

Regional

6,200 Jobs created through SOCO project implementation

From Gilbert Mawuli Agbey,
BOLGATANGA & Mohammed
Fugu, TAMALE

ABOUT 6,200 jobs have been created through the successful implementation of the first phase of the Gulf of Guinea Northern Regions Social Cohesion (SOCO) project in the six beneficiary regions.

The jobs include 3,800 unskilled labour, 2,000 skilled labour and 426 community facilitator roles.

The beneficiary regions are Upper West, Upper East, Northern, North-East, Savannah and Oti.

Out of the 530 projects earmarked in the first year of implementation, 441 have been successfully implemented, with an estimated investment of GH¢184,777,742.07.

These projects span sectors such as education, health, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), agriculture, road network, natural resource management, climate adaptation, local economic development to youth development.

These came to light at separate media engagements on the SOCO

project in the Northern, North East, Upper East and Savannah regions.

The essence of the encounter was to update the media on the progress of work done in the first-year of implementation and efforts being put in place to kick-start the second phase of the SOCO project.

Significant development

In his remarks, the SOCO Zonal Coordinator for the Northern Region, Samuel Kobina

Forson, explained that the completed projects comprised 33 roads and culverts, 59 classroom blocks with teacher accommodation, 73 rural markets, 66 health facilities and 210 water systems.

He indicated that all the 48 beneficiary districts across northern Ghana and the Oti Region had witnessed significant development since the implementation of the project.

The Northern Regional Minister, Shani Alhassan Shaibu, described the project as a game changer.

He said it had contributed significantly to bridging the gaps in the social, economic, health, education and development sectors.

He indicated that out of the 58 projects earmarked for the region, 48 had been completed, while the rest were at various stages of completion.

He, therefore, appealed for the extension of the project to cover the eight non-beneficiary districts in the region, to improve the standard of living of the people.

Improved well-being

The North East Regional Minister, Yidana Zakaria, indicated that the region had witnessed substantial investments in key sectors that directly impacted the well-being of the people.

"In education, nine schools have

been constructed, ensuring that more children have access to quality education. The health sector has also seen significant improvements with eight health facilities built, enhancing healthcare services for our people," he stated.

He added that nine rural markets had been built to provide opportunities for local traders and boost economic growth in the communities, whereas two additional roads had been constructed to facilitate better connectivity and access within the region.

Indelible impact

The Upper East Regional Minister, Alhaji Dr Hafiz Bin Salih, said a total of 243 projects executed across the 15 MDAs had made an indelible impact on the lives of the people in the region.

He announced that for the year 2024, a total of 323 sub-projects were to be implemented as the procurement had been concluded, paving the way for successful bidders to move to site for construction works to commence.

The Savannah Regional Minister, Muhazu Jibril, lauded all stakeholders for ensuring the successful implementation of the first phase of the project.

"We are proud to report that the SOCO project has received unwavering support from the Government of Ghana. The initiative has the full commitment of our President, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, and our Vice-President and Presidential Candidate for the NPP, Dr Mahamudu Bawumia, who has been deeply involved in every phase of the project," he said.

Writer's email:

gilbert.agbey@graphic.com.gh/
mohammed.fugu@graphic.com.gh



• Yidana Zakaria, North East Regional Minister, addressing the media. Looking on is Samuel Agyarko Larbi (right), SOCO Zonal Coordinator for Upper East and North-East regions