



Youth Economic Inclusion through Next Generation Local Economic Development

Report on Workshop on Learning Lessons and the Way Forward

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Acronyms

DA	District Assembly
DPAT	District Performance Assessment Tool
DRIP	District Road Improvement Programme
ILGS	Institute of Local Government Studies
INCLUDE	Inclusive Development Policies
LED	Local Economic Development
LG	Local Government
MA	Municipal Assembly
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MMDAs	Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies
NGLED	Next Generation Local Economic Development
SHS	Senior High School
SPV	Special Purpose Vehicle
YEIP	Youth Economic Inclusion Programme

Executive Summary

The Institute of Local Government Studies (ILGS) with the support of the Knowledge Platform on Inclusive Development Policies (INCLUDE) is implementing a three-year project (2024-2026): “Youth Economic Inclusion through Next Generation Local Economic Development (NGLED)”. This is an action research project being implemented in five (5) local government (LG) jurisdictions in Ghana (namely, Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolitan Assembly (STMA), Komenda Edina Eguafo Abrem Municipal Assembly (KEEA), Awutu Senya East Municipal Assembly, Nsawam Adoagyiri Municipal Assembly, and Atiwa East District Assembly) to: (1) provide evidence towards developing a national programme on NGLED to create sustainable decent jobs and income growth for unemployed graduate youth, and (2) analyse the entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial behaviours among young people and LG officials respectively when trained and facilitated to pursue productive economic activities.

The project has so far facilitated the setting-up of five (5) youth business groups of four (4) persons each. The business groups are the Ecohoof Ranch, Fishhaven Farm, Aquayouth Harvesters, Big Mind Catfish Farm, and the Atiwa Youth Poultry from the above-mentioned LG jurisdictions respectively.

In 2024, the ILGS organized a two-day training workshop on entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial skills development for members of the youth groups and the LG officers respectively to equip them with the requisite competencies to enable them commence and operate the project effectively without much hurdle. Since then, the various youth business groups had undertaken several activities, ranging from construction of business structures to stocking them with their products. A few had started selling their products

By way of exchanging ideas with the various stakeholders, especially from the business groups, this second workshop had been 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 which took place on May 9th, 2025 at the ILGS Conference Centre.

From the presentations and the discussions that ensued, the workshop had been able to establish the status of the enterprises, their challenges, new lessons learnt and the way forward, which would serve as important input into the official launch of the project which was slated for June 23, 2025. These include the following.

- Three of the businesses (Atiwa Youth Poultry, Big Mind Catfish Farm and Ecohoof Ranch) had completed their structure and were in full operation.
- Four of the youth enterprises were given plots of land by their Assemblies but only three enterprises had permanent land.
- Awutu Senya East Municipal Assembly and Atiwa East District Assembly were very supportive of their youth enterprises.

- The enterprises claimed that they had 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 guide the youth before venturing into any business; and the importance of effective leadership in promoting the business.
- Tertiary graduates' commitment appears to be limited, for he has one leg in the business and another leg out.
- 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.
- There was a complaint by the Big Mind Catfish Farm about the high mortality rate that they encountered, which was attributed to the fish and the feed supplied.
- The depreciation of the cedi and inflation resulted in high prices of goods and services which affected the budget for the groups.

Under the way forward were, the following ensued:

- R & B Farm would conduct training for the youth business that were in aquaculture, monitor and inspect their structures before they are stocked
- LG Officials to increase the number of young business partners, specifically for the enterprises whose members resigned. In selecting the graduates, care should be taken to pick the serious and committed ones
- ILGS to increase the funding and make provisions 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.
- Regarding the apprenticeship system, the agreement was that another platform had to be created for an indepth analysis. This was after a lengthy discussion on the topic which touched on various scenarios: that would-be group should have the patience to go through the apprenticeship training; that, there would be the need to assess the MMDAs' capability to implement the apprenticeship system; that, there might be the possibility of the apprentices rising up to demand their share of profit; that, the apprentice's interest might be in a project or product other than one being offered by the existing group; that, there might be the need to select youth from nearby communities to make commuting easier and economical.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

The Institute of Local Government Studies (ILGS) with the support of the Knowledge Platform on Inclusive Development Policies (INCLUDE) is implementing a three-year project, the “Youth Economic Inclusion through Next Generation Local Economic Development (NGLED)” which is an action research being carried out in five (5) local government (LG) jurisdictions (districts) in Ghana. This action research project seeks to achieve the following:

1. Provide evidence towards policy formulation and adoption of a national programme on NGLED to create sustainable decent jobs and income growth for unemployed graduate youth; and
2. Analyse the entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial behaviours among young people and LG officials respectively when trained and facilitated to pursue productive economic activities.

The project has so far facilitated the setting-up of five (5) youth business groups of four (4) persons each (see Table 1 below). By the end of the first year, the 5 start-up youth groups are expected to develop economic products for the market and replicate themselves by creating five additional groups of four persons each with the same support (as provided by the project), thereby making the working seed capital operate as a revolving fund. In addition to the creation of sustainable decent jobs, the project is expected to result in changes in the way LGs conceptualise and implement LED.

Table 1: Business Groups and Respective Districts

No	Business Groups	District Assembly
1	Atiwa Youth Poultry	Atiwa East District Assembly
2	Aquayouth Harvesters	Awutu Senya East Municipal Assembly
3	Fishhaven Farms	Komenda Edina Eguafo Abrem Municipal Assembly
4	Big Mind Catfish Farm	Nsawam-Adoagyiri Municipal Assembly
5	Ecohoof Ranch	Sekondi Takoradi Metropolitan Assembly

In 2024, the ILGS organized a two-day training workshop on entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial skills development for members of the youth groups and the LG officers respectively, to enable them have a full grasp of the NGLED programme and prepare their minds for the commencement and full implementation of the project. Subsequently, a number of activities have been carried out as follows:

- Formation of a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) to manage the process
- Signing of MOU between the Youth Groups and their respective District Assemblies
- Formalization 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 to date
- On-going mentorship of youth groups

In carrying out the above-mentioned activities, many issues have emerged which previously were not overt. These include the waning interest, resignation and lack of commitment of some members of the groups, inadequate transparency as well as challenges that some Assemblies have been encountering. Among the groups, it was only the Big Mind Catfish Farm that could start business operation in 2024 (October 2024). The Ecohoof Ranch started stocking their pen in March 2025; the Atiwa Youth Poultry did their stocking in April 2025; and the remaining two groups (which are in aquaculture) are yet to stock their ponds. It is expected that by the end of year one (1), each youth group would have supported the development of a new group with the same seed capital that they received from the project. However, this has not happened.

Each of the youth groups and LG Officials have their own experiences to share and lessons to learn. It is in this vein that the ILGS is organizing the one-day workshop

1.2 Workshop Objectives

The workshop sought to:

1. Bring the youth groups and their LG Officials together to reflect on the present happenings and exchange ideas regarding the way forward.

2. Discuss the proposal to prepare new groups through the apprenticeship system.
3. Discuss the official launch of the programme

2.0 Workshop Activities

The workshop was held on Friday, 9th May 2025, at the Institute of Local Government Studies (ILGS) Conference Centre. In all, 27 people participated in the programme and were made up of 11 young entrepreneurs, seven (7) LG officials and seven (7) ILGS staff. The attendance lists and the workshop programme are shown at Appendices 3.1 and 3.2 respectively.

2.1 Startup Activities

The programme started with an opening prayer by Mr. Alhaji Mahama Abu, after which the Prof Nicholas Awortwi, the Director of ILGS, conducted a quick roll call as a way of introducing the participants. He then presented an overview of the project.

2.2 Overview of the Project & Emerging Issues



Figure 1: Work progress of Atiwa Youth Poultry

Professor Nicholas Awortwi, the Director of ILGS, began his presentation by giving the background of the project and the issues that had prompted the action research. He pointed out his expectations from each of the groups. That is to reflect on their experience during the year; provide information on the progress that they had made so far; and the challenges that they had encountered or could foresee; the way forward; emerging issues and how to approach the enrolment of the next batch of youth.

According to Prof. Awortwi, though the project is being implemented by the Dutch in eight (8) African countries, the donors chose Ghana as the country to be visited and to enable Ghana group to formally launch its project. He explained that the Ghana project chose to focus on Youth Economic Inclusion because access to capital and entrepreneurship is normally skewed against young people in Ghana. Besides, there is a high tendency for employers to employ individuals with experience, a condition which most young graduates may lack. He further explained that the 3-year project was setup to conduct action research to understand how young people work with local government authorities and

with each other to pursue economic activities to help inform government policies on youth entrepreneurship. Thus, the project aims to promote the adoption of a national programme on NGLED that will create sustainable decent jobs and income growth for the youth in LG jurisdictions. He explained that NGLED hinges on the idea that job creation must be nurtured by an intrapreneurial LG and does not simply take place because the LG provides an 'enabling environment'. He was of the view that, the existence of numerous public sector youth entrepreneurship programs calls for a strategy where Local Government could support youth economic activities without leading the process. This informed the approach to support youth groups in the five (5) MMDAs.

He then outlined the research questions guiding the action research, the workshop objectives and the activities that had been undertaken over the past one-year. He admitted that there had been delays in starting business. For example, the Big Mind Catfish Farm was the first to do its stocking and that was in October 2024, followed by Ecohoof Ranch in March 2025 and the Atiwa Youth Poultry in April 2025. The two other youth groups, Fishhaven Farms and Aquayouth Harvesters were yet to stock their ponds.

2.3 Presentation by the Youth Groups

This section is about the presentations made by the various youth business groups on the progress they had made, their challenges, lessons learnt and the way forward. Below are the presentation of each youth group.

2.3.1 Atiwa Youth Poultry



Picture 1: Members of Atiwa Youth Poultry presenting the status of their project

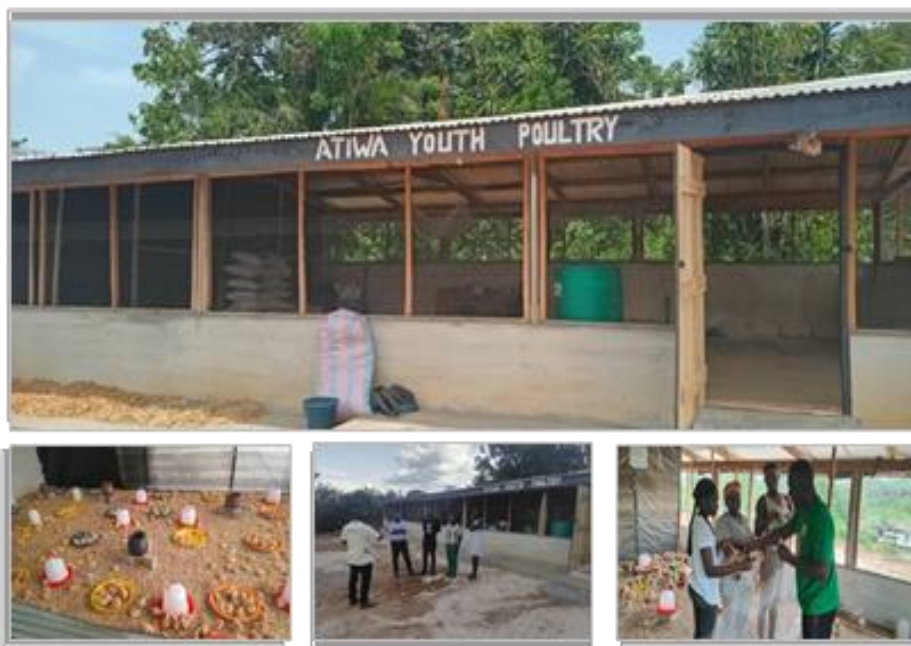
The Atiwa Youth Poultry is at the Atiwa East District. The group reported that, the construction work started on 12th October 2024 and was completed by the 15th March 2025. According to them, they had to revise the original plan of rearing layers by going in for day-old chicken. This was because of the high cost of feeding the layers. However, they had not given up on the rearing of layers but would revisit it when they accumulate enough funds in future. At the time of their presentation, they had stocked their coop with 500-day-old chicken which they received on 11th April 2025, and had their first vaccination on 25th April 2025. They intended increasing the

quantity from 500 to over 1000-day-old chicken because the coop is spacious enough to take more birds. He hinted that, the chicken could be sold when they are four to six weeks old and were expecting their first tranche of birds to be ready for sale from 12th of May 2025.

The group enumerated the following challenges that they had encountered:

- Resignation of two of the business partners. One person too hardly showed up (in consultation with the Assembly Officials, two new people had been added to the business;
- Mortality of 10 of the birds due to stampede during rainfall.
- No contingency fund in the budget to take care of unforeseen expenses;
- Inflation that caused variation in the prices
- Difficulty in extending electricity to the farmhouse and the need to rely on rechargeable bulbs provided by the District Assembly as an interim measure.
- Difficulty in getting artisans to do the construction work (because of interest of the youth in galamsey business) and therefor had to transport artisans from Koforidua; a situation that affected the project completion timelines.

The group applauded the officials of the Atiwa East District Assembly for their unwavering support, which included offering of free land for the project,, clearing the project site for the construction (with their DRIP machines); extending pipe-borne water to the project site, and last but not the least, providing funds to enable the coop size to be increased.



They also expressed their gratitude to the ILGS, and the donors for their support and encouragement. They affirmed their readiness to ensure the successful implementation of the project and adhered to all standards and advice from key stakeholders.

Emerging Issues



Picture 2: Mr Antwi Asking a question

Table 2: Emerging Issues from Atiwa Youth Poultry

Questions	Responses
Have there been a targeted market identified for the sale of the chicken by the 12 th of May 2025?	Yes. With the help of the Assembly, some market women, individuals, and the poultry farmers association in Atiwa have been notified and are ready to buy from us.
Do the team members stay close to the poultry house or far from it?	The residents of team members are quite far from the poultry house, but the Assembly has provided a temporary accommodation for us, which is closer.
How is the poultry house frequently visited for monitoring?	Team members run a 24hr shift
Did you do any calculations to determine whether selling 6-week-old chicks will generate more revenue than using the available budget to go in for the layers?	Yes. The Assembly made a comparative analysis
Is the original number of group members who started the project still intact?	No. Two people had left.
What role did the Assembly play in the motivating the team members?	The Assembly helped with the daily welfare i.e. feeding of the members

Questions	Responses
What were the processes for adding the other two new members to replace the ones that had left?	The Assembly helped us get two new people with agriculture background.

2.3.2 Ecohoof Ranch



Picture 3: Members of Ecohoof Rank presenting the status of their project

The Ecohoof Ranch is into goat rearing, and is temporarily located at the Sekondi Takoradi Metropolitan Assembly.

So far the group had been able to accomplish the following: finished constructing the pen for the goats; stocked the pen with 35 goats (33 females and 2 males) which were 6 to 8 months old; engaged the services of a veterinarian to deworm the goats as a preventive measure; erected a security post, and hired a security man; and provided lighting in the area.

They enumerated their challenges as: stealing of construction materials (wood used for the construction of the pen at the early stage of the construction and a bundle of mesh); a still birth experienced by their first goat to give birth; inflation that affected the cost of materials; termites that destroyed some of the wood, and snakes in the area because of the bushy surroundings.

Some of the lessons that they had learnt were that security at the project site is paramount, and that engaging the community would help increase their awareness about the existence of the project. That would help them keep an eye on the project.



Figure 2: Status of work by Ecohoof Ranch

Moving forward, they promised to see to the partitioning of the pen; concreting the floor; creating additional space for an office unit and storage space for the feed. In addition, they would cultivate vegetables to

provide feed for the livestock and engage the services of a full-time caretaker to take care of the livestock. Finally, they talked about improving the access route to the pen..



Picture 4: Mr Osei-Wusu, Registrar of ILGS asking a Question

Emerging Issues

Table 3 presents the emerging issues that were discussed.

Table 3: Emerging Issues at Ecohoof Ranch

Questions	Responses
Are the livestock being fed at night?	Yes. But not too late in the night. By 6 pm, they are done with feeding for the day.
Did both the baby goat and the mother die?	No. it was only the baby goat that died
Why is there a need for a caretaker when the team consists of 4 able-business people?	The caretaker is for the long-term of the business because creating other branches of the business would require having a substitute.
A participant suggested that saw dust should be used on the pen's floor instead of casting concrete	



Picture 5: Members of Big Mind Catfish Farm

2.3.3 Big Mind Catfish Farm

Big Mind Catfish Farm is in the Nsawam Adoagyiri Municipality. The group has been operating the business in the house of one of the partners because, the man who agreed to give them his abandoned coop for the project changed his stand at the last hour. The Assembly too was on the lookout for a permanent site for them.

The group talked about the challenges they had been encountering, namely: the initial stocking which was made on the 10th of October 2024 consisted 90% of fingerlings instead of juveniles throughout, per the agreement. In addition, the feed was heavily infested with insects and so they had to rely on the 2 mm feed for the whole period. The feed was also the sinking type instead of the floating ones and that hindered their growth and contributed to poor health of the fingerlings because they could not eat well.

According to the group, most of their challenges had to do with the vendor, R&B Farm, because of their failure to stick to the plans and agreements. The vendor often cited logistical issues as its challenge and also attempted to shift blame instead of taking actions to rectify errors.

The group also faced high mortality, in that they lost 1917 of the 2000 of their first stock. According to them, best practices dictate that, the fish had to be starved for 24 hours after they had been transported to the pond. However, R&B Farms failed to disclose that they had already starved the fingerlings prior to transporting them which led to over starvation. Despite the challenges, the Big Mind Catfish Farm received a second batch of 1200 fishes on March 12, 2025 in lieu of what they lost. Besides, the R & B Farms made an arrangement for Raanan Feed to supply them 10 bags of Raanan feed.

The group also felt that, even though the idea of ILGS entering a deal with a vendor on their behalf was commendable, there was not enough room for them to manage the fund themselves, thus leading to relying on income from their supplementary jobs to run the business.

These challenges notwithstanding, they claimed to have learnt to take decision, solve problems and appreciate the importance of feed quality to the success of the project.

On the way forward, they affirmed their dedication the business. They promised to take a number of actions such as convening a high-level meeting between all parties to address past failures; developing a sustainable plan; implementing and adhering to a clear timetable for the consistent supply of feed to ensure optimal growth; establishing a formal process for prompt reporting, investigating and addressing project challenges; acknowledging team efforts as well as seeking urgent disbursement of funds from ILGS and Nsawam Adoagyiri Municipal Assembly. Table 4 summarises the emerging issues discussed.



Figure 3: Images presented by Big Mind Catfish

Emerging Issues

Table 4: Emerging Issues at Big Mind Catfish Farms

Questions	Responses
There was a banter during a virtual meeting between the supplier, ILGS and the Youth Group with regards to specifications, delivery, certification and usage where no one took responsibility for correcting the issues. Is that still the case or it has been resolved?	There was a decision that R&B Farms was to supply 1200 juveniles to replace what was lost and they did so in March 2025. We also received 10 bags of Raanan feeds. However, there is concern over continuous supply of the feed
According to experts, there are some guidelines that need to be adhered to when transporting and stocking fingerlings. Were these guidelines	Big Mind Catfish Farm was informed that they were going to receive the fishes at 6 am. However, the fishes arrived at Nsawam at 11am close to 12 pm. A report was submitted to ILGS for a follow up.

Questions	Responses
adhered to, in the case where the fishes died the day after transporting them?	
Big Mind Catfish Farm claimed that they had to wait for some time for the feed. So, how did they feed the fish during the waiting period?	The new fishes that were stocked in March 2025 are being fed with the 10 Raanan bags and the previously stocked fishes are still surviving on the 2mm instead of 6 mm feed
Does Big Mind Catfish Farm keep records of feeding the fish?	Yes, Big Mind Catfish keeps daily records of everything on the farm.
After the mortality and restocking of the 1200 juveniles, how many of the old and new fishes are in the ponds now?	For the old stock, 87 are remaining out of the 2000 stock and 800 are remaining out of 1200 freshly stocked. The mortality was due to explosion of dynamite which induces acidic rains.
What are the timelines in terms of relocation of the ponds to your permanent site?	It will be confirmed from the Coordinating Director on Monday. The MCD has instructed the physical planning officer to allocate land for Big Mind Catfish Farm.
How does Big Mind Catfish Farm handle disease or infections?	Concerning disease and infections, the first treatment was the administration of multi amino M and antibiotics which are all in powder form that can easily mix in water. This treatment is supposed to be performed weekly especially when the water is changed. This should be repeated till all fishes are of even colour. For the organic treatment, some plants such as bitter leave and pawpaw can be used to cure ulcers and others.
Does Big Mind Catfish have a quarantine tank?	Yes, Big Mind Catfish Farm has 2 tarpaulins and 2 quarantine tanks.
What was done at the initial stage when it was realized that R&B Farms was going to delay in bringing the juveniles?	It is a standard practice for fishes not to be fed within 24 hours after the arrival. However, R & B Farms starved the fish before transporting them which led to accidental over starvation by Big Mind Catfish Farm.
How do you determine the feed quality especially between the Raanan and the 2mm feeds?	Good quality feed is supposed to stay afloat and not to sink so the fish can come to feed at the surface and go down to rest. To reduce cost of water, use floating feeds and always check for insect infestation before taking the feed to the field.
From the picture, which of the feed is of good quality?	For the good quality, the composition stays solid throughout the whole feeding process while the poor-quality looks powdery, bleached, and weevils can be seen around it.
Are there experts that advise Big Mind Catfish Farm on the project and what kind of arrangement do they have with the expert and the Assembly?	Bernard of Big Mind Catfish Farm has been in the aquaculture business for 3 years now and has worked collaboratively with other Aquaculture such as Mr. Frederick who is the head of Aquaculture at Ashaiman and a veterinary service from Koforidua who are consulted for fish inspection and others.

Questions	Responses
Are there any supply agreement with the supplier of the feeds so that the supplier can be dropped if he does not adhere to the timelines?	The Agreement is between ILGS and R & B Farm
What caused the fourth person to desert the group?	The fourth person lost interest after the mortality were becoming very drastic
With the experience of Big Mind Catfish Farm, it can be anticipated that the group should be able to detect and reject sub-standard feed delivered by R&B Farms and report to ILGS. So why did ILGS not get that from the group?	On arrival, the group made notes on the infested feed to the driver and called the representative of R&B Farm, Mr. Turkson, on the day of arrival who indicated that weevils are other source of protein. My personal feed was given to fishes for a week while we were contemplating on the use of the infested feed.
Some fishes feed faster than others, so they become bigger and then later feed on the smaller ones. So are the fishes separated for the others to survive?	The fishes were unable to feed on the feed because the feed was not fitting in their mouth and was also dissolving faster. And this was also caused by improper sorting of fishes by the vendor

Other Emerging Issues

- The focal person from Nsawam Adoagyiri Municipal Assembly claimed that all the fish would have died if not because of the expertise of the partners of the Big Mind Catfish Farm.
- The Assembly should have a permanent site for the tank.
- A partner from the Aquayouth Harvesters reported that the fish quality from R&B Farms are generally poor. He explained that, in a similar project that was implemented by the previous government, 56 out of the 66 beneficiaries lost all their fishes that were supplied by R & B Farm. He personally was left with on only 77 of his fishes. Besides, the quantity of fish supplied was less than the agreed quantity. For example, he was supplied 700 fingerlings instead of 1070. A representative of the Nsawam Adoagyiri Municipal Assembly confirmed the assertion with his personal experience, that he and his MCD lost all the fishes that were supplied by R&B Farms.
- R & B Farm's responses are very disheartening; you hardly get feedback from them;
- To prevent such challenges, R&B Farms has decided to conduct training for the other groups for 5 days. They would also monitor and inspect the ponds etc of the other aquaculture groups before stocking the ponds.

2.3.4 Aquayouth Harvesters



Picture 6: Sole Member of AquaYouth Harvesters

The Aquayouth Harvesters is a youth business group in the Awutu Senya East Municipality. The group reported that, they received an initial disbursement of GHC10,800 from the Institute of Local Government Studies to commence the construction work on 13th December 2024. They also received the second tranche of GHC7,400 which was used to purchase poly tank for water storage.

The group recounted the immense support that they had received from the Awutu Senya East Municipal Assembly e.g. two plots of land for the project which were cleared with

the District Road Improvement Programme (DRIP) machines as well as cash of GHC 40,730, part of which they used to construct a shed for the pond. During each phase of the construction, the Assembly deployed engineers to supervise the activities. According to them, the Focal Person, Madam Olivia Nyarko (Head of Budgeting) and the Coordinating Director were very instrumental in the progress made.

Their main challenge was that the group was left with only one person. The Assembly stepped in as usual to add one more person just before the workshop. The group also found it challenging in dealing with the Assembly on financial issues. *"You could visit the Assembly early in the morning only to be told around 3 pm that the MFO could not make it to the office."* This challenge also presented the opportunity to understand the importance of creating a good working relationship with the Focal Person. Inadequate funding from the ILGS also posed a challenge.

On the way forward, they appealed to the Institute of Local Government Studies to increase the funding for the project. They also proposed for the number of their partners to be increased. Table 5 presents the emerging issues that were discussed



Figure 4: Progress of Work of Aquayouth Harvesters

Emerging Issues

Table 5: Emerging Issues relating to Aquayouth Harvesters

Questions	Responses
Majority of the youth groups disclosed that, money was given to them for their project. Why is it that the Nsawam Adoagyiri group, Big Mind Catfish Farm, did not receive any funds?	The Nsawam Adoagyiri group opted for tarpaulin pond. So, their money was paid to R&B Farm to everything to them – tarpaulin pond, fish and feed.
Is the amount for the construction made up of ILGS's GHC 18,200 and that of the Assembly's GHC 58,930?	The ILGS disbursed 18,200 and the Assembly contributed GHC 40,730, making a total of GHC 58,930. The Assembly's contribution is besides the land they provided. They also intend fencing the project and providing electricity. city.

2.3.5 Fishhaven Farms



Pictures 7: Presentation by Fishhaven Farms

Fishhaven Farms is situated in Egyeikrom, a community in the Komenda Edina Eguafo Abrem Municipal Assembly (KEEA). The vision of the youth group is to be the leading catfish company, producing healthy catfish, using eco-friendly and hygienic practices.

The group received their first and second tranches of funds on 4th October 2024 and January 2025 respectively. With those moneys, they constructed the concrete fishpond by 29th November 2024, built and sprayed the metal cover to be mounted on the pond for protection against birds, fixed a faulty submersible pump and all the plumbing works. They later received GHC 4,000 from the Assembly to repair the cracks on the pond.

The following were their challenges:

- There were leakages on the newly-constructed pond which were fixed from 4th – 10th May 2025.
- Some members of the group assumed the program was from the government, a mentality which contributed to poor work ethics.
- A change in initial proposed project budget
- Inaccurate estimations from local artisans and
- Bureaucracy in the channel of communication with Assembly Officials which led to delays in the implementation.

According to them, these challenges taught them the need to select dedicated people young people.

On the way forward, they suggested the following:

- Consider making provision for contingency during budgeting
- Hire professional artisans
- Look forward to treating their pond between the 10th and 17th May, 2025 and stock the pond with the juveniles
- Liaise with ILGS to replace the members who resigned from the group.

Emerging Issues

Table 6 outlines the emerging issues discussed during this session.

Table 6: Emerging Issues relating to Fishhaven Farms

Questions	Responses
Do you think the pond covering is of good quality?	The pond covering was a protection against theft and not to provide shade for the fishes.
What is the status of the shade for the pond?	There is currently no shade. The budget allocated to the group makes it difficult to construct a shade despite the support from the Assembly
Are the ponds partitioned?	Yes, the pond is partitioned into two although the initial plan was to partition it into four. This is due to lack of funds
How much has the group spent so far?	The group has received GHC21,290 from ILGS, and GHC4,000 from the Assembly. Reports on the expenses are yet to be prepared.
Is the pond worth the amount of money spent?	The pond is worth the amount of money compared to that of the Aquayouth Harvesters.
Has the pond been treated?	The initial pond was treated but the rectification of the leakage was completed on the 8 th May, 2025 (that was yesterday). It is containing moist and therefore cannot be treated now.
During the visit by ILGS' team, it was noticed that the pond had cracked from all angles, what prevented the group from filling the pond with water to prevent the cracks?	The first tranche received was solely for the construction of the pond and there was no component for repairing the pump. Prior to the completion, the group informed Mr Larnyoh that their funds were almost depleted, and he outlined the procedure for applying for the second tranche. However, the funds were not received on time. ¹
Is there water in the rectified pond?	The pump issue has been solved but there is no water in the tank because the repair was completed yesterday (8 th May 2025)

¹Professor Nicholas clarified that, ILGS sent all the funds for the construction of the pond. The Institute again sent funds to repair the pump even though the Assembly should have been responsible for fixing the pump.

Questions	Responses
Were the cracks due to the sand that was used?	During the inspection by the second mason and the engineer, it was identified that, the sand that was used and failure to fill the pond with water caused the cracks.



Figure 5: Status of Fishhaven Farms' Project

2.4 MMDAs perspectives on doing business with Youth Groups

The five beneficiary MMDAs presented their experiences, challenges the lessons learnt and the way forward.

Their respective presentations are as follows:



Picture 8: Presentation by Mr Boateng

2.4.1 Atiwa District Assembly

Mr. James Obeng Boateng, the focal person of the Atiwa Youth Poultry presented on behalf of the Atiwa East District Assembly. He talked about the progress made and mentioned that the Assembly had supported the group with some amenities to enable them complete the project successfully. This included:

- Providing land and clearing the site,

- Extending water and electricity to the site and procuring rechargeable bulbs to be used in the interim while waiting for the farmhouse to be connected to the national grid.
- Installing streetlights to provide visibility at night
- Releasing technical staff to guide the team in the implementation of the

The Assembly noted a few lessons that they learnt from the project:

- Constant monitoring and advice will awaken the commitment of the youth groups.
- Guidance to the group before venturing into any business is critical to ensure sustainability.

The challenge reported by the Assembly was how to get a conducive place for the business partners to reside. The Assembly had gotten a temporary place to accommodate one of the group members, but the others commute had to commute to and from work because of their proximity to the project site.

Going forward, the District Assembly will continue to monitor the group's activities to ensure the project's sustainability.

2.4.2 Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolitan Assembly



Picture 9: Presentation by Mr Mahama

Alhaji Mahama Abu presented the Assembly's experience in dealing with the youth group. He started by acknowledging the importance of the YEI-NGLED project to the Assembly because the intervention was aligned to their Local Economic Development Plan. He explained the project had helped operationalise their LED plans.

Mr Mahama went on to present the progress that they had made so far. He indicated that the initial land that was agreed on for the project would have caused mobility issues for the youth because a lot of work had to be done to make it ready and that would have taken a lot of time. Subsequently, a piece of land by the side of the Assembly was made available to the youth.

He also talked about the interventions that the new mayor had planned to put in place to ensure the project's success. That is the project would be replicated in each electoral area, and a strategy would be introduced for the livestock to be bought from the groups. Mr Mahama commended the team members for their zeal and commitment.

2.4.3 Nsawam Adoagyiri Municipal Assembly



Picture 10: Presentation by Mr Antwi

Mr Frederick Antwi, the focal person of the Big Mind Catfish Farm made the presentation on behalf of the Municipal Assembly. He pointed out that the first criterion to consider in selecting the youth was the interest. This would prevent dropouts along the way.

He explained that the project site was moved to one of the group member's residence due to security and land litigation issues. According to him, two tarpaulin ponds, 2000 fishes and 30 bags of feed were received by the group in October 2024.

The challenges, however, noted by the Assembly included the high mortality rate of the initial stock. He explained that only 83 out of the 2000 fishes were remaining at the time of his presentation. He attributed this to the mixed stock of about 70% fingerlings and 30% juveniles that were supplied, coupled with low-quality feed. Again, transportation and storage also contributed to the mortality. He pointed out that, the skill set of the partners helped in identifying various issues onset in the project implementation.

The focal person admitted that some of the issues that the youth brought up in their presentation were new to him and was hearing it for the first time. The was due to poor communication between the Assembly and the youth business partners. Mr. Antwi asserted that effective leadership and management of the group was crucial for the success of the project.

Going forward, the Assembly suggested the following:

- There should be training and mentoring to enhance knowledge in the aquaculture business. Funding modalities should be agreed upon before the MOU is signed.
- Infrastructure development such as ponds, equipment and storage facilities should be assessed before supplying the juveniles.
- Insurance strategies should be put in place to mitigate risk and ensure sustainability.
- The Assembly should release a portion of its land for the project.

2.4.4 Awutu Senya East Municipal Assembly



Picture 11: Presentation by Madam Olivia

Madam Olivia Nyarko, the Head of Budget at the Awutu Senya East Municipal Assembly, is the focal person of the Aquayouth Harvesters. She presented the Assembly's experience in dealing with the youth group. She said that was her first time of dealing with the Institute of local Government Studies (ILGS). According to her, the Assembly and the youth group had been able to work within the agreed timelines even though the ponds had not yet been stocked with the juveniles.

She reported that the Assembly had learnt innovative skills from the project. According to her, the persistence of the youth group to build concrete ponds instead of going for the tarpaulin tanks, as well as the advice from the Agriculture and Fisheries Commission and Urban Roads not to build the pond horizontally brought about the assimilation of the innovative skills. She said the Assembly adopted the project as part of its LED activity and therefore was high significance to them.

The major challenge had been with the commitment of the members of the youth group because three university graduates with technical knowledge opted out of the group. One had to go for further studies overseas, another obtained a salaried work and the remaining opted out of despair.

To Madam Olivia Nyarko, the major lesson learnt by the Assembly is the importance of determination and persistence. She emphasized that the effort of the only remaining member of the group, Justice Aikins, prompted this outcome.

On the way forward, she indicated that her Coordinating Director had proposed that the ILGS must review the age limit of participants.

2.4.5 Komenda Edina Eguafo Abrem Municipal Assembly



Picture 12: Presentation by Mr Johnson

Mr. Degraft Johnson Taylor, the Planning Officer of KEEA is the focal person for Fishhaven Farm. He started his presentation by indicating that implementation of the project had been a roller coaster of emotions, but he believed there would be light at the end of the tunnel.

He then zeroed in on the various supports by the Assembly, namely:

- Secured a land at Egyeikrom community for the youth project.
- Organised a maiden meeting with the youth group before the commencement of activities
- Assisted the youth groups to open bank accounts,
- Assisting them to have technical backstopping e.g. the Assembly's engineer had been supervising to ensure the completion of the new pond, and
- Handed over a partially working borehole for repairs

The focal person lamented that after the youth had gone through the training (first workshop), they insisted on seeing to the implementation of the project themselves and this created problems about the smooth supervision of the project. He therefore remarked that dealing with university graduates is very complex since they have “one leg in, one leg out” attitude unlike SHS graduates who are more susceptible to direction. He also reported that the leader of the youth group was very committed, however he could rather be reached at times. The other members that he delegated tasks too did not address issues head on.

Mr De Graft Johnson admitted that the LED Committee of the Assembly was not functional, and this made it difficult for him to advocate for the project during their meetings. Besides, there was no component for monitoring in their budget hence, he had to use his own money to fuel his vehicle.

Moving forward, he proposed the following:

- Inclusion of LG officials as part of management team would help address the issue.
- ILGS should educate the group about the process for adding new members to the group,

- ILGS to build adequate entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial capacities for the youth group and local assemblies respectively
- ILGS to extend the maturity time for setting up new group.

2.5 Discussions on Emerging Issues and Learning Lessons



Picture 13: Presentation by Mr Osei-Wusu

This session was conducted by Mr David Osei-Wusu, the registrar of ILGS. He provided a list of 12 discussion points and asked participants to choose a maximum of four and report on the follow:

1. What was expected to occur, and what happened?
2. What did not work well and why?
3. What worked well, and why?
4. What needs to be done differently?

The discussion points are as shown in the Figure below. The individual reports have been presented in the matrix at Appendix 3.3, and the summary of the key issues are follows:

The Expectations

The groups were expecting to have:

- Committed and strong working team members
- Sustainable and thriving business
- Community support in ensuring project security and financial backing

What happened

Contrary to their expectations, the following occurred:

- Lack of commitment on the part of some members
- Problem of insecurity which in some cases resulted in vandalism and theft of project materials
- High mortality which was a setback to the project sustainability aside the poor quality of the feed
- Members had to rely on their personal funds to support the project

What did not work well and why?

- Lack of commitment of some youth members because they were engaged in their personal activities or thinking of what could get now
- Members did not have direct relationship with their suppliers for possible price negotiation because the focal person had taken up that procurement duty.
- Group had limited their market to the area residents because of limited access to the larger market
- Experienced incidents of debt and vandalism
- Delays in receiving funds
- Collaborating with local stakeholders did not materialize
- Delay in resolving critical problems due to absence of formal grievance mechanism

What worked well and why?

- There was mutual understanding, togetherness, teamwork and respect among them
- The environment was suitable for the business e.g. the poultry business with its high demand
- Guidance and training from the ILGS as well as expert advice
- Working in groups and commitment that some demonstrated
- The facilitative role of the MMDAs, especially the focal persons and the coordinating directors
- Project's proximity to the community and security advantage
- Ability to analyse and identify strategies to address issues

What needs to be done differently?

- Assembly to select serious and committed graduates
- Strengthen team bonding and encourage regular team meetings
- Need for clarity on the partnership agreement, especially individual roles and profit / loss sharing ratios
- Need for structured feed supply
- Establish problem-solving and communication procedures with service providers e.g. veterinary

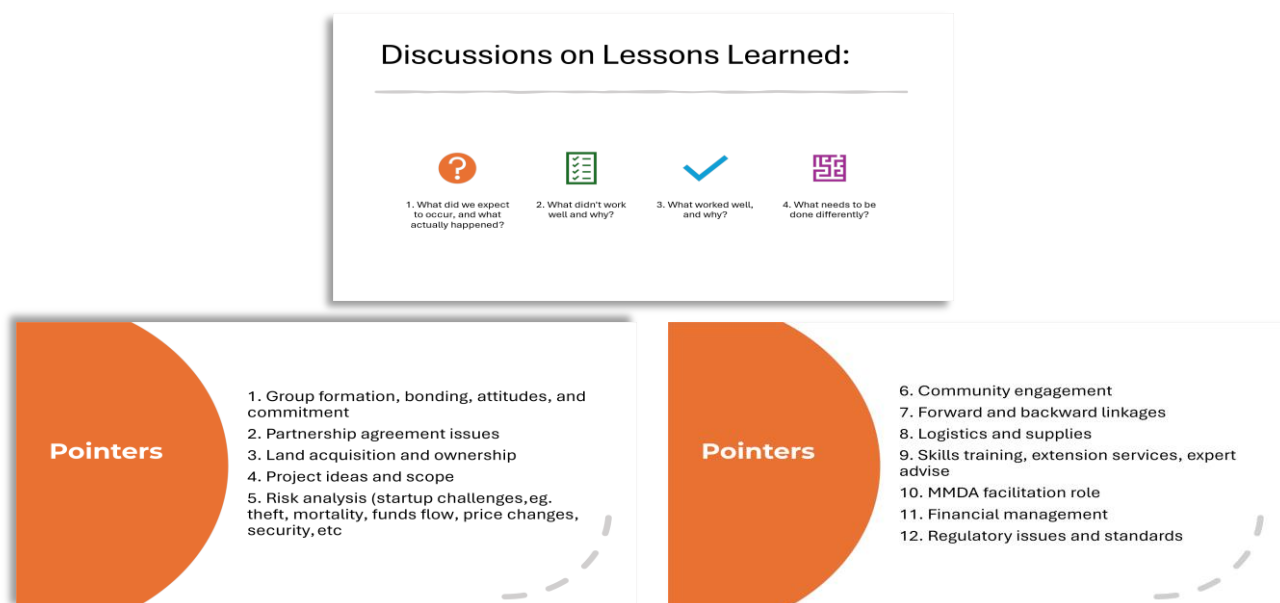
Figure 6: Assignment for Participants

2.6 Managing Your Business & Setting up New Groups via the Apprenticeship System

Dr. Jerome Rudolf Awortwe-Abban, the project coordinator, presented the session on how the youth groups could manage their business and explore the possibility of preparing a new group through apprenticeship. He started his presentation by recapping the progress that had been made by the various youth groups, from construction through production to marketing / distribution.



Picture 14: Presentation by Dr Jerome R. Awortwe-Abban



Dr. Awortwe-Abban explained that some team members could not endure and sustain their interests in the project and subsequently resigned. He encouraged the remaining team members to pursue their vision and never compromise for wage employment because the projects would be more rewarding. He advised them to be people with character and integrity, for right values are not for sale.

He went on to inform the groups on how to develop standards and maintain them; the need to plan their daily activities; assign responsibility and accountability; monitor activities daily; hold daily/weekly meetings to reflect and strategize; and keep records of events. He, in a nutshell, asked the youth to effectively manage themselves and others as well.

On the marketing of their produce, he advised the young entrepreneurs to have quality in mind; the quality of what and how to deliver. This would bring them loyal customers. .

Dr. Awortwe-Abban also touched on setting up new business groups. He reminded the groups of the need to replicate themselves by creating another group by saving towards a revolving fund. He ended his presentation with a question: "What approach should be adopted in creating a new business group?". *"Should the new groups be created by letting them understudy the existing ones through the apprenticeship system?"*

Professor Nicholas Awortwi then led participants to reflect on the question. He asked if the apprenticeship approach should be started right away or not, and the following comments emerged:

- That, the arrangement would work and should be started right away.
- That, the apprentices would serve as support to the groups and would learn hands-on skills. This would help them to avoid the mistakes made by the existing groups.
- That, though the apprenticeship arrangement could start immediately, we should be mindful of the process of selecting the people. If the people did not have the patience, they would abandon the project.
- That, the project should be advertised locally for the youth to apply.
- That, even though the apprenticeship system is a good, the existing groups would need to be assessed to determine whether they could implement the idea.
- That, the apprentices would have to know what they would gain from the apprenticeship training. Also, what would happen if after the training, the existing group was unable to set them up?
- That, we should be cautious because the apprentices might start demanding their share of the profit while in training.
- That, some apprentices might be interested in the project but not in the same line of business as the existing group.
- That, the apprentices are unemployed and might be living far away from the farmhouse. Commuting to and from the farmhouse may be a problem since most of them might be fending for themselves. To avert this, the would-be apprentice should be selected from those living close to the farmhouse.
- That, the original timeline for setting up a new group had already expired, yet most of the groups had experienced some delays and not made any sales yet. So, would the future apprentice also be delayed for one year or some percentage of the start-up capital could be used to set them up?

Prof. Awortwi ended the discussion by suggesting that the discussion on the apprenticeship system should be suspended, even though he had wished the new group could be set up before the official launch of the project.

2.7 Discussion on the official launch of the programme

Professor Nicholas Awortwi led the discussion on the official launch of the programme. He encouraged the young entrepreneurs to be present. According to him, the launch had been scheduled for 23rd of June 2025. He hinted that, the participants would include some researchers outside Ghana, from INCLUDE, APD and AERC.

2.8 Emerging Issues from the Workshop Presentations

Current Situation

- 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 by some Focal persons and Coordinating Directors, especially those from the Awutu Senya East Municipal Assembly and Atiwa East District Assembly.

Lessons learnt

- 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 guide the youth before venturing into any business; and the importance effective leadership in promoting business success
- Consider the ease of mobility / commuting of the young entrepreneurs in determining the business location
- Consider one's interest in a business as a major determinant of the person's commitment to the business
- Revelation that tertiary graduates' commitment appears to be limited, for he has one leg in the business and another leg 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.
- General complaint by the Big Mind Catfish Farm about the high mortality was associated with the fish and the feed supplied by R & B Farms.
- 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
- Inadequate funding from ILGS
- Fishhaven Farm and Aquayouth Poultry suffered from pond leakages immediately after their construction
- Dealing with the Assemblies involves some bureaucracy.
- Problem about the welfare of the young entrepreneurs e.g. accommodation, commuting to and from work

Way forward:

- 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
- Big Mind Catfish Farm to hold meetings to address past failures, develop sustainable plans, investigate and address project challenges, calling on their Assembly to provide them with land for their operations
- Readiness of R & B Farms to conduct training for youth in aquaculture, monitor and inspect structures before they are stocked
- LG Officials to increase the number of young business partners, specifically for the enterprises whose members resigned. They select serious and committed graduates as well.
- Considering insuring the business to mitigate risk and ensure sustainability
- Enhance mentoring to ensure business knowledge
- ILGS to increase the funding and make provisions 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.
- Regarding the apprenticeship system, the agreement was that another platform had to be created for indepth discussion on it. This was after a lengthy discussion on the

topic which touched on various scenarios: patience of the youth to go through the apprenticeship training; assessing the MMDAs on the capability to implement it; inability of existing group to set up the new group; the apprentice demanding their share of profit; apprentice interested in a project other than the existing one in this or her LG jurisdiction; need to select youth from nearby communities to making commuting easier for them.

- Business groups should strengthen team bonding and encourage regular team meetings
- Need for clarity on the partnership agreement, especially individual roles and profit / loss sharing ratios
- Establish problem-solving and communication procedures with service providers e.g. veterinary services
- Businesses to develop standards and maintain them; the need to plan their daily activities; assign responsibility and accountability; monitor activities daily; hold daily/weekly meetings to reflect and strategize; and keep records of events. He, in a nutshell, asked the youth to effectively manage themselves and others as well.
- The young entrepreneurs need to have quality in mind; the quality of what and how to deliver. This would bring them loyal customers.

3.0 Appendices

3.1 Workshop Programme

WHEN	WHAT	WHO
8 th May 17.00	Arrival of Participants that are staying overnight: STMA, KEEA and Atiwa Check-in at ILGS Hostel	Ms Rita Agyakwa
9 th May 08:30 – 09:00	• Arrival and Registration • Opening Prayer • Introduction	ILGS Team
09.00 – 9.15	Overview of the Project & Emerging Issues	Prof N. Awortwi (Director, ILGS)
9.15 – 10.30 15 Mins Each	Presentation by youth groups on business (progress, lessons, challenges & way forward) • Atiwa Youth Poultry • Ecohoof Ranch • Big Mind Catfish Farm • Aquayouth Harvesters • Fishhaven Farms	ILGS Team
10.30 – 11.45 15 Mins Each	MMDAs perspectives on doing business with youth groups: Experience so far (progress, lessons, challenges & way forward) • Atiwa District Assembly • Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolitan Assembly • Nsawam Adoagyiri Municipal Assembly • Awutu Senya East Municipal Assembly • Komenda Edina Eguafo Abrem Municipal Assembly	
11.45– 12.00	Snack Break	ILGS Hospitality
12.00– 12.45	Discussions on Emerging Issues and Learning Lessons	Mr. David Osei Wusu (Registrar, ILGS)
12:45 – 13.15	Managing Your Business Setting up New Groups via the Apprenticeship System	Dr. Jerome Awortwe-Abban (coordinator)
13.15 – 14:15	Break-up Session • Youth Groups • MMDAs Officials	ILGS Team
14.15 – 14.35	Discussion on the official launch of the programme	Prof: N. Awortwi (Director, ILGS)
14.35	Lunch Break & Departure	ILGS Hospitality

3.2 List of Participants

Atiwa Youth Poultry

No.	NAME	M/F
1	Amponsah Ophelia	F
2	Bamfoaa Comfort	F

Aquayouth Harvesters

No.	NAME	M/F
1	Justice Aikins	M
2	Avinu Cecilia	F

Fishhaven Farm

No.	NAME	M/F
1	Cynthia Biney	F
2	Godfred Kingsley Kwofie	M

Big Mind Catfish Farm

No.	NAME	M/F
1	Tracy Amponsah-Awuku	F
2	Bernard Asempa Adu-Amankwah	M

Ecohoof Ranch

No.	NAME	M/F
1	Naa Adjeley Tagoe	F
2	Benjamin Adu Akyeah	M
3	Abdul-Wahab Mahama	M

Local Government Officers

N	NAME	M/F	MMDA	Position
1	Degraft Johnson Taylor	M	KEEA	MDPO
2	Yussif Fahizu	M	KEEA	ATG. MCD
3	Frederick Antwi	M	Nsawam Adoagyiri	MPO
4	Alhaji Mahama Abu	M	Sekondi-Takoradi	MDPO
5	James Obeng Boateng	M	Atiwa East	DPO
6	William Asiedu-Akrofi	M	Atiwa East	REP. DCD
7	Olivia O. Nyarko	F	Awutu Senya East	SBA

ILGS

NO.	NAME	M/F	POSITION / DESIGNATION
1	Prof. Nicholas Awortwi	M	Director
2	David Osei-Wusu	M	Registrar
3	Mr. Kwasi Larnyoh	M	Project Team Member
4	Dr. Jerome Rudolf Awortwe-Abban	M	Coordinator
5	Adiboye Philip	M	Research Assistant
6	Bernice Kyei	F	Administrative Assistant
7	Micheal Letsa	M	IT

3.3 Reports on Assignments

Youth Business Group	Our expectation	What happened?	What did not work well and why	What worked well and why?	What needs to be done differently?
Fishhaven	In our team formation, we had diverse experienced yet personalities from different fields, hence we expected to gel and bond well as a team, share our diverse experiences to help make the group very formidable in order to make the business successful.	Regardless of our experiences and the training given to us by ILGS, and R&B farms on team formation, and fish farming respectively, our team members did not depict true commitment, zeal and effort to help build the business	The team lacked commitment, zeal to overcome the challenges we encountered during our pond construction. The team did not commit their time, energy and resources because some lost interest in the project, some were also busy with other activities which made them not to contribute.	Regardless of the lack of commitment, we were able to maintain our togetherness, peace and contribute in idea sharing during meetings. Also, some members were making effort to make time for workshops, training and meetings with the assembly and Institute of Local Governance. This was a result of mutual understanding, togetherness, and respect that existed among each other in spite of the lack of commitment towards the work.	We should choose serious team members who have the determination to build a business but not just fascinated about the idea of having a business without committing their time and effort to make it successful.
Atiwa Youth Poultry	We expected smooth collaboration, equal participation and timely completion of tasks, but some members were active and contributed well, others were less involved, which caused delays and some miscommunication		We lacked strong relationships with our suppliers, which made it difficult to negotiate better price bor credit terms. Additionally, transportation of inputs was sometimes costly or delayed, which affected our operation and selling our poultry products was another major challenges we had limited access to reliable buyers or large	One of the key things that worked well bin our poultry farming project was the teamwork among our group members. Each person had clear responsibilities, and we supported each other throughout the process. With the guidance of ILGS, we were able to get basic training startup materials, checks and feed. Poultry farming was practical and suitable for our environment; it has a clear	In our poultry farming project ,we faced some challenges with partnership agreement, especially around role, profits ,sharing and decision making. To improve this in the future, we need to create a clear and written partnership agreement that all members responsibilities, how profits and losses will be shared, rules for

			market, so we forced to sell mostly within our local area at low prices.	scope to raise chickens for meat and eggs and sell them within the community. There is high demand for poultry products locally which make the project sustainable and expandable in the future	decision -making and a conflict resolution process. It's also important to involve a natural third party, like a local leader or ILGS representative to witness and help guide the agreement .
Ecohoof Ranch	We anticipated strong community support and steady financial backing, strong security presence and lower risks of theft given the project's proximity to the assembly,	However, challenges arose due to unexpected risks such as theft and vandalism, an Increase in Prices of goods and services, termite and Snake threats and Inadequate Personnel. (security and additional caretaker)	• Risk Management: Theft and vandalism rates were higher than anticipated, requiring better security and veterinary services. There were also delays in receiving funds. These financial setbacks impacted areas such as farm maintenance, leading to termite infestations due to postponed structural improvements • Community Engagement: Collaboration with local stakeholders did not materialise as expected, affecting project support and could	• Group Formation & Commitment: Despite initial concerns about not knowing each other, teamwork and bonding strengthened over time, leading to better collaboration. • Skills Training & Expert Advice: Training sessions boosted members' knowledge and improved farm operations and understanding of each member's strengths and weaknesses • Logistics & Supplies: Establishing strong supplier connections ensured reliable access to feed and equipment. For example, there is an arrangement by the team leader and a chop bar joint to collect cassava	• Strengthen team bonding and commitment through clearer roles and capacity building. • Improve financial management with diverse funding sources to help construct a storeroom for animal feeds, a small office space, partition the pen, and recruit an additional caretaker.

			have resulted in high theft of the project. • Financial Management: The project faced unexpected financial challenges after the theft and vandalism which happened twice one at the initial setup of the pen where all the frames were stolen and the recent one where all the electrical wires were stolen with no emergency funds or financial assistance from the assembly, we are unable to restock the pen with the livestock and purchase other necessary materials.	peels and residues from the chop bar. • MMDA Facilitation: The district assembly played a helpful role in connecting electricity and guiding us through the entire operation • Partnership Agreements: Structured and detailed agreements by ILG led to clearer terms and stronger collaborations. • Land Acquisition & Ownership: Due to the distance and security threats of the location of the previous land, we settled at a place closer to the assembly, which is also a temporary location and limited in case we would like to extend the project.	
Big Mind Catfish Farm	The Big Mind Catfish Farm project was initiated with the expectation of establishing a sustainable and thriving aquaculture operation as part of the broader Youth Employment Project. Key goals included successful fish	During its initial phase, the Big Mind Catfish Farm experienced significant setbacks. A critically high initial mortality rate resulted in a devastating loss of fish from the first stock. This was exacerbated by issues with the initial feed, which was found to be	Several internal and external factors contributed to the project's underperformance. The devastating initial mortality was a direct consequence of the team's oversight in verifying the quality and suitability of the first feed batch and ensuring	The team's ability to conduct a comprehensive risk analysis and identify specific mitigation strategies was a significant positive. Resolving the feed change, even though it took a while, restocking the new batch.	The proposed "Way Forward" strategies, including plans for structured feed supply, establishing a formal problem-solving process, and emphasizing constant communication with veterinary services. Having regular weekly team meetings (at least 30 minutes) to reviewing past

	stocking, ensuring healthy growth through proper nutrition, securing consistent and adequate funding, and managing logistics efficiently, all aimed at long-term viability and positive community impact.	sinking, of the wrong size, and potentially low quality, insect infestation, hindering growth. The project also faced severe funding deficiencies and delays, leading to minimal working capital and an unsustainable reliance on the team's personal funds. Logistical problems caused early difficulties, potentially stressing the fish. Additionally, the farm was impacted by the high risk of disease outbreaks, such as fish ulcers.	correct stocking accuracy (calls were placed but goods were not returned). Funding deficiencies and delays created an unsustainable operational model, with the project lacking sufficient working capital and relying on personal funds due to insufficient proactive engagement with funding bodies. Logistical issues during the initial stocking phase, stemming from insufficient planning, caused undue stress on the fish. The absence of formal grievance mechanisms also meant that critical problems were not addressed with the necessary urgency or accountability.		performance, planning for the week ahead, and proactively developing a sales
Aquayouth Harvesters	I, for instance, the beginning of the project was awesome but things started slowing down that made the whole project delayed.		The selection of the group members, I think didn't go well because we all come from different background and with different expectations. For me I was looking at the big picture for our group, but some were thinking of what they	Working with the assembly was okay for me, my coordinating director, focal person, municipal finance officer, and planner have done wonderfully well to the success of this project.	Going forward, I think selecting of the group members should be carefully looked into because with my experience as a group leader have thought me more lessons. Most Ghanaian youth are looking for a monthly payment jobs. some also

			might get monthly or weekly.		think of going back and forth with no any allowance be released for any quark work done.
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