DO THE RIGHT THING

Friends of the Nation

2025

ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

SAFEGUARDING RESOURCES, STRENGTHENING LIVES

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List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
ABFA	Annual Budget Funding Amount
ACEP	Africa Centre for Energy Policy
ASM	Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining
ASWiM	Association of Women in Small-Scale Mining
CEMAGs	Community Environmental and Advocacy Groups
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DACF	District Assemblies Common Fund
DACF-RFG	DACF–Response Factor Grant
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EU	European Union
FoN	Friends of the Nation
FSD	Forestry Services Division
GNASSM	Ghana National Association of Small-Scale Miners
GPS	Global Positioning System
GSM	Global System for Mobile Communications
IEZ	Inshore Exclusion Zone

Abbreviation	Meaning
IFFS	International Fund for Fishing Safety
IUU	Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (fishing)
MCS	Mutual Capacity Strengthening
MDF	Minerals Development Fund
MTDP	Medium-Term Development Plan
PAIReD	Participation, Accountability and Integrity for Resilient Democracy
PETS	Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys
PoC	Proof of Concept
PWDs	Persons with Disabilities
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEMACs	School Environmental Monitoring and Advocacy Clubs
SRAs	Social Responsibility Agreements
STMA	Sekondi–Takoradi Metropolitan Assembly
UMaT	University of Mines and Technology
USD	United States Dollar
WiLDAF	Women in Law and Development in Africa

Chairman's Statement

On behalf of the Council of Directors, it's my pleasure to share Friends of the Nation's 2025 Annual Report with you.

This was a year where FoN's voice carried further into the rooms that matter: local government planning processes, the national conversation on methane policy, and the relationships between communities, mining companies and forestry operators. That kind of access isn't handed to an organisation; it's earned, and I'm proud of how our team earned it.

> *That kind of access isn't handed to an organisation; it's earned, and I'm proud of how our team earned it.*

What stood out most to the Council was watching citizen-led monitoring turn into real, tangible commitments. The Tarkwa-Nsuaem Municipal Assembly's pledge to channel at least 30% of Mineral Development Fund resources towards women's economic empowerment and girls' education is exactly the kind of outcome we hope for communities speaking up, and institutions listening. We also saw community priorities woven directly into the 2026–2029 Medium-Term Development Plans of the Tarkwa-Nsuaem and Ellembelle Municipal Assemblies, further proof that when citizens engage, local development planning gets better.

This year also marked something new for us in ensuring Ocean Justice: a deliberate shift towards the wellbeing of fishers. I want to especially commend the work to digitalize the small-scale fisheries sector through the ALON Safety and Connectivity Device, a satellite tracking system that's already pointing toward a safer, better-connected, and more resilient future for our fishing communities.

None of this happens without people who care deeply about the mission.

Many thanks go to the Executive Director and the entire staff for their leadership and professionalism throughout the year, to our dedicated volunteers, the Community Environmental and Advocacy Groups (CEMAGs) and School Environmental Monitoring and Advocacy Clubs (SEMACs) whose grassroots commitment carries this work into communities, and to our government partners, donors and development partners for continuing to place their confidence in FoN.

As a Board, we remain committed to strengthening this institution so it can do even more of what's already working. These aren't just moments: they're the kind of institutional shifts that outlast any single project cycle. They reflect years of patient, credible, community-centred engagement, and they give me real confidence in where FoN is headed.

Executive Director's Letter

2025 asked a lot of us and our team showed up for it. It was a year of hard work, a few hard lessons, and real achievement for Friends of the Nation. As the Chairman noted, the Board set the strategic direction this year, and it was our staff who turned that direction into results on the ground. To every one of you: thank you. I'm genuinely proud of what we built together.

We stayed true to who we are, a people-centred, rights-based organisation working on environmental governance, natural resource accountability, climate action, and ocean justice and coastal livelihoods. Along the way, we reached 4,407 people directly, through work that strengthened community participation, accountability, inclusion and innovative solutions.

> *Your work, your resilience, your creativity: that's the real foundation of everything FoN has achieved.*

What we accomplished in the Extractives, climate, fisheries and ocean justice says a lot about what's possible when people show up for each other; communities, government, civil society, our partners, all pulling in the same direction. Whether it was helping communities hold institutions accountable, promoting fair and safer mining practices, or using new technology and media to protect fishers at sea, this year gave us real proof that our work still matters.

OUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Our 2025 work contributed to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) covered in this report: safer work and fairer livelihoods in small-scale mining and fisheries (SDG 8); women's participation and gender-responsive development (SDG 5); citizen-led oversight and accountable local institutions (SDG 16); climate action through inclusive methane management and climate-smart practices (SDG 13); and sustainable fisheries and the responsible use of marine resources (SDGs 14 and 12).



I want to especially recognise how the team handled the tough moments. Resources were limited for much of the year, and there were stretches where staff carried out without their normal compensation, yet the dedication never wavered. People adapted, stayed professional under real pressure, and still delivered. That kind of commitment isn't something you can take for granted, and it's exactly what's positioning FoN for even greater impact ahead.

The Board has laid out where we're headed next. Our job now is to execute leaning further into community-led work, get sharper about using evidence, and scale up what's already working for people and ecosystems. That's how we turn this year's gains into something lasting.

So, on behalf of Management: thank you. Your work, your resilience, your creativity: that's the real foundation of everything FoN has achieved. Let's keep going with that same energy, knowing our impact reaches well beyond any single project. It touches lives, strengthens communities, and moves us all toward a more just, sustainable future.

Thank you for everything you bring to Friends of the Nation.

Introduction

Profile of the Organization

History, Vision, and Mission

Friends of the Nation (FoN) is a people-centered, rights-based socio-environmental advocacy organization established in 1993 and registered in 1994, and headquartered in Adiembra, Sekondi-Takoradi, in Ghana's Western Region. Since its establishment, FoN has partnered with coastal and resource-dependent communities, the state, and like-minded Institutions to promote transparency, accountability, sustainability, and justice in the governance of natural resources and public assets. Our work is grounded in amplifying the voices of marginalized groups and strengthening systems that place people, the planet, and the pursuit of just, thriving communities at the center of development.

VISION

FoN envisions a world where natural resources are harnessed sustainably, shared equitably, and preserved for a just and prosperous future for all.

MISSION

FoN champions socio-environmental justice, amplify marginalized voices, and drives transformative changes through advocacy, capacity building, strategic partnerships, and innovative solutions.

Our Core Values

Participation

We believe in people-centered development and rights-based advocacy, ensuring inclusive and diverse perspectives in our actions.

Accountability

We are transparent and accountable to stakeholders and society, maintaining confidentiality where necessary.

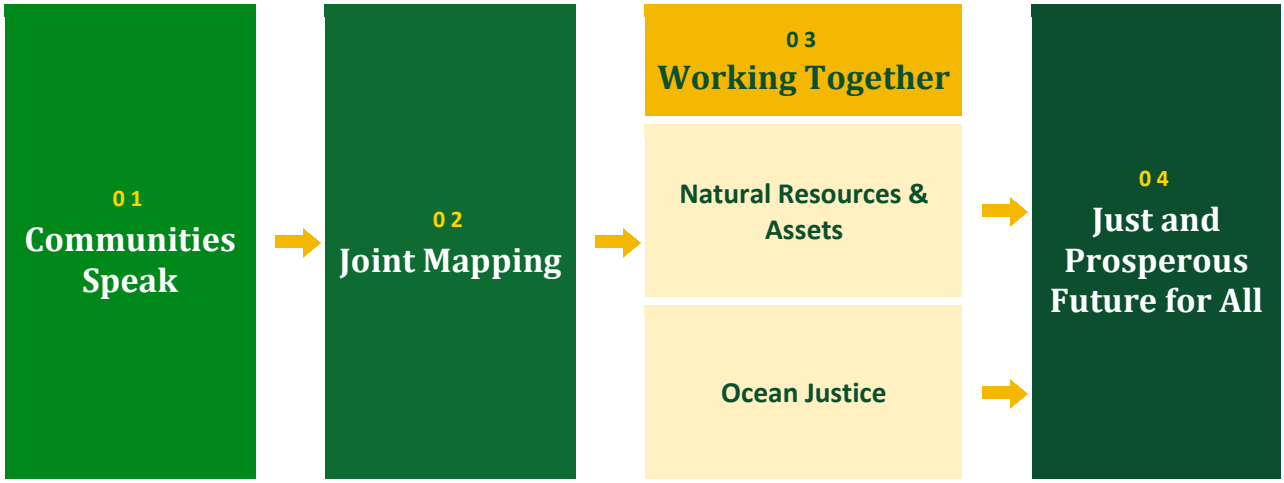
Gender Inclusivity

We promote equality, recognizing the rights and dignity of all genders, and provide equal opportunities regardless of sex, race, or social identity.

Self-reliance

We maintain our independence, focusing on our vision and mission.

Our Approach



2025 Interventions under Programme Areas

Programme Area	Project Name	Donors / Partners
Natural Resources & Assets Governance	PVP Fair for All – Agriculture and Extractive Value Chains in Ghana	Oxfam
	Strategic Partnership Initiative for Ghana and West Africa	DANIDA Oxfam
	Fair Finance	Oxfam
	Mutual Capacity Strengthening Fund – Bridging Cocoa and Mining Value Chains for Sustainable Practices	NOVIB-MCS Fund, Oxfam
	Participation, Accountability and Integrity for Resilient Democracy (PAIReD)	German Cooperation, Co-funded by EU, Ministry of Finance
Ocean Justice	Improving the Safety, Wellbeing and Sustainability of Ghana's Small-Scale Fisheries	International Fund for Fishing Safety (IFFS), Lloyd's Register Foundation

Beneficiaries (Gender) Engaged in 2025

In 2025, FoN directly engaged a total of 4,407 beneficiaries, of whom 42% were females and 58% were males. The distribution of beneficiaries by sex and program area is illustrated in Figures 1 and 2 below, respectively.

4,407
beneficiaries directly engaged

58%
male (2,566)

42%
female (1,841)

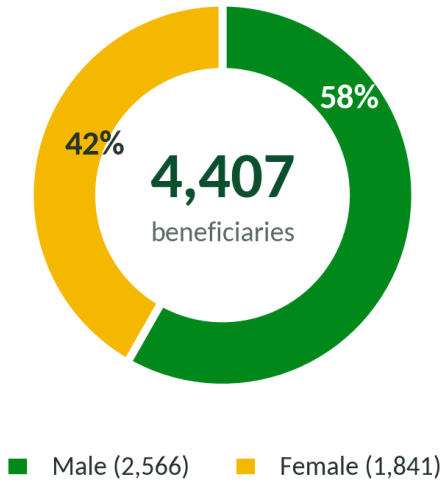


Figure 1: Beneficiaries directly engaged in 2025

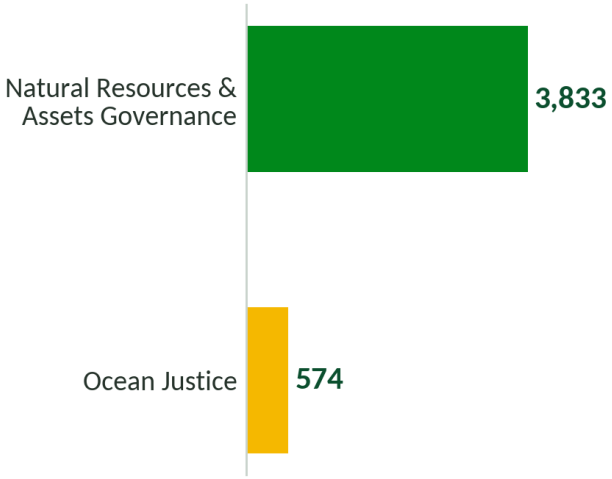


Figure 2: Beneficiaries engaged per program area

Summary of Key Impact Under Program Areas

80
miners trained in responsible mining (60 women, 20 men)

6
districts with a growing network of accountability champions

500+
citizens shaped local development priorities

200+
citizens empowered to monitor mineral revenue-funded projects

Natural Resources and Assets Governance

- Eighty miners (60 women and 20 men from GNASSM and ASWiM) deepened their knowledge of responsible mining, legal and environmental compliance, and mercury-free gold processing, particularly the use of borax as a safer alternative to mercury. A field visit to an active mining concession gave them firsthand exposure to good environmental and safety practices, equipping them to strengthen site management, regulatory compliance, and community relations.
- A growing network of local accountability champions has emerged across six districts in Ghana's Western and Western North Regions (Effia Kwesimintsim, Ellembelle, Wassa Amenfi West, Sefwi Wiawso, Bia, and Bodi), strengthening citizen-led monitoring of public resources and advocacy for transparent, responsive, and inclusive local governance as a result of enhanced knowledge, practical skills, and confidence among citizens and community champions in applying social accountability tools and engaging duty-bearers.
- Community-led monitoring of mineral revenue projects drove concrete governance reforms including the Tarkwa-Nsuaem Municipal Assembly's commitment to channel at least 30% of Mineral Development Fund resources toward women's economic empowerment and girls' education.
- Over 500 citizens, including representatives from marginalized groups, directly shaped local development priorities, resulting in their needs being formally embedded in the 2026-2029 Medium-Term Development Plans (MTDPs) of the Ellembelle and Tarkwa Nsuaem Assemblies.
- Over 200 citizens are empowered to monitor mineral revenue-funded projects.
- FoN's partnership with ACEP created an inclusive national platform that moved Ghana's methane conversation beyond emission targets toward practical action, elevating grassroots concerns—from limited irrigation infrastructure to the high costs of adopting methane-reducing practices—alongside measurable industry and municipal progress. This cross-sector engagement-built consensus around five priority actions for methane mitigation, ensuring community realities now directly inform Ghana's national priority-setting process.
- FoN's inclusive dialogue platforms transformed relations between forest-fringe communities and Swiss Lumber Ltd. in Wassa Amenfi Central, giving communities greater awareness of their rights and access to functioning grievance redress mechanisms.
- FoN's pilot installation of polycarbonate roofing sheets in education infrastructure introduced an energy-efficient green solution that boosts natural lighting and regulates indoor temperatures, creating a more comfortable, sustainable learning environment while cutting energy consumption.

Ocean Justice

FoN, in partnership with Navcast Inc. (Canada), conducted a Proof of Concept (PoC) to assess the feasibility and value of the Alon Safety and Connectivity Device, a satellite-enabled system designed to improve safety at sea, enable communication beyond GSM coverage, and strengthen fisheries monitoring and governance. Beyond safety at sea, the device also allows fishers to stay in contact with their communities and families on shore, easing the anxiety that comes with not knowing a loved one's whereabouts while out on the water.

CHAPTER 1

01 Natural Resources and Assets Governance

The Natural Resources and Assets Programme promotes a rights-based, inclusive, and accountable approach to natural resource governance across Ghana. The programme is guided by a clear mission: to advance equitable access, responsible management, and the sustainable use of natural assets while safeguarding the environment and improving the livelihoods of communities, particularly those most affected by resource extraction and environmental change.

The programme is grounded in the principles of social justice, human rights, and active citizenship. It strengthens the capacity and agency of communities to participate meaningfully in decisions affecting their lands, resources, and livelihoods. It also fosters collaboration among communities, civil society organisations, government institutions, and private sector actors to ensure that natural resource governance systems are transparent, accountable, and responsive.

The programme operates across key sectors, including mining and agriculture, with a strong emphasis on sustainable and inclusive natural resource governance. Through evidence-based advocacy, participatory monitoring, and multi-stakeholder dialogue, FoN supports reforms that enhance transparency in resource revenue management, strengthen environmental compliance, and promote fair compensation and equitable benefit-sharing mechanisms.

A critical aspect of the programme is the integration of climate and environmental considerations into natural resource governance. It promotes climate-smart practices, ecosystem restoration, and nature-based solutions to address the increasing impacts of climate change. At the same time, the programme prioritises inclusive economic opportunities, particularly for women and young people, ensuring that natural resource governance contributes to resilient livelihoods and sustainable local development.

By strengthening citizen constituencies, enabling informed public participation, and holding duty bearers accountable, the Natural Resources and Assets Programme contributes to the development of systems in which natural resources are managed sustainably, benefits are shared equitably, and development outcomes are just and enduring.

Ultimately, the programme seeks to ensure that natural resources serve as a foundation for prosperity, environmental sustainability, and human dignity, delivering lasting value for communities, the nation, and future generations.

Promoting Safer and Sustainable Small-Scale Mining Practices

80
small-scale miners trained

60
women participants

20
men participants

SDG 8
Decent Work and Economic Growth

In 2025, Friends of the Nation (FoN), in partnership with Women in Law and Development in Africa (WiLDAF), implemented a targeted capacity-building programme under the Fair4All Project. The initiative contributed to the project's strategic objective of strengthening civil society to promote an inclusive and sustainable extractive sector that respects human rights, protects the environment, advances women's economic empowerment, and supports a more locally owned and equitable economic transformation in Ghana. By equipping artisanal and small-scale miners (ASM) with the knowledge and skills required to adopt responsible mining practices, the programme enhanced stakeholders' capacity to improve environmental stewardship, strengthen regulatory compliance, and promote decent work within the sector.





Fair4All capacity-building programme for small-scale miners, delivered with WiLDAF.

A total of eighty (80) miners participated in the training, comprising sixty (60) women and twenty (20) men from the Ghana National Association of Small-Scale Miners (GNASSM) and the Association of Women in Small-Scale Mining (ASWiM). The programme also brought together key institutions, including the University of Mines and Technology (UMaT), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Minerals Commission, and the Birim Central Municipal Assembly, fostering collaboration among civil society, government agencies, academia, and mining associations to advance responsible ASM practices.

The training enhanced participants' knowledge and understanding of responsible mining, legal and environmental compliance requirements, and occupational health and safety standards. Participants also gained practical knowledge of technical mining approaches that promote more efficient and environmentally sustainable mineral extraction, as well as the importance of geological assessment in reducing land degradation. In addition, the programme strengthened participants' understanding of mercury-free gold processing techniques, particularly the use of borax as a safer alternative to mercury, while reinforcing the importance of occupational health and safety measures to safeguard miners' well-being and reduce workplace risks.

As part of the programme, participants had firsthand exposure to an active small-scale gold mining concession near Akim Oda Nkwanta and they were exposure to good environmental management and worker safety practices, enabling them to identify practical measures for improving site management, environmental compliance, and community relations. The programme also created a platform for dialogue between miners and regulatory institutions, increasing participants' understanding of licensing procedures, environmental permitting requirements, and post-mining land rehabilitation obligations. These engagements strengthened trust and collaboration between miners and regulators, while encouraging greater compliance with legal and environmental standards.

By promoting responsible mining practices, improving occupational health and safety, encouraging the adoption of mercury-free gold processing technologies, and strengthening collaboration between miners and regulatory institutions, the initiative directly contributed to the Fair4All Project's objective of fostering a more inclusive, environmentally sustainable, and rights-based extractive sector. The strong participation of women miners further advanced women's economic empowerment by enhancing their technical knowledge, confidence, and ability to participate effectively in the artisanal and small-scale mining value chain. The initiative also contributed to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth, particularly through the promotion of safer working conditions, productive employment, and sustainable economic opportunities in the ASM sector.

Inclusive and Sustainable Extractive Sector Value Chains in Ghana

4
mining districts engaged

30%
minimum share of MDF resources committed to women's economic empowerment and girls' education

2026–2029
Medium-Term Development Plans now reflect project lessons

In 2025, Friends of the Nation (FoN), under the Fair4All Project, continued to foster transparency, accountability, inclusive governance, and gender-responsive development in four mining districts, specifically Tarkwa-Nsuaem, Prestea Huni Valley, Wassa Amenfi East, and Ellembelle Districts. The capacities of women, youth, traditional authorities, persons with disabilities (PWDs), and Assembly Members was strengthening on the governance framework of the Minerals Development Fund (MDF), public expenditure tracking, and inclusive and gender-responsive development. Through participatory monitoring exercises, community members worked with District Assembly officials to assess MDF-funded projects, including schools, health facilities, water systems, sanitation facilities, markets, and community centers.



Fair4All capacity strengthening on MDF governance and public expenditure tracking.

This collaborative oversight strengthened transparency and accountability in the management and utilization of mineral revenues while empowering communities to demand responsible governance.

The monitoring process revealed tangible improvements in access to education, healthcare, sanitation, and livelihood opportunities, demonstrating the transformative potential of well-managed extractive sector revenues. At the same time, it identified critical governance and service delivery gaps, including weak transparency mechanisms, limited community participation in decision-making, poor infrastructure quality, and inadequate disability-accessible and gender-responsive facilities.



Participatory monitoring of MDF-funded projects by community members and District Assembly officials.

The evidence generated through these community monitoring exercises enabled FoN to facilitate constructive dialogue and advocacy with District Assemblies and other relevant stakeholders, resulting in concrete commitments to improve accountability and inclusiveness in project implementation. These commitments included the installation of project signages to enhance transparency, the adoption of disability-friendly infrastructure standards, and the strengthening of gender-responsive planning processes.

Importantly, lessons and recommendations emerging from the project were incorporated into the 2026–2029 Medium-Term Development Plans of the Tarkwa-Nsuaem and Ellembelle District Assemblies. In addition, the

Tarkwa-Nsuaem Municipal Assembly committed to allocating at least 30 percent of Mineral Development Fund resources under its Youth, Women and Vulnerable Empowerment Programme to initiatives that support women's economic empowerment and girls' education.

The Fair4All Project demonstrated that citizen-led oversight and inclusive participation are effective mechanisms for strengthening governance, enhancing accountability, and ensuring that revenues from Ghana's extractive sector contribute to sustainable and equitable community. This also contributed to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 16 and 5 by fostering transparency, accountability, inclusive governance, and gender-responsive development within the extractive sector.

Strengthening Citizen-Led Accountability and Inclusive Local Governance

FoN under the Participation, Accountability and Integrity for Resilient Democracy (PAIReD) Program, strengthened citizen-led accountability and promoted transparency and inclusive participation in local governance in six districts in the Western and Western North Regions: Effia Kwesimintsim, Ellembelle, Wassa Amenfi West, Sefwi Wiawso, Bia, and Bodi.



Capacity-building on social accountability tools under PAIReD.

6

districts in the Western and Western North Regions

4

social accountability tools put into practice: Community Score Cards, Citizen Report Cards, PETS and Social Audits

This was achieved through enhanced capacity that strengthened participants' knowledge and practical skills in key areas of local governance and public accountability. Their knowledge and understanding were deepened regarding the Local Governance Act, 2016 (Act 936), Ghana's decentralization structures, and the roles and responsibilities of District Assemblies and their departments. They also gained practical knowledge of social accountability tools that was used to monitor public service delivery and the management of public resources. These included Community Score Cards, Citizen Report Cards, Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys (PETS), and Social Audits.

The intervention enhanced participants' understanding of key public funding streams available at the local level, including the District Assemblies Common Fund (DACF), DACF–Response Factor Grant (DACF-RFG), Minerals Development Fund (MDF), Annual Budget Funding Amount (ABFA), and timber royalties. This enhanced understanding strengthened their ability to track the allocation and use of public resources and engage duty-

bearers on issues affecting their communities. Beyond increased knowledge, participants demonstrated greater confidence in their ability to monitor public expenditure, engage duty-bearers, and advocate for transparency and accountability in the management and use of public funds.

The intervention contributed to the emergence of a growing network of local accountability champions across the six districts. Equipped with practical tools and improved knowledge of local governance processes, these champions are better positioned to support community monitoring, engage duty-bearers, and promote evidence-based advocacy. This is strengthening communities' ability to demand transparency, monitor public resources, and participate meaningfully in local decision-making, contributing to more responsive, accountable, and inclusive local governance.

Strengthening Local Governance and Citizen Participation in Mining Communities

500+
citizens, including representatives from marginalized groups, shaped local priorities

2
Municipal Assemblies (Ellembelle and Tarkwa Nsuaem) embedded them in their 2026–2029 MTDPs

FoN in collaboration with the Ellembelle and Tarkwa Nsuaem Municipal Assemblies under the Fair for All project, has created platform for over 500 citizens, including representatives from marginalized groups to directly influence local development priorities across selected mining communities. Their needs and aspirations were raised through jointly facilitated Town Hall meetings and community needs assessments. These have now been formally embedded in the Medium-Term Development Plans (MTDPs) 2026-2029 of their respective Assemblies.



Town Hall meetings and community need assessments in Ellembelle and Tarkwa-Nsuaem.

This has strengthened the responsiveness of local governance to community priorities. It has also deepened citizen participation in official district planning and equipped CSOs to represent constituents' interests and hold duty-bearers accountable. Together, these gains directly respond to rising community demands for transparency and inclusive decision-making in the management of extractive sector revenues.

Building on this collaboration, FoN had similar engagement with the Mfantseman and Abura Asebu Kwamankese District Assemblies to help optimize the benefits of lithium mining while safeguarding community rights, positioning affected communities to receive a fair share of the gains from extractive sector activities.

This collaboration has also driven a systemic strengthening of community groups within Ellembelle District and Tarkwa Nsuaem Municipality, enhancing their capacity to participate meaningfully in governance and development processes. Governance principles such as gender-responsive budgeting and social inclusion have been institutionalized within district-level planning, aligning local development priorities with government policy and embedding practices that will ensure sustainability beyond the Fair4all project.

Preparing Host Communities and District Assemblies for Lithium Development

5
host communities engaged: Krofu, Ansaadze, Abonko, Anokyi and Afrangua

2
District Assemblies supported to plan for the mine

2025–2029
Medium-Term Development Plans now address lithium impacts

In 2025, Friends of the Nation (FoN), under the Fair4All Project, worked with host communities and local government institutions in the Mfantseman Municipality and Abura Asebu Kwamankese District to strengthen their preparedness for the opportunities and potential impacts of the proposed Ewoyaa Lithium Project.

During the period, FoN engaged traditional leaders, women and youth groups, community representatives and Assembly officials in Krofu, Ansaadze, Abonko, Anokyi and Afrangua. Residents raised concerns about the prolonged land-use moratorium, delayed compensation, limited information on company plans and inadequate feedback from the compensation and resettlement committees. FoN used the evidence gathered to identify information and participation gaps and to prepare a learning exchange with communities that had experienced resettlement.



Community leaders and residents at a FoN review meeting in Krofu

At the local government level, FoN supported both Assemblies to integrate lithium-related opportunities, risks and mitigation measures into their 2025–2029 Medium-Term Development Plans. Planning teams reviewed the commitments in the project's Environmental and Social Impact Statement and lithium lease agreement and translated them into practical priorities on employment, infrastructure, skills development, security, resettlement and community investment.

Impact: Community representatives now understand compensation and resettlement processes better and can take part in them more effectively. Both Assemblies have placed community concerns, project commitments and mitigation measures within their local development planning. The evidence generated also informs FoN's continued advocacy for transparent, inclusive and accountable lithium governance.

Advancing Transparency and Access to Information in the Lithium Sector

2
groups engaged: community representatives and the media

1%
proposed Community Development Fund explained to communities

As Ghana's lithium sector develops, informed community participation and accountability depend on access to information and a clear understanding of the governance framework. In 2025, FoN, under the Fair4All Project, worked with lithium-affected communities and the media to strengthen their understanding of the arrangements and commitments associated with the proposed Ewoyaa mine.



Journalists and radio presenters at the FoN media workshop on lithium governance

In the Mfantseman Municipality, FoN engaged community representatives, including members of the Compensation Negotiation Committee and the Resettlement Negotiation Committee. They raised continuing concerns about compensation, communication, resettlement expectations and institutional roles. FoN provided simplified information on the revised lithium mining lease, covering royalties, revenue sharing, local employment and skills development, and the proposed 1% Community Development Fund. FoN also trained journalists and radio presenters on lithium governance, revenue arrangements, institutional responsibilities and community development commitments, and encouraged evidence-based, community-centred reporting.

Impact: Community representatives now understand the key provisions of the revised lease better, giving them a clearer basis to take part in compensation, resettlement and community development discussions. Journalists and radio presenters are better equipped to communicate accurately on the sector and to engage affected communities. The issues raised have built a stronger evidence base for public dialogue and for FoN's advocacy on transparency, access to information and accountable institutions.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Advancing Inclusive Methane Management in Ghana

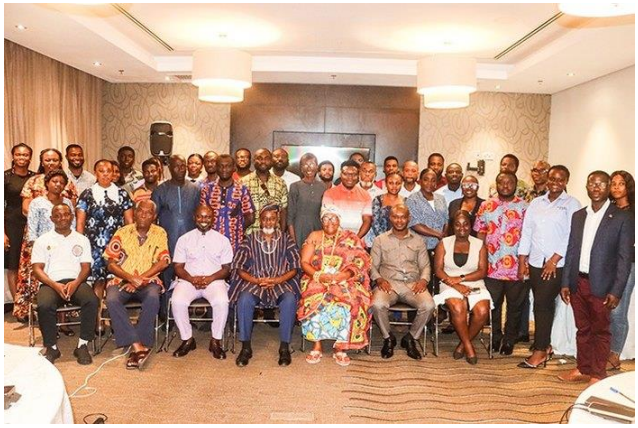
As Ghana works to meet its climate commitments, effective methane management has emerged as a critical priority, given its far-reaching implications for climate change, public health, food security, livelihoods, and environmental sustainability. Methane emissions from oil and gas, agriculture, and waste sectors pose increasing risks, particularly for coastal and rural communities whose wellbeing and livelihoods depend heavily on healthy ecosystems and natural resources.

Addressing methane emissions therefore represents not only a climate imperative but also an opportunity to promote sustainable green solutions that deliver immediate climate, environmental, and development benefits. Reducing methane emissions can contribute to cleaner air, improved public health, more sustainable agricultural practices, better waste management, and increased resilience for communities that are among those least responsible for climate change but are often hardest hit by its impacts.

Over the past year, Friends of the Nation (FoN), under the Strategic Partnership Initiative for Ghana and West Africa project, has played a strategic role in advancing inclusive and accountable methane management in Ghana. Our work has contributed to the project's overall impact of ensuring that women, young people, and communities in Ghana live in a more equal, just, peaceful, and sustainable country that leaves no one behind and provides a resilient and sustainable future through just economies, gender justice, and climate justice.

FoN's approach recognizes that the transition towards sustainable and low-emission practices must be inclusive and responsive to the realities of communities, farmers, women, young people, and other groups whose livelihoods are directly affected by climate and environmental changes. Through policy advocacy, technical analysis, community engagement, and multi-stakeholder collaboration, FoN promotes greater participation and shared responsibility in advancing sustainable methane management.

In 2025, FoN's partnership with the Africa Centre for Energy Policy (ACEP) strengthened collaboration and accountability among key stakeholders in Ghana's methane management landscape, including the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Sekondi–Takoradi Metropolitan Assembly (STMA), farmer-based organizations, civil society organizations, Ghana National Gas Company Limited, industry actors, and community representatives. This was achieved through a national learning event, where FoN created an inclusive platform for these actors to share experiences, assess progress, and identify persistent gaps in Ghana's implementation of its commitments under the Global Methane Pledge.





National learning event on inclusive and accountable methane management.

This engagement advanced the project's climate justice objective by moving the national conversation beyond emission reduction targets alone, toward practical, sustainable green solutions across key methane-emitting sectors. Ghana National Gas Company shared measurable progress in regulatory implementation and efforts to reduce routine gas flaring, demonstrating how improved industry practices and technologies can meaningfully lower methane emissions. Similarly, the Sekondi–Takoradi Metropolitan Assembly's presentation of innovations in waste management pointed to concrete, replicable pathways for reducing methane at the municipal level. Community voices were also elevated, farmer groups, civil society organizations, and community representatives successfully amplified grassroots concerns, including limited irrigation infrastructure, inadequate agricultural extension services, and the high costs of adopting methane-reducing practices, ensuring these realities now inform the national priority-setting process.

Most significantly, the engagement built cross-sector consensus around five priority actions for methane mitigation in Ghana:

Five Priority Actions for Methane Mitigation in Ghana

1. Stronger regulatory enforcement of low-emission practices
2. Increased investment in waste segregation & landfill infrastructure
3. Expanded agricultural extension services for climate-smart farming
4. Deeper collaboration among government, industry, civil society & communities
5. Sustained capacity-building and awareness creation

Strengthening Accountability and Community Rights in Ghana's Extractive Sector

3
communities with greater awareness of their rights: Supanso, Sureso and Pensanom

Within days
Swiss Lumber Ltd. graded the road that women in Pensanom reported

Wassa Amenfi Central, in Ghana's Western Region, is a forest-rich area whose economy relies heavily on cocoa farming and timber extraction. While timber has generated jobs and supported community development through Social Responsibility Agreements. It also brought social, environmental, and human rights issues including environmental degradation, loss of livelihoods, and neglect of people rights. Poor communication, limited transparency, and weak community participation have further strained relations between timber companies and host communities.

Friends of the Nation (FoN), under the Strategic Partnership for West Africa II project, set out to strengthen community rights and accountability for pro-poor, inclusive public spending within the extractive sector and at the District Assembly level. The project contributes to a broader vision in which women, young people, and communities across Ghana live in a more equal, just, peaceful, and sustainable country that leaves no one behind supported by resilient, inclusive economies and gender and climate justice.




Inclusive engagement platforms bring together forest-fringe communities, the company and the District Assembly.

Through this intervention, relationships between forest-fringe communities and timber industry stakeholders in the Wassa Amenfi Central District have significantly improved. Community members in Supanso, Sureso, and Pensanom now have greater awareness of their rights and responsibilities regarding tree tenure, timber harvesting regulations, and SRAs including their entitlement to benefit from trees planted on their farms and from community development contributions made by timber companies. This shift was made possible by strengthened dialogue between communities, Swiss Lumber Ltd., the District Assembly, and the Forestry Services Division (FSD), built through inclusive platforms for engagement that brought together women's groups and youth representatives, traditional authorities, assembly members, and company and District Assembly officials. These platforms created space for community concerns, farm destruction, inadequate compensation, poor road conditions, reckless driving by timber trucks, and weak communication channels, to be openly discussed and acknowledged for the first time, laying the groundwork for a more constructive relationship.

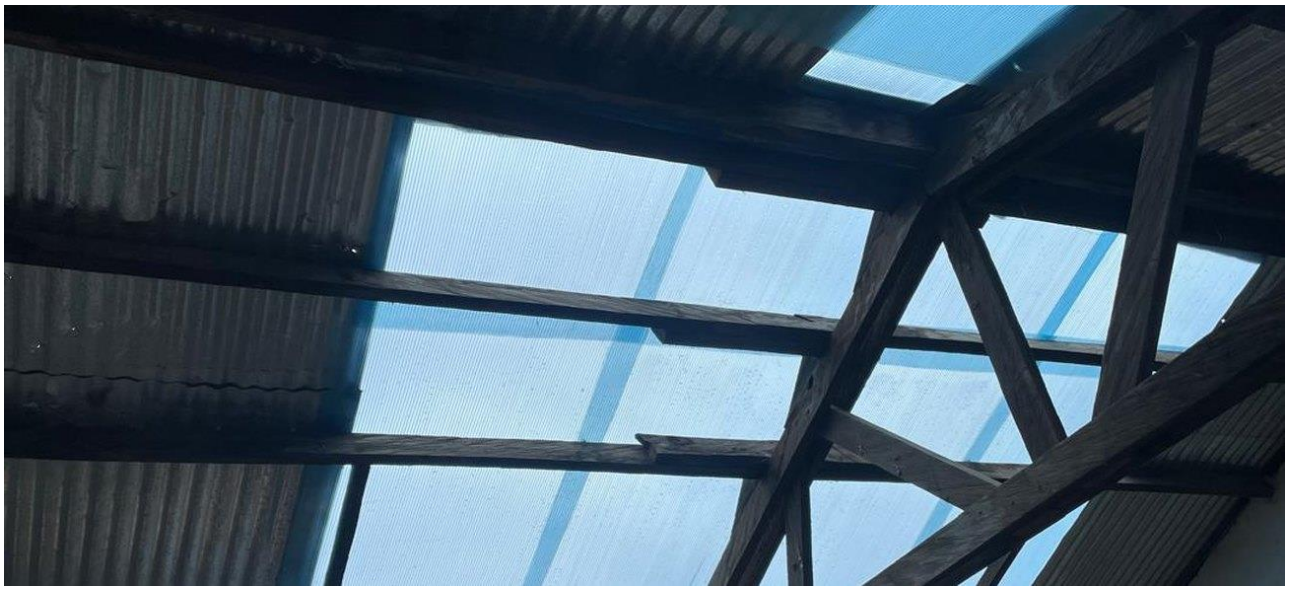
This resulted in an improved responsiveness and accountability of Swiss Lumber Ltd. toward affected communities. The company committed to strengthening its environmental management practices and community engagement processes, demonstrated by the installation of grievance procedure boards across its catchment communities. These mechanisms have increased community confidence in reporting concerns and seeking redress, turning what was once a one-way relationship into a genuine dialogue.

The strength of this new relationship was put to the test and proven in Pensanom, where women used the grievance procedure to report deteriorating road conditions to the company's bush manager. Within days, Swiss Lumber Ltd. graded the affected section of the road. It was a small fix, but a powerful signal, communities were not just being consulted, they were being heard, and their concerns were translating into real, timely action.

The intervention has contributed to improved relationships between communities, the extractive company, the District Assembly, and the Forestry Commission; increased transparency; improved access to grievance redress mechanisms; and enhanced participation of local communities in issues affecting their livelihoods and environment.

A Climate-Smart Roofing Pilot in Ellembelle District

As part of its commitment to climate-responsive development, Friends of the Nation (FoN), under the Strategic Partnership for West Africa II project, piloted the installation of polycarbonate roofing sheets in Esiama Methodist school basic school in the Ellembelle District. The initiative forms part of a broader effort to promote green solutions and innovative energy technologies within the education sector.



Polycarbonate roofing sheets at Esiama Methodist Basic School, Ellembelle District.

Polycarbonate roofing sheets allow greater natural light to filter into classrooms, reducing the need for artificial lighting and helping to lower overall energy consumption. Their heat-absorbing properties also assist in regulating indoor temperatures, creating a more comfortable and sustainable learning environment for pupils and teachers.

CHAPTER 2

02 Ocean Justice

Friends of the Nation's (FoN) Ocean Justice programme aims to advance sustainable development by integrating environmental protection, economic empowerment, and responsible resource governance in coastal and marine spaces. It aligns closely with key Sustainable Economic Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 14 (Life Below Water), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Growth), and SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production).

The programme promotes an integrated Blue Economy, sustainable fisheries management, the protection of marine mammals, and the prevention of plastic pollution, ensuring that ocean resources are used in ways that safeguard their long-term health and productivity.

It supports decent work and inclusive economic opportunities for coastal populations, especially small-scale fishers, women, and youth while promoting safer working conditions and more resilient livelihoods. The programme also encourages responsible fishing practices, improved transparency across fisheries value chains, and reduced overexploitation of marine resources, fostering more sustainable production and consumption patterns.

The programme contributes to a broader vision of ocean justice, in which coastal communities are empowered to participate in decision-making, defend their rights, and shape the governance of marine and natural resources. By linking environmental sustainability with social equity and economic resilience, FoN's work promotes a holistic approach to development, one in which healthy oceans, decent livelihoods, and responsible stewardship of natural resources are mutually reinforcing outcomes.

FISHERIES

Advancing Safety and Connectivity in Maritime Space through Innovative Technologies

10
Alon devices deployed on artisanal canoes

7
coastal communities across four coastal regions

2–10 min
SOS alert response times during the pilot

12,500
canoes proposed for a phased national rollout

Ghana's artisanal marine fisheries face persistent safety, communication, and governance challenges, including limited offshore connectivity, weak emergency response mechanisms, and continued exposure to Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing. These challenges directly affect fisher safety, livelihoods, and the effective implementation of fisheries management measures. National legislation, including the Fisheries and Aquaculture Act, 2025 (Act 1146), the Ghana Maritime Authority Act, 2002 (Act 630), provides a clear statutory mandate for improving safety at sea, strengthening monitoring systems, and enhancing inter-agency collaboration through the adoption of appropriate technologies.

It is against this background that in 2025, Friends of the Nation (FoN), in partnership with Navcast Inc. (Canada), implemented a Proof of Concept (PoC) to assess the feasibility and value of the Alon Safety and Connectivity Device, a satellite-enabled system designed to improve safety at sea, enable communication beyond GSM coverage, and strengthen fisheries monitoring and governance. The PoC deployed 10 devices on 10 artisanal fishing canoes across 7 coastal communities in four coastal regions, with fishing trips ranging from 1-13, lasting between 2-5 days, and 20 to 30 nautical miles of active fishing, and in some cases extending beyond 80 nautical miles as the farthest distance canoes traveled.

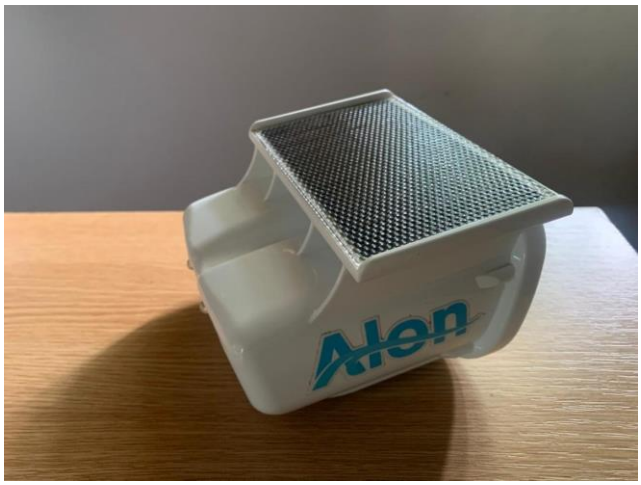
The integrated system, comprising the Alon device, the Adarna communication application, and the SkyTracker monitoring platform, enabled real-time vessel tracking, two-way communication, and automated SOS alerts. During the pilot, SOS alerts transmitted GPS coordinates enabled response times of between 2 and 10 minutes, significantly improving emergency response capability.

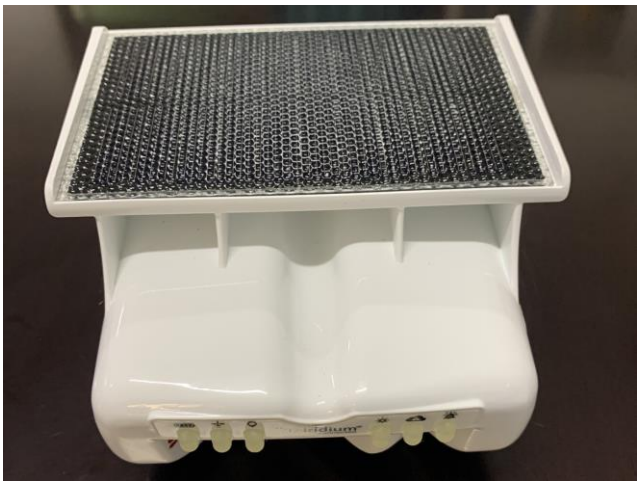
One reported incident from Lekpongunor in the Greater Accra Region demonstrated the system's life-saving potential when an SOS alert was triggered after a canoe became trapped at sea for nearly three hours, enabling timely assistance from another canoe.

The PoC generated important governance and policy-relevant data. Tracking evidence confirmed that artisanal canoes routinely operate far beyond the Inshore Exclusion Zone (IEZ), providing objective information to support enforcement, safety planning, and ongoing policy discussions.

THE ALON STORY IN PICTURES

From the beach to the dashboard





01 The device

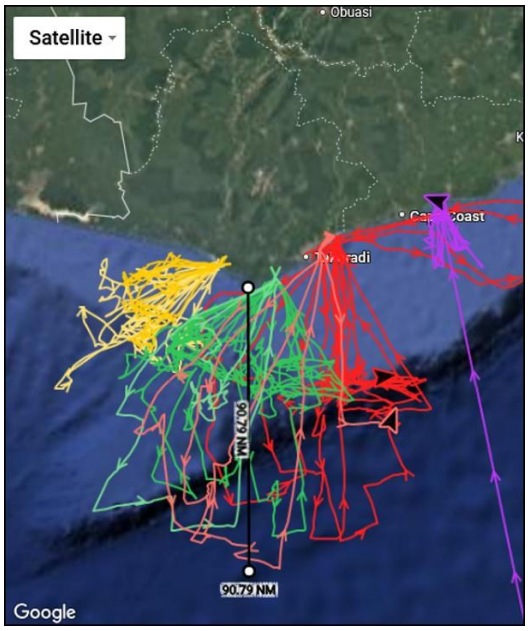
The Alon Safety and Connectivity Device: a satellite-enabled unit with status indicator lights.





02 Fitted on the canoe

Fixing the device to a canoe mast, and the unit in place among the canoes.



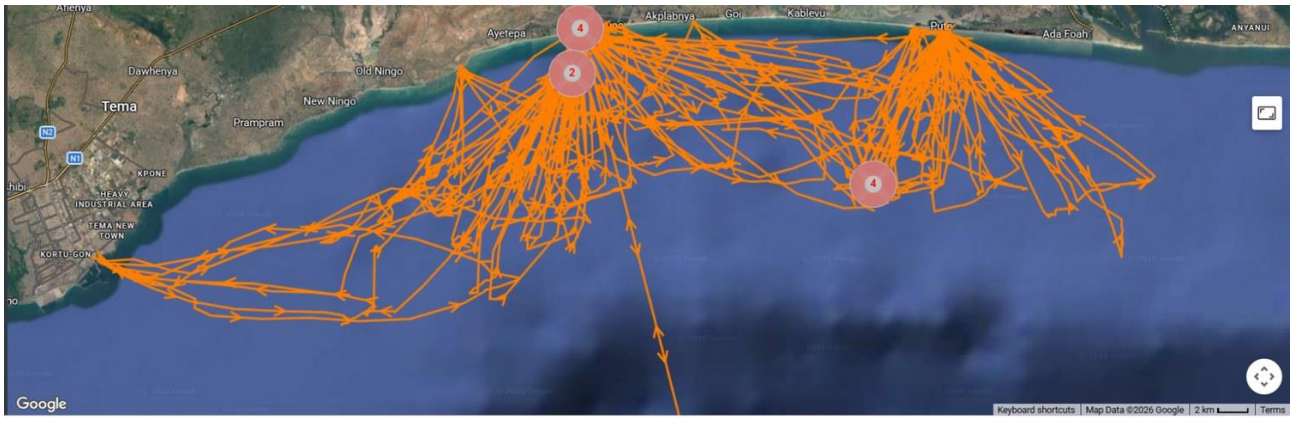
03 Many canoes, far offshore

Tracks from several canoes, with the distance measured on the platform.

90.79 NM

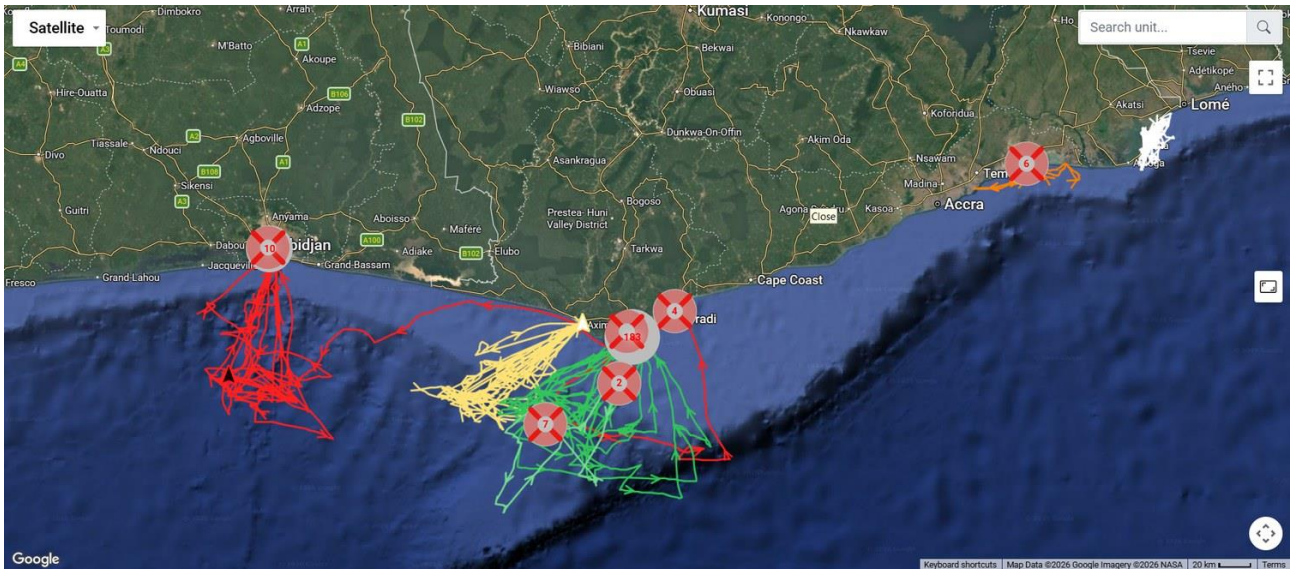
measured offshore on the monitoring platform

Evidence like this supports the Minister's statement below that canoes have operated beyond 40 nautical miles.



04 One canoe, many trips

Tracks of a single canoe fitted with the device, shown on the monitoring platform.



05 The big picture

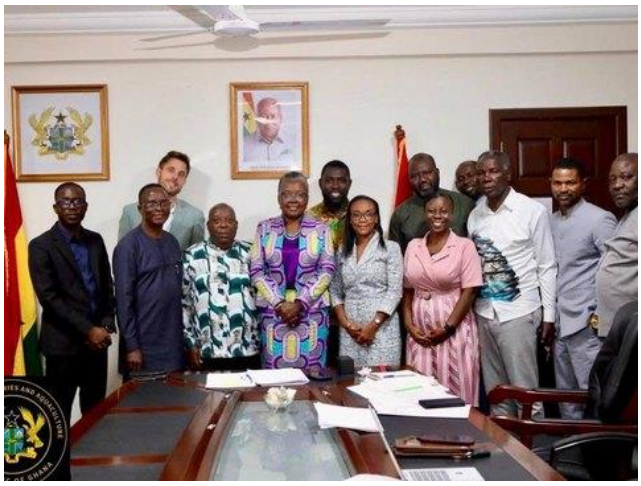
Monitoring-platform view of the tracked canoes along the coast.

> *"The argument by trawler operators that artisanal fishers do not go beyond 12 nautical miles is inaccurate, as evidence shows that canoes have operated beyond 40 nautical miles. This information provided by Alon is therefore useful and will support ongoing discussions and decision-making as we move forward"*
>
> **— Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture**



Hon. Emelia Arthur, Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture

Stakeholder engagements involved key institutions, including government agencies, fisher associations, enforcement and security services, academia, and international partners. The Fisheries Commission, Ghana Maritime Authority, and Petroleum Commission acknowledged Alon's potential to strengthen safety oversight, monitoring in restricted and offshore zones, and inter-agency coordination.





Stakeholder engagements during the Alon Safety and Connectivity Device proof of concept.

Fishing communities and associations reported high acceptance of the device, valuing its combined safety, navigation, communication, and traceability functions, and expressed strong interest in acquiring the device during a planned national rollout.

The PoC also identified implementation challenges requiring policy attention. These include affordability constraints (estimated unit cost of USD 900 with an annual subscription cost of USD 240 per canoe inclusive), the need for sustained training and sensitization, connectivity and battery performance issues linked to improper device handling, and the absence of formalized data-sharing and governance protocols across institutions. Based on the findings, the report recommends a government-led, phased national rollout targeting 12,500 artisanal canoes between 2026 and 2027, prioritizing motorized fleets and high-risk fishing zones. Proposed financing options include a combination of fisher contributions, government subscription support, and potential development partner co-financing.

In conclusion, the Alon Safety and Connectivity Device PoC demonstrates a viable and scalable solution for enhancing safety at sea, strengthening fisheries monitoring and traceability, improving compliance with national fisheries regulations, and advancing Ghana's Blue Economy objectives. The evidence supports policy action toward institutional adoption and national scale-up, anchored in Ghana's existing legal and regulatory framework.

How Media Training Is Changing the Story on Safety at Sea

28	2	35,000+
journalists, officials and community leaders trained	radio stations launched weekly fisheries programmes	estimated listeners reached by each programme

For generations, Ghana's small-scale fishers have gone out to sea carrying more than nets, they carry risk. Every trip is a gamble against unpredictable weather, ageing boats, and gaps in emergency response that can turn a routine outing into a life-or-death situation. Yet for years, these daily risks stayed largely invisible in the media, covered only after tragedy struck, rarely explored as the ongoing safety crisis it is. Many Journalists lacked the background to report on safety risks, regulatory gaps, or the human toll of accidents at sea with the depth the issue deserved. Without informed reporting, public pressure for reform stayed muted, and fishers' stories went largely untold.

In 2025, Friends of the Nation, through the Marine SafeNet Ghana Project, in partnership with ProSea Marine Education and with support from the International Fund for Fishing Safety, set out to close that gap. The intervention trained 28 participants: journalists, officials from the Fisheries Commission of Ghana and the Ghana Maritime Authority, and community leaders from fishing communities across the Western Region.

The training went beyond facts and figures. Journalists sat face-to-face with fishers who had survived serious incidents at sea, hearing first-hand what it means to face an emergency with little support. Interactive sessions with community leaders grounded the technical content, safety regulations, accident prevention, emergency preparedness, in lived reality, giving participants both the knowledge and the empathy to report responsibly.



Participants in the Marine SafeNet Ghana media training on fisher safety.

The shift was immediate and measurable. Every radio station that took part in the training went on to air reports and discussions on artisanal fisher safety. Two stations went further, launching weekly fisheries programmes dedicated to safety, regulation, and fisher welfare, each reaching an estimated 35,000+ listeners.

For the first time, fishing communities that had lived with risk in silence were hearing their own realities reflected to them on air and being heard by regulators and the public. Media coverage does more than inform, it holds systems accountable. By equipping journalists to tell accurate, human-centred stories, the intervention has sparked sustained public dialogue on maritime safety, placing pressure on institutions to close the gaps that put fishers' lives at risk.

Financial Statement

The charts below present FoN's comprehensive income and expenditure for the year ended 31st December 2025, and its financial position as of that date.

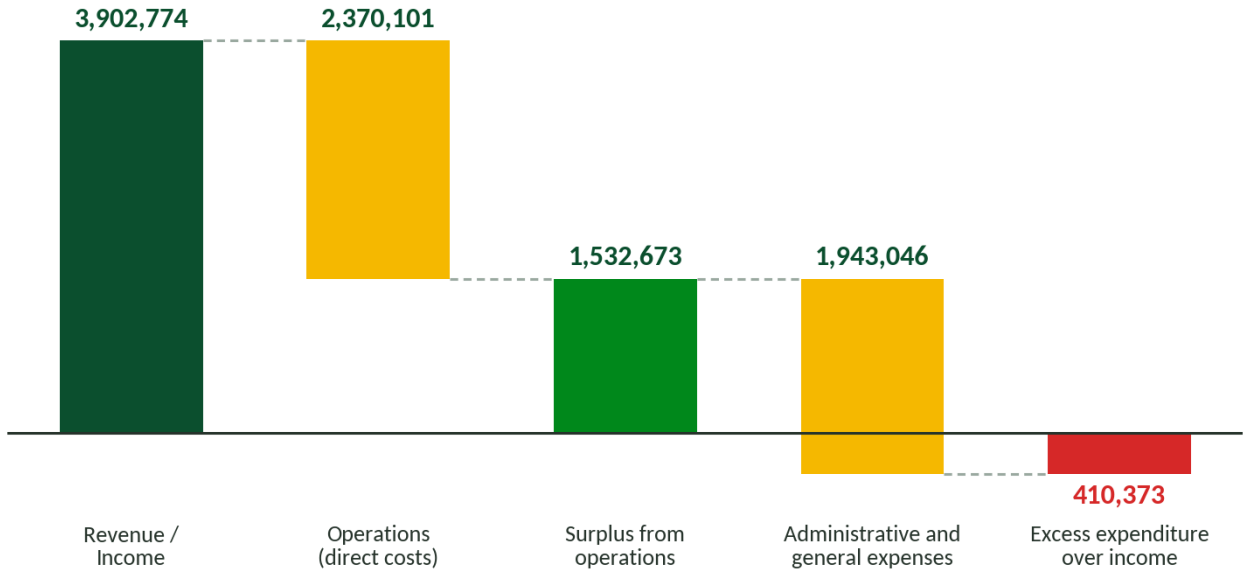


Figure 3: Comprehensive income and expenditure for the year ended 31st December 2025

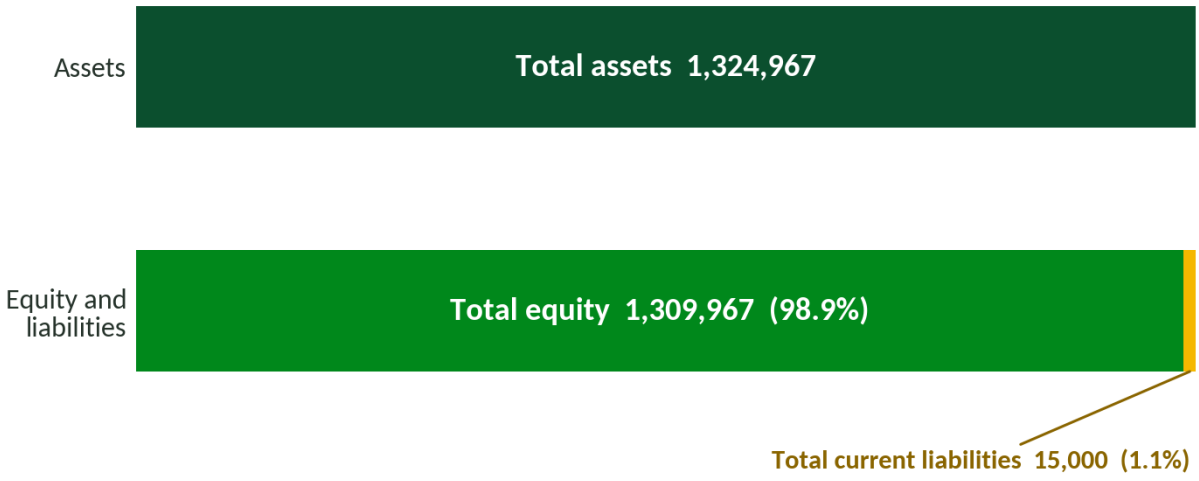


Figure 4: Financial position as of 31st December 2025

DO THE RIGHT THING

Friends of the Nation

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