

Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights in Ghana

Quarterly Project Update: January-March 2017

Fostering a more permissive and accepting environment for the implementation of the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights (VPs) within Ghana is the principal goal of the Fund for Peace (FFP) and West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP-Ghana) program. The project aims to support the formation and rollout of the Ghanaian VPs National Action Plan; build the capacity of an informed local civil society, particularly on critical human rights issues that impact both men and women; and to develop a sustainable multi-stakeholder forum that can collectively create the conditions necessary for effective VPs implementation. A full program scope of work and current activity timeline is attached (*Attachment A*).

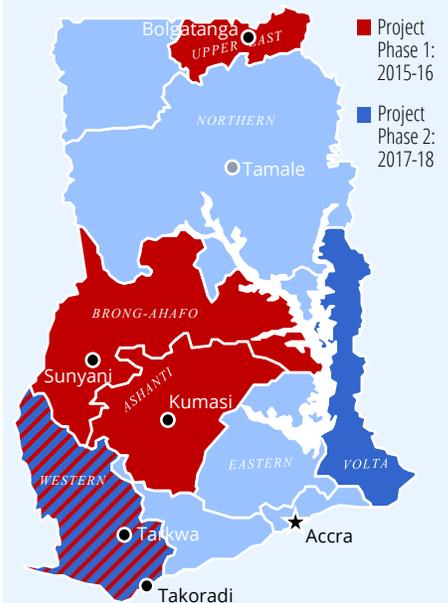
Since July 2015, our program has focused on building the awareness and capacity of civil society — this has included developing pilot programs in four regions, to facilitate training, then dialogue that encourages constructive engagement between local government, communities, and companies. The activities are aimed at helping local stakeholders address grievances

transparently, and ensure public and private security forces are acting responsibly and proportionately. With the program now extended into a Phase 2 from January 2017 to January 2018, we will seek to expand these activities into two new target areas.

Equipping local stakeholders with the knowledge and tools to monitor issues relating to security and human rights, as well as helping them to identify conflict drivers related to extractives, our program provides civil society with a platform to better mitigate violence and potential for security force abuses in communities. This will continue to feed into national level multi-stakeholder roundtables, designed to establish a practical working group of stakeholders to further VPs implementation across Ghana.

This briefing of Quarter One 2017 (Q1) provides updates on the third national level roundtable staged in Accra—bringing together representatives from civil society, companies and government to discuss VPs issues and broader goals for furthering VPs implementation within the country.

Ghana Project Areas



This brief summarizes the key project updates for the quarter relating to the Voluntary Principles in Ghana undertaken by FFP in local partnership with WANEP-Ghana. The project implementation is focused in the four key regions highlighted in the map above. This program is a U.S. Government funded initiative, provided by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau for Democracy, Rights and Labor. For further information on our program, please contact FFP or WANEP-Ghana:

Third National Dialogue in Accra, February 2017

The third national level forum for the program was held on 22nd February, 2017, bringing together participants from private sector, civil society and government.



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Program Progress

Establishing a Sustained Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue

On the 22nd February 2017, FFP and WANEP-Ghana held our third national roundtable on the VPs in Accra. Building on the momentum from the two roundtables held in July and October 2016, this dialogue sought to identify longer term goals for VPs implementation that could complement the Government's three year National Action Plan (NAP). In attendance were key stakeholders that had attended previous VPs events including government ministries, companies, civil society representatives, international partners and the media.

The aim of this roundtable series is ultimately to establish a sustainable multi-stakeholder forum which is able to identify priorities and work together to facilitate implementation. The first dialogue was intended as an introduction of the key stakeholders to the process, and linkages between local communities and national level representatives. Then, the second dialogue brought some of those identified security and human rights issues to a higher policy level, including a review of the government's NAP. Now, the third dialogue built upon the feedback from the second dialogue which identified a need for broader goals/strategy to complement the shorter term NAP.

In attendance at this third roundtable were representatives from key Ghana Government ministries including the Ghana Army and Navy, Ministry of the Interior, Petroleum Commission, Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice, Minerals Commission, Ministry of Justice and Attorney General, Ministry of Energy, and the Environmental Protection Agency. Private sector representatives included the Ghana Chamber of Mines, AngloGold Ashanti, Newmont Mining, Kosmos Energy, ENI Ghana, Tullow, and G4S. Civil society was represented by WANEP-Ghana, as well

Key Priorities Identified at the National Roundtable

During the National Dialogue, stakeholders discussed some broader priorities for VPs implementation which could complement the three year National Action Plan (NAP) developed by the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources. These areas include:

1 Raising Industry Standards for Private Security Providers

Increased awareness and training of private security providers in Ghana, to raise the industry standards on security and human rights practices. On the government side, this could be done by the responsible ministry (currently the Ministry of Interior) amending the private security provider regulations on licensing, to require compliance with tenets of security and human rights. On the private sector side, this requires companies to continue vetting private security providers through their tender processes, and monitoring compliance once contracts are executed, to ensure they meet the necessary security and human rights standards. On the civil society side, it was requested that NGOs do outreach to the Ghana private security sector, to share knowledge and training resources on respect for human rights in security deployments.

2 Standardized Security & Human Rights Training Curriculum

Establishment of standardized training on the core tenets of the VPs, through a recognized education institution, which can be used for training of Ghana public security forces. This curriculum could then be used for the Ghana Armed Forces, as well as the Ghana police and private security providers. This would require cross-Ministry collaboration to establish, with support from other partners.

3 Cross-sector Collaboration on Reducing Security Risks Posed by Illegal Artisanal Small-Scale Mining

Increased cross-sectoral collaboration on addressing illegal ASM. Known commonly to some as "Galamsey", the issue of illegal ASM is a key security risk for companies, security providers and communities alike. Bringing together government ministries and commissions, alongside civil society and companies, in the efforts to address the complex issues of illegal ASM, the security risks to communities, site operations and security personnel will be reduced. As these issues are being looked at by key Government institutions (such as the Minerals Commission), as well as other outside partners, a multi-stakeholder forum to share information and approaches could enhance efforts.

4 Increased Coordination of Oil/Gas Companies, Government & Communities

Increased collaboration between oil and gas companies and key government ministries, to communicate effectively with communities and fishermen, and reduce the risk of tension or conflict around on-shore and off-shore sites. This could be done through a sustainable multi-stakeholder forum, that could be timed to coincide with the establishment of a Working Group between companies, NGOs and governments. This Working Group would be part of a new pilot program from the VPs international initiative, which is seeking to establish local meeting platforms in Ghana, along with Myanmar, Nigeria and Peru. It was highlighted that the Ghana government should play a leading coordination role in this group.

Program Progress

concern for community members, which is in contrast to government and company perspectives raised in other VPs forums. These perspectives and potential grievances are valuable context which will inform the training and dialogue in May 2017.

FFP and WANEP-Ghana then traveled to the Keta Basin area in the Volta region on the 20th February 2017, where we met with community members and company representatives. There has been a history of issues related to a salt mine in the Keta Basin area, with reported riots and clashes with security personnel in December 2015, after communities from Agbozume-Tagba took issue with the company's use of a section of the lagoon for salt mining. According to community members we met with, compensation was not required to be given to local communities, as the lagoon is a public resource, and not part of any one community's land title. When we met with members of the company, they suggested relations had since improved with surrounding communities, and were a major source of livelihood for many women, who mine salt while their male family members fish. Oil and gas exploration was also noted as an emergent issue, as offshore exploration has begun.

Focusing on both the oil/gas and salt mining issues, a training and dialogue session will come at an important time for the Keta Basin area. This is especially crucial in light of new media reports of an incident in involving angry local youth storming the site in March 2017, resulting in a fatal clash with police which left one community member dead. This was then followed by reported community protests (see box above).

Increasing Public Education and Understanding of Key Issues

The February national roundtable received national coverage, resulting from continued inclusion of the media in the VPs process at

Importance of Vigilance and Continued Dialogue: Violence Over Salt Mine Operations in Volta Region

A month after FFP and WANEP-Ghana visited communities and the salt mine operations in the Keta Basin area of the Volta region, new reports of community protests and clashes with the company over land and resource access, and environmental pressures emerged. Planning a multi-stakeholder dialogue and training in the area in May 2017, we will seek to constructively engage with the key stakeholder groups involved to ensure our activities are sensitive and relevant, in order to promote peace and de-escalate potential conflict.

GH HEADLINES TODAY YESTERDAY THIS MONTH NEWS AGENCIES -

2 Volta communities protest against Indian salt mining firm

Citi 97.3 fm
citifmonline

Adina: Police condemn residents' attack on Indian salt company
Friday 17th March, 2017 2:38 pm

Barely two weeks after residents of Adina in the Keta South Municipality of the Volta Region attacked an Indian salt mining company, Kensington, two more neighboring communities, Agbozume and Kiklor, are also up in arms against the same company.

The residents there are accusing Kensington of drying up their wells and destroying their water bodies with their operations.

Fatality on March 17th 2017: An excerpt from the Citi97m coverage of an incident which reportedly left one youth dead after a clash with police. For the full article visit: <http://citifmonline.com/2017/03/17/adina-police-condemn-residents-attack-on-indian-salt-company/>

Protests on March 29th 2017: An excerpt from the GH Headlines article covering the community protests at the salt mine, following a fatality earlier that month. For the full article visit: <http://ghheadlines.com/agency/citifm/20170329/38587126/2-volta-communities-protest-against-indian-salt-mining-firm->

the national and local levels. Representing not only their media outlet, journalists also play a key role in ensuring civil society voices are heard, and diverse perspectives are shared. The coverage focused on the VPs initiative, calling for the Ghana Government to take stronger ownership of VPs implementation see box on Page 3.

The program's website www.ghanavps.org was launched at the February roundtable, with the intention of eliciting feedback and further inputs from key stakeholders. The site provides communities with a platform to monitor and report issues that can be followed up by WANEP-Ghana, as well as broader information about the VPs and how different stakeholder groups can get involved.

Upcoming Activities

The following activities will take place in Q2 2017 (April – June) of the Program:

- Local training, dialogue and media activities in May 2017 in two new pilot areas of Tarkwa, Western Region and Keta Basin, Volta Region.
- Side meeting at the Dutch Embassy in Accra in June 2017, bringing together key VPI stakeholders to discuss starting a VPI Working Group, overseen by the international initiative.