroforestry plots monitoring.

Community Engagement

The project successfully conducted a community engagement at Lemu in Kwame Danso, addressing conflicts between farmers and Fulani herdsmen. A mass meeting was held to assess the challenges to find solutions, and foster collaboration between the herdsmen and the farmers in the community. Mr. Yelley emphasised the importance of Lead farmers prompting project officers for community engagements as needed to address implementation issues, capacity building for farmers on proper farm maintenance and lead farmers to transfer knowledge shared during MSP meetings to other farmers. This engagement aims to promote peaceful coexistence and effective project implementation.

Recruitment of farmers for the new planting season

Mr. Yelley reported that manual and electronic forms have been rolled out to lead farmers to register new farmers for the planting season, as recruitment of new farmers is ongoing to expand project participation. Farmers who have requested replacements for dead trees will be supplied with seedlings in due time.

Mr. Yelley also updated on the progress made by the African Plantation for Sustainability Development (APSD). He stated that approximately 276 hectares of natural forest have been restored, and over 1 million indigenous timber tree species have been prepared and are ready for planting by APSD.

Mapping of Project Plots

Mr Yelley mentioned that plots are mapped to have data of project farms in a central base system. The project team verifies plot suitability through a site visit before mapping and including it in the project, ensuring that only suitable plots are incorporated in project implementation. Again, if the preparation of farmers is not encouraging, the project will not accept the plot to be part, hence it won't be mapped. Currently, about 326 plots have been mapped, amounting to 346 hectares for the year 2025. The mapping process is ongoing.

Project Monitoring

The project will conduct PSP (Permanent Sample Plot) monitoring on selected plots to calculate carbon sequestered. Project officers will visit these plots to count standing trees, informing project decision-making. Mr Yelley also stated that monitoring for 2024 plots has commenced, targeting all farmers who received planting materials in 2024. The project aims to achieve better results than the 2022-2023 season. This monitoring is crucial due to an upcoming audit by the CBA team, which will randomly select farmers to assess the project's overall performance.

Social Survey

Mr Yelley said that experts from KNUST will conduct interviews using the random sampling instrument to select communities in the project districts. Questionnaires will be administered to identify the challenges and successes of the project, and the experts will then hand over the results to the project for further action.

Ending his presentation, Mr Yelley mentioned that agroforestry training, radio programs on the project, the Kwame Danso MSP meeting, and the project board meeting are pending activities to be executed next. He again stressed the pending audit by the CBA team and urged all farmers to properly maintain their farms and prepare adequately for the audit.

Attached as Annexe_2 is the PowerPoint presentation by the NGPTA.

Group Discussions

As part of the MSP meeting, participants were divided into three groups for a focused breakout discussion session facilitated by Mr. Mustapha Seidu. Before the start of the group discussion, Mr. Seidu led a stakeholder engagement exercise where stakeholders articulated their interests and roles in the project. This helped clarify expectations and contributions from each stakeholder group. As already mentioned, the stakeholders who participated include farmers, government officials, assemblymen, subchiefs and fulani representative. Each group was carefully composed to ensure representation from all stakeholder categories. Mr. Seidu posed the following questions for discussion:

1. In your own opinion, why do you think the plots were abandoned, badly managed or burnt?
2. What do you suggest the project should do to prevent the bad outcome from happening again?
3. What additional responsibilities can farmers take on to ensure full commitment to the project, beyond plot preparation and maintenance?

The objective of the group work was to analyse the causes of the bad results of the 2022-2023 season plots' low performance identified during the survival monitoring exercise of 2022-2023 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.

Group I Presentation

1. In your own opinion, why do you think the plots were abandoned, badly managed and burnt?
 - Lack of understanding of the project background by project beneficiaries.
 - Beneficiaries don't know and understand the long-term benefits of the project.
 - Lack of financial support.
 - Land ownership issues.
 - Unreliable rainfall patterns.
2. What do you suggest the project should do to prevent the bad outcome from happening again?
 - Continuous education and awareness creation about the project.
 - Financial support to beneficiaries.

- Adequate capacity building for project beneficiaries on farm maintenance.
 - Genuine farmers should be targeted and recruited under the project through lead farmers in the community.
 - Limiting the land size for establishment under the project.
 - Provision of Agro-chemical inputs
 - Provision of incentives to hardworking beneficiaries.
 - Additional livelihoods like beekeeping for farmers to be established in the project farms.
3. What additional responsibilities can farmers take on to ensure full commitment to the project, beyond plot preparation and maintenance?
- Farmers should practice intercropping in the project farms
 - Creating fire belts around their farms during the dry season and keeping the farm clean from weeds.

Group II Presentation

1. In your own opinion, why do you think the plots were abandoned, badly managed and burnt?
- Land availability issues.
 - Lack of intercropping technique in project farms.
 - Lack of committed farmers recruited.
 - Lack of limiting farm size for establishment.
 - Unreliable rainfall pattern.
 - Late supply of seedlings to project beneficiaries.
 - Lack of a ready market for cash crops in the landscape.
2. What do you suggest the project should do to prevent the bad outcome from happening again?
- Intercropping food crops like beans and groundnuts in project farms.
 - Committed farmers should be recruited to be part of the project.
 - Farm maintenance support should be provided to farmers who are part of the project.
 - Seedlings should be distributed to farmers who have prepared the land for planting.
 - The relationship between lead farmers and farmers of the project should be cordial.
 - Provision of incentives to hardworking farmers.
3. What additional responsibilities can farmers take on to ensure full commitment to the project, beyond plot preparation and maintenance?

- Farmers should motivate themselves to realise that the project is for own benefit.
- Farmers should report any destruction caused by fire or herdsmen for the appropriate action to be taken by duty bearers.
- There should be regular visits to the farms with lead farmers to help find immediate solutions to problems identified in the project farms.
- Farmers should devise a different strategy for irrigation for the project farms.
- Farmers should always find a way to attend any good agronomic practices training to enhance their knowledge of farm management.

Group III Presentation

1. In your own opinion, what do you think could be the cause of the plots being abandoned, badly managed or burnt?
 - Lack of commitment by project beneficiaries.
 - Lack of financial support to establish the plot.
 - Unreliable rainfall pattern.
 - Lack of proper maintenance of the established farm.
 - Inadequate education and capacity building of the project concept.
 - Inadequate fire prevention and management techniques.
2. What do you suggest the project should do to prevent the bad outcome from happening again?
 - Patrol and monitoring of project farms during the dry season to help reduce fire outbreaks.
 - Adequate training on fire management and prevention for the project beneficiaries.
 - Creation of a fire task force in the project communities to fight fire.
3. What additional responsibilities can farmers take on to ensure full commitment to the project, beyond plot preparation and maintenance?
 - Self-motivation by project beneficiaries.
 - Intercropping project farms with food crops like pepper and groundnuts.
 - Devising a new strategy to irrigate project farms.
 - Rewarding hardworking farmers.

Mr. Seidu concluded the discussion by noting key points from the group responses for consideration at the advisory board meeting. He urged participants to fully commit to the project for its success.

Conclusion

The 14th Multi-Stakeholder Platform (MSP) meeting for the Atebubu-Wiase Forest Landscape Restoration Project was successfully convened on May 27, 2025. The meeting brought together 54 stakeholders from diverse backgrounds to review project progress, discuss challenges, and propose solutions. Key discussions centred around the poor performance of 2022-2023 agroforestry plots, project implementation updates, and strategies for improvement. As the project moves forward, stakeholders must continue to work together to address challenges, share knowledge and expertise, and ensure that the project achieves its objectives and benefits the communities involved.

Issues Log and Action Points

Issue	Status	Actions until the next MSP meeting
Communication	Done	How can members help communicate better on project objectives? The project resolved to use Community Information Centres to educate and spread information about the project.
Better gender representation	Done	Women empowerment plan Bring in more female speakers to address their issues
Farmer representatives	Done	NGPTA field staff to help farmers select their representatives for the MSP

Land Tenure	In progress	NDF, Assembly members, and the 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	Same as above

Annexes

Annexe_1



14TH MSP
PARTICIPANT SHEET.

14th MSP Participants Sheet

Annexe_2

PowerPoint Presentation by NGPTA

