

Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights in Ghana

Quarterly Project Update: July-September 2016

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.

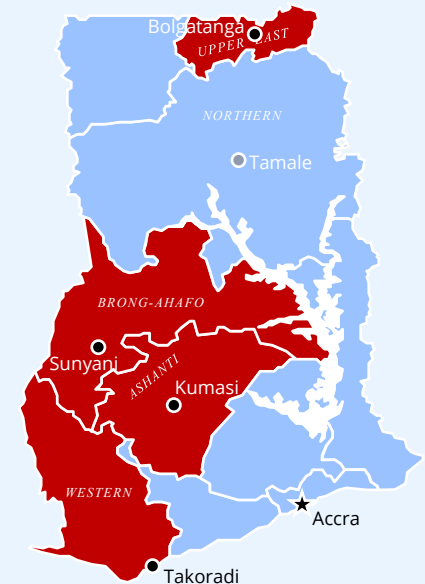
Since July 2015, our 18-month program has focused on building the awareness and capacity of civil society — including local community members and civil society organizations (CSOs) — about the VPs, as well as more broadly peacebuilding and conflict prevention in extractives-affected communities of Ghana. This included developing pilot programs in four regions, to facilitate training, then dialogue that

encourages constructive engagement between local government, communities, and companies. The activities aimed to help local stakeholders address 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 has provided civil society with a platform to better mitigate violence and potential for security force abuses in communities. This will 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 Three 2016 (Q3) provides updates on the first national level roundtable staged in Accra—bringing together representatives from the four pilot regions in July 2016.

Ghana

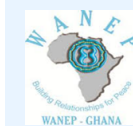


This brief summarizes the key project updates for the quarter relating to the Voluntary Principles in Ghana undertaken by FFP in local partnership with WANEP-Ghana. The project implementation is focused in the four key regions highlighted in the map above. This program is a U.S. Government funded initiative, 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:

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National Dialogue Accra, July 2016

The first national level forum for the program was held on 28th July, 2016, bringing together participants from the four pilot regions to share information and lessons learned.



Program Progress

First National-Level VPs Dialogue

Establishing a national platform

One of the most valuable parts of the Voluntary Principles Initiative, is its ability to convene diverse stakeholders to find common ground on key human rights and security issues. This constructive engagement centers on the shared interests of government, company and civil society of promoting sustainable security and development within communities. For the company—reduced security risks mean a stable operating environment for their project to succeed. For civil society, it offers a chance to promote peace and prosperity for communities, while also ensuring their rights are protected. And for the government, it supports the objectives of both citizen protection and peaceable economic growth.

While in theory these interests align, the reality on the ground is often very different. Communities and their representatives can

feel aggrieved, distrusting of companies and government, and commonly as if they have not seen the project’s prosperity benefit their community or region, or that their concerns not taken seriously. By contrast companies or government may see the side of violence, crime and hostility from local actors that impact the safety of their personnel and assets, and jeopardize their operations.

Establishing that mutual trust takes time. However, through clear rules and support to create a platform where constructive engagement can begin — sustained dialogue has the potential to address many of the underlying conflict dynamics.

This program sought to achieve this through the creation of local dialogue platforms in Upper East, Western, Brong-Ahafo and Ashanti regions. For many stakeholders, it was the first time they had sat in a room all together with local leadership, government, company, CSOs and media, to talk about the issues facing them around the extrac-

tives sector. Discussions during the local dialogues staged in February and May 2016, were framed within the context of a forum of addressing security and human right concerns. The underlying conflict drivers also informed discussion, highlighting issues such as environmental degradation, compensation, unemployment and land disputes which can be triggers for violence.

Using the information shared in the local dialogues, the July 2016 roundtable provided a forum for representatives from the four regions to voice concerns and issues at a national level. It also represented an important opportunity for different communities, government stakeholders and mining, oil and gas companies to connect and share lessons learned and best practices. To provide a more national-level perspective, were stakeholders from the Government of Ghana including the Petroleum Commission, Ministry of Justice and Attorney General, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Jus-

Key Issues Raised from Each Region

Major conflict drivers identified during the national roundtable

Brong-Ahafo Region

- Youth unemployment and competition for skilled labor positions
- Site incursions by Galamsey; eliciting security responses from deployed public security
- Perceived in-access to complaints structures by community members

Western Region

- Dispute over government distribution of oil revenues to coastal communities and Western region
- Youth unemployment and access to education
- Limited community engagement by some companies operating in the region



Upper East Region

- Disputed MoU between community and company relating to implementation of development projects
- Environmental degradation; both from illegal mining (Galamsey) and perceived by communities
- Underground tunneling by Galamsey; causing security and environmental concerns to communities and company workers

Ashanti Region

- Street violence and criminality
- Disenfranchised youth; high rates of unemployment
- Site incursions and use of explosives by Galamsey; causing site security implications

Program Progress

tice (CHRAJ), the Ghana Army, Navy and Police, and Ministry of the Interior.

The Roundtable included company representatives from the four regions including AngloGold Ashanti, Eni, Newmont, Shantii Mining, and Tullow Oil, as well as the Ghana Chamber of Mines and private security provider G4S. Also in attendance were local leadership from youth, women and religious groups as well as WANEP and the Ghana News Agency. A total of 30 participants were involved at the event, which was staged at the Fiesta Hotel in Accra on July 28th, 2016.

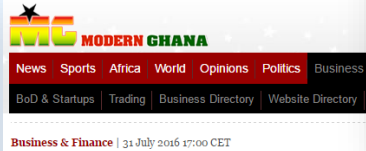
During proceedings, local representatives from the company, community and government in each region provided updates on key issues affecting their local areas. Across the regions, commonality was found in the propensity of underlying issues having the potential to escalate into conflict and violence, and result in security response and use of force incidents. This was considered more of a challenge than any human rights abuses being actively committed by security forces, which was seen as a follow-on effect.

At the stage where a security situation escalates and there is a response by public security — the need for training and communication between companies, police and military was highlighted. One example raised was the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between mining companies and the Ghana Army which was negotiated by the Chamber of Mines in 2014 which focuses on VPs. There remains an ongoing issue surrounding the MoU at the Obuasi mine site in the Ashanti region, where a company-government dispute is currently before international arbitration. Despite this, it was noted that the parties have continued to communicate and coordinate on some security measures.

Nonetheless, the coordinated approach amongst the Chamber's membership with respect to formal agreements with public

Success Story: Coverage of the National VPs Roundtable

The approach to involving local journalists in our regional activities has ensured that the knowledge around the VPs has been carried through to the national and international media. This approach was continued at the national level roundtable in July, with media representatives invited to be part of the discussion. Coverage of the event reinforced positive messaging around the VPs framework as well as highlighting key issues such as underlying conflict drivers of youth disenfranchisement, illegal mining practices and environmental degradation.



Stakeholders schooled on Voluntary Principles implementation

By GNA



By Samira Larbie, GNA
Accra, July 31, GNA - The Fund For Peace, (FFP), in partnership with the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding, (WANEP-Ghana), has held a stakeholders meeting for extractive industries to educate them on the implementation of the Voluntary Principles (VPs).

It was also to enable stakeholders share experiences in their various communities and be able to learn more practi addressing issues in their regions.

As part of our program's objective to contribute to overall learning and development of best practices on VPs, we circulated a summary to key community, government and company stakeholders both within Ghana and wider international community.

Right: An excerpt from the public summary of the first national roundtable. For a full copy visit: <http://library.fundforpeace.org/ghanavpsnr-1607>



Above: An excerpt from the Ghana News coverage from the July national roundtable. For the full article visit: <https://www.newsghana.com.gh/stakeholders-take-training-on-voluntary-principles-implementation/>

Left: An excerpt from the Ghana News coverage and interviews with WANEP-Ghana and FFP. For the full article visit: <https://www.modernghana.com/news/708192/stakeholders-schooled-on-voluntary-principles-implementation.html>



Voluntary Principles in Ghana National Roundtable

Event Summary—28 July 2016

In 2014, Ghana took steps to become the first African nation to join the International Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights (VPS) initiative. Now in 2016 as the Ghana Government finalizes its National Action Plan for VPs implementation, companies, civil society and government stakeholders are working together to share challenges and best practices for addressing security and human rights in large scale project areas.

On the 28th July, 2016 the Fund For Peace (FFP) in partnership with the West Africa Network for Peace Building Ghana (WANEP-Ghana) staged the first national VPs Roundtable in Accra. Staged as part of a program funded by the U.S. Department of State, this roundtable follows a series of local trainings and dialogues in four regions in Ghana over the past 12 months. The national event included representatives from four community areas affected by oil, gas and mining operations, including the Asofo District in the Brong-Ahafo region, Adansi West District in the Ashanti region, the Talensi District in the Upper East region and six coastal Districts in the Western region.



Government, community, and company representatives from Upper East, Brong Ahafo, Ashanti and Western regions met in Accra on 28th July 2016 to discuss security and human rights issues in extractives affected communities.

Stakeholders from the Government of Ghana included the Petroleum Commission, Ministry of Justice and Attorney General, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ), the Ghana Army, Navy and Police, and Ministry of the Interior. The Roundtable included company representatives from the four regions including AngloGold Ashanti, Eni, Newmont, Shantii Mining, and Tullow Oil, as well as the Ghana Chamber of Mines and private security provider G4S. Also in attendance were local leadership from youth, women and religious groups as well as WANEP and the Ghana News Agency.

The local representatives from the company, community and government in each region provided updates on key issues affecting their local areas. Across the regions, commonality was found in the propensity of underlying issues having the potential to escalate into conflict and violence, and result in security response and use of force incidents. This was considered more of a challenge than any human rights abuses being actively committed by security forces, which was seen as a follow on effect.

At the stage where a security situation escalates and there is a response by public security — the need for training and communication between companies, police and military was highlighted. One example raised was the Memorandum of Under-

standing (MoU) between mining companies and the Ghana Army which was negotiated by the Chamber of Mines in 2014 which focuses on VPs. There remains an ongoing issue surrounding the MoU at the Obuasi mine site in the Ashanti region, where a company-government dispute is currently before international arbitration. Despite this, it was noted that the parties have continued to communicate and coordinate on some security measures.

Nonetheless, the coordinated approach amongst the Chamber's membership with respect to formal agreements with public security, provided an example of best practice for the oil/gas companies in the Western region who work with the Ghana Navy and Airforce, as well as Naval Police.



Program Progress

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Discussion highlighted the need for companies to better engage with communities from the beginning of a project lifecycle, and managing community expectations about employment opportunities, compensation, and livelihoods, as well as security arrangements. With new oil/gas projects coming online in the Western region, community concerns were raised about planning for sustainable livelihoods, including investing in youth skills and education. Similarly, the disputes in the Upper East regarding the company provision of funds for development projects, rather than sums of revenue to traditional leadership, remains ongoing.

A second follow-up dialogue intended to narrow the focus to a policy discussion of security and human rights issues, and review the Ghana Government VPs National Action Plan, will be staged in October 2016.

Increasing Public Awareness

Promoting security and human rights throughout Ghana

The program's website is underway, with completion due in coming months (*see box below*). The website will be a key resource for companies, communities and government alike on the VPs and how they can get involved. The website will also have a reporting portal, enabling local stakeholders to submit incidents relating to VPs-related conflict—for review and follow up by WANEP-Ghana, as part of their broader organizational work on conflict early warning/response, and peacebuilding.

As part of the Ghana Government's commitment to become a member of the Voluntary Principles Initiative, they have developed a National Action Plan (NAP) which will help deepen VPs awareness and buy-in from civil society, companies and government at different levels. During the national roundtable in July, what became apparent was the need for robust consulta-

tion with a range of stakeholders – from different ministries, to companies themselves about how they could support efforts, as well as how CSOs could also participate. The topic of VPs within a national policy level context will be explored during our next national roundtable in October, to ensure the NAP is a well consulted and sensitized document for maximum success during the government's implementation phase.

Upcoming Activities

Taking place next quarter are the following project activities:

- Second national level VPs dialogue in Accra on October 20th, 2016
- Circulation of summary and recommendations from the national roundtable to a wider public audience
- Sustainability planning for post-program continued multi-stakeholder VPs in-country process.

Development of www.ghanavps.org

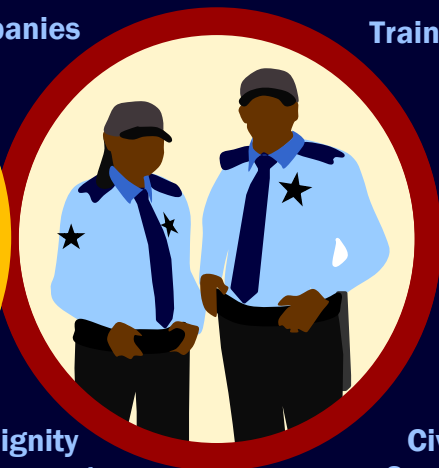
A central 'knowledge hub' for security and human rights content is an important part of this program's objective to deepen knowledge and share best practices within Ghana. It also provides an opportunity to showcase to other global partners the strides Ghana has made in implementing the VPs, since joining onto the international initiative in 2014. The website—whose url will be <http://www.ghanavps.org> is in the final stages of testing, with launch anticipated to be next quarter. It will showcase publicly available content on VPs resources, tools, as well as reporting functionality for stakeholder to report incidents to WANEP-Ghana to integrate into their early warning and response systems. It aims to encourage engagement on the VPs by all stakeholder groups - not just companies implementing the guidelines, but also how civil society and government can get involved.

Dialogue

Government

Companies

Training



Responsible
Security

Safer
Communities

Dignity
& Respect

Civil
Society

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.