

|  |
| --- |
| Policy Paper ( Revised Edition) |
| The Northern Ghana Transformation Agenda for inclusion in Political Parties Manifestos for the 2020 General Elections in Ghana, under the aegis of the Northern Development Forum (NDF) |
| July, 2020 |

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Contact

Chair

Northern Development Forum

Major Albert Don-Chebe (Rtd)

Contact: +233-540667224

Partners

  

1.0. **Introduction**

In March, the Northern Development Forum (NDF) issued a Policy Paper on the imperatives for the transformation on Northern Ghana for inclusion in the manifestos of the political parties for the 2020 General Elections. This was after an extensive consultation with stakeholders in the five northern regions of Ghana This revised edition of the policy paper is occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic and is real and/or potential implications for the development of Northern Ghana. It highlights the real and/or potential economic and social impacts of the virus on the already challenged northern regions and proffers proposals for inclusion in the manifestos of the political parties for the 2020 General Elections in Ghana. The initial recommendations which are captured in this revised policy paper remain relevant to the development of the northern regions of Ghana.

**2.0. Harnessing the socio-economic potential of Northern Ghana**

The development of Northern Ghana is a national prerogative and an increasingly urgent one. Studies conducted by the erstwhile SADA indicate that with the right interventions, Northern Ghana can grow on an average of 12% annually. If strategically nurtured along such a growth path, by 2020 (the target date for bringing extreme poverty to zero as per the SDGs), per capita income can rise from the current estimate of $500 to well over $2,200, placing the area firmly in a Lower Middle-Income status, a situation which constitutes a radical break in endemic poverty and its attendant burdens on national development. This will reduce the current unemployment level of close to 20% to about 13% and a further reduction of informal employment currently constituting 70% of all paid work to about 45%. These changes will inject an additional 2.0 to 2.5% annually to Ghana’s GDP growth, lifting the country closer to an Upper Middle-Income status. Delaying Northern Ghana’s development represents a significant waste of Ghana’s development potential, not to mention the suffering of the people who live there and the potential benefits of a reverse migration.

To achieve this will require multiple and sustained interventions that lead to the steady expansion of agricultural output and productivity; sharp improvement of nutrition; rapid increase in agro-processing and light industries and planned urbanization, among others.

The transformation of this part of the country will also contribute immensely to the peace and security of Ghana against the backdrop of the looming threats from the neighbouring sahel region. The envisaged new economy will create opportunities for young people to aspire to better things and direct their energies productively rather than channeling them into retrogressive and violent agendas. Such a situation only makes room for recruitments not just internally but also externally. There will equally be no “empty” geographic spaces that can be exploited for violent and disruptive purposes. A peaceful and generally productive northern Ghana will make it possible for the state to provide a good life for all Ghanaians.

Northern Ghana is advantageously positioned to be a growth centre. If considered as part of the larger savannah, this area is the larger half of Ghana (54%) occupying an expansive land area (130,262 km²). It is the bread basket of Ghana yet to be developed and when fully developed can easily feed up to 50 million people and beyond, contribute significantly to substituting for the US$2billion or so annual food imports, especially grains and pulses (rice, soy-bean, cowpea, groundnuts, sorghum, millet) as well as sugar and such value chain products as chicken, fish, meat (beef and mutton), and edible/essential oils (shea, groundnut, sesame, baobab). (USAID, 2014[[1]](#footnote-1)). Essential oils from shea and baobab are in high demand in the cosmetics and pharmaceutical industries. Northern Ghana’s savannah grasslands are home to the production of grains such as sorghum, millet and corn, which can be harnessed for malt, cereals and confectioneries.

This part of Ghana is also uniquely positioned as a bridge to the Sahel and many markets within the ECOWAS region with a 340 million-strong market that is growing rapidly with immense benefits to be derived from integrating into these markets. Similarities in language, vegetation, culture and climate give the area added advantage. The Tamale International Airport is also an hour closer than Accra to the heart of Europe and only 30 minutes to one-hour flying distance to many West African capitals. It is also uniquely suitable for cargo transport around the world and therefore has the potential of becoming a major logistics hub. A thriving Tamale International Airport will feed smaller airports in the Upper West and Upper East regions, which will stimulate various businesses including services. Tamale itself, which is currently the only comprehensively planned city in Ghana can grow rapidly and be a major source of jobs and innovation if the available plans are implemented.

The five regions of Northern Ghana are suitable for producing a number of cash-crops including cotton, cashew, cotton and groundnuts as well as the highly-priced essential oils like shea butter and even livestock based on improved small-holder systems integrated with commercial holdings. The low poverty levels in the rest of Ghana owe much to a single cash-crop, cocoa, and increasingly palm-oil and rubber, all of which receive significant attention of the public purse. The same levels of investments in cotton and shea are necessary and beneficial to the country and local economies.

But perhaps the region’s greatest resource, and yet its greatest need, is water. Whilst abundant during the rainy season supplying the Akosombo dam, its scarcity during the dry season or its over-abundance in the form of floods and attendant destructions underpin the poverty, unemployment and vulnerability which triggers the various forms of migration and conflicts. Work has already been done to map the main irrigation and hydropower dam potentials (95 small dams for irrigation and 23 medium-large scale dams for irrigation, flood control and hydropower). Pre-feasibility studies for the medium and large dams have been done indicating the possibility of generating 548MW of hydropower. Similarly, with solar radiation in excess 5 w/ m² and enough unused land, Northern Ghana has a potential to become a major player in West Africa’s solar energy production pool.

The Voltaian basin which includes many districts in Northern Ghana presents the country’s best opportunity for commercial onshore oil and gas production but its exploitation needs to be traded off against other competing land use as these areas also house the most productive soils for agriculture and fisheries. Another industrial mineral that is abundant in the north is iron ore, found at three main sites in Ghana namely: Zabzugu and Tatale (Sheini hills), Sissala East (Pudo) and Krachi East. The Sheini hills deposits alone contain 1.3 billion tonnes of iron ore, on a 33km long belt. The deposits are recognized to be some of the finest in Africa and big enough to last over a period of 100 years even at the commercial mining scale. The Pudo deposits are estimated to contain 5 million tonnes ([[2]](#footnote-2)NSEZ, Regional Concept Plan, 2016). Together, they form a strong basis for a local steel and related industry that can serve the country and sub-region.

Other development potentials, especially in tourism, culture and the creative arts, present huge opportunities for jobs and wealth creation for Ghanaians. The appropriate policies, partnerships and programmes, therefore, need to be included in the 2020 Manifestos of the Political Parties to ensure Ghanaians benefit from these opportunities and resources.

The Northern Development Forum, backed by the chiefs and people of the five northern regions by this policy paper are seeking the endorsement of the Political Parties in Ghana to include a number of strategic and game-changing initiatives from this part of the country in their Manifestos which will be beneficial to all Ghanaians. This legitimate demand is consistent with Article 36, Clause 2, Section (d) of the Directive Principles of State Policy of the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana which specifies that the State shall as a matter of principle undertake “*even and balanced development of all regions and every part of each region of Ghana, and, in particular, improving the conditions of life in the rural areas, and generally, redressing any imbalance in development between the rural and urban areas”* (p.37). This demand is also anchored on the affirmation of the Sustainable Development Goals theme to “Leave No One Behind”. It is also consistent with the commitment by the current government in the Ghana Beyond Aid Charter to the effect that by 2028 the gap between the poorest region in terms of the poverty rate is no more than 3 times that of the least poor region. It is currently 12 times.

3.0. **Consultation process**

The Northern Development Forum and its partners employed participatory and bottom-up approaches in building consensus on the prioritized initiatives that should be included in the Manifestos of the Political Parties for the 2020 General which will be beneficial to residents of Northern Ghana and all Ghanaians. First, was a well-planned and well attended Northern Ghana Development Conference which took place at the University for Development Studies, Tamale from the 30th to 31st May, 2019. The guest speaker for the Conference was the Vice President of the Republic of Ghana, H.E Alhaji Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia. A total of 394 participants attended the conference. They included the regional ministers of Northern, Upper West, Savannah and North East regions; 6 other Ministers and Deputy Ministers of State; Minority leader in Parliament, Hon. Haruna Iddrisu; leader of Northern Region NPP caucus in Parliament, Hon. Wahab Suhuyini; some northern members of the Council of State; the CEO, board members and management of the Northern Development Authority; Chiefs and Queen Mothers from the Houses of Chiefs and Association of Queen Mothers; Heads of Cooperation (HoCs); Ambassadors; MMDCEs; Academics; Chief Directors and Regional Economic Planning Officers in active service and on retirement; NGOs/CSOs such as the Northern Development Forum, STAR Ghana Foundation, TAMA Foundation, Peasant Farmers Association of Ghana( PFAG), Farmer-Based Organisations and Ghana Federation of the Disabled (GFD) as well as private sector players, women and youth groups, development experts and the media. This policy paper for engagement with the political parties draws heavily from the key conclusions and recommendations from that conference.

Second, the leadership of the Northern Development Forum met at the Best Western Hotel in Accra, where the conference recommendations were further prioritized. Third, was a follow-up meeting with the Vice President of Ghana, H.E Alhaji Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia where the key recommendations from the Tamale Conference were discussed. Fourth, was an engagement with the development partners led by the Country Director of DFID where options for development cooperation for implementing the recommendations of the Tamale Conference were considered. Fifth was a meeting with the President of the Republic of Ghana, H.E. Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo at the Jubilee House in Accra on 6th February, 2020. Sixth, were three regional forums held in Bolgatanga, Wa and Tamale in the month of February, 2020. These forums prioritized and validated the projects and programmes that should be included in the Manifestos of the Political Parties for the 2020 elections. Participants at these forums included: chiefs and queen mothers, farmers, students, women and youth groups, religious leaders, CSOs, political parties’ representatives, technocrats, academics and the media.

This policy paper, therefore, reflects the voices, aspirations and views of a representative sample of the people of the five northern regions of Ghana.

4.0. **Objectives**

The Northern Development Forum and its allies believe that the people of Northern Ghana who understand their development challenges are better placed to input into the Manifestos of the Political Parties who are seeking their mandate. The objectives of this policy paper are:

1. To propose prioritized-game changing projects and programmes that will help transform the economy of Northern Ghana and ensure inclusive and equitable development in Ghana for inclusion in the Manifestos of the Political Parties for the 2020 General Elections;
2. To propose specific policy actions required to mitigate the real and /or potential implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on the already challenged northern regions of Ghana for inclusion in the Manifestos of the Political Parties for the 2020 General Elections.

**5.0. COVID-19 and Northern Ghana**

The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed new vulnerabilities on the lives of the people living in the five northern regions of Ghana. Political Parties are encouraged to include measures that will mitigate these challenges during and after the post-covid-19 era in their Manifestos for the 2020 General Elections. The specific challenges and the proposed actions required to address these challenges are presented below:

**5.1. COVID-19 and implications for Northern Ghana**

Since the confirmation of the first two COVID-19 cases in Ghana on 12th March, 2020, the number of confirmed cases as at [[3]](#footnote-3)28th June, 2020 has risen to 17,741, with 13,268 recoveries /discharges and 112 deaths. The government of Ghana accordingly has initiated a number of measures to contain the spread of the virus, care for the sick and limit the impact of the virus on social and economic life of Ghanaians. Among the many measures initiated and rolled out by the government are: closure of the country’s borders, ban on public gatherings, partial and total lock downs for a number of weeks, roll-out of GHS and WHO safety protocols, production and supply of Personal Protective Equipment ( PPE) to health workers and facilities, announcement of relief packages for health workers and households, expansion of testing facilities, increase in number of quarantine, isolation and treatment centres, provision of a GHS1billion soft loan stimulus package for Small Medium Enterprises ( SMEs), disinfection and fumigation of market centres, schools and other public facilities among others.

The above COVID-19 responses have re-enforced the call for hard policy choices to be made in support of equitable development in Ghana. This argument is sound because the impact of COVID-19 on public health, education, water, sanitation and hygiene and livelihoods impinge more on poor regions than the relatively well-endowed ones. Whilst the entire country continues to count the losses from COVID-19 pandemic, the COVID-19 interventions and circumstances continue to marginalize the five northern regions even the more as presented below:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| COVID-19 impact | National COVID-19 Response | Impact on Northern Ghana |
| 1. Closure of schools | Resort to on-learning platforms  and take-home and self-study forms of education. | Widening of education gap as many students from the northern regions do not have or cannot afford the needed ICT infrastructure to benefit from on-line learning services ( UNICEF, May 2020 estimates 40% of students in pre-tertiary institutions are not able to access on-line learning services, this probably is higher for students in Northern Ghana ) |
| 1. Slowdown of business activities, especially for SMEs and women led enterprises | GHS 1 billion stimulus package for SMEs | Requirement of on-line registration poses a challenge to many SMEs in Northern Ghana. The data from the NBSSI indicates that [[4]](#footnote-4)64% of applicants are from Ashanti, Central, Greater Accra and Eastern regions. This shows how SMEs in other regions are disadvantaged by the assessment criteria due to their high level of informality and thus outside the formal economy |
| 1. Pressure on few testing centres | Expansion of testing centres | Samples from all the 5 northern regions can only be tested at the Public Health and Reference Laboratory at the Tamale Teaching Hospital. This means results for the needed actions will have to be delayed with the associated consequences on the lives of the people from this part of the country. |
| 1. Poor attention to other equally important health issues such as CSM cases | Fragmented efforts by the GHS to contain CSM outbreaks | Over 40 people have died in the UWR due to lack of vaccines for CSM. |
| 1. Return of Kayayei | No social protection programme for Kayayei returnees. | The return of the many Kayayeis involuntarily to northern regions have exacerbated the financial burdens on their households. |
| 1. Low income for producers of perishable crops and | Limited agro-processing support | Many producers, most of them women, of onions, tomatoes, yams and other perishable produces have lost income due to low demand as a result of the lock down and social distancing requirements. The situation is precarious because they are unable to process their produce. This might affect the next season and create food security challenges |
| 1. High demand for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene facilities | Promotion of hand washing and healthy living practices. Provision of PPE especially for Educational and health Facilities | Many of the districts in Northern Ghana are yet to attain open defecation free status. Access to safe and reliable water supply remains a challenge in many rural areas in the zone. ( UNICEF, 2018 estimates 76% of rural households do not have access to safe water) |
| 1. Infections from neighbouring countries | Closure of border and surveillance by security services | Many of the borders in Northern Ghana are porous and ill-equipped. The importation of ten COVID-19 cases from nationals of neigbouring countries into the Northern Region in March, 2020 shows the risk posed to the health of the people in this part of the country. |
| 1. Increased incidence of poverty and vulnerability, especially of women and girls | Limited poverty alleviation measures in the form of food rations, subsidy for life-line electricity users and free water supply to households for three months. | Limited household incomes, which specific affects the ability of women and girls to manage dietary requirements and purchase of personal effects. Research from Ebola shows that it is increasingly more difficult for girls to go back to school. This increases their vulnerability. |
| 1. Closure of markets | Temporary freeze in travel to Kumasi and Accra | The northern Ghana economy is overwhelmingly dependent on the south for markets for produce and source of supply of consumables and farm inputs. The market disruption if not addressed could exacerbate poverty. |
| 1. Disruption of infrastructure projects | Temporal suspension of on-going infrastructure projects. | The construction of such projects as the Pwalugu dam and major roads projects were suspended. It is not clear whether new priorities have affected commitment to these projects. |

**5.2. COVID-19 Proposals related to Northern Ghana**

Following from the analysis above, we urge political parties to include the following specific recommendations related to the COVID-19 pandemic in their manifestos for the 2020 General Elections.

1. Expand Internet and other ICT infrastructure in Northern Ghana and subsidize the cost of ICT services for students and workers in rural areas;
2. Introduce a special financing stimulus package for SMEs in Northern Ghana and other low income regions;
3. Upgrade laboratory facilities at the Navrongo Health Research Centre and the Wa and Bolgatanga regional hospitals as well as the yet to be established regional hospitals at North-East and Savannah regions with the needed equipment and expertise for testing for COVID-19 and other infectious diseases; while resourcing the Tamale testing centre to become a fully-fledged research regional centre for northern Ghana, like Noguchi Memorial Research Centre and Kumasi Centre for Collaborative Research ( KCCR) ;
4. Improve health services and services delivery as well as health education in northern Ghana and especially improve the supply of PPE to health facilities;
5. Commit to support local institutions build their capacities to better identify and respond to COVID-19 risks;
6. Establish properly equipped emergency units in all regional and District Hospitals;
7. Commit adequate resources for CSM research and treatment. This should include:
   1. Financing the Navrongo Health Research Centre to work on CSM;
   2. Revamping the Pong Tamale Veterinary Centre to produce vaccines like they did in the past.
8. Introduce a social protection programme targeting Kayayei and young women from vulnerable households in Ghana;
9. Provide special incentives to the private sector to enable them set-up agro-processing factories in Northern Ghana;
10. Expand water, sanitation and hygiene systems in rural communities in Northern Ghana and other underserved areas of the country;
11. Increase budgetary allocation to Northern Ghana to support local initiatives that build resilience and recovery in the light of COVID;
12. Equip borders in Northern Ghana to prevent importation of diseases and deal with the threats of terrorists’ activities;
13. Undertake a spatial impact analysis of the stimulus packages and correct regional distributional inequities;
14. Ensure that agricultural inputs are ready to be distributed on-time in northern Ghana;
15. Provide assurance that infrastructure projects committed to prior to COVID-19 will not be displaced.

6.0. **Strategic imperatives from the people of Northern Ghana for inclusion in the**

**Manifestos of Political Parties for 2020 General Elections in Ghana.**

These recommendations presented in the first version of this policy paper still remain relevant. Addressing them will help build the needed resilience in the post-COVID-19 era.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Sector | Issue in Northern Ghana | Initiatives to include in the Manifestos of Political Parties |
| 1. Climate change and Agriculture | Perennial flooding in northern Ghana | 1. **Complete the Pwalugu Multiple Dam (PMD) Development Programme**.   We are seeking your commitment to develop all the three components of this project that is irrigation, flood management and hydropower simultaneously by the end of your fourth year in government. |
| Depletion of woodlands and illegal logging | 1. **Launch of a Northern Ghana Greening Programme.**   We call for a comprehensive tree growing and alternative livelihoods programme to address the threats of desertification in this part of the country. Also, strategies should be outlined in the manifestos of the political parties to stop all illegal logging of rosewood and teak and the cutting down of shea trees for charcoal in the first year in government.   1. **Promote the use of Liquefied Petroleum Gas**   We call for a commitment to subsidize LPG. This will make it affordable and available to households who use charcoal as fuel. This should be done in the first year in government. |
| Over-dependence on rain-fed farming.  The existing infrastructure for all year farming is less developed resulting in only 1% of the total arable land in the zone under irrigation | 1. **Develop strategic Water basins**   We seek your commitment to facilitate the development of the following agricultural clusters and growth corridors. The necessary investments required include the development of irrigation infrastructure; establishment of storage facilities, establishment of mechanizations centres and development of industrial zones in these clusters to develop various value chains. This should be completed by the fourth year in government.   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | Agriculture Growth Pole | Irrigable Area (ha) | Adjoining districts | | 1. Fumbisi Valley | 173,000 | Bulsa South, Mamprugu Moaduri, West Mamprusi | | 1. Nasia –Nabogo Valley | 184,000 | Savulugu, West Mamprusi | | 1. Funsi Valley | 424,000 | Wa East | | 1. Kabaka Gorge | 470,000 | East Gonja, Pru | | 1. Daka/Katanga Valley | 378,000 | East Gonja, Kpandai | | 1. Buipe Area | 198,000 | Central Gonja | | 1. Bui Development Area | 689,000 | Bole, Tain, Wenchi, Kintampo North & Kintampo South | | 1. Oti River Basin | 564,000 | Kpandai,Nanumba South;Nkwanta North;Nkwanta South; KrachiEast;Krachi Nchumuru andKrachi West | | 1. Kamba Valley | 4,050 | Lawra |  1. **Expand the Janbuso water system along the Black Volta.** This should be done in the second year in government**.** 2. **Revamp the following dams in Northern Ghana: Tono, Vea, Bontanga, Tambay, Golinga, Libga, and Bunglum to support all year round farming.** This should be done by the end of the third year in government. |
| Ghana’s installed ginning capacity of close to 80,000 metric tonnes of lint cotton is under-utilized due to low production | 1. **Revamp the Cotton and textile industry in Ghana**   We require your commitment to revamp the cotton and textile industry in Ghana. Specific actions required include: strengthening the Cotton Development  Authority, revamping ginneries, incentivizing farmers  with inputs and extension services and creating the  needed environment to attract private investments in  this sector. We demand action on this proposal by the  end of your second year in government. |
| Shea research and development not given the needed support | 1. **Establish a Shea Development Authority.**   Given the great potential of shea for jobs and wealth creation, we are calling for you to commit to develop the shea tree. This includes setting up a Shea Development Authority to support shea research to reduce the gestation period, support shea plantations and agro- processing activities. We do not support the current arrangement to include shea under the Tree Crop Development Authority.  We demand action on this proposal by the end of the second year of which ever political party is in government. |
| Rice and chicken importation killing local rice and poultry production in Ghana. | 1. **Raise Import tariffs for Rice and Chicken.**   We require your commitment to address  this issue by the end of your third year in government.  This will create more jobs in the rice and chicken  value chains in Ghana.   1. **Facilitate the establishment of rice mills in rice- producing districts.**   A major constraint to the rice industry is the inadequacy of rice milling facilities in the rice-growing districts like the Fumbisi Valley, Nasia-Nabogo Valley and other places. We are seeking your commitment to ensure this gap is addressed by the end of your second year in government. |
| Ghana imports almost 100% of all the cane sugar it consumes. | 1. **Provide incentives for sugar production in suitable valleys.** This should be initiated in the first year in government**.** |
| Alarming rate of depletion of non-timber forest products | 1. **Support development of non-timber forest products.**   We call for the promotion and conservation of non-timber forest products including baobab, dawadawa, neem, moringa, vetiver grass etc. We expect a strategy for this to be launched in the second year of government. |
| 1. Education and youth development | Bolgatanga and Wa Polytechnics are yet to be upgraded to Technical Universities status | 1. **Upgrade Bolgatanga and Wa Polytechnics to Technical Universities status.**   We seek your commitment to upgrade the  Bolgatanga and Wa Polytechnics to Technical  Universities and re-tool them into Centres of Excellence  for Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET).  This includes providing them with the needed  educational infrastructure, tools and human resources to  mount programmes in departments that provide 4th  generation technology training. We demand that this  issue be addressed as a matter of priority in the first year  of your government. |
| Inadequate Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) opportunities for the youth resulting in high unemployment. | 1. **Revamp RTTUs and technical/vocational institutes to fully serve their mandates.**   We request your commitment to revamp, resource and expand RTTUs and TVET institutions in the country. This includes providing them with the needed infrastructure, equipment/tools and human resources to implement their mandate. We expect to see a comprehensive strategy for re-tooling the RTTUs and TVET institutions to execute their mandate in the first year of your government. |
| Improve Infrastructure at the newly established Universities at Navrongo and Wa | 1. **Establish seed funding for the C. K. Tedam University of Technology and Applied Sciences, Navrongo and S. D. Dombo University of Business and Integrated Development Studies, Wa.**   We demand your commitment to provide seed funds  for these new Universities to improve their existing  infrastructure now that their governing councils have been  established. |
| Northern Ghana falls far behind in terms of skills for ICT innovation and infrastructure to prepare the youth to participate in the 4th Industrial Revolution (4IR) technologies such as robotics, machine learning and software development. | 1. **Establish youth business innovation and ICT hubs in the five northern regions.**   Technology and business innovation opportunities will  help in developing creative and innovative youth to start  their own businesses and participate in the 4th Industrial  Revolution. In the case of northern Ghana, we call on  the political parties to commit to the completion of the  laying of the Eastern Corridor optic fibre network,  making internet available in all secondary and technical  schools and establishing at least one Technology  Innovation Centre and one Business Innovation Centre  in each of the major towns in northern Ghana. |
| Some basic schools in northern Ghana still under trees and in makeshift structures. | 1. **Remove all schools under trees in northern Ghana.**   We demand the construction of well-ventilated and permanent structures to replace all basic schools under trees in the northern regions of Ghana. This commitment should be executed by the end of the second year in government. |
| Literacy and Continuous Education | 1. **Revamp existing libraries and establish new regional libraries for new regions**   We demand that all district and regional capitals are equipped with functional libraries and services. For the two newest regions, we demand that steps are taken to stablish state of the art libraries to help improve literacy and continuous learning. |
| Some rural areas and hard-to-reach communities do not have teachers. Due to the refusal of teachers to accept postings due to the lack of basic amenities and other reasons. | 1. **Set-up an incentive scheme for teachers working in deprived communities in northern Ghana and other parts of the country.**   In order to ensure equitable development, we call for an incentive scheme for teachers who accept to work in deprived and hard-to-reach areas of Ghana. This will motivate them to serve the children in these parts of the country. This scheme should be launched in the first year of the political party in government. |
| 1. Health | Health infrastructure needs improvement in northern Ghana | 1. **Facilitate the construction of Regional Hospitals for the newly created North-East and Savannah Regions and resource them to handle COVID-19 testing and management.** 2. **Establish two specialized military and police hospitals in northern Ghana.** 3. **Equip and post health professionals to all CHPS facilities in northern Ghana.** |
|  | Some rural areas and hard-to-reach communities in northern Ghana do not have health facilities and where they are available do not have the needed health professionals to provide them with health care. | 1. **Set-up an incentive scheme to attract critical health professionals to work in deprived communities in northern Ghana and other parts of the country.**   In order to improve health outcomes for all Ghanaians, we call for an incentive scheme for health workers who accept to work in deprived and hard-to-reach areas of Ghana. This will motivate them to serve the people in these parts of the country. This scheme should be launched in the first year of the political party in government. |
| 1. Infrastructure and private sector development | High cost of freight between southern and northern Ghana and with neighbouring countries | 1. **Develop Buipe In-land port.**   We are seeking your commitment to develop the Buipe in-land port which has been on the drawing board for many years. This will facilitate the transportation of goods via the Volta Lake. These goods include building materials, agriculture produce, fertilizers, petroleum products, vehicles, and other heavy materials, such as steel products. This will lower the cost of doing business between northern-southern Ghana and with the neighbouring countries.  Buipe as an intersection of a potential multi-modal transport – rail, road and water is uniquely placed for the development of an industrial park. We envisaged the completion of this project by the political party in government by the end of the fourth year. |
| * Limited cargo and passenger traffic at the Tamale International Airport; * The Airport earmarked for the UER yet to take off. | 1. **Upgrade the Tamale International Airport.**   The upgrade of the Tamale Airport with ware-housing facilities for cargo will improve trade between Ghana and the other West African countries. It will specifically support the export of horticultural products like flowers and vegetables to the European market. This will create the much-needed jobs for the youth. The Airport and Air force base in Tamale will also improve the country’s capacity to fight the insurgence of terrorists’ activities within the sub-region.   1. **Commence the development of the Airport earmarked for the UER.** We want to see concrete proposals to start and complete the UER Airport by the end of your third year in government. |
| Northern Ghana’s potential for processing meat and other agricultural products underutilized. | 1. **Revamp Zuarungu Meat Factory and the Wulugu Livestock Company into multipurpose agro-processing factories.**   We seek your commitment to support agro-processing  activities in northern Ghana by revamping the  Zuarungu Meat Factory and Wulugu Livestock  Company. These factories will create some jobs in the  meat, milk and leather value chains even as they  promote nutrition and reduce imports with their  attendant stress on foreign exchange.   1. **Revamp the Pwalugu Tomato Factory into a**   **multipurpose agro-processing factory.**  We request your commitment to facilitate public  private partnerships that will lead to the revival of the  Pwalugu Tomato Factory as a multipurpose agro  processing factory. Progress on this recommendation is  expected in the second year in government. |
| Tema-Paga rail development programme not beneficial to northern Ghana | 1. **Review the railway development strategy to benefit northern Ghana.**   We are seeking your commitment to review the railway  Project. In our view railway lines going  from Buipe to Paga, Hamile through Wa and Bawku  through Yendi and Sheini will have a bigger impact  on the development of northern Ghana compared to a  Tema-Paga railway line. |
| Poor roads, bridges and school infrastructure in northern Ghana | 1. **Deploy the Field Engineer Regiment of the Ghana Armed Forces to support a Rapid Infrastructure Development Programme for Northern Ghana (FERRID).**   This rapid, low cost and aprotech approach will help address critical infrastructure gaps in northern Ghana by supporting the construction of roads, school infrastructure to remove schools under trees, bridges and anti-floods defences. This innovative proposal will also improve Military-Civilian relations.   1. **Complete key inter-regional roads in northern Ghana.**   These include: (1) Eastern Corridor Road, (2) Navrongo –Wa; (3) Kpasenkpe-Wa; (4) Nalerigu-Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo; (5) Gushegu-Cheriponi.   1. **Develop transborder roads such as Wa-Hamile-Burkina Faso; Bolga-Bawku-Pulmako, Bunkpurungu-Yumbori, Bongo-Yelwongo, Kunchogo-Leo.** |
| High cost of building materials in northern Ghana | 1. **Introduce a price stabilization mechanism for building materials in Ghana.**   The cost of building materials including cement, iron rods, roofing zinc, nails, paint etc are higher in northern Ghana as compared to other parts in the coastal and middle belt regions. This has contributed to the poor housing stock in northern Ghana. We requirement to cross-subsidize the cost of building materials as done with petroleum products and other beverages in Ghana. |
| Iron ore deposits in northern Ghana yet to be developed into iron and steel industry. | 1. **Develop the iron ore resources in northern Ghana.**   We seek your commitment to ensure that the needed legal and financial frameworks are completed for the development of the iron ore reserves at Zabzugu and Tatale (Sheini hills), Sissala East (Pudo) and Krachi East. This will pave the way for the development of an Iron and Steel industry in northern Ghana. |
| 1. Peace and security | Given the volatility of the area and emerging external security threats; peace building and security management needs adequate attention as an area of study | 1. **Facilitate the establishment of a Centre of Excellence for Peace, Security and Conflict Transformation Studies affiliated to the University for Development Studies and related Institutions in the Zone.**   We are seeking your commitment to establish a Centre of Excellence for Peace, Security and Conflict Transformation Studies similar to the Kofi Annan Peace Keeping Training Centre model. This will make it possible to train traditional leaders on peace-building and non-violent approaches to conflict resolution, promote research and ensure early warning mechanisms are in place to address the threat of violent extremism within the West African sub-region.   1. **Resource the regional houses of chiefs to deal with the emerging conflicts in their regions.**   We expect your commitment to resource the regional houses of chiefs and queen mothers to enable them perform their functions well as envisaged in the Chieftaincy Act, 2008, Act 759. The resources needed include staff, office equipment and funds.   1. **Increase the number of Military Barracks in northern Ghana.**   Given the vastness of northern Ghana and the porous nature of the borders, establishing three more military barracks in the Upper West, North-East and Savannah Regions will be a beneficial investment to make. We expect to see commitment regarding this proposal in the manifestos of the political parties and implementation in the second year after winning the 2020 elections. |
| 1. Tourism, Culture and Creative Arts | Many of the tourists’ attractions in northern Ghana are under developed. | 1. **Develop the many tourist attractions in northern Ghana.**   We are seeking your commitment to improve tourism in northern Ghana by developing the infrastructure at the following tourism destinations.   * Mole National Park * Gbelle Resource Reserve * Wechiau Hippo Sanctuary * Nakpanduri Scarp for paragliding * Paga Crocodile Pond * Kulmasa Crocodile Pond * Sirigu Arts and Crafts * Salaga Slave Wells and Market * Tengzug Hill and Shrines * Daboya Smock Weaving commitments |
|  | 1. **Support slave routes resilient project in northern Ghana.**   Given the fact that northern Ghana was a source region during the Trans-Atlantic Slave trade, the people from northern Ghana seek the commitment of the political parties to ensure initiatives by the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Creative Arts such as *“The Year of Return”* and other Ghana-Diaspora initiatives include the five northern regions of Ghana. This includes support to promote northern Ghana festivals, fabrics and artifacts like the smock, baskets, pottery and cuisines. |
|  | 1. **Establish or strengthen Centres for Creative Arts and Culture in northern Ghana.**   Many of the centres for culture and arts in northern Ghana are non-functional. We seek commitment to revamp these centers as places for tourism and development of culture and creative arts industries. |

5.0 **Important pre-conditions for the development of northern Ghana**

In the context of the development of Northern Ghana, our considered opinion is that the political parties should be guided by the following general principles, commitments and pre-conditions:

* Commitment to ensure social justice, equity and balanced development across regions;
* Commitment to green northern Ghana including containing bush fires and preventing illegal logging and mining:
* Commitment to support the upgrade and uptake of technology to drive the development of northern Ghana;
* Commitment to apply countervailing and affirmative action where needed to addressed colonial and post-colonial development gaps;
* Commitment to reflect the principles of responsiveness, transparency and accountability in the manifestos of the political parties as a mark of respect for the people of Ghana.

7.0. **Conclusion**

The people from the five Northern Regions of Ghana are convinced that the above-prioritized projects will benefit all Ghanaians and also address colonial and post-colonial historical development inequalities. We pledge to support any political party that wins the 2020 general elections to roll-out the above projects and programmes with our natural, human, and other resources.

**Revised Policy Paper Issued on behalf of the chiefs and people of the five Northern Regions of Ghana by:**

**The Northern Development Forum**

**July, 2020.**

1. Scoping report of potential growth poles for the implementation of projects under the 11th EDF [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Regional Concept Plan of the Northern Savannah Ecological Zone, 2016 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. https://ghanahealthservice.org/covid19/ [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. <https://news.cencord.org/over-170000-businesses-apply-for-ghs1bn-stimulus-package-for-smes-nbssi/> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)