

Foundation Year for Sustainable
Cashew Led Livelihoods in
Wenchi and Sampa

Annual Impact Report 2025



Acknowledgements

Rosswood Impact extends its sincere appreciation to the cashew farming communities of Wenchi Municipality and the Sampa/Tain District for their openness, cooperation, and willingness to engage throughout the 2025 foundation year.

The organisation acknowledges the leadership of traditional authorities, cooperative executives, and the B.D.T Cashew Farmers Union for their role in mobilising farmers, facilitating dialogue, and strengthening community ownership.

Appreciation is also extended to partners, interns, and the Rosswood Impact field team whose dedication supported learning, innovation, and delivery during the reporting period.





Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Message From Leadership | 10 |
| About Rosswood Impact | 12 |
| Vision, Mission, and Values | 14 |
| Context and Development Challenge | 16 |
| Rationale For Rosswood Impact’s Approach | 18 |
| Geographic Focus and Community Coverage | 20 |
| Theory Of Change and Impact Framework | 22 |
| Alignment with The Sustainable Development Goals | 24 |
| 2025 as a Foundation Year | 26 |
| Engagement Approach and Baseline Interactions | 27 |
| Results at a Glance | 30 |
| Farmer Organisation and Institutional Strengthening | 32 |
| Livelihood and Productivity Support Interventions | 34 |
| Inclusion and Equity | 36 |
| Outcomes and Early Change Signals | 38 |
| Stakeholder Voices and Case Insights | 40 |
| Stakeholder Engagement and Community Ownership | 42 |
| Governance and Accountability | 44 |
| Risk Management and Mitigation | 46 |
| Learning and Adaptive Management | 48 |
| Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Framework | 50 |
| Environmental Sustainability and Circularity | 54 |
| Partnerships and Collaborations | 56 |
| Projections and Strategic Roadmap For 2026 | 58 |
| Scalability and Sustainability Outlook | 59 |
| Data Integrity and Limitations | 60 |
| Conclusion and Way Forward | 61 |







Abbreviations

Acronym

CEO
CBO
Co-op
CSA
FBO
FGD
FY
GIS
HQ
km
KPI
LC
Ltd
M&E
MEL
N/A
NGO
OCHA

PPA
PWD
Q1
Q3
Q4
SD
SDG
SME
TOC
UN
WASH
Yr

Full Term

Chief Executive Officer
Community-Based Organisation
Cooperative
Climate-Smart Agriculture
Farmer-Based Organisation
Focus Group Discussion
Financial Year
Geographic Information System
Headquarters
Kilometre
Key Performance Indicator
Local Community
Limited
Monitoring and Evaluation
Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
Not Applicable
Non-Governmental Organisation
United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
Participatory Planning Approach
Persons with Disabilities
Quarter One
Quarter Three
Quarter Four
Sustainable Development
Sustainable Development Goal
Small and Medium Enterprise
Theory of Change
United Nations
Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
Year



 **Causing big
changes with
every effort**



Executive Summary

Overview

In 2025, Rosswood Impact deepened its engagement with cashew farming communities in Wenchi Municipality and the Sampa/Tain District of Ghana's Bono Region. The year marked the formal activation of Rosswood Impact as the social development and sustainability arm of Rosswood Company Ltd, following earlier commercial interactions that revealed deeper livelihood challenges facing smallholder farmers.

Context and Challenge

Cashew farming is the economic backbone of the target communities, yet incomes are highly seasonal. During the off season, households experience significant income gaps, youth migration increases, and women face limited access to land and alternative income opportunities. In addition, large volumes of cashew apples are wasted annually due to limited processing knowledge and infrastructure, representing lost income and environmental inefficiency.

2025 as a Foundation Year

Rosswood Impact deliberately positioned 2025 as a foundation year. Rather than prioritising rapid scale up, the organisation focused on trust



building, structured engagement, and institutional readiness. This approach responded directly to community experiences with short lived interventions and emphasised sincerity, consistency, and visible action.

Key Outputs (Aggregated)

- 1,169 smallholder cashew farmers were formally registered across five rural communities.
- Six cooperatives were formed or strengthened and coordinated under

one union, providing an organised platform for engagement, governance, and future market participation.



- Cooperative and union bank accounts were established to promote transparency, accountability, and readiness for partnerships.
- Livelihood and productivity pilots were delivered, including ginger planting material distribution, provision of farm equipment, and demonstrations of cashew apple value addition.

Early Outcome Signals

As a foundation year, Rosswood Impact does not claim long term impact outcomes. However, early change

signals were observed, including renewed trust between farmers and project actors, increased acceptance of cooperative based organisation, growing interest among youth in short cycle livelihood options, and heightened awareness of the economic value of cashew by products.

Inclusion and Equity

Engagements prioritised women, youth, and persons with disabilities through livelihood options that reduce barriers related to land access, capital intensity, and physical demands. Cooperative based delivery further supported shared access and inclusive participation.

Looking Ahead to 2026

Building on the trust, organisation, and learning achieved in 2025, Rosswood Impact will transition from groundwork to delivery in 2026. Planned priorities include detailed farmer profiling, expanded input support, establishment of community level processing centres, structured capacity building programmes, and strengthened market linkages. A formal monitoring, evaluation, and learning framework will guide implementation and accountability.

The 2025 reporting year therefore represents both a foundation and a turning point. It established the relationships, structures, and evidence base required for Rosswood Impact to deliver sustainable, inclusive, and measurable livelihood outcomes in the years ahead.

Message From Leadership

The year 2025 marked a defining with cashew farming communities in Wenchi and Sampa. Through the formal activation of Rosswood Impact, we made a deliberate decision to move beyond transactional relationships and invest in understanding the deeper livelihood realities faced by smallholder farmers.

Many of the communities we engaged with have experienced projects that promised much but delivered little. Trust, therefore, could not be assumed. Our approach in 2025 was guided by patience and sincerity. We chose to listen carefully, return consistently, and demonstrate commitment through visible actions rather than speed or scale.

Throughout the year, Rosswood Impact focused on strengthening farmer organisation, engaging traditional leadership, and piloting practical livelihood support that responded directly to community priorities. Cooperative formation, the establishment of transparent governance structures, the provision of farm equipment, and the introduction of ginger and cashew apple value addition demonstrations were not isolated activities.

They were deliberate signals of a long term partnership anchored in accountability and mutual respect.

We also learned that the challenges facing cashew farmers extend beyond production.

Seasonal income gaps, youth migration, limited opportunities for women, and the widespread waste of cashew apples remain pressing concerns. These insights have reinforced our conviction that sustainable impact in the cashew sector must be built around value addition, alternative livelihoods, and strong farmer institutions.

As we look ahead to 2026, Rosswood Impact is prepared to move from foundation building to delivery. The trust and structures established in 2025 provide a solid base for investing in processing infrastructure, skills development, and market access that can generate year round income and resilience for farming households.

I am grateful to the farmers, traditional leaders, cooperative executives, and partners who walked this journey with us. Together, we are laying the groundwork for systems that can endure beyond a single reporting cycle and contribute meaningfully to inclusive and sustainable rural livelihoods.



Ms. Priscilla Asante
Founder/CEO
Rosswood Ltd

About Rosswood Impact

Rosswood Impact is the social development and sustainability arm of Rosswood Company Ltd. It was established to address livelihood, inclusion, and environmental challenges within agricultural value chains, with an initial focus on the cashew sector in Ghana's Bono Region.

While Rosswood Company Ltd engages commercially in cashew based processing and product development, Rosswood Impact operates with a distinct development mandate. Its role is to strengthen farmer livelihoods, reduce waste, promote inclusive participation, and support long term resilience within rural farming communities. This separation allows Rosswood Impact to prioritise community needs, learning, and sustainability outcomes alongside commercial considerations.

Rosswood Impact works through a community centred and market aware approach. Interventions are designed in close collaboration with farmers, cooperatives, unions, and traditional authorities, ensuring that support reflects local realities and builds on existing social structures. The organisation emphasises collective action, transparency, and readiness for future partnerships as foundations for sustainable impact.





In 2025, Rosswood Impact formally activated its operations following earlier engagement with cashew farmers through Rosswood Company Ltd. This activation marked a transition from commercial interaction to structured livelihood support, positioning Rosswood Impact as a long term partner committed to inclusive growth and responsible value chain development.

Vision, Mission & Values

Vision

To build resilient farming communities where cashew farmers earn stable, dignified incomes throughout the year.

Mission

To support smallholder cashew farmers through value addition, alternative livelihoods, strong farmer organisations, and inclusive opportunities for women and youth.

Core Values

Inclusion

Rosswood Impact is committed to ensuring that women, youth, and persons with disabilities are meaningfully included in livelihood opportunities and decision making processes.





Sustainability

Interventions are designed to deliver long term economic, social, and environmental benefits, with a focus on reducing waste, strengthening local institutions, and promoting circular value chain practices.

Accountability

Transparency, responsible resource management, and clear governance structures underpin all engagements with farmers, cooperatives, and partners.

Partnership

Rosswood Impact believes that lasting change is achieved through collaboration with communities, traditional leaders, farmer organisations, and technical partners.

Learning and Adaptation

Continuous learning from field experience and community feedback guides programme design and implementation, ensuring relevance and effectiveness over time.

Context & Development Challenge

Cashew farming is the primary source of Bono Region, particularly within Wenchi Municipality and the Sampa/Tain District. The crop provides seasonal cash income for smallholder farmers and underpins local economies during the harvest period. However, despite its importance, cashew farming alone does not provide year round livelihood security for most households.

A defining challenge is the seasonality of income. Earnings from cashew are concentrated within a limited harvest window, after which many farming households experience prolonged income gaps. During the off season, families struggle to meet basic needs such as food, school fees, healthcare, and farm maintenance. This seasonal pattern constrains household resilience and limits farmers' ability to plan or reinvest in their farms.



The lack of viable off season opportunities contributes to youth migration, as young people leave their communities in search of temporary work in towns and cities. Those who remain are often under employed. Women, while deeply involved in farming and household economies, face additional constraints, including limited access to land, capital, and training opportunities. These dynamics weaken social cohesion and reduce the long term attractiveness of agriculture as a livelihood.

Another major challenge is the widespread wastage of cashew apples. After nut harvesting, large volumes of cashew apples are discarded due to limited knowledge, short shelf life, and the absence of local processing facilities. This represents a significant loss of potential income and an inefficiency within the cashew value chain, with negative environmental implications.

Underlying these challenges is a history of short lived interventions that have raised expectations without delivering sustained benefits. As a result, many communities exhibit caution and scepticism toward new initiatives. Trust cannot be assumed and must be rebuilt through consistent engagement, transparency, and visible action.



These interconnected challenges underscore the need for an approach that goes beyond production support. Addressing livelihood insecurity in cashew farming communities requires integrated solutions that combine farmer organisation, value addition, inclusive livelihood options, and long term institutional strengthening.

Rationale For Rosswood Impact's Approach

Rosswood Impact's approach was shaped by and a recognition of the limits of purely commercial relationships in addressing livelihood challenges. While market participation is important, it does not, on its own, resolve income seasonality, exclusion, or structural inefficiencies within the value chain.

Initial interactions with farmers through Rosswood Company Ltd revealed that farmers valued transparency and market connection, but also faced deeper challenges that required a development oriented response. Farmers consistently raised concerns about off season hardship, the wastage of cashew apples, limited access to tools and inputs, and the absence of opportunities for youth and women to engage meaningfully in income generating activities.



In response, Rosswood Impact adopted an integrated, livelihood centred approach built on five core principles:

Community Led Engagement:

Interventions are informed by continuous dialogue with farmers, cooperative leaders, and traditional authorities, ensuring relevance and local ownership.

Farmer Organisation:

Strengthening cooperatives and unions provides a platform for collective action, shared resources, accountability, and future market engagement.

Value Addition and Waste Reduction:

Promoting the utilisation of cashew apples and other by products supports a zero waste, circular economy

model while creating new income streams.

Inclusive Livelihood Options:

Short cycle and low barrier activities such as ginger cultivation, processing, and beekeeping are prioritised to enable participation by women, youth, and persons with disabilities.

Phased Implementation:

A foundation first approach allows trust, readiness, and institutional capacity to be built before scaling investment and infrastructure.

This rationale positions Rosswood Impact not as a one off project, but as a long term partner working alongside communities to strengthen resilience, diversify incomes, and prepare farmers for sustainable participation in value added markets.



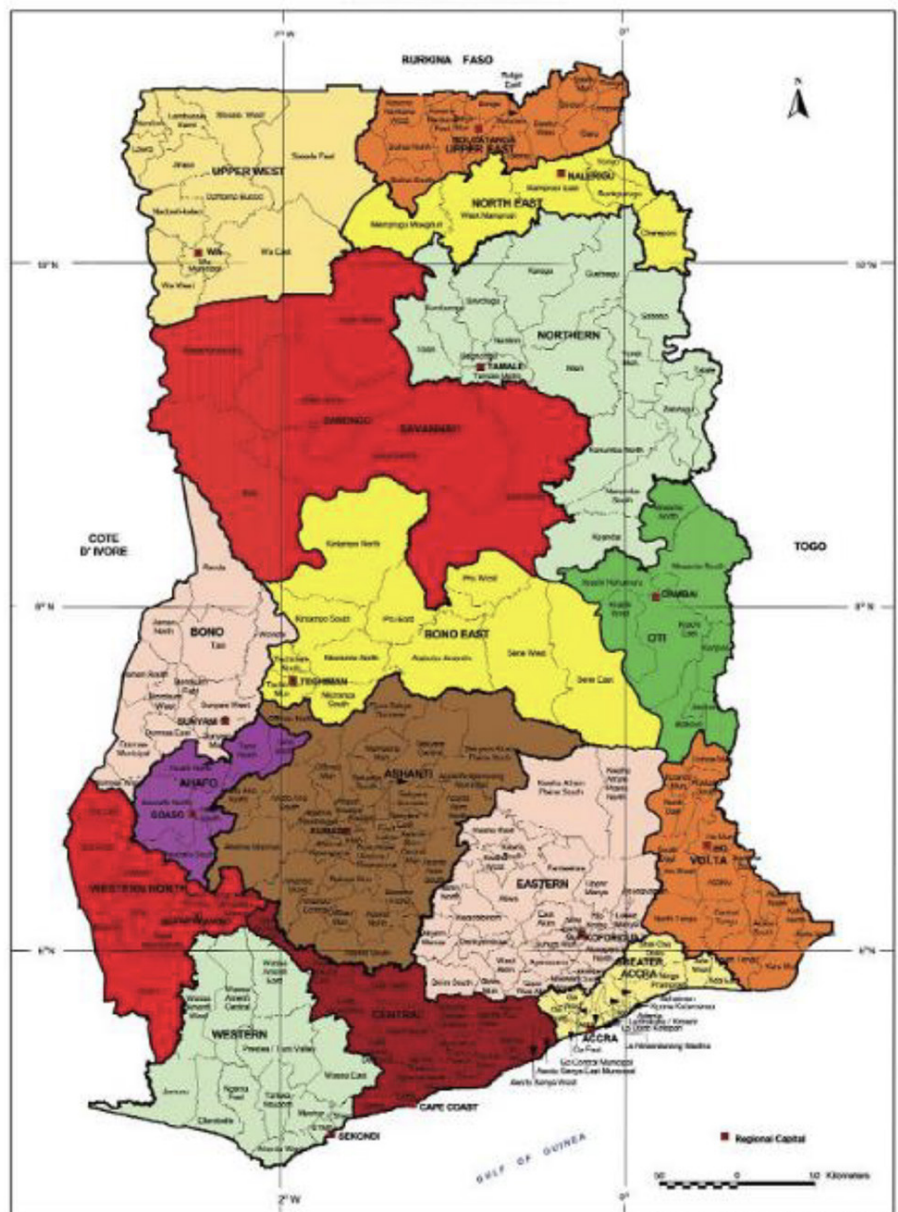
Geographic Focus & Community Coverage

Rosswood Impact’s 2025 activities were communities within Ghana’s Bono Region. The geographic focus was informed by existing relationships, the concentration of smallholder cashew farmers, and the prevalence of livelihood challenges associated with income seasonality and limited value addition.

Wenchi

In Wenchi Municipality, Rosswood Impact engaged farmers from the following communities

- Abotreye
- Amponsah Krom



Source: Ghana Statistical Service, Geographical Information Systems (GIS) Section



These communities are characterised by smallholder cashew production as the primary income source. During the off season, households experience significant income constraints, which informed Rosswood Impact’s emphasis on cooperative strengthening, alternative livelihoods, and inclusive participation in this area.

Sampa/Tain District

In the Sampa/Tain District, Rosswood Impact worked with farming communities along the Sampa corridor, including:

- 📍 Kwame Tentene
- 📍 Debibi
- 📍 Brodi

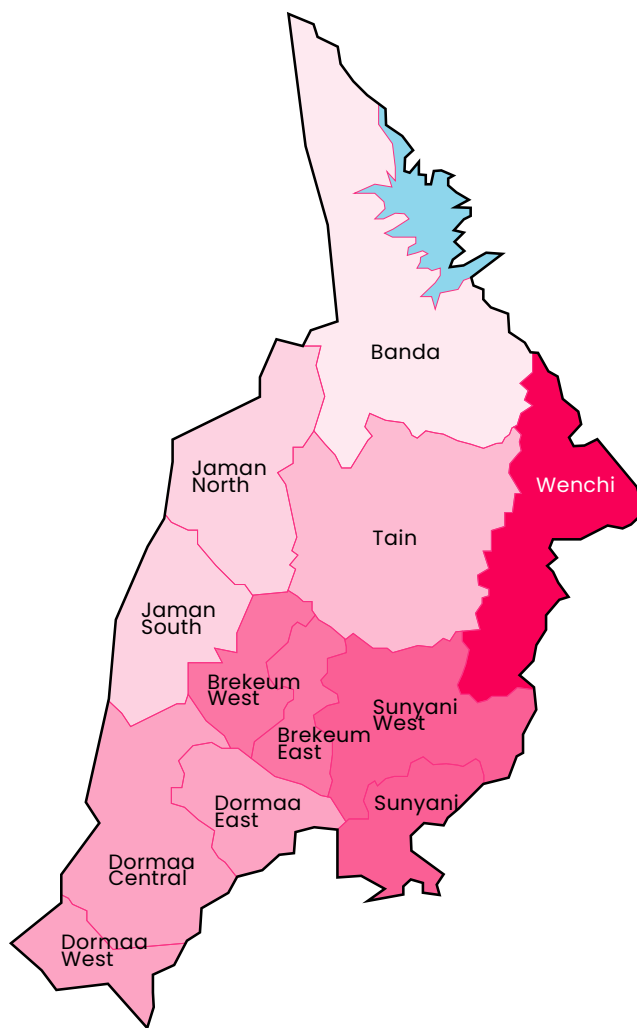
These are remote rural communities with high dependence on cashew farming and limited access to markets, farm inputs, and off season income opportunities. Interventions in these areas focused on farmer organisation, pilot livelihood support, and trust building through consistent engagement.

Community Context

Across all five communities, shared characteristics influenced programme design, including:

- 📍 Heavy reliance on cashew as a seasonal income source
- 📍 Limited off season livelihood alternatives
- 📍 High interest in cooperative based solutions
- 📍 Strong influence of traditional leadership structures

By focusing on these defined geographic areas, Rosswood Impact ensured that its 2025 interventions were targeted, context specific, and responsive to the lived realities of cashew farming households.



Theory Of Change & Impact Framework

Rosswood Impact's Theory of Change provides are expected to contribute to improved livelihoods for smallholder cashew farmers over time. The framework reflects the realities of the 2025 foundation year and distinguishes clearly between delivery (outputs), early change signals (outcomes), and long term impact.

Theory of Change

Rosswood Impact operates on the premise that sustainable livelihood improvement in cashew farming communities requires more than increased production. It depends on strong farmer institutions, diversified income opportunities, reduced post harvest waste, and readiness for market engagement. The causal pathway begins with community led engagement and institution building, including continuous dialogue with farmers and traditional authorities, and the formation and strengthening of cooperatives and a union.

These inputs create the conditions for trust, coordination, and accountability.

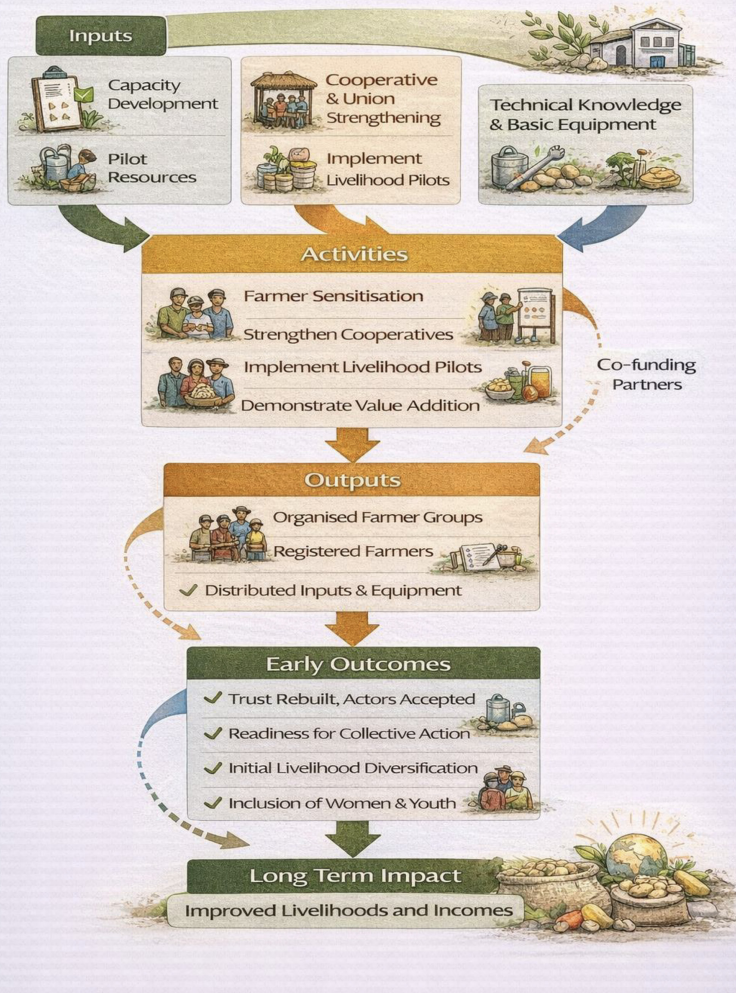
Through these structures, Rosswood Impact delivers practical livelihood and productivity support, such as farm equipment, short cycle income activities (for example ginger cultivation), and demonstrations of cashew apple value addition. These activities generate tangible outputs while reinforcing confidence in collective action.

In the short to medium term, these outputs are expected to lead to early outcomes, including increased trust in project actors, greater willingness to work through cooperatives, improved awareness of value addition opportunities, and heightened interest among youth and women in accessible livelihood options.

Over the longer term, as interventions scale and infrastructure and market linkages are introduced, these outcomes are expected to contribute to sustained impact, characterised by more stable year round incomes, reduced waste within the cashew value chain, stronger rural institutions, and more inclusive local economies.

Theory of Change

Impact Pathway for Rosswood Impact



Impact Pathway (Summary)

- Inputs: Community engagement, cooperative and union strengthening, technical knowledge, basic equipment, planting materials
- Activities: Farmer sensitisation, cooperative governance support, livelihood pilots, value addition demonstrations
- Outputs: Organised farmer groups, registered farmers, distributed inputs and equipment, demonstrated processing innovations
- Early Outcomes: Trust rebuilding, behaviour change toward collective action, livelihood readiness, inclusion of women and youth
- Long Term Impact: Resilient livelihoods, reduced post harvest losses, inclusive and sustainable cashew led local economies

Alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals

Rosswood Impact's work contributes to Development Goals (SDGs). While Rosswood Impact does not claim attribution to national or global targets, its interventions are aligned with SDG objectives through defined contribution pathways.

Priority SDGs and Contribution Pathways

SDG 1: No Poverty

By supporting income diversification, cooperative strengthening, and preparation for value added markets, Rosswood Impact contributes to improved household income stability among smallholder farmers.

SDG 2: Zero Hunger

Livelihood support and improved farm practices strengthen food security and agricultural productivity within rural farming households.

SDG 5: Gender Equality

The prioritisation of women in accessible livelihood activities, cooperative participation, and skills development contributes to women's economic inclusion and agency.

1 NO POVERTY



2 ZERO HUNGER



5 GENDER EQUALITY



8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

Alternative livelihoods, processing activities, and cooperative based enterprise development create pathways for decent rural employment, particularly for youth.

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production

Cashew apple value addition initiatives promote waste reduction and circular use of agricultural by products within the cashew valuechain.

13 CLIMATE ACTION



SDG 13: Climate Action

Reduced waste, improved resource efficiency, and diversified livelihoods contribute indirectly to climate resilience and environmentally responsible agricultural practices.



2025 as a Foundation Year

Rosswood Impact deliberately designated 2025 as a foundation year. This strategic choice dynamics, and establish the institutional and social conditions necessary for effective delivery.

Why a Foundation First Approach Was Necessary

Engagements with farmers revealed a history of initiatives that raised expectations without delivering sustained benefits. Proceeding directly to large scale implementation risked reinforcing scepticism and undermining long term success. Rosswood Impact therefore prioritised credibility, consistency, and learning over speed.

What Success Meant in 2025

Success in the foundation year was defined not by income outcomes, but by readiness indicators, including:

- Established and functioning cooperatives and a union
- Formal registration of participating farmers
- Active participation in engagement sessions and pilots
- Willingness to adopt cooperative based approaches
- Openness to new livelihood and value addition ideas

Managing Expectations and Claims

Rosswood Impact recognises that meaningful livelihood transformation takes time. As such, the organisation does not claim long term impact outcomes for 2025. Instead, the reporting focus is on outputs delivered and early change signals that indicate preparedness for scale up. By clearly defining 2025 as a foundation year, Rosswood Impact sets realistic expectations and establishes a transparent basis for measuring progress in subsequent implementation phases.

Engagement Approach & Baseline Interactions

Rosswood Impact's engagement approach that transitioned from initial commercial interaction to structured, impact driven partnership. This progression allowed the organisation to ground its interventions in farmer realities while building trust and institutional readiness.

Pre Activation Engagement and Baseline

Prior to the formal activation of Rosswood Impact, Rosswood Company Ltd had established working relationships with cashew farmers in Wenchi and Sampa through its commercial operations. Early engagements focused on transparency within the supply chain, including introducing farmers to finished cashew products derived from their harvests. These interactions provided an informal baseline, revealing both the strengths of existing relationships and the limitations of a purely transactional model.

Quarter 1 Engagements: Identifying Livelihood Priorities

During the first quarter of 2025, engagement sessions introduced the concept of farmer cooperatives as a mechanism for structured collaboration. As discussions progressed, farmers articulated key livelihood challenges, notably income instability during the cashew off season, widespread cashew apple wastage, limited access to basic farm equipment, and a lack of viable opportunities for youth and women. These conversations marked a turning point, informing the formal activation of Rosswood Impact as a dedicated vehicle for livelihood enhancement and sustainability.

These conversations marked a turning point, informing the formal activation of Rosswood Impact as a dedicated vehicle for livelihood enhancement and sustainability.



Quarter 3 Engagements: Deepening Consultation and Readiness Assessment

In the third quarter, Rosswood Impact conducted extensive field engagements across Abotreye, Amponsah Krom, Kwame Tentene, Debibi, and Brodi. These sessions deepened dialogue with farmers and community leaders, explored alternative livelihood options, and assessed readiness for cooperative based delivery.

Farmers expressed strong interest in short cycle livelihoods such as ginger cultivation, cassava processing, beekeeping, and cashew apple value addition. Youth participation emerged as a key concern, with engagement confirming that migration was driven largely by a lack of accessible opportunities rather than disengagement from agriculture.

Quarter 4 Engagements: Validation and Trust Building Through Action

Fourth quarter engagements focused on validating earlier discussions and demonstrating commitment through visible action.





Practical demonstrations of cashew apple value addition innovations were conducted, and farm equipment and planting materials were delivered through cooperative and union leadership structures.

These follow up visits reinforced trust, addressed scepticism arising from previous short lived initiatives, and strengthened confidence in Rosswood Impact's long term intentions.

Engagement Continuity and Learning

Across all phases, Rosswood Impact maintained regular presence, open communication, and responsiveness to farmer feedback. This continuity ensured that engagement was not perceived as episodic, but as part of an evolving partnership grounded in accountability and mutual respect.



Results at a Glance

Delivery Snapshot (Aggregated)

- 1,169 smallholder cashew farmers formally registered across five communities
- Six cooperatives formed or strengthened and coordinated under one union
- Five rural communities engaged through structured field interactions
- Cooperative and union bank accounts established to support transparency and readiness
- Livelihood and productivity pilots delivered, including ginger planting materials, farm equipment support, and cashew apple value addition demonstrations

Inclusion Snapshot

Women, youth, and persons with disabilities were prioritised across engagement and pilot activities. Livelihood options were selected to reduce barriers related to land access, capital intensity, and physical demands, while cooperative based delivery promoted shared access and equitable participation.

Early Change Signals

- Growing trust in Rosswood Impact's engagement approach
- Increased acceptance of cooperative based organisation
- Heightened awareness of the economic value of cashew by products
- Strong interest among youth in short cycle livelihood options

Key Risks and Mitigation Measures

- Income instability during the off season: Addressed through short cycle livelihood pilots
- Community scepticism: Mitigated through repeated engagement and early delivery of inputs
- Risk of equipment misuse: Managed through cooperative led oversight and shared use arrangements



Farmer Organisation & Institutional Strengthening

Rosswood Impact's livelihood and productivity support in 2025 focused on practical, low barrier demonstrate the potential of value addition. These interventions were delivered as pilots during the foundation year to test relevance, build confidence, and inform scale up in 2026

Formation and Strengthening of Cooperatives and Union

During the reporting period, six cooperatives were formed or strengthened across the operational communities and coordinated under one union. These structures were organised along geographic lines to reflect community relationships and ease of coordination.



The cooperatives and union serve multiple functions, including mobilising farmers for engagement sessions, coordinating the distribution and shared use of inputs and equipment, representing farmer interests, and preparing members for future market participation and partnerships.

Governance and Leadership Structures

Each cooperative and the union established recognised leadership structures, including executive committees responsible for coordination, communication, and oversight. Leadership roles were agreed upon through community processes, reinforcing legitimacy and accountability at the local level.

Financial Readiness and Transparency

To strengthen institutional credibility and financial discipline, Rosswood Impact supported the establishment of bank accounts for the cooperatives and the union. This step promotes transparent management of shared resources, enables proper record keeping, and prepares farmer organisations

for future funding, investment, and partnership opportunities.

Participation and Institutional Readiness

Through these organisational structures, Rosswood Impact formally registered 1,169 smallholder cashew farmers across Wenchi Municipality and the Sampa/ Tain District. Registration improved communication, enabled more inclusive participation, and provided a foundation for systematic monitoring and future profiling.

The establishment of functional cooperatives and a coordinating union represents a critical foundation year achievement. These institutions provide the platform through which livelihood support, capacity building, and market oriented interventions will be delivered in subsequent phases.



Livelihood & Productivity Support Interventions

Rosswood Impact's livelihood and productivity support in 2025 focused on practical, low barrier demonstrate the potential of value addition. These interventions were delivered as pilots during the foundation year to test relevance, build confidence, and inform scale up in 2026.

Ginger Planting Material Pilot

Ginger cultivation was introduced as a short cycle livelihood option suitable for small landholdings and rapid income generation. Planting materials were distributed through cooperative and union leadership structures to ensure transparency and equitable access.

Ginger was selected due to its relatively short growing period, strong market demand, and accessibility to women and youth with limited land access.

The pilot enabled participating farmers to begin income diversification during the cashew off season while building readiness for more structured support in future phases.

Farm Equipment Support

To improve farm maintenance and productivity, Rosswood Impact provided basic farm equipment, including chainsaws and brush cutters, to farmer organisations. Equipment distribution and use were coordinated through cooperatives and the union, with shared use arrangements and oversight responsibilities assigned to leadership structures.

This approach reduced labour constraints, supported timely farm activities such as pruning and weeding, and reinforced collective management of shared assets.

Cashew Apple Value Addition Demonstrations

Rosswood Impact conducted practical demonstrations to showcase how cashew apples, previously treated as waste, could be processed into products with economic value. Demonstrated products included cashew apple flour, spice blends, and juice.

These demonstrations increased farmer awareness of zero waste opportunities within the cashew value chain and generated strong interest in future processing and market oriented initiatives.

Cooperative Led Delivery Model

All livelihood and productivity interventions were delivered through cooperatives and the union. This reinforced collective action, strengthened organisational capacity, and ensured that support was managed transparently and equitably.

The pilots implemented in 2025 provided both immediate support and critical learning that will guide the design and scale of livelihood interventions in subsequent years.



Inclusion & Equity

Inclusion is a core principle of Rosswood Impact's work. Throughout the 2025 foundation year, deliberate engagement processes and livelihood opportunities.

Women expressed particular interest in processing and value addition activities, which align with existing roles and time constraints while offering opportunities for income generation.

Inclusive Design of Livelihood Options

Livelihood activities were selected to reduce common barriers to participation. Short cycle crops such as ginger, processing activities, and cooperative based enterprises were prioritised because they require limited land, lower capital investment, and can be undertaken alongside household responsibilities.

Participation of Women and Youth

Engagement sessions actively encouraged the participation of women and young people. While mobilisation challenges were observed, particularly during periods of seasonal migration, interest among youth increased when livelihood options with clear income potential were introduced.



Persons with Disabilities

Rosswood Impact recognises that persons with disabilities often face additional barriers to participation. Cooperative based delivery and processing focused activities provided pathways for inclusion that do not rely solely on physically intensive farm labour.

Learning and Adaptive Inclusion Strategies

The foundation year highlighted the importance of targeted communication and flexible programme design to reach marginalised groups effectively. These lessons will inform more intentional inclusion strategies, monitoring indicators, and support mechanisms as interventions scale in 2026.



Outcomes & Early Change Signals

As a foundation year, Rosswood Impact's 2025 rather than long term impact outcomes. These signals indicate shifts in behaviour, attitudes, and readiness that are necessary precursors to sustained livelihood transformation.

Trust and Confidence Rebuilding

Across engagement communities, repeated interaction and early delivery of agreed support contributed to renewed trust between farmers and project actors. Farmers demonstrated increased willingness to participate in meetings, cooperative activities, and pilot interventions, reflecting confidence in Rosswood Impact's commitment and consistency.



Behavioural Shift Toward Collective Action

A notable change observed during the year was growing acceptance of cooperative based organisation. Farmers increasingly recognised the benefits of working collectively to access inputs, manage shared resources, and prepare for future market opportunities. This behavioural shift strengthens the feasibility of cooperative led delivery in subsequent phases.

Livelihood Readiness and Adoption Interest

Introduction of short cycle livelihood options and value addition demonstrations generated strong interest among farmers, particularly youth and women. These activities helped farmers re imagine the cashew value chain beyond nut production and consider income diversification as a practical strategy rather than a distant aspiration.

Inclusion Related Signals

Women and youth participation increased in discussions around processing, alternative livelihoods, and cooperative governance. While participation levels varied by community and season, the foundation year revealed clear entry points for more intentional inclusion strategies going forward.

Strength of Outcome Signals

Rosswood Impact assesses these outcome signals as moderate but encouraging, reflecting the early stage of intervention. These signals provide a credible basis for scaling activities and strengthening measurement in 2026.



Stakeholder Voices & Case Insights

Stakeholder voices provide qualitative validation of the changes observed during the foundation year. The testimonials below illustrate how engagement, practical support, and inclusion have begun to shift perceptions and behaviours within farming communities.

Farmer and Cooperative Perspectives

“The ginger has given us hope. Even when the cashew season ends, we now have something to work on.”

Farmer, Kwame Tentene

This reflection highlights the importance of short cycle livelihoods in addressing off season income gaps.

“Before, we thought cashew apples were useless. Now we see that we were throwing money away.”

Farmer, Abotreye

This insight reflects increased awareness of value addition opportunities and waste reduction.





“Rosswood did not just talk. They brought tools and ginger. That is why we believe in the project.”

Cooperative member, Debibi

This testimony underscores the role of visible action in rebuilding trust.

Inclusion Related Voices

“These new activities will help our youth stay instead of travelling to town.”

Community member, Brodi

“We are happy that women are also being considered in this project.”

Female farmer, Sampai

Each testimonial is linked to an outcome domain, including trust, behaviour change, livelihood readiness, and inclusion, reinforcing the qualitative evidence base for the foundation year.

Stakeholder Engagement & Community Ownership

Rosswood Impact's approach places strong emphasis on community ownership and partnership. Throughout 2025, engagement was conducted in close collaboration with traditional authorities, cooperative executives, and union leadership.





Traditional leaders played a critical role in and legitimising engagement processes. Their involvement supported community acceptance and helped align interventions with local norms and priorities.

Rather than imposing predefined solutions, Rosswood Impact encouraged joint problem solving and open discussion. Farmers and leaders were invited to contribute ideas, raise concerns, and participate in decision making, particularly around cooperative management, equipment use, and livelihood priorities

This participatory approach strengthened ownership and increased confidence that interventions are aligned with community interests. It also laid the groundwork for sustained collaboration as activities scale and become more complex in subsequent phases.

Governance & Accountability

Strong governance and accountability are central to Rosswood Impact's credibility and long term effectiveness. During the 2025 foundation year, deliberate measures were taken to establish transparent and responsible management structures within farmer organisations

Cooperatives and the coordinating union were supported to operate with recognised leadership and clear roles. Bank accounts were established to manage shared resources, receive support, and ensure proper financial tracking.

Livelihood inputs and equipment were distributed through cooperative and union leadership, with shared use arrangements and oversight responsibilities clearly communicated. This reduced the risk of misuse and promoted equitable access among members.



Rosswood Impact maintained regular engagement with leadership structures to reinforce accountability, address emerging issues, and support continuous improvement.

These governance arrangements provide a solid foundation for managing increased resources, partnerships, and delivery responsibilities in future phases.



Risk Management & Mitigation

Roswood Impact recognises that delivering sustainable livelihood outcomes within rural agricultural contexts involves navigating multiple risks. During the 2025 foundation year, potential risks were identified early and managed through deliberate mitigation measures aligned with the phased implementation approach.

Key Risks Identified

Seasonal Income Vulnerability

Reliance on cashew as a seasonal crop exposes households to income gaps during the off season, increasing vulnerability and limiting participation in longer term initiatives

Community Scepticism and Trust Deficits

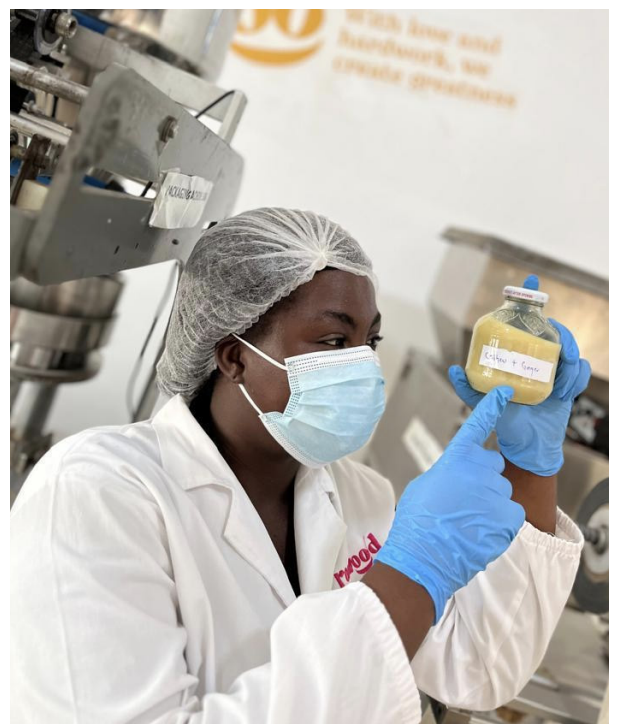
Previous experiences with short lived interventions created initial caution among farmers and community leaders.

Risk of Asset Misuse

The introduction of shared equipment and inputs carried the risk of misuse, unequal access, or poor maintenance

Participation Fluctuations

Seasonal migration, especially among youth, affected consistent participation in engagement activities.

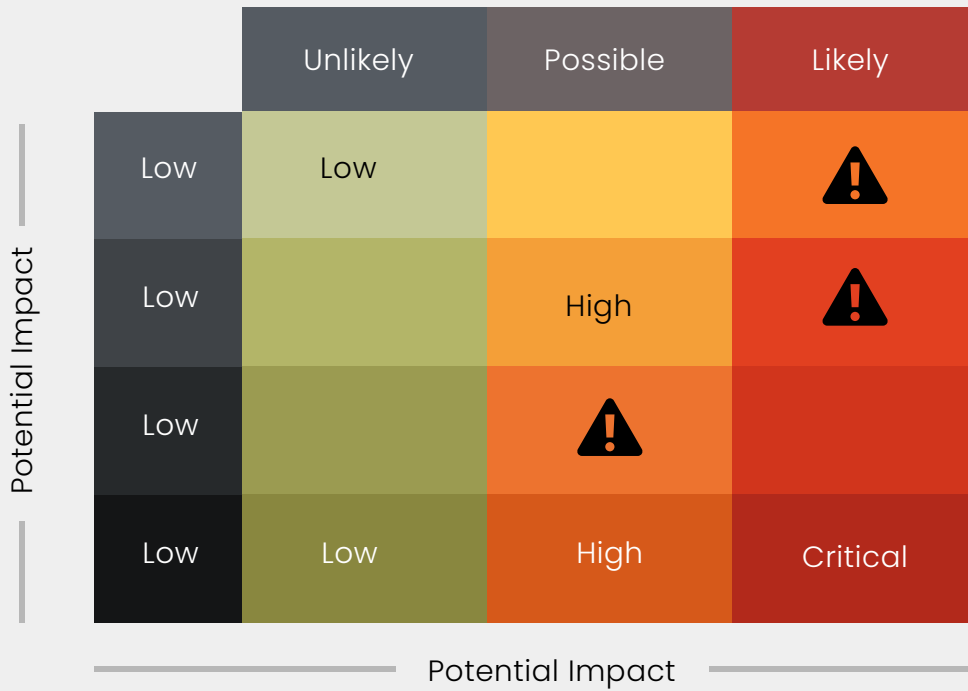


Mitigation Measures

To address these risks, Rosswood Impact implemented the following measures:

- Introduction of short cycle livelihood pilots to address immediate off season income needs
- Repeated field engagements and early delivery of tangible support to rebuild trust
- Cooperative led asset management with shared use protocols and leadership oversight
- Flexible engagement scheduling and targeted mobilisation to accommodate seasonal movement

Likelihood, Impact and Mitigation Actions for Rosswood Impact's 2025 Activities



| Mitigation Actions | Key Risks & Mitigation Measures |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equipment Misuse Cooperative Oversight | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Income Instability Short Cycle Livelihood Pilots |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Scepticism Repeated Engagement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Scepticism Repeated Engagement |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Income Instability Short Cycle Pilots | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equipment Misuse Cooperative Oversight |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong Youth Interest in Short Cycle Livelihoods | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear Structures and Bylaws |

Risk Heat Map

Learning & Adaptive Management

Learning and adaptation were central to Rosswood Impact's approach during the 2025 foundation year. Continuous feedback from farmers, cooperative leaders, and field observations informed programme design and implementation decisions.

Key Risks Identified

Trust Is Built Through Action

Consistent engagement and early delivery of agreed support proved critical in rebuilding trust and encouraging sustained participation.



Income Potential Drives Adoption

Farmers demonstrated stronger interest in livelihood options when income opportunities were clear, immediate, and practical.

Youth Require Accessible Entry Points

Short cycle and processing related activities resonated more strongly with youth than long term crops alone, reducing disengagement and migration pressure.

Women Benefit from Flexible Livelihood

Processing, value addition, and cooperative based activities enabled women to participate more effectively alongside household responsibilities.



Strong Organisations Enable Sustainability

Communities with functioning cooperatives and clear leadership structures showed greater coordination, accountability, and readiness for scale up.

Adaptive Responses

These learning insights directly informed planning for 2026. Adjustments include a stronger emphasis on structured farmer profiling, expanded processing capacity, clearer inclusion strategies, and strengthened monitoring and reporting systems to support accountability and learning.

Monitoring, Evaluation, & Learning (MEL) framework

Rosswood Impact is committed to evidence-based decision-making, accountability to communities and partners, and continuous improvement. The Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) framework provides the structure for tracking delivery, assessing early outcomes, and informing adaptive management as interventions scale beyond the foundation year.

The framework is intentionally calibrated to the realities of a foundation year, recognising that long term impact measurement will be phased in as interventions mature.

Results Levels and Measurement Focus

Purpose of the MEL Framework

The MEL framework is designed to:

- Track delivery against planned activities and outputs
- Capture early change signals and readiness indicators
- Inform learning and programme adaptation
- Support transparent reporting to stakeholders and partners



Rosswood Impact's MEL approach distinguishes clearly between three results levels:

Outputs

Immediate and tangible deliverables produced through project activities. These include organised farmer groups, registered farmers, distributed inputs and equipment, and completed demonstrations.

Early Outcomes

Observable changes in behaviour, attitudes, relationships, and readiness that emerge as a result of outputs. Examples include increased trust in project actors, willingness to participate in cooperatives, an interest in alternative livelihoods.



Impact

Long-term changes in income stability, waste reduction, institutional resilience, and inclusion. Impact-level measurement is planned for subsequent implementation phases and is not claimed for 2025.

Indicators and Data Sources

Indicators are aligned to the Theory of Change and grouped by results level. Primary data sources include:

- Farmer registration records
- Cooperative and union documentation
- Field visit reports and observation logs
- Stakeholder feedback and testimonials

Data collection frequency and tools will be progressively standardised as delivery scales.

Data Quality, Integrity, and Limitations

During the 2025 foundation year, data collection relied primarily on administrative records and qualitative observations. While care was taken to ensure accuracy, some figures remain subject to refinement due to ongoing registration, seasonal migration, and the absence of baseline income data.

Strengthening MEL in 2026

Planned enhancements to the MEL system include:

- 🔴 Detailed farmer profiling and baseline income assessments
- 🔴 Disaggregated tracking of gender, youth, and disability inclusion
- 🔴 Clear indicator definitions and reporting templates
- 🔴 Regular monitoring cycles and internal learning reviews

Summary Indicator Table

Key Indicators for Rosswood Impact's MEL Framework



| Indicator | Method | Frequency | Target |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------|
| Household Income Stability | Household Surveys | Annually | % Increase in Income |
| Cooperative Engagement | Cooperative Records | Semi-annually | # Active Members Tracked |
| Livelihood Pilot Uptake | Pilot Records | Quarterly | # Participants by Livelihood Type |
| Cashew Processing Innovations | Demonstration Records | Annually | # Demonstrations Held |
| Women & Youth Inclusion | Engagement Records | Quarterly | % Women & Youth Participants |
| Environmental Sustainability | Observation & Interviews | Semi-annually | # Waste Reducing Practices |

Mitigation Actions

- ✓ Equipment Misuse
Cooperative Oversight 
- ✓ Community Scepticism
Repeated Engagement 
- ✓ Income Instability
Short Cycle Pilots
- ✓ Strong Youth Interest in
Short Cycle Liveihoods

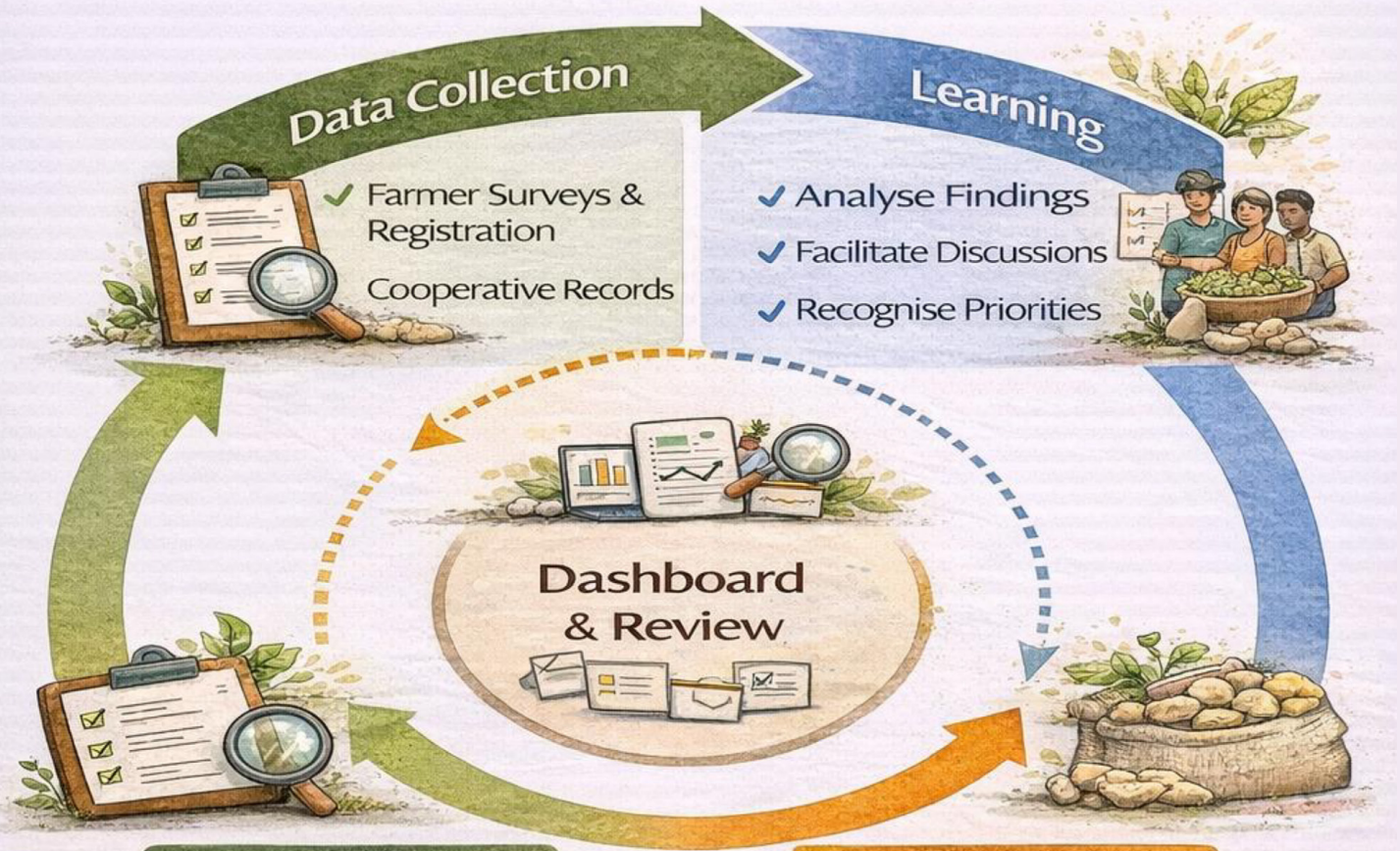
Key Risks & Mitigation Measures

- ⚠️ Income Instability  Short Cycle Livelihood Pilots 
- 🗨️ Community Scepticism
✓ Repeated Engagement
- ⚖️ Equipment Misuse
Cooperative Oversight
- ⚖️ Clear Structures and Bylaws 



MEL Feedback Loop

Continuous Cycle of Data Collection, Learning, and Programme Adaptation for Rosswood Impact



✔ **Trust Built Through Action**

✔ Farmer Surveys & Registration

✔ **Income Drives Adoption**

✔ Women & Youth Inclusion

✔ **Strong, Flexible Livelihoods**

✔ Women & Youth Inclusion

- **Outputs** Immediate and tangible deliverables produced through project activities
- **Early Outcomes** Observable changes in behaviour, attitudes, and readiness
- **Impact** Long-term improvements anticipated beyond the foundation year

Environmental Sustainability & Circularity

Environmental sustainability and responsible resource use are integral to Rosswood Impact's approach farming communities must be supported by practices that reduce waste, improve efficiency, and protect local ecosystems.

Reducing Waste within the Cashew Value Chain

A key environmental challenge identified during field engagements was the widespread wastage of cashew apples following nut harvesting. In many communities, cashew apples are discarded due to limited processing knowledge, short shelf life, and lack of local facilities. This results in lost economic value and unnecessary organic waste

Rosswood Impact's foundation year activities introduced farmers to practical cashew apple value



addition options, including juice, flour, and spice blends. These demonstrations highlighted opportunities to convert agricultural waste into usable products, laying the groundwork for a more circular and resource efficient cashew value chain.

Circular Economy Principles

By promoting the utilisation of cashew by products, Rosswood Impact advances a circular economy approach in which materials are kept in productive use for as long as possible. This approach contributes to:

- Reduced post harvest losses
- Improved resource efficiency
- Additional income streams for farming households

Circularity principles are expected to be further embedded as processing infrastructure and market linkages are developed in subsequent phases.



Circular Economy Principles

Alternative livelihoods such as ginger cultivation, cassava processing, and beekeeping also offer environmental co benefits when appropriately managed. Diversified production systems can reduce pressure on single crops, spread risk, and support more resilient farming practices.

Looking Ahead

As Rosswood Impact transitions from foundation to implementation, environmental considerations will be integrated more deliberately into programme design. Future plans include the adoption of basic environmental management practices at community processing centres and increased awareness of sustainable resource use among farmer organisations.

Partnerships & Collaborations

Rosswood Impact's work in 2025 was anchored in partnership and collaboration. Sustainable authorities, local institutions, and technical partners. Throughout the foundation year, Rosswood Impact prioritised relationship-building and alignment with existing community structures.

Farmer Organisations and Traditional Leadership

Primary partnerships were established with farmer cooperatives and the coordinating union, which served as the main channels for engagement, delivery, and accountability.

Traditional leaders played a critical role in legitimising activities, mobilising community participation, and supporting conflict resolution and land-related discussions.



Institutional and Technical Collaboration

Rosswood Impact also engaged with technical partners and interns to support innovation, learning, and demonstrations, particularly around cashew apple value addition.



These collaborations introduced new ideas while remaining grounded in community realities.

Partnerships developed during the foundation year focused on trust, alignment, and shared understanding, providing a platform for more formalised collaborations as delivery



Projections & Strategic Roadmap for 2026

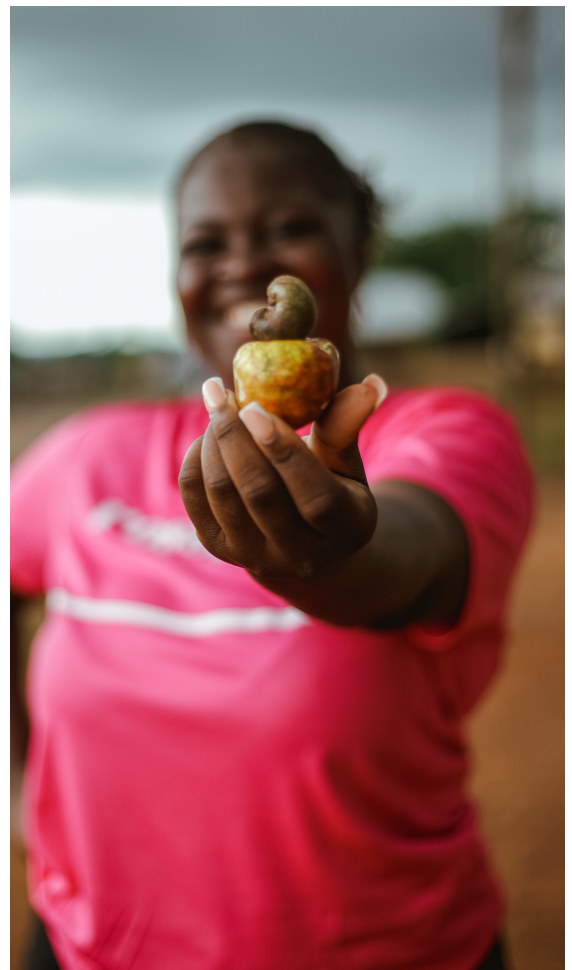
Building on the foundations established in 2025, Rosswood Impact will transition to full implementation outcomes.

Key Strategic Priorities

- **Farmer Profiling and Baseline Assessment:** Comprehensive profiling to inform targeted support and establish income baselines.
- **Expanded Input and Livelihood Support:** Distribution of inputs for ginger, cassava, beekeeping, and related activities.
- **Establishment of Community Processing Centres:** Development of local facilities for cassava processing and cashew apple value addition.
- **Training and Capacity Building:** Skills development for farmers, cooperative leaders, and machine operators.
- **Market Linkages:** Connection of farmer organisations to reliable buyers and support for quality and basic branding.

Implementation Focus

Delivery in 2026 will prioritise sequencing, inclusion, and learning, with regular monitoring to guide adaptation and accountability.





Scalability & Sustainability Outlook

Rosswood Impact's model is designed for scalability and long-term sustainability. By strengthening creates conditions for replication beyond the initial communities.

Economic Sustainability

Diversified income streams and market-oriented activities are expected to improve household income stability and reduce reliance on a single seasonal crop.

Institutional Sustainability

Strong cooperatives and a functioning union provide the governance backbone required to manage shared assets, attract partnerships, and sustain interventions over time.

Replication Potential

The phased, foundation-first approach allows lessons learned in Wenchi and Sampa to inform adaptation in other cashew-producing regions.

Data Integrity & Limitations

The information presented in this report is drawn from farmer registration records, cooperative documentation, field observations, and stakeholder feedback collected during 2025.

While care has been taken to ensure accuracy, some data remain subject to refinement due to ongoing registration, seasonal migration, and the absence of baseline income

measurements. Rosswood Impact is committed to strengthening data systems, verification processes, and reporting standards as interventions scale.

Detailed operational data are maintained in donor-only annexes to protect privacy while ensuring accountability.





Conclusion & Way Forward

The 2025 reporting year marked a pivotal transition for Rosswood Impact. Through deliberate engagement, institution building, and practical pilot interventions, the organisation established trust and readiness within cashew-farming communities in Wenchi and Sampa.

Farmers are now better organised, more aware of value-addition opportunities, and increasingly open to diversified livelihoods that can provide income beyond the cashew season. While long-term impact is yet to be realised, the foundations

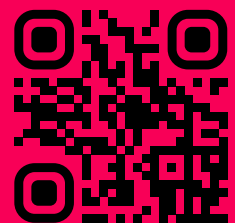
laid in 2025 position Rosswood Impact for effective delivery and measurable outcomes in the years ahead.

Looking forward, Rosswood Impact remains committed to inclusive, sustainable, and accountable development. By building on the lessons of the foundation year and working in partnership with communities and stakeholders, the organisation aims to contribute meaningfully to resilient rural livelihoods and a more efficient, zero-waste cashew value chain.

+233 (0) 54 60 44 523
+233 (0) 30 24 43 824
+233 (0) 50 23 16 233
+1 (305) 423 5603

📷 **f** ✖ **in**

@rosswoodsnacks
impact@myrosswood.com
www.myrosswood.com



rosswood