



*“Key national institutions of democracy are effective, accountable, gender responsive and promote peace, inclusive governance, human security with focus on vulnerable groups, by 2016.”*

#### **UNDAF Outcome 10**

## **ENHANCING HUMAN SECURITY THROUGH DEVELOPING LOCAL CAPACITY** **UNITED NATIONS JOINT PROGRAMME IN NORTHERN GHANA**

Although Ghana is seen as an oasis of stability in a volatile West African sub region, it nonetheless faces a number of human security challenges, especially in the three northern regions, which must be addressed before they undermine **peace and security** of the nation as well as the human development gains. **The United Nations Joint Human Security Programme in Northern Ghana (HSP)** addresses underlying threats to human security through empowering local institutions, communities and individuals to manage and **prevent conflict** in Northern Ghana as a means to sustainable human security. The concept of human security is based upon individuals' rights to *"freedom from fear," "freedom from want" and "freedom to live in dignity"*; it is distinguished from national security by its *"people-centred"* focus.

While there has been exceptional progress in Ghana towards meeting MDG poverty reduction targets, this improvement is seen primarily in the south of the country. Poverty levels in Ghana's Northern Regions are virtually unchanged since 1991-92. Development in the three northern regions has been hindered by ongoing disputes over land, political and chieftaincy issues.

With the aim of addressing threats to human security in Northern Ghana, and with particular reference to conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peace-building processes, the United Nations Joint Programme, "Enhancing Human Security through Developing Local Capacity for Holistic Community-Based Conflict Prevention in Northern Ghana (HSP)", was initiated in 2009.

The programme integrates the expertise and experience of **six UN agencies**; **UNDP** and **UNICEF** combines their expertise in local capacity development in governance, peace building, conflict resolution mechanisms and sustainable livelihoods, **WFP** ensures health and food/nutrition security, **UNIDO** extends its experience in small enterprise and business development skills, **FAO** promotes agricultural productivity and food security while **UNU** advocates the human security concept at all levels.

Concrete results on the ground have been achieved. According to the HSP mid-term outcome assessment in 2011, the majority of respondents in human security programme communities (85.5%) was of view that the level of tension had reduced in their communities between 2009 and 2011.



**Traditional leaders brainstorming on roadmap to peace in Dagbon**

*Stakeholders have developed much trust in the UN by virtue of its neutrality and all-inclusive engagement of all in the peace process.*

Some of them referred to HSP as one of major factors which contributed to the reduction of tension. These communities have been making efforts towards human security with holistic support from HSP including those in the areas of food security, nutrition, livelihoods and peace building.

For instance, 75 tree crop farmers from Bawku and Wa have received 840 improved mango seedlings and are growing the trees to improve upon household **food security and nutrition**. Also, 400 farmers have been trained in animal husbandry in preparation for the delivery of 2000 sheep in February 2012. A total of 21,584 metric tons of food supplements was distributed to 3,239 pregnant and lactating **women** and 775 children under five years.

Besides, key stakeholders in the Dagbon and Bawku conflicts have developed much trust in the UN by virtue of its neutrality and all-inclusive engagement of all in the peace process. This thus places additional responsibility to respond beyond capacity development by engaging in **high level mediation** to create the necessary space for further dialogue and reconciliation. The HSP also organized peace building workshop for 53 members of the various media houses in the three regions of the north. This was aimed at ensuring transparent, fair and balanced and conflict sensitive reporting of sensitive issues such as conflicts and elections.

As part of mainstreaming and advocating human security in the context of Northern Ghana, a series of research activities and local-level dialogues has been undertaken to discuss current status, progress and way forward for promoting human security as well as to facilitate learning about human security. Advocacy materials such as "Human Security Tool Box" are also



Farmer receiving improved mango seedling



400 Farmers have received 2000 sheep in February 2012 (Tamale)

being developed based on evidence and inputs by local stakeholders. – i.e., Tamale, Yendi, Bawku and Wa.

Joint Programming is new and agencies have improved in their coordination building consensus and **developing synergies** and complementarities for working together and "**delivering as One**" (DaO). Working directly with communities through the use of the field specialists has brought the UN closer to the communities, although challenges are still lying ahead. The presence of the UN in the selected human security communities is eliciting positive responses from the local government system to the needs of

*The HSP addresses underlying threats to human security through empowering local institutions, communities and individuals to manage and prevent conflict*

those communities and thus paved the way for the UN to promote a wider understanding of how to address determinants of human insecurity. Joint missions created synergy, and momentum between agencies as well as fostered commitment from the communities to a shared vision and ideas for further collaboration. Furthermore, these joint efforts have been contributing to ensuring ownership of the Government of Ghana and other local stakeholders with an intention to sustain human security outcomes at the local level and in a long term perspective.