

# Project empowers women with leadership skills

**From Kwadwo Baffoe Donkor,**  
GUABULIGA

THE Guabuliga Raana, Naa Salifu Mahama Tampuri, has praised the intervention of Plan International Ghana's She Leads Project in his community, which, he said, had empowered a lot of women who have become very active in the community development.

Guabuliga is a farming community in the West Mamprusi District in the North East Region and has a population of about 5000 residents.

The project, he said, also inspired most of the young girls to aspire to greater heights and to take their education seriously.

Naa Tampuri, who is also a champion (promoter) of the She Leads Project, said that through the project, Guabuliga now has a queen mother who leads and organises the women within the community, something that did not exist in the past.

## She Leads Project

It is a five-year programme (2021-2025) designed with the strategic objective to increase the sustained influence of Girls and Young Women (GYW) on decision-making and to transform negative gender norms in both formal and informal institutions.

It is an initiative of Plan International Netherlands (PIN), Defence for Children - ECPAT the Netherlands (DCI-ECPAT), African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET) and Terre des Hommes the Netherlands (TdH), with Equal Measures 2030 - a technical partner.

The consortium unites women's rights and feminist organisations, girls and young women (GYW)-led groups. It is being implemented in seven African countries, two countries in the Middle East and at the regional and international level.

In Ghana, She Leads is a consortium of Plan International Ghana, Defence for Children International Ghana, Women Aspire Network and Hope for Future Generations, Rights and Responsibilities Initiatives, Songtaba, Erudite Women Empowerment Network and Community Aid for Rural Development as implementing partners.

## Timidity

Guabuliga Raana said this in an interaction with the media during a field trip as part of a

three-day training workshop organised by Plan International Ghana (PIGHA) for its media partners in northern Ghana.

He said before the project came to the area, most of the girls and even the women folks were very timid and felt reluctant to speak during community gatherings.

Through the project, he said, many girls have been empowered to seek further education and achieve their full potential.

Another impact of the project, he explained, was the ability of the women to come together to select their leader and discuss issues of interest to them and those of the community.

## Challenges

Notwithstanding the impact of the project in the community, Naa Tampuri said the abject poverty facing the majority of the people has been one of the stumbling blocks in the way of the girls.

He gave the example of girls from the community who have gained admission to the

University of Development Studies to pursue nursing and needed about GH¢6,000 for their fees, "this is something her parents cannot afford and we will need to seek support from elsewhere." One of the beneficiaries of the project, Rukiya Issa from Gambaga, said that after completing SHS in 2019, she went to Accra to work as a head porter (kayayo).

However, after a while, she decided to return home and it was then that she realised she was two months pregnant.

"My parents were disappointed in me and did not want to have anything to do with me.

"I had to cater for myself throughout the pregnancy, and after I gave birth, it was the same. Things became really difficult," she said.

Rukiya said it was around the same time she heard about the She Leads Project and decided to join them.

Through the project, she was inspired to pick up the pieces and learned a trade to become self-reliant and has just graduated as a fashion designer.

Through the project, she has been able to take up leadership and is currently serving as the secretary of a women's group in her community.

"But for She Leads, I would not know where I would be. Apart from acquiring a skill to make a living, I have become more confident and can take up any leadership role in society," she said.

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