Democratic Governance and Peacebuilding Cluster

Ghana and Democratic Governance

Ghana is one of West Africa’s most peaceful, stable and resilient multi-party democracies. The country has held seven successive peaceful and credible general elections with three smooth transfers of power. Ghana is a top performer on various governance rankings for the continent. It is ranked the 5th most peaceful nation in Sub-Saharan Africa and has an overall governance performance ranking of 8th out of 54 African countries by the 2017 Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG).

Although it remains in the top ten performing countries, Ghana is rated the 6th most declined country on the continent in overall governance in the last 5 years and 8th in the last 10 years. This is evident in the persistent inequalities, weak institutional capacities for reforms, inadequate policy implementation and enforcement and low access to quality public services and information. Even Ghana’s well-regarded peace architecture is coming under stress due to increasing disputes over resources, political and electoral violence, terrorism, vigilantism, spread of illicit small arms, growing unemployment and chieftaincy related communal conflicts amongst others.

The 2017 articulated national vision is to build an optimistic, self-reliant and prosperous nation, through the sustainable use of Ghana’s human and natural resources. The country also seeks to continue to operate within a democratic, open and fair society which expands economic opportunities for all.

UNDP Support to Democratic Governance and Peacebuilding in Ghana

UNDP seeks to contribute to a Ghana where all citizens — women, men, youth — can govern themselves by choosing and holding representatives and systems accountable in an open, transparent and participatory process. UNDP works closely with Government, Civil Society and Development Partners to achieve this goal.

In line with SDG 16 (Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions), UNDP works with national partners to strengthen independent governance institutions to develop effective mechanisms for sustaining the peace architecture and to ensure broader citizen participation in decision-making where no one is left behind. Our support is structured under these priority areas:

- Responsive & Accountable Institutions
- Access to Justice & Rights Protection
- Conflict Prevention & Social Cohesion
- Inclusion & Social Mobilization

UNDP supports:

- Independent Governance Institutions to be responsive, effective, and gender-sensitive.
- Peace Actors and Institutions to sustain peace and reduce spread of small arms.
- Justice and Human Rights Institutions to provide equitable access and guarantee the rights of all.
- Policies and Strategies for the uptake of health services and to reduce inequalities that drive poor health.
- Social Mobilization to scale up community actions for local development and upstream impact; and to promote democratic governance through collective citizen action for accountability.

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1 2017 Global Peace index by the Institute for Economic and Peace
2 Mo Ibrahim Foundation 2016, at: https://bit.ly/2I0A2Gz
Recent Achievements: Key Facts

### Supporting Electoral Process in Ghana
- UNDP, in strategic partnership with the EU, USAID, DANIDA, and the Governments of Norway and Canada, provided coordinated technical and financial assistance to the Electoral Commission (EC) and key stakeholders. This contributed to strengthening electoral processes and mitigating electoral risks.
- Transparency and credibility of the 2012 and 2016 elections were greatly enhanced with the provision of a biometric voter registration system, a mobile telephone-based SMS voter registration verification platform and projectors and screens in all the 275 constituency collation centres.

### Transparency & Accountability
- The poor and vulnerable that received legal aid services in Ghana increased from 2,138 (46% women) in 2012 to 10,350 (60.78% women) by end of 2016. This resulted from strengthening the capacity of the Legal Aid Scheme (LAS) with UNDP support. Over the period, LAS expanded to 15 districts, trained 145 (20% female) staff nationwide, developed and implemented a Legal Aid guide as well as a personnel and communication strategy.
- 90% of Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) clients surveyed indicated satisfaction with the quality and timely delivery of services received from the Commission. This comes as a result of UNDP's support to improve the knowledge of 267 CHRAJ staff nationwide on their roles and responsibilities (194 males and 93 females).

### Consolidating Peace
- The National Peace Council (NPC) has successfully intervened in several conflicts including mediating in emerging disputes at Tuobodom, Kwapong, Sankore and Portor to restore relative peace. These results are due to UNDP’s support to improve the technical, operational and organizational development capacity of the National and Regional Peace Councils.
- Similarly, the Upper East Regional Peace Council reconstituted the Bawku Inter-Ethnic Peace Committee and developed a road map for peace. In addition, 60 women and youth in 6 conflict affected areas have improved their capacity for increased participation in conflict prevention and mediation, also due to UNDP support.

### Representation & Participation
- 113 (57 women and 56 men) party executives from five political parties (NPP, NDC, PNC, CPP and PPP) nationwide enhanced their capacity to promote gender equality and women’s political participation through the development and implementation of gender policies. UNDP also assisted these parties to strengthen their internal democracies with improved communication policies and membership databases.
- Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) are better able to engage citizens in budget planning, policy formulation, and implementation. This was achieved through enhancing the skills and knowledge of MMDAs on the National Framework on Popular Participation using the Practitioners Manual, which was developed and implemented with UNDP support.

### Projects Highlights

#### Improving Response Capacities to Terrorism in Peacekeeping Theatres in Africa
In partnership with the Government of Japan this intervention aims to enhance the operational effectiveness of peacekeepers in Africa against terror attacks through research and training. The project, which is being implemented in collaboration with the Kofi Annan International Peace Keeping Training Centre, will train up to 100 personnel from the training units of eight (8) beneficiary Police/Troop Contributing Countries: Togo, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Nigeria and Senegal.

#### Improving Access to Legal Aid Services for the Poor and Vulnerable
In line with SDG goal 16.3 which aims at ensuring equal access to justice for all, UNDP is supporting the drafting of the Legal Aid Commission Bill and Regulations, and facilitating stakeholder engagement for adoption. If passed, the new Act will reform the legal aid institution from a scheme to a Commission with the requisite independence and decentralized administration of the legal aid system. Additionally, paralegals (non-lawyers with a certain level of legal training) will be formally institutionalized into Ghana’s legal system, for the first time ever. These reforms will ensure alignment with international best practice and empower effective delivery of legal aid services to the poor and vulnerable in Ghana.

#### Enhancing Women’s Participation in Decision-Making
UNDP is providing technical and financial assistance to the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection to review, redraft and advocate for the adoption of an Affirmative Action (Gender Equality) Bill. When passed, implementation of the Affirmative Action Act will redress the persisting social, economic, political and cultural barriers to the full participation of women in leadership and decision-making positions.

#### Strengthening Capacities to Reduce HIV-Related Stigma and Discrimination
UNDP in collaboration with UNAIDs through the Joint UN Team on AIDS, is providing support to strengthen technical capacities to reduce HIV-related stigma and discrimination in Ghana. UNDP in close partnership with the Ghana Aids Commission (GAC) is facilitating the engagement of traditional leaders and authorities to enlist their support in creating awareness on HIV; empowering the media to support the national HIV response efforts; and reinforcing the institutional capacity of CHRAJ to address HIV related stigma and discrimination.

For more information on projects in this cluster, please visit: [http://www.gh.undp.org/content/ghana/en/home/ourwork/democratic-governance/overview.html](http://www.gh.undp.org/content/ghana/en/home/ourwork/democratic-governance/overview.html)