

NEWSLETTER

Friday 9th May, 2025



LEARNING LESSONS FROM THE YOUTH ECONOMIC INCLUSION PROGRAMME AND THE WAY FORWARD

The Institute of Local Government Studies (ILGS), with the support of the Knowledge Platform on Inclusive Development Policies (INCLUDE), organised a second workshop on the Next Generation Local Economic Development (NGLED) Project on Friday, 9th May 2025, at the Institute's campus at Ogbojo in Accra.

By way of exchanging ideas with the various stakeholders involved in the project, especially the youth business groups, this second workshop was organised to reflect on the achievements of the business groups, their challenges, lessons learned and the way forward. In all, 27 people attended the programme.



*Prof. Nicholas Awortwi
welcoming the
participants*



*Mr. David Osei-Wusu
making inputs into
the discussions*

The focus of the workshop was based on the activities that had been undertaken since the inception of the project, namely the

- ➡ Formation of the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) to engage the process
- ➡ Signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Youth Groups and their respective District Assemblies
- ➡ Formalisation of the youth businesses (development of partnership agreement and registration of the businesses at the Registrar General's Department)
- ➡ Training of youth in aquaculture by R & B farms
- ➡ Opening of bank accounts and transfer of funds into the accounts
- ➡ Construction of structures (ponds, coop and pen) and purchase of tarpaulin ponds
- ➡ Stocking of the structures with juveniles, birds and goats (depending on the product of the youth groups) and supply of feed
- ➡ Management of the businesses by the youth groups and the MMDAs; and the
- ➡ Mentoring of the youth groups



Status of the Enterprises

- ▶ Three youth business groups, Atiwa Youth Poultry, Big Mind Catfish Farm and Ecohoof Ranch, were in full operation. The rest were yet to complete their structures.
- ▶ Atiwa Youth Poultry changed their initial plan from rearing layers to rearing day-old chicken from four to five weeks.



- ▶ Four of the youth enterprises were given plots of land by their Assemblies but only three enterprises had permanent lands: Atiwa Youth Poultry, Aquayouth Harvesters and Fishhaven Farm. Big Mind Catfish Farm was operating from home.
- ▶ Some Assemblies were also supportive financially.
- ▶ Maximum support was given by some Focal persons and Coordinating Directors, especially those from the Awutu Senya East Municipal Assembly and Atiwa East District Assembly.

Lessons Learnt

- (i) The youth learnt about decision making and problem solving; the importance of feed quality; importance of creating a good working relationship with stakeholders, especially the Assembly; the need to be guided before venturing into any business; and the importance of effective leadership in promoting business success;
- (ii) The need to consider the ease of mobility / commuting of the young entrepreneurs in determining the business location; and one's interest in a business as a major determinant of the person's commitment to the business

- (iii) Revelation that tertiary graduates' commitment appears to be limited, for they have one foot in the business and another foot out.

Challenges

- ◆ Apart from Ecohoof Ranch, the rest had at least one person who had resigned, and they were all tertiary graduates. Atiwa Youth Poultry and Aquayouth Harvesters lost three members each.
- ◆ Security was of great concern especially for Ecohoof Ranch which suffered theft of their construction materials
- ◆ The depreciation of the cedi and inflation resulted in high prices of goods and services which affected the budget for the groups.
- ◆ Delay in construction work of Atiwa Youth Poultry was ascribed to the fact that most of the artisans in the Community were into galamsey business.
- ◆ Problem of information asymmetry where focal persons felt they were not privy to some information
- ◆ Fishhaven Farm and Aquayouth Poultry suffered from pond leakages immediately after their construction



- ◆ Dealing with the Assemblies involves some bureaucracy.



Way Forward

- (i) Ecohoof Ranch to Improve the structure e.g. partition the pen and concrete the floor, create storage place for the feed. They are to cultivate vegetables to support the feed.



- (ii) Big Mind Catfish Farm to hold meetings to address past failures, develop sustainable plans, investigate and address project challenges and call on their Assembly to provide them with land for their operations.



- (iii) Readiness of R & B Farms to conduct training for youth in aquaculture, monitor and inspect structures before they are stocked.



- (iv) LG Officials to increase the number of young business partners, specifically for the enterprises whose members resigned. They should select serious and committed graduates as well.

- (v) Consider insuring the business to mitigate risk and ensure sustainability.
- (vi) Enhance mentoring to ensure business knowledge.
- (vii) ILGS to increase the funding and make provision for contingencies in the budget; provide adequate entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial capacities for the youth groups and their LG officials respectively; and extend the period for setting up new groups.
- (ix) Business groups should strengthen team bonding and encourage regular team meetings.
- (x) Need for clarity on the partnership agreement, especially individual roles and profit / loss sharing ratios.
- (xi) Establish problem-solving and communication procedures with service providers e.g. veterinary services.
- (xii) Business groups to develop standards and maintain them; plan their daily activities; assign responsibility and accountability; monitor activities daily; hold daily/weekly meetings to reflect and strategize; and keep records of events. In a nutshell, the youth are to effectively manage themselves.

- (xiii) The young entrepreneurs need to have quality in mind; the quality of what and how to deliver. This will bring them loyal customers.