

GHC48m disbursed in U/W for SOCCO projects



Mr Dan Botwe, Local Government Minister

From Musah Umar Farouq, Wa

An amount of GHC48 million was disbursed to eleven Municipal and District Assemblies (MDAs) in the Upper West Region for the first phase of the Gulf of Guinea Northern Ghana Social Cohesion (SOCO) project implementation.

The Minister of Local government, Decentralisation and Rural Development, Mr Daniel Botwe, said the amount was to implement 127 sub-projects across all the Municipal and District Assemblies in the Region.

He indicated that GHC 107 million had been allocated to the region for the second phase of the project, which is expected to commence soon.

Mr. Botwe made this statement last Thursday, during a Consultative workshop on SOCO Scoping Report and Digital Knowledge Management Platform, organised by the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC), in collaboration with MLDGRD and the Project Implementation Unit (PIU).

The programme provided a platform for experts, indigenes, and academics and professional groups to be informed about the SOCO project and review the Scoping Reports and the Digital Knowledge Management Platform, to offer suggestions and ideas for the improvement of the program.

Forty Eight (48) Municipalities and Districts in six regions in Northern Ghana, including Oti-Region are benefiting from the \$150 million SOCO Project.

"This money is available, it has been sent to the region, GHC 48 million. No contractor or consultant will say we done this work, and we are waiting for payment, no, the money is available.

"If the project is not going as it

should and you go to the Municipal and District Chief Executive, the Coordinating Director and they are giving excuses, no," he pointed out.

Mr Botwe, therefore, urged the media and other stakeholders to monitor the implementation of the Sub-Project from the start to completion to ensure they were implemented to yield expected result.

The Minister for Local Government, Decentralisation and Rural Development reminded the MDCEs and the Coordinating Directors of the provisions of the Local Government Act, 2016 (Act 936), which enjoined the Assemblies to play effective role of the activities of the development at the district level to bring the government closer to the people.

The Vice Chairman of the National Development planning Commission (NDPC), Mr David Quaye Annang, indicated that the SOCO Project was expected to stop the spillage of violent extremism into Ghana from the neighbouring countries and vulnerabilities caused by climate change and to strengthen local institutions to provide economic opportunities for the youth.

He indicated that, interventions of government and Non-governmental Organisations in the past to address the development challenges in the country were inhibited by the lack of coordination and fragmented approach to those interventions among stakeholders.

The Chief Analyst at the NDPC, Mr Bright Afiase, who did the presentation on the Scoping Study Report, stated that the report would be launched in March 2024.

The Upper West Regional Minister, Dr Hafiz Bin Salih, called for collaboration and partnership between the MLDGRD and the NDPC, the Regional Coordinating Council and MMDAs into the implementation of the SOCO Projects, to help achieve the expected results.