



## IN THIS ISSUE

**Building Legal and  
Advocacy Skills at the  
Congo River School**

**Celebrating Excellence &  
Impact in Our  
Communities!**

**Documenting the  
Human and  
Environmental Costs of  
the Simandou Project**

## WELCOME TO QUARTER 1 NEWSLETTER

This edition brings together stories that reflect a shared reality across the communities we work with: progress is happening, but not without tension, resistance, and the need for accountability. This edition is also a moment of celebration. We are celebrating not only individual excellence, but the collective effort behind every achievement.



## Legal

### Building Legal and Advocacy Skills at the Congo River School

ACA's Legal Director, Lalla Moulati Touré, participated in a two-week, intensive session of the Congo River School, an initiative led by Afrewatch in collaboration with EarthRights International.

The session was aimed at training community activists so that they can, in turn, support and assist communities affected by mining companies. It focused on raising awareness, strengthening local capacities, and equipping activists with the tools needed to address the challenges posed by extractive industries.

On March 2, 2026, the first cohort of the program officially concluded its training. Throughout the program, participants benefited from the expertise of facilitators from several countries, including Senegal, Ghana, Liberia, Congo, and the United States, representing organizations with extensive experience in community-based work.

This participation reflects our continued commitment to strengthening the expertise of our legal team and building stronger regional and international networks in support of environmental justice and the rights of affected communities.



*ACA's Legal Director supporting activists at the Congo River School, an initiative led by Afrewatch and EarthRights International.*



## Niafrang Community Raises Concerns Over Mining Project

During a recent visit by the Parliamentary Commission on Energy and Mineral Resources, representatives from Niafrang spoke out about the future of their coastal territory. Community members stressed that the Niafrang dune system is a single ecological unit that plays a crucial role in protecting the coastline from erosion and preventing the salinization of nearby agricultural lands.

During the visit, residents also raised concerns about the project's compliance with national mining regulations, particularly regarding required safety distances from wetlands and waterways. They emphasized the need for strict enforcement of the law to protect freshwater resources and local livelihoods.

Notably, youth representatives pointed to the ongoing situation in neighboring Abene, where G-SAND is reportedly continuing mining activities despite the cancellation of its concession by the Supreme Court. They highlighted this as a troubling example of the gap between legal decisions and their enforcement, and called on authorities to ensure that judicial rulings are upheld in practice.

The community is therefore urging authorities to recognize the ecological integrity of the dune system and to prioritize sustainable alternatives such as ecotourism, responsible fishing, and sustainable agriculture—pathways they view as both economically viable and environmentally sound.

## Documenting the Human and Environmental Costs of the Simandou Project

During a press briefing held on March 24th, Advocates for Community Alternatives (ACA) and Actions Mines (AMINES) presented new evidence documenting the impacts of Guinea's Simandou Iron Ore Project on local communities.

### ACA presents bailiff's evidence

ACA presented a bailiff's report from August 11, 2025, which documents severe damage across five prefectures:

- Agriculture: Fields invaded by red mud from rail construction; oil pollution destroying harvests.
- Fishing: Stone dredging for the port has torn nets and destroyed motors; fish have fled.





*A recent picture of the Wouradala River showing the effect of polluted runoff from the Simandou Project.*

- Blasting: Homes, a mosque, and a health centre cracked or destroyed; residents report feeling "earthquakes."
- Water pollution: Several rivers providing drinking water are polluted..

### **AMINES report: 62% increase in impacts**

At the same time, AMINES presented findings from its latest citizen monitoring report, documenting a growing number of impacts across affected areas, with many community complaints still unresolved despite complaints filed with the companies' grievance mechanisms.

### **Community demands in the face of silence from WCS**

The organizations are calling for greater transparency, an independent environmental and social audit, and the creation of a public mechanism to ensure effective compensation and restoration for affected communities. We officially notified Winning Consortium Simandou of the damages to fields, houses, livelihoods, and the environment documented by the bailiff in January 2026. We gave them one month to respond, in accordance with the law. They have never responded. This silence is not an omission, it is a position. It is contempt elevated to a strategy.

**CDD**



## Strengthening “Oman Yie Die”: CDD Sharpens Strategy for Nationwide Expansion

ACA’s Community-Driven Development (CDD) Department is proud to announce a new cycle of its flagship Oman Yie Die project, in which we support mining-threatened Ghanaian communities to implement community-driven development projects and conduct advocacy to protect their vision of sustainable, inclusive future.

Oman Yie Die is an adaptation of the Facilitated Collective Action Process (FCAP), an approach to community-driven development that was developed and popularized in East Africa by ACA’s partner organization, Spark MicroGrants. In Ghana, ACA uses the FCAP to support communities to create a common development vision and equip them with skills and financial resources – including a USD 9,000 microgrant-to pursue their vision.

At its March 2026 team session in Osino in the Eastern Region, the team reviewed and refined the FCAP model to enhance its impact and future implementation. Project Manager Godfred Osei Nimako opened the session with a forward-looking update, announcing the expansion of Oman Yie Die to 200 additional communities - 100 in northern Ghana and 100 in the south – with the support of Spark MicroGrants. Discussions were underway to choose the specific districts and communities that will benefit from the expansion.

Senior Trainer Francis Manu led a practical session on the key steps in rolling out Oman Yie Die, while ACA Legal Officer Bridget Kartey provided guidance on land acquisition and its legal framework.

## A Symbol of Togetherness: Boateh’s new durbar ground officially opened

On Tuesday February 24, 2026, a quiet farming community called Boateh in the Abuakwa South Municipality, was filled with colour, music and celebration as residents gathered to witness the official inauguration of a newly constructed Durbar Ground.

The project, a collaboration between Advocates for Community Alternatives (ACA), the Abuakwa South Municipal Assembly and the people of Boateh, marks another milestone in community-driven development within the municipality.



What made the occasion particularly significant was not just the unveiling of a physical structure, but the story of unity and collective effort behind it. Speaking during the occasion, ACA's Senior Trainer Francis Manu described the event as more than the commissioning of a project.

***“Today is not just the commissioning of a project,” he said. “Today is the commissioning of unity, vision, and self-belief.”***

He noted that through the FCAP process, the people of Boateh chose not to wait for development to come to them, but instead took the bold step to plan, decide and work together to bring their vision to life.

***“You didn’t wait to be developed; you chose to develop yourselves. You planned together. You decided together. You worked together. And today, you celebrate together,” he stated to loud applause.***

Drawing on Akan proverbs to underscore the spirit of togetherness, Mr. Manu quoted, “Nsa baako nkura adeso” (One hand cannot lift a load), explaining that the Durbar Ground stands as proof that when hands come together, burdens become lighter and dreams become achievable. He added another proverb, “Baakofoɔ nsa ntɔ dua” (One person’s hand cannot fell a tree), emphasizing that the strength of the community lies in its unity. According to him, Boateh’s achievement demonstrates that development is not imported but built from within.



*The chief of Boateh (2nd right) joined by ACA's Francis Manu (3rd right) to celebrate the occasion*

## **Communities lead; ACA supports: collective action transforms rural livelihoods**

Advocates for Community Alternatives (ACA), an NGO, held a colorful graduation ceremony at Owuratwum near Kyebi in the Abuakwa South Municipality, marking the completion of the Facilitated Collective Action Process (FCAP) in 22 communities. FCAP is a community-driven development model developed and popularized in East Africa by ACA's partner organization, Spark MicroGrants.



Communities in Abuakwa South, Atiwa West, and Fanteakwa South have completed a range of sustainable projects over the past six years in partnership with their District Assemblies and ACA. These include school blocks, teachers' quarters, a CHPS compound, a doctor's bungalow, mechanized boreholes, an electrification project, a soap-making center, and a poultry farm – significantly improving local living conditions.

A key highlight of the event was the inauguration of a newly constructed three-unit kindergarten block at Owuratwum under the program. ACA's Project Manager, Godfred Osei Nimako, traced the organization's work in the Eastern Region to 2020, following earlier efforts in Nkoranza South in the Bono East Region.



*The 3-unit classroom block completed under "Oman Yie Die" at Owuratwum*

"After successful pilot projects in Sagyemase, Nsuapemso, and Juaso, ACA expanded in 2023 to reach more communities across the three districts. So far, ACA's interventions have benefited 34 of 56 communities in Abuakwa South, 28 of 32 in Fanteakwa South, 20 in Atiwa West, and 24 in Nkoranza South," he stated.

Mr. Nimako urged beneficiary communities to maintain the projects and continue mobilizing local resources for further development. He emphasized that the Oman Yie Die initiative aims to revive communal cooperation and self-help traditions. He also announced plans to extend the program to 200 additional communities nationwide over the next two years.

Local leaders, including the Assembly Member of Odumasi Electoral Area, Collins Akonnor and Ankobeahene of Owuratwum, Nana Oturoku Danquah III, expressed gratitude to ACA and community members for the achievements.

## General



## Celebrating Excellence & Impact in Our Communities!

On March 26, during a graduation ceremony of 22 communities held at Owuratwum near Kyebi in Abuakwa South, a truly inspiring moment unfolded. Five communities (Boateh, Owura-twum, Ntabea, Adukrom, and Atwemamena) came together to honor one of our exceptional Senior Trainers, George Nafiu Mpoah, with a special award.



*Georges Nafiu Mpoah receiving a recognition award from five communities.*

This recognition celebrates his unwavering dedication and commitment to the successful implementation of the Oman Yie Die projects across these communities. Your passion and hard work continue to transform lives and uplift communities. Congratulations, George, for making ACA proud!

**Thank you for reading!**

