



**NETWORK FOR WOMEN'S  
RIGHTS IN GHANA (NETRIGHT)**

# **GHANA NGOs NATIONAL BEIJING+25 REVIEW PARALLEL REPORT**

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**Ghana NGOs National  
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Parallel Report**

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# Acronyms

ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution
BfPA	Beijing Platform for Action
CAMFED	Campaign for Female Education
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
CERT	National Computer Emergency Response Team
COP	Conferences of the Parties
COTVET	Council for Technical, Vocational Education and Training
CPESDP	Coordinated Programme of Economic and Social Development Policies
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
DOVVSU	Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit
ECREEE	ECOWAS Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FC	Forestry Commission
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
FIDA	Federation of International Women's Lawyers
FNS	Food and Nutrition Security
GACCES	Gender Action on Climate Change for Equality and Sustainability
GES	Ghana Education Service
GEWE	Gender Equality and Women Empowerment
GEWR	Gender Equality and Women's Rights
GHACMA	Ghana Association of Chartered Mediators and Arbitrators
GSFP	Free School Uniforms/Exercise Books, Ghana School Feeding Programme
GRAF	Ghana Robotics Academy Foundation
GRB	Gender Responsive Budgeting
GNHR	Ghana National Household Registry
GSOP	Social Opportunities Project
GSEP	Ghana School Feeding Programme

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HACSA	Heritage and Cultural Society of Africa
INDCs	Intended Nationally Determined Contributions
LEAP	Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty
LIPWP	Labour Intensive Public Works Programme
MESTI	Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation
MoGCSP	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection
MMDAs	Ministries, Municipal and District Assemblies
NAFP	National Adaptation Fund Project
NBSSI	National Board for Small-Scale Industries
NCA	National Communications Authority
NECs	National Executive Committees
NDCs	Nationally Determined Contributions
NETRIGHT	Network for Women’s Rights in Ghana
NHIS	National Health Insurance Scheme
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
REDD+	Reducing Emission from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
REP	Rural Enterprises Project
RHNP	Regenerative Health and Nutrition Programme
SGIP	Social and Gender Integration Plan
TVET	Technical, Vocational Education and Training
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
WANEP	West Africa Network for Peacebuilding
WATSAN	Water and Sanitation Committees
WIAD	Women in Agriculture Directorate
WROs	Women’s Rights Organisations

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# Executive Summary

**A**t the Fourth World Conference on Women, in 1995, UN Member States adopted and committed to implementing the Beijing Platform for Action (BfPA), which identifies twelve critical areas of concern with respect to the advancement of women and the achievement of gender equality. Worldwide progress in the implementation of the BfPA is reviewed every five years by the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). Since the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action (BfPA), there has been gradual progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment across the world. Governments, civil society and other stakeholders have translated the BfPA's commitments into concrete strategies. While noting the gradual progress being made, structural inequalities still persist in many countries preventing the full achievement of women's rights and gender equality.

Women Rights Organisations (WROs) in Ghana, in particular; and civil society in general, have continued to make strategic efforts at the community and national levels to influence policy and legal reforms to ensure that the BfPA informs the political, social and economic development processes in Ghana.

This report is the outcome of the work of Beijing+25 review thematic working groups; consultative processes by WROs, CBOs and women rights and gender equality advocates; and the broader CSO community drawing on their work; previous alternative Beijing Review Reports and government's interventions to advance women and girls' rights. The report reflects the current status of women and girls in the country and focuses on the twelve (12) critical areas of the BfPA including CEDAW and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) commitments. The critical areas of the BfPA are:

- Women and Poverty
- Education and Training of Women

- Women and Health
  - Violence Against Women
  - Women and Armed Conflict
  - Women and the Economy
  - Women in Power and Decision-making
  - Institutional Mechanism for the Advancement of Women
  - Human Rights of Women
  - Women and the Media
  - Women and the Environment
- The Girl Child

The report is made up of an introductory chapter which provides an overview of processes leading to the production of the Ghana NGOs report, followed by thematic chapters. Each of the thematic chapters provides a situational analysis of one of the BPfA critical areas of concern, assesses the achievements and existing gaps and make recommendations. The concluding chapter brings out some key issues in the report and calls for the acceleration of the implementation of the Beijing Commitments. There are two (2) appendixes attached to this report – a tabulated summary of achievements, existing gaps and recommendations; and a list of organisations that were directly involved in the production of the report.

Key highlights of existing gaps to ensure effective implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) included:

- **Low Political Commitment and Will**
- **Socio-Cultural Norms and Behaviours**
- **Gender-Blind Policies**
- **Extractives**
- **Low Participation and Representation**
- **Limited Budgetary Allocation for Women’s Rights and Gender Equality Work**

In order for Ghana to meet its Beijing Commitments, some recommendations are made which include:

- **Transparent Public Gender-Responsive Tracking Systems** – Ghana Government should institute transparent public systems to track resources for gender equality and women’s rights;
- **Adequate Budgetary Allocation and Resources** - Allocation of adequate budgetary support for institutions mandated to promote gender equality and women’s rights.
- **Accelerate Passage of Gender Equality and Women’s Rights (GEWR) Legislations** – As a matter of urgency, the government should fast track efforts aimed at passing the **Affirmative Action Bill**, **the gender responsive Land Bill** and the **Spousal Property Rights Bill** that seek to protect and safeguard the rights of women and girls;
- **Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)** - As a matter of urgency, government should implement the actions contained in the Gender Action Plan in the Ghana’s Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).
- **Sustainable Development** - Government need to adopt a holistic approach that is inclusive towards sustainable development recognising the role of civil society organisations (CSOs) and other non-governmental organisations (NGOs) coupled with a better integration of intervention by other agencies;
- **Focus on gender equity at the Junior and Senior High School Levels (JHS and SHS levels)<sup>1</sup>** – Though gender parity has been reached at kindergarten and primary levels, the same cannot be said for JHS and SHS levels. It is therefore important for the Ministry of Education, Ghana Education Service and CSOs to adopt and implement strategies for achieving gender parity at these levels. A major initiative in this direction could be the expansion of the G-PASS to all deprived districts;
- **One Stop Shop** - Government of Ghana should establish a **One Stop Shop** for survivors of domestic and gender-based violence;
- **Passage of ILO Convention 181** - To guarantee protection of workers and ensure adherence and commitment by Private Employment Agencies, Ghana should ratify ILO C181 adopting Articles 4, 5, 9 and 11 of the Convention which responds to the protection of agency-

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<sup>1</sup> J/SHS – Junior/Senior High School

recruited workers to guarantee the fundamental rights at work, such as freedom of association, collective bargaining, equality of opportunity and treatment, and eliminating child labour.

- **Gender-Responsive Media** – Media Houses should be committed to promoting gender equality in their respective organisations. This can be done by changing the power relationships in teams. Management should include engagements with women and coverage of women’s issues in its programming.

To achieve a sustainable development, it is key that Ghana recognizes and empower women as agents of development – women must be empowered holistically, thus not focusing narrowly on the micro-economic aspect but also on macro-economic, socio-cultural and political levels to change the status quo and dismantle the patriarchal structures that inhibits the advancement of women and girls. The full realisation of women’s rights as human rights is essential to Ghana’s development. Moreover, the implementation of gender equality and women’s rights commitments are cornerstones for development. Women’s empowerment and full and equal participation in all spheres are fundamental for the achievement of social, political and economic justice; substantive democracy and peace for all.

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## CHAPTER 1

# INTRODUCTION

**T**he Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA) adopted by 189 countries at the 1995 UN Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China, constitutes to this day the most effective and comprehensive global policy framework and roadmap for achieving gender equality and women's rights. Since the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA), there has been steady progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment across the world. Governments, civil society and other stakeholders have translated the BPfA's commitments into concrete strategies. While noting the gradual progress being made, structural inequalities still persist in many countries preventing the full achievement of women's rights and gender equality.

Since its adoption 25 years ago, the BPfA has been a point of reference for gender equality and women's rights at several national, regional and global processes. On the Africa continent and across the world, Beijing '95 accelerated activism within women's movements. In Ghana, institutional mechanisms set up to advance women's rights issues have overtime metamorphosed into systems that not only focus on women, but on broader issues of gender.

The Network for Women's Rights in Ghana (NETRIGHT), since its inception in 1999 has actively engaged the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UN CSW) and Beijing Review processes. At the country level, NETRIGHT coordinates the participation of women's organisations, groups and advocates in these processes including the production of the Ghana

NGOs Parallel Report. One of NETRIGHT's first activity as a network was the production of the Ghana NGOs Parallel Report for Beijing+5 Review in 2000. This report takes a critical reflection on the 12 critical areas of the BPfA, CEDAW and the SDGs for the inter-linkages of these documents.

NETRIGHT employed the following strategies and approaches in producing this report:

- **Formation of Thematic Working Groups:** working groups were set up to produce the thematic reports with each group focusing on specific BPfA theme/s (including the aligning CEDAW and SDGs):
  - Team 1: Women and Poverty; and Women and Economy
  - Team 2: Education and Training of Women; and The Girl-Child
  - Team 3: Violence Against Women; Women and Armed Conflicts and Human Rights of Women
  - Team 4: Women in Power and Decision Making
  - Team 5: Women and Media
  - Team 6: Women and the Environment
  - Team 7: Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women
  - Team 8: Women and Health
- **Report Consolidation:** thematic reports consolidated for zonal consultations and national validation meeting;
- **Zonal Consultations:** 3 zonal consultative meetings were organised for the northern, middle and southern zones as demarcated by NETRIGHT based on the 16 administrative regions of Ghana. The outcome of the zonal consultations incorporated in report;
- **Validation:** national meeting was organised to validate the final draft report and inputs used to finalise the Ghana NGOs Beijing+25 report.

The findings and recommendations of this report feed into the West Africa sub-regional and Africa Regional CSOs Beijing+25 Review Reports.

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The Beijing+25 review process offered a rare opportunity for women groups, WROs including women's rights and gender equality advocates and the wider civil society community to relook at the BPfA, CEDAW and SDGs; reassess the situation of women and girls and how Ghana has been able to advance the rights of women and girls to meet international, regional and national commitments on gender equality and women and girls' empowerment.

In as much as this report acknowledges the progress being made by Ghana, it also points out the slow pace of progress which is unacceptable to especially the women of Ghana and calls on the government to demonstrate real commitment towards women's empowerment and gender equality.

## CHAPTER 2

# WOMEN AND POVERTY (CEDAW 13; SDG 1 AND 10)

### 2.1 Introduction

According to a World Bank report in 2018, the International Poverty Line is set at \$1.90 per person per day, using 2011 Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) conversion factors. The World Bank (2018) report on poverty reduction indicated that in all regions except Sub-Saharan Africa, the regional average rates range from 1.5 percent to 12.4 percent, while in Sub-Saharan Africa, around 41 percent live below the international poverty line.

Similarly, the equity poverty brief (2019) reports that, Ghana's poverty rate at 2011 PPP \$1.90 per person per day was 47.4 percent in 1991 and was down at a rate of \$1.90 in 2016 culminating to 13.3 percent. Today, the daily minimum wage has been recorded at 10.65GHS relating to \$1.93 a rise from the 10.33GHS to \$1.88 in 2018.

While both genders are noted to suffer in poverty worldwide, the effects of gender discrimination have translated to more women having fewer resources to cope in the areas of access to land and its ownership, employment and income insecurities etc. Meanwhile, when women are poor, their rights are not protected, and they face far more obstacles that may be difficult to overcome. This deprivation as active recognized players in the economy and in their own lives translates into “a broader society and economic loss” (UN Women, 2014). The +25 1995 Beijing national review is therefore an appropriate time to review and reaffirm the commitments of

countries in empowering women, both economically and socially towards guaranteeing “the future well-being of our children and their children after that” (UN Women, 2014).

## **2.2 Brief Situational Analysis**

According to the Voluntary national report (2019) of Ghana, the proportion of Ghanaians “living below the international poverty line declined from 13.6 percent in 2013 to 11.9 percent in 2017” a trend reflected in both the urban and rural areas over the same period. Further to this, two out of the ten regions (Upper East and Northern) continued to record increases in their overall poverty from 31 percent to 40 percent and 36 percent to 39.3 percent respectively. The report also noted that there have been significant focus on “social protection, provision of basic education, primary health care, poverty-focused agriculture, rural water, feeder roads and rural electrification” (p: 40) to improve the lives of people.

The economy of Ghana is basically divided into formal and informal economies with a higher concentration rate of women in the informal economy. Meanwhile, a research by Osei-Boateng & Apramtum (2011) has noted that because workers do not earn much in the informal economy, a significant number of workers are trapped in poverty affecting their ability to lift themselves and their families out of the poverty line majority of who are women.

It is worth noting that, poverty is mostly concentrated among food crop farmers who are primarily women, as well as in the informal economy, where women predominate. Gender discrimination in access to services and distribution of resources can be a barrier to their productivity. It is noted in the VNR (2019) report, “Gender differences in access to economic opportunities arise in part because women are “time poor” due to their responsibilities for household and unpaid care work. Other constraints to women’s economic empowerment include lack of physical and financial capital, and weak property and inheritance rights” (106).

As part of its efforts at reducing poverty in the achievement of the SDGs and lifting women from poverty, Ghana has a Social objective of “eliminating poverty and hunger, reducing social exclusion and all forms of social inequalities” (VNR, 2019: iii) with emphasis on human and social capital development.

### **2.2.1 Poverty Reduction**

Paci, a lead economist with the World Bank has noted that, Ghana’s stage of developmental stage changed in 2011 when it was designated a middle-income country with the daunting task and challenge of ensuring equitable distribution of prosperity across the entire population (World Bank 2015). After experiencing the largest reduction in poverty from 1991 to 1998, the growth elasticity of poverty decreased remarkably. In 2016, Ghana’s poverty rate at \$1.90 was a down performance to 13.3 percent, “lower than not only the mean poverty rate of Sub-Saharan Africa but also the mean poverty rate of middle-income countries” (VNR, 2019; 40).

Hitherto, it has been noted in the VNR 2019 report that, the country witnessed a widening spatial inequality, poverty and vulnerability became more concentrated in the three Northern regions (Northern, Upper East, and Upper West) and the Volta region where women are more vulnerable due to some cultural and traditional practices like marriage, lack of women’s access and ownership to land and other resources. Similarly, the “extreme poverty rate declined from 5.2 percent to a negligible share in Greater Accra between 2005 and 2016, while the extreme poverty rate fell from 76 percent to only 45.2 percent in Upper West region during the same period” (p40). With Agriculture as the major source of economic participation, the “spatial inequities reflect both ecological conditions and disparities in service delivery” (p40).

### **2.2.2 Financing**

According to Macdonald (2013), “microfinance became a popular poverty alleviation tool, incorporated as part of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs)...” (p2) including Ghana towards the fulfillment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It has been defined to be “the

delivery of banking services to the poor to help them to start or expand an income-earning activity and thereby escape poverty” (Macdonald, 2013;2). In Ghana, Microfinance has been a poverty alleviation tool to women in the informal economy aimed at helping aspiring entrepreneurs, traders, hawkers etc. generate income, build assets, manage risks and meet their household needs, according to Western Union. It has also been noted by Tarsava that, "The end goal of microfinance is to have its users outgrow these smaller loans and become ready for a traditional bank loan," cited in (Ann 2018). The informal economy of Ghana has over the years been supported by microfinance and banks who provided loans in different forms to support businesses of women. These loans were designed to help the growth of businesses and as an alternative means of business financing to people especially women through groups, associations or unions. The convenience and flexibility of the money arrangements through market collection made the easiest mode of accessing support for one’s business. However, the micro financing environment given its interest rate system negatively affects women’s chances of earning more income to enhance their livelihood options.

The Village Saving and Loans Association (VSLA) scheme has proven to be a viable means of alleviating poverty among women, empowering women economically to support their children and the larger family.

Sadly, Ghana has recorded the collapse of more than 45 Microfinance companies and Banks in the last 2 years affecting more indigenous banks due to the new banking regulations and the inability of these micro-finance institutions who “could not meet the new capital obligation by the end of 2018 as required by the Bank of Ghana (Agyei 2018).

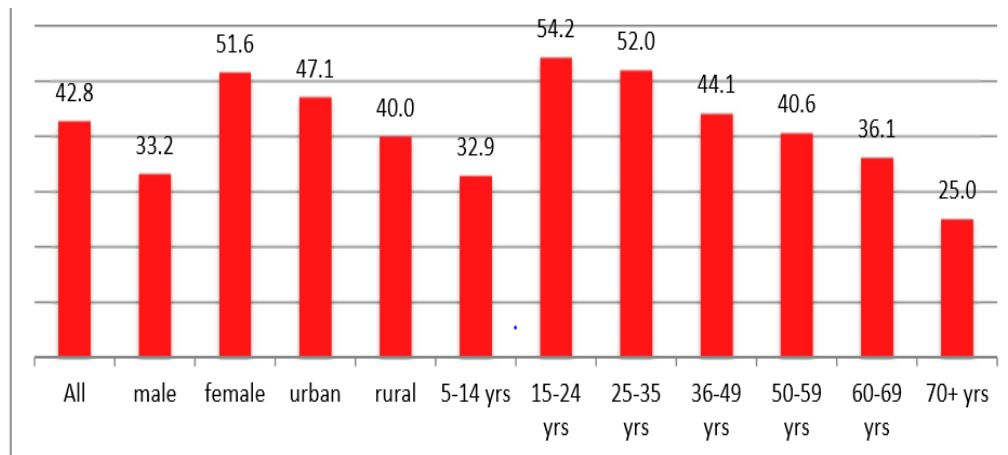
### ***2.2.3 Paid and Unpaid Care Work***

It has been noted that, Ghanaians averagely spend 42.8 minutes of their time on daily basis on domestic and care work such as collecting firewood, fetching water, washing and ironing clothes, cooking and cleaning, caring for children, elderly, and the sick among others. Added to this, “Female unpaid domestic and care workers spend an average of 51.6 minutes a day compared to males, who spend 33.2 minutes on average” (VNR, 2019;61).

This shows the dependency on women as the primary care givers within a given society. The situation is not too different for the urban areas where unpaid domestic and care workers spend “47.1 minutes per day compared to 40 minutes in the rural areas” (GLSS, 2012; 13). The recognition, retribution and redistribution of care work would enable women to engage meaningfully in other aspects of society and live the broad opportunities of development.

The table below shows the distribution of care and domestic work in the country.

Figure 2.1: Distribution of care and domestic work in the country



Source: GSS, GLSS6 (2012/13)

The graph shows the uneven distribution of care and domestic work between men and women where the traditional and cultural roles have contributed to this anomaly where productive time is spent unproductively. Presently, domestic and migrant workers are not covered under any laws including the Labor Act, 2003 (Act 651) and Ghana is yet to ratify ILO C189 on Decent work for domestic workers but there has been considerable effort towards including workers in the informal economy on the 3<sup>rd</sup> tier of the pensions scheme.

The government should prioritise spending on social protection and gender responsive public services such as water and sanitation, education and health. Services should be designed to address the unfair social organisation of care by reducing and redistributing care and domestic work burden and also improve the environment in which care work occurs , such as improving access to energy (gas and electricity ) and reliable public transport.

#### **2.2.4 Elderly Care**

Even though Ghana's population is majority youth, there has been an increase in both the proportion and absolute number of elderly population (persons aged 60 years and over) as seen by the results from 2010 census and estimates from other sources due to a decline in fertility and mortality. According to GSS 2013b, the aged population has increased from 988,000 to about 1.6 million between the years 2000 to 2015 and it is projected to hit 6.3 million by 2050. The increase in the aged population in Ghana comes with increasing rate of hardship, poverty and defenceless among the older population (Mba, 2010), Tawiah, 2013). Traditionally, the care of these elderly is an extra burden on the woman who has the added responsibility of caring for them. In recognition of the contributions of the aged coupled with their plights, the Government of Ghana, drafted the National Aging Policy dubbed, "Aging with security and Dignity" in 2010, The overarching goal of the Policy is to achieve the overall social, economic and cultural re-integration of older persons into mainstream society, to enable them as far as practicable to participate fully in the national development process (<https://www.modernghana.com/news/875999/ghanas-national-aging-policy-are-we-implementing.html>).

Unfortunately, most of the active older Ghanaians are not engaged or working in the formal sector. About 63.1% are engaged in the farming and forestry sector, with others in the sales and services (13%) the skills section (8.4%), and experts and directors (5%) (GSS, 2013a). Below is detailed breakdown as at 2010.

The problems associated with population ageing has been heightened particularly because it is taking place with neither a comprehensive formal

**TABLE 1.2: Occupation of the Economically Active Elderly by sex, (2010)**

<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Total</i>		<i>Male</i>		<i>Female</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
Managers	20,683	2.2	10,789	2.2	9,894	2.1
Professionals	26,165	2.7	18,397	3.8	7,768	1.6
Technicians & Associate Professionals	12,364	1.3	9,580	2.0	2,784	0.6
Clerical Support Workers	7,614	0.8	6,243	1.3	1,371	0.3
Service & Sales Workers	127,725	13.3	31,806	6.6	95,919	19.9
Skilled Agriculture & Forestry	607,152	63.1	327,092	68.1	280,060	58.2
Craft and Related Trades	81,218	8.4	37,146	7.7	44,072	9.2
Plant & Machine Operators	18,545	1.9	17,420	3.6	1,125	0.2
Elementary Occupations	32,411	3.4	9,522	2.0	22,889	4.8
Other	27,899	2.9	12,319	2.6	15,580	3.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>961,776</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>480,314</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>481,462</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: GSS (2010) Population and Housing Census

social security system nor a well-functioning traditional care system in place for elderly people (National Research Council, 2006). Studies revealed that demographic and socio-economic factors affect living arrangements of elderly persons in Ghana and elsewhere (Mba, 2007; Mba, 2002; United Nations, 2005). While the older men in Ghana are more likely to live in nuclear households, the older women are more likely to live in extended family households (Mba, 2007).

### **2.2.5 Older Women and Human Rights in Ghana**

In spite of the numerous international, regional and national treaties, convention and laws on Human Rights that Ghana as a country has ratified, signed and enacted, human rights abuses, marginalization, disrespect, exploitation, isolation, neglect among others remain key challenges in coping with old age in Ghana especially among older women (Apt, 1993, Mba, 2007 and Ferrira and Lindgren, 2008).

The cultural related abuses continue to worsen the plight of the older people especially the women. For instance, the accusation of older women as witches, its related stigmatisation and banishment in certain part of Ghana affects the care, support and courtesy older women enjoy in certain communities in Ghana (Apt, 1993). According to Sossou and Yogtiba, (2015), their situation is characterized by pervasive poverty, illiteracy, widowhood, predominantly rural dwelling, and subjection to insidious cultural practices and superstitious beliefs.

## **2.3 Achievements**

Aware of such associated challenges, Ghana has over the years taken several actions including ratification, domestication and initiation of several progressive policies, legislations and programmes that aim at addressing issues and challenges that confront women and the elderly in poverty. It is worthy of note that effective implementation of laws and policies still remains a challenge the most deprived regions.

### ***2.3.1 Government of Ghana***

The 1992 constitution of Ghana extends adequate protection to the aged in Article 37(2) (b) which states that, “the protection and promotion of all other basic human rights and freedoms, including the rights of the disabled, the aged, children and other vulnerable groups in development processes” the country has also enshrined in it several Articles on the Fundamental Human Rights & Freedoms (24 & 25) and the Directive Principles of State policy in Article (36 & 37).

There is also a National Policy for the Aged, and many other national and international policies that we have developed and ratify respectively. The Policy document promulgated by Parliament in 2010 entitled “National Ageing Policy: Ageing with Security and Dignity”. This policy states that the overarching goal is “to achieve the overall social, economic and cultural reintegration of older persons into mainstream society, to enable them as far as practicable to participate fully in the national development process” (Ministry of Employment and Social Welfare, 2010).

In addition, the institutional framework for policy implementation specifies the role of government, family and community, private sector, employers and organized Labour, older persons' groups and associations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society, development partners and National Council on Ageing. Further, there has been the development and implementation of other legislations and development policies such as National HIV/AIDS Policy 2002, Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) Social Grants Programme, Persons with Disability Act, 2006 (Act 715), Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS11) 2006-2009, and National Social Protection Strategy among others that seek to protect the older people.

Government has also developed and is implementing a National Social Protection Policy (**NSPP**) aimed at "achieving sustainable development through the cushioning of citizens against destitution, enabled to realize their basic rights and participate effectively in socio-economic life." Its objectives included reduce poverty by half through increased and improved effective and efficient social assistance for the poor and vulnerable, to also enhance the employment opportunities through the promotion of productive inclusion and decent work as well as increase and improve social security and social insurance for everyone with tailored made ones for the vulnerable.

There are many social protection programmes which include Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) 2, National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS), Free School Uniforms/Exercise Books, Ghana School Feeding Programme (GSFP), Capitation Grant, Labour Intensive Public Works Programme (LIPWP), and Free Mass Transit Ride for School Children and the Aged, and Social Opportunities Project (GSOP). These have helped to improve targeting in social protection spending; increase access to conditional cash transfers nationwide to beneficiaries to ease burden of living standards and cash earning opportunities for the rural poor during the agricultural off-season; and improve economic and social infrastructure in targeted local communities aimed at achieving the SDGs. Other interventions by the government of Ghana includes the Ghana Shared

Growth & development Agenda (GSDA 2014-2020) and the Coordinated Programme of Economic & Social Development Policies (2014 - 2020).

The significance of all these interventions to women's livelihood is towards promoting inclusion, poverty reduction through coordinated efforts, protecting women's source of livelihoods and recognising women as partners in poverty alleviation in Ghana.

There is also the Implementation of the District Warehousing Policy to prevent food losses; Promoting the production and utilization of locally grown and nutrient-rich food; Developing and implementing a nutrition strategy which adopts a life cycle approach to deal with malnutrition at all levels; Reviewing and scaling up the Regenerative Health and Nutrition Programme (RHNP); eliminating child and adult obesity; and promoting research and development in Food and Nutrition Security (FNS) in building healthy homes. Article 27 (2) of the 1992 constitution of Ghana recognizes women with the traditional care of the home and family making them solely responsible for the unpaid care work within the family, food and nutrition and the gender responsible for caring for the sick and aged. In lieu of these, interventions aimed at improving nutrition and protecting the health of people eases the burden on women on care work thereby allowing them to focus on activities that contribute to doing productive work.

### ***2.3.2 Civil Society Organisations Interventions***

There have been several actions and interventions by Non-governmental Organisations in complimenting the efforts of government to alleviate poverty in Ghana. Some of these interventions have been external donor funded and grants while others have been through collaborations with the government of Ghana. Key amongst them have been the development of a Women's Manifesto for Ghana with sections on poverty alleviation and employment and income securities.

Trade Unions like the General Agricultural Workers Union of TUC-Gh developed a program that supports the Non-Farm Economic Activity aimed at providing alternative livelihoods to women workers to keep them

economically independent through-out the year. There has also been the Revolving Loan Scheme to build a network of women who support each other through contributions for start-ups and business expansion.

Organisations like the Widows and orphaned movement led rigorous advocacy and campaigns including leading some women to court to get a fair share of their inheritance and on access and ownership of land. Similarly, the Network for Women's Rights Organisations in Ghana (NETRIGHT) through its interventions on women's land rights and engagement with rural women farmers is leading gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) reforms in land governance in Ghana to protect rural women smallholder farmers land tenure security. In addition, NETRIGHT through its 'Leading from the South (LFS)' project is empowering women farmers to add value to their farm products, engage in government flagship programmes in the agriculture sector, and training of voluntary female extension officers to support women farmers and their groups. These interventions are geared towards addressing systemic barriers to advance women's economic empowerment. In addition, NETRIGHT is actively engaging a Land Bill process which is intended to consolidate and harmonise existing legislations on land to ensure sustainable land administration and management, effective land tenure as well as promote gender equality and social inclusion in the land sector. NETRIGHT and other WROs are also leading and pushing for the passage of the Spousal Property Rights Bill aimed at protecting and safeguarding women's property ownership in relationships.

According to an IPA report (2008 - 2011) to the introduction of Village Savings and Loans Associations in rural areas has contributed to improved nutrition and standard of living of female headed households through the expansion of their businesses. The several vocational skills trainings for women on the making of tie and dye, soap, bakery and many more has contributed to making women more independent economically.

## **2.4 Remaining GAPS and Policy Issues**

Even though the country has so many written laws, policies and has gone further to ratify several international conventions it is unfortunate to note

that most of these remain written documents without any legal backing and/or political and adequate resources to enable effective implementation. Each of these policies has well-structured institutional frameworks to facilitate their implementation and yet, the institutions mandated for their implementation hardly have funding to support effective implementation.

The absence of legislative instruments to some of the legislations also contribute to their ineffective implementation. The coverage of the different Social Security and social protection schemes are very low coupled with inadequate retirement pension whose value is constantly eroded by inflation. The main challenge facing Social Security and National Insurance Trust (SSNIT) is how to increase coverage particularly among informal sector workers and provide sustainable cash for retirees. The SSNIT should liaise with Information Services Department (ISD) to embark on continuous public education on the importance of contributing to the social security scheme among petty traders, farmers, fishermen, carpenters, masons among others. Also, civil society must add its voice to strengthen the coverage of the SSNIT scheme to especially women in the informal economy. This will serve as safety net for informal women workers and help minimize old age poverty among women.

The abysmal implementation of the Warehousing Policy which is aimed at preventing food losses: The few that had been set up are not accessible to most women making it difficult to cope with their losses. The losses are further worsened by poor road networks which prevent them from being able to access the market centers.

The LEAP project is unable to target the right people due to systemic barriers that fueled interferences from stakeholders' such as traditional and political leaders interference. Failure to re-vamp training centers that give training to women on employable skills.

## **2.5 Recommendations for Action**

It is important for government to adequately resource the National Commission on Civic Education (NCCE) to enable them carry out sensitization, advocacy and campaigns and training and education to help citizens

understand existing laws and how to seek redress in cases of abuse. The effective implementation of the SDGs and all other legislations and policies will require adequate capacity at local authority level to engage with local communities and other stakeholders.

Government should fast track efforts aimed at passing the gender responsive Land Bill, Property Rights of Spouses Bill and the Affirmative Action bill that seek to protect and safeguard the rights of women. Government needs to start the registration of market groups for protection against violence and harassment from city officials like the case of the Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) in India.

As noted in the VNR 2019 report, "a significant proportion of the population lacks adequate knowledge of the SDGs. There is therefore an urgent need to expand the current awareness-creation efforts using institutions with access to communities and grassroots populations across the country.

Government need to adopt a holistic approach that is inclusive towards sustainable development recognizing the role of Civil Society Organisations and other Non- Governmental Organisations coupled with a better integration of interventions by other agencies.

Establishment of non-contributory pension scheme to cater for the aged. The scheme should be funded with revenues accrued from the country's natural resources – for example the allocation of 0.5% allocation of oil and gas revenue to fund the scheme.

Government to expedite action on the passage of Social Protection and Ageing Bills and ensure their effective implementation.

Total closure of all witches' camps and reintegrated into the communities.

CSOs should carry out a needs assessment and synergize their work for a broader sustained impact.

There is a need for more sensitisation on the Labour Act to avoid exploitations and promote fair treatment especially for women and marginalised groups.

Schemes such as MASLOC which grant loans at lower rates should be strengthened and replicated. However, they should be devoid of cronyism and party politicking influence in order to open up wider access for women.

Article 27 (2) of the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana needs to be amended to make it gender sensitive.

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## CHAPTER 3

# EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF WOMEN AND THE GIRL-CHILD (CEDAW ARTICLE 10 AND 12; SDG 2, 3, 4 AND 6)

### 3.1 Introduction

**N**early 25 years ago, some 30,000 women and men from 189 countries arrived in Beijing, China, for the Fourth World Conference on Women, determined to recognize the rights of women and girls as human rights. The conference culminated in the adoption of the **Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action** - the most comprehensive policy agenda for the empowerment of women.

In the years following, women pressed this agenda forward, leading global movements on issues ranging from sexual and reproductive health rights to equal pay. More girls today are attending and completing school, fewer are getting married or becoming mothers while still children, and more are gaining the skills they need to excel in the future world of work.

Today, the movements for the empowerment of women have expanded. They are being organised by and for adolescent girls, and tackling issues like child marriage, education inequality, gender-based violence, climate change, self-esteem, and girls' rights to fair treatment. The movements for women empowerment have transcended states and now include actions by

civil society and NGOs, faith-based organisations, private sector, media and corporate entities.

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action affirmed, amongst others, that equality between women and men is a matter of human rights and a condition for social justice. It is also a necessary and fundamental prerequisite for development and peace. To this end, governments, the international community and civil society, as well as the private sector committed to ensuring equality in 12 critical areas, including education.

The 12 critical areas of concern include issues around women and poverty, education and training of women, women and health, violence against women, and women and armed conflict. Others are women and the economy, women in power and decision-making, institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women, and human rights of women. Also included are issues around women and the media, women and the environment, and the girl child.

As the attention of the International Community was focused on the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the United Nations, at the historic millennium declaration at the United Nations Millennium Summit in 2000, adopted the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), a set of eight goals with measurable targets and clear deadlines for improving the lives of the world's poorest people. The MDGs committed world leaders to, amongst others, combat poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, and environmental degradation. Goals 2 and 3 of the MDGs were on the achievement of universal primary education and the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women, an affirmation by the international community of the importance of education and gender equality.

Following a comprehensive assessment of actions by countries toward the achievement of the MDGs, the United Nations in 2015 adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030. The SDGs are a set of 17 integrated goals,

recognizing that action in one area will affect outcomes in others, and that development must balance social, economic and environmental sustainability. Goals 4 and 5 of the SDGs are on the attainment of quality education and gender equality respectively.

From Beijing through to the MDGs and SDGs, there is universal acknowledgement, at the global level, of the importance of attaining quality education as well as gender equality and women empowerment. Though it is acknowledged that great strides have been made over the past 25 years, a lot more needs to be done by governments, civil society, the private sector and media to create a more equitable, sustainable, inclusive and peaceful world.

### **3.2 Situational Analysis of the Education Sector**

The education system in Ghana has over the past nine years been influenced by the current Education Strategic Plan (ESP, 2010-2020), the fifth in a series of ESPs produced over the years. The ESP 2010-2020, amongst others, sets out the strategic vision for where the education system will be by 2020. With a goal to leave no child out, eight policy objectives covering access, gender disparity, disability, quality, inclusion of social issues, science and technology, industry and tertiary education, as well as management underpinned the ESP 2010-2020. Six focal areas that constituted the basis for the ESP are basic education, second cycle education, non-formal education, inclusive and special education, tertiary education, and education management.

The Ministry of Education (MoE) oversees the administration and management of education through its head office, 16 regional offices and 230 district offices as well as its 20 semi-autonomous agencies. The Ministry also provides non-formal education in its various forms. According to the Education Act 2008 (Act 778), the education system consists of three levels:

1. Basic education or first cycle education consisting of 2-year kindergarten, 6-year primary and 3-year junior high school;

2. Second cycle education consisting of 3-year senior high, technical/vocational, business, agriculture, and apprenticeship (there is talk about re-defining basic education to include second cycle education);
3. Tertiary education consisting of colleges of education, polytechnics, universities and other degree and diploma-awarding institutions.

Act 778 also established three new national bodies – National Inspectorate Board, National Teaching Council and the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, to oversee the operations of the pre-tertiary sub-sector.

The Education Strategic Plan (ESP 2018–2030) is the third in a series of strategic plans that have been produced since 2000 (ESP 2003–15; ESP 2010–20; and now 2018–30) and follows from the ESP 2010–2020. It has been produced in response to targets in SDGs 4 and 5, as well as challenges facing the education sector. In developing the ESP 2018-2030, and indeed previous ESPs, attention was paid to the philosophy underpinning Ghana’s education system, namely “to produce well-balanced individuals with the requisite knowledge, skills, values, aptitudes and attitudes to become functional and productive citizens for the total development and the democratic advancement of the nation.” (GoG, 2002).

Linking closely with a number of the SDGs, particularly SDG4 and the overall National Development Plan, ESP (2018-2030), therefore sets out a strategic vision for where the education system intends to lead the country to the year 2030. As at 2015, 40% of the population was under 14 years old, 55% were between 15 and 64 years old, and just 1.9% were over 65 years. The number of school-age children 4–18-years old are projected to grow at just over 2% per year for the next four years, dropping to a 1.9% growth rate in 2025 and a 1.7% growth rate in 2030.

ESP (2018-2030), amongst others, focuses on improving access, equity, skills and raise the standards at all levels of the educational system. Focus is also on equipping students, especially at the basic level, with adequate literacy and numeracy skills. Emphasis has also been placed on the development of technical, vocational and 21<sup>st</sup> century skills such as critical thinking,

creativity and innovation. With increasing unemployment of higher education graduates, there has also been a focus on preparing students to develop work-ready skills and providing support for start-ups.

### **3.2.1 Gender Dimensions**

Improving the educational access, retention and transition of girls has over the years been a concern for successive governments. This concern was reiterated in 1995 during a seminar which produced a National Vision for Girls' Education and '10-year Plan of Action on Girls' Education' by the Ministry of Education (MoE). The MoE acknowledged this vision during its development of the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) policy in 1997, in which '*Improving access to and participation in basic education*' was one of its key objectives. The Girls' Education Unit (GEU) was created in 1997 as a unit in the Basic Education Division (BED), under the Ghana Education Service (GES).

In June 2001, participants from institutions and organisations involved in girls' education attended 'Approaches for Advancing Girls' Education: A Symposium to Examine Current Practices and Identify Future Directions' to reflect on achievements made since 1995 and to chart future work that was needed. The symposium aimed to revisit the National Vision for Girls' Education and develop strategies for achieving that vision. What resulted was a Framework for Action that gave direction to activities undertaken by the GEU, NGOs and development partners<sup>2</sup>. In addition to this, a GEU Resource Handbook was developed<sup>3</sup>, which outlined a wide-ranging mandate that included 'bringing parity of access to educational opportunities', and more far-reaching aims such as, 'developing the social capital of women'.

More recently, ESP (2010-2020)<sup>4</sup> outlined its commitment to gender with its first guiding principle, to '*Eliminate gender and other disparities that arise*

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2 This symposium and Framework were sponsored by the USAID Strategies for Advancing Girls' Education (SAGE) project

3 Resource Handbook for the Girls Education Unit (2002)

4 The Ghana's Education Strategic Plan (2010-2020) is currently being transformed into the National Action Plan on Education (2016-2030); however, as the Plan is still in draft form, this document will make reference only to the ESP.

*from exclusion and poverty*' and its third policy objective, to *'Bridge gender gaps in access to education*<sup>5</sup>. In order to implement this objective, the ESP's Strategies and Work Programme document provided a more specific mandate for the GEU, which included ensuring that central and district GEUs were informed by EMIS and that girl-friendly guidance and counselling systems are in place<sup>6</sup>. It is critical that these systems are well resourced to facilitate effective service delivery and extended to all districts.

As indicated a significant step towards achieving gender parity in education for women and girls was birthed when the Government of Ghana in 1997 established the GEU under the GES to oversee the education of the girl child at all levels of pre-tertiary education. The GEU addresses issues relating to access, participation and achievements of girls and young females in formal education. Since 1997, interventions including targeted girls enrolment and retention programmes by CSOs in collaboration with the GEU, provision of scholarships, legislation against early marriages, public education on the relevance of girls education to national development, and affirmative action policies in the education sector which gave preferential treatment (by relaxing entry levels and reserving a percentage of admission for girls) to the admission of girls in secondary and tertiary schools, have for the past two decades contributed to increasing access of girls and women to education.

Today, gender-parity in Ghana has almost been reached at primary level, where the ratio of girls to boys in school is almost the same. The gender-parity index at primary level improved from 0.85 to 0.99 between 1996/97 and 2016/17. At the junior high school (JHS) level, the gender-parity index improved from 0.82 to 0.98 between 1996/97 and 2016/2017 (MoE, 2018). It is also observed that the gender parity gap based on enrolment increases as children proceed to higher levels of education. At the senior high school (SHS) level, the gender parity level remains at 0.96 indicating a steady decline compared to the primary and JHS levels, and reducing further to 0.74 at the tertiary level. The gender gap is more visible at technical training

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5 The most recent draft National Action Plan 2016-2030 also states a similar guiding principle and the first policy objective as: 'Improved equitable access to and participation in quality education at all levels'

6 see Annex 1 for details on these strategies outlined in the ESP

institutions where female enrolment in public and private TVET institutions is 25% (MoE, 2018).

There is also evidence of persistent gender-based violence in Ghanaian schools, including sexual violence, which negatively affects girls and sometimes causes them to drop-out. There is documented evidence of older male students and teachers making sexually-aggressive gestures towards female students in schools. In addition, it is reported that teachers normally do not question boys' sexual harassment towards girls (Leach, 2006).

The above situation demonstrates an urgent need to adopt strategies to improve girls' enrolment and retention in SHS, improve their enrolment in tertiary education, and increase female participation in TVET to pursue the male-dominated and science-based TVET programmes. This should be against the backdrop of sustained gender parity at the basic level.

### **3.3 Government's Interventions and Achievements since Beijing+20**

#### ***3.3.1 Education and Training of Women***

Government's interventions and achievements since 2015 have been influenced by the current Education Strategic Plan (ESP, 2010-2020) which had eight policy objectives, including actions to bridge the gender gap in access to education. The importance of bridging the gender gap in education and the empowerment of women have also been captured in the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Beijing Platform for Action, the MDGs and SDGs.

As a signatory to these international conventions and development goals, the Government of Ghana has over the years designed its development plans, including education strategic plans, with international conventions and goals as framework. Moderate to significant achievements covering education and training of women have been in the following areas:

***Gender in Education Policy*** - The Gender in Education Policy (GEP), a specific policy document focusing on girls' education at the basic level, and a broader gender in education policy for the secondary and tertiary levels, is being developed. The GEP is aimed at addressing the range of issues that act as barriers to the achievement of equality between boys and girls at all levels of education and establishing strategies for their removal. The life-long learning perspective enshrined in SDG 4 serves as the organizing framework for the GEP. Though not finalised, the development of the policy demonstrates government's commitment to the advancement of education and training of women. However, real commitment lies in the finalization and implementation of the policy.

***Gender Mainstreaming in TVET/National TVET Strategic Plan*** – Government, working through COTVET, has developed a Gender Strategy to promote the participation of females in TVET. A national TVET Strategic Plan to guide the development of TVET in the country has also been produced.

***Access*** - Indicators of access at the basic education level have improved considerably, but there are still large inequities by income, region, location (rural–urban), and gender. Gross enrolment rates (GERs) exceed 100% for KG and primary and are over 85% for JHS. Net enrolment rates (NERs) are generally much lower, indicating that a large proportion of children who are not of the appropriate age are attending school. Gender parity at the national level has been achieved at all sub-levels of basic education (ESP, 2018-2030).

***Affirmative action on admission*** – Some tertiary institutions, including the University of Ghana, have instituted affirmative action on quota for admission of women to the institution. The University of Ghana for instance has a cut-off point of 'plus two' for women and this helped to increase enrolment of women to the university.

***Female enrolment (Colleges of Education and Polytechnics)*** – As of 2015, female enrolment in the Colleges of Education increased from 39% to 43.5% and 29.7% to 34.1% in polytechnics.

**Retention through support systems** – implementation of the capitation grant, free school uniform, school feeding programme, and other interventions by government has increased access and retention of students, including females.

**Funding** – As of 2015, approximately a fifth (20.5%) of the national budget was spent on the education sector for the implementation of strategies and payment of compensation. Additionally, total allocations to the sector showed a 15.8% nominal growth.

**Completion rates** - Completion rates at the basic and secondary levels have increased since 2010 and as of 2015, completion rates have been 99.6%, 73.5% and 44% at primary, JHS and SHS respectively (Draft Framework for National Action Plan, 2016-2030).

**STEM initiatives** – a number of initiatives have been instituted by the MoE/GES to encourage more women to study Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). A National Science and Mathematics quiz has been instituted and a special prize for the best female contestant is awarded to encourage female contestants to participate in the competition. Some tertiary institutions also run a quota admission system for women intending to pursue STEM courses in order to increase admission to those male-dominated courses. It is important that the quota system is extended to cover all government institutions.

**SEIP Scholarships** - With funding support from the World Bank, the Ministry of Education has since 2015 implemented the *Secondary Education Improvement Project (SEIP)*. The scholarship component of the SEIP has been designed to award scholarships to boys and girls in the ratio 40:60. This is yet another intervention by government to enhance access and retention of women in school.

**Teacher quality** - The proportion of trained teachers at basic level has increased significantly with kindergarten, primary and JHS having rates of 61%, 75% and 87.8% respectively as of 2015.

**Mobile Library** - The Ghana Library Authority has revamped its mobile library project to bring library services to the doorstep of children in Ghana during the period under review.

### **3.3.2 The Girl Child**

Since its establishment the Girls' Education Unit (GEU) has been tasked with the responsibility of overseeing the education of the girl child at all levels of pre-tertiary education. As a result, the issues around girl child education have been highlighted resulting in achievements in the following areas:

**Access** - Gender-parity in Ghana has almost been reached at primary level, where the ratio of girls to boys in school is almost the same. The gender-parity index at primary level improved from 0.85 to 0.99 between 1996/97 and 2016/17. At JHS level, the gender-parity index improved from 0.82 to 0.98 between 1996/97 and 2016/2017 (MoE, 2018).

**Retention of girls in schools** – implementation of social interventions such as supply of sanitary pads to girls, capitation grant, free school uniform, school feeding programme, and other interventions has improved retention of girls in schools.

The table below shows a fair amount of reduction in drop-out rates for girls resulting in part from social interventions to encourage retention of girls in school. Between 2017/2018 and 2018/2019 academic years, drop-out rates for girls have seen a significant reduction from 5,806, 7,863 and 638 to 5,531, 1,537 and 308 for primary, JHS and SHS respectively.

**Safer Schools project** – The Guidance and Counselling (G&C) Unit of the GES has been implementing a safer schools project. The project intends to create a friendly and conducive school environment for effective teaching and learning, particularly for girls. Safer schools contribute to the retention and performance of girls in school.

**TABLE 3.1: Drop-out situation in schools**

Level	2015/16			2016/17			2017/18			2018/19		
	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls
Prim.	23,050	11,952	11,098	31,246	15,915	15,331	11,697	5,891	5,806	11,159	5,628	5,531
JHS	12,972	5,996	6,976	17,294	8,336	8,958	15,178	7,315	7,863	2,967	1,430	1,537
SHS	4,292	2,093	2,197	5,533	2,749	2,784	1,270	632	638	577	269	308

Source: EMIS data from GEU

**STEM clinics and camps** - The MoE/GES in collaboration with CSO partners have been organising STEM clinics and camps for girls as part of strategies to demystify the study of STEM and to encourage more girls to take up the study of STEM courses at an early age.

**Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE)** - The FCUBE was launched in October 1996 to be implemented within a ten-year period (1996-2005) in fulfilment of requirements in the 1992 Fourth Republican Constitution of Ghana. It was designed to address some of the shortcomings of previous educational reform initiatives in the country. The first nine years of education constitute basic education and is supposed to be free and compulsory. The requirement for basic education to be free and compulsory has contributed to increase in access and retention of girls in school.

**Guidelines on pregnancy and re-entry into schools** – The GES has developed guidelines for prevention of pregnancy among school girls and facilitation of re-entry into school after childbirth. The guidelines are designed to help address the problem of pregnancy among school girls and its consequences on their education. The goal is to prevent pregnancy while ensuring that

pregnancy and childbirth do not end education for girls. Overall, the guidelines will increase completion rates for girls in school.

**TABLE 3.2: Incidence of pregnancy in schools**

<i>Academic Year</i>	<i>Upper Primary</i>	<i>JHS</i>	<i>SHS</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
2014/2015	1,562	4,607	674	6,843
2015/2016	1,399	4,822	823	7,044
2016/2017	1,444	5,254	877	7,575
2017/2018	1,130	4,484	993	6,607
2018/2019	1,024	4,836	1,433	7,293

Source: EMIS data from GEU

The table above shows fluctuations in the incidence of pregnancy in schools over the last five academic years for upper primary and JHS. The trend for SHS shows a consistent increase in the incidence of pregnancy. The case above strongly demonstrate the urgent need for the GES/GEU and CSOs in education to collaborate to implement the guidelines on pregnancy and re-entry of girls in school.

**TABLE 3.2: Girls who returned to school after child-birth**

<b>Academic Year</b>	<b>Upper Primary</b>	<b>JHS</b>	<b>SHS</b>	<b>Total</b>
2017/18	210	2,075	435	2,720
2018/19	180	2,326	693	3,199

Source: EMIS data from GEU

The table above shows an increase in the number of girls who returned to school after child-birth at JHS and SHS between 2017/2018 and 2018/2019. The case for upper primary shows a reduction from 210 to 180. The implementation of the guidelines on pregnancy and re-entry should

hopefully result in a reduction in the incidence of pregnancy and for that matter re-entry at all levels.

***Girls' Education Strategy*** – A girls' education strategy document that will guide the design and implementation of interventions to promote girls' education is under development. Though not finalised, the development of the strategy document demonstrates commitment by government to the education of girls.

***G-PASS Project*** - With funding support from the UK Department for International Development (DFID), the GEU implemented a scholarship programme dubbed, "*Participatory Approaches to Students' Success (PASS)*" commonly referred to as G-PASS to support girl-child education in Ghana. The G-PASS was designed, amongst others, to capacitate the GEU to plan and implement activities to promote school enrolment, retention, completion and attainment rates of girls over a four-year period spanning 2012/2013 to 2016/2017. The GEU delivered a scholarship package to about 60,000 girls in 2,054 junior high schools in Ghana.

***Eradication of Head Porters (Kayayei) Project*** - This is a Government Strategic Plan to eradicate Head Porters (Kayayei) from Ghana's cities. The initiative was developed by the Ministry of Gender, Children and Special Protection through the support of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The project includes provision of robust trolleys for Kayayei and linking the Head Porters to smallholder farming through the Planting for Food and Jobs (PFJ) Initiative. The Project is under the Ghana Government's Head Porterage module to link Head Porters to government projects and economically empower them.

### **3.4 CSOs Interventions and Achievements**

Since their emergence in the development sector generally, and the education sector in particular, CSOs have undertaken a wide range of interventions to advance education and training of women and the girl child. CSO interventions have been implemented in partnership with the MoE/GES

and their divisions and units. Interventions and achievements of CSOs in the education and training of women and the girl child include the following:

### **3.4.1 Education and Training of Women**

CAMFED Technical Support to GEU under G-PASS Project – CAMFED provided technical support to the GEU for the implementation of the G-PASS. Technical support came in the form of collaboration in research on topics of common interest, facilitation of exchange visits and learning for Girls' Education Officers (GEOs), and holding of GEO fora. Under the partnership, four research pieces were conducted covering: 'gender and aspirations amongst Junior High School (JHS) students in 2014; 'the impact of girls' clubs on the retention of girls in JHS in 2015; 'the role of parents in their children's aspirations, life choices and educational attainment from a gender perspective' in 2016; and 'school governance in public Junior High Schools in Ghana from a gender perspective' in 2017. Four girls' education officers' fora were organised to share experiences and learning from the research findings. The partnership under the G-PASS was intended to promote school enrolment, retention, completion and attainment rates of girls.

**ActionAid Strategic Country Paper** - ActionAid is implementing its sixth strategic country paper which focuses amongst others on promoting the re-entry of teen mothers to school. About 140 young mothers in the Nanumba District have so far been supported to go back to school. The goal is to promote education and increase completion rates for young women in school.

**Child Online Africa** – Child Online Africa is implementing the 'Happy School Girl Project' in schools. The project facilitated menstrual hygiene management sessions in schools and distributed some 1000 packs of 'Be Girl Period Panties' to school girls within the Manhyia South Constituency in the Ashanti Region. Overall, the project is intended to eradicate a major barrier to girls' attendance and retention in school, thereby contributing to their performance. The organization is also advocating to get custom duties on the importation of sanitary pads to be reduced by 20 percent in order to lower the cost of pads.

***CAMFED Innovation Bursary and Transition Programs*** - CAMFED has over the years implemented a number of education and training programs geared towards the empowerment of young women. The Innovation Bursary Program (IBP) and the Transition Program have been implemented with funding support from the Mastercard Foundation. These programs, with significant training components, were designed to provide livelihood pathways for young women to transition into employment, entrepreneurship and further education.

***FIDA Ghana Paralegal Training for Persons with Disabilities (PWDs)*** – focusing on inclusive education; the programme aims at addressing inequalities within the educational system to promote inclusion for PWDs, in particular women and girls.

***Verandah Library project*** – This project forms part of bigger program being run by Advocacy and Trainers for Children and Women’s Advancement and Rights (ATCWAR). The project involves stacking boxes with reading books and placing them on project school’s verandah’s to enable increased access to school children. The project operates in 4 districts (Shama, Effia Kwesimintsim, Ahanta West, and Daboase) of the western region and is targeted at basic school students. In addition, reading sessions are held on the office premises of ACTWAR during out of school sessions.

***Mobile Library Programme*** – This programme is run by the Rural Aid Alliance Foundation (RAAF). The initiative involves collaboration with the Global Library Fund to take library services to deprived communities to improve literacy skills. The program operates in 2 districts (Ellembelle and Effia Kwesimintsim) and across 6 basic schools and serves over 2,500 pupils. A complementary ICT programme being run by RAAF includes provision of laptops given to students to use and covers an average of 250 students per school.

***Get Up Speak Out Project*** – Hope for Future Generations (HFFG) has empowered girls in health and sanitation and entrepreneurial skills through the Get Up, Speak Out project. HFFG also through the Golden Line

Programme provided women in mining communities with entrepreneurial skills and education on their sexual and reproductive health rights.

### **3.4.2 The Girl Child**

Girls' Education Network (GEN) – The GEN was established by NGOs in girls' education in 2017 as a network of government departments and agencies, civil society organisations, donor partners, educational/research institutions and other practitioners interested in promoting quality education for girls in Ghana. Regional branches of the GEN have also been launched. Since its first meeting in January 2018, the GEN has discussed key girls' education issues such as the guidelines on pregnancy and re-entry, the girls' education strategy, the gender in education policy, and the GEU work plan. The GEN has also instituted a 13-member advisory body for strategic decision-making.

**ActionAid Strategic Country Paper** – In implementing its sixth strategic country paper, ActionAid is delivering a program that focuses, amongst others, on promoting girls education using its Girls Club Resource Manual and building girls' confidence to take up leadership positions in secondary schools. This initiative involves 18 SHSs in the Northern Region. The organization is considering engaging the GES at the national level to propose modalities for making leadership positions in SHSs more gender-responsive. The objective is to empower girls and promote women's leadership.

**CAMFED Bursary Program for Girls** – CAMFED, with funding support from DFID, implemented a bursary program dubbed, '*Incentive support for girls in secondary education in Ghana*'. The program was designed to provide comprehensive support to girls in CAMFED's areas of operation to attend and complete JHS and SHS. Overall, a total of 32,120 girls (16,120 SHS and 16,000 JHS) from the Northern, Upper East, Upper West and Central regions were supported to complete secondary education.

**Right to Play Gender-Responsive Pedagogy Training** – Right to Play is implementing a program that trains teachers to enhance their capacity and skills to deliver gender-responsive pedagogy in schools. The program also involves

the training of head teachers on strategies for improving participation of girls in school leadership.

***GNECC-OXFAM Project*** – The Ghana National Education Campaign Coalition (GNECC), a network of CSOs in education and OXFAM have been implementing a project dubbed, '*Addressing inequalities in Ghana's basic education system towards achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 4*'. The project, amongst others, seeks to promote girls' education through advocacy and removal of barriers to girls' participation, retention and performance in school.

***CAMFED Support for SEIP Scholarships*** – On account of the successful implementation of its bursary program, CAMFED was in 2015 contracted by the MoE to design the scholarship programme to be implemented under the SEIP. The organisation designed the scholarship administration system, the quality assurance and monitoring framework, and trained staff of the MoE/GES in the administration of the scholarships.

***Girls Advocacy Alliance (GAA) Project by Plan International Ghana*** – designed to create equal rights and opportunities for girls and young women. GAA works with 100 girls' clubs from 100 communities across 4 regions in Ghana. A training manual has been developed by Plan International and use in training selected district Girls' Education Officers of the Ghana Education Services (GES). Together with select school mentors, the Girls Education Officers engage GAA girls clubs on weekly basis taking them through different topics in the different modules. Some of the topics include personal and mensural hygiene, making good decisions, being assertive, building self-confidence. The Regional Girls Education Officers are then supported to monitor the activities of the mentors on quarterly basis. The girls are now empowered to be assertive and are able to resist child marriages. They also assist their fellow girls who are victims of forced and child marriages to report to appropriate institutions for redress.

***AKER Energy Scholarships for students*** – This was started in 2012 and to date has provided 1,200 scholarships for SHS students (male and female). The Scholarship package includes water bottles, school bags, sanitary pads, trunks and chop boxes, stipend for provisions and exercise books. The

project operates in the 7 districts of Shama, EKMA, Ahanta West, Takoradi, Nzema East, Jomoro and Ellembelle in the Western Region.

***Role Model Parade*** - This project, run by done by ATCWAR, aims to expose female students to different professions to enhance their acceptability of women in different roles and build in them a sense of aspiration. The Parade is an annual event and has reached 500 girls over the reporting period.

### **3.5 Remaining Gaps and Policy Issues**

Though substantial progress has been made since the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in advancing education and training of women and the girl child, a lot more still remains to be done in-country to ensure that key indicators in the CEDAW, SDGs and indeed ESP (2010-2020) are achieved. Among the key gaps and policy issues requiring critical attention include the following:

***Finalise Gender in Education Policy*** - The GEP, a specific policy document aimed at addressing the range of issues that act as barriers to the achievement of equality between boys and girls at all levels of education and establishing strategies for their removal, has been under development for a while now. The time has come for government and CSOs to deliberate and finalise the GEP as it is very important for the achievement of SDG4 and SDG5.

***Finalise Girls' Education Strategy*** – An important girls' education strategy document that will guide the design and implementation of interventions to promote girls' education by government and CSOs is under development. It will be useful at this time to move the processes for the finalisation of the document forward for girls and women to derive the intended benefits.

***Decentralise TVET*** – Though a Gender Strategy and National TVET Strategic Plan have been developed, there have been calls for the decentralisation of TVET through the creation of the Ghana TVET Service, akin to the GES. This call is timely and appropriate considering the low status of TVET and overall performance of the sector. The decentralisation initiative will amongst

others, increase the participation of females in the TVET sector. The initiative will also facilitate the study of TVET courses by girls and young women thereby creating employment opportunities in the sector.

***Address Free SHS Policy implementation challenges*** – As with any policy, the implementation of the Free SHS policy in 2017 has come with a number of challenges including those relating to placement, accommodation, and funding. For example, students who do not secure accommodation in schools lodge in hostels where there may be limited supervision and oversight. The time has come for the MoE/GES, CSOs and all stakeholders to have open, frank and non-partisan discussions to address the implementation challenges.

***Adequate resource allocation and capacity building for GEU*** – Though the GEU has made appreciable progress since its establishment, the unit will benefit from adequate allocation of financial and logistical resources to implement its programmes and activities. It will be useful also to build the capacity of staff to deliver effectively and efficiently on their mandate.

***Enrol more female teachers*** – The MoE/GES should introduce policy measures to increase the number of female teachers, particularly in mixed and girls' schools, and also to post more female teachers to rural and remote areas to support the facilitation of female education. This is important considering that female teachers will have better appreciation of gender issues in education and will work to create safer school environments that will enhance girls' retention and performance in school. Female teachers will also serve as role models to girls.

***Mainstream Teacher Mentoring into G&C system*** - As a strategic measure designed to achieve a wide range of educational and academic objectives, it is imperative for the GES, through the G&C Unit, to work to mainstream teacher mentoring into the G&C system in Ghana. CAMFED's research on *'The role of CAMFED-supported teacher mentors in influencing outcomes for students in secondary schools in Ghana'* suggests, amongst others, that teacher mentors have significant impact on a wide range of outcomes including improved academic performance, enhanced leadership skills, and

reduction in teenage pregnancy among secondary school students (CAMFED-GEU Research Study, 2017).

***Inclusive Education*** - At least there should be three special schools for PWD in every region from the primary to JHS to SHS levels. Some children with disabilities have to travel outside their regions to pursue secondary education.

- Girls and young women with intellectual disabilities are often vulnerable to sexual violence.
- Special schools established by private initiatives have been taken over by GES and there are a myriad of problems eg Lack of assistive devices in the schools, unfriendly infrastructure.
- Ministry of education – Free school education does not include children with special needs, this is discriminatory e.g. the School for the blind

### **3.6 Recommendations for Action**

A number of recommendations are provided below as steps to be taken by government, working in collaboration with CSOs, to enhance education and training for women and the girl child.

***Finalise Gender in Education Policy and the Girls' Education Strategy***- It is very important for the MoE/GES and partners to work to complete the various policies and strategies that drive girls' education in the country, particularly the Gender in Education Policy and the Girls' Education Strategy. Therefore, all the interventions such as supply of sanitary pads to girls, capitation grant, free school uniform, school feeding programme should be improved and scaled up.

***Focus on gender equity (JHS and SHS levels)*** – Though gender parity has been reached at kindergarten and primary levels, the same cannot be said for JHS and SHS levels. It is therefore important for the MoE, GES and CSOs to adopt and implement strategies for achieving gender parity at those levels. A major initiative in this direction could be the expansion of the G-PASS to all deprived districts.

***Effectively implement guidelines on pregnancy prevention and re-entry –***

The data on the incidence of pregnancy at all levels shows a worrying trend, particularly at SHS. The time has come for the MoE/GES and partners to map out strategies for addressing the challenge in order to check drop-out rates in schools. There is the need for sexuality education within the context of Ghanaian values and norms in line with the benefits of scientific progress in sexuality.

***Strengthen Social Welfare System –***

Closely linked with the implementation of Guidelines to prevent pregnancy and promote re-entry is the need to strengthen and resource social welfare systems, and ensure the inclusion of vulnerable and disadvantaged girls who get pregnant in school to be included in the LEAP programme.

***Deepen career guidance and counselling for girls –***

Substantial research literature suggest a direct correlation between career guidance and counselling and girls' performance and aspirations in school. CAMFED's research on *'Aspirations and Gender in Ghana's Junior High Schools'* suggests, amongst others, that "the absence of information and career guidance means that most JHS students, in particular female students, are unable to fulfil their academic aspirations, an important stage along the pathway towards meeting their career aspirations" (CAMFED-GEU Research Study, 2014). The G&C Unit of the GES will therefore need to deepen career guidance and counselling for girls to enhance their performance in school and career aspirations.

***Establish highly-functioning girls' clubs in schools –***

There is the need for the GES and CSOs to collaborate to establish highly-functioning girls' clubs in schools with no such clubs and revamp existing ones that have become inactive as strategy for reducing drop-out rates. This is important as a number of research studies have confirmed that highly-functioning girls' clubs are more responsive to the specific risk factors of school drop-out, for example, by including study skills support to help girls improve their academic performance (CAMFED-GEU Research Study, 2015).

**Select female teacher mentors/girls' club facilitators** – It will be useful to select females to serve as teacher mentors and girls' club facilitators, particularly in girls' and mixed schools, to serve as role models to girls. Teacher mentors/club facilitators should also be selected based on their commitment to keeping girls in school for longer, as well as their commitment to supporting girls who are most at risk of school drop-out to do well. Facilitators will also require periodic training to upgrade their skills.

**Ensure timely release of capitation and other support grants** – The implementation of support systems such as the capitation and school feeding programmes have contributed to improvements in enrolment, retention and performance of students in schools. The challenge has however been delays with the release of grants and funds for such programmes. It will be useful for the MoE/GES to work to address this challenge.

**Re-constitute School Management Committees**- Findings from CAMFED-GEU research on school governance in public junior high schools in Ghana from a gender perspective suggest that although the GES recommends that women should make up at least 30 percent of School Management Committees (SMCs), three out of the eight schools that were involved in the study did not meet this threshold. The SMCs were generally found to be male-dominated in terms of composition and participation (CAMFED-GEU Research, 2017). The GES and GEU should work to ensure that the gender composition of SMCs is enforced, while encouraging women to actively participate in meetings and decision-making processes of the SMCs. This is because SMCs have the capacity to influence the school environment by formulating and driving the implementation of gender-friendly policies that support retention of students and minimise drop-out, particularly of girls.

**School Feeding Programme** – should be made available in all public schools to increase enrolment and retention of pupils. This intervention should also be extended to the JHS level.

**Publication of scholarships** – Scholarships such as the Secondary Education Improvement Project (SEIP) should be publicised widely to increase reach and accessibility

**Quality Teaching** - Although, the proportion of trained teachers have increased, there is still poor output from the children as per the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) results. Education Officers should intensify monitoring and supervision in the schools. In addition, teachers should monitor pupils during school contact hours. Motivation to teachers to stay in the rural areas is not being implemented effectively.

**Mobile Library** – the Ghana Library Authority should revamp its mobile library nationwide

**Free Senior High School (SHS) Policy** - GES should address the free SHS Policy implementation challenges by intensifying public education on its school placements programme as well as current policies to all stakeholders especially parents and pupils.

**Children with Special Needs** – Government through the Ministry of Education (MoE) should provide free education for children with special needs.

**Legal Education** – Legal education on child marriage and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) such as defilement, rape, indecent assault should be intensified amongst key stakeholders including children, parents, traditional and religious leaders. Additionally, girls should be provided with all the necessary tools to empower them with regards to their sexuality.

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## CHAPTER 4

# WOMEN AND HEALTH (CEDAW ARTICLE 12; SDGs 2 and 3)

### 4.1 Introduction

**W**omen's health has been repeatedly emphasized as a key development issue that merits attention in global and continental discourses and declarations on population, health and development such as the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and its follow-up conferences; the Beijing Platform for Action (BfPA); CEDAW; the Maputo Protocol and the UN Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In addition, women's health issues have also received attention from both government and CSOs in Ghana, especially in relation to reproductive and maternal health. However, as noted by Frempong-Ainguah et al., (2018), studies indicate that Ghanaian women's general health status and health differentials have not received much attention.

This report presents a situational analysis of women's health in Ghana focusing on the various legal frameworks on women's health with particular interest in the strategic objectives under the women and health thematic area under the BfPA; provisions under Article 14 of the Maputo Protocol; Article 12 of CEDAW and Goals 2, 3, and 5 of the SDGs. The report will also look at various aspects of women's health, including sexual and reproductive health and rights, maternal health rights and services, abortion, access to service delivery and facilities and their associated gaps or barriers, future challenges and provide some recommendations.

## **4.2 Brief Situational Analysis**

### ***4.2.1 Ghana's Legal framework on Women and Health***

There are a number of international and regional human rights laws that oblige Member States to provide adequate, accessible and acceptable health care, which includes sexual and reproductive health care and maternal health, all of which Ghana has taken steps to ratify and has domesticated in some cases. For instance, The Universal Declaration of Human Rights calls for everyone to have access to health care and social services. The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) also explicitly outlines the right to the highest attainable standard of health, expanded on in the Covenant's General Comment No.22 on the right to sexual and reproductive health. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) obliges state parties to **"take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of health care... including those related to family planning"**. Also as defined by the Continental Policy Framework on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHRs) and the Maputo Protocol, SRHRs "embrace certain human rights that are already recognized in national laws, international human rights documents and other consensus documents. These rights rest on the recognition of the basic right of all couples and individuals to decide freely and responsibly the number, spacing and timing of their children and to have the information and means to do so, and the right to attain the highest standard of sexual and reproductive health. It also includes their right to make decisions concerning reproduction free of discrimination, coercion and violence, as expressed in human rights documents."

Article 25 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) also entreats Member States to make SRH services and care accessible and inclusive, and on an equal basis to persons with disabilities.

The UN inter-agency estimates that, the global maternal mortality ratio declined by 38 per cent – from 342 deaths to 211 deaths per 100,000 live

births from 2000 to 2017. This translates into an average annual rate of reduction of 2.9 per cent. While substantive, this is less than half the 6.4 per cent annual rate needed to achieve the Sustainable Development global goal of 70 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births. Sub-Saharan Africa achieved a substantial reduction of 39 per cent of maternal mortality during this period.

Aside the above mentioned legal instruments that Ghana has ratified, Ghana is also a signatory to the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by the UN General Assembly in 2015 which enjoined States to provide human rights-based social protection. The SDGs specifically also call for the integration of sexual and reproductive health and rights into universal health care system of all Member States.

Over the years, Ghana has made significant efforts to ensure that national policies and actions on women's health including SRHRs and maternal health comply with the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action. For example, the Ghana Shared Growth Development Agenda (Volume I and II, 2014 – 2017) recognizes, as a matter of priority, the critical contribution of expanding coverage, availability and accessibility of reproductive health and family planning services — particularly to adolescents and youth — in national development efforts.

Beside the 1992 Constitution of Ghana, which guarantees the rights of citizens — including women and children— additional national Laws, such as the Children's Act, 1998 (Act 560); the Domestic Violence Act, 2007 (Act 732); The Disability Act, 2006 (Act 715); the Provisional National Defense Council Law (PNDCL 102) of 1985, and the Criminal Code (Amendment) Act, 2007 (Act 741) have been enacted to promote sexual and reproductive health and rights:

- **The Children's Act** defines a child as a person below the age of 18. It further pegs the minimum marriage age at 18, recognizing that marriage before the age of 18 is a fundamental violation of human rights which compromises girls' human rights and their socio-economic development.

- **The Criminal Code (Amendment) Act 2007, ACT 741** changed the reference from “female circumcision” to “female genital mutilation” (FGM) to reflect its actual nature and made it a criminal offence.
- **The Provisional National Defence Council Law (PNDCL) 102 of 1985 which amended Act 29, Section 58 of the Criminal Code of 1960** makes abortion legally permissible if the pregnancy is the result of rape or incest, or if the pregnancy is a threat to the health of the mother or the fetus.
- **The Domestic Violence Act, 2007 (Act 732)** has instituted criminal sanctions and civil remedies for perpetrators and victims of domestic violence, significantly improving Ghana’s ability to comply with international human rights obligations. For instance, it criminalizes rape in marriage and other acts of domestic violence.

In addition to the aforementioned laws enacted by the State, Ghana has also formulated a number of policies and strategic plans to enhance sexual reproductive and maternal health rights and women’s general health in the country. For instance:

- National Health Insurance Scheme (2005)
- National Health Insurance Policy Framework, 2004
- National Health Insurance Act 2012 (ACT 852)
- The Sexual Reproductive Health Policy for The Young People 2016 - 2034
- Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda II: 2014-2017 (NDPC 2014)
- Reproductive Health Service Policy and Standards, 2003
- Adolescent Reproductive Health Policy, 2000
- Reproductive Health Commodity Security Strategy (2011-2016)
- Draft National Condom and Lubricant Strategy and Market Segmentation Analysis for Family Planning
- Safe Abortion Policy and Services
- Adolescent Health Service Policy and Strategy (2016 – 2020)
- Policy on Antimicrobial Used and Resistance (1<sup>st</sup> Edition, 2017)
- Ghana National Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance (2017-2021)
- Ghana National Healthcare Quality Strategy (2017-2021)
- Health Sector Staffing Norm

- National Community Health Planning and Services (CHPS) Policy (March, 2016)
- Anti-Malaria Drug Policy (2009)
- Ghana National Drug Policy – 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (2004)
- Ghana E-Health
- Guidelines for Strengthening Accidents & Emergency Services in Hospitals (October, 2011)
- Health Care Waste Management Policy and Guidelines (March, 2006)
- Health Sector Gender Policy (April, 2009)
- Health Sector ICT Policy and Strategy (July, 2005)
- Human Resource Health Policy & Plan (2007-2011)
- National Health Policy (September, 2007)
- Occupational Health & Safety Policy & Guidelines for Health Sector
- Policy and Legal Framework for HMIS (2008)
- Private Health Sector Development Policy (2013)
- Traditional Medicine Policy (2005)
- Ministry of Health Referral Policy & Guidelines (May, 2012)
- CHPS Operational Policy (2005)
- Ghana Health Service and Teaching Hospitals Act, 1996 (Act 525)
- Ghana Health Service Act, 1996 (Act 525)
- Health Professions Regulatory Bodies Act, 2013 (Act 857)
- Mental Health Act, 2012 (Act 846)
- Pharmacy Act, 1994 (Act 489)
- Public Health, 2012 (Act 851)

Despite the ratification and enactment of these legal instruments, the outcome of their implementation has been mixed. Between 2008 and 2014, the percentage of men and women between the ages of 25 and 40 who reported having sexual intercourse at age 15 decreased only one point, from 12% to 11%. Within the same period, the percentage of girls who were married or were in union before the age of 18 years reduced from 25% to 21%. The use of modern contraceptives increased from 17% to 22%, while the percentage of married women who have an unmet need for family planning reduced from 36% in 2008 to 30% in 2014 (Ghana Statistical Service, 2008:2015). The unmet family needs as at 2018 was 34%.

Unfortunately within the same period, births to teenage mothers (young women between the ages of 15-19) which is the main contributor to Ghana's relatively high infant and child mortality, increased from 10% to 14%. Perinatal mortality remained practically unchanged, going from 39 deaths per 1,000 pregnancies in 2008 to 38 deaths per 1,000 pregnancies in 2014. Reported domestic violence rates against women, including sexual violence, rose from 17% in 2008 to 22% in 2015, and FGM also increased from 3.8% in 2007 to 4% in 2011 (Source?).

Additionally, the prevalence of HIV among women increased from 4.1% in 2014 to 4.9% in 2015, while that of men reduced from 4.2% in 2014 to 0.9% in 2015. The national prevalence rate was 1.69. Out of this rate, 65% were females (**Ghana AIDS Commission, 2016**).

#### **4.2.2 Women's Reproductive Health**

The following are some of the critical areas concerning women's reproductive health:

##### **Fertility**

Fertility, health, and family planning are not independent factors, but rather involve a series of biological and social mechanisms in close interaction with one another. The impact that a high fertility rate has on health is reflected mainly in a rise in the rates of maternal and child mortality. Similarly, fertility has a greater negative effect upon the health of groups characterized by high reproductive risk, high parity, short intergenetic intervals, and unwanted pregnancies. On the other hand, family planning and specifically the use of contraceptive methods helps to achieve a lowering of the fertility rate and also has a positive effect on maternal-child health (Urbina-Fuentes and Echanva-Fremandez, 1989).

Total Fertility Rate in Ghana has continued to decline since 1998, from 6.4 children per woman to the current level of 3.9 children per woman in 2017. But total fertility varies by residence, region and education. Thus currently, women in rural communities have 4.7 children on average, compared to 3.3 children among women in urban communities. At the regional level, the Greater Accra Region recorded the lowest fertility of 2.8 children per

woman, lower than the national average, while the Northern Region recorded the highest rate of 5.3 children per woman (GMHS, 2018). With regard to variation by education and economic status, Ghanaian women with no education have twice as many children (5.5), than women with more than secondary education (2.7). The more years the girl-child or women spend in school, the less fertile they become and likely to give birth to less number of children. According to Ghana Statistical Services Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (GSSMICS) 2017, Women with higher or tertiary education are 18% likely to bear children at age 18 compared to 41.9% of women with primary education. Further, women with pre-primary or no education have 5.7 fertility rates as compared with women with secondary education with 3.4 fertility rate. (GSSMICS, 2017).

Fertility also decreases as the wealth of the household increases; thus women living in the poorest households have an average of 5.7 children, compared to 2.8 children among women in the wealthiest households (GSS, GHS and ICF, 2018).

#### **Antenatal and Post-natal Services**

Though there is a significant disparity between urban and rural communities, the GDHS (2014), indicates that, as many as 96% of pregnant women in Ghana receive at least one antenatal care service (ANC) from trained providers, such as a doctor, nurse or midwife, or an auxiliary midwife. But according to Dako-Gyeke et al., (2013), the high utilization of ANC services has not led to the expected corresponding reduction in maternal mortalities (Ministry of Health 2014), probably due to inappropriate utilization of services or poor quality of services.

According to the Ghana Statistical Service (2011), though majority of Ghanaian women seek antenatal care from health professionals and 4 in 5 women seek postnatal care, less than half of all women receive all three maternity care components (antenatal care, care at birth, and postnatal care) from skilled providers. The Ghana Maternal Health Survey, 2017 indicated that ANC coverage by a skilled provider slightly improved from 96% in 2007 to 98% in 2017. According to the report, 98% of women age 15-49 years who had a live or still births in the 5 years before the survey

received ANC from skilled providers with only 2% who did not attend ANC with skilled provider. Among these 2% of women, 42% cited lack of money as the reason why they did not seek the help of a skilled provider. Nearly half of the women (45%) who received ANC at a public facility were asked to make payment for ANC, 37% paid for laboratory tests, 32% paid for drugs, 22% paid for their suppliers and 8% paid to see a provider.

### **Antenatal, Childbirth and Postnatal Coverage**

Access to care in pregnancy has reached almost universal levels in Ghana, with more than nine (9) in ten (10) women currently making at least one contact during pregnancy and 87% making a minimum of four contacts. Medical care for childbirth has also improved considerably over the same period at 79%. This increase has also improved care seeking in the postnatal period with more than eight in ten women and babies currently accessing postnatal care from the formal health sector within two days of delivery. The national performance of this indicator looks good, however, the specific geographical area performance still have huge gaps to be filled. Example, in the urban setting 98% make at least one antenatal care visit compared to 96% in the rural setting. In the urban setting those who make 4 or more antenatal care visits is 90% compared with 81% in rural setting. Source: GSSMICS 2017.

### **Delivery Care**

Health facility deliveries have increased since 2007 when only 54% of live or still births were delivered in a facility to 79% in 2017. Home deliveries have seen a corresponding decline from 45% in 2007 to 20% in 2017. Some of the reasons cited for home deliveries included the fact that the baby came earlier than expected (25%), and transportation challenges (24%).

### **Maternal Health**

There is a strong political leadership under the 1<sup>st</sup> lady of the Republic of Ghana in championing efforts at reducing maternal mortality. During the period (2014-2019) under review, Ghana achieved the following key outcomes in maternal health:

- Midwifery numbers have increased tremendously over the years; the number of midwives nationwide increased from 3,000 to 10,000
- Deliveries per midwives declined from 82 per deliveries to 66 deliveries in 2017
- More than three-quarters (79%) deliveries happened in public health facilities
- Maternal deaths reduced from 451 deaths in 2007 to 343 per 100,000 live births in 2017.

### **Postnatal Care**

According to the Ghana Maternal Health Survey, women who delivered in a health facility are twice as likely to have received a postnatal check within 2 days of delivery (95%), than women who delivered elsewhere (45%). More than 84% of women aged 14 to 49 years with live or still births in the 2 years before the survey received a postnatal check within 2 days of delivery, while 12% did not have. A regional breakdown of postnatal care received indicates a range from a low of 71% in the Northern Region to a high of 91% in the Upper West and Greater Accra Regions.

### **Neonatal Care Delivery**

Ghana's infant and under-five mortality rates have seen some reduction over the years. However, it has seen some stagnation due to the inability to reduce neonatal mortality significantly. The neonatal mortality currently stands at 29 deaths per 1000 live births, accounting for almost 50% of under-five mortality in Ghana and continues to rise. Without any drastic, collaborative and concerted effort to tackle causes of neonatal mortality, it will not be possible for the State to achieve the goal of reducing under-five mortality (*Ghana Health Services Website, Accessed 11/11/2019*). Under 5 mortality is 63 per 1,000 live births in the Upper West Region and as high as 79 deaths per 1,000 live births in the Ashanti Region (GSSMICS 2017).

### **Maternal Mortality**

Maternal mortality and morbidity continue to be a significant problem in low-income countries, despite a worldwide focus on the need to improve maternal health. Maternal mortality as indicated in the Ghana Maternal Health Survey, 2017 includes death of women during pregnancy, delivery

and 42 days after delivery of end of pregnancy, excluding deaths that were due to accidents and violence. According, to the report the maternal mortality ratio (MMR) for Ghana is 310 deaths per 100,000 live births for the seven-year period before the survey. WHO (2018) quoted the same figure.. The report again indicated that, more than half of women (52%) who delivered at a public health facility were asked to make payment for health delivery care, 31% paid for drugs, 32% paid for other supplies, 22% for laboratory test and 9% paid to see a doctor or nurse. Also according to the Ghana Health Service Family Health Division Annual report (2016), the number of maternal deaths recorded for 2016 reflects a corresponding increase in maternal mortality ratio which had declined from 2013 to 2015 during the implementation of the MDG Acceleration Framework (MAF) programme. However, this decline was not sustained. This implies that the risk of a woman dying when she becomes pregnant has relatively increased.

According to the Ghana Maternal Health Survey (2017), most of the maternal deaths (67%) were caused by obstetric complication during pregnancy, labour or 42 days after delivery or end of pregnancy (Direct Cause); indirect causes resulting from non-obstetric complications aggravated by pregnancy (27%) while the remaining 6% result from unspecified maternal cause. These causes are no any different from those that were stated in the Ghana Health Service Family Health Division 2016 Annual report. According that report, out of the 1,033 maternal deaths recorded, 872 (84.4%) were audited and causes identified. Most (56.6%) of the deaths were due to direct causes. Hemorrhage (39%) continues to be the leading direct cause of maternal death, with hypertensive disorders (35%) following closely as the second direct cause of maternal death in the country. Unsafe Abortion also continue to contribute some 7% causes of maternal deaths in the country.

### **Impact of Increase Coverage to Reproductive health care for women**

Two of the major indicators for assessing the impact of reproductive health care for women are total fertility rate and maternal mortality ratio. The total fertility rate stands at 3.9 in 2017. This means that women in their reproductive age are tending to have fewer children thereby reducing the risk of illness or death that may accompany pregnancy and childbirth. There

has also been a decline in the maternal mortality ratio estimates to 310 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2017.

All Childhood indicators show Improvement over the years – According to MICS 2017

- Under 5 mortality rate – 46.4%
- Infant Mortality Rate – 29.2%
- Neonatal Mortality Rate- 18.5%

### **Family Planning and Women’s Health**

Family planning use is generally increasing slightly, with the use of any modern method of family planning by married women increasing 5-fold from 5% in 1998 to 25% in 2017 and use of traditional methods has remained below 19% since 1998. According to the Ghana Maternal health Survey (2017), more than 3 in 10 (31%) married women aged between 15 and 49 years use any methods of family planning, 25% use modern methods and 6% use a traditional method. Injectable are the most popular modern methods with coverage of 8%, followed by implants and the pills with coverage of 7% and 4% respectively. Among sexually active unmarried women between the same age brackets, 31% use a modern method with 8% using a traditional method. The most popular modern method used are injectable (8%), male condom (6%) and implant (6%).

The use of family planning among married women varies by residence and region. Interestingly, the use of modern methods is slightly higher in rural areas (27%) than in urban areas (23%). On a regional basis, use of a modern method ranges from a low of 17% in the Northern Region to a high of 31% in the Upper East Region. Since both regions are predominantly rural other explanations for the variation need to be sought.

However, there was an increase in institutional mortalities in 2017, from 33 deaths recorded in 2016 to 44 in 2017. Inadequate access to quality skilled delivery, emergency obstetric and new born care, economic factors including inadequate opportunities for decent and sustainable jobs for women which constrict their access to wealth and resources, and transportation (Not covered by the National Health Insurance Scheme

(NHIS) and inadequate family planning services have been identified as some contributory factors (WHO, 2015 Annual Report).

### **Family Planning Coverage**

Contraceptive prevalence or the regular use of modern contraceptives by women in their reproductive age to avoid unintended pregnancy is at 25% in 2017 (2017 GMHS). One of the main factors accounting for this has been the increase in the number and cadre of human resource base for the delivery of family planning services. Family Planning observed an increased use of modern contraceptive from 20.3% in 2014 to 36.6% in 2017.

### **Abortion and Women's Health**

Abortion was criminalized in the penal code as inherited from the colonial government and later embedded in the Criminal Code (Act 29; 1960). However, the ban on abortion was amended in 1985 (P.N.D.C. Law 102) to permit abortion in cases of rape, incest, foetal abnormalities, or where the pregnancy posed a risk to the woman's physical or mental health, although these still remain exceptions within the Criminal Code. Since 1985, Ghana has taken a number of steps to tackle unsafe abortions including ratification of international treaties and formulation of policies and strategic plans. Post abortion care forms an integral part of the Safe Motherhood Initiative that was implemented from 1990, though operational service guidelines were only finalised in 2006.

Previously, safe abortion services were largely provided in private clinics and in some circumstances under secrecy so these were not accessible to all women due to lack of knowledge and financial constraints. Although a few were provided in public hospitals, they were done clandestinely and were difficult to access. However, over the decades, changes occurred at various level of service providers in line with the law and safe abortion services are now being provided more frequently in health centers and public hospitals by obstetricians and midwives who are trained and willing to provide the services, though coverage remains patchy. *(Ministry of Health/Ghana Health Service, (2005)*

### **Access to Safe Abortion Services**

Ghana made an amendment in the Criminal Code in 1985, decriminalizing abortion and specifying the conditions under which abortion care may be sought. Several years following this amendment, the Ghana Health Service developed a service policy to guide the provision of safe abortion services in 2006 and this was reviewed in 2012 to include medical abortion. Since then safe abortion services are provided as part of reproductive care for women under the provisions of the law, with a strong emphasis on post-abortion family planning counseling and service provision. However, the policy is not being implemented effectively in all health facilities. There is the need for the establishment of 'Adolescent Health Corners' at health facilities to provide safe spaces for adolescent seeking abortion services.

### **National Health Insurance Scheme**

The National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) aimed at providing equitable access and financial coverage of health care services. Active membership is 10.6m people and this figure includes 358,000 indigenes in the exempt category. 95% of the diseases on our list are in the exempt category. It also includes free maternal care services. There were special interventions spearheaded by Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP) to freely register prisoners and the elderly which benefits all women within the category. Critical women's health issues such as cervical and breast cancer are not covered under by the scheme.

#### **4.2.3 Women and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) including HIV/AIDs**

Like many other countries, Ghana is striving towards achieving the United Nation's Programme on HIV/AIDs (UNAIDS) 90-90-90 (90% of HIV positive people know their status, 90% of those diagnosed are on treatment, and 90% of those on treatment are virally suppressed) targets (UNAIDS, 2014). Currently, there are a total of 334,713 people living with HIV in Ghana, with 217,514 being female (65%) and 117,199 being male (35%) (Ghana HIV Fact Sheet, 2018).

The number of men with new infections stood at 5, 670, while the number is estimated to be 9,731 among females. According to the national and sub-

national HIV and AIDS estimates and projections report, (Author? 2017), the number of persons living with HIV/AIDS has increased by more than 7,000 since 2017.

The regional breakdown indicates that Greater Accra and Ashanti Regions have the highest number of people living with HIV, and the Upper West and Upper East Regions recording the lowest number of people living with the virus according to the report.

#### **4.2.4 Women, Disability and Health**

Due to the double vulnerability of women with disability, they are confronted by a number social challenges related to health, education and economic activities (Opoku, et al, 2016; Kassah et al., 2014).

Irrespective of the numerous policies that have been formulated and implemented with regard to improving women's health, including sexual reproductive health services, Mprah et al., (2014) and Mayhew and Adjei, (2004) indicated that most of these policies and strategies do not directly recognize the needs of persons with disabilities, except perhaps in the field of reproductive health (Mprah et al, 2014).

Women with visual, hearing and speech impairments have continually been neglected. They may have different experiences of their disabilities, but they are not familiar with their experiences of service provision and delivery (Ganle, et al, 2016; Mprah, 2014; Mprah, 2013; Mayhew & Adjei, 2004; Abdul, 2017).

In assessing disability challenges, the Ghana Maternal Health Survey, 2017, included 6 domains of disability – seeing, hearing, communication, remembering or concentrating, walking or climbing steps, and washing all over or dressing, among women age 25 to 49 years. Overall, 51% of women have no difficulty in any domain, 38% have some difficulty and 10% have a lot of difficulty or cannot function in at least one domain. According to the report, women with disability in at least one domain, are more likely to experience at least one problem accessing health care (70%), than women with some or no difficulty in all domains (56%).

#### **4.2.5 Health Insurance Coverage and Women's Health**

The National Health Insurance Scheme which came into being since 2003 is a contributory health insurance being implemented across the entire country. Though, not compulsory, all are encouraged to register under the scheme and a few categories of people (children under 5, older people who are 70 years and above, and pregnant women) are enrolled free to totally do away with the "Cash and Carry" health system. Overall, 79% of women aged between 15 to 49 years are registered with insurance, yet 46% are not covered by any kind of insurance. National and district health insurance is the most common type of insurance coverage across the country of about 46%. Regional health insurance coverage varies from 31% in the Greater Accra Region to 60% in the Upper West Region (Ghana Maternal Health Insurance, 2017).

Among the health insurance coverage, 15% have no maternity benefits; about 83% have insurance that covers ANC, child birth at a health facility (79%), postnatal care for mothers (78%) or postnatal care for the new born (77%) (Ghana Maternal Health Survey, 2018). Only 15% of women have health insurance coverage that requires no payment for drugs and service, while 16% have coverage that always requires payment.

#### **4.2.6 Mental Health and Psychological Well-being**

Health research amongst women in low- and middle income countries, particularly in Africa, has tended to focus primarily on maternal and reproductive health issues, with the neglect of mental health concerns (Avotri & Walters, 1999, 2001; Moultrie & Kleintjes, 2006). Notwithstanding the importance of these issues, the sidelining of women's mental health has meant that there is a paucity of reliable gender disaggregated prevalence and incidence rates available in developing countries (WHO, 2000).

Furthermore, the determinants of mental illness in women have remained unexplored, and gender sensitive mental health services and interventions underdeveloped in these regions (Patel et al., 2006; Sellers, 2004). This marginalization has dire social development and public health implications, given growing global evidence that common mental disorders (CMDs), such

as anxiety disorders and depression represent an increasing and disproportionate burden amongst women.

According to Sipsma et al, (2013), although psychological distress is substantial among both sexes in Ghana, with nearly 20% having moderate or severe psychological distress, it is quite higher in women. Women who are disempowered in the context of intimate relationships may be particularly vulnerable to psychological distress.

Research on Ghanaian women's health and wellbeing suggests that a complex range of factors impinge on their mental health. These include poverty (De-Graft and Ofori- Atta, 2007), everyday burdens of paid work, housework and childcare (Avotri and Walters, 1999), domestic violence (Gender Studies and Human Rights Documentation Centre, 1999 and Amoakohene, 2004), chronic illness experiences (De-Graft et al, 2010 and Clegg-Lampsey, 2010), infertility (Donkor and Sandall, 2007), and ageing-related discrimination, in particular witchcraft accusations (De-Graft, 2007).

### **4.3 Government's Interventions/ Programmes and Achievements**

Aside, ratification of treaties, enactment of laws, establishment of institutions and development of policies, governments over the years have undertaken a number of programs and interventions to Increase women's access throughout the life cycle to appropriate, affordable and quality health care, information and related services to strengthen preventive programmes that promote women's health and undertake initiatives that address sexually transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS, and sexual and reproductive health issues. For instance, the countrywide family planning programmes; the Community-Based Health Planning and Services (CHP) Compounds concept among others; the free maternal care programme, the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS), tricycles and the ambulance concept; training of specialized nurses and midwives; installation of drones service in some hospitals and polyclinics, adoption of focused Antenatal Care, institution of pregnancy school in some health facilities,

adoption of WHO policy of “treat all” to combat HIV, among others, are government’s interventions and achievements.

#### **4.3.1 Neonatal Care**

To ensure the State called Ghana achieves its goal of reducing under-five mortality and also enhance service delivery, a number of interventions were put in place including introducing basic essential newborn care, management of adverse intra-partum events which is primarily advanced care at the health facilities especially in the district/polyclinic, regional and teaching hospitals; Care of the preterm/low birthweight/growth retarded baby; Management of neonatal infections/sick newborns; kangaroo mother care, neonatal resuscitation, postnatal care among others

#### **4.3.2 Sexual Reproductive and Maternal Health Care**

As part of government’s intervention to enhance sexual reproductive and maternal care and rights in the country, a number of programmes were introduced. For instance, the introduction of free maternal health care policy and implementation which allows all pregnant women to have free registration with the NHIS after which, they are entitled to free services throughout pregnancy, childbirth and 3 months postpartum; mass education on SRHR, establishment of Adolescent Corners in government hospitals and polyclinics, subsidized family planning products; Adoption of Focused Antenatal Care (FANC) to replace ANC - a client-based programme, and the site of its service is not limited to a health facility; this allows for the provision of tailored services at times and places most convenient to clients. It is believed that this approach would reduce barriers to ANC service utilization, improve access especially to rural women, and enhance quality of the services (Baffour-Awuah, at el., 2015).

#### **4.3.3 HIV/AIDS and Women’s Health**

Ghana has adopted the WHO Policy (“**treat all**”) which aims at providing Antiretroviral Treatment (ART) to all people living with HIV (PLHIV) irrespective of their CD4 count, which was previously used as a cut off to start treatment (WHO, 2015). This has contributed to the increase in the

number of people living with HIV (PLHIV) enrolment onto the treatment (Dr Kwadwo Appiah-Kubi, 2019)

The United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) is supporting Ghana to maximize the quality, coverage and impact of the national HIV/AIDS response. The PEPFAR provides technical support and assistance in this regard (US PEPFAR, 2016).

#### **4.3.4 Drone Supply Services**

Pilot implementation of Drone supply services for essential health commodities including blood and medicine deliveries to health facilities in far, remote and deprived or hard to reach communities

### **4.4 Outcome and Achievements**

- Development of effective legal instruments including programs to address challenges associated to women health and reproductive rights
- Accessibility to health care service has increased appreciably
- Slight increment in allocation of resources to the sector
- Ghanaians including women and girls enjoy subsidized medical health care services?
- Free maternal health care for women and girls
- Increase in the number of health facilities across the country
- Steady decline in fertility rate, improvement in health outcomes relative to improved infant health and education

### **4.5 CSOs Interventions and Achievements**

It is important to note that each of the achievements listed above as government's interventions has been possible through the sustained advocacy of civil society organisations, coalitions and networks working on the various subject. Due to the complexities of the issues of the environment and climate change there has often been the tendency for policy makers to ignore the important nexus of those issues with gender related concerns. However, the persistent advocacy from women's rights organizations and

coalitions has brought women's voices and agency into the mainstream development agenda.

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) continue to support in creating awareness on health rights and service delivery, maternal and reproductive health issues. Interventions by CSOs include:

- Provision of mobile health services;
- Lobbying and advocacy for women's health such as fistula in some communities in Northern Ghana;
- Engaging the media on policies supporting women's health;
- Offering free reproductive health services;
- Establishing health centres;
- Donate items to health facilities;
- Providing medical screening such as breast screening;
- Antenatal, Childbirth and Postnatal Coverage
- Impact of Increase Coverage to Reproductive health care for women
- Access to Safe Abortion Services
- Functional coalitions of NGOs in Health (regional and national levels)
- Effective collaborations and networking between NGOs and major governmental stakeholders in Health

## **4.6 Gaps and Policy Issues**

### ***4.6.1 Issues and Challenges on SRHR (Gaps and Threats for Women)***

Available data from national surveys, Ghana Health Service and Ministry of Health indicates sexual reproductive health rights issues are and will continue to be critical in the development discourse of the country. Though a number of actions have been taken by the various stakeholders leading to some progress much needed to be done especially in terms of adolescent inability to freely access SRHR information and services which is largely due to socio-cultural and economic barriers. This has reflected in the high unmet needs for SRHR services among the adolescent leading to high teenage

pregnancies, unsafe abortions, sexually transmitted infections (STIs) including HIV/AIDS and high population rate among others.

The SRHR situation also suggest that some progress has been made in terms of steady decline in fertility rate, improvement in health outcomes relative to improved infant health and education. Unfortunately, there are still gaps between males and females. Adolescents and young people continue to make significant contributions to fertility through unplanned and unwanted pregnancies that also expose them to sexual and reproductive health risks including HIV/AIDS. Access to appropriate health information by adolescents and young people remained low and utilization of health services by adolescents and young people has remained poor (GHS, 2018).

#### **4.6.2 Social and Health Challenges of Women and Girls**

There is a general ignorance of human rights including SRHR among women and adolescent girls particularly in rural areas. The high rate of teenage pregnancy means that young girls are not able to negotiate safe sex and are not using contraceptives, and/or are ignorant of their reproductive rights. The corollary is unsafe abortion due to stigmatization associated with teenage pregnancy, some of which lead to death. According to Ghana's 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> Periodic Report to the UN Committee on CEDAW, deaths from complications of unsafe abortion are still high and unsafe abortion is the leading cause of maternal mortality among adolescents.

A survey conducted in the Ashanti Region on contributing factors to unsafe abortion practices among women of reproductive age at selected hospitals indicate that the majority of respondents including patients, nurses, religious leaders and medical officers were not aware of the safe abortion policy and services in Ghana (*BMC* 2019).

Data available indicates that of all births registered in the country in 2014, 30% were by adolescents, and 14% of adolescents aged between 15 and 19 years had begun childbearing (Graphic Online. 2016). Adolescent pregnancy contributes to the cycle of maternal mortality and morbidity because adolescents are more likely to experience adverse pregnancy outcomes than their older counterparts. In addition, babies born to

adolescent mothers are at increased risk of sickness and death; therefore, they need special attention during pregnancy (GHS Family Health Division 2016).

Pregnancies and deliveries of adolescents (10–19 years old) are accompanied by more risks as compared to older women (World Health Organization: Adolescent pregnancy, 2016). Results show that adolescent women (<19 years at their first pregnancy) have an 80% higher risk for a cesarean section for the first and subsequent births as compared to older women ( $\geq 19$  years). Furthermore, younger mothers have a 45% higher risk of stillbirths and a 30% increased risk of losing their baby within the first 6 weeks after birth (*BMC* 2017).

Aside the health challenges, teenage pregnant girls are more constrained in their ability to pursue educational opportunities than their counterparts who delay childbearing. The conditions and structures in place also allow boys who might have impregnated their age mates to easily continue schooling at the expense of their female counter. The lack of infrastructure, especially laboratory facilities, also makes it difficult to diagnose pregnancy complications and other risks timeously. The inability to do so hampered free antenatal care (FANC) services.

Space constraints at CHPS compounds contribute to regular overcrowding, and delays in providing services regularly occurred. This has led to clients being frustrated and complaining that the situation resembled the old ways of ANC, where overcrowding was persistent (Arthur, 2012). Coupled with the above is the lack of the requisite number of health staff at the CHPS compound and other supporting health facilities.

Poor telecommunication and transportation systems in the districts also have the potential to render the provision of free antenatal care (FANC) services ineffective. Poor roads, inaccessible communities, and broken down motor bikes as well as poor cellphone reception were serious obstacles to health service provision and FANC services in some of the communities covered. The net result of this was that referral of cases was sometimes done without the knowledge of receptor facilities. It also made

it difficult for relevant personnel to be contacted in times of emergencies. In some instances where health workers needed to conduct some counseling or education on phone, this becomes impossible to do with the poor quality of cellphone reception in the area. Poor accessibility and lack of transportation also hampered effective home visits and defaulter tracing system by the CHPS. This confirms the findings of Mills et al. (2007) on linkage of telecommunication infrastructure and health.

Young women and girls continue to face challenges of sexual and reproductive health, and are ignorant of their sexual and reproductive rights. These challenges include stereotypes and taboos which prevent young women and girls from accessing services to improve their sexual and reproductive health. Others are norms that make them susceptible to discrimination and violence by society and at the hands of their male partners. Some young women and girls believe taking contraceptives can lead to infertility; and would not take any preventive actions and therefore many women would have many children, an average of 4 children.

The category of girls and young most affected are those with disability – hearing impaired, deaf and dumb, and the physically challenged girls and young women. Aside verbal, cultural/religious, sexual abuses and gender discrimination, they are also discriminated against due to their challenges. For instance, duty bearers such as the health workers and police are unable to communicate with the deaf and dumb when their rights are violated or abused or decided to seek help. Their needs are hardly taken care of by the policy makers and the duty bearers and where policies are available, its effective implementation is always a challenge due to lack of resources - facilities, logics, human resources and/or funds.

Child marriage intrinsically violates the very livelihood, and ultimately, fundamental rights of a child as enshrined in a number of national, continental and international legal instruments. The practice of Child marriage is a depraved act that directly undermines the country's commitment and aspirations to put children first, and girls and women's possibilities to play their rightful role in all spheres of life, as stipulated under our children Act and human right laws respectively.

### **4.6.3 Legal Challenges**

The implementation of some of the legal instruments are confronted with challenges and barriers leading to the State's inability to fully and effectively implement some of these instruments/laws. For instance, whereas the Children's Act states that the marriage age is 18, the Criminal Code specifies the legal age of consent regarding sex is at age 16. The latter means that youth may engage in sex at age 16 but they cannot marry until 18 years. The implication is that children have the right to have sex at 16 and automatically can get pregnant but cannot get married. This may be a reflection of the increasing numbers of early pregnancies, infant and child mortalities and high prevalence of HIV among girls. Ironically, per Ghana Education Service practice and policy, education on comprehensive sex including family planning are not permissive in schools.

Again, most young people in Ghana still do not have access to comprehensive sex education regarding, for instance, sexual violence and access to safe abortion, as it is not incorporated into school curricula. Related to this is the limited capacity to extend this type of education to youth who do not attend school and other groups of marginalized young people.

### **4.6.4 Cultural and Gender Norms**

Gender norms and practices make females including young girls subservient to males; most of them have low self-esteem and are unable to negotiate safe sex in relationships. There are also myths surrounding public and even family-level discussions of reproductive health and rights with children and young persons despite the fact that things are changing with the advent of modern communication and technology - (mobile phones and internet).

Traditional and cultural practices, beliefs and negative attitudes limit adolescent girls' utilization of reproductive health services and thus denying them the enjoyment of their sexual and reproductive health rights. For instance, there are several myths and taboos about pregnancy that inhibit women from seeking attention; myths about contraceptive use and infidelity; contraceptive use and infertility; and contraceptive use and

weight-gain. Others are food taboos such as pregnant women not eating snails or eggs and the perceptions of 'sin' and taboo ('*echiwadeé*') of a pregnant adolescent girl or the single woman. Pregnancy before marriage is not acceptable in the Ghanaian society.

Women are expected to get engaged and properly married before getting pregnant. Therefore, women who got pregnant before marriage or out of wedlock were most often stigmatized in their community. These women or girls are shame and to avoid embarrassment abort their babies through unsafe means. These beliefs that have been perpetuated for many years to the extent that people fail to question the rationale behind them.

Finally, isolated negative sociocultural practices still posed a major problem in the utilization of FANC and other CHPS services (Dako-Gyekye et al., 2015).

#### **4.6.5 Attitude of Health Workers**

Adolescent girls are recognized as one of the underserved categories and their SRH related issues exist without concrete action plans to address them in many developing counties. Professor Sai, a former Reproductive Health Advisor of the Government of Ghana said "*Girls under 16 will stop patronizing quack health facilities to terminate pregnancies if legitimate health facilities don't turn them away*". There is therefore an urgent need to provide proper information and services for contraceptives, Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) treatment, condoms among others for young people to meet their SRH needs.

#### **4.6.6 Economic Factors**

Engaging communities under WILDAF Ghana's Maternal Health Care in Community Hands project (implemented from 2013 -2016) supported by the EU, it was revealed that some of the economic causes of teenage pregnancy are that sometimes girls go to school without pocket money because their parents are poor and cannot afford to give them same. They therefore fall on their male colleagues or other adult males for money for meals; and they invariably pay back with sex. The result is that most of these girls drop out of school or getting pregnant. A survey conducted in some selected hospitals in Ashanti region indicate that the socio-economic

conditions of adolescent girls and women forced them to indulge in unsafe abortion practices. For instance, many participants who were involved in unsafe abortion cited financial difficulties, schooling and the inability to cater for the unborn baby as reasons for practicing unsafe abortion.

Other challenges include:

- Inadequate Health literacy (lack of information on health-related issues). There is Inadequate education and information(including counselling)on reproductive health rights for teenagers or young adults. Our young girls in our rural communities are dropping out of school because of teenage pregnancies which is so endemic
- Poor sanitary and safety conditions at health facilities (eg. No WASH facilities)
- Inadequate preventive health care system
- Understaffing and high staff attrition
- Insufficient professional development of health workers, especially nurses and midwives (eg. Attitude towards PWD,)
- Inadequate coverage of some drugs and medical conditions under the NHIS
- Lack of essential routine medications at health facilities especially for pregnant women, women living with HIV/AIDS
- Improper patient record keeping
- Most Facilities are not-disability-friendly including poor services delivery to PWDs
- Non-Adherence to patient charter rights
- Adolescent Health Corners (AHC) not present in health facilities and most of the existing ones are non-functional AHC

## **4.7 Recommendations**

- Drastic measures must be put in place to effectively implement all international, regional and national legal instruments to enhance health delivery and enjoyment of health and reproductive rights of all particularly women and girls. This can be done through domesticating all treaties and conventions ratified and putting

systems and mechanisms in place for its effective implementation including increasing resource – human and material allocations.

- The State should commence reporting on the Maputo Protocol to enable the state learn and share best practices from other countries which will guide the implementation of all legal instruments on health and reproductive health of women and girls in Ghana.
- There is an urgent need for provision of proper information and services for contraceptives, Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) treatment, condom use among others for young people and women to meet their SRH needs.
- The state particularly the Ghana Health Service and the Ministry of Health should take steps to present valuable data and evidence to help unpack the links of the practice of child marriage with emphasis on particular violations in Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) as indispensable Human Rights for the advocacy and realization and protection of all rights of women and girls. It would also ensure the rights of sex education, avail and bring SRH services to the door steps of vulnerable Ghanaian girls and women.
- There should be an increased access to SRHR education to boys. This will also help them to counter harmful social norms and practices, increase their understanding of key issues around rights and consent, as well as equip them with means to protect themselves against STIs and HIV.
- Government should increase access to health service particularly in the rural areas.
- MoH to digitize record keeping at all levels of the care continuum (regional, district and sub-district levels).
- Comprehensive abortion care, family planning, breast and cervical cancer should be enrolled into the national health insurance scheme and free screening in all our major health facilities including district health centres.
- Attention must also be paid to childhood cancers. There should be an increase in human resources capacity of the health system to manage childhood cancer. The Ghana Health Service must strengthened the cancer surveillance system and research on childhood cancers in Ghana and train more specialists in Pediatric Oncology.

- There is the need to decentralize service delivery to increase access, reduce cost to families and provide better opportunity for social support for affected families.
- Intensive counseling should be offered to patients before and after the administering of family planning.
- There should be an expansion of youth centres for reproductive health across the country especially in our rural communities.
- Government should adequately resource local health centers especially in the rural areas to increase the range of services delivery e.g. the CHPS Compound. These facilities must also be staffed with qualified health personnel, provided with reliable supply of drugs, equipment and transport. Women seeking prenatal/postnatal services will attend these clinics and so help reduce the pressure on the few well-equipped health facilities in the country. This will cut down on the time spent accessing prenatal/postnatal health services.
- Government should expand access to education and ensure the retention of girls at all levels e.g. JHS, SHS to address high fertility rates.
- Introduction of Sign Language into the curriculum of Health Training institutions to enhance access to health care delivery services to hearing impaired persons.
- Government should pass the legislative instrument (L.I.) on the Disability Act, 2006 (Act 715) to ensure effective implementation of the law.
- Government should release funds timely to the NHIA to settle service providers to enable more women have access to quality healthcare delivery.

## **Reference**

<https://data.unicef.org/topic/maternal-health/maternal-mortality/>

## CHAPTER 5

# VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN (CEDAW ARTICLE 5, 6; SDG 16)

### 5.1 Introduction

**G**hana has enacted a number of laws and policies that seek to promote and protect women's rights in order to achieve gender equality and a violence free society. Ghana has also signed and ratified various International treaties and conventions that prohibits all forms of discrimination and abuses against women.

This report highlights the main achievements of Ghana under the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) within the timeframe of 2014-2019. The report also looks at the gaps and challenges that hinder the fight against violence perpetrated against women and made recommendations.

### 5.2 Brief Situational Analysis

The Government of Ghana has taken proactive steps over the years to address violence against women by enacting laws and formulating policies as well as putting in place, structures to address the root causes of the violation. Ghana has also ratified and formulated laws on trafficking in persons and on slavery as well as gender-based violence.

The Domestic Violence Secretariat conducted a research in 2016 on domestic violence. The Report, entitled: 'Domestic Violence in Ghana:

Incidence, Attitudes, Determinants and Consequences', includes specific recommendations to strengthen the implementation of Ghana's National Plan of Action on Domestic Violence and the National Social Protection Strategy.

A lot still needs to be done to rehabilitate and integrate victims of GBV and trafficking by equipping them with employable skills, providing them with legal assistance and free confidential health care services including those of psychological nature.

In all these efforts, women's rights organisations (WROs) have collaborated with the government to advancing women's rights and gender equality.

## **5.3 Achievements**

The Government of Ghana and Civil Society Organisations have made a lot of strides in ending violence against Women in the country.

### **5.3.1 Government**

Ghana has enacted laws that prohibit all forms of violence against women. These include:

- Constitution of Ghana Chapter 5-Articles 12-33 prohibit all forms of violence against women.
- Domestic Violence Act 2007 (Act 732) of Ghana also defines and prohibit violence against women and girls as well as punishments for perpetrators. An LI (1616) has also been passed to ensure effective implementation of the law.
- Criminal Offences Act, 1960 (Act 29, 30) also prohibit the use of all forms of violence against women and girls.
- Human Trafficking (Amendment) Act, 2009
- Protection and Reintegration of Trafficked Persons Regulation (2015)
- Passage of the Legislative Instrument (2016) to the DV Act
- Social Protection Policy 2015 (Final Draft)
- National Gender Policy (2015)

- Child and Family Welfare Policy (2014)

Programmes available include:

- Provision of shelters
- Rehabilitative service - Not functioning & under-resourced
- 2016 Domestic Violence Research by the Domestic Violence Secretariat
- Establishment of response centres on GBV at Mallam Atta and Abgobloshie markets
- Establishment of 5 Domestic Violence (DV) courts. The Chief Justice has renovated some courts to be more child friendly
- There are trafficking awareness programs by the Gender Ministry, local governments, immigration service, police service on reporting and punishments for offenders
- Anti-Human Trafficking Secretariat at the Ministry of Gender
- Anti-trafficking unit established by the Ghana Police Service.
- Rescue and rehabilitation programmes and centres for victims

Interventions:

- Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGSCP) has set up a Human Trafficking Fund
- Supported 4 shelters which are rehabilitating rescued victims of trafficking
- Provided shelter and rehabilitation services for 159 rescued child victims and 7 adults in 2016 and 2017.
- One witch Camp known at Boyanse in the Northern Region was closed down in 2014.
- Existence of rescue operations for girls who travel to the Gulf States.

### ***5.3.2 Civil Society Organisations' Interventions and Achievements***

- CSOs and Women's Rights Organisations (WROs) in Ghana undertake various intervention activities some of which include: Establishment of Shelters to support victims of SGBV.
- Provide psychosocial support for victims and survivors of DV and GBV

- Reintegrated 221 alleged witches (2010-2019) from witch camps by the Regional Reintegration Committee.
- Printing and distribution of simplified version of the Domestic Violence Act
- Advocated for the passage of the LI on the DV Act
- Interfaced with traditional and Religious Leaders to modify practices that abuse the rights of women
- Advocated the establishment of Domestic Violence Secretariat, Human Trafficking Management Board, Domestic Violence Management Board
- Capacity building for various stakeholders (Court Actors, the Police, Social Welfare)
- Developed educational and training programmes on Gender, Human Rights, Domestic violence and Gender Based Violence and distributed educational materials
- Worked with some districts in North-East and Northern Regions to include issues of witchcraft accusation, child and enforced marriages and GBV in the assemblies' bye-laws
- CSOs instituted awareness programmes on various thematic areas across the country

## **5.4 Remaining Gaps and Policy Issues**

- The punishment of offenders in the DV Act contradicts that in the Criminal and other Offences Act
- Shelters exist for trafficking victims but none for DV victims
- Domestic Violence Victims Support Unit (DOVVSU) offices not available in all districts across country

### **5.4.1 Challenges**

- "Helpline of Hope" established by DV Secretariat & DOVVSU (0800.800.800) not functioning
- Gender insensitivity of some DOVVSU officers and some court actors towards Survivors of Gender Based Violence
- Interference of politicians and traditional leaders on GBV issues that deny victims justice

- Lack of One-Stop Shop to address GBV issues at all levels
- Political interference in the constitution of the DV board does not allow for continuity and independence
- Existing community structures are insensitive in responding to GBV
- Payment for medical forms at the various health facilities across the country
- Family interference in domestic violence cases
- Interferences from leaders as well compel victims of violence to usually take decisions that do not promote their best interest even in cases with serious criminal undertones.
- Strong influence of tradition and cultural practices. The existence of negative traditional practices such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), widowhood rites, witchcraft accusation as well as some women accepting beating as a sign of love and affection from their husbands or partners.
- Inadequate capacity and awareness of law enforcement institutions to enforce laws and put into practice policies concerning violence against women
- Witchcraft accusations and the existence of witch camps
- Lack of effective mechanisms for planning, implementing and monitoring programmes carried out by agencies responsible for the welfare of women
- Inadequate Funding
- Ineffective implementation of the DV Act and the Legislative Instrument.
- DOVVSU is under-resourced
- Lack of Psychologists at DOVVSU across the country
- Educational Text books are not gender sensitive
- Inadequate education on the risk of human trafficking especially in the rural communities
- Corruption at higher level in relation to the prosecution of human traffickers
- Immigration Officers are not vigilant enough at the various checkpoints
- Lack of courage, confidence and empowerment to report DV issues

## **5.5 Recommendations for Action**

In spite of efforts by government and CSOs in ensuring women's rights and empowerment, domestic and gender-based violence continue to be a problem in Ghana. The Government of Ghana, CSOs, and private Institutions will work around the clock to significantly reduce all forms of violence. Specific recommendations include:

- DV secretariat and the Ghana Police Service should activate the Helpline for Victims and Survivors of Domestic and Gender-Based Violence
- Government should increase and release budgetary allocation to operationalize the Domestic Violence Fund
- Government of Ghana should establish a '**One Stop Shop**' for Survivors of Domestic and Gender-Based Violence in every region
- Domestic Violence Fund should absorb the medical form and examination fees charged by medical facilities
- DV fund should be decentralized to the regional levels to make it accessible to victims
- There is need for standardization of medical related charges for victims of SGBV across the country by GHS and MOH.
- MoGCSP should establish new shelters across the 16 regions of Ghana for DV victims
- Government and CSOs should increase sensitization programmes that are targeted at modifying social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women. Educational programmes should target family heads, traditional leaders, religious leaders, and other opinion leaders to re-examine traditional and religious doctrine from the viewpoint of promoting equality and dignity of all members of society
- Adequately resource DOVVSU to enable them carry out their mandate and provide sensitization training for police officers on SGBV.

- The Domestic Violence Fund should be decentralized and be operational in all the regions within the next five years. MoGCSP should institute mechanisms for easy and equitable access to the Fund
- The institution of the Domestic Violence Management Board should be devoid of politics so that members appointed can have the opportunity to serve to full term.
- Responding to the practical needs of women and families through counselling and mediation is very key. Hence the need to establish gender sensitive informal systems at community levels which are easier and closer to women and less expensive and offers no time constraints especially where access to legal services is absent in the rural communities.  
Government should consider funding support for CSOs working on SGBV issues.

## CHAPTER 6

# **WOMEN AND ARMED CONFLICT (CEDAW GENERAL RECOMMENDATION 30; SDG 16)**

### **6.1 Introduction**

**T**he strategic objectives on women and armed conflict in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action charge State Parties to increase women's participation in conflict resolution at decision-making level, promote non-violent forms of conflict resolution, promote women's contribution to fostering a culture of peace, and protection for internally displaced women through government and civil society collaboration.

Ghana has not experienced any high-profile conflict, however, there are pockets of inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic conflicts which invariably has tremendous effects on women (and their children). Many of such conflicts are initiated mainly by men though these conflicts take place in areas where women are mainly small holder farmers and so livelihoods of women are adversely affected and the cycle of poverty keeps rolling without end.

### **6.2 Overview of Progress from Perspective on Women and Armed Conflict**

Over the years, there had been progress regarding conflict prevention and resolution with the promulgation of the Alternative Dispute Resolution into

law in 2010 (Act 798), the inclusion of alternative dispute (ADR) resolution into the course of study at the Ghana School of Law and civil society involvement in conflict prevention and resolution such as the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) Ghana. There are however no clear-cut gender and human rights issues in these interventions. There is the need to promote women's contribution to fostering a culture of peace.

There has been progress by CSOs in coming out with programmes to address conflict resolution. For instance, Women in Law and Development Africa (WiLDAF) Ghana has a project "Community Reconciliation Committees" a women-headed project currently in two regions (Greater Accra and Eastern Regions) which seeks to address conflict prevention in selected communities in Ghana.

## **6.3 Achievements**

### ***6.3.1 Government's Interventions and Achievements***

- Passage of the Alternative Dispute Resolution Act, 2010 (Act 798)
- Institutionalization of Alternative Dispute Resolution, a Course of Study at the Ghana School of Law
- Establishment of institutions such as REGSEC and DISEC and the peace council to promptly respond to conflict issues at the regional and district levels

### ***6.3.2 Civil Society Organisations' Interventions and Achievements***

CSOs engage in sensitizations on conflict prevention, resolution and peace building in hot spots.

## **6.4 Remaining Gaps and Policy Issues**

The remaining gaps are as follows:

- The inclusion of specific gender issues into the ADR structure and into the alternative dispute course of study in the Ghana School of

Law and possibly into other areas in our higher institutions of learning

- Inability of security agencies to pick early intelligence signals of potential conflicts.
- Denial of the rights of Queen mothers to participate in the cultural and traditional affairs of the state especially on conflict issues.

## **6.5 Recommendations for Action**

- Factor gender studies and alternative dispute resolution into the educational curricula at all levels.
- There is need for the security agencies to pick early intelligence signals from the few areas that experience conflict in order to prevent escalation. This is because in any conflict situation, no matter how big or small, it is women who suffer through displacement, loss of livelihood and are left to take care of themselves and their children.
- The Chieftaincy Act must consider integrating the active role of Queen mothers within the cultural and traditional affairs of the state.

## **References**

Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 1995 (pages 56 to 65)  
CEDAW Committee – Summary of General Recommendations (June 2018)  
UNDP Ghana Summary of the Sustainable Development Goals  
West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) Ghana  
Alternative Dispute Resolution Act, 2010 (Act 797)

## CHAPTER 7

# **WOMEN & ECONOMY (CEDAW ARTICLES 11 AND 14; SDG 8,9,10 AND 12)**

### **7.1 Introduction**

**T**he financial crisis grip in the world economy since 2008 led to an increase in the unemployment rate leading to an increase in precarious employment affecting mostly women. This crisis and the resulting social problems starkly show-up the failings of the global capitalist system. Many Governments resorted to privatisation and Labour market flexibilisation to save their economies.

Recent experiences with gender issues and noting the general trends in the economy are threatening to erode gains in the quest for gender equality in the labour market. Women face issues related to discrimination, exploitation, marginalization and violence and sexual harassment in the labour market and workplaces due to their reproductive roles, biological make-up and attributes related to intersectionality. Women are mostly the last to be hired and the first to be fired in the labour market. Where recruitment gives preference to women instead of men it is often because employers find it easier to exploit women, as it were, without too much resistance.

Women in the formal economy are mostly in precarious employment that are mostly not guaranteed job and income securities with a high concentration in the services sector. Women are discriminated against and face the lack of information access about the worker employer relationship, threat of dismissal for maternity related issues and sexual harassment. Even though the country has signed onto some international treaties, protocols and conventions like the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Violence against Women (CEDAW) which emphasis the removal of all barriers against women's economic, social and political participation.

## **7.2 Brief Situational Analysis**

According to the GLSS7, Ghana's economic freedom score is 57.5 as 109th freest in the 2019 economic Index with an increased score of 1.5 points, fiscal health and higher scores for labor freedom and monetary freedom more than offsetting declines in the tax burden and business freedom scores. Ranked 13th among 47 countries Sub-Saharan Africa, Ghana's overall score is above the regional average but below the world average.

Although Ghana prioritised industrialisation in creating jobs and spurring economic growth, the government faces fiscal constraints even in an economy that "thrived for decades under relatively sound governance and a competitive business environment, but has suffered in recent years as a consequence of loose fiscal policy, high budget and current account deficits, and a depreciating currency..." (VNR, 2019; 60)

The SDGs implementation focus in Ghana is "Leaving no one behind" with emphasis on ending extreme poverty in all its forms, reducing inequalities and eliminating discriminatory behavior. The economic objective of the SDG is to build strong and resilient economy, modernize agriculture, grow industry and produce high value-added products". The agenda is being pursued through the development of a viable and competitive private sector and support for entrepreneurship, especially among women and the youth. (VNR page iii).

The activities of Fissuring - outsourcing, subcontracting, third party employment which allows employers to cut cost has been identified as one of the major reasons for the fallen rate of women in the Labour market. Evidently, according to several research works, majority of women who participate in the formal sector are in lowest paid jobs with least opportunities for training, promotion and prospects for development. We need an inclusive approach that addresses the diversity of women as a response to their intersectionality.

Whiles Ghana's economy is built on the formal and informal economy, majority of the workforce is concentrated in the informal economy without adequate protection against exploitation, violence and harassment. Available data suggest that "90 percent of employed persons work in the informal economy, with males accounting for 45.1 percent and female's 54.9 percent. The proportion of females in informal employment in both rural and urban areas is higher than that of males" (VNR, 2019; 105). According to a research by Osei-Boateng & Apramtum (2011), their employment is characterized by underemployment, bad working conditions, uncertain work relationships and low wages. The Women, who are in the majority, are vulnerable to extortion, violence and harassment from city authorities and environmental issues related to flood and fires which has led to the destruction of livelihoods in most part of the country.

The country in recent times has been bewildered with the activities of illegal mining that has adversely affected communities in the areas of providing portable affordable safe drinking water etc. The continuous increment in local taxes has become a bane on women in the informal economy whiles foreign businesses continue to enjoy tax exemptions.

### **7.2.1 Decent Work**

According to the ILO, Decent work means work which is carried out in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity. Decent Work is the convergence of four interdependent strategic objectives encompassing rights at work, employment, social protection and social dialogue. It is a sustainable growth and development agenda endorsed by the General

Assembly of the United Nations in the review session of the World Summit for Social Development, 1995. (ILO, 2000)

### **7.2.2 Decent Work Deficits**

The ILO defines the Decent work deficit as the absence of enough employment opportunities, inadequate social protection, the denial of rights at work and short comings in social dialogue, which are measures between the world that we work in and the hopes that people have for a life. (ILO Decent work report, 1999).

The increasing unemployment rate in the country has led to prospective employees accustomed to the phrase “bad jobs are better than no jobs” contributing to the deficit accounted for in the job market through agency employment with no willingness to report violations. It is worthy to note that, commitment of agencies to the rights of workers is low as is evident in principle 7 of the Ghana Association of Private Employment Agencies which states that “respect for workers’ rights: we shall make best efforts to send candidates to companies that will respect their rights” clearly this does not show a committed effort at guaranteeing workers’ rights in any way since their major aim is to create jobs.

Recent violations of the right of women workers to maternity protection in Ghana has been recorded mostly from women working through agency employment where these rights are not guaranteed. The gender and sex discrimination imbedded in the decent work deficit is relatively high on women due to their reproductive roles and unpaid care work. (Kamal, n.d.)

There has also been an increase in cases of abuses against women on maternity protection. In 2016, a leaked memo cited at Millicom Ghana, was asking female pregnant employees to re-apply for their jobs after delivery. While these forms of marginalisation and discrimination keeps the numbers of women entering the labour market very low, the ILO has stressed that “Decent work is also about gender equality, equal recognition and enabling women to make choices and take control of their lives. It is about a person’s personal abilities to take control of their lives and a person’s personal ability

to compete in the labour market”. (ILO agenda, 1999) pledge by its constituents.

The conclusions of the 98th International Labour Conference in June 2009 also acknowledged that “strengthened maternity protection is key to gender equality at work and therefore called on the ILO to promote the ratification and application of Convention No.183 and to “compile and disseminate good practices on parental leave, paternity and maternity leave and benefits, and provide technical support to governments to develop effective laws and policies” (ILC, 2009). Women’s participation in the Labour market can be adequately guaranteed if their reproductive roles are respected and protected against discrimination, marginalization and exploitation.

Even though Ghana is among countries making positive strides towards protecting women’s employment in the labor market, much still needs to be done in the areas of coverage of section 6 of the Labor act on Night work for pregnant women.

In Ghana, gender differences in access to economic opportunities also arise in part because women are “time poor” due to their responsibilities for household and unpaid care work which is not counted among GDP as work. Other constraints to women’s economic empowerment include the lack of physical and financial capital, and weak property and inheritance rights and laws.

## **7.3 Achievements**

### ***7.3.1 Government’s Interventions and Achievements***

Government has enacted several legislations, policies and signed unto international treaties, protocols and conventions that promote women’s economic empowerment and enhance women’s participation in the Labour market. Government interventions include assignment of government-sponsored poverty alleviation funds and micro-finance and small loans to women like MASLOC. There is also focus on female head porters (kayayei) enshrined in the national development framework including improved

access to education, healthcare and skills training in income-generating activities.

The VNR (2019) report shows Government's medium-term national development policy framework also commits to legislation and enforcement of fair pay, equitable conditions of service and its promotions in both the formal and informal sectors, while ensuring that women's access to and participation in the economy is guaranteed with their shared benefits from all occupations protected.

Section 6 of the Labour act protects pregnant women against night work or overtime, safeguarding their maternity, annual leave and sick leave. The Act also makes provision in support of the change of task of pregnant women in instances their tasks are found to be hazardous to their health and that of their unborn child. There is a provision for equal pay for work of equal value and protection against sexual harassment. The Labour Act, 2003 (Act 651) states on fair pay in Article 68 that; "every worker shall receive equal pay for equal work without distinction of any kind" (p:26).

Chapter 5 of the 1992 Constitution guarantees fundamental human rights against any form of discrimination based on gender, race, ethnic origin, religion etc. Article 27 (1) states that "special care shall be accorded to mothers during a reasonable period before and after child-birth; and during those periods working mothers shall be accorded paid leave" (p 25). Article 27 (2) further states that; "facilities shall be provided for the care of children below school going age to enable women, who have the traditional care for realize their full potential" (p25). These laws unfortunately do not cover women workers in the informal economy and make distinctions even for some categories of women in the formal sector who work with the security agencies.

Efforts by government to respond to the challenges faced by women in the informal economy have included the strengthening of institutional arrangements towards supporting small- and medium-size enterprises and the merging the National Board for Small-Scale Industries (NBSSI) and the Rural Enterprises Project (REP). There are also targeted efforts aimed at

Sustainably expanding financial inclusion by deepening the reach of financial services, improving financial literacy, especially among youth and women in the informal sector; and improving access to finance by informal sector operators and agricultural enterprises in the rural areas.

Enacting a National Social Protection Law which will establish a Social Protection Floor to provide a legal basis for the country's flagship social protection program and prioritizing expenditure for social protection that links vulnerable groups, including beneficiaries of existing social protection interventions, to productive and financial inclusion initiatives. The third tier of the National Pensions Act 2008 provides for a voluntary fully funded and privately managed provident fund and personal pension scheme.

### **7.3.2 CSOs Interventions and Achievements**

Several Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), Trade unions and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) have worked assiduously towards Improving the working Conditions of women on Mine sites by providing timely transportation for nursing mothers from mine site to their homes, provision of alternative livelihoods for women to economically sustain themselves, access to ready markets, Non-Farm Economic Activities and value addition to products they produce and deal in. Unions have signed gender responsive Collective Agreements that provides adequate protection for women workers, protection against hazardous work and strengthen regulations on Occupational Safety and Health.

## **7.4 Remaining Gaps and Policy Issues**

There has been low commitment on the part of Policy makers on issues of women in the extractive sectors. Fissuring has been a major hindrance to women's active participation in the Labour market.

Weil (2014;10) defines "fissuring as not simply the result of employers seeking to reduce wages and cut benefits but a representation of the intersection of three business strategies, focused on revenues, costs and providing the "glue" to make the overall strategy operate effectively. In Ghana, Private Employment Agencies engage in the employment

relationship mostly through outsourcing and contracting with higher interests in employing women (Kamal, n.d.).

“In spite of the undoubted benefit that trade liberalisation and other aspects of globalisation can offer, in terms of the better allocation of resources, greater economic efficiency and higher growth it has failed to deliver fully on the goal of “raising standard of living, ensuring full employment and a large and steadily growing of real income and effective demand”. (ILO 2003). This shows that we have only witnessed employer driven objective of wealth accumulation through the maximisation of profit as is the driving force leading to the growth in fissuring.

According to the ILO declaration, 1998, expanding the opportunities for Decent Work, requires a deliberate policy to overcome these constraints and make markets work for everybody. We must take advantage of market dynamism in ways that deliver social justice as well as economic justice” (ILO DW report 1999). Accordingly, the government of Ghana through its agencies should ensure the interconnectedness of all the pillars of decent work for available jobs and through inspections and reported cases to ensure the strict adherence to legislations and frameworks.

Socio-cultural barriers and traditional barriers like superstition, sexual harassment, discrimination have also contributed to the unfair treatment of women in the economy. Women in the informal economy are exploited in taxes where they pay more than 2 different taxes to city authorities on their goods on daily basis.

## **7.5 Recommendations for Action**

Government should ensure that the African Continental Free Trade Agreements does not become a bane on the activities of women in the Informal sector on patent rights etc. The continuous increment in local taxes should be reviewed to protect local economies from foreigners who have longer tax exemption periods. Government should strengthen its actions against Illegal mining to protect the safety & health of the environment, water for access and affordability.

To guarantee protection of workers and ensure adherence and commitment by Private Employment Agencies, Ghana should ratify ILO C181 adopting Articles 4, 5, 9 and 11 of the Convention which responds to the protection of agency-recruited workers. These guarantees cover fundamental rights at work, such as freedom of association, collective bargaining, equality of opportunity and treatment, and eliminating child labour.

The formalisation process of the informal economy should be fast tracked to include enforcing Labour laws and regulations; “strengthening the linkages among social protection and employment services while enhancing livelihoods and entrepreneurship” (VNR, 2019; 109).

Government should ratify and adopt ILO Conventions 189 and 190 to ensure that all workers are protected from violence in the workplace and develop national action plans to support the implementation of ILO Conventions 189 and 190, where there are none, and ensure political follow-through including adequate national budgets for implementation and rigorous monitoring mechanisms.

Review existing labour laws and regulations and bring them in line with ILO Conventions 189 and 190.

Ratify ILO Conventions 183 on maternity protection; 156 on workers with family responsibilities; 189 on domestic workers and 190 on sexual harassment in the world of work.

CSOs should monitor the implementation of the various laws, policies and international treaties, protocols and conventions that promote and protect women and girls.

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## CHAPTER 8

# WOMEN IN POWER AND DECISION- MAKING (CEDAW ARTICLES 7, 9 AND 16; SDG 17)

### 8.1 Introduction

**T**here have been admissions that the failure to place emphasis on tackling the underlying structural causes of gender inequality and gender disparities contribute in very realistic and substantial ways to the failure to secure comprehensive improved living conditions in the world's poorest countries. Women, represent a numerical strength in the global population but this phenomenal strength has not translated into proportional benefits for women, especially in developing countries like Ghana, despite the worldwide social, economic and technological progress witnessed in recent times.

Current mainstream development thinking has recognised that the involvement of women in wealth creation and national development is no longer in dispute and that women's political participation is a critical component of democratic dialogue and social cohesion. As part of a growing movement worldwide, helped by United Nations Women Conferences, and reinforced by the Beijing Conference of 1995, there is a growing acceptance that women need to be involved in decision-making processes and that women's rights intersects in ways crucial to our lives and sustainable development.

Gender and development practitioners have continued to place the prime issue of women's participation in policy-making structures as a core concern in the struggle for economic and social justice. A viable democratic culture is, in its building and sustainability, hugely dependent upon all citizens, women and men, participating in the political and social institutions. Democratic values and political pluralism are fortified by the concept that good governance, must be anchored in the sovereign will of the people and therefore, integrating women as participants and as beneficiaries in planning and policy-making processes becomes much more imperative. Rwanda, has promoted women's participation and representation in decision-making to become number one country in the world. From an average of 10 and 15 percent before 1994 to 62 per cent currently which has resulted in marked improvement in women's social positioning and a corresponding positive impact in national development.

That women's increased entitlement to participate in power and in decision-making in order to shape policies and practices is vital to democratic governance. It is also a right that is enshrined in a number of human rights instruments that Ghana has signed as well as in the national constitution and laws. The right is found in Goal 7 of the Beijing Platform for Action and in Goal 3 of the erstwhile Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as well as in Goal 5 of the current comprehensive global development framework – Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

## **8.2 Ghana's Situational Analysis**

In Ghana, women make up 51.2 per cent of the population while male population is at 48.8 per cent (2000 Population Census). However, while we recognise that some progress has been made, statistics indicate the inability of the country to promote a significant upward move of a critical mass of women in leadership and in decision-making. The Global Gender Gap Report (2017) placed Ghana 112 out of 144 countries for the Gender Index on political empowerment (IPU & UNDP). Ghanaian women are still confronted by limited options and formidable social, economic and cultural barriers that place them at a great disadvantage. Issues of gender inequality, socio-cultural subordination, attitudes and low levels of women's political

participation and representation are undermining the ability to achieve rapid results in the fulfillment of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA), CEDAW and other Instruments and Frameworks promoting Sustainable Development.

Comparatively, men have dominated power and political leadership over the years (Allah Mensah, 2003) while women have continued to face political exclusiveness under an entrenched patriarchal system that often masks inequities as a cultural compulsion. Following a period of successive military interruptions between 1966 and 1992, Ghana has successfully organised seven (7) Presidential and Parliamentary Elections and women have failed to attain the 30 per cent UN recommended minimum threshold in representation. Women’s representation in decision-making has never gone beyond 19 per cent both at the local and national levels making gender disparities in these structures a major deficit in equal participation and representation. The highest figure recorded for women’s representation in Parliament was 18.3 per cent in 1965 (Electoral Commission, 2017).

**TABLE 8.1: Trends in Parliamentary Elections from 1960 to 2016**

Year	CONTESTANTS					ELECTED				
	Females	%	Males	%	Total	Females	%	Males	%	Total Seats
2016	137	11	1121	89	1258	35	12	240	88	275
2012	133	9	1332	91	1465	29	10	246	90	275
2008	103	10.7	856	89.3	959	20	8.7	210	91.3	230
2004	104	10.9	849	89.1	953	25	10.9	205	89.1	230
2000	102	9.3	986	90.7	1088	18	9	182	91	200
1996	59	7.6	721	92.4	780	18	9	181	91	200
1992	23	2.9	418	94.8	441	10	5	190	95	200
1979	23	1.5	781	97.1	804	6	4.3	134	95.7	140
1969	7	1.5	472	98.5	479	1	0.7	139	99.3	140
1965	unknown		N/A		N/A	19	18.3	85	81.7	104
1960	52		N/A		N/A	10	10	94	90.4	104

Source: Tsikata (2009, Parliament of Ghana (2017))

Currently, the figure for women’s representation in Parliament is 38 (13.8) and in District Assemblies, women’s representation is at 4.7 per cent (ABANTU for Development, (2009); EC (2010, 2015). All Presidents and Vice-

Presidents who have occupied power since independence, both military and civilian have been men. However, women have made attempts from 2008 to contest in these positions but none of them won (Gyimah-Boadi, 2008; Dartey-Baah, 2015).

Local governments, the world over, are usually introduced as part of broader efforts towards democratisation and modernisation of State mechanisms. Therefore, processes are intended to promote accountability to local communities in terms of facilitating equal opportunities to participation and access to national resources. The District Assemblies were introduced as the highest political authorities in the districts in 1988 under PNDC Law 207 and further strengthened by Article 242 of Ghana's 1992 Constitution under the decentralised system of governance. The overall stated objective is to make local governments effective centres of self-governance, local participation, decision-making, planning and development. Through the Directive Principles of State Policy Articles 35 Section 5 of the Constitution which mandates the State to decentralise in order to democratise and afford all possible opportunities to the people to participate in decision-making at every level in national life. The system is therefore expected to facilitate effective popular participation to ensure accountability of government.

**TABLE 8.2: Trends in Local Government Elections from 1994 to 2019**

Year	CONTESTANTS					ELECTED				
	Females	%	Males	%	Total	Females	%	Males	%	Total
2019	909	4.91	17,601	95.09	18510					
2015	1,182	6.2	17,756	93.8	18,938	282	4.7	5,779	95.3	6,061
2010	1,376	7.9	15,939	92.1	17,315	412	6.8	5,681	93.2	6,093
2006	1,772	11.9	13,084	88.1	14,856	478	10.1	4,254	89.9	4,732
2002	965	7.1	12,625	92.9	13,590	341	7.5	4,241	92.5	4,582
1998	547	3.6	14,696	96.4	15,243	196	4.1	4,624	95.9	4,820
1994	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	122	2.9	4,082	97.1	4,204

Source: ABANTU for Development (2010); Electoral Commission (2017)

Since the inception of the decentralised system in 1988, women have failed to attain the 30% UN recommended minimum threshold in representation in the district assemblies. By doing so, Ghana is preventing the perspectives of a considerable number of citizens from consensus building around many of the critical challenges facing the country. To quote the UN, such a State is failing to "promote gender equality and the empowerment of women as effective ways to combat poverty, hunger and disease and to stimulate development that is truly sustainable" (UN Millennium Summit 2000).

Political Parties are very critical institutions in a constitutional multiparty democracy. As institutions, they control the space relating to participation and facilitate citizens' engagement in national governance process. The level of representation of women in policy-making structures depends to a large extent on the decisions or judgement of political parties. However, political parties have grown to become rigid structures and have shown no inclination to transform their male-oriented party cultures by including women's rights and interests as salient issues. Women are unable to make inroads in the fiercely competitive platforms for high political party positions in their own parties because they lack the financial resources associated with the pursuit of political power. Within the National Executive Committees (NEC) of the major political parties, Convention Peoples Party (CPP), National Democratic Congress (NDC) and People National Convention (PNC) had less than a 25 percent representation of women with 22 per cent, 18 percent and 12.5 percent respectively. The New Patriotic Party (NPP) had the highest, with a 44.4 per cent representation of women within the NEC (ABANTU for Development Scorecard, 2012). The end result of all this is that women remain excluded from the political party decision-making processes as leaders, and not enough of women's rights concerns are incorporated into party policy formulation.

### **8.3 Achievements**

Since the Beijing Conference in 1995, Ghana has committed herself to the improvement of the status of women. Among the achievements are:

### **8.3.1 Government**

- The establishment of the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection in 2002, has provided a site where women's issues are kept visible
- Government's 'Administrative Directive' developed as a policy intended to increase women's representation at the local level
- Appointment of women to a number of high profile positions that were formally the preserve of men. These include Speaker of Parliament, Chief Justice, Electoral Commission, Attorney General and Minister of Justice, Deputy Inspector General of Police, Commissioner of Immigration and Director of Prisons
- Women's marginal increased representation in Parliament from 18 in 1996 to 38 in 2019
- Political parties halved filling fees for women since 2012 to attract more women candidates
- From 2008 political parties have increased appreciably the number of women in their National Executive Committees (NECs)
- Setting up of a Fund housed in the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection to support women contesting in the local government elections.
- Payment of allowances to paramount queen mothers as in the case of Paramount Chiefs

### **8.3.2 Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)**

- Civil society organisations in Ghana, especially women's groups, have focused on social mobilisation and political empowerment initiatives to build women's capacity to be more effective
- Continuously advocated for policy reforms, gender responsive legislations and implementation of international, continental and regional instruments and frameworks that promote gender justice
- Engaged in various forms with state institutions, government, political parties, traditional authorities, faith-based institutions, the media and the public with the intention of addressing those discriminatory manifestations in laws, policies, attitudes and the

design of public institutions that continue to keep women out of influence.

- Many CSOs have also offered services to ameliorate the burden on women's household chores to make time for campaigns, provided financial and logistical support during electioneering periods
  - CSO mobilised in the development and production of The Women's Manifesto for Ghana document in 2004 (a political non-partisan document that outlines ten (10) critical areas of concern to women and makes demands for addressing them) seeking to influence gender dynamics in governance as an expression of citizenship at national and community levels in the country
  - Worked to promote, nurture and strengthen young women's political activism to sustain the women's movement
  - Continuous support for women in local level elections by creating campaign platforms for women aspirants for District Assembly and Unit Committee Elections
  - Capacity building of women aspirants in parliamentary and local level elections by CSOs
  - The Local Governance Network (LoGNET) with support from GIZ/Support for Decentralization Reforms Unit trained 150 women in 60 selected district on Leadership and Governance in 2019
  - LoGNET again sensitized and educated women groups, queen-mothers and market leaders on district level elections and the Referendum so as to enable them make informed decisions
  - Training of Gender Desk officers in selected Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies by Gender Centre for Human Rights Documentation
- Provision of gender inputs to political parties' manifestos

#### **Challenges Women Face**

- Gender-based Political Violence
- Monetization of Politics
- Traditional and cultural beliefs
- Lack of support and rejection

## **8.4 Remaining Gaps**

- Disappointing low level of women’s participation and representation in power and in decision-making structures. Currently, women in the public Service make up only 24 per cent of the work force
- Lack of political will that has resulted in the non-implementation of international, continental and regional instruments that seek to promote gender equality
- Failure of governments to take needed measures to reform electoral systems that could facilitate gender diversity and remove discrimination as required by Article 4 and 7 of CEDAW
- Reforms in the electoral system like the Proportional Representation system to ensure women participation.
- The absence of an Affirmative Action Law
- Meager budgetary allocation to Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection whose mandate is expansive
- Addressing socio-cultural norm and behavior that reinforces patriarchy
- Non-domestication of the Maputo Protocol
- Non-adherence of Government’s ‘Administrative Directive’ on appointment of 30% women out of the 30% district assembly government appointees aimed at increasing women’s representation at the local level

## **8.5 Recommendation for Action**

We must proceed to demand for concrete deliberate and all-inclusive system of governance that direct efforts towards accountable and transformational environment in gender relations. Passage of the Affirmative Action Bill into Law should be a government priority. There is a need for distinct legislation that will regulate gender equality dynamics in the public and private sectors for sustainable development. Secondly, allocation of adequate budgetary support for institutions mandated to promote gender equality and women’s rights and transparent accountability mechanisms to track public resources for women’s rights and gender equality.

CSOs should track women's representation in the parliamentary committees including District Assembly Committees and sub-committees and use the evidence to advocate for more women representation on key committees at the national and district levels.

The Gender Ministry should publicize the fund to support women contesting local level elections through the regional offices of the Department of Women and the District Gender Desk Office.

The status of women in power and decision-making 62 years after independence, 33 years after ratifying CEDAW, 24 years after signing to Beijing Platform for Action gives ample justification for Ghana to take immediate urgent actions to address the gaps.

- Deepen women participation in governance through capacity building, representation and decision-making process.
- Reforms in the electoral system like the adoption of the proportional representation election system to ensure women representation
- Women who wants to be in decision-making positions need to be resourced personally

## CHAPTER 9

# INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISM FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN (CEDAW ARTICLE 10; SDG 17)

### 9.1 Introduction

**T**he Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs (MOWAC) was re-designated as the Ministry of Gender; Children and Social Protection (MOGCSP) in 2013 with an expanded mandate to promote gender equality; promotion and protection of children's rights and welfare and empowerment of the vulnerable, excluded, the aged and persons with disabilities for Sustainable National Development.

The Ministry's priority programme areas include Early Childhood Development, Addressing Child Labour, Human Trafficking, Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence.

### 9.2 Brief Situational Analysis

Although efforts have been made at strengthening the legal and institutional framework on violence against women by various interventions, there are still challenges such as funding, strong influence of tradition and cultural practices, Inadequate capacity and awareness of law enforcement institutions to enforce laws and put into practice policies concerning violence against women, lack of effective mechanism for planning, implementation and monitoring programmes carried out by agencies responsible for the welfare of women.

## **9.3 Achievements**

### **9.3.1 Government's interventions and achievements**

- The creation of Ghana Card and the Household registry by the ministry
- The Ministry has established regional offices and plans to have Gender Desk Officers in all sector Ministries and District Assemblies.
- In May 2015, the Ministry launched the National Gender policy to help in mainstreaming gender equality concerns in national development processes by improving the Social, Legal, Civic, Political, Economic and Social-cultural conditions of the people of Ghana particularly women, girls, children and the vulnerable and people with disabilities.
- The Ministry has launched the child and family Welfare Policy to ensure holistic protection and welfare of the Ghanaian child within a functional family system.
- The Ministry further developed a 3 year sector medium term development plan (SMTDP) (2010 – 2013) with six major stated objectives, notable among which are the promotion of Gender mainstreaming and Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) in MDA's and MMDAs through capacity building and improvement of the Socio-economic status of women and children, the vulnerable and, marginalized groups through targeted interventions.
- It has also developed Gender Analysis Framework and Planning Units (DPCU's) and the inclusion of gender in planning processes for poverty reduction, local Economic Development, Agriculture and Infrastructural development at the Local level.
- The Ministry in collaboration with Ghana Statistical Service have undertaken an Assessment of Gender Statistics at National and District Levels (2017-2021) of 20 MDA's.
- The Government of Ghana has ratified a number of International frameworks and protocols for the promotion of Gender Equality, Women's Empowerment and Social Development issues which requires gender statistics for monitoring their implementation.
- The LEAP and the School feeding programme

### **9.3.2 CSOs interventions and achievements**

- Public advocacy for the relevance of the Ghana Card and Household registry
- Engagement meetings with Ministries and other government agencies
- Media Engagements
- A formation of a collective front and voice to demand and push for change
- Increased level of awareness on women representation and gender equality issues
- Strengthened CSOs and WROs work
- Directly training women in skills and leadership.
- Passage of the Domestic Violence Act (2007)

## **9.4 Remaining Gaps and Policy Issues**

In spite of major achievements some key challenges encountered in the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) are as follows:

- Lack of data coordination between the Ghana Card and the Household registry which has been done in 2 regions
- Low participation of women in decision making at all levels
- Harmful socio-cultural practices
- Violence against Women/Children
- Child trafficking and streetism
- Commercial sex exploitation of women and children
- Low representation of women in conflict management
- High infant/maternal mortality rate
- Low access to credit and support facilities by women
- Inadequate disaggregated data (gender, sex and age)
- Lack of accountability institutions/mechanisms and empowerment of existing ones to execute mandates.
- Domestic Violence Fund has only received one funding from government since its establishment

## **9.5 Recommendations for Action**

- Institutionalizing gender –responsive budgeting. GRB prioritizes income and expenditure such that specific needs of women, men, girls and boys are met equally
- Addressing socio-cultural beliefs practices and institutions which are discriminatory of women and girls, out of school girls, teenage pregnancies and addressing violence against women and girls
- The public sector institutions, MDA's and MMDA's are governed by the institutions and common to all, no role has been assigned by law that specifies the production of gender statistics within any institution in the country with no specific provisions on either gender equality or gender statistics, most institutions are under no obligation to compile, analyze and disseminate gender statistics to monitor achievements in gender equality and Women's empowerment. Steps should be taken to ensure implementation of gender statistics across institutions.
- Empowering the queen mothers to play more visible roles in communities to demystify the role of women in leadership.
- The Chieftaincy Act, 2008 (Act 759) should be reviewed to include queen mothers.
- The mandate of MOGCSP has been expanded so their budget allocation should be increased
- Continuous capacity building for women in leadership
- Advocate for a percentage of royalties to be used for development projects in the traditional area

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## CHAPTER 10

# WOMEN AND HUMAN RIGHTS (CEDAW ARTICLES 2, 3 AND 4)

### 10.1 Introduction

**H**uman rights violations in Ghana continue to prevail especially for women and girls in rural deprived areas. Today, many women in Ghana still have their basic human rights abused because they are women. Various systemic cultural, religious and traditional issues contribute to the abuse of human rights and discrimination against women in Ghana.

Articles 2, 3 and 4 of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) have been identified as the main pointers requiring governments to ensure the protection of the basic human rights of women and also ensure that specific measures are put in place to ensure that more opportunities are created for women for equality and elimination of all forms of discrimination.

### 10.2 Overview of Progress in Human Rights Protection of Women in Ghana

Ghana has a considerable legal and policy environment that seeks to protect the rights of all persons. In Chapter 5 and 6 of the 1992 Constitution, Ghana has committed itself to ensuring the protection of fundamental human rights of all Ghanaians. The passage of the Gender Policy in 2015 also set a good step for government in promoting the human rights of women in Ghana.

There has been a considerable increment in activism for women's rights on digital media without restrictions. More young women and girls are more assertive and are given equal edge to compete with their male colleagues. The consciousness of gender equality in government and civil society activities have also increased. More opportunities are progressively being created for women in various sectors especially in education, entrepreneurship and media.

### **10.3 Achievements**

#### **Government's Interventions**

- Government of Ghana launched its strategy towards the elimination of child marriage in Ghana in 2016
- Ghana has adopted a National Gender Policy which seeks to empower women and create more opportunities for women and girls
- The launch of the anti-child marriage programme was a significant show of government of Ghana's commitment to ending the issue of child marriage
- In 2015, the government closed down a witch camp in the Northern Region of Ghana. This set as a significant move towards challenging some stigma and discrimination in culture that goes against women
- Establishment of regional re-integration committee to dissolve the alleged witch camps and re-integrate them into their communities.

#### **Role of Civil Society**

- Educate and create awareness of the rights of women and girls
- Advocate for the formulation of policies and laws towards the provision of basic services (e.g legal aid, access to capital for economic ventures)
- Increased media engagement in women rights issues in the country.

### **10.4 Existing Gaps**

The following are existing gaps:

- Insufficient sustainable human rights education;

- Ineffective justice system to encourage women to report human rights abuses;
- 
- Still outstanding are the Spousal Property Rights and the Intestate Succession Review Bills;

## **10.5 Recommendations**

- Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection should be resourced to be able to implement the various programmes and policies that are aimed at advancing the human rights of Ghanaians especially women in the rural areas;
- Human rights education should be made available to women across the country to enable them demand their rights;
- Government should continue to partner with civil society groups to advance the human rights protection of women and girls;
- Human rights issues should be included in basic education curriculum.

## CHAPTER 11

# WOMEN AND THE MEDIA (CEDAW ARTICLE 5)

### 11.1 Introduction

**W**omen and the Media under Section J of Beijing Platform for Action has two main objectives. These include increasing the participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in and through the media and new technologies of communication and promoting a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media (Women Action, 2000).

This report focuses on the current situation of women and the media in Ghana. Chapter 12 of the Ghanaian Constitution protects both freedoms of expression and of the media. The freedoms stipulated amongst other things include the prohibition of censorship, the freedom to establish private media, insulation of the media from the government's control of interference, editorial freedom by the media and independence of the state (public) broadcaster. As a result of these far-reaching guarantees of media freedom, Ghana is one of the few countries where the government steers away from interfering in the media.

The media in Ghana is an agenda setter and serve as a platform for issues concerning politics, development, economic and other issues to be discussed. Policy makers and politician use the media to put across their programmes and the media is also able to carry the concerns of the public to the policy makers.

News media remain the major and most influential source of information, ideas and opinions for most people around the world. It is a key element of the public and private space in which people, nations and societies live. Across the world, the cultural underpinnings of gender inequality and discrimination against women are reinforced in the media.

## **11.2 The Media Landscape in Ghana**

Ghana's media landscape mostly conforms to political affiliations. A well-informed public, a pluralistic media free from government intervention, objective state-owned media and journalists' adherence to professional standards and codes of ethics are some of the most important pre-conditions for a thriving democratic society.

The vibrancy of the media landscape is reflected in the number of media networks available in the country. New publications appear on the newsstand every day as much as there are over 24/7 radio stations nationwide (GMMP, 2015). Ghana has 398 radio stations and 88 TV Stations as per the National Communications Authority of Ghana 2018 report and over 135 newspaper publication.

### **Ownership**

Ghanaian media ownership and management is male-dominated. A research conducted by the Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA) and Reporters Without Borders (RSF) in 2017 indicated that out of twenty-five (25) media organisations monitored, only four (4) were owned by women. It is inferred from the research finding that there is less than a quarter of women owned media houses.

#### ***11.2.1 Participation and Representation***

Women's participation and representation in media as well as their access to it have consistently been an issue of discussion and debate in Ghana. In an IWMF 2018 report on Ghana, 6 Ghanaian media companies participated in the study. The study included 141 female and 251 male journalists. Findings revealed that men outnumbered women by almost a 2:1 ratio in these companies. Women's absence was evident in governance (28 per

cent) and top management (15.8 per cent). These are two key executive levels where major company decisions are made.

A Media Foundation for West Africa and Reporters without Borders (2017) research indicated that coverage of men and women in Ghanaian newspapers showed that women are quantitatively under-represented in the media. The underrepresentation of women in the media is not only limited to the traditional (print and broadcast) media but has also found its way into new electronic media forms, showing only 26 per cent of people in internet stories and media news tweets to be women (The Global Media Monitoring Project, 2015).

### **11.2.2 Media Management**

The board of directors of a company has a strong influence on how an organization operates as well as on the decisions it makes. A gender balanced or gender sensitive board is considered one of the ways to encourage a variety of perspectives. While many companies acknowledge this publicly and claim to be prioritizing the issue of gender equality and balance, these numbers illustrate that this is not necessarily happening when it comes to actual board recruitment processes of media houses.

The research by MFWA and RSF (2017) showed that women still make up a small percentage of the management boards of directors of the media companies. Out of twenty-five (25) companies studied, thirteen (13) had their board members listed. Eight (8) out of those thirteen (13) had women amongst their board of directors. The research showed that all the three state owned companies had women on their boards. However, just like the privately owned companies, the male board members outnumbered the females. There was a total of twenty-seven (27) male board members and thirteen (13) female board members respectively.

Findings from a survey conducted by Women, Media and Change (WOMECE) illustrated similar outcomes as those previously conducted by MFWA and RSF (2017). From 5 media houses that took part in the survey, it was revealed that women held key positions in some media organisation. For example, News Times Corporation and Ghana News Agency, currently have

two females in key positions in each organisation. At Daily Guide and Ghanaian Times, one female held a key position in each organisation.

However, a respondent from Despite Group of Companies, which is currently owns 4 radio stations and a TV station mentioned “a lot of women are holding very important positions at Despite Media”. The positions these women hold include News Editor, Deputy Director of Administration, the Board Chairperson, Editor-in-Chief, Chairperson of Senior Staff Union and the Managing Editor. These findings show clearly that less females hold key positions in the media companies.

### **11.2.3 Coverage**

GMMP 2015 report revealed no improvement in the coverage women receive in the media with regard to quantity. The report showed that “women make up only 24 per cent of persons heard, read about or seen in newspaper, television and radio news”.

It is therefore evident that where news coverage is concerned, men received better coverage than women did both quality and quantity, making it difficult for women to make significant achievements. The absence of women in the management of media organisations has resulted in the poor coverage and portrayal of women in the media. There are many reasons for this situation. The reasons include:

- The media focuses on political reporting for popularity and revenue generation
- Social issues that affect the poor and vulnerable, who are mostly women and children are usually ignored because they “don’t sell”.
- Gender biases and prejudices in the media are also seen in the ‘choices’ of media managers, advertisers and media professionals (including editors, journalists, sub-editors, and news photographers).

From the survey conducted by WOMEC, four (4) respondents mentioned they were not aware of any legal reforms enacted by Government of Ghana to combat discrimination and/or gender bias in the media. However, one (1)

respondent mentioned that the Right to Information Bill has been passed to fight gender bias in the media. However, in reality the Right to Information Law guarantees citizens equal rights to access information in the custody of any public institution in accordance with Article 31F of the 1992 Constitution (Myjoyonline, 2018).

#### **11.2.4 Media Related Associations and Organisations**

There is an urgent need for strong women media associations to advocate for representation in decision-making positions within their organisations. This is an important way they can influence organisational policies to their benefit. Their representation will also help bring balance in media house's priorities. Some strong women media associations include:

##### **Women, Media and Change (WOMECE)**

Women Media and Change (WOMECE) is a national independent non-profit and non-governmental organization established in response to the need to promote effective use of the media for the advancement of women. WOMECE recognizes that women's issues are a dimension of many issues such as education, health, environment, and human rights, and is committed to giving women public voice and visibility through the mass media to expand their participation in the public arena. WOMECE is committed towards bridging the gap between rhetoric and action in addressing issues on gender and empowering women to gain public voice and visibility as well as have control of their lives. WOMECE believes strongly that the media are crucial for recording activities of men and women and constitute our collective memory and that the trend of excluding women's issues and activities from media content has adverse implications for societal progress and therefore should be halted.

##### **Association of Women in the Media (ASWIM)**

The Association of Women in the Media (ASWIM), was relaunched in 2018, which is aimed at recognizing the works of female journalists across the country to forge a united front and bring about change on the Ghanaian media landscape. The launch was held on the theme, "Ghana's development needs, and strategic contributions from women in the media".

### **Alliance for Women in Media, Africa (AWMA)**

Alliance for Women in Media, Africa (AWMA) is an association of female journalists and broadcasters set up to support women in journalism and related media disciplines and to advocate for women's rights through the media.

## **11.3 Women and Girls in ICT**

According to the National Communication Authority (2018), Ghana has 398 radio stations and 88 TV Stations operating in the country. The electronic media landscape has witnessed the increase in the number of women over the past five (5) years. The introduction of digital Television (TV), in particular, has seen a lot of women involved in news reporting, news casting and as hosts. Two prominent TV stations have only women panels on specific days, which helped to increase visibility of women in discussions on topical issues.

### ***11.3.1 Policy and Regulatory Frameworks Governing Women's Internet Rights***

Several laws and policies regulate Ghana's internet space. These include:

- Article 21 of the 1992 Constitution, which grants freedom of press and other media; and freedom of speech, expression, thought and information.
- The National Communications Authorities Acts and Legislative Instruments
- The Ghana National Telecom Policy
- The National Gender Policy
- Internet and Communications Technology for Accelerated Development polices (ICT4AD)
- The Electronic Communications Act and its Amendments
- The Electronic Transactions Acts
- Associated policies and Acts including the SIM Card Registration policy.

### **11.3.2 ICT Policies and Initiatives**

There has been a number of policy interventions and initiatives to expose women and girls to technology and internet in Ghana. These include:

- Ghana ICT Policy for Accelerated Development: This policy has yielded several positive results in the media landscape for women. Under this Policy, the Ghana Investment Fund for Electronic Communications (GIFEC) had been created to facilitate the provision of internet connectivity and ICT infrastructure to the underserved and un-served areas of the country.
- The Girls in ICT Project continue to expose girls to the many opportunities available in the ICT sector and to encourage and generate the interest of young girls to consider pursuing careers in technology innovation and artificial intelligence. Over 500 girls from deprived schools were introduced to ICT (2018) in selected districts of Ashanti Region (Ministry of Communication, 2018).
- Centre for Research Information Technology and Advanced Computing (CRITAC): The institution trains, motivates and works in a collaborative environment with young female scientists, technologists and developers.
- Ispace Foundation: The foundation equips women with coding, business management, professional networking and pitching skills and access to funding to kick start their businesses.
- Developers Vogue: The organisation creates awareness around women in tech and also supports initiatives like introducing and teaching principles around data science and analysis
- The Campaign for female education (CAMFED), and Council for Technical, Vocational Education and Training (COTVET) are partnering to promote technical, vocational education and training (TVET) as a catalyst for socio-economic development. As part of the partnership between the two organisations, CAMFED is working with COTVET to promote the participation of females in education and employment in the technical and vocational sector. The organisations also intend to undertake advocacy on gender stereotypes and promote equity for female students and persons with disability.

- The Government of Ghana through partnership with UNESCO and in collaboration with Advance Information Technology Institute-Kofi Annan Centre of Excellence in ICT (AITI-KACE), Ghana Education Service (GES), Heritage and Cultural Society of Africa (HACSA), DreamOval and Soronko Solution in 2018 provided 300 female junior high school students with ICT skills in development of codes and application. At the Open Day for Girls in Information Communication Technology held at Kofi Annan ICT Centre this year, it was reported that over 4,000 girls from selected basic schools have participated in this initiative (GhanaWeb, 2019).

### ***11.3.3 The Gender and Digital Gap***

Although the electronic media landscape in Ghana has generally improved, gender gaps still exist. Globally 50.9 per cent of men use the internet compared to 44.9 per cent of women. Thus, worldwide the proportion of women using the internet is 12 per cent lower than the proportion of men. About 10.32 million (35 percent) of Ghana's population have access to the internet (Digital 2019 Ghana). There is under-representation of women in the electronic media space as compared to men. Women and girls in the rural areas still have limited access to television and telecommunication services. This is exacerbated by poor digital and radio signals.

Access to the internet in Ghana, is gendered and privileged. More men and relatively fewer elite women access the internet at much higher rates than poorer men and the vast majority of Ghanaian women. Ghanaian men and women have diverse social media behaviour and different rate of engagements. About 64 per cent of males are more active face book users compared to 36 per cent females advertising audience. There is 63 per cent male advertising audience on Instagram as compared to 37 per cent females. About 84 per cent of males are active twitter users as compared to 16 per cent of females.

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engagements. About 64 per cent of males are more active face book users compared to 36 per cent females advertising audience. There is 63 per cent male advertising audience on Instagram as compared to 37 per cent females. About 84 per cent of males are active twitter users as compared to 16 per cent of females.

As the UN emphasized, “the gender divide is one of the most significant inequalities to be amplified by the digital revolution, and cuts across all social and income groups”. Throughout the world, women face serious challenges that are not only economic but social as well as cultural obstacles that limit or prevent their access to, use of, and benefits from ICTs. Using the African Declaration of Internet Rights as a guide, the following critical issues curtail full internet access and use in Ghana, particularly among women:

- Limited infrastructure and access to high-speed bandwidth
- High cost of accessing the internet and associated technologies
- Threats to free speech and privacy online
- Limited access to local content online
- Barriers to the use of Ghanaian languages – where the literacy of marginalised women is limited to the reading and writing of local languages which obviously is not the language used online. It is important that women are informally taught how to read their local languages so it is easy for them to read their language online
- Limited ICT skills
- Few women occupying leadership positions in the internet and technology space

#### ***11.3.4 Gaps/Factors that limit women from effective access and use of the internet***

- **Lack of internet infrastructure and low bandwidth:** According to the National Communications Authority (NCA), Ghana’s mobile internet penetration in 2015 was 59.7 per cent. Like most African countries, many Ghanaian internet users access the internet on mobile devices at a much higher rate than users in developed countries. In fact, many Ghanaians are adapting to the use of mobile platforms, which

is recognised as the future of internet communications. However, in many rural areas in Ghana where many women live and earn a living, low bandwidth greatly hampers access to the internet.

- **Affordability:** Internet costs are high in Ghana, even for the average middle class. Internet cost, coupled with the lack of high-speed infrastructure results in only 17 per cent of Ghanaians being able to access and use the internet effectively (ITU, 2013). According to the Alliance for Affordable Internet (2010), only 2.1 per cent of rural dwellers accessed the internet as compared to 12.7 per cent of urban dwellers. According to World Bank Country Economic Memorandum (CEM) report on Ghana (2007), the high internet charges create a barrier to internet access for many women. The cost of devices to access the internet is also a limiting factor. Since majority of women in Ghana live in rural and urban-poor areas, it is almost impossible for many of such women to afford a computer or a smart phone in addition to the already exorbitant costs of data.
- **Literacy, Education and Training:** According to a report by the Gender, Equity and Rural Employment Division of the Food and Agricultural Organisation (2012), although the official literacy rate in Ghana is around 65 per cent, actual functional literacy is estimated to be much lower (around 28 percent). The report posits that in rural areas, where the benefit of internet access will accrue the most, only 29 per cent of women are literate as compared to 59 per cent of men. The country's informal sector comprises of many women who are not literate to the English language and any other proficiency apart from their local languages. Ghanaian languages are predominantly spoken in the informal sector while English is used in the formal sector. Ordinarily therefore, illiteracy is a barrier to the effective and efficient use of the internet by many women and therefore functions to disempower them.
- **Socialisation of girls away from the use of science and technology:** In urban Ghanaian elite environments where the internet is available, girls still face barriers to access the internet due to the continued repression and penchant not to expose girls fully to technology. This is manifest in the toys and games that girls are socialised to use; in how girls are socialised to not fully own how

comfortable they are with science and technology, and in how parents are unwilling to bear the cost of exposing girls to technology.

- **Content:** According to Research ICT Africa (2012) 'What is happening in ICT in Ghana' study, 30 per cent of internet users in Ghana cited "lack of content in Ghanaian languages" and 20 per cent mentioned "no interesting content" as barriers to internet use. There is not much locally relevant content on the internet particularly for Ghanaian women. This is a result of several issues including fewer Ghanaian women using and producing content; the de-prioritisation of Ghanaian women's life experiences when narratives are told and history is written; and the exclusion of women's voices and women's stories in the Ghanaian narrative. Misogynistic, patriarchal norms that function to exclude women's voices in the offline spaces are generously reproduced in online spaces.
- **Time:** Due to societal demands on women to fulfil their role as predominant care-givers, women often have fewer hours to spend on the internet compared to men. Even if they have full access to the web (in the case of elite, urban women), women typically spend that time online doing a bit of social media, email (if work functions demand it) and on electronic banking, if available. Additionally, women may use the web to get updated on recipes, first aid, home care and other things related to care giving. In contrast, men usually have more hours on the internet which they often use to further their work and social lives (Fallows, 2005). Time constraints on women's use of the internet is further restricted if they are only able to access the internet from their workplace due to limited resources (devices, budget for data etc.) at home.
- **Gender segregation in employment:** Generally, more Ghanaian women occupy workplace positions that do not require extensive use of the internet. According to the Ghana Statistical Service, an estimated 80 per cent of Ghanaians work in the informal sector. And women make up the majority of the workers in the informal sector. This is a huge problem and a barrier to women making meaningful use of the internet. Due to limited resources at home, more workers in the formal sector are exposed to technology at work. But limiting women's roles in the formal workplaces prevents Ghanaian women

from benefitting fully from the availability of the internet in their workplace.

## **11.4 Women's Rights Online**

Women's rights online are particularly linked to:

- The rights to access a free, safe and open internet, the right to reducing discrimination and combating digitally-enabled violence and other pertinent factors that limit women's ability to fully realise their rights online.
- The norms and practices that inform the articulation and promotion of women's rights online reflect those that are used offline.
- Specifically, gendered social structures and norms which define the Ghanaian social relationships in various communities have a direct bearing on social relationships online (WFWA, 2018).

### ***11.4.1 Threats Ghanaian women face in the use of the internet***

Violence Ghanaian women face online include cyberbullying and harassment; the publication of private information for malicious intent; sexually explicit emails and SMS messages; unwanted and inappropriate sexual advances on social media sites. In the Ghanaian social media scene, the following specific forms of violence have been expressed by women:

- Intimidation, bullying and harassment, often by groups of young men, that are directed specifically at young women feminists.
- Targeting and harassment (mostly sexual images and innuendoes) directed at female public figures and celebrities.
- Cyber stalking
- Death threats and rape threats directed at women and teenage girls.
- Revenge pornography where men release nudes of their former partners. Most of these cases go unreported.
- Body shaming and slut-shaming where Ghanaian women are subjected to relentless rounds of cruel shaming based on their looks or based on their sexual lives.

- The use of all manner of verbally violent tactics meant to effectively silence women and their stories especially the visible fight for women's rights.
- The efforts to denigrate, silence and exclude spaces that promote and support all aspects of Ghanaian women's lives.
- The death of positive support directed at women who are the subjects of digitally enhanced violence.

## **11.5 Recommendation on Promoting Access to the Media and Internet**

These recommendations will create an enabling environment that will help women and girls to assert their rights and optimise the opportunities that the internet offers for their development.

- **Internet Infrastructure, Connectivity, Access and Costs:** The National Telecommunications Policy clearly states the government's intentions of providing universal access to the internet for all communities in Ghana. The government must double its efforts to meet this objective. Several measures have been announced by government to gradually improve access to higher bandwidths in a number of communities. This includes the use of the Ghana Investment Fund for Electronic Communications (GIFEC) to extend mobile telephony to eighty rural communities. Women must be provided with affordable and easy access to the internet. This could include the provision of well-resourced multimedia centres throughout the country, especially in rural communities where women live and work.
- **Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) facilities** in schools, including vocational and tertiary institutions, must be improved and upgraded. The Ministry of Communication which is now solely responsible for the Community Information Centres (CIC) should consider placing ICT facilities at the disposal of rural schools to enable all Ghanaian children, regardless of their geographical locations, especially the girls to have access to Internet use. This will enable Ghana to act in accordance with the "newly adopted UN

Sustainable Development Goals to advance women's empowerment, and a commitment to connect everyone in Least Developed Countries to the Internet by 2020."

- Content: There is an urgent need to develop online content that is relevant to the needs and concerns of Ghanaian women and children. Stakeholders must allocate more resources towards the creation of content and effective use of the internet for the differently abled. Users must make a conscious effort to use content platforms (e.g. Wikipedia) already available on the internet to add locally-relevant content to such platforms.
- Literacy, Training and Awareness Creation: Girls and women should be encouraged to enter science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) programmes. Several initiatives, such as robotic workshops and competitions initiated by the Ghana Robotics Academy Foundation (GRAF) throughout Ghana for Junior Secondary Schools, Senior Secondary Schools and Colleges, already expose girls to STEM.
- District/Municipal/Metropolitan Assemblies should set aside a certain percentage of their Common Fund solely for women and girls' education in ICTs.
- Combating digitally-enabled violence against women: There should be specific policies and laws designed to fight VAW in online spaces such as cyberstalking, sexual harassments, and revenge porn. Stakeholders include The Parliament; Ministry of Children, Gender and Social Protection; women's rights organisations such as NETRIGHT, ABANTU. These specific policies and laws when enacted should be made known by the citizens.
- Government should enact a policy that guarantees specifically the safety of women and girls online. The Ministry of Communication has developed a National Cyber Security Policy & Strategy Final Draft document. Policy statement; Child Online Protection Policy measures will be implemented through multi-stakeholder working with government, industry, civil society, and relevant international child online protection agencies. Government will encourage dialogue at national and local levels to engage all concerned and create awareness of the possibilities and dangers of the Internet.

- Africa Cybersecurity and Digital Rights Organisation is into cybersecurity policy development and capacity building. The organisation promotes cybersecurity awareness creation and works with government to build cybersecurity capacity for the development and deployment of a National Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT).
- Socio-Cultural Practices: Cultural values and norms are to be respected, but the culture that subject women to servitude so that they have limited opportunities in accessing and using the internet and other technologies to improve their lives should not be encouraged. There is therefore a need for a paradigm shift from the status quo to a culture where women are supported in their day-to-day duties and responsibilities. This will give them the leverage to tap into the potential of the internet and other available technologies to upgrade themselves and become economically independent.
- Women in Media should contribute extensively and more sustainably to the campaign on the passage of the Affirmative Action Bill (AAB) as it is a guaranteed way of increasing women's representation in decision-making spaces.
- Media content (news) should be balanced across gender lines. Women issues should be given the same priorities as political, economic issues etc.
- Management of media houses should be committed to promoting gender equality in the organisation. This can be done by changing the power relationships in teams. Management should include engagements with women and coverage of women's issues in its programming.
- Women must be represented on all levels of authority in the organisation. Women deserve a place in the newsroom and in senior positions just as much as men.
- Unpaid household care work of girls and women should be reduced so they can have access to the internet.
- Encourage women in the media landscape to advocate for women and children issues.

## **11.6 Conclusion**

Women and their issues are mostly ignored and invisible in the media, with far less content featuring their expertise and views. However, when women participate and are well represented in the media, it influences every facets of society. Ghana has made progress in increasing women and girls' participation and access to technologies of communication. However, internet coverage is limited in rural areas.

Government and civil society organisations are implementing initiatives to empower young girls and women to take up positions in the media and ICT space. It is important to encourage women and young girls to take advantage of these initiatives that seek to empower them to take up professions in male dominated fields and make decisions. Finally, to ensure that women and girls issues become a priority in the media, structural and systemic barriers must be removed.

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## CHAPTER 12

# WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENT (CEDAW GENERAL RECOMMENDATION 37; SDG 6, 7,11,13,14 AND 15)

### 12.1 Introduction

**A**t the global level, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is the international environmental treaty adopted on 9 May 1992 and entered into force on March 21, 1994, after a sufficient number of countries, including Ghana ratified it. The main objective of the UNFCCC is to “stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system”. Since 1995, the parties to the Convention have met annually in the Conferences of the Parties (COP) to assess progress in dealing with climate change. In 1997, the Kyoto Protocol was concluded and established legally binding obligations for developed countries to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions in the period 2008–2012. In 2015, the Paris Agreement was adopted, governing emission reductions from 2020 on through commitments of countries in Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), lowering the target to 1.5°C. The Paris Agreement builds upon the UNFCCC and for the first time brings all nations into a common cause to undertake ambitious efforts to combat climate change and adapt to its effects, with enhanced support to assist developing countries to do so, charting a new course in the global climate effort. The Nationally Determined Contributions were first developed as Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) and in the aftermath of COP21, these

INDCs became Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) when a country ratified the Paris Agreement.

Ghana has ratified the Paris Agreement and as a result started Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) processes.

## **12.2 Brief Situational Analysis**

In Ghana, the basis of environmental policy in Ghana is the 1992 Constitution. Chapter Six of the Constitution mandates the Government to take appropriate measures needed to protect and safeguard the national environment for posterity; and in cooperation with other agencies, protect the wider international environment for mankind. Following from the Constitution, the Environmental Protection Agency Act, 1994 (Act 490) and Environmental Assessment Regulation, LI 1652 has been passed by Parliament, together with Regulations made under these laws to operationalise the broad environmental policy directives within the Constitution of Ghana.

The Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI) together with other agencies and departments such as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Forestry Commission (FC) are largely responsible for the design, development and implementation of issues on environment and related issues. In terms of policies and laws that guide the environment and its use, Ghana has passed a number of laws that relate to different aspects of the environment.

### ***12.2.1 Ghana's Policies and Laws on the Environment***

National polices and laws on the environment include:

- National plan of Action to Combat Desertification 1986
- National Oil Spill Contingency plan 1985
- National Environmental Action plan for comprehensive 1988
- 40-Year Socio-Economic Transformational Plan (2015/18)
- National Climate Change Policy (2012)
- National Climate Master Plan (2015)

- Nationally Determined Contributions (2015)
- National Climate Adaptation Strategy (2010)
- National Climate Adaptation Plan (NAP) Framework (2018)
- Agenda for Jobs: Creating Prosperity and Equal Opportunity For All (2018)
- Local Governance Act (2016)
- National Climate Change and Green Economy Learning Strategy (2016)
- Ghana Meteorological Agency Act 2004 (Act 682)
- National Ghana Forest and Wildlife Policy (2012)
- National Environment Policy (2014)
- National Water Policy (2007)
- National Transport Policy (2008)
- National Energy Policy (2010)
- National Gender Policy (2015)
- Ghana Plan of Action for Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation (2011-2015)
- National plan of Action to Combat Desertification (1986)
- National Oil Spill Contingency plan (1985)
- National Environmental Action plan for comprehensive (1988)

### **12.2.2 Women and Environment**

Women play a critical role in managing issues relating to the environment. However, they are more likely to have greater negative impact in the event of environmental hazards. As a result of the gender roles that women play in Ghanaian societies, particularly as caregivers and persons involved in care work, women are generally more likely to be affected by environmental problems. For example, drought makes it difficult for women to access water for cooking and undertake other household activities: women and girls therefore experience the greater risk and impacts of environmental disasters.

Regarding climate change, it has been noted that its occurrence worsens the pre-existing gender inequalities such as, access to resources like education, food, water, land, housing, employment, energy is limited. When there are changes in the climatic conditions, it is less likely for women and girls to

adapt faster because they are often responsible for gathering and producing food, sourcing fuel for cooking, collecting water and changes in the climate therefore makes these tasks difficult and time consuming. Furthermore, women have different susceptibilities to toxic effects to chemicals, especially towards their health. Women are also largely absent in all levels of policy formulation and decision-making in environmental management, conservation protection and rehabilitation, experience and skills in advocacy monitoring of natural resources management. Marginalisation of women in policy decision-making bodies, educational institutions and environment-related agencies at managerial levels are some of the challenges facing women in the environmental sphere.

However, given the right resources and support, women help in reducing resources use and reusing or recycling resources. They play powerful roles in influencing consumption decisions and through grassroots and youth campaigns and provide the main labour force for subsistence food production and nutrition.

Similar to what pertained at the global level, initial discussions of climate change and related environmental issues in Ghana, this is not sufficiently consider issues of concern to women. However, in recent times, gender related issues have become a key concern to issues around the environment. Civil society organisations have constantly made a strong case for the inclusion of women and gender related issues in environment and climate change discourse based on two (2) key issues: women's productive and reproductive activity are directly interlinked with their experience of inequality in society and therefore discussions on climate change need to consider critical issues and concerns of women. Secondly, based on women's specific knowledge and experience of interacting with the environment, they have to be considered as critical agents of change in addressing mitigation and adaptation issues climate change and other environmental hazards. Women's agency must therefore be factored in the planning, implementation and monitoring of policies, programmes and projects aimed at resolving environmental issues.

The advocacy for the inclusion of women's issues gained momentum in Ghana in the year 2000 leading to the formation of coalitions, networks and organisations including the Gender Action on Climate Change for Equality and Sustainability (GACCES), a platform for women's rights organisations in Ghana to discuss and influence national climate change policies and processes from a gender perspective. Under the leadership of its host organization, namely ABANTU for Development, GACCES contributed a chapter on "Gender and Climate Change" in Ghana's National Climate Change Policy (NCCP, 2012).

### **12.3 Achievements since Beijing 1995 in Relation to CEDAW and the SDGs**

A common denominator of the CEDAW and the SDGs is inclusion. It is acknowledged that the goals and objectives of CEDAW and the SDGs, can only be achieved with the specific inclusion of marginalized groups such as women, children and persons with disabilities. In relation to women and environment therefore, Ghana has achieved some measure of success in its attempt to ensure the full inclusion of women and other marginalized groups. Though the process has been slow, it is worth mentioning the achievements made over the years, since 1995.

#### ***12.3.1 Government's Interventions and Achievements***

Based on increased advocacy over the years on mainstreaming women and gender related issues into environment and climate change issues, some of the interventions, policies and laws which have been enacted by Ghana's Parliament are leading the way in addressing the gendered impacts of environmental challenges as outlined below:

- The National Gender Policy that provides for mainstreaming gender equality and women's empowerment into Ghana's development processes, and discusses the inclusion of women into climate change interventions. Though this Policy does not provide clear guidelines for mainstreaming women's issues into environment, it recognises the need for environmental issues to take into consideration women's issues and their inclusion as a developmental area.

- Ghana's National Climate Change Policy contains a whole chapter on women and climate change. The chapter acknowledges the marginalisation of women in environmentally related issues and provides for strategies for mainstreaming women and gender related issues in climate change. It also notes the inclusion of women from the inception stage to monitoring and evaluating climate change policies, programmes and projects.
- Ghana's Gender Strategy on Reducing Emission from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) was developed to mainstream gender considerations into the forestry sector, paying special attention to REDD+ processes.
- Performance Standards and Labelling (Improved Biomass Cookstoves) Regulations, 2019 for women has been developed by Ghana's Energy Commission
- The Renewable Energy Act of 2011 provides for Improved Cookstoves, including development of standards for improved biomass stoves and formalization of biomass markets and Regulation. It also discusses plans to disseminate 2 million clean cookstoves to reduce the health hazards of smoke on women.
- The development of Ghana's Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (GH-NDCs) consulted and actively engaged with women and their groups. Women's ideas contributions and experiences have therefore formed a core feature of the GH-NDCs. Specific recommendations to promote gender responsiveness of the NDCs have been developed and approved by government.
- Ghana is one of the few countries in Africa, under the UNFCCC that has a specific action plan on adaptation in its Nationally Determined Contributions (GH-NDCs) and through that, has undertaken comprehensive research on a gender analysis of the adaptation actions under the GH-NDCs. Following from the research, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI) have jointly launched a Gender Technical Working Group to facilitate the implementation of the action on gender under Ghana's NDCs. These processes are serving as best practices for other countries to learn from Ghana.

- There is the inclusion and specific targeting of women in the implementation of government programmes on environment, including the National Adaptation Fund Project (NAFP), which is being implemented in the three (3) Northern Regions of Ghana. The project has women leaders, women farmers and ordinary women as citizens of Ghana, becoming members of the steering committee of the project. A specific 40% representation of women within these committees is maintained.

### ***12.3.2 Civil Society Organisations' Interventions and Achievements***

It is important to note that each of the achievements listed above as government interventions has been possible through the sustained advocacy of civil society organisations, coalitions and networks working on the various subject. Due to the complexities of the issues of the environment and climate change there has often been the tendency for policy makers to ignore the important nexus of those issues with gender related concerns. However, the persistent advocacy from women's rights organisations and coalitions has brought women's voices and agency into the mainstream development agenda. A key achievement has been the recognition and acceptance from government agencies on the environment on the important role of women in articulating national policies and programmes. Women in civil society organisations have developed relevant technical expertise on mainstreaming gender in environmental issues. Civil society organisations are therefore represented on critical Technical and Steering Committees. A case in point is the National Steering Committee on Climate Change (NSCCC) hosted by MESTI which has representation from the women's rights organisations sector.

The media (both public and private) and CSOs have equally contributed to educate the general public on the effects of environmental degradation and pollution and the need to put in place systems or measures to safeguard the environment.

## **12.4 Remaining Gaps and Policy Issues**

The main gaps that need to be addressed include the following:

- Some of the Regulations and Laws on issues of the environment do not have policies targeting gender-specific or women empowerment interventions. Some also merely mention the mainstreaming of gender without concrete gender responsive initiatives that address women's issues. Gender is seen only as a cross-cutting issue in all sectors of environment, water, energy, agriculture and climate change but not also as a stand-alone goal in the implementation of key programmes within these sectors.
- Areas of least progress and difficulties include affordability of improved energy sources, inadequate technology and capacity of women and girls in the various sectors addressing environmental and climate issues.
- Mining with its negative impacts on women remains a major concern with insufficient attention being paid to gender issues in spite of years of intense advocacy on women's rights.
- There is a general lack of a direct gender policy on environmental issues in the country.
- There is the inability of state agencies to demystify terminologies and concepts around environmental issues to allow for women to actively participate in these areas.
- There is no strict enforcement of existing environmental laws, regulations etc.

## **12.5 Recommendations for Action**

The recommendations below are listed for further action:

- The need for the immediate passage of Ghana's Affirmative Action Bill into law to ensure effective women's representation and leadership on environmental governance and climate change,
- There is the need to as a matter of urgency, implement the actions contained in the Gender Action Plan in the Ghana's NDCs.

- There is the need to improve efficiency and quality of stoves to conform to standards developed for enforcement in 2020. Local knowledge and expertise of women and their groups should be a core feature of this energy entrepreneurship processes.
- The gender and energy nexus should be fully embraced by government and relevant stakeholders and serve as strategic guidance in the formulation of policies and programmes in all the various sectors of the energy.
- The Ghana Clean Bill, which is in its draft stages of drafting should mainstream gender issues to ensure that environmental hazards that women face in performing their productive and reproductive activities particularly in the care economy are addressed.
- Continuous policy advocacy on the need for a demystification of the technical conceptions of environmental and climate change to allow for women's inclusion and active participation must be a matter of urgency.
- The need to strengthen and expand Rural Women's Climate-Change and Environmental Protection Advocacy Networking Groups to further work and deepen practical actions towards realising set goals and objectives.
- It is critical to delve more into research (at the national level) on women's roles and functions in degrading the environment, develop appropriate policies and alternative strategies to provide sustainable income generation sources to protect women's livelihoods.
- There should be a concerted national effort to coordinate and address women's land rights and rights to cultivate cash crops.

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## CHAPTER 13

# CONCLUSION

**G**lobally, there is recognition that gender equality and women's rights are central and critical to inclusive and sustainable development, yet gender equality remains the greatest human rights challenge of our time. In as much as, we do recognise and appreciate the gradual progress being made by Ghana through several interventions such as legislations, policies and programmes yet, structural inequalities still persist preventing the full achievement of women's rights and gender equality. **The slow pace of progress is unacceptable** – the women's movement is deeply concerned with the slow implementation, lack of political will and accountability by successive governments in resourcing and translating women's rights and gender equality commitments made over the years. This has led to the harsh realities faced by women such as abject poverty; low status at all levels; gender-based violence; the burden of care; marginalisation; discrimination; and as the worst victims of bad governance and economic instability.

The current development context is characterised by dwindling resources with the donor community and governments providing limited funds for women's rights and gender equality work. This is of grave concern to the women's movement as it defeats the purpose of advancing women's human rights, gender equality and the full emancipation of women and girls. The continued shrinking civil society space and resources for collective action threatens the gains made, increasingly less WROs are able to organise, mobilise and influence spaces in the same manner as they did in the past.

Women play key roles in development at all levels, yet, their contributions are not given the due recognition on the development agenda. Women

must be recognised as key economic agents of development in their own right and not as passive victims in need of protection and rescue, or as consumers to be instrumentalised for economic growth. Women must be empowered as agents of development – they must be empowered holistically thus, not focusing narrowly on the economic aspect but also on socio-cultural and political in order to change the status quo and dismantle the patriarchal structures that inhibit the advancement of women and girls. The full realisation of women’s rights as human rights is essential to any country’s development. Moreover, the implementation of gender equality and women’s rights commitments are cornerstones for development. Women’s empowerment and their full and equal participation in all spheres are fundamental for the achievement of social, political and economic justice; substantive democracy and peace for all.

Beijing+25 is being celebrated in the midst of the erosion of gender equality and women’s empowerment gains made – terrorism is on the increase, religious fundamentalism, austerity measures, conflicts, high incidence of sexual exploitation and abuse etc. – in all these women and girls are the worst victims. As women’s rights organisations (WROs) especially in Africa, we need to reactive country level activism in order to demand greater gender responsiveness, respect for human rights, transparency and accountability from our governments. This is also critical for our own mobilising to strengthen regional and global level engagement. It is crucial that we intensify community voices in our work and link local advocacy to national level advocacy.

While taking a reflection on the 12 critical areas of the BPfA, it is also important to take a deeper look at the creation of Gender Ministries, assess their mandates and status; and how they have contributed to advancing women and girls’ interest and rights. This will help the women’s movement to reach conclusions on how best to work towards supporting the Gender Ministries and its agencies to protect women’s rights and advancement. One key question that we should ask ourselves is – ‘how has the change of name from Women Affairs to Gender Ministries impacted on the advancement of women and girls?’ The focus we believe should be on effective action and not simply on name change.

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**APPENDIX I: BEIJING +25 NATIONAL REVIEW TABULATED SUMMARY REPORT**

<i>Critical Areas of Concern (BPfA, CEDAW &amp; SDGs)</i>	<i>Areas of Appreciable Progress</i>	<i>Areas of Least Progress</i>	<i>Difficulties, Obstacles &amp; Constraints to Implementation of Priorities</i>	<i>Priorities &amp; Challenges for the Future</i>
<p><b>WOMEN &amp; POVERTY (CEDAW ARTICLW 13; SDG 1 AND 10)</b></p>	<p>Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) – a national social protection initiative</p> <p>National Gender Policy with provisions towards women’s economic, social and political independence</p> <p>Transition of the Ministry of Women and Children to the Ministry of Gender Children and Social Protection</p> <p>Establishment of Tier 3 of the Social Security and National Insurance Trust (SSNIT) for the informal economy</p> <p>Social protection programmes such as Free SHS, Free School Uniforms/Exercise Books,</p>	<p>Poverty is still concentrated mostly in Northern and Volta regions of Ghana</p> <p>Inequality gap is widening in Ghana, particularly Northern Ghana</p> <p>Women’s ability to access and own land. In some cases, access does not guarantee ownership especially in the Northern part of Ghana</p> <p>There is an over concentration of government resources in the LEAP which makes beneficiaries more dependent on the state</p> <p>Government’s inability to ratify the ILO</p>	<p>Poverty reduction programmes are skewed towards southern Ghana than northern Ghana and urban than rural</p> <p>Climate change, rapid urbanization, conflicts, youth unemployment, food insecurity challenges the reduction of poverty</p> <p>The influx of foreigners poses a threat to local businesses</p> <p>illegal mining poses threat to farmlands and water bodies</p> <p>Adequate budgetary allocation to MMDAs who work on women and poverty issues. In communities</p>	<p><b>Challenges</b></p> <p>Political/ethnic instability in certain parts of the country</p> <p>Lack of continuity of projects by past government</p> <p>Government over dependency on external support in its budget</p> <p>The existence and practice of some obsolete cultures and traditions that discriminates against women</p> <p>Vulnerability of women in the informal economy</p> <p><b>Priorities</b></p> <p>Government should make efforts aimed at Achieving the</p>

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<i>Critical Areas of Concern (BPfA, CEDAW &amp; SDGs)</i>	<i>Areas of Appreciable Progress</i>	<i>Areas of Least Progress</i>	<i>Difficulties, Obstacles &amp; Constraints to Implementation of Priorities</i>	<i>Priorities &amp; Challenges for the Future</i>
	<p>Ghana School Feeding Programme (GSFP), Capitation Grant, Labour Intensive Public Works Programme (LIPWP)</p> <p>Establishment of the Ghana National Household Registry (GNHR) to guide the targeting for poverty alleviation interventions and reducing duplication of targeting mechanisms</p>	<p>Convention C189 on Decent Work for Domestic Workers to provide adequate protection for them.</p>		<p>Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and put measures in place to eradicate poverty and under-development.</p> <p>Bridging inequality gap in Ghana</p> <p>linking informal sector organization to national development, which would mean paying particular attention to agriculture and manufacturing</p>
<p><b>EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF WOMEN (CEDAW ARTICLE 10 AND SDG 2 AND 4)</b></p>	<p><b>Access:</b> Affirmative action by tertiary institutions to increase female enrolment e.g. University of Ghana (+2 admission quota policy).</p> <p>As of 2015, female enrolment in Colleges of Education increased from 39% to 43.5% and 29.7% to 34.1% in polytechnics.</p>	<p>Absence of comprehensive, multi-sectoral strategy to provide transition pathways for girls and women after education and training</p> <p>Attainment of gender parity at the SHS and tertiary levels long overdue</p>	<p>Inadequate budgetary allocation from government to the education sector for infrastructure projects, training and employment of teachers etc.</p> <p>Traditional and socio-cultural practices favouring education of males at the expense of females.</p>	<p>Finalise Gender in Education Policy</p> <p>Decentralise TVET</p> <p>Address Free SHS Policy implementation challenges</p> <p>Mainstream Teacher Mentoring into G&amp;C system</p>

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<i>Critical Areas of Concern (BPfA, CEDAW &amp; SDGs)</i>	<i>Areas of Appreciable Progress</i>	<i>Areas of Least Progress</i>	<i>Difficulties, Obstacles &amp; Constraints to Implementation of Priorities</i>	<i>Priorities &amp; Challenges for the Future</i>
	<p><b>Gender in Education Policy (GEP):</b> GEP under development to promote female education.</p> <p><b>Gender Mainstreaming in TVET/National TVET Strategic Plan:</b> Gender strategy and national TVET Strategic Plan developed to promote female participation in TVET.</p> <p><b>Funding</b> – As of 2015, approximately a fifth (20.5%) of the national budget was spent on the education sector for the implementation of strategies and payment of compensation.</p> <p><b>STEM initiatives by MoE/GES and partners</b> - National Science and Mathematics quiz; best female contestant award; quota admission system for women intending to pursue</p>	<p>Paucity of data on the non-formal and informal sub-sectors of the TVET system.</p> <p>Poor female participation in TVET.</p> <p>Low status and performance of the TVET sector.</p> <p>Consistent increase in the incidence of pregnancy in SHS worrying and contributing to drop-out.</p>	<p>CSO interventions in the education sector remain donor dependent and therefore susceptible to external factors.</p> <p>Pregnancy and drop-out affecting achievement of educational and training targets.</p> <p>Secondary Schools are not disability friendly, the physically challenged find it difficult to move around. This deters them from pursuing an education to the highest level as the same situation persists at the tertiary level</p>	<p>Effectively implement guidelines on pregnancy and re-entry</p> <p>Re-constitute School Management Committees</p> <p>School for the blind, etc free SHS does not cover them)</p> <p>Female Teachers with disabilities with the competence to teach JHS levels should not be placed in lower primary or kindergarten but at the appropriate levels for instruction., They must be given opportunities to further their education and get promoted on assessment</p> <p>Special schools established by private initiative have been taken over by GES and there are</p>

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<i>Critical Areas of Concern (BPfA, CEDAW &amp; SDGs)</i>	<i>Areas of Appreciable Progress</i>	<i>Areas of Least Progress</i>	<i>Difficulties, Obstacles &amp; Constraints to Implementation of Priorities</i>	<i>Priorities &amp; Challenges for the Future</i>
	<p>STEM courses at tertiary level.</p> <p><b>SEIP Scholarships</b> – awarded to boys and girls in the ratio of 40:60. Intervention to enhance access and retention of girls/women in secondary schools.</p> <p><b>CSOs Innovation Bursary and Transition Programs</b> – Bursary and training programs designed to provide livelihood pathways for young women to transition into employment, entrepreneurship and further education.</p> <p><b>Child Online Africa ‘Happy School Girl Project’</b>- Project facilitating menstrual hygiene management sessions in schools and distributing sanitary pads to females in schools.</p> <p>Queen mothers directly received legal education on</p>			<p>a myriad of problems. Eg Lack of assistive devices in the schools, unfriendly infrastructure.</p> <p>At least there should be three special schools for PWD in every region from the primary to JHS to SHS levels. Some children with disabilities have to travel outside their regions to pursue secondary education.</p> <p>Community sensitization is crucial for parents to send their children with disability to school.</p>

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<i>Critical Areas of Concern (BPfA, CEDAW &amp; SDGs)</i>	<i>Areas of Appreciable Progress</i>	<i>Areas of Least Progress</i>	<i>Difficulties, Obstacles &amp; Constraints to Implementation of Priorities</i>	<i>Priorities &amp; Challenges for the Future</i>
	child marriage, sexual violence against girls			
<b>WOMEN AND HEALTH (CEDAW Article 12; SDGs 2 and 3)</b>	<p>National laws, policies and actions on women’s health including SRHRs in compliance with the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action and other international legal instruments.</p> <p>Inclusion of reproductive health and family planning services in the national development plan - The Ghana Shared Growth Development Agenda (Volume I and II) Ghana Health Service and the Teaching Hospital Act establishes the various institutions and</p>	<p>Health workers (doctors and nurses) ratio to patients remains a huge challenge</p> <p>Women and Girls access to information particularly on Sexual Reproductive and Maternal Health information and services continue to hinder health care delivery</p> <p>Accessibility to health facilities especially in the rural areas where majority of Ghanaians including women and girls reside still remains a challenge. For example,</p>	<p>There is a general ignorance of human rights including Sexual Reproductive and Maternal Health Rights among adolescent girls and women particularly in rural areas.</p> <p>Women’s inability to freely access Sexual Reproductive and Maternal Health information and services which is largely due to socio-cultural and economic barriers. r</p> <p>Health workers (doctors and nurses) ratio to patients remain a challenge across the country</p>	<p>Increasing population and related health implications</p> <p>Women with Disability and Health</p> <p>Child Marriage and its related health Issues</p> <p>Teenage pregnancy and fistula</p> <p>Older women and their Health related issues</p> <p>Passage of Older People’s Act</p> <p>Ability of Government to protect women health rights including women</p>

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<i>Critical Areas of Concern (BPfA, CEDAW &amp; SDGs)</i>	<i>Areas of Appreciable Progress</i>	<i>Areas of Least Progress</i>	<i>Difficulties, Obstacles &amp; Constraints to Implementation of Priorities</i>	<i>Priorities &amp; Challenges for the Future</i>
	<p>departments within the health sector to address the various issues on health and reproductive rights of all including women and girls".</p> <p>Development of the Patient Charter emphasizes the rights of all patients including women and girls</p> <p>The passage of the Mental Health Act</p> <p>Children's Act, 1998 (Act 560);</p> <p>The Domestic Violence Act, 2007 (Act 732);</p> <p>The Provisional National Defence Council Law (PNDCL 102) of 1985</p>	<p>the Household Registry (2019) for Upper East Region shows that it takes 44 minutes to get to a nearest health facility</p> <p>Inadequate allocation of both human and material resources including medical consumables, equipment and logistics</p> <p>Absence of specialist/expert service delivery in rural areas largely due to absence of hospitals and refusal of doctors to accept posting to rural areas</p> <p>Ineffective implementation of the laws, policies and treaties and conventions</p>	<p>Access to appropriate health information by adolescents and young people especially females remained low and utilization of health services by adolescents and young people has remained poor. (GHS, 2018)</p> <p>Ineffective implementation of some of the legal instruments - Ghana Education Service practice and policy, education on comprehensive sex including family planning are not permissive in schools.</p> <p>Women's inability to negotiate safe sex in relationships and when they want to have children</p> <p>Traditional and cultural practices, beliefs and</p>	<p>with disability and Older women</p> <p>Addressing issues concerning women suffering from Fistula.</p> <p>Strengthening social protection to benefit all categories of vulnerable women including girls, women with disability, orphans, widows, single mothers, caregivers and older women – example NHIS, LEAP, School Feeding Programme</p> <p>Addressing inequities in access and quality of health delivery especially between the rural and the urban areas</p>

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	<p>Criminal Code (Amendment) Act, 2007 (Act 741)</p> <p>Establishment of health training institutions across the country to train nurses, doctors, midwives among others.</p> <p>Formation of Nurses and Midwifery Council</p> <p>Development of Community-Based Health Planning and Services (CHPS) Compounds.</p> <p>Establishment of various departments within the Ministry of Health and the Ghana Health Service including the Reproductive Health Units to enhance service delivery</p>	<p>Women with visual, hearing and speech impairments access to service delivery and facilities</p>	<p>negative attitudes limit adolescent girls' utilization of reproductive health services and thus denying them their rights to sexual and reproductive health. For instance, there are several myths and taboos about pregnancy that inhibit women from seeking attention; myths about contraceptive use and infidelity; contraceptive use and infertility; and contraceptive use and weight-gain. Others are food taboos such as pregnant women not eating snails or eggs</p> <p>Women including older women and girls with disability – hearing impaired, death and dump, and even the physically challenged</p>	<p>Strengthening and expanding accessibility of the Domestic Violence fund</p> <p>Addressing the doctor – patient ratio by reducing it to the barest minimum</p> <p>Training of sign language interpreters and assigning them to each state institution particularly the health sectors</p> <p>Upgrading and Resourcing of the health facilities – logistics, medical equipment, consumables among others.</p> <p>Enhancing access to mental healthcare services including counselling service</p>

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	<p>National Health Authority</p> <p>Sexual Reproductive Health Policy for The Young People (2016 -2034)</p> <p>Growth and Development Agenda II: 2014-2017 (NDPC 2014).</p> <p>Reproductive Health Service Policy and Standard</p> <p>2000 Adolescent Reproductive Health Policy</p> <p>Reproductive Health Commodity Security Strategy (2011-2016)</p> <p>Draft National Condom and Lubricant Strategy and Market Segmentation Analysis for Family Planning</p>		<p>women and girls continue to suffer discrimination in access to health care service</p> <p>Ineffectiveness of the NHIS and National Ambulance Authority</p> <p>Lack of Political willingness and commitment to fully and effectively implement policies and laws, inadequate resources including human resource, facilities and logistics that will enhance health delivery and SRH and maternal rights in the country</p>	

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	<p>Safe Abortion Policy and Services</p> <p>Adolescent Health Service Policy and Strategy (2016 – 2020)</p> <p>National Health Policy Development of Adolescent Corners in Public Health Facilities.</p> <p>Family Planning Programmes</p> <p>CHPS Compounds Concept</p> <p>Free Maternal Programme</p> <p>National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS)</p> <p>Tricycles and Ambulance Concept</p>			

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<i>Critical Areas of Concern (BPfA, CEDAW &amp; SDGs)</i>	<i>Areas of Appreciable Progress</i>	<i>Areas of Least Progress</i>	<i>Difficulties, Obstacles &amp; Constraints to Implementation of Priorities</i>	<i>Priorities &amp; Challenges for the Future</i>
	<p>Training of Specialized Nurses and Midwives</p> <p>Institution of Drones Service in some hospital</p> <p>Formation of National Taskforce on Fistula and designated Fistula Centers</p>			
<p><b>VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN (CEDAW Articles 5, 6 and SDG 16) including:</b></p>	<p>Establishment of 11 Gender-Based Violence Courts</p> <p>Passage of the Domestic Violence Act (2007) and the passage of the Legislative Instrument to DV Act (2016)</p> <p>Establishment of 110 Domestic Violence and Victims Support Units across the country.</p> <p>Simplified Versions of the DV Act available</p> <p>Reopening of the Ark Foundation Shelter and a</p>	<p>Existence of traditional and cultural practices that abuse the rights of women and girls such as FGM, Trokosi, early and forced marriage, witch camps, widowhood rites</p> <p>The punishment in the DV Act is lesser than the Criminal and other Offences Act.</p> <p>Gender insensitivity of the DOVVSU officers and some court actors</p>	<p>Domestic Violence Fund not operational.</p> <p>There are no state provided shelters in the 16 regions</p> <p>DOVVSU officers not well resourced</p> <p>Payment for medical forms and examination still being enforced in spite of provisions in the Domestic Violence Act.</p> <p>Delays in court in the handling of cases.</p>	<p>Need for advocacy for government of Ghana to establish a one-stop-shop for Survivors of Domestic and Gender Based Violence.</p> <p>Functional Helpline for Victims and Survivors of Domestic and Gender Based Violence.</p> <p>Making medical form and examination free in reality.</p>

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<i>Critical Areas of Concern (BPfA, CEDAW &amp; SDGs)</i>	<i>Areas of Appreciable Progress</i>	<i>Areas of Least Progress</i>	<i>Difficulties, Obstacles &amp; Constraints to Implementation of Priorities</i>	<i>Priorities &amp; Challenges for the Future</i>
	<p>new shelter built by ActionAid.</p> <p>Establishment of Child friendly Gender Based Violence Courts</p> <p>Training of Court Actors on the DV Act and the LI</p> <p>Teachers Code of Ethics” that prohibits teachers having relationships with their students or students in another school.</p> <p>Domestic Violence fund established.</p> <p>Establishment of Domestic Violence Secretariat, Human Trafficking Management Board and Domestic Violence Management Board.</p> <p>CSOs building the capacity of stakeholders (Court Actors,</p>	<p>towards Survivors of Gender-Based Violence</p> <p>"Helpline of Hope” established by DV Secretariat &amp; DOVVSU (0800.800.800) not functioning</p>	<p>Not enough DOVVSU offices in every district currently only 110 DOVVSU offices across the country</p> <p>Interference in cases of violence against women</p> <p>Traditional and religious leaders handling cases of violence against women</p> <p>Patriarchal nature of our societies, rape culture and culture of silence contributes to perpetrators getting off the hook.</p> <p>There are no permanent clinical psychologists that provides professional service to victims and survivors.</p> <p>Counselling services are basic and have been not effective.</p> <p>Medical care to victims are free under the DV Act and its</p>	<p>Establishment of more shelters across the 16 regions of Ghana.</p> <p>Increase sensitization programs that are targeted at modifying the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women</p> <p>Multifaceted approach to ending violence against women.</p> <p>Collaborative effort among state and non-state institutions to reduce the prevalent rate of violence against women.</p>

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	<p>the Police, Social Welfare on the LI to the DV.</p> <p>Marital Rape is now a criminal offence under the laws of Ghana.</p> <p>Review of provisions on FGM in Criminal Offences Act.</p> <p>Launching of the Ghana 'HeForShe' Campaign</p>		<p>LI but health personnel demand for payment.</p> <p>There is no effective collaboration between service providers which may jeopardize the evidence and subsequently prosecution which might adversely affect the outcome of reported cases.</p> <p>Legal Aid Scheme is not able to carry out its mandate to support women to access justice, due to inadequate resources (personnel and logistics).</p>	
<p><b>WOMEN AND ARMED CONFLICT (CEDAW GENERAL RECOMMENDATION 30; SDG 16)</b></p>	<p>Freedom of the Press – increased media reportage</p> <p>Joint police-military operations in the few areas of inter and intra ethnic conflicts, mainly in the Northern, Upper East and Volta regions</p>	<p>Relief services and support systems have not been apt due to cumbersome bureaucratic processes by the National Disaster Management Organization (NADMO)</p> <p>Joint police-military operations in the few</p>	<p>Inability of National Security operatives to pick up early intelligence and react promptly.</p> <p>None consideration and recognition of gender issues in conflict management</p>	<p>Increase women's participation in conflict resolution by equipping queen mothers and other female traditional rulers or opinion leaders with the requisite skills for arbitration</p>

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	The implementation of Alternative Dispute Resolution to resolve differences before they erupt into conflict	<p>areas of inter and intra-ethnic conflict is not gender sensitive</p> <p>Inability to integrate human rights issues in conflict prevention and resolution.</p>		<p>Incorporate gender perspective in conflict resolution</p> <p>Ensure gender balance in the formal and informal justice systems at all levels</p> <p>Ensure that gender issues are rights-based by providing judicial staff with appropriate training and knowledge.</p>
<b>WOMEN AND THE ECONOMY (CEDAW ARTICLES 11 AND 14; SDG 8,9,10 AND 12)</b>	<p>Ghana has ratified ILO C 03 &amp; C103 on Maternity Protection and gone further to have it enshrined in the Labour Act 651 (2003) Other Conventions includes 100 on no discrimination etc</p> <p>Articles 27 (1-3) of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana guarantees job and income securities for women</p> <p>National Gender Policy protects and promotes equal</p>	<p>Rise in recruitment agencies contributing to alarming growth of precarious employment.</p> <p>High growth in decent work deficits with a lack of social protection, non-adherence to standards</p> <p>Child care: government of Ghana is in breach of Article 27 (3) of the constitution for not establishing any</p>	<p>Fissuring has become one of the most difficult issues in the job market powered through outsourcing, contracting, sub-contracting, casualization etc. Workers are mostly on short term contracts with no benefits including maternity.</p> <p>Economic growth has not translated into employment particularly in the informal sector</p>	<p><b>Challenges</b> Increasing population of unemployed youth</p> <p><b>Priorities</b> Employment creation among youth with emphasis on women</p> <p>Reducing vulnerability of employment</p> <p>Inclusive growth of the economy</p>

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	<p>opportunities for women in the 'world of work'</p> <p>Appreciable economic growth in the country</p>	<p>childcare facility at the workplace. Most employers have also failed to provide childcare for working parents at the workplace</p> <p>Women face discrimination in the security services</p> <p>There are slow efforts towards achieving Inclusive growth of the economy through formalization of the informal sector which has majority as women</p> <p>Delay in passing the Affirmative Action Bill into law.</p>	<p>No priority for the passage of affirmative action bill into law</p> <p>Women in Artisanal and Small-scale mining groups do not have improved working conditions since their sector is categorized under the informal economy.</p> <p>Insufficient focus on ensuring women advance in leadership in the technical areas especially in the industrial sector</p> <p>Socio-cultural barriers e.g. superstition, sexual harassment, discrimination etc.;</p> <p>Ghana does not have any legislations on violence and sexual harassment at the workplace</p>	<p>Passage of the affirmative action bill into law</p> <p>Government to protect the informal economy against FDIs</p> <p>Develop sustainable financial and credit schemes training and education programs for interpersonal and vocational skill development;</p> <p>insurance schemes to promote social protection advocate for the application of labour standards.</p> <p>Promote policies and laws on sustainable mining practices and gender mainstreaming.</p> <p>Promote environmentally sustainable practices and</p>

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				<p>education to protect natural resource environment.</p> <p>Strengthen social protection to all categories of vulnerable workers</p> <p>Accelerate progress on gender equality and empowerment of women and girls</p> <p>Address inequities in access and quality of job</p> <p>Advance the decent work and job-creation agenda</p> <p>Guaranteeing sustainable access to public service</p> <p>Ratification of ILO Conventions C156 on Workers with Family responsibilities; C183 on Maternity Protection with 14 weeks leave instead of</p>

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				12; C190 on Elimination of all forms of Violence and Sexual Harassment at the Workplace and C189 on Decent Work for Domestic workers
<b>WOMEN IN POWER AND DECISION MAKING (CEDAW ARTICLE 7, 9 AND 16; SDG 17)</b>	<p>Establishment of the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection</p> <p>Government's 'Administrative Directive' intended to increase women's representation at the local level</p> <p>Appointment of women to a number of high profile positions</p> <p>Women's marginal increased representation in Parliament from 18 in 1996 to 38 in 2019</p> <p>Reduced filling fees for women by political parties since 2012</p>	<p>Low levels of women's participation and representation in power and in decision-making structures</p> <p>Lack of political will</p> <p>Failure of governments to take needed measures to reform electoral systems required by Article 4 and 7 of CEDAW</p> <p>The absence of an Affirmative Action Law</p> <p>Inadequate budgetary allocation to Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection</p>	<p>An entrenched patriarchal system</p> <p>Lack of political will</p> <p>Financial constraints</p> <p>Low capacity among women</p> <p>Lack of understanding of gender equality and implication to development</p> <p>Lack of knowledge of the instruments and frameworks that seek to promote gender equality</p>	<p><b>Priorities</b></p> <p>More commitment from governments</p> <p>Sensitising citizenry about the various Instruments, Protocols and Conventions on women's rights and gender equality</p> <p>Passage of gender responsive legislation, e.g. Affirmative Action Law</p> <p>Government should create empowering initiatives and opportunities in the allocation of central livelihood resource to women</p>

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	<p>Increased number of women in political party National Executive Committees (NECs)</p> <p>Setting up of a Fund to support women contesting in the local government elections.</p> <p>Civil society focused on social mobilisation and political empowerment initiatives</p> <p>CSO continuous advocacy for policy reforms, gender responsive legislations and implementation of instruments and frameworks that promote gender justice</p> <p>Development and production of The Women's Manifesto for Ghana document in 2004 by CSOs seeking to influence gender dynamics</p>	<p>Addressing socio-cultural norms and behavior that reinforces patriarchy.</p>		<p>Political party hierarchies should facilitate women's participation in order that they can influence policies and the composition of party and parliamentary elites.</p> <p><b>Challenges</b> Lack of financial support for women in politics</p> <p>Excessive monetization of the political process</p> <p>Inter and intra party violence especially during electioneering campaigns</p> <p>Ability to demand accountability and transparency of duty bearers.</p>

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	CSOs working to promote, nurture and strengthen young women's political activism.			
<b>INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISM FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN (CEDAW ARTICLE 10 SDG 17)</b>	<p>Gender Ministry has established regional offices and plans to have Gender Desk Officers in all sector Ministries and District Assemblies.</p> <p>National Gender Policy</p> <p>Child and Family Welfare Policy</p> <p>Gender Analysis Framework and Planning Units (DPCU's) of MoGCSP</p> <p>Gender Ministry in collaboration with Ghana Statistical Service have undertaken an assessment of gender statistics at national and district Levels (2017-2021) of 20 MDA's</p>	<p>Low participation of women in decision making at all levels</p> <p>Harmful socio-cultural practices</p> <p>Violence against women/children</p> <p>Commercial sex exploitation of women and children</p> <p>Low representation of women in conflict management</p> <p>High infant/maternal mortality rate</p> <p>Low access to credit and support facilities by women</p>	<p>Although efforts have been made at strengthening the legal and institutional framework on violence against Women by various interventions, there are still challenges</p> <p>Funding challenges</p> <p>Strong influence of tradition and cultural practices</p> <p>Inadequate capacity and awareness of law enforcement institutions to enforce laws and put into practice policies concerning violence against women</p> <p>Lack of effective mechanism for planning, implementation and monitoring programmes</p>	<p>Institutionalizing gender – responsive budgeting.</p> <p>GRB prioritizes income and expenditure such that specific needs of women, men, girls and boys are met equally.</p> <p>Addressing socio-cultural beliefs practices and institutions which are discriminatory of women and girls, out of school girls, teenage pregnancies and addressing violence against women and girls</p> <p>Steps should be taken to ensure implementation of gender statistics across institutions</p>

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		Inadequate disaggregated data (gender, sex and age)	carried out by agencies responsible for the welfare of women	
<b>WOMEN AND HUMAN RIGHTS (CEDAW ARTICLES 2, 3 AND 4)</b>	<p>Passage of gender policy which aims at empowering women and girls in various areas and sectors to ensure equality and wellbeing of women</p> <p>Launch of Abolish of Child Marriage strategy to ensure the end of child marriage in Ghana especially in the Northern sector of Ghana where child marriage is rife.</p> <p>Available space for advancing the advocacy for women's human rights especially on digital media platforms without restrictions</p>	<p>Passage of Affirmative Action bill and other laws and legal instruments like the Spouses Property bill</p> <p>Human Rights abuse of women in religious institutions like churches and other religious institutions in the name of religious belief.</p> <p>Limited human rights education available for women especially in the rural areas and avenues to get access to legal redress to human rights abuses that they face.</p>	<p>Cultural and religious barriers which limits people from understanding the need to accord women some basic human rights notwithstanding their status as women in various cultural, religious and social backgrounds</p> <p>Inadequate funds allocated to the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection to implement policies to its fullest like the Gender Policy</p>	<p>Passage of the Affirmative Action Bill into law to create more opportunities for women to be involved in decision making and also reducing incidents of gender inequalities and discrimination.</p> <p>Attention to be given to human rights abuses in churches and other religious institutions where women go through degrading and inhuman activities in the name of religion and culture.</p> <p>Human rights education from CHRAJ, NCCE and CSOs to women who are more vulnerable to human rights abuse.</p>

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<p><b>Women &amp; the Media (CEDAW ARTICLE 5)</b></p>	<p>Many women are involved in news reporting, news casting and as hosts in some media houses.</p> <p>Policies and initiatives to promote women and girls exposure to ICT includes: Ghana ICT Policy for Accelerated Development The Girls in ICT Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Soronko Solution</li> <li>▪ DreamOval</li> <li>▪ Developers Vogue</li> <li>▪ Ispace Foundation</li> </ul> <p>The number of females using the internet has increased over time.</p> <p>There is an increase in female internet uses but it is still less than forty percent</p>	<p>Less than one quarter of women own media houses</p> <p>Only 28 per cent of women in governance positions and 15.8 percent in top management positions</p> <p>Women make only 24 per cent of newsmakers in newspaper, television and radio news.</p> <p>A few media houses have pages and slots for gender and women issues</p> <p>Men outnumber women in the use of dominant social media platform</p> <p>A high percentage of women and young girls in rural areas do not have access to</p>	<p>Ownership of most media organisations are men.</p> <p>Low support from men in the media to women colleagues</p> <p>Over 60% management of board of directors are men</p> <p>Women are still not regarded as news makers and whenever they are featured, they are featured as victims or the other.</p> <p>Limited infrastructure and access to high-speed bandwidth</p> <p>High cost of internet</p> <p>Limited access to local content online</p> <p>Limited ICT skills</p>	<p>Encouraging more women to start-up and own media organisations</p> <p>More women should be appointed as editors in media houses</p> <p>Recruiting, promoting women to key positions and appraising women in the media</p> <p>Increase the percentage of women on management of board of directors in media houses</p> <p>More women-oriented programs should also be aired on radio and TV.</p> <p>Promote fair and balanced representation of women in the media</p> <p>Formulation and Implementation of gender sensitive policies in media organisations</p>

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		technology and the internet	Few women occupying leadership roles in the internet and technology space	<p>Encourage girls to undertake ICT and STEM (science, technology, engineering, and Mathematics) courses</p> <p>Interventions that provide affordable internet Provision of well-resourced multimedia centres throughout the country.</p> <p>Specific policies and laws on women’s rights online should be enacted. Citizens should know these policies or laws</p> <p>Final Draft document of National Cyber Security Policy &amp; Strategy has been developed</p>

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<p><b>WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENT (CEDAW GENERAL RECOMMENDATION 37, SDG 6, 7, 11, 13, 14, AND 15)</b></p>	<p>Climate Change policy documents recognise the relevance of gender issues with specific sections on gender and climate change</p> <p>There is institutional mechanism within state institutions responsible for dealing with issues of the environment. For example, the Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation has a gender desk while the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has a gender unit with dedicated staff coordinating the formulation, implementation and evaluation of policies and programmes</p> <p>Specific budgetary allocations for aspects of climate change and gender issues are made. Examples are the budgets for work on</p>	<p>Gender and environmental issues related to the Energy sector</p> <p>Gender and environment issues of the Mining, oil and gas sectors. Environmental issues pertaining to women's land rights.</p>	<p>The non-existent of specific gender and environment policies.</p> <p>Insufficient strategies for addressing gender equality issues in issues of the environment and climate change</p> <p>Insufficient harnessing of women's agency and knowledge of issues of the environment and climate change.</p> <p>Inadequate women's representation and participation in key policies of the environment and climate change</p> <p>Limited tools and mechanisms to serve as guidance for addressing gender issues of the environment and climate change</p>	<p>Formulation of gender specific environmental policies and laws.</p> <p>Coherent and concrete strategies on environment and climate change should be in place to address gender equality issues.</p> <p>The need for dedicated institutional framework on gender and environment to promote learning and women's agency and knowledge on issues of the environment and climate change is urgent.</p> <p>Need for equal women's representation and participation in key policies and initiatives of the environment and climate change</p>

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	<p>Gender and REDD+ under the Forestry Commission, Gender and the Ghana NDCs and Gender and the National Adaptation Plan (NAP)</p> <p>Involvement of women in consultations on the different aspects of climate change with gender working groups set up to facilitate such discussions.</p> <p><b>Agriculture:</b> incorporation of gender issues in agriculture policy and programmes under the Women In Agriculture Directorate (WIAD)</p> <p><b>Water and Sanitation</b> Decision making roles of women in water and sanitation policies and programmes. Key component here are the Water and Sanitation Committees (WATSAN) across the country.</p>		<p>Limited state budgetary allocations for gender analysis of environmental and climate change issues</p>	<p>The need to develop relevant gender tools and mechanisms to serve as guidance for addressing gender issues of the environment and climate change</p> <p>Dedicated national budgetary allocations for gender analysis of environmental and climate change issues must be in place</p>

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	<p><b>Energy</b> Recognition of the important role of women in energy policy and programmes. Ghana has signed on to relevant Gender and Energy policies initiated through the ECOWAS Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (ECREEE).</p> <p>There is also the Ghana Power Compact which supports the energy sector strategic objectives to achieve [power supply sufficiency and exports to neighbouring countries and also supply power for new oil and gas based industries. The programme also seeks to address the attendant socio-economic and gender issues that are related to electric power.</p>			

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	<p>There is a MiDA Gender and Social Inclusion Directorate which is responsible for ensuring a gender responsive and socially inclusive electricity delivery. The Directorate's key areas of work include the promotion, consultation and engagement with women, vulnerable groups and civil society.</p> <p>Social and Gender Integration Plan (SGIP) has been developed to ensure systematic gender and social inclusion in MiDA's projects and activities.</p>			
<p><b>THE GIRL – CHILD (CEDAW ARTICLES 10, 12; SDG 3, 4 AND 6)</b></p>	<p><b>Access:</b> Gender parity achieved at KG and Primary levels.</p> <p><b>Retention:</b> Social support interventions such as supply of sanitary pads to girls, capitation grant, free school uniform, school feeding programme, etc. have</p>	<p>Attainment of gender parity at JHS level long overdue.</p> <p>Incidence of pregnancy in primary, JHS and SHS worrying and contributing to drop-out.</p>	<p>Delays in release of capitation and other social support grants</p> <p>Traditional and socio-cultural practices favouring boys' education at the expense of girls.</p>	<p>Finalise Girls' Education Strategy</p> <p>Adequately resource the GEU</p> <p>Enrol more female teachers</p>

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	<p>improved access and retention of girls in schools.</p> <p><b>Girls' Education Strategy:</b> Strategy to guide design and implementation of interventions to promote girls' education under development.</p> <p><b>Safer Schools Project:</b> G&amp;C Unit implementing safer schools project to create friendly and conducive school environment for girls.</p> <p><b>Guidelines on pregnancy and re-entry into schools –</b> Guidelines designed to prevent pregnancy and ensure pregnancy and childbirth do not end education for girls have been finalized and being implemented.</p> <p><b>G-PASS Project –</b> GEU and partners implemented project to promote school</p>		<p>CSO interventions in the education sector remain donor dependent and therefore susceptible to external factors</p> <p>Inadequate resource allocation (financial, human, logistical) to the GEU.</p> <p>Pregnancy and drop-out affecting the achievement of girls' education targets.</p> <p>Girls and young women with intellectual disabilities are often vulnerable to sexual violence</p>	<p>Establish highly-functioning girls' clubs in schools</p> <p>Ensure timely release of capitation and other support grants</p> <p>Effectively implement guidelines on pregnancy and re-entry</p> <p>There is low enrollment of girls compared to boys in the district due to poverty, child marriage, lack of adequate infrastructure and teenage pregnancy.</p> <p>Inadequate parental care</p> <p>Engagement of girls in child work and selling.</p> <p>Late enrollment of girls in schools which makes them 'too big' at the basic and second cycle levels.</p>

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	<p>enrolment, retention, completion and attainment rates of girls. GEU delivered scholarship package to about 60,000 girls in 2,054 JHS in Ghana.</p> <p><b>Girls' Education Network</b> – Network of CSOs in education established in 2017 to support GEU to promote girls' education in Ghana.</p> <p><b>CSOs Bursary Program for Girls</b> - bursary program dubbed, 'Incentive support for girls in secondary education in Ghana'. Increased access to technical and vocational training (TVET)</p> <p>Action Plans developed to protect girls and young women to affect change on sexual violence and child marriages.</p>			<p>Lack of appreciation for issues of child marriage and sexual violence as developmental issues.</p> <p>Relevant project intervention that seeks to address the real challenges of the people and elicit their support</p> <p>Legal education on child marriage, sexual violence on related issues is lacking in Ghanaian schools</p> <p>Child marriage receives very little on publicity and will take continued education.</p>

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	Girls trained on: Social media, Cyber security, They have created Facebook accounts, Whatsapp, twitter and Instagram pages, sharing information with the rest of the world.			

## **APPENDIX II – ORGANISATIONS**

The following are organisations that were involved in the production of the Ghana NGOs Beijing+25 Review Parallel Report:

### **Organisations**

1. Network for Women’s Rights in Ghana (NETRIGHT) – Lead organisation
2. ABANTU for Development
3. Abibiman Foundation
4. Advocacy and Trainers for Children and Women Advancement Rights (ATCWAR)
5. Advocates for Gender Equity (AGE)
6. African Women Lawyers Association Ghana (AWLA Ghana)
7. Amnesty International Ghana
8. Anglican Diocesan Development Relief Organisation (ADDRO)
9. Apex Law Consult
10. Campaign for Female Education (CAMFED Ghana)
11. Centre for Educational Development, Evaluation and Management (CEDEM)
12. Central and Western Fishmongers Improved Association (CEWEFIA)
13. Centre for Gender and Labour Relations (Gendlab)
14. Centre for International and Integrated Community Development
15. Centre for Research Information Technology and Advanced Computing (CRITAC)
16. Centre for Youth and Literacy Development
17. Community Development and Advocacy Centre
18. Free the Marginalised Women Advocates (FREMA)
19. Gender Action on Climate Change for Equality and Sustainability (GACCES)
20. Gender Centre for Empowering Development (GENCED)
21. Gender Studies and Human Rights Documentation Centre (Gender Centre)
22. General Agricultural Workers’ Union of TUC (GAWU of TUC)
23. Ghana Federation of Disability Organisations (GFD)
24. Ghana Federation of Labour (GFL)
25. Ghana Integrity Initiative
26. Ghana Trades Union Congress

27. Global Action for Women Empowerment (GLOWA)
28. Global Media Foundation
29. Global Women's Rights Initiative Foundation
30. Grassroot Sisterhood Foundation (GSF)
31. GRASSROOTS Africa
32. Green Africa Youth Organisation
33. Greener Impact International
34. Hope for Future Generations (HFFG)
35. Justice for the Vulnerable Organization
36. Kasa Initiative Ghana
37. LAWA Ghana
38. Muslim Family Counselling Services
39. NORSAAC
40. PARDA
41. Resource Link Foundation
42. Rights and Responsibilities Initiative (RRIG)
43. Rosemond Girl Child Foundation
44. Rural Women Farmers' Association of Ghana (RUFAG)
45. Songtaba
46. SOS Children's Village Ghana 'No Business as Usual' Project
47. STEPUP AID and Education
48. Strategic Youth Network for Development (SYND)
49. The Development Institute
50. The Human Help and Development Group (THUHDEG)
51. Ups Avenue for Development
52. Upper West Rural Women Association
53. West Africa Network for Peace Building (WANEP)
54. Widows and Orphans Movement (WOM)
55. Window of Hope Foundation (WHF)
56. Women in Agriculture Platform
57. Women in Law and Development in Africa (WiLDAF Ghana)
58. Women in Mining
59. Women, Media and Change (WOMECA)
60. Women's Integrated Development Organization
61. Women's Manifesto Coalition (WMC)
62. Youth Empowerment for Life (YEFL)
63. Youth in Natural Resource and Environmental Governance (YNREG)



**Network for Women's Rights in Ghana  
(NETRIGHT)**

**9 Asmara Street, East-Legon**



**P.O. Box AN 19452, Accra-North**

**Tel: 233 302511189/500419/503669**

**Cell: 23320 0458945 | Fax: 233 302 511188**

**Email: [netright@ymail.com](mailto:netright@ymail.com) / [info@netrightghana.org](mailto:info@netrightghana.org)**

**Website: [www.netrightghana.org](http://www.netrightghana.org)**

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