

**Proven
Solution**

Ending Gender-Based Violence



HeForShe

Ghana

Increasing women's participation and representation in governance, leadership and decision making

Global Context

Women’s equal participation in leadership in political and public life is essential to achieving the sustainable development goals by 2030. However, data shows that women are underrepresented at all levels of decision making worldwide and achieving gender parity in political life is far off.

Women serve as Heads of State or Government in only 22 countries, and 119 countries have never had a woman leader. At the current rate, gender equality in the highest positions of power will not be reached for another 130 years.

Africa has seen an increase in women leadership, with women now being given more leadership roles in governments. This includes Tanzania’s first female President being sworn into office.

Over the years, women have played little or no leadership roles in issues pertaining to development and decision making in most developing countries including Ghana.

In Ghana, statistics show that over 52% of the population are females yet most of the decisions affecting their lives are made by men.

However there has been a significant improvement in the promotion of gender equality, representation in decision making by women and women’s empowerment as well as an attitudinal shift in society. This has come about as a result of the progressive strengthening of the legal, economic, social and political spheres. Female representation in Ghana’s legislature has seen an increase from 36 (12%) in the seventh Parliament which ended in 2020 to 40 (14%) in the eighth (current) Parliament.

“Providing women and girls with equal opportunities just as men and boys in all spheres of life will create peaceful and harmonious societies with shared responsibilities.”

**H.E. Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo
President of Ghana**



Female representation in Ghana’s legislature has seen an increase to 40 (14%) in the eighth (current) Parliament.

Key Stages of Implementation

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Step 1 Developing the policy and legal framework

To increase women's participation in governance and all levels of decision making, the Government of Ghana through the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, developed and is implementing a National Gender Policy. The Policy stated the commitment of government to the promotion of women's human rights and empowerment in all spheres of life and at all levels.

The policy and the legal framework will ensure the sustainability of the implementation over the years to facilitate the achievement of gender parity in the country.

An Affirmative Action (Gender Equality) Bill which is in Cabinet for consideration and approval and subsequently passed into law also captures women's active participation and proportionate representation in governance, politics, leadership and education to remove the gender inequality gap in various sectors of the economy. The policy and the legal framework will ensure the sustainability of the implementation over the years to facilitate the achievement of gender parity in the country.

A Policy and Legal Framework is essential in determining the framework to address the issue and also to ensure sustainability in the implementation.

Step 2 Creating a Strategic Implementation Plan

A Strategic Implementation Plan (SIP) for the National Gender Policy has been developed. The SIP provides guidelines and direction for key actions to be taken in the implementation of the policy to realize the set objectives. It also provides clear roles and responsibilities for each stakeholder at all levels in the implementation of the policy.

A Strategic Implementation Plan is essential to provide direction for all stakeholders in the implementation of the policy and legislation.

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Step 3 Advocacy, Communication and Implementation

The communication and advocacy strategy of the Policy and the Affirmative Action Bill has also been developed. All these documents are being used to facilitate the effective and efficient implementation of the Policy to increase women's active participation and representation in leadership and decision making.

A number of advocacy, sensitization, education and capacity enhancement activities, interventions, programmes and projects are being implemented to promote women's active participation in leadership and decision making including the following;

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- The Ministry in collaboration with key stakeholders organized a series of advocacy programmes for the general public and political parties on the Affirmative Action (Gender Equality) Bill and the National Gender Policy and encouraged them to vote for female Parliamentary aspirants. This has led to a modest increase in the number of female candidates and the eventual increase in the number of elected female Parliamentarians for the current Legislature in December, 2020 from 36 (12%) to 40 (14%).
- The introduction of a "Girlz Girlz" power television talk show is providing girls the platform to interact with mentors and building their capacity and interest to take up leadership in all spheres of social and economic development.
- Leaders of Traditional, Religious and Faith based organizations as well as civil society organizations are also actively engaged in advocacy and sensitization on gender equality and women participation in leadership and decision making at all levels.
- Mentorship and youth clubs have been established in the Senior High Schools and Tertiary Institutions to enhance gender equality and women empowerment initiatives. A gender equality clinic is also being implemented in communities.
- To enhance women's access to education at higher levels and enhance their participation in taking up leadership position, an admission quota system which lowers the required grade point of entry for female candidates is being implemented by the universities to ensure that more females attain higher educational level.

- A Free Senior High School programme is also being implemented to provide access to all school-going pupils especially girls to help ensure that all especially women have the right to education which is fundamental for building their capacity for leadership roles.
- Ending child marriage and harmful traditional practices is key in ensuring gender parity in education. In this regard, the government of Ghana has developed and is implementing a 10 year Strategic Framework on Ending Child marriage in Ghana. This initiative is addressing the issue and providing opportunities for girls to be enrolled, retained and complete their basic education.
- The implementation of the strategy is coordinated with duty bearers whose roles are essential in addressing Child Marriage in Ghana.

Sensitization, advocacy and capacity building are essential for the buy-in, commitment and participation needed to ensure that all stakeholders play their rightful roles in gender equality and women empowerment

Resources

For the attainment of equal representation of males and females in decision making, collaboration among stakeholders in the public, private, civil society, faith based organizations, research and academia, the media, HeForShe Ambassadors in targeted communities and development partners is essential.

Technical and financial support from all stakeholders will be needed in ensuring that results are achieved timely.

For interventions to yield maximum results, partners must continue to work together to avoid duplication of efforts in achieving the desired results.

The development and usage of information, education and communication (IE&C) materials both in print and electronic, policy and legislation documents.

Contact

The results achieved in increasing women's participation and representation in governance, leadership and decision making in Ghana is a collaboration among stakeholders mentioned above. It was led by the Director for Policy, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation of the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, Mr. Mawutor Kwaku Ablo, an advocate of Gender Equality in Ghana.

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