

Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights in Ghana

Quarterly Project Update: October-December 2015

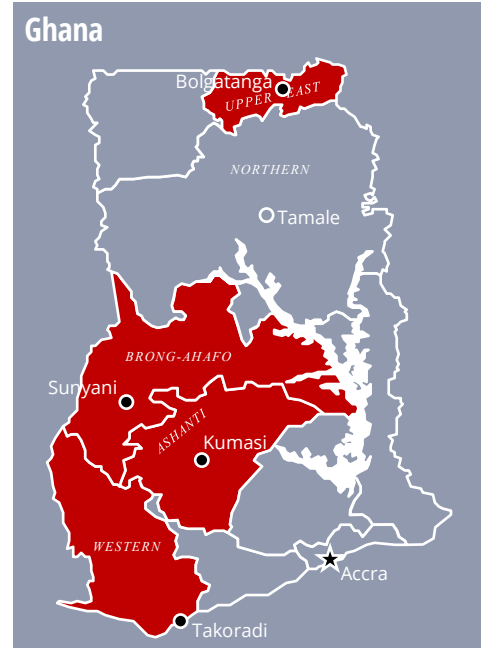
Fostering a more permissive and accepting environment for the implementation of the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights (VPS) within Ghana is the principal goal of the Fund for Peace (FFP) program, implemented in partnership with the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP-Ghana). The project aims to support the formation and rollout of the Ghanaian VPS National Implementation 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.

Commencing in July 2015, our 18-month program centers upon building the awareness and capacity of civil society — including local community members and civil society organizations (CSOs) — about the VPS, as well as more broadly peacebuilding and conflict prevention in extractives-affected communities of Ghana. This involves developing pilot programs at a local level to facilitate training, then dialogue which encourages constructive

engagement between local government, communities, and companies to address issues and grievances transparently, and ensure public and private security forces are acting responsibly and proportionately.

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

This briefing on the October-December 2015 quarter, provides updates on the first stage of local trainings in Upper East and Western regions, bringing together communities, CSOs, local government, oil/gas and mining companies, media, and public security.



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:

FFP Fund For Peace, Washington D.C.

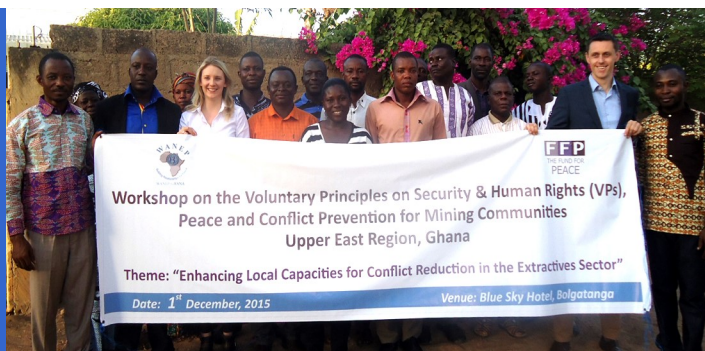
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Bolgatanga, December 2015

FFP and WANEP-Ghana kicked off the first local program training in Bolgatanga, Upper East region. Participants included galamsey community members, Shaanxi mining company representatives, local government leaders, CSOs and the media.



Program Progress

Local Trainings

Building capacity of local stakeholders on VPs

In December 2015, FFP and WANEP-Ghana delivered local training workshops in Bolgatanga, Upper East Region, and Takoradi, Western Region.

Both trainings focused on sensitizing the VPs initiative and guidelines, as well as introducing ways to mitigate conflict through available grievance mechanisms, and promoting peacebuilding and conflict early warning in communities. Twelve participants were attended each of the full day courses co-presented by WANEP-Ghana and FFP.

In Bolgatanga, the training session marked the first time a Chinese mining company had attended a VPs related event in Ghana alongside the Galamsey community men and women who live near their goldmine operations. Also in attendance were local media, government representatives and CSOs. The presentations were given in both English and the local dialect Grune.

In Takoradi, participants included local government, media, and representatives from a number of CSO advocacy groups active in the region, including members of the Coastal Platform for Peace Building (COPP) and Friends of the Nation. Further, there were representatives from VPs member company Tullow Oil and, for the first time, Naval police involved in patrolling the fishing waters around the offshore oil operations. The diverse participant mixes provided not only a shared learning environment on the VPs which was a new concept for many, but also a valuable exchange of experiences, grievances and ideas.

Local Journalist Participation

The December trainings received national coverage from sources such as the Ghana

Success Story: Diverse Participation in Local Trainings

The December trainings brought together a diverse mix of company, community, government and public security, and media representatives to discuss local issues related to extractives and conflict, and learn more about the VPs.



Above WANEP-Ghana's Alice Akayete and FFP's Hannah Blyth engage with training participants from the local community and a Chinese-owned Shaanxi mining company in Upper East region on gender related issues in extractives.



Left FFP's JJ Messner delivers training on transparency and governance during the Upper East training, with translation from WANEP-Ghana's local chapter to enable participation from the local Bolgatanga community members.

Below The Western Region training brought together participants from local government, civil society groups, media, company representatives—and for the first time — the participation of Naval Police in VPs training.



News Agency, following the participation of local journalists in both workshops. The program equips media representatives with an understanding of conflict early warning, grievance mechanisms, transparency and governance, and more about the VPs initiative itself. As one journalist noted during the Upper East training, they had been covering extractives issues in Ghana for decades, but had been unaware of the VPs initiative or the Ghana Government's

participation. As part of our program's objective to increase public awareness of VPs related issues, local journalists will be part of the trainings, dialogues and national roundtables. Being in the room to engage on the extractives related conflict issues, and human rights and security challenges in their own regions, journalists will have the chance to participate in the journey with local communities throughout the program.

Program Insights

Making the VPs Accessible and Relevant to Local Community Audiences

Commonly, VPs implementation is spearheaded by companies, with the focus on how companies best communicate with communities on issues of security and human rights, oversee private security, and engage with public security forces to promote responsible conduct. This program is unique, in that its focus foremost is on communities. It therefore requires a different approach to framing both training materials and shaping discussions around the VPs initiative and local civil society's role within it.

During the trainings in Takoradi and Bolgatanga, what emerged was the common misperception that all "human rights violations" and extractives sector related grievances could be remedied through the VPs guidelines and initiative. The VPs for example, does not provide easy solutions to some of the community grievances raised such as land acquisition,

economic inequality, adverse environmental impacts or industrial disputes. We therefore sought to clarify the purpose and scope of the VPs by framing their importance in two ways:

1. The VPs Make Communities Safer

When security is appropriate, proportionate, and predictable, and when guards and security forces are properly trained, supervised, and given clear instructions, the likelihood of security incidents is reduced, resulting in safer communities. FFP created accessible training handouts and graphics, that participants could take away and share with their local communities or colleagues.

2. The VPs Can Provide a Platform for Constructive Dialogue

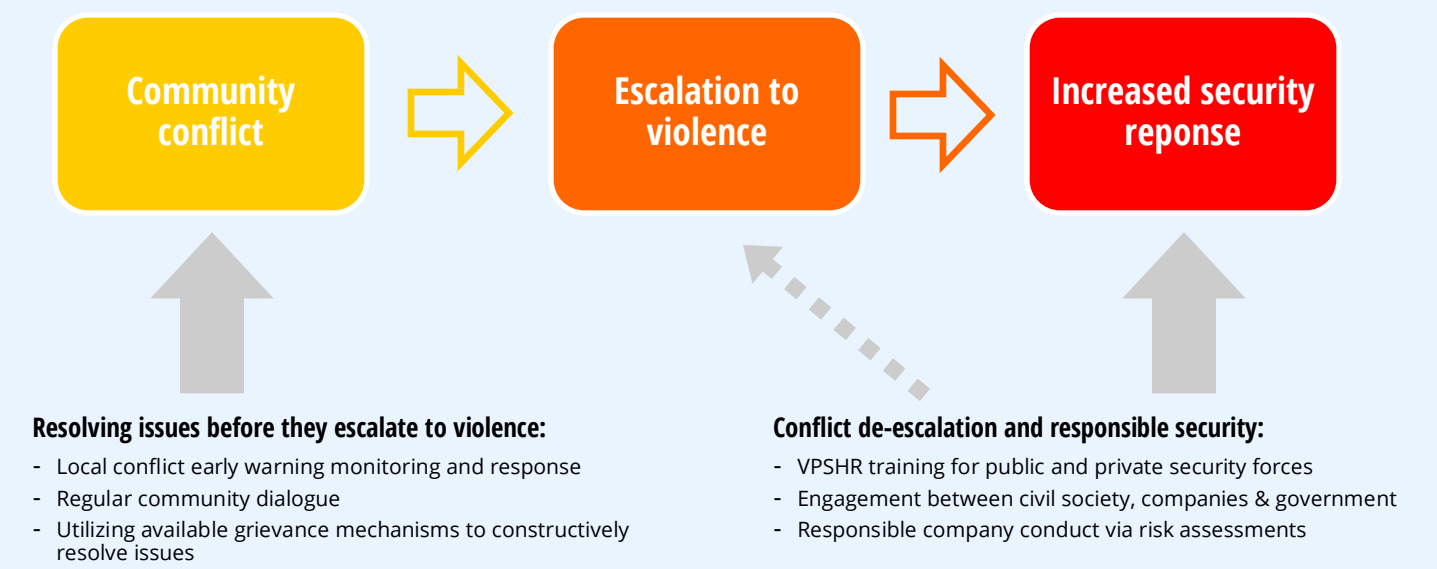
While the VPs are designed to address human security, they encourage a forum for discussion between governments, communities and companies which can be used to resolve issues before they escalate. As part of the training content, information was also

included on revenue transparency, good governance, grievance mechanisms available to communities, media advocacy, and peacebuilding and conflict early warning. These aspects provided a larger toolbox for community members and local CSOs to seek constructive engagement and peaceful resolutions with companies and government, reducing the possibility of conflict escalating into violence.

Linking Conflict Early Warning and Response to VPs Implementation

Drawing upon both WANEP and FFP's experience in conflict early warning and response, we developed a component of the training that sought to contextualize the role of the VPs within a broader framework of sustainable peace and security within communities. As illustrated in the box below, the scope of the VPs guidelines addresses the stage at which conflict escalates, and public security or private security may be required to respond. The VPs can be used as a helpful platform for stakeholders to engage and resolve issues

A Training Approach to Peace and Security in Extractives-Affected Communities: Linking Conflict Early Warning and Response to the VPSHR



Program Insights

related to a wider host of issues, however that is not their primary purpose. Therefore, the role of conflict early warning and response to identify and mitigate issues before they escalate into violence, can be used to minimize the need for an increased security response by public or private security forces. As such, WANEP-Ghana will develop a series of indicators focusing on community pressures which increase the risk of escalation into violence in extractives related areas. Engaging community members and a range of other local actors in the process, they will report conflict incidents, identify patterns and trends, and then catalyze local response to hot spot areas. This conflict analysis will also be used as a constructive tool for engagement and peaceful resolution during the local and national dialogues which will be organized during the course of this program. This will build the capacity of civil society in Ghana to more constructively communicate and seek solutions to issues with government and company stakeholders.

Upcoming Activities for Next Quarter

The following project activities are planned January—March 2016:

- The second trainings in Brong-Ahafo (Sunyani) and Ashanti (Kumasi)
- The first local dialogue in the Upper East (Bolgatanga)
- A local media campaign led by WANEP-Ghana in the Upper East in tandem with the local dialogue
- The new online web resource for the VPs in Ghana is anticipated to be launched
- The Scoping Study will be finalized and circulated for wider publication

About Us

The Fund For Peace



The Fund for Peace (FFP) is an independent, nonpartisan, 501(c)(3) non-profit research and educational organization founded over five decades ago, headquartered in Washington D.C. FFP works to prevent conflict and promote sustainable security by building relationships and trust across diverse sectors and by developing innovative technologies and tools.

WANEP-Ghana



Established in 2002 as a non-profit, nonpartisan civil society organization, WANEP-Ghana has a network of over 130 grassroots civil society organizations across the country, and is engaged in a wide range of education, peace and conflict research, gender-based (including women, youth and vulnerable groups) peacebuilding, and human security early warning and response activities.