# IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF ABFA UTILIZATION BY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITIES

## FINAL STUDY REPORT

**BY**

**Centre for Extractives and Development, Africa (CEDA)**

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## Executive Summary

Since 2017, Ghana has made significant strides in leveraging its oil and gas revenues (ABFA) to fund development projects, through the Coastal, Middle Belt, and Northern Development Authorities. Yet, development challenges at the sub-national level still persist. With funding from the Extractive Industry and Climate Change Governance Fund, the Centre for Extractives and Development Africa (CEDA) undertook a comprehensive study to assess the effectiveness of the Development Authorities in utilizing ABFA to accelerate socio-economic growth, alleviate poverty and bridge the widening inequality gap.

The methodology of the study encompassed participatory monitoring and evaluation techniques, field verifications, and stakeholder interviews. This multidimensional approach was intended to obtain a thorough and nuanced knowledge of the projects' direct impact on socio-economic growth, and poverty reduction in beneficiary communities. The scope of the study included a detailed examination of infrastructure projects in key sectors such as education, health, agriculture, and road construction across the Development Authorities.

**Key findings:**

1. **ABFA Utilization by Development Authorities have impacted communities positively:** ABFA-funded projects have positively impacted individuals and communities, contributing significantly or moderately to socio-economic growth and better living standards, especially for women, youth, children, PWDs, and marginalized groups. The evidence shows that these projects are achieving their goals and underscores the positive role of ABFA funding in community progress.
2. **Agricultural and Road projects have significant impact on promoting socio-economic growth and development of communities:** The assessment revealed that road and agricultural projects had the most significant impact on the socio-economic growth of communities, as these are key economic sectors. In contrast, health and education, while essential, yield economic benefits in the medium to long term.
3. **Lack of MMDA Involvement:** The study reveals a significant lack of participation by Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Assemblies (MMDAs) in ABFA-funded projects, indicating a disconnect between local governance and these initiatives. This limited involvement raises concerns about project sustainability and alignment with local needs. Despite their crucial role in local development, MMDAs are notably absent in the management of these projects.

4. **Active Community Consultation in Project Selection:** The report highlights the active involvement of key community members in project selection, ensuring a bottom-up approach that aligns initiatives with local needs. This method fosters community buy-in, ownership, and empowerment, crucial for the success and sustainability of development projects.
5. **Women's Participation in Project Selection:** The study highlights women's crucial role in community development, emphasizing their proactive involvement in project discussions. Including women's perspectives ensures an inclusive approach that meets the entire community's needs.
6. **Limited Oversight and Operational Challenges:** Ghana's Development Authorities face challenges of inadequate oversight and operational inefficiencies, exacerbated by a lack of monitoring funds and issues like project delays and poor coordination. To overcome these challenges, it's crucial to include dedicated monitoring funds in contracts and improve strategic planning, community engagement, and inter-agency collaboration to ensure effective and efficient project outcomes.
7. **Project Completion and Utilization Issues:** Challenges like construction delays, underutilization, and redundant initiatives have been observed in various projects, such as the healthcare facility in Yakubupe and educational and market projects in Imamiya and Apesokubi. These issues highlight inefficiencies in project management and the need for better stakeholder consultation, planning, and implementation.

**Study recommendations:**

1. **Legislative, Regulatory, and Conceptual Framework Enhancement:** The operational efficiency of Development Authorities is hindered by the lack of clear regulations, leading to administrative uncertainties. A comprehensive Legislative Instrument (LI) is needed to define their roles, operational boundaries, and responsibilities. This LI should also include guidelines for ABFA utilization, particularly for the Infrastructure for Poverty Eradication Programme (IPEP), to ensure effective poverty reduction and economic growth. The LI should enhance administrative processes, compliance, and technical specifications, strengthening the authorities' strategic direction and accountability.
2. **Timely Disbursement of ABFA Funds from Ministry of Finance:** To improve the efficiency of Development Authorities in Ghana, it's essential to establish a regular, reliable disbursement timetable for ABFA funds from the Ministry of Finance. This would support better financial management and ensure timely project execution.

3. **Enhanced Funding Mechanisms:** To ensure consistent funding for Development Authorities, reliable financial resources should be secured for both capital and operational needs, including project monitoring. Establishing contingency funds can also help manage delays in ABFA disbursements, allowing projects to proceed without interruption.
4. **Ensure projects are exclusively financed by ABFA:** Mixing ABFA and GOG funds hampers financial transparency, complicating the tracking of ABFA usage and project outcomes. To improve clarity, Development Authorities should avoid using GOG funds for ABFA-funded projects.
5. **Mitigate Political Interference:** To protect Development Authorities from political influence, transparent criteria for project selection and resource allocation should be established, ensuring decisions are based on need and impact rather than politics.
6. **Facilitating Public-Private Partnerships:** Reducing bureaucratic hurdles to facilitate public-private partnerships (PPPs) can significantly enhance the scope and impact of development projects. By streamlining processes, Development Authorities can more effectively engage with private sector partners, leveraging additional resources and expertise for infrastructure and development projects.

# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

The exploitation of oil and gas resources represents a significant boon to the economic landscape of resource-rich countries. These resources offer a multitude of benefits that extend far beyond the confines of the energy sector, catalyzing widespread economic growth and development. From bolstering government revenues to fostering job creation and stimulating ancillary industries, the harnessing of oil and gas resources can serve as a transformative force, driving prosperity and enhancing national resilience.

In Ghana, the discovery of oil in commercial quantities in 2010 raised the hope and expectation of increased revenue and job creation, and the availability of resources to finance critical infrastructure such as schools, hospitals and roads, which is yet to materialize. Ghana's oil and gas industry has however undergone significant development post-discovery, attracting local and foreign companies in exploration and production activities. The industry also attracted investment into downstream activities with the influx of OMCs and new refineries being set up. Ghana produces an average of 58.4 million barrels (bbls) of crude oil yearly for sale on the international market with 127,696 million standard cubic feet (mmscf) of associated and non-associated gas from its 3 production fields[1]. While crude oil is exclusively sold on the international market, gas resources are channelled into the downstream industry to support domestic and industrial power generation in the country.

To enhance the effective management and utilization of petroleum revenues, Parliament, in 2011, passed the Petroleum Revenue Management Act (PRMA), 2011, Act (805), with the overriding objective of guiding the optimal utilization of petroleum revenues for both current and future generations. The Act outlines key principles, fiscal rules, and mechanisms for transparent and accountable management of petroleum funds, including the establishment of the Annual Budget Funding Amount (ABFA) to serve as a critical resource pool to bolster national growth initiatives and infrastructure development. For instance, between 2011 and 2022, approximately USD 2.60

[1] PIAC (2024) Public Interest and Accountability Committee Petroleum Revenue Management Dashboard https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrIjoiYjc2ZmI2MzItNmU0Yy00MmQ5LTkzODgtYzM5MDVmMzAxMjA5IiwidCI6IjcxMWI4ZmZmLTlkYjMtNDJjYy1iYzI3LTdhMTljZWQ5MWYzOSIsImMiOjI9 [**NOTE**: averages computed over 5 year period from 2015 to 2020]

billion was allocated to ABFA to finance projects in the priority sectors, including energy, education, health, agriculture and infrastructure.[2]

To translate Ghana's developmental aspirations into tangible outcomes and demonstrate a commitment to optimized resource allocation, government, in 2017, established the Coastal, Middle Belt and Northern Development Authorities through the Coastal Development Authority Act, 2017 (Act 961), Middle Belt Development Authority Act, 2017 (Act 962), and the Northern Development Authority Act, 2017 (Act 963), respectively.

Initially established under the Ministry of Special Development Initiatives, the Development Authorities are responsible for coordinating the implementation of infrastructural projects in their respective geographical belts, under the Infrastructure for Poverty Eradication Programme (IPEP). Pursuant to section 2 of their Acts of establishment, the Authorities are specifically responsible for:

- accelerating economic and social development in their zones;
- mobilizing public resources for the accelerated economic and social development of their zones;
- coordinating development activities in the zones; and
- formulating and implementing initiatives aimed at achieving gender equality and empowerment of vulnerable groups in the zones.

The Development Authorities, per their Acts of establishments, have multiple funding streams. However, a comprehensive review of the reports of the Public Interest and Accountability Committee shows that the three development authorities received substantial ABFA allocation since their establishment in 2017. Despite the significant financial allocation to the Development Authorities from the Annual Budget Funding Amount, socio-economic development of communities remains worryingly low, poverty levels and living standards are worsening, while inequality of income and opportunities continues to widen. This development has raised serious concerns about the effectiveness of the Development Authorities in utilizing ABFA to accelerate socio-economic development of communities.

In light of the above, this study assessed the socio-economic impact of ABFA utilization by Development Authorities in accelerating socio-economic growth, alleviating poverty and bridging

[2] PIAC (2024) Public Interest and Accountability Committee Petroleum Revenue Management Dashboard https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrIjoiYjc2ZmI2MzItNmU0Yy00MmQ5LTkzODgtYzM5MDVmMzAxMjA5IiwidCI6IjcxMWI4ZmZmLTlkYjMtNDJjYy1iYzI3LTdhMTljZWQ5MWYzOSIsImMiOjl9

the widening inequality gap within their respective geographical zones. The scope of the study extended beyond project assessment to the formulation of evidence-based recommendations for policymakers and stakeholders aimed at enhancing the performance and impact of the three Development Authorities.

### *1.1.1 Objectives of the Study*

The overarching objective of the study is to assess the effectiveness of Development Authorities in utilizing Annual Budget Funding Amount to accelerate socio-economic development, poverty alleviation and inequality reduction. Specifically, the project sought to:

- ✓ Identify the legal framework and governance structures of the Development Authorities;
- ✓ Assess the socio-economic impact of ABFA-funded projects implemented by the Development Authorities;
- ✓ Identify key challenges and barriers faced by the Development Authorities in their utilization of ABFA;
- ✓ Formulate well-founded recommendations grounded in empirical evidence to address the identified challenges and optimize the use of ABFA to advance socio-economic development.

### *1.1.2 Scope*

The scope of this study included;

- An analysis of governance structures, resource allocation mechanisms, project implementation frameworks, and stakeholder engagement processes of the Development Authorities
- An evaluation of the socio-economic impact of ABFA funded projects implemented by the Development Authorities
- An assessment of the institutional challenges facing the Development Authorities
- Evidence-based policy recommendations aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of Development Authorities in the delivery of their institutional mandate

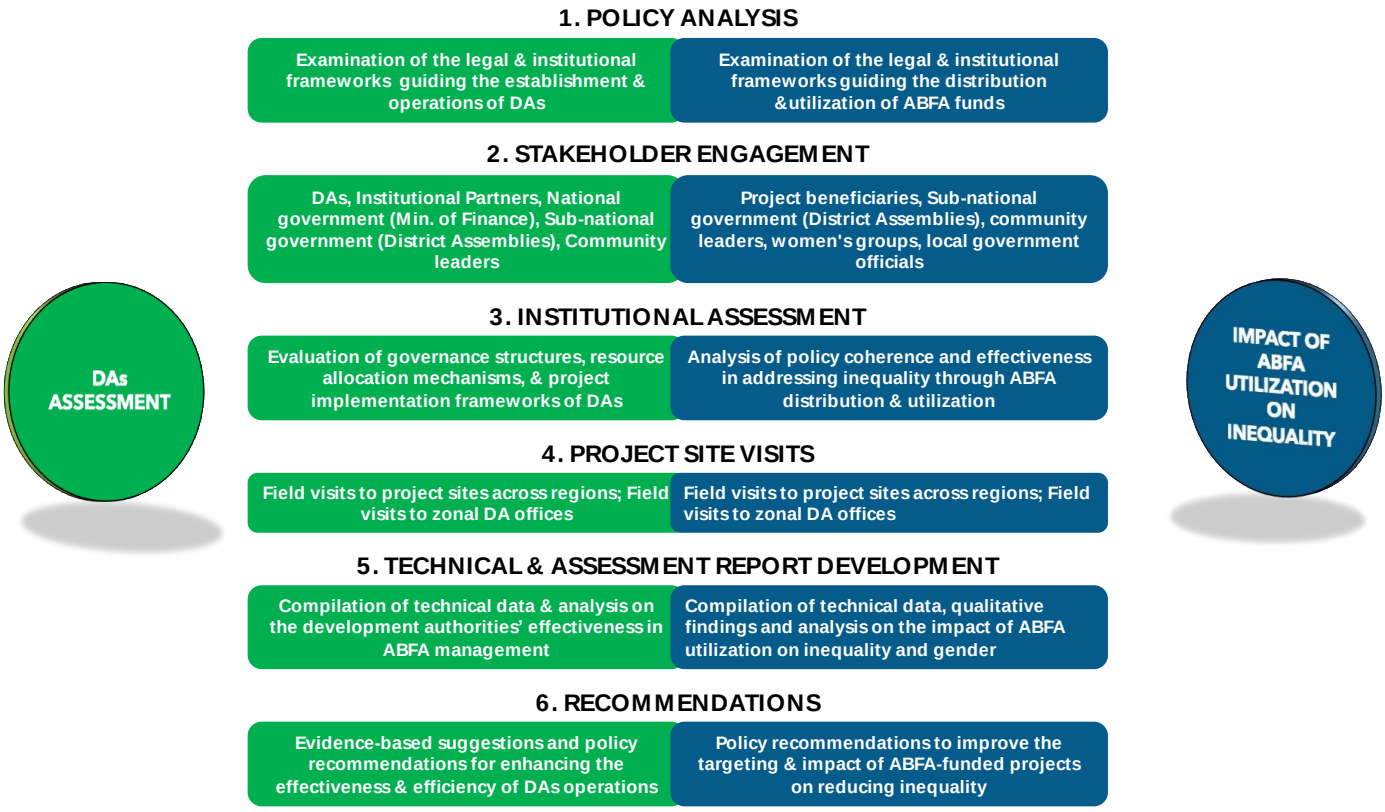


**Figure 1 Consultants' Understanding of the Work Scope**

## 1. 2 Study Methodology

This section of the report highlights the various methodological approaches utilized for the conduct of the study.

### *1.2.1 Broad Assessment Methodology*

The study adopted various tools and techniques including, participatory M&E methods such as Outcome Harvesting, to assess the impact of the ABFA-funded projects within the three Development Authorities along the three main study themes. This was complemented with questions distilled from surveys conducted by reputable state institutions, including the Ghana Statistical Service.

However, majority of the projects were newly constructed or commissioned, hence, assessing a longer-term impact could be biased. Therefore, the expectation of actual longer-term impact assessment was based on an average of two years post-project beneficiaries' views.

### *1.2.2 Literature Review*

To situate the assessment in an empirical context and deepen the consultants understanding of the functions and mandate of the Development Authorities, an extensive literature review was conducted. The review focused on;

- Understanding the mandate of the Development Authorities
- Identifying the institutional arrangement and workings of the Development Authorities
- Understanding the relationship between the mandate of the Development Authorities and ABFA provisions in the PRMA
- Exploring the critical role of local development actors in accelerating socio-economic development and reducing inequality
- Examining the intricate relationship resources allocation and gender

The following documents were extensively reviewed;

- Petroleum Revenue Management Act, 2011 (Act 815)
- Coastal Development Authority Act, 2017 (Act 961)
- Middle Belt Development Authority Act of 2017 (Act 962)
- Northern Development Authority Act (Act 963)
- Ghana EITI Annual Reports
- Public Interest and Accountability Committee Reports
- Ministry of Finance Petroleum Reports

### *1.2.3 Data Collection – Field Verification Exercise*

A key methodological approach utilized in the conduct of the impact assessment is the field verification and inspection of selected ABFA projects across the three (3) Development Authorities. In all, 10 projects were inspected in each Development Authority, while primary data was collected from project stakeholders, utilizing random and purposive sampling techniques, to understand how the projects have propelled socio-economic growth, reduced inequality and positively impacted identifiable gender groups. The engagements with multiple stakeholders (beneficiary communities, MMDAs and heads of departments) provided an avenue for triangulating and validating stakeholder responses, thereby enriching the outcome of this report.

The selection of projects for field verification was guided by the following criteria;

- Selection of projects with a high tendency of accelerating socio-economic development, reducing inequality and empowering women and other vulnerable groups in predominantly rural communities. Projects in the road, health, education and agriculture sectors were identified and selected
- Sectorial distribution of projects
- Contract sum above GH 400,000
- Spatial distribution of projects (urban, peri-urban and rural)
- Geographical/regional distribution of projects, as shown in the diagrams below

**Table 1: Projects that were selected for Field Verification**

| MMDA | Region | Project | Location | Sector | Project Status | Contract sum |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Coastal Development Authority** | | | | | | |
| Juaboso | Western North | Payment For Construction Of 1no.40-Seater Open Stalls, Store Room And External Works At Bonsu Nkwanta In The Aowin Constituenc | Bonsu Nkwanta | Agriculture | Completed | 551,363.08 |
| Suaman | Western North | Payment For Construction Of 1no. 6-Unit Classroom Block With Ancillary Facilities At Karlo | Karlo Location changed to Dadieso | Education | Completed | 830,814.07 |
| Jomoro | Western | Payment For Construction Of 1no. 40 Open Seater Market Stalls, Store And External Works At Tikobo In The Jomoro Constituency | Tikobo | Agriculture | Completed | 551,363.08 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Anura Asebu Kwaman | Central | Payment For Construction Of 1no. Market At Asebu In The Abura Asebu Kwaman Constituency In The Central Region Final Ipc | Asebu | Agriculture | Completed | 1,070,028.78 |
| Ajumako Enyan Essiam | Central | Payment For Construction Of 1no.6unit Classroom Block With Ancillary Facilities At Osedzi School In The Ajumako Enyan Esiam Constituency | Osedzi | Education | Completed | 868,230.69 |
| Biakoye | Oti | Payment For Construction Of 40 Seater Open Market Stalls And Store Room At Kwamekron ( Apeso Kubi) In The Biakoye District Oti Region | Kwamekron Apeso Kubi | Agriculture | Completed | 551,363.08 |
| Keta | Volta | Payment For Construction Of 1no. Concrete Bridge In The Keta Concrete Bridge In The Keta Constituency Ipc1 | Keta Constructed of a Culvert instead of a bridge | Road | Completed | 475,000 |
| Ketu South | Volta | Payment For Construction Of 1no. 6 Unit Classroom Block With Ancillary Facilities At Adafienu In The Volta Region. | Adafianu Location Changed to Viepe | Education | Completed | 868,230.68 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Awutu Senya East | Central | Payment For Construction Of 1.60km Of Road At Datus Electoral Area At Kasoa In The Awutu Senya East Constituency In The Central Region Ipc No. 02 | Datus Electoral Area Kasoa Location Changed to Melcom | Road | Completed | 1,198,976.92 |
| Ablekuma West | Greater Accra | Payment For Resurfacing Of Roads In The Ablekuma West Constituency Ipc3 | Ablekuma | Road | Completed | 2,058,520.19 |
| **Middle Belt Development Authority** | | | | | | |
| Tafo | Ashanti Region | Construction of 1 No. 3 unit Classroom Block, 2 No Mechanised Borehole, Udrains and Culvert | Tafo RC | Road and Education | Completed Drains & Uncompleted Educational Facility | 2,754,501.67 |
| Asokore | Ashanti Region | Construction of6 Unit Classroom block at Communities in the Effiduase/Asokore Constituency | Effiduase | Education | Completed, | 855,000 |
| Abuakwa South | Eastern Region | Construction of 1No. CHPS Compound with 2 Bedroom Quarters at Akokoo in Abuakwa South | Akokoo | Health | Completed | 466,000 |
| Abuakwa South | Eastern Region | Construction of Classroom block at Agyapomaa Basic School | Agyapomaa | Education | Completed | 427,500 |
| Okere | Eastern Region | Construction of CHPS Compound at Yilo Krobo | Aboabo | Health | Complete | 532,000 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Asutifi South | Ahafo | Construction Of Girls' Dormitory At Dadiesoaba Nursing Training, | Dadiesoaba | Education | Completed | |
| Asutifi South | Ahafo | Construction Of Girls' Dormitory With 2 Bedroom Masters Bungalow At Acheresua Shs | Acheresua | Education | Completed | |
| Techiman North District | Bono East | Construction Of 3-Unit Classroom Block With Office ,Store ,Library And Staff Common Room At Tuobodom Sda | Tuobodom | Education | Completed | 475,000 |
| Sunyani Municipal District | Bono | Construction And Filling Of Culvert At Abesim Shs Road | Abesim | Road | Completed | |
| Sunyani West District | Bono | Construction Of 1 No.Surgical Theatre At Nsoatre Health Centre | Nsoatre | Health | Completed | |
| **Northern Development Authority** | | | | | | |
| East Gonja | Savannah | Construction of 1No. CHPS Compound with Ancillary Facilities and Furnishing at Yakubupe in the Salaga South Constituency of the Savannah Region | Yakubupe | Health | Completed<br>(Project Stalled) | 600,000.00 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| East Gonja | Savannah | Construction of 1No. 3-Unit Classroom Block with Ancillary Facilities and Furnishing at Imamiya Islamic Primary School in the Salaga South Constituency of the Savannah Region. | Salaga Township | Education | Completed | 449,600.00 |
| Kumbungu | Northern | Rehabilitation and dredging of dams | Sing,Toligu, Gizaagundaa, Kukuo Gizaa | Agric/Dam | Completed | 764,999.89 |
| Kumbungu | Northern | Rehabilitation and dredging of dams | Chanzegu | Agric/Dam | Completed | |
| West manprusi | North East | Construction of health center at Mimima | Mimima | Health | Completed | |
| West manprusi | North east | Construction of 1No. 6-Unit Classroom Block with Ancillary Facilities and Furnishing at Boakudow | Boakudow | Education | Completed | |
| Binduri | Upper East | Construction of 1No Bridge at Bummbugu to Link Zaago to Binduri Central leading to Bazua market and Bolga - Bawku Trunk Road | Bummbugu - Zaago-Binduri Central-Bazua and Bolga - Bawku Trunk Road | Road | Completed | 410,000.00 |
| Bolga East | Upper East | 3-Unit Classroom Block-Dubila | Dubila | Education | Completed | 450,000.00 |
| Lambussie-Karni | Upper West | Spot improvement Chognuori-Liero Road | Chognuori-Liero | Road | Completed | 508,197.00 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Wa west | Upper West | Construction of 1 No 6-Unit Classroom Block at Wechiau SHS | Wechiau SHS | Education | Completed | 770,000.0 |

## Location and Geographical Distribution of Projects

The diagrams below present the location and geographical distribution of the projects included in the impact assessment.

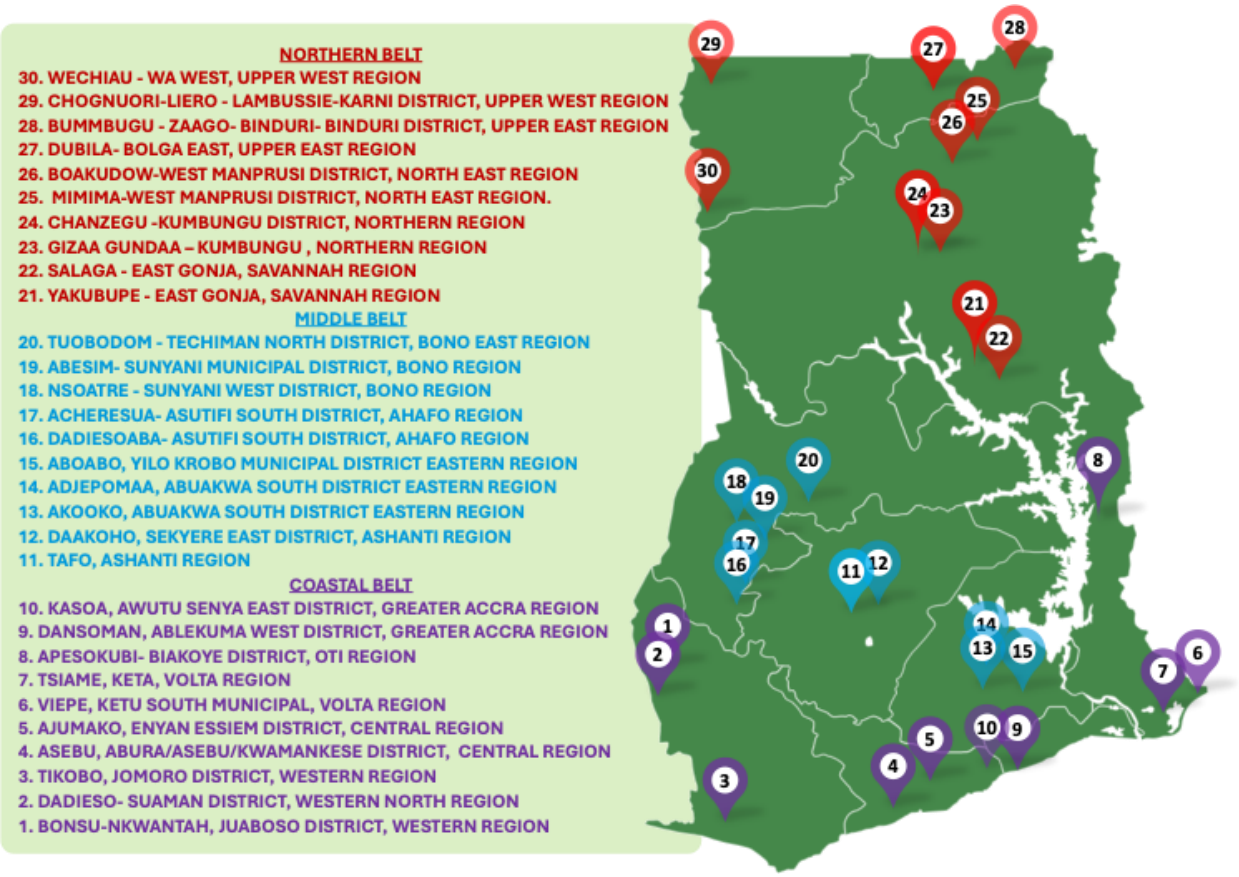


**Figure 2 the *location and geographi*cal distribution of the project**

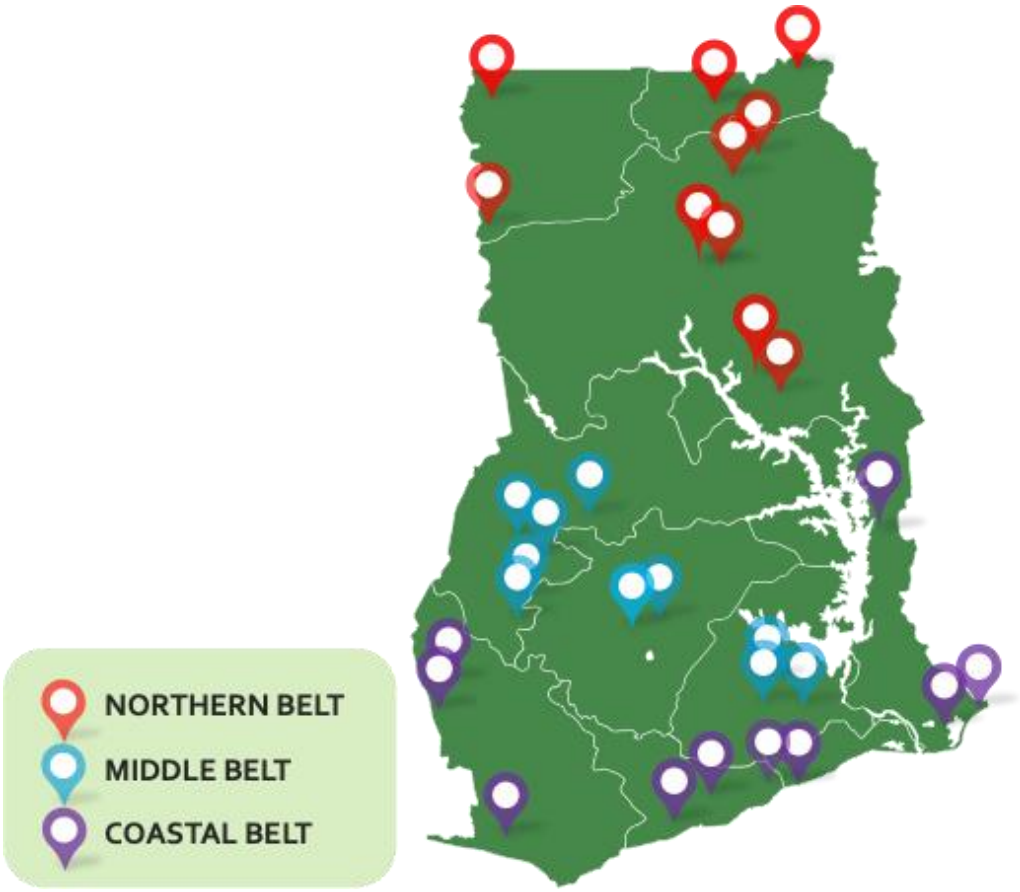


**Figure 3 Location and geographical distribution of the project**

## 1.3 Limitations of the Study

The study faced certain limitations that impacted its scope and findings, including;

- The lack of standardized data management methods and procedures across the 3 Development Authorities delayed the release of project information which negatively impacted project timelines
- Logistical constraint posed a challenge for conducting extensive data collection and analysis, and restricted the depth of the study.

# 2.0 Overview of Development Authorities

## 2.1 Introduction

In alignment with the Government's commitment to fostering national development, three distinct Development Authorities were established under the Ministry of Special Development Initiatives in 2017. These authorities, namely the Coastal Development Authority, Middle Belt Development Authority, and Northern Development Authority, were established to spearhead community-based development initiatives, each catering to the unique needs and challenges of its respective geographical belt.

## 2.2 Legal Framework (Act 961, Act 962 and Act 963)

The Coastal Development Authority Act, 2017 (Act 961), the Middle Belt Development Authority Act, 2017 (Act 962), and the Northern Development Authority Act,2017 (Act 963) established the Coastal Development Authority, the Middle Belt Development Authority and the Northern Development Authority respectively. The legal foundation of each Development Authority is delineated in its corresponding legislative act, outlining the organizational structure, governance mechanisms, administrative framework, financial provisions, and other miscellaneous provisions.

The Acts establishes the authorities as corporate bodies with perpetual succession and possessing the authority to acquire, hold, and dispose of property, as well as to enter into contracts or transactions pertaining to its objectives. The Authorities primary objectives encompass strategic planning, resource mobilization, coordination of development activities, and promoting gender equality and empowerment of vulnerable groups within their respective zones.

The Acts further mandates the authorities to design development strategy, establish effective implementation structures, facilitate consensus building among stakeholders, and coordinate resource mobilization efforts. Additionally, the Authorities are responsible for executing relevant projects aimed at modernizing key industries, stimulating private sector development, investing in infrastructure, facilitating access to food and sustainable livelihoods, and cooperating with statutory bodies to ensure alignment with national development plans.

The Acts also stipulates the source of funding for the authorities, including parliamentary allocations, loans, grants, investment returns, fees, donations, and internally generated funds. These funds are managed through a designated bank account, with expenditures covering administrative costs, employee remuneration and project execution. More, the Acts provides the

Authorities with the power to borrow, subject to relevant legal and regulatory provisions, in fulfilment of their institutional mandates.

The governance of the authorities is overseen by a board consisting of various stakeholders, including government appointees, representatives from traditional authorities, civil society organizations, and private sector entities. The Chief Executive Officer, appointed by the President, is responsible for day-to-day activities of their respective institution.

## 2.3 Resource Mobilization

To effectively achieve their mandates, the Development Authorities must have a resource mobilization strategy that will fund internal institutional operations and the implementation of projects. As provided in Sections 21 of Acts 961, 962, and 963, the Authorities are to mobilise funds through:

i. money approved by Parliament;
ii. money allocated for the Infrastructure for Poverty Eradication Programme;
iii. loans and grants;
iv. interest from investments made by the Authority;
v. rents and royalties accruing to the Authority from property of the Authority, including intellectual property and land banks;
vi. fees due to the Authority from services rendered by or through the Authority;
vii. donations and gifts;
viii. seed money specifically allocated for the start-up of the Authority; and
ix. any other internally generated funds of the Authority.

Despite the Acts providing a variety of financing sources, the Annual Budget Funding Amount has been the primary source of funding for the authorities. This can be attributed to the fact that section 2 of the Development Authorities Acts aligns strongly with the objectives of ABFA, as contained in section 21(2) of the PRMA.

**Table 2: Comparing Section 21(2) of the PRMA Act and Section 2 of the Development Authorities Acts**

| Section 21(2) of the PRMA | Section 2 of the Development Authorities Acts |
|---|---|
| The use of the annual allocation of the ABFA shall be to maximize the rate of economic development | DAs are to mobilise public resources including financial resources and private and public investments for the accelerated economic and social development of their respective development zones |
| The use of the annual allocation of the ABFA shall be to promote equality of economic opportunity to ensure the well-being of citizens | DAs are to coordinate development activities in their respective zones to ensure that resources are effectively utilised to achieve maximum development impacts to reduce poverty and deprivation |
| The use of the annual allocation of the ABFA shall be to promote equality of economic opportunity to ensure the well-being of citizens | DAs are to formulate and implement initiatives to meet the specific needs of communities, promoting gender equality and empowerment of vulnerable groups within their respective zones. |
| The use of the annual allocation of the ABFA shall be to undertake even and balanced development of the regions | DAs are to accelerate economic and social development in their respective zones through strategic direction in the planning and prioritization of development projects |

## 2.4 Mandate of Development Authorities

### *2.4.1 Implementation of IPEP*

The Infrastructure for Poverty Eradication Program (IPEP) was introduced in 2017 to reallocate $275 million from the national capital expenditure budget to finance critical infrastructural projects at the sub-national level. [3] This strategic allocation sought to catalyze economic growth, foster job creation, and combat poverty at the grassroots level. Central to the execution of IPEP was the proposed establishment of the three distinct Development Authorities. Tasked with overseeing the implementation of the program, these Authorities reported directly to the

[3] New Patriotic Party (NPP) (2016) New Patriotic Party Manifesto For Election. https://npp-usa.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/2016-manifesto-full.pdf

President, ensuring efficient coordination and accountability in driving development initiatives equally across the nation.

Before the introduction of IPEP, infrastructure needs and financing at the local level were organized differently such that the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) issued guidelines to district assemblies to prepare district medium-term development plans aligned with national plans. These plans were formulated through extensive consultations with assembly members and community stakeholders, with infrastructure needs identified through participatory needs assessment. Implementation was led by the District Planning Coordination Unit (DPCU) at the local government level, the District Coordinating Director (DCD) and the Executive Committee at the Assembly level[4].

As part of efforts to streamline infrastructure development efforts, the government inaugurated the Ministry for Special Development Initiatives (MSDI) under the auspices of the Presidency. This ministry was tasked with harmonizing infrastructure needs across various flagship projects, including IPEP, through collaboration with the newly established Development Authorities. To jumpstart the IPEP implementation process, regional-based committees were commissioned to conduct comprehensive infrastructure needs assessments across all 275 constituencies. Supported financially by Regional Coordinating Councils and District Assemblies, these committees were entrusted with compiling detailed regional and constituency infrastructure needs to inform the strategic objectives of the proposed Development Authorities[5].

While the IPEP has undergone significant modifications in its structuring, particularly in its funding mechanisms, the core mandate of the Development Authorities remains steadfast: the implementation of IPEP. Rooted in the foundational infrastructure assessments conducted by regional teams, which subsequently formed the bedrock of the Development Authorities' operational framework, this mandate underscores the pivotal role these entities play in identifying and addressing the pressing infrastructure needs of rural and marginalized communities.

[4] Ghana Center for Democratic Development (2018) Monitoring the Initial Implementation of the Infrastructure for Poverty Eradication Program (IPEP) https://cddgh.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Monitoring-the-Initial-Implementation-of-the-Infrastructure-for-Poverty-Eradication-Program-IPEP-dubbed-the-1-Million-1-Constituency-Program.pdf

[5] Ghana Center for Democratic Development (2018) Monitoring the Initial Implementation of the Infrastructure for Poverty Eradication Program (IPEP) https://cddgh.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Monitoring-the-Initial-Implementation-of-the-Infrastructure-for-Poverty-Eradication-Program-IPEP-dubbed-the-1-Million-1-Constituency-Program.pdf

### *2.4.2 Socio-Economic Growth and Development*

The mandate of the Development Authorities extends beyond project implementation to encompass a holistic approach to socio-economic development that emphasizes inclusivity, community participation, infrastructure development, resource mobilization, and alignment with national development goals. As outlined in Sections 2(a) and 2(b) of Acts 961, 962, and 963, the Development Authorities are tasked with fostering and accelerating economic and social development within their respective catchment areas.

In delivering this mandate, the Development Authorities plan and prioritize infrastructure projects that facilitate access to basic services, and enhance economic opportunities in their respective zones. This includes investments in roads, bridges, healthcare facilities, schools, and other critical infrastructure necessary for fostering sustainable development.

### *2.4.3 Inequality Reduction and Poverty Alleviation*

A commitment to address the pressing issues of inequality reduction and poverty alleviation within their designated zones is enshrined in sections 2(c) and 2(d) of the Development Authorities Acts. By strategically planning and implementing initiatives, the Development Authorities aim to mitigate the socio-economic disparities prevalent within their zones. This multifaceted approach encompasses targeted interventions designed to provide resources to uplift marginalized communities, enhance livelihood opportunities, and foster inclusive economic growth.

## 2.5 Conclusion

Acts 961, 962, and 963 serves as a foundational bedrock upon which the Development Authorities operate, enabling them to effectively fulfil their prescribed duties and functions. These Acts provide a comprehensive roadmap guiding the operations and responsibilities of the Development Authorities, ensuring alignment with overarching developmental objectives. The provisions offer a mechanism for channeling resources towards the realization of infrastructural and socio-economic development equally in all areas of the country.

By aligning the mandates of the Development Authorities with Section 21(2) of the PRMA, avenues are created for directing the Annual Budget Funding Amount (ABFA) towards the activities undertaken by the Development Authorities. This strategic alignment empowers the Authorities to leverage the country's petroleum revenues to drive impactful initiatives aimed at delivering sustainable development and bridging the inequality gap in the country.

# 3.0 Assessment of ABFA Utilization in the Coastal Development Authority

This chapter of the study presents a sectorial and project-specific analysis of the outcome of the field verification exercise conducted on ABFA-funded projects within the Coastal Development Authority. The project-specific analysis is presented along the 3 main thematic focus of the study; socio-economic growth and development of communities, poverty alleviation and inequality reduction, and impact on women, children and PWDs.

## 3.1 Agricultural Projects

### *3.1.1 Project A- 40-seater Open Market at Bonsu Nkwanta in the Juaboso District in the Western North Region*

#### *3.1.1.1Socio-Economic Growth and Development of Communities*

The 40-seater open stall market located in the Juaboso District has helped to reduce infrastructure gaps in the Bonsu Nkwanta market. The Bonsu Nkwanta Market is one of the biggest markets in the Western North region, and serves traders from Kumasi, Sunyani, and Côte d'Ivoire, enhancing social ties and connectivity while boosting the local economy. The field assessment revealed that the market is reserved for traders from different parts of the country on Fridays, underscoring its relevance to the wider Ghanaian economy.

In the face of dwindling and irregular District Assembly Common Fund (DACF) and other donor grants, the project contributes to the domestic revenue mobilization efforts of the Juaboso District Assembly, albeit minimally, through receipts from stall allocations, business operating permits and market tolls.

**'This is a rural district; our people are mostly farmers. The Common Fund is also in arrears. The new store has somehow helped in boosting the IGF we receive from the Bonsu Nkwanta market'**

- Senior Official of the Juaboso District Assembly

**Figure 4 Previous Bonsu Nkwanta Market Shed in the Juaboso District**

#### *3.1.1.2 Poverty Alleviation and Inequality Reduction*

According to the Assembly, application for the allocation of the stalls was opened to all residents, with every applicant having equal chance of being selected. Priority was however given to market women who were previously occupying the old market shed.

The impact of the 40-seater open stall on poverty alleviation and inequality reduction is however yet to materialize, partly as a result of the underutilization of the facility, occasioned by the poor siting of the facility within the market premises. The market women argued that, the position of the stalls is problematic as shoppers do not even notice it because it is behind existing structures. As a result, some market women have moved out of the new stalls to trade along the roadside, pointing to a lack of extensive stakeholder consultation during the commencement of the project.


**Figure 5 Bonsu Nkwanta CODA Open Market Stall in the Juaboso District**

#### *3.1.1.3 Impact on Women, Children and PWDs (Gendered Analysis)*

Despite the potential of the new market stall to significantly impact women, who predominately trade in Ghanaian markets, the underutilization of the facility (25%) shows the project is not having any significant impact on women in the community. The new facility also failed to address the specific sanitary needs of market women, as the project did not include toilet facilities. The market stalls also lack provisions to accommodate persons with disability as the market is not disability friendly (absence of ramps). Lastly, there was no special criteria for PWDs to apply for occupancy of the market.

### *3.1.2 Project B- Construction of 1no. 40 Open Seater Market Stalls, Store, And External Works at Tikobo in the Jomoro Constituency*

#### *3.1.2.1 Socio-Economic Growth and Development of Communities*

The Tikobo market is a vital asset to the people of Jomoro, with the potential to drive socio-economic growth and development in the community. The construction of additional market stalls by CODA was intended to increase access and utility, maximize the economic benefit of the facility and propel socio-economic development in the Jomoro community. However, the assessment showed that the project has had minimal impact on the socio-economic growth and development of the community, as final construction works are yet to be completed, limiting the

usefulness of the facility. This is despite the fact official data received from CODA indicates the project has been completed and is currently in-use.


**Figure 6 Tikobo market in the Jomoro Constituency**

Further, the market stalls do not respond to the peculiar needs of project beneficiaries, as the layout and design impede the free movement of clients. It is worth noting that market women, who are the ultimate beneficiaries of the project, were not consulted during project inception and execution.

#### *3.1.2.2 Poverty alleviation and Inequality Reduction*

The market stalls have not led to any significant improvement in the lives of beneficiaries. Incomes of users have reduced significantly while livelihoods have also been lost.

**"We demonstrated to the contractor about the design of the project but the contractor brought in policemen to arrest us. We are now noticing the long-term challenge, and very soon we will all leave this market"**

- Market woman

The allocation of stalls was also not based on any codified selection criteria, causing serious dissatisfaction among market women and community members.

#### *3.1.2.3 Impact on Women, Children, and PWDs (Gendered Analysis)*

The market stall project does not have any significant impact on the lives of women, children and other vulnerable groups, despite its strong potential to promote gender equality. The project also failed to include gender perspectives into the design and implementation of the project, by sidelining market women during the stakeholder consultation processes. In the case of PWDs, the market design does not respond to their peculiar needs.

### *3.1.3 Project C – Construction of 1no. Market at Asebu in The Abura Asebu Kwaman Constituency*

#### *3.1.3.1 Socio-Economic Growth and Development of Communities*

The Abura Asebu Kwaman constituency is located in the Central Region of Ghana with an estimated population of 124, 465. A road construction project birthed the idea of building the lockable stores next to the road to catalyze socioeconomic growth and development in the town. Located along a major road, the market has boosted the local economy by increasing trade in the district, while serving as a major source of revenue for the district assembly.


**Figure 7 Asebu Market in the Abura Asebu Kwaman Constituency**

Despite Abura Asebu Kwaman district being agrarian, the market however does not contribute to agricultural development as the market is primarily occupied by traders selling finished/imported goods.

The notable challenge observed is that the stores were not wired and connected to the national grid. The market also lacks sanitary facilities.

#### *3.1.3.2 Poverty Alleviation and Inequality Reduction*

The Asebu market has become an asset for the Abura Asebu Kwaman district as it plays a pivotal role in the local economy. One significant role it plays is it serves as an avenue for job creation, providing livelihood opportunities for people from diverse socio-economic backgrounds. The revenue generated from the market for the Assembly is also used in funding developmental projects aimed at addressing poverty and inequality in the district.

The market also serves as a vocational training centre, where young people acquire essential livelihood skills. For instance, a cobbler in the market had two apprentices who are eagerly learning the trade to be able to earn a decent living.

#### *3.1.3.3 Impact on Women, Children, and PWDs (Gendered Analysis)*

With women constituting about 70% of the direct project beneficiaries, the Asebu market has had a profound impact on the economic empowerment of women in the community, providing critical livelihoods and improving their overall living standards. The facility, however, is not disability friendly.

### *3.1.4 Project D – Construction Of 40-Seater Open Market Stalls and Store Room At Kwamekrom (Apesokubi)*

#### *3.1.4.1 Socio-Economic Growth and Development of Communities*

The Apesokubi market has not spurred socio-economic growth and development in the community, as a result of the numerous challenges that characterize the project. A visit to the market reveals that the newly constructed facility is already deteriorating two years after it was completed, and the market stalls are flooded with rainwater during the rainy season, discouraging community members from using the facility.

One major concern was that the roads connecting the farming enclave to the market are in poor condition, posing significant difficulties for farmers transporting their produce. As a result, farmers in the area persist in utilizing a neighboring market, despite its lower standards.

**Figure 8 Kwamekrom (Apesokubi) Open Market Stalls**

Consequently, the project has had little or no economic benefit to the people of Apesokubi due to underutilization of the project. The district assembly has been unable to derive revenues from the market to fund developmental projects due to underutilization of the project

### *3.1.4.2 Poverty and Inequality Reduction*

The market facility has not addressed poverty and the widening inequality in the community due to the underutilization of the facility.

### *3.1.4.3 Impact on Women, Children, and PWDs (Gendered Analysis)*

The key objective of CODA market initiative is to empower women economically to reduce gender inequality. However, the Apesokubi market project has not had any impact on the economic empowerment of women in the community as it is currently not in use.

## 3.2 Educational Projects

### *3.2.1 Project A - 6-Unit Classroom Block with Ancillary Facilities at Karlo (Project location changed to Dadieso)*

#### *3.2.1.1 Socio-Economic Growth and Development of Communities*

Dadieso is the Capital City of the Suaman District with an estimated population of around 34,875. The school building at Dadieso has a multifaced impact on the Dadieso community. The project was supposed to be at Karlo but due to a GNPC proposal to build a 6-unit block in Karlo, the former DCE decided to relocate the project to Dadieso SDA School.

The increasing population of the Suaman district led to an increase in parents seeking education for their children in the district, leading to the over population of SDA school B, and necessitated the construction of a new school facility. In the absence of the facility, the students were using the church building as a classroom block. 289 students are currently benefiting from the educational facility. The school has become a beacon of hope in offering quality education to the students. Since its completion, over 200 pupils have advanced their education to the Junior High School and there have not been recorded cases of teenage pregnancy or school dropouts.


**Figure 9 6-Unit Classroom Block with Ancillary Facilities at Dadieso**

#### *3.2.1.2 Poverty Alleviation and Inequality Reduction*

The educational facility promotes inclusivity, and accessibility which are critical in fighting poverty and bridging inequality. Community members, who hitherto could not access quality educational facilities for their children, are now able to enrol their children in the nearby school, ensuring school dropout rates is reduced and improving the life outcomes of the children.

The school has also generated economic opportunities for some residents in the Dadieso community, particularly for food vendors and book shop owners.

#### *3.2.1.3 Impact on Women, Children, and PWDs (Gendered Analysis)*

The enrolment statistics indicate that there has been an increase in female in enrolment in the school after the completion of the project, with 140 females currently benefiting from the educational facility. The facility also serves as a source of employment for women in the community, as all the food vendors in the school are women. The facility also responds to the needs of individuals with mobility-related disabilities.

Despite benefits of the project for women and children, there were notable challenges with the sanitary facilities of the structure. The students do not have adequate sanitary facilities and they use a single washroom which is unisex.

### *3.2.2 Project B- Construction of 1no. 6 Classroom Block with Ancillary Facilities at Osedzi School in The Ajumako Enyam Esiam Constituency*

#### *3.2.2.1 Socio-Economic Growth and Development of Communities*

The Osedzi school was constructed because of a huge infrastructure gap, as the existing facility was in a dilapidated condition. After the construction of the educational facility, enrolment has increased by 77.9% (197 students to 253 from class 1 to class 6 as they are the direct beneficiaries).

**Figure 10 6 Classroom Block with Ancillary Facilities at Osedzi in the Ajumako Enyam Esiam Constituency**

The presence of the new educational facility has also become a catalyst for opening up the surrounding areas, with evidence of new building infrastructure around the school block.

A notable challenge identified is the continuous use of the old delipidated structure by kindergarten pupils, posing health and safety risks to the minors. Also, the presence of the school has led to the collapse of a private school within the Osedzi community.

#### *3.2.2.2 Poverty Alleviation and Inequality Reduction*

The project has made critical contribution to poverty alleviation and inequality reduction in the community by increasing access to educational opportunities for community members through the elimination of financial bottlenecks associated with attending private educational facilities.

Aside the educational benefits of the facility, there are notable economic benefits of the project. For instance, during the construction of the facility, the contractor engaged locals of Osedzi, providing temporary but essential income for a section of the community. Also, a number of community members engage in petty trading and food vending on the school premises.

Also, inclusivity was key to the success of the Osedzi school. Prior to the construction of the project, there was an extensive engagement with the school authorities, district assembly, and members of the community to solicit for their inputs, which was used to inform project design and execution.

#### *3.2.2.3 Impact on Women, Children, and PWDs (Gendered Analysis)*

The project has resulted in an increase in female enrolment and retention in the school, as out of the 253 students benefiting from the classroom block, 112 (44.3%) are females. The educational facility has also positively impacted women in the community, providing livelihoods for food vendors and caterers. Lastly, the school facility contains a ramp, making it disability friendly.

### *3.2.3 Project C – Construction Of 1no. 6 Classroom Block with Ancillary Facilities at Adafianu (Project location changed To Viepe)*

#### *3.2.3.1 Socio-Economic Growth and Development of Communities*

The six-classroom block was originally to be sited at Adafianu and a three-unit block sited at Viepe, however, Adafianu community did not have enough space to accommodate the 6-unit classroom block, the location of the project was therefore changed to Viepe, which also needed a 6-unit classroom block.

The project has resulted in a remarkable increase in enrolment post-completion, with the JHS student population (streams A &B) increasing from 295 to 346. Despite the benefits of the project, the school faces some notable challenges. For instance, the classroom size is too small for a modern 6-unit classroom block. The facility is also located under a high tension, posing significant safety risks.

Based on the feedback received from stakeholders, the assessment was unable to attribute significant socio-economic growth and development in the community to the presence of the school.

**Figure 11 6 Classroom Block with Ancillary Facilities at Viepe**

### *3.2.3.2 Poverty Alleviation and Inequality Reduction*

The school provides equal access to education for all children in the community. There are no criteria in admitting students regardless of their economic background, giving each student the opportunity for a higher education to gain employment in the formal sector after completion.

### *3.2.3.4 Impact on Women, Children, and PWDs (Gendered Analysis)*

The project has resulted in an increased female enrollment and retention in the school, with females now constituting 52.2% of the 346 student's population. The inclusion of a ramp in the construction of the project also makes the facility disability friendly.

**'We even have a student who has a disability in the school. The contractor did very well by including a ramp. It has been very helpful'.**

- **Headmaster**

## 3.4 Road Projects

### *3.4.1 Project A- Construction Of 1.60km Road at Datus Electoral Area at Kasoa in the Awutu Senya East Constituency (Project Changed to Melcom)*

#### *3.4.1.1 Socio-Economic Growth and Development of Communities*

The increasing rate of the population of Kasoa has led to road congestion on the main road. The newly constructed road has reduced time travel for commuters, improved access to essential services, revived the local real estate economy and spurred economic activities in the community.

**"Since the construction of the road, we have noticed an increase in our daily sales"**

-Business owner

**Figure 12 1.60km Road at Datus Electoral Area at Kasoa**

#### *3.4.1.2 Poverty Alleviation and Inequality Reduction*

The Kasoa Road has contributed to an increase in economic activities in the community. New businesses have been established while trading activities has significantly improved, ultimately

increasing the IGF of the district assembly. The construction of the road also generated temporary job opportunities, providing critical income source for locals.

#### *3.4.1.3 Impact on Women, Children, and PWDs (Gendered Analysis)*

The project has led to an improved access to educational facilities through the reduction in travel time for school children. Female-owned businesses along the road have also flourished post-construction, increasing sales and significantly contributing to their economic empowerment.

### *3.4.2 Project B- Construction Of 1no. Concrete Bridge in The Keta Constituency (Project Changed to the construction of a culvert at Tsame)*

#### *3.4.2.1 Socio-Economic Growth and Development of Communities*

The culvert at Tsame Abor in the Keta constituency was constructed to alleviate recurring flooding in the neighbourhood and facilitate movement, particularly of schoolchildren and other community members during the rainy season. The absence of the culvert previously resulted in the death of a member of the community.

However, the phenomenon continues to persist during rainy seasons, limiting the movement of people and goods, and adversely impacting local economic activities.

**"After the construction of the culvert, an investor decided to set up a corn mill in the community, but did not return after he noticed the challenge of flooding persisted after the intervention of the culvert"**

– Community Member


**Figure 13 construction of a culvert at Tsame**

#### *3.4.2.2 Poverty Alleviation and Inequality Reduction*

The project's effectiveness in reducing inequality and poverty in the community has been limited, as marginalised groups such as the elderly, women, children and disabled people continue to face barriers to accessing essential social services and opportunities, particularly during the rainy season, which the project aimed to address.

#### *3.4.2.3 Impact on Women, Children, and PWDs (Gendered Analysis)*

The impact on women, children, and other vulnerable people in the community has been less than expected, as the perennial flooding that this project was designed to alleviate during the rainy season continues to occur.

### *3.4.3 Project C- Resurfacing of Roads in The Ablekuma West Constituency*

#### *3.4.3.1. Socio-Economic Growth and Development of Communities*

Ablekuma West (Dansoman) is one of the busiest suburbs in the Greater Accra Region, due to its vibrant local economy. The construction of the road has greatly improved vehicular movement in the community, serving as an alternative route for commuters, and reducing travel time.

Economic activities have also improved, as new businesses continue to spring up along the road, creating employment opportunities in the process.

**Figure 14 Resurfaced of Roads in The Ablekuma West Constituency**

### *3.4.3.2 Poverty Alleviation and Inequality Reduction*

The road has become a catalyst for local business to flourish as goods and services move freely, increasing individual and household incomes, while creating new employment opportunities.

### *3.4.3.3 Impact on Women, Children and PWDs (Gendered Analysis)*

The project has also positively impacted gendered groups. For instance, women who constitute majority of shop owners along the road, have seen their daily sales increase since the construction of the road, while the elderly and individuals with mobility impairments are now able to easily access critical services.

# 4.0 Assessment of ABFA Utilization in the Middle Belt Development Authority

This chapter of the study presents a sectorial and project-specific analysis of the outcome of the field verification exercise conducted on ABFA-funded projects within the Middle Belt Development Authority. The project-specific analysis is presented along the 3 main thematic

focus of the study; socio-economic growth and development of communities, poverty alleviation and inequality reduction, and impact on women, children and PWDs.

## 4.1 Education Projects

### *4.1.1 Project A-Construction of Girls' Dormitory at Dadiesoaba Nursing Training*

#### *4.1.1.1 Socio-Economic Growth and Development of Communities*

Completed in 2021, the educational sector project was a direct response to the pressing need for accommodation, offering new facilities and alleviating an acute housing crisis. By providing a block that initially accommodated 200 students, the project addressed the loss of a hostel to fire, benefiting around 300 individuals but also leading to overcrowding and strained resources, like sanitation facilities. Despite these challenges, the initiative positively impacted the community by creating jobs, enhancing local economic activities, and stimulating demand in the food and transportation sectors. This surge in student population notably benefited local entrepreneurs, food vendors, and transportation services, contributing to socio-economic growth. However, the emergence of issues such as inadequate washroom facilities and limited water access underscores the necessity for a comprehensive approach to infrastructure development. While the project significantly aided the trading and transportation sectors, it highlighted the need for further infrastructure enhancement to support the growing community needs fully.

**Figure 15** ***Constructed Girls Dormitory at Dadiesoeba Nursing Training School***

#### *4.1.1.2 Poverty Alleviation and Inequality Reduction*

Through the provision of educational facilities and accommodation, the project indirectly contributed to poverty and inequality reduction by enhancing access to education. This improvement is evidenced by an increase in enrollment from 450 to 600 students, indirectly

indicating a broader impact on educational attainment and potentially long-term socio-economic mobility.

#### *4.1.1.3 Impact on Women, Children and PWDs (Gendered Analysis)*

The project indirectly benefited women and vulnerable groups by providing safer and more accessible educational facilities. The exclusive housing of female students in the new block, coupled with improved security measures, marks a positive step towards gender-sensitive infrastructure development. Yet, the limited stakeholder consultation, particularly the exclusion of the principal and management's views, indicates missed opportunities for addressing specific needs more effectively.

### *4.1.2 Project B: Construction Of Girls' Dormitory With 2 Bedroom Masters Bungalow at Acherensua SHS*

#### *4.1.2.1 Socio-Economic Growth and Development of Communities*

The Acherensua SHS project, completed in 2021, addressed the critical need for better educational facilities by decongesting an old block that previously housed around 500 girls without adequate sanitary facilities. Benefiting approximately 254 students, the initiative significantly improved the educational infrastructure, accommodating the growing student population and directly impacting socio-economic growth in the community. The construction and operational phases of the new building generated employment opportunities, increasing both teaching and non-teaching staff numbers. Furthermore, it boosted local entrepreneurial activities, evidenced by an increase in the number of women vendors on campus from 8 to 26, fostering a vibrant micro-economy around the school. Despite these advancements, there has been no significant rise in investments or further infrastructure development directly linked to the school's establishment.


**Figure 16** ***Constructed Girls Dormitory at Acheresua SHS.***

#### *4.1.2.2 Poverty Alleviation and Inequality Reduction*

The project has contributed to community development through job creation and enhanced educational facilities. Access to education has improved markedly, with enrollment rates increasing from approximately 700 to 1,118 in subsequent years, which indirectly contributes to poverty reduction by providing greater access to education and potential future employment opportunities. Additionally, entrepreneurial activities have been stimulated, with the number of women selling on campus increasing from 8 to 26, indicating a reduction poverty and inequality reduction.

#### *4.1.2.3 Impact on Women, Children and PWDs (Gendered Analysis)*

While the project did not actively involve women and vulnerable groups in the planning and decision-making processes, it has nonetheless contributed to their empowerment and capacity building. The increase in job and entrepreneurial opportunities for women and the higher admission rates of female students as a result of the project are notable achievements. These outcomes indicate a positive step towards gender empowerment, although the project could have had a more significant impact with deliberate inclusion and engagement of these groups in the planning phases. The project also did not include a ramp to enhance the movement of mobility-impaired users.

### *4.1.3 Project C: Construction Of 3-Unit Classroom Block with Office, Store, Library and Staff Common Room at Tuobodom SDA*

#### *4.1.3.1 Socio-Economic Growth and Development of Communities*

The educational initiative at Tuobodom SDA aimed to replace an outdated, structurally compromised building with a new facility designed to enhance teaching and learning. Completed in 2020 and operational from 2021, it serves approximately 110 students but struggles with space due to an enrollment surge, lacking a library and storeroom as initially envisioned. Despite these limitations, it has significantly uplifted Tuobodom's educational environment. The project also sparked socio-economic benefits, creating jobs through the hiring of eight (8) new teachers and supporting 3 new food vendors, although it hasn't directly led to other business or infrastructure growth. Notably, the facility has improved enrollment rates, particularly among girls, and exam performances, positively affecting the community's overall well-being.

**Figure 17 *3-unit classroom block constructed by MBDA at Tuobodom.***

#### *4.1.3.2 Poverty Alleviation and Inequality Reduction*

The project has significantly impacted poverty and inequality reduction through education. The increased enrollment rates, especially among girls, and the enhanced pass rates from 50-60% to 70-80%, reflect improved educational outcomes. These achievements contribute to breaking

cycles of poverty and reducing inequality, underscoring the importance of accessible, quality education in community development

#### *4.1.3.3 Impact on Women, Children and PWDs (Gendered Analysis)*

The project's impact extends to women, children, and PWDs, with a noted increase in girls' enrollment rates attributed to the new building. The project, however, has faced criticism for inadequate infrastructure, such as poor ventilation, lack of a computer lab, water supply issues, insufficient classroom size, and the absence of proper washrooms and teachers' quarters. These deficiencies highlight areas for improvement in catering to the unique needs of these groups and ensuring an inclusive educational environment.

### *4.1.4 Project D – Construction of 1 No. 3 unit Classroom Block, 2 No Mechanised Borehole, Udrains and Culvert*

#### *4.1.4.1 Socio-Economic Growth and Development of Communities*

The Tafo RC School was inaccessible during the rainy season, necessitating the construction of U-drains and culvert by the MBDA. In addition to improving access to the school during rainy seasons and increasing overall school enrolment rate, the U-drains and culvert has mitigated the perennial flooding in the community, safeguarding lives and properties.

**Figure 18 the construction of U-drains and culvert by the MBDA at Tafo RC School.**

**"Aside the u-drain mitigating flooding in the community, contributing to school attendance, the the U-drain has served as a boundary for the RC school which helps protect school land from poachers"**

-Headmistress of Tafo RC School

The construction of a 3-unit classroom block in the school has however stalled.

**Figure 19 stalled construction of a 3-unit classroom block at Tafo RC.**

#### *4.1.4.2 Poverty Alleviation and Inequality Reduction*

The U-drain and culvert project has improved access to the school during rainy season, increasing equal access to educational opportunities for children in the community. More, by protecting the livelihoods and properties of community members through the mitigation of the perennial floods in the locality, the disposable incomes of individuals are safeguarded.

#### *4.1.4.3 Impact on Women, Children and PWDs (Gendered Analysis)*

The project has improved access to educational opportunities for children in Tafo and neighbouring communities, while the unique challenges mothers faced in getting their wards to school during the rainy season has been resolved.

### *4.1.5 Project E – Construction of 6 Unit Classroom block at Communities in the Effiduase/Asokore Constituency*

#### *4.1.5.1 Socio-Economic Growth and Development of Communities*

The 6-unit classroom block at Daakoho was aimed at addressing significant infrastructure gap in the school. Prior to the construction of the facility, school activities took place in an uncompleted house. The project has helped improved access to educational opportunities in the community, as

school enrolment has increased from 47 to 183 pupils from KG1 to JHS 2, while the teaching and learning environment has significantly been enhanced.

**"Students had to walk 2km to schools in Asokore which became a disincentive for the students to go to school regularly. But with the presence of this facility, the students are eager to attend school"**

-Headmistress of Daakoho D/A Basic Schhol

**Figure 20 Private Property Previously used as a School Building**

**Figure 21 6 unit classroom block at Daakoho D/A Basic School**

Also, the school has become a catalyst for developmental projects in the community, with new buildings springing up around it. The presence of the school has also attracted further development in the community. For instance, a borehole constructed by an NGO for the school is also serving residents of Daakoho.

#### *4.1.5.2 Poverty Alleviation and Inequality Reduction*

The rate of enrolment at the school has increased by 389%, providing equal and unrestricted access to educational opportunities. The project has also provided employment opportunities for 6 newly trained teachers.

#### *4.1.5.3 Impact on Women, Children and PWDs (Gendered Analysis)*

The facility has helped to create a conducive and safe environment for teaching and learning, a key enabler for girl child education, evidenced by the increase in female enrolment in the school (48%). The presence of a ramp also makes the facility disability friendly.

### *4.1.6 Project F- Construction of Classroom block at Agyapomaa Basic School*

#### *4.1.6.1 Socio-Economic Growth and Development of Communities*

The construction of a new school building was necessitated by the dire condition of the previous school block, which posed health and safety risks for students and teachers, and impeded effective teaching and learning. The ABFA funded classroom block has increased enrolment in the school, while improving the teaching and learning environment. The project has also contributed to the socio-economic development of the community, with 5 new teachers and a headmaster engaged post-construction.

The old structure however continues to pose a safety risk to the school community, including students.

**"Even though students use the new building, the dilapidated building is a safety risk to the students"**

-Assistant headmaster

**Figure 22 old classroom structure at Agyapomaa Basic School**

**Figure 23 Constructed of Classroom block at Agyapomaa Basic School**

### *4.1.6.2 Poverty Alleviation and Inequality Reduction*

The facility has improved access to educational opportunities for children in the community and further resulted in an increase in the number of food vendors in the school.

### *4.1.6.3 Impact on Women, Children and PWDs (Gendered Analysis)*

The facility has increased female enrolment in the school, while the inclusion of a ramp in the project construction enhances the movement of mobility-impaired students and teachers.

## 4.2 Health Project

### *4.2.1 Project A- Construction of 1No. CHPS Compound with two (2) Bedroom Quarters at Akokoo in Abuakwa South*

#### *4.2.1.1 Socio-Economic Growth and Development of Communities*

The Akokoo CHPS compound plays a crucial role in the socioeconomic growth and development of the community, by improving and expanding their access to quality and comprehensive healthcare. Before the construction of the CHPS compound, the community accessed healthcare from a make-shift facility, which impeded healthcare delivery. Women in the community, for instance, travelled to neighbouring towns to access healthcare because the facility did not respond to their peculiar gendered needs.

The new facility has resulted in an increase in OPD attendance from 25 to 150 – 180 monthly. Additionally, the CHPS compound has become a catalyst for employment and increased revenue. A new licensed chemical shop has been opened in the community after the construction of the facility.

**"The women feel much safer to discuss, learn, and enrol on family planning due to the availability of privacy at the CHPS compound"**

-Nurse at the Akokoo CHPS compound

**Figure 24 Constructed CHPS Compound with two (2) Bedroom Quarters at Akokoo in Abuakwa South**

#### *4.2.1.2 Poverty and Inequality Reduction*

The health facility is easily accessible to all members of the community, eliminating the costs associated with traveling to neighbouring communities to access healthcare.

#### *4.2.1.3 Impact on Women, Children, and PWDs (Gendered Analysis)*

The CHPS compound has positively impacted women, children, and PWDs by providing them with regular and prompt quality healthcare. With increased privacy and comfort, women feel confident to seek medical attention and advice from health professionals, leading to improved maternal and child health outcomes. The resident nurse stated that women and children seek medical attention than men. The facility can however be optimally utilized with the presence of a midwife.

### *4.2.2 Project B-Construction of CHPS Compound at Yilo Krobo*

#### *4.2.2.1 Socio-Economic Growth and Development of Communities*

The construction of the CHPS compound was crucial in closing a major infrastructure gap in the community. Prior to the construction of the facility, the health centre was located at the chief's palace, which impeded quality healthcare delivery. Attendance rate at the new facility is however low (25 patients since January 2024) because the facility is yet to be commissioned.

**"We must commission this facility to make people aware that the facility is now in use"**

-Nurse at Aboabo CHPS compound

**Figure 25 Constructed of CHPS Compound at Yilo Krobo**

#### *4.2.2.2 Poverty and Inequality Reduction*

The facility is having minimal impact in the community because of the low attendance rate. The facility has however enhanced access to quality healthcare, while improving the overall health and wellbeing of community members.

#### *4.2.2.3 Impact on Women, Children, and PWDs (Gendered Analysis)*

The CHPS compound adequately responds to the peculiar needs of women and children in the community. However, while a ramp was included in the design of the facility to aid mobility of PWDs, the construction of a small drainage system in front of the ramp limits its utility.

### *4.2.3 Project C: Construction Of 1 No. Surgical Theatre at Nsoatre Health Centre*

#### *4.2.3.1 Socio-Economic Growth and Development of Communities*

The Nsoatre Health Centre project, completed in 2023, serves approximately nine communities by offering essential healthcare services, filling a vital gap in local healthcare infrastructure. Prior to its establishment, the nearest healthcare facilities were in Sunyani and Berekum, located 16 and 8 kilometers away, respectively, underscoring the urgent need for more accessible healthcare options. Despite its potential, the facility's effectiveness is limited by a lack of essential equipment, particularly for operating a fully-fledged surgical theater, which affects the quality and

accessibility of healthcare services. Although the project has not yet been commissioned due to missing auxiliary facilities, hindering immediate job creation and socio-economic benefits, it holds significant potential. About 35 healthcare jobs are expected to emerge, along with enhanced healthcare services and economic activities in the community, once it becomes operational. Support from NGOs for additional infrastructure reflects communal interest and underscores the project's potential for improving healthcare delivery and socio-economic development in the Nsoatre area.

 [43]

**Figure 26** ***Constructed Surgical Theater at Nsoatre Health Centre.***

#### *4.2.3.2 Poverty Alleviation and Inequality Reduction*

Given the facility's non-operational status, there has been no immediate impact on poverty reduction or the narrowing of inequality gaps within the target communities. The project's future role in providing accessible healthcare could indirectly contribute to these goals by lowering healthcare-related expenses and improving overall community health, which are critical factors in poverty alleviation strategies.

#### *4.2.3.3 Impact on Women, Children, and PWDs (Gendered Analysis)*

The project has not actively involved women and vulnerable groups in its planning and decision-making processes, missing an opportunity to directly address their specific needs. However, it has considered the requirements of PWDs by ensuring facility accessibility, which is a positive step towards inclusivity. The full impact on these groups remains to be seen and will largely depend

on how the project's services are tailored and made accessible to meet their unique healthcare needs upon commissioning.

## *4.3 Road Projects*

### *4.3.1 Project I: Construction and Filling of Culvert at Abesim SHS Road*

#### *4.3.1.1 Socio-Economic Growth and Development of Communities*

The culvert construction on the Abesim SHS road between 2017 and 2019, funded by ABFA, replaced a makeshift wooden bridge, significantly improving road conditions and community connectivity. This project addressed a critical infrastructure gap, enhancing road safety and access to the main Sunyani-Techiman Road, and spurred community development and expansion. Benefiting around five communities, it improved access to essential services, encouraged economic activities, and led to the development of new buildings. The project's success has prompted the need to complete unfinished parts like gutters and access junctions to further enhance its benefits. It has markedly boosted socio-economic development, leading to new economic ventures, real estate growth, the relocation of Abesim SHS, and increased trading activities. Additionally, it created employment opportunities during construction and contributed to the real estate sector's upturn, showcasing a positive transformation in the community's economic dynamics.

**Figure 27** ***Constructed culvert on the Abesim SHS road***

#### *4.3.1.2 Poverty Alleviation and Inequality Reduction*

Improved road accessibility has significantly contributed to poverty and inequality reduction by enhancing access to markets, social amenities, and employment opportunities outside the community. Farmers can now sell their produce in other markets, leading to increased household income. Furthermore, the establishment of Abesim SHS has made education more accessible, which is a critical factor in long-term poverty alleviation and inequality reduction.

#### *4.3.1.3 Impact on Women, Children and PWDs (Gendered Analysis)*

The project has had a positive impact on women, children, and vulnerable groups by addressing their unique needs and enhancing their quality of life. Expectant mothers can now access medical attention more easily, women can sell their agricultural goods without navigating a difficult bridge, and children can attend school without significant travel barriers. This demonstrates the project's contribution to the empowerment and capacity building of these groups.

# 5.0 Assessment of ABFA Utilization in the Northern Development Authority

This chapter of the study presents a sectorial and project-specific analysis of the outcome of the field verification exercise conducted on ABFA-funded projects within the Northern Development Authority. The project-specific analysis is presented along the 3 main thematic focus of the study; socio-economic growth and development of communities, poverty alleviation and inequality reduction, and impact on women, children and PWDs.

## 5.1 Agricultural Projects

### *5.1.1 Project A: Rehabilitation and dredging of dam at Chanzegu*

#### *5.1.1.1 Socio-Economic Growth and Development of Communities*

The Chanzegu project in Kumbungu District, funded by the Annual Budget Funding Amount (ABFA) and completed in just three months in 2018, was aimed at fulfilling the urgent need for accessible water for agricultural purposes. This initiative has significantly impacted the local community by providing a steady and reliable water source, boosting agricultural productivity, and improving socio-economic conditions despite its small size limiting its use for broader agricultural activities. Serving around 20,000 people and over 1,000 animals, the project has become essential for drinking, domestic use, and has notably decreased the distances women travel to fetch water, besides preventing animal deaths due to thirst.

The active participation of the community in the planning process and their satisfaction with the results have been key to the project's success, fostering socio-economic development across 11 communities. It has also led to job creation, the opening of agro-business stores, increased livestock production, and improved household incomes due to better agricultural outputs and livestock health.

However, the dam's limited size restricts its application in irrigation, with the community consciously managing its use to prevent depletion and prioritize domestic needs. There is a collective aspiration for the dam's expansion to enhance its support for agricultural activities, reflecting a sustainable approach to resource management and a keen interest in leveraging the project for maximal agricultural and socio-economic advancements.

**Figure 28** ***Rehabilitated and dredged dam at Chanzegu, Kumbungu District***

#### *5.1.1.2 Poverty Alleviation and Inequality Reduction*

Enhanced access to water has played a pivotal role in mitigating poverty and narrowing the gap of inequality by fostering improved agricultural output and the well-being of livestock. Previously reliant on purchasing water and journeying to remote areas for their water needs, the community now benefits from local water access, leading to significant savings and enhanced living standards. The construction of a dam has boosted economic activity, with significant improvements in cattle health translating into increased earnings. This improvement has resulted in higher cattle prices, more agricultural production, and lower costs for water acquisition. Moreover, the younger population has witnessed a surge in economic prospects, with healthier and more abundant livestock pushing their earnings from sales to 5000gh, a substantial increase from the former range of 1000gh to 2000gh, thereby elevating the overall prosperity of the community. The availability of water has also alleviated the workload on women, empowering them to devote more time to profitable endeavors such as the production of shea and rice, thereby amplifying their financial gains.

#### *5.1.1.3 Impact on Women, Children and PWDs (Gendered Analysis)*

Involvement of women in both the design and execution of projects has markedly empowered them and uplifted the socio-economic condition of the community and its vicinity. Enhanced

water accessibility has reduced the burden on women, allowing them more time for revenue-generating endeavors like shea butter and rice production, thus increasing their income. Additionally, the initiative has positively impacted children's schooling by boosting attendance rates and cutting down on additional costs associated with livestock management, as it removes the need for children, particularly boys, to take animals to distant locations for water.

### *5.1.2 Project B: Rehabilitation and dredging of dam at Gizaagundaa*

#### *5.1.2.1 Socio-Economic Growth and Development of Communities*

The ABFA's investment in the Gizaagundaa dam rehabilitation project has significantly transformed agricultural practices and improved community life. Previously challenged by limited water access for agriculture and domestic use, leading to dependency on rain-fed farming and low agricultural productivity, the project has enhanced irrigation infrastructure, benefiting approximately 500 farmers. These improvements have enabled the adoption of sustainable farming techniques, increased crop yields, and ensured year-round water availability, directly enhancing community well-being and living conditions.

However, it's important to note that despite the project's success in improving water availability for farming, it did not include the creation of all-year irrigation channels. This omission suggests there is room for further enhancements to fully optimize the dam’s potential for agricultural development.

The socio-economic impact of the project is profound, with increased agricultural productivity leading to higher farmer incomes, ranging from 5000-8000gh bi-weekly during the production season. This financial uplift has facilitated economic diversification, with community members establishing agro-based shops and small enterprises, thereby contributing to local economic development, job creation, and improved social services. The Gizaagundaa dam project has been a catalyst for broad socio-economic transformation, promoting diversified agricultural activities, enhancing household income, and improving access to healthcare. Overall, the project lays a foundation for sustained community growth, resilience, and improved welfare.

**Figure 29** ***Rehabilitated and dredged dam at Gizaagundaa, Kumbungu District***

### *5.1 2 2 Poverty Alleviation and Inequality Reduction*

The project has played a pivotal role in reducing poverty and inequality in the district. By boosting agricultural productivity and diversifying income sources, it has directly contributed to elevating the economic status of households. Improved income levels have translated into better housing, healthcare, and educational opportunities for community members. With over 500 individuals turning to farming and livestock rearing post-project, the initiative has significantly increased employment opportunities within the community This advancement has particularly impacted marginalized groups, reducing economic disparities and fostering a more equitable distribution of resources and opportunities. Enhanced agricultural productivity and economic diversification have directly contributed to poverty reduction within the communities. The increased income from agricultural ventures has improved living standards, allowing community members to invest in new household buildings and better healthcare, thus reducing poverty and narrowing inequality gaps.

### *5.1.2.3 Impact on Women, Children and PWDs (Gendered Analysis)*

By facilitating easier access to water, the project has alleviated the burden traditionally placed on women and children, who were primarily responsible for water collection. This change has allowed women to engage more in productive activities such as the shea butter business, a key livelihood activity for women in the community, enhancing their economic independence and social status. Children, especially girls, have benefited from improved attendance and performance in schools, given that they no longer need to allocate significant time to fetching water. However, the desire for dam expansion and better irrigation infrastructure to support dry season farming indicates areas for further development.

## 5.2 Educational Projects

### *5.2.1 Project A: Construction of 1No. 3-Unit Classroom Block with Ancillary Facilities and Furnishing at Imamiya Islamic Primary School in the Salaga South Constituency of the Savannah Region.*

#### *5.2.1.1 Socio-Economic Growth and Development of Communities*

The Imamiya Islamic Primary School project, conceived in direct response to the demands of the Zongo community, aims to address educational gaps by offering spaces for Arabic and adult education, benefiting approximately 120-150 students and adults without formal Arabic education. Despite facing challenges such as project delays and underutilization stemming from community disputes, particularly between school authorities and Zongo community leaders over the location, the initiative underscores a significant investment in local education infrastructure.

**Case Study: Dispute between Islamic Leaders and the Management of the *Imamiya underscores a lack of extensive stakeholder consultation***

The Imamiya Islamic Primary School, initially established as an Islamic school, was handed over to government over a decade ago. Government consequently took steps to establish new school facilities in a new site, and school is relocated to the new site. However, when the Northern Development Authority decided to construct a new classroom block for the school, they sited the project at the premises of the old school compound. The Muslim opinion leaders, who had also submitted a request to the former MP for a new Islamic school to accommodate the increasing number of Arabic students, are now laying claim to the ownership of the new 3-unit classroom structure constructed by the Northern Development Authority, as the facility is located on the site of old Islamic school, instead of the new site of Imamiya Islamic Primary school. The DCE and the Education Directorate are taking concrete steps to resolve the impasse and allow Imamiya school to utilize the newly constructed classroom block. To avoid similar issues in the future, broader consultation with all stakeholders is essential, ensuring that educational developments meet their full potential and serve the community effectively.

The urgent need for improved facilities is evident as some students are forced to study under dilapidated structures, suggesting that strategic placement of new buildings could greatly enhance

their impact beyond their current use. Although the project has generated employment opportunities for 30 individuals during construction and promises to spur small business creation, its full influence on community infrastructure and socio-economic development is yet unrealized due to ongoing underutilization. This situation underscores the critical need to resolve location disputes to unlock the project's comprehensive benefits, including improving literacy and educational outcomes.

**Figure 30** ***Imamiya Islamic Primary School at Salaga Township***

**Figure 31** ***3-unit classroom block constructed within the Zongo community.***

#### *5.2.1.2 Poverty and Inequality Reduction*

The educational infrastructure enhancement indirectly facilitates poverty and inequality reduction by improving access to education for previously underserved students and adults. This

initiative is a critical component in the broader aim of enhancing literacy and educational outcomes, vital for sustained socio-economic development.

#### *5.2.1.3 Impact on Women, Children and PWDs (Gendered Analysis)*

Demonstrating a commitment to inclusivity, the project actively involved women and vulnerable groups in its planning stages and provided specific measures to address their needs, including a disability-friendly design and adult education programs. These steps are instrumental in empowering these groups and building their capacities.

### *5.2.2 Project B: Construction of 1No. 6-Unit Classroom Block with Ancillary Facilities and Furnishing at Boakudow*

#### *5.2.2.1 Socio-Economic Growth and Development of Communities*

The Buakuado school project, initiated in 2020 and operationalize in 2023, significantly upgraded the community's educational infrastructure, replacing a hazardous, dilapidated building with a new structure. This development, driven by the Annual Budget Funding Amount (ABFA), showcases a pivotal advancement in meeting the urgent educational needs of the Buakuado community and surrounding areas, leading to a 25% increase in student enrollment and better progression to higher grades. However, the project's effects on broader socio-economic factors like job creation and entrepreneurial activities were not immediately evident. This indicates that while ABFA's focus on specific infrastructure needs like education is beneficial, its potential for stimulating wider socio-economic growth remains limited. Future projects should adopt a holistic approach, intertwining educational improvements with initiatives for economic empowerment and job creation, to ensure comprehensive community development and sustainable progress.

**Figure 32** ***6-unit classroom block constructed by NDA***

**Figure 33** ***Old Dilapidated structure***

### *5.2.2.2 Poverty and Inequality Reduction*

The assessment indicates no direct influence of the project on reducing poverty and inequality in the community. Despite enhancing educational access and potentially impacting long-term socio-economic outcomes through improved literacy and education, immediate impacts on income

levels, access to basic services, and living standards were not evident. This underscores a need for a more integrated approach in ABFA utilization, targeting not only educational infrastructure but also initiatives directly aimed at poverty alleviation and inequality reduction.

#### *5.2.2.3 Impact on Women, Children and PWDs (Gendered Analysis)*

The new school building has enabled children, including girls, to attend school without the anxieties associated with the previous dilapidated structure, indirectly contributing to the empowerment and better future prospects for these groups. However, the lack of disability-friendly facilities highlights a missed opportunity to fully cater to the needs of all community members, including PWDs. This indicates room for improvement in ensuring that future ABFA-funded projects are more inclusive and responsive to the needs of these groups.

### *5.2.3 Project C: 3-Unit Classroom Block-Dubila*

#### *5.2.3.1 Socio-Economic Growth and Development of Communities*

Initiated in 2020 and completed in 2023, this project significantly enhanced local education by constructing a Junior High School (JHS) block closer to the students, eliminating their need to travel around 2km for JHS education. Benefiting 69 students across four communities, it provided a much-needed alternative to older or incomplete educational facilities. While the project itself didn't create direct job opportunities, it catalyzed local entrepreneurship, evidenced by new food vendors and a stationary shop. Despite no reported increases in broader community investments or developments, the project markedly improved educational access and enrollment by 20% and decreased dropout rates, signifying a substantial boost in the community's educational outcomes.

**Figure 34** ***Uncompleted 3-unit classroom by Member of Parliament on the left and 3-unit classroom block constructed by NDA***

**Case Study: *Duplication of Efforts and Inefficiencies in ABFA Utilization***

The situation in Dubila, where both the previous MP of the area and the NDA constructed separate JHS blocks on the same compound despite their proximity and overlapping objectives, highlights the inefficiency and resource wastage stemming from duplicated efforts. The former MP had used his share of DACF to commence a 3-unit classroom block which was 50% completed prior to him leaving office, however, NDA/MSDI awarded contract for the construction of a new JHS structure, even though the former MP-led project had served the community for almost 8 years, despite not being completed. The most prudent utilization of ABFA was for the Assembly and new MP to collaborate with NDA/MSDI to complete the existing facility, instead of commencing the construction of a new JHS structure. Emphasizing resource optimization, avoiding duplication, maintaining community trust, ensuring strategic continuity, efficient use of time, and fostering inter-agency collaboration, is crucial for government projects, particularly those with direct public impact, to be carried to completion by the overseeing agency, regardless of changes in funding sources or administrative control, rather than initiating similar projects anew.

#### *5.2.3.2 Poverty and Inequality Reduction*

Although the project has had a significant impact on educational access and enrollment, there is no direct evidence of its contribution to poverty and inequality reduction. The primary focus has been on improving educational infrastructure, which indirectly contributes to long-term socioeconomic benefits by enhancing literacy and education levels.

#### *5.2.3.3 Impact on Women, Children and PWDs (Gendered Analysis)*

The project has positively impacted women and vulnerable groups by increasing school attendance among girls and incorporating disability-friendly features. This indicates an effort towards inclusivity and addressing the unique needs of women and vulnerable groups in the community. The involvement of these groups in the planning and decision-making processes further emphasizes the project's commitment to empowering them.

### *5.2.4 Project D: Construction of 1 No 6-Unit Classroom Block at Wechiau SHS*

#### *5.2.4.1 Socio-Economic Growth and Development of Communities*

Initiated in 2019 and completed in 2023, the project in Wechiau aimed to fulfill a crucial need for educational infrastructure, significantly enhancing the learning environment for around 46 students. Before this, the lack of adequate teaching spaces and the necessity for students to travel for ICT lessons severely hampered effective learning and exam preparations. By utilizing ABFA funds, the project successfully built a dedicated educational facility, transitioning from temporary solutions like a health training college and a community center, which were inconvenient and

poorly equipped for educational purposes. The new school building has dramatically transformed the educational landscape in Wechiau, offering stable and conducive learning conditions. This transformation has led to reduced travel for students and teachers, improved enrollment and discipline, higher female enrolment due to better gender dynamics, and stimulated local economic activities. Future enhancements should include essential amenities like washrooms, electricity, water, furniture, and staff accommodations to further improve the learning environment and leverage local labor opportunities.

**Figure 35** ***6-unit classroom block at Wechiau SHS***

#### *5.2.4.2 Poverty and Inequality Reduction*

The project has made significant strides in reducing inequality by providing an accessible and permanent educational facility. It serves as a barrier against early marriages by keeping young women in school, illustrating a direct impact on reducing gender-based disparities and fostering community development.

#### *5.2.4.3 Impact on Women, Children and PWDs (Gendered Analysis)*

The construction of the school has had a positive effect on gender dynamics, leading to a rise in female enrollment and the inclusion of married students. This development promotes ongoing education for young women, thereby aiding in their empowerment and lessening gender inequalities, with females making up 30 of the 46 students. While the project's design does not specifically address the needs of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), the involvement of the community in selecting the project suggests a participatory method that could be used in the future to improve inclusiveness.

## 5.3 Health Projects

### *5.3.1 Project A: Construction of 1No. CHPS Compound with Ancillary Facilities and Furnishing at Yakubupe in the Salaga South Constituency of the Savannah Region*

#### *5.3.1.1 Socio-Economic Growth and Development of Communities*

The Northern Development Authority (NDA) has utilized the Annual Budget Funding Amount (ABFA) to reduce developmental disparities and promote growth in underserved communities. A key project funded by the ABFA has been the establishment of healthcare facilities in rural areas without sufficient medical services, notably around Yakubupe. This has addressed the logistical difficulties faced by locals who previously had to travel to Salaga for healthcare. The project, chosen with considerable input from the community, underscores a commitment to involving locals in planning. However, the initiative has faced delays, currently stalled at the lintel stage, leading to community concerns and calls for its speedy completion to fulfill its crucial health and wellbeing role.

**Case Study: Delays in *Completing Stalled ABFA projects***

The healthcare project initiated before the 2020 election, aimed at addressing a significant need within the community remains uncompleted contrary to completed status given to it. The anticipation was to provide accessible healthcare services to 14 communities, demonstrating the project's critical importance to a broad segment of the population within the constituency.

The stalled healthcare facility has led to delayed treatments and poorer health outcomes, diminishing community morale and trust in authorities. To mitigate these impacts, it is crucial for stakeholders to re-engage with the community, reassess the project's scope and requirements, and develop a clear, actionable plan to resume and complete the construction of the healthcare facility.

Once completed, this initiative is expected to significantly enhance socio-economic development by providing accessible healthcare, thereby improving community health standards and economic productivity. The improved healthcare services are anticipated to attract further investment, boosting the local economy by drawing businesses and professionals to the area.

**Figure 36** ***Uncompleted Chips Compound at Yakubupe***

#### *5.3.1.2 Poverty and Inequality Reduction*

The ABFA's initiative to enhance healthcare accessibility in underserved areas like Yakubupe aims to combat poverty and inequality by offering crucial services to previously overlooked communities. This helps to equalize opportunities by addressing a key barrier to poverty reduction. The project will not only meet immediate health needs but also diminishes economic vulnerabilities by reducing both direct and indirect healthcare expenses. This, in turn, aids in poverty alleviation efforts by making healthcare more accessible and affordable within the community.

#### *5.3.1.3 Impact on Women, Children and PWDs (Gendered Analysis)*

The initiative will empower women economically by providing them with opportunities to work as food vendors. Additionally, the presence of health workers from this facility will lead to a decrease in health-related issues among women, children, and the elderly in the communities, underscoring its beneficial impact on these vulnerable groups.

### *5.3.2 Project B: Construction of Chips Compound at Mimima*

#### *5.3.2.1 Socio-Economic Growth and Development of Communities*

The Mimima Chips Compound project, launched in 2016 and completed in 2020, addressed the community's demand for accessible healthcare services, benefiting approximately 1,000 people with around 200 monthly users across four communities. Offering a variety of healthcare services, such as outpatient care, antenatal and postnatal care, and childcare, the facility significantly contributed to the reduction of malaria and respiratory tract infections through effective home visits by health workers. This initiative has drastically decreased the necessity for long-distance

travel for healthcare, with workers also focusing on preventive education. Besides enhancing healthcare accessibility, the project has stimulated economic growth by prompting the establishment of five food vendors and several drug stores, creating jobs for carpenters, electrical workers, and additional construction staff, as well as employing health workers within the district. However, the poor road conditions to three communities remain a critical challenge that needs addressing to improve healthcare access further.

**Figure 37** ***Constructed CHIPS Compound at Mimima***

#### *5.3.2.2 Poverty and Inequality Reduction*

The proximity of the healthcare facility has enabled community members to access essential health services at night and save money on transportation. These savings contribute directly to poverty reduction and indirectly to diminishing inequality by providing equal access to healthcare services. The assessment indicates no direct influence of the project on reducing poverty and inequality in the community.

#### *5.3.2.3 Impact on Women, Children and PWDs (Gendered Analysis)*

The project has greatly benefited women by offering them the chance to work as food vendors, leading to economic empowerment. Moreover, the design of the facility is accessible to people with disabilities (PWDs), making healthcare services more inclusive and equitable. The reduction of cases among women and children in the communities can be attributed to the house calls made by the health workers from this facility, highlighting its positive impact on Women, Children, and PWDs.

## 5.4 Road Projects

### *5.4.1 Project A: Construction of 1No Bridge at Bummbugu to Link Zaago to Binduri Central leading to Bazua market and Bolga - Bawku Trunk Road*

#### *5.4.1.1 Socio-Economic Growth and Development of Communities*

The bridge construction at Bummbugu, linking Zaago to Binduri Central and onwards to Bazua market and the Bolga-Bawku Trunk Road, completed in 2020, has significantly impacted around 30 communities. This project addressed the urgent need for better accessibility, particularly during rainy seasons when previous constraints led to loss of lives and restricted movement of agricultural goods. Transforming local lives, the bridge has facilitated smooth movement, enabling students to attend school and farmers to transport produce efficiently, reducing spoilage. It has spurred socio-economic growth by improving market access, boosting household incomes, and stimulating economic activities. The construction phase provided employment, enhancing the local economy. Improved road access has also attracted more nurses and teachers to the district, positively affecting education and healthcare services. The project, marked by strong community engagement, exemplifies a successful participatory approach in addressing transportation and socio-economic challenges.

**Figure 38** ***constructed Bridge at Bummbugu***

#### *5.4.1.2 Poverty and Inequality Reduction*

Improved road accessibility has contributed significantly to poverty and inequality reduction in the community. Enhanced transport routes have enabled the community to send farm produce to

other markets for sale, increasing profitability and economic resilience. Additionally, the bridge has collapsed the informal and risky services of individuals who previously assisted people to cross the river, providing a safer and more reliable means of crossing.

#### *5.4.1.3 Impact on Women, Children and PWDs (Gendered Analysis)*

The project has had a marked impact on women, children, and PWDs, empowering these vulnerable groups through improved access to essential services. Access to nearby clinics for medical needs, including during labor, and the ability to visit relatives in other communities without stress, has significantly improved the quality of life for women and children. The project's positive impact has been widely acknowledged by the community, who have expressed significant satisfaction, especially as it has eased movements and allowed students to attend school during the rainy season without interruption. The active involvement of women in the project selection process and their contribution to suggesting the bridge highlights the project's inclusive approach.

### *5.4.3 Project B: Spot improvement Chognuori-Liero Road*

#### *5.4.3.1 Socio-Economic Growth and Development of Communities*

The Spot Improvement of Chognuori-Liero Road project, completed in 2019 in the Lambussie-Karni district of the Upper West Region and funded by the ABFA, significantly enhanced transportation and accessibility for the community. Chosen by community members, this project showcases a participatory approach, aiming to improve access to education, healthcare, markets, and support agricultural activities. Addressing challenges like students' difficulty attending school during the rainy season and the community's isolation, the project has benefited about 16 communities and 16,000 people. It has notably impacted socio-economic indicators, leading to job creation, the emergence of new businesses, increased investments, and further infrastructure development. By facilitating easier access to markets, healthcare, and other communities, the project has significantly improved livelihoods, enabled access to essential services, and boosted the local economy. Additionally, it has strengthened community engagement, allowing NGOs and other organizations to support the community more effectively.

**Figure 39** ***Spot improvement Chognuori-Liero Road***

### *5.4.3.2 Poverty and Inequality Reduction*

The project has played a crucial role in reducing poverty and inequality in the region. By enhancing access to employment opportunities both within and outside the community and significantly increasing household income, the ABFA utilization through this road project has contributed to uplifting the economic status of many households. The ability to transport goods at a cheaper rate and the emergence of savings and loan companies employing community members further support this positive outcome. The construction phase provided employment opportunities, benefiting community members and supporting local businesses.

Notably, households reported an 85% increase in their income due to improved market access for their farm produce and shea butter, indicating significant socio-economic growth and development. The project also contributed to the attraction of new investments or businesses to the area, enhanced access to social amenities, and improved household income.

### *5.4.3.3 Impact on Women, Children and PWDs (Gendered Analysis)*

The project has markedly empowered women and vulnerable groups, involving them in the decision-making processes and tailoring interventions to meet their unique needs. Women now have better access to healthcare for childbirth, marketplaces for selling goods, and educational facilities for their children. The improved infrastructure has also enhanced mobility for the elderly and PWDs, enriching their quality of life and access to essential services. The project was tailored to meet the unique requirements of women and vulnerable groups by improving access to

healthcare, education, and enabling economic activities, showcasing a commendable approach to inclusive development.

# 6.0 Ratings of Effectiveness of ABFA Projects by Development Authorities

This chapter of the study presents a colour coding assessment of the effectiveness of ABFA utilization by the Development Authorities along the 3 main study focus; accelerating socio-economic growth and development of beneficiary communities, alleviating poverty and reducing inequality in beneficiary communities and improving the wellbeing of women, children, youth and other vulnerable groups.

## 6.1 Interpretation of Colour Coding

The ratings adopted a simple Traffic light ratings system to demonstrate the projects' contribution to the above-mentioned study focus. Consequently, **Green** represents a strong contribution of a particular project to accelerating socio-economic growth and development, strong contribution of the project to poverty and inequality reduction in beneficiary communities and strong contribution to improving the lives and wellbeing of women, children, youth and vulnerable groups. **Yellow** represents a minimum contribution of a particular project to particular project to accelerating socio-economic growth and development, minimum contribution of the project to poverty and inequality reduction in beneficiary communities and a minimum contribution to improving the lives and wellbeing of women, children, youth and vulnerable groups. Lastly, **Red** indicates that a particular project is not accelerating socio-economic growth and development, not making any contribution to poverty and inequality reduction in beneficiary communities and not making any contribution to improving the lives and wellbeing of women, children, youth and vulnerable groups.

**Table 3 Coastal Development Authority Projects**

| Project | Sector | Socio-economic development | Poverty alleviation and inequality reduction | Positive impact on gender |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Payment For Construction Of 1no.40-Seater Open Stalls, Store Room And External Works At Bonsu Nkwanta In The Aowin Constituency | Agriculture | | | |
| Payment For Construction Of 1no. 6-Unit Classroom Block With Ancillary Facilities At Karlo | Education | | | |
| Payment For Construction Of 1no. 40 Open Seater Market Stalls, Store And External Works At Tikobo In The Jomoro Constituency | Agriculture | | | |
| Payment For Construction Of 1no. Market At Asebu In The Abura Asebu Kwaman Constituency In The Central Region Final Ipc | Agriculture | | | |
| Payment For Construction Of 1no.6unit Classroom Block With Ancillary Facilities At Osedzi School In The Ajumako Enyan Esiam Constituency | Education | | | |
| Payment For Construction Of 40 Seater Open Market Stalls And Store Room At Kwamekron ( Apeso Kubi) In The Biakoye District Oti Region | Agriculture | | | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Payment For Construction Of 1no. Concrete Bridge In The Keta Concrete Bridge In The Keta Constituency Ipc1 | Road | | | |
| Payment For Construction Of 1no. 6 Unit Classroom Block With Ancillary Facilities At Adafienu In The Volta Region. | Education | | | |
| Payment For Construction Of 1.60km Of Road At Datus Electoral Area At Kasoa In The Awutu Senya East Constituency In The Central Region Ipc No. 02 | Road | | | |
| Payment For Resurfacing Of Roads In The Ablekuma West Constituency Ipc3 | Road | | | |

**Table 4 Middle Belt Development Projects**

| **Project** | **Sector** | **Socio-economic development** | **Poverty alleviation and inequality reduction** | **Positive impact on gender** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Construction of 1 No. 3 unit Classroom Block, 2 No Mechanised Borehole, Udrains and Culvert<br><br>**(Ratings only for Udrains and Culvert project)** | Road and Education | | | |
| Construction of6 Unit Classroom block at Communities in the Effiduase/Asokore Constituency | Education | | | |
| Construction of 1No. CHPS Compound with 2 Bedroom Quarters at Akokoo in Abuakwa South | Health | | | |
| Construction of Classroom block at Agyapomaa Basic School | Education | | | |
| Construction of CHPS Compound at Yilo Krobo | Health | | | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Construction Of Girls' Dormitory at Dadiesoaba Nursing Training | Education | | | |
| Construction Of Girls' Dormitory With 2 Bedroom Masters Bungalow at Acheresua Shs | Education | | | |
| Construction Of 3-Unit Classroom Block With Office, Store ,Library And Staff Common Room At Tuobodom Sda | Education | | | |
| Construction And Filling Of Culvert At Abesim Shs Road | Road | | | |
| Construction Of 1 No.Surgical Theatre At Nsoatre Health Centre<br><br>**(Project not commissioned)** | Health | | | |

**Table 5 Northern Development Authority Projects**

| **Project** | **Sector** | **Socio-economic development** | **Poverty and inequality reduction** | **Positive impact on gender** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Construction of 1No. CHPS Compound with Ancillary Facilities and Furnishing at Yakubupe in the Salaga South Constituency of the Savannah Region<br><br>**(Uncompleted project)** | Health | | | |
| Construction of 1No. 6-Unit Classroom Block with Ancillary Facilities and Furnishing at Boakudow | Education | | | |
| Rehabilitation and dredging of dam at Chanzegu | Agric/Dam | | | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Rehabilitation and dredging of dam at Gizaagundaa | Agric/Dam | | | |
| Construction of Chips Compound at Mimima | Health | | | |
| Construction of 1No. 3-Unit Classroom Block with Ancillary Facilities and Furnishing at Imamiya Islamic Primary School in the Salaga South Constituency of the Savannah Region. | Education | | | |
| Construction of 1No Bridge at Bummbugu to Link Zaago to Binduri Central leading to Bazua market and Bolga - Bawku Trunk Road | Road | | | |
| 3-Unit Classroom Block-Dubila | Education | | | |
| Spot improvement Chognuori-Liero Road | Road | | | |
| Construction of 1 No 6-Unit Classroom Block at Wechiau SHS | Education | | | |

# 7.0 Conclusions and Way Forward

## 7.1 Key Findings

- **ABFA Utilization by Development Authorities have impacted communities positively:** The overriding objective of the study was to identify how Development Authorities are utilize ABFA to improve the lives of communities within its jurisdiction. The assessment consequently proved that, with the exception of unique and peculiar circumstances, projects financed by ABFA have notably impacted individuals and communities positively. Across the various sectors, ABFA projects have contributed significantly or moderately to socio-economic growth and development of communities, and have improved the overall living standards of beneficiaries, including women, youth, children, PWDs and other margainalized groups. This evidence supports the conclusion that the projects are fulfilling their objectives and emphasizes the positive contribution of ABFA funding to the progress of the community.
- **Agricultural and Road projects have significant impact on promoting socio-economic growth and development of communities**: While projects across the various sectors have spurred socio-economic growth and development of communities, the assessment showed that road and agricultural projects had the strongest link to the socio-economic growth and development of beneficiary communities. This is attributed to the fact that agriculture and road are critical economic sectors, while health and education are pro-poor social sectors, whose economic benefits and impacts are realized in the medium to long term.
- **Lack of MMDA Involvement:** The study highlights a marked deficiency in the participation of Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Assemblies (MMDAs) in ABFA-funded projects, suggesting a disconnect in local governmental engagement in both the planning and execution stages of these initiatives. This lack of involvement hints at a broader issue of integration between local governance structures and the development projects, potentially impacting the projects' sustainability and their alignment with local needs. The findings point to a conspicuous absence of MMDAs in the management of projects, indicating that despite their expected critical role in local development, their actual engagement in ABFA-funded activities by the Development Authorities is limited.
- **Active Community Consultation in Project Selection:** The report emphasizes the active involvement of key community members in selecting projects, showcasing a bottom-up approach in the planning process. This method ensures that the initiatives are community-focused and reflect the genuine needs of the residents, enhancing the

likelihood of their success and sustainability. The engagement process not only secures local buy-in but also promotes ownership and empowerment among community members, vital elements for the long-term success of development projects.

- **Women's Participation in Project Selection:** The study emphasizes the significant role of women in the community development process, noting their proactive involvement in initiating discussions about projects. This underlines the importance of including women's perspectives in decision-making, ensuring an inclusive approach to project selection that caters to the entire community's needs and leverages the unique insights of women.
- **Limited Oversight and Operational Challenges:** The Development Authorities in Ghana face a dual challenge of inadequate oversight and operational inefficiencies. The absence of dedicated monitoring funds hampers their ability to effectively track the progress, quality, and impact of development projects. This lack of oversight is compounded by operational issues, including project delays, underutilization of infrastructure, and poor coordination. To address these intertwined challenges, it is essential for contract sum to not only include funds specifically for monitoring and evaluation activities but also to enhance strategic planning, community engagement, and inter-agency collaboration. By doing so, they can ensure that development initiatives meet their objectives, offer value for money, and optimally utilize resources for improved project outcomes.
- **Project Completion and Utilization Issues:** Challenges such as halted construction, underutilization, and redundant initiatives have been observed in various projects. For instance, the healthcare facility in Yakubupe has experienced construction delays, while educational projects in Imamiya and the market infrastructure in Apesokubi are not being fully utilized. These situations underscore the inefficiencies in project management and underscore the necessity for enhanced stakeholder consultation, planning and implementation of development initiatives.

## Challenges facing Development Authorities in Effectively Utilizing ABFA

- **Funding Constraints:** The funding constraint is a significant barrier to the effective utilization of the Annual Budget Funding Amount (ABFA) by Development Authorities, which are pivotal in promoting socio-economic growth across various regions. These Authorities face substantial challenges due to the limited funding, which falls short of meeting the extensive developmental needs. The discrepancy between available financial resources and the comprehensive scope required for successful project execution leads to considerable operational limitations. Additionally, the unpredictability of funding streams exacerbates these challenges, as inconsistent financial flows hinder project timelines and obstruct long-term strategic planning and resource allocation.
- **Inadequate Oversight:** The absence of funds for monitoring and evaluation poses a significant institutional challenge for the three Development Authorities, as funds are allocated primarily for capital expenditure without specific provisions for oversight activities. Effective monitoring and evaluation are essential to assess the progress, quality, and impact of development initiatives, ensuring they meet their objectives and deliver value for money. It is imperative for Development Authorities to prioritize and allocate funding specifically for the monitoring and evaluation of their projects. This necessity became evident during our field evaluations, where representatives visited project sites for the first time after their completion, highlighting the urgent need for systematic monitoring and evaluation processes. Allocating dedicated budgetary resources for monitoring activities and developing the necessary capacities and protocols are crucial steps in conducting comprehensive and effective project evaluations.
- **Political Interference:** Political interference significantly hampers the effectiveness of Development Authorities by effectively utilizing ABFA, with political agendas often overshadowing strategic development priorities. This interference frequently results in resources being allocated to politically favored areas rather than those most in need, thereby skewing development efforts and leading to inefficiencies and inequities in benefit distribution. The politicization of resource allocation have caused funds to be diverted to initiatives that fail to yield the greatest social or economic advantages, undermining the goal of equitable and balanced development. An example of this can be observed in Salaga, where educational infrastructure intended for Imamiya Islamic Primary School was redirected to the Zongo community, following a promise made by the Member of Parliament for the area.

- **Lack of Legislative Instrument:** The Development Authorities do not have clear regulations and guidelines of how the Authorities should operate in practice. The lack of a LI creates a gap in the institutional effectiveness of the Authorities as operations are not clearly explained. The absence of the LI highlights a gap in clearly stating the powers of the authority, clarifying their existing legal provisions, regulating administrative processes and enforcing compliance.
- **Lack of MMDA Involvement:** There is a notable gap in the involvement of local governments, specifically the Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Assemblies (MMDAs), in the planning and implementation of ABFA-funded projects. This absence of participation points to a broader issue of integrating these development projects within local governance frameworks, potentially impacting the sustainability and relevance of the projects to local needs. The apparent disconnection indicates that Development Authorities and MMDAs might not be effectively collaborating or coordinating their efforts, leading to concerns about the alignment of development initiatives with community goals and the efficacy of local governance structures.
- **Impact of COVID 19:** The COVID-19 pandemic significantly disrupted the Infrastructure for Poverty Eradication Programme (IPEP), affecting its timeline, funding, priorities, expenditures, community engagement, and labor force. The economic downturn caused by the pandemic reduced state revenue, leading to decreased budgetary allocations for IPEP projects. With emergency healthcare becoming a government spending priority, less financial support was available for these development initiatives. Lockdown measures and social distancing mandates caused delays or halts in projects, with challenges in worker mobility and supply chain disruptions prolonging construction and infrastructure activities. Furthermore, the need for improved health protocols and the procurement of safety equipment, along with increased material costs due to logistical challenges, raised the overall expenses of IPEP projects funded by ABFA. For the Development Authorities, these disruptions translated into strained financial resources, project delays, and increased costs, complicating their efforts to meet development objectives and efficiently manage their allocated funds.

## 7.2 Conclusions and Policy Recommendations

In Ghana, the prudent management of petroleum resources, encapsulated in the Annual Budget Funding Amount (ABFA), is pivotal for catalyzing socio-economic growth. The establishment of Development Authorities i.e. Coastal, Middle Belt, and Northern development authorities marks a significant stride toward decentralizing and optimizing the allocation of these funds. However, despite their critical mandate, challenges persist in realizing the full potential of ABFA in fostering equitable and inclusive development. The following recommendations are therefore intended to enhance the effectiveness of ABFA utilization by the Development Authorities:

- **Legislative, Regulatory, and Conceptual Framework Enhancement:** The operational efficiency of Development Authorities in Ghana is significantly hindered by the absence of definitive regulations and guidelines, leading to administrative uncertainties and inconsistent enforcement. These authorities need a clear, well-articulated strategy that defines their roles in poverty eradication and socio-economic development. To address these challenges, the introduction of a comprehensive Legislative Instrument (LI) is critical. This instrument should define the operational boundaries, authorities, and responsibilities of the Development Authorities, thereby clarifying existing ambiguities. Moreover, the effectiveness of ABFA utilization is grounded in a robust and clear conceptual framework. Finalizing this framework, especially for the Infrastructure for Poverty Eradication Programme (IPEP), is essential. It should act as an extensive guide that outlines specific initiatives and the strategic use of ABFA to facilitate measurable improvements in poverty reduction and economic growth. Additionally, the LI should encompass administrative processes, compliance enforcement, and technical specifications to boost the effectiveness and accountability of Development Authorities, thereby strengthening their strategic direction and operational framework.

- **Timely Disbursement of ABFA Funds from Ministry of Finance:** To enhance the operational efficiency of Development Authorities in Ghana, it is crucial to establish a regular and reliable disbursement timetable for ABFA funds from the Ministry of Finance. This timetable should guarantee that Development Authorities receive their funds systematically, aiding in optimal financial management and project execution. Adherence to this schedule is essential for improving financial planning and ensuring the timely implementation of development projects.

- **Enhanced Funding Mechanisms:** Establishment of a more reliable and consistent funding streams for the Development Authorities, ensuring that financial resources are

aligned with the developmental demands of their regions. This could involve securing dedicated funding for both capital and operational expenditures, including project monitoring and evaluation. Development Authorities should establish contingency funds to manage financial needs during delays in ABFA disbursements. This fund can act as a buffer, allowing projects and operations to continue without interruption.

- **Ensure projects are exclusively financed by ABFA:** The co-mingling of ABFA and GOG can obscure financial transparency, making it difficult for stakeholders such as the public and regulatory authorities to track and scrutinize Development Authorities' precise use of ABFA. Assessing the performance and outcomes of projects funded by ABFA is also complicated when these funds are not separately tracked. To address this, Development Authorities should avoid allocating GOG to finance projects being funded by ABFA.
- **Mitigate Political Interference:** Developing mechanisms to safeguard the operations of Development Authorities from political influence. This could involve establishing transparent criteria for project selection and resource allocation to ensure that development efforts are based on need and potential impact rather than political considerations.
- **Facilitating Public-Private Partnerships:** Reducing bureaucratic hurdles to facilitate public-private partnerships (PPPs) can significantly enhance the scope and impact of development projects. By streamlining processes, Development Authorities can more effectively engage with private sector partners, leveraging additional resources and expertise for infrastructure and development projects.

# Annexures

Annex 1: End of Project Report

## Key Stakeholder Institutions and Individuals Consulted

| Beneficiary Communities | Government | Civil Society |
|---|---|---|
| MMDAs | Middle Belt Development Authority | Public Interest and Accountability Committee |
| Traditional authorities | Coastal Development Authority | Africa Centre for Energy Policy |
| Assembly members | Northern Development Authority | Natural Resource Governance Institute |
| Women groups | Ministry of Finance | Strategic Youth Network for Development |
| Youth groups | National Development Planning Commission | Ghana Anti-Corruption Coalition |