

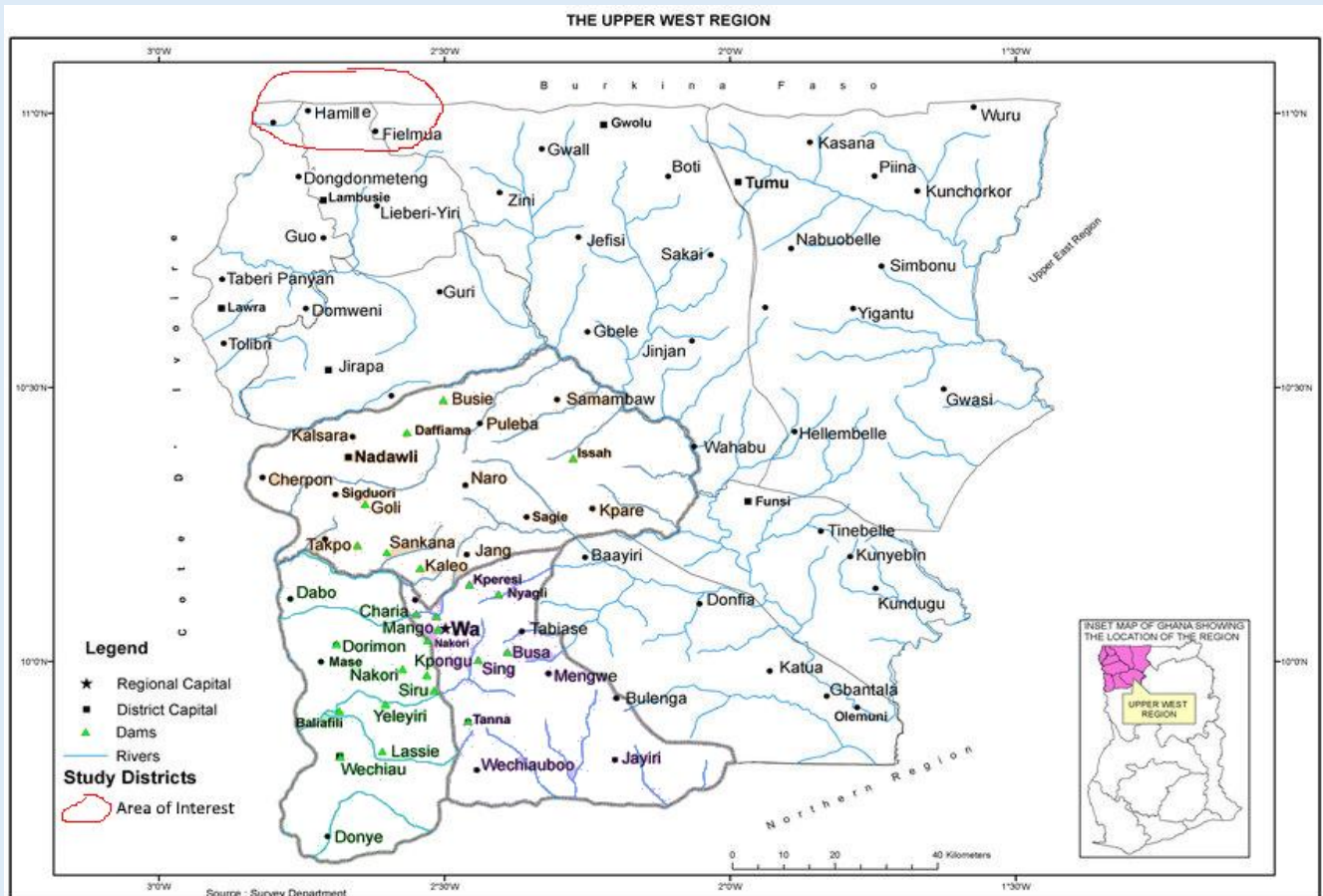
Violent Extremists' Attacks in Communities in Burkina Faso have Displaced about 1000

Persons into Border Towns of Northern Ghana

December 5, 2022

BACKGROUND/ DEMOGRAPHY

Map of the Upper West Region



INCIDENT PROFILE

Several reports monitored by WANEP-Ghana on 5th December 2022 morning suggested that a group of people numbering about 1000 were moving from nearby villages in Burkina Faso into Hapa a village around Hamille, because of an alleged terrorist advancement into Kolinka, one of the villages along the Burkina Faso side of the border, which is approximately 5 km away from Hamille on the Ghana side. Reports from WANEP Ghana's community Early Warning network have corroborated that the alleged extremists visited the village, Kolinka, during the early hours of 5th December 2022 and requested the community members to not pray in certain mosques but in one mosque. The threats indicated that a failure to comply would incur the wrath of the alleged extremists. According to WANEP-Ghana's community monitoring report, the alleged threats and the fear of a later attack might have resulted in the estimated 1000 community members from Burkina Faso fleeing into the northern Ghana border communities.

Under the circumstances, the Chief of Chetu, a community close to Fielmuo in the Sissala West District also based on reports of a shooting incident in his area about 6pm on the same day of the influx of people, called on residents to stay indoors until it was safe to stay outdoors.



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However, the reports further suggest that the Jihadist allegedly destroyed some communication infrastructure including telephone poles and communication links in the Kolinka community in Burkina Faso. This action suggests the alleged criminal element's attempt to prevent the communities from support from the security.

RISKS ANALYSIS:

The influx of Burkina Faso residents into the border towns of Ghana re-emphasises the vulnerability (based on at least proximity) of especially Ghana's northern border communities, and by extension the country, to violent extremism. Although this incident happened in Burkina Faso, the impact has been felt in Ghana in the form of temporarily closure of some schools for safety reasons, fear, and panic. There is also some economic pressure on families that are humanly compelled to accommodate their kinsmen fleeing the extremist. Already, the displaced persons are facing food and water challenges thus forcing authorities in the Fielmuo, Hamille and other villages to canvas for resources to reduce the levels of vulnerabilities and risks. The forced replacements of southern border Burkina Faso communities with jihadist groups reinforces the fear about southward expansion of violent extremist attacks towards Ghana.

MECHANISMS FOR INTERVENTIONS:

- The Ghana Immigration and Police services as well as other District authorities are in control and accordingly monitoring the situation.
- Some relevant security agencies have been informed of the development
- Funerals expected to be performed in the locations have been suspended temporarily. This is expected to curtail risks through attendance from across the border in Burkina Faso.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The Ghana Immigration Service, Ghana Police Service, the Military Intelligence, and other national investigative intelligence bodies need a coordinated effort to investigate the development and impacts in the identified communities.
- While state and non-state actions are required, it is imperative that citizens, especially the affected communities engage among themselves as local leaders, religious and traditional authorities, youth, and women groups to enhance self-resilience and awareness.
- There is the need to reinforce security patrols along the borders especially in Hamille, Fielmuo, Chetu and their environs.
- Humanitarian assistance must be provided for the displaced persons within the affected communities

Reference

<https://upperwestmedia.net/uw-some-suspected-jihadists-attempt-penetrating-the-upper-west-region/>

Reports received from Community Monitoring Teams in the area.

Ghana Broadcasting Corporation news report.

For further information, kindly contact Albert Yelyang, National Network Coordinator through ayelyang@wanep.org