

The Purdue Peace Project Post

The mission of the Purdue Peace Project is to convene groups of local citizens in fragile states where clearly identified situations threaten to lead to political violence, and encourage and assist these citizens in their efforts to bring about peaceful solutions. In promoting locally-driven and inclusive approaches to peacebuilding, we seek to reduce the likelihood of political violence and contribute to lasting peace. In doing so, we also seek to add to the body of knowledge in this field by documenting and disseminating our work to practitioners and scholars alike.



Mrs. Rosaline Baatuolkuu Obeng-Ofori, West Africa Program Manager,
PPP

In this Issue

- Tribute
P. 2
- El Salvador
P. 3-4
- Ghana
P. 5-6
- Liberia
P. 7-8
- Peacebuilder Profile
P. 9-10
- Malaysia Conference
P. 11
- Research Assistant Spotlight
P. 12

PURDUE
LIBERAL ARTS

BRIAN LAMB
SCHOOL OF
COMMUNICATION

PURDUE
LIBERAL ARTS

PURDUE PEACE PROJECT

Promoting Peace Through Local Action

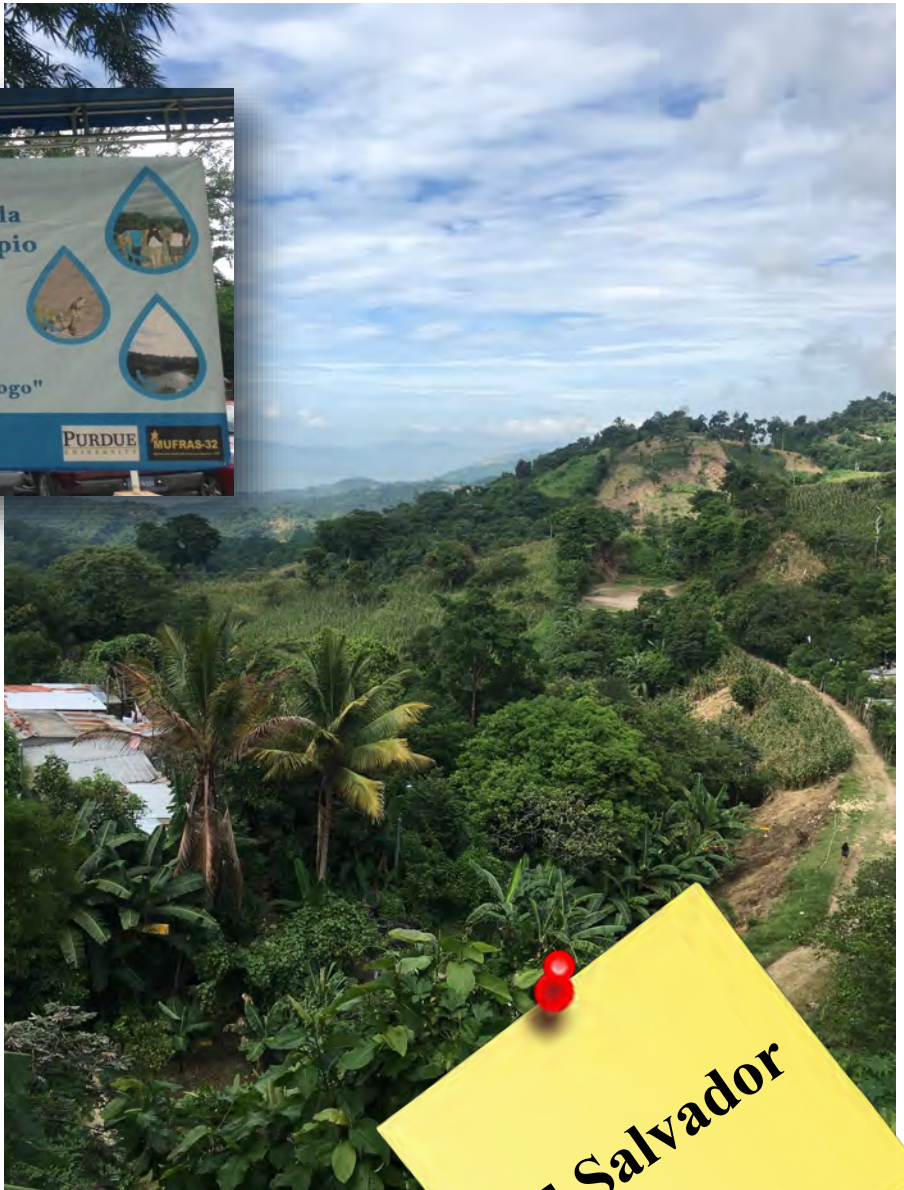
Quarterly Newsletter
ISSUE 15 October 2016

Tribute: Mrs. Rosaline Baatuolkuu Obeng-Ofori, West Africa Program Manager, PPP

All of us at the Purdue Peace Project mourn the loss of our colleague and dear friend, Mrs. Rosaline Baatuolkuu Obeng-Ofori, who passed away suddenly on October 27, 2016. Read tribute [here](#) and watch video tribute [here](#).



PPP Visit to Cabañas Strengthened Relationships with Local Actors



In September 2016, PPP (Purdue Peace Project) team members visited El Salvador to observe recent developments of the project launched in June 2016, and to strengthen our relationships with local actors relevant to peacebuilding around water management. During the visit, the team met with Fundación Salvadoreña Para El Desarrollo Economico Y Social, or the National and Cultural Economic Social Development Group, to discuss water management concerns in El Salvador. The PPP team also participated in a radio program on popular Radio Cadena Mi Gente. While on air, PPP consultant, Jessica Berns shared about the PPP approach and discussed the relationship between peace and water management in the country.





During the trip, our team also met with different actor groups in San Isidro (e.g., representatives of the local police, business leaders, government officials, community members, and MUFRAS-32 members). The highlight of the team's visit was a water festival coinciding with El Salvador's Independence Day and organized by MUFRAS-32, PPP's local collaborator. Issues around peaceful management of local waters were raised during the festival. The festival also coincided with the finalization of the constitution of the comisión, the group of local actors who committed to promoting peace in water management during the project launch in June 2016.



Our team at Radio Cadena Mi Gente (top). Festival on water and peace in San Isidro (bottom).



NYPAD Promotes a Violence-Free Election through Campaign

Since April 2016, the Nandom Youth for Peace and Development (NYPAD), a local group of peacebuilders in the Nandom district and surrounding areas in Ghana, has organized community activities to support a Violence-Free Election Campaign for the December 2016 presidential and parliamentary elections.

Concerned about tensions during the primaries and heading into voter registration activities, NYPAD recognized the need to organize for the purpose of

preventing violence before, during, and after the elections. To this end, NYPAD has taken part in voter registration sensitization activities at schools coupled with speaking to students about peaceful coexistence, good leadership, and good governance. NYPAD has also organized a district-wide peace walk, outreach programs in communities within Nandom at risk of political violence, ongoing friendly football matches between communities, and regular radio programs.





First peace walk organized by NYPAD in June 2016 in Nandom, Ghana.

In August 2016, NYPAD organized a town hall meeting, which included 70 community members, local leaders, and politicians. The town hall meeting aimed to encourage peaceful campaigning. Post-meeting evaluations suggest participants are committed to preaching peace and educating others before, during and after the election.

Though many of these activities have taken place in Nandom, NYPAD's efforts have spread beyond Nandom into communities in four surrounding districts and led to invitations to

conduct further outreach to spread peace. Specifically, in October, NYPAD also held a peaceful elections workshop in the neighboring district of Lambussie. Approximately 55 people attended this workshop, which included presentations on the need for peace during as well as after the election.

NYPAD plans to continue their outreach efforts to promote peace leading up to and following the December election. Their plans include additional community outreach and a second district-wide peace walk.

Liberia: The Peaceful Elections Project Expands to Bong County



Actor meeting activities in Bong County, September 2016.



In early September 2016, the PPPN (Pen-Pen Peace Network), a local peace committee supported by PPP, organized an actor meeting in Bong County in order to discuss the Peaceful Elections Project's

expansion beyond Montserrado County to this area. Among actor groups who convened at the meeting were representatives of pen-pen riders, police, youth, market women, and other community members. Several members of the Bong community spoke and they saw this project as a great way to address tensions and issues that occur within specific groups (e.g., pen-pen unions). One meeting participant said, "We strongly believe that when this group comes to Bong County that we have to face the leadership crisis among motorcyclist unions. [By facing the leadership crisis] among the union, that there would be unity. From unity there would be peace. When we have peace we would be able to have peaceful elections."

Liberia

During the actor meeting, the participants agreed that they should promote peace-promoting messages (such as in radio talk shows) in some of the local dialects, in order to reach more people. They also formed a local working group, consisting of ten individuals from various actor groups: pen-pen riders, the National Election Commission (NEC), police, and the rest of the community. The

PPPN is currently working with the local citizens in Bong County to strategize best ways to spread the word on peace and to encourage collaboration among various actor groups in the local communities in Bong in their joint efforts against electoral violence in 2017 and beyond. The project is to be launched in January 2017.



Snapshot of working group organized after the actor meeting in Bong County, September 2016.

Local Peacebuilders: “Unity, Peace & Development” Local Peace Committee

The Tuobodom Peacemakers Committee, a group of local citizens that works towards promoting peace in Tuobodom, Ghana, has begun to plan and implement activities as part of their peacebuilding program in this area.

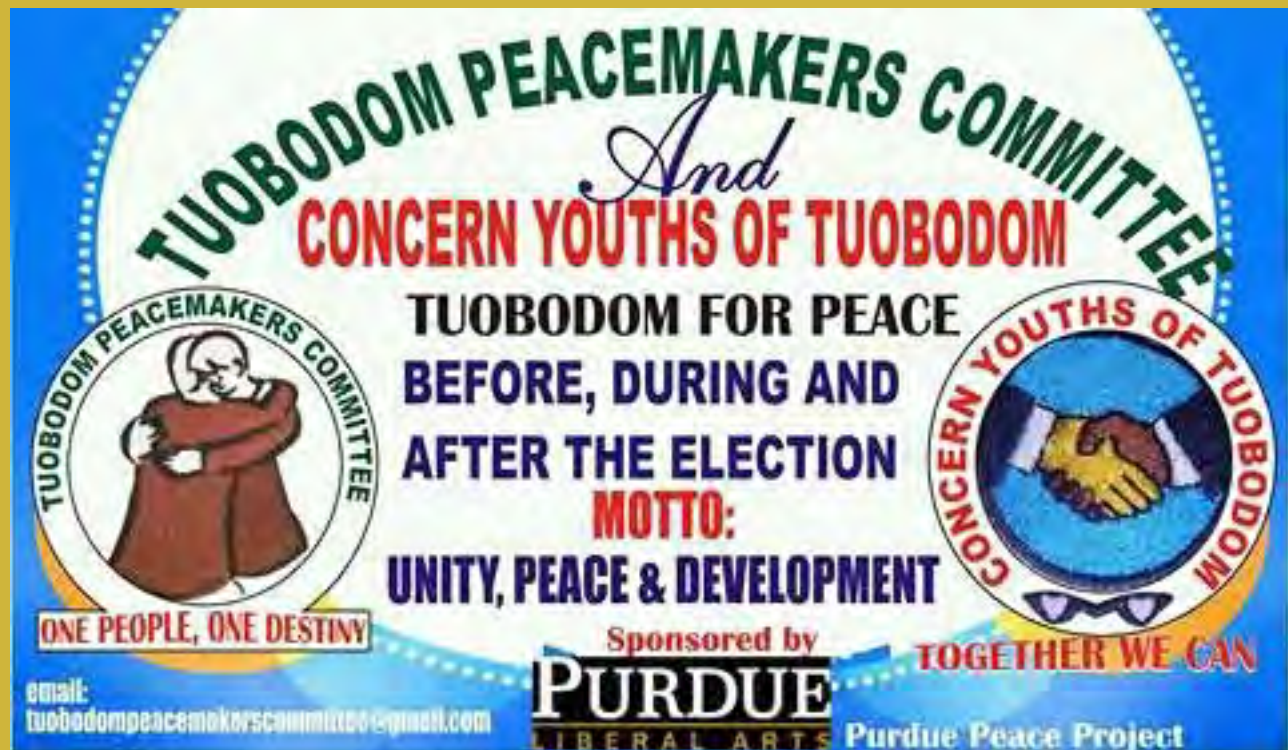
Following its formation during an actor meeting in August 2016, the Tuobodom Peacemakers Committee has been meeting

regularly to strategize best ways to bring and sustain peace related to a chieftaincy dispute in Tuobodom. They came up with several outreach strategies, including door-to-door interactions to let locals know about the committee and the need for peace, visits to religious institutions, media programs, a peace march, and visits to local chiefs.



The “New Tuobodom” that the peace committee members want to see is people embracing each other and living peacefully. Here, the Tuobodom Peacemakers Committee poses together along with PPP team members and Concern Youth of Tuobodom, a self-organized group of youth that the PPP collaborated with for the actor meeting in

August 2016.



One of the Tuobodom Peacemakers Committee’s banners with artwork that represents the committee’s motto, “Unity, Peace & Development”, and the Concern Youth of Tuobodom’s logo.

Implementation of some activities has already begun. In early fall, the peace committee visited several local churches to spread the word about violence prevention related to the chieftaincy conflict that has been dividing local citizens living in Tuobodom for decades. In addition, members of the committee met with traditional leaders from the two opposing factions, the Abroman family chief and the Krotia family chief. During that meeting,

the Abroman chief’s son, who expressed great commitment for peace to prevail in the town, entered the Krotia chief’s palace for the first time in his life.

Next, the peace committee members have been planning to talk to the families that lost their loved ones during the violence in past years. They also hope to consult with market women and other community members about ways in which they can bring peace to the community.

Academic Update: PPP Shares Recent Research at International Conference in Malaysia

In September 2016, the Purdue Peace Project team joined communication and media scholars from South Asia and other parts of the world for the i-COME'16 International Conference on Communication and Media: An International Communication Association Regional Conference in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The conference provided an opportunity to engage in conversations about how communication and media scholarship can respond to global and local challenges.

Under the conference theme, “Exploring Communication: Beyond National Cultural Adoption, Images and Identity,” the PPP hosted a panel on how to develop new knowledge about peacebuilding and communication through engaged scholarship based on our political violence prevention work in West Africa and Central America. We presented some of our most recent research, including work on a local leadership approach to peacebuilding, corporate-community relations, corporate engagement and corporate social responsibility, constructing and interrogating meanings of space, and the role of religious leaders in peacebuilding.



Conference



Research Assistant Spotlight



Jessica Pauly is a third-year PhD student at the Brian Lamb School of Communication, Purdue University. Jessica's research interests pertain to social change, more particularly to gender and feminism, identity work, and religion and faith. Jess became interested in the PPP before she was even accepted to Purdue. She was fascinated by how the work of communication researchers applies to violence-prevention efforts in other countries and what such work looks like in action. To Jess, the PPP is an opportunity to find inspiration through

her interactions with her PPP teammates and colleagues from the U.S and around the world. She also views PPP as an opportunity to live her own values. In her work on PPP's Ghana projects, Jessica has discovered that peace starts from each person. As Jess says, "Each one of us can contribute to a more peaceful world. I think this simple thought is very powerful, and it is easy to take for granted. But we must remember this as we engage in our daily lives, because all of us can contribute to peace."

Like us on Facebook & Follow us on Twitter and Instagram

The Purdue Peace Project is on Facebook! Like our page to stay up to date on our projects and related peacebuilding and violence prevention efforts. www.facebook.com/PurduePeaceProject

Follow us on Twitter @PurduePeaceProj

Follow us on Instagram @instagram.com/purdue_peace_proj/

Comments, Questions, or Suggestions about the Newsletter?

Please contact the Editor, Liliya Yakova, at lyakova@purdue.edu.

PURDUE
LIBERAL ARTS

PURDUE PEACE PROJECT

Beering Hall, Room 2114
100 N. University Street
West Lafayette, IN 47907, USA
(765) 494-9107
<https://www.cla.purdue.edu/ppp/>