



REVIEW OF THE 2015 NATIONAL GENDER POLICY OF GHANA

**EMERGING PUBLIC LEADERS OF GHANA, MAY
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1. BACKGROUND

The 2015 National Gender Policy (NGP) of Ghana, coordinated by the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP), stands as a beacon of inclusivity and equity. The policy aims to rectify gender imbalances through a robust framework.¹ Established to ensure women's empowerment and gender equality, the policy responds to pressing issues hindering sustained national development. In addition, it seeks to eradicate discrimination based on social or economic status and advocates for equal freedoms for both genders. The policy builds upon Ghana's post-independence strides towards women's rights, bolstering institutional support, gender mainstreaming efforts, and equality endeavours.²

Women's empowerment and gender equality are moral imperatives and catalysts for socio-economic progress.³ The NGP strategically addresses historical gender disparities and institutional biases against women, aligning with Ghana's global commitment to gender equality exemplified by initiatives like the Beijing Declaration and CEDAW.⁴ While prioritising the removal of structural barriers inhibiting women's progress, the policy underscores critical components, including legal frameworks, education, economic empowerment, health rights, and political participation. Despite acknowledging challenges like institutional capacity constraints and entrenched cultural norms, Ghana's National Gender Policy underscores the nation's dedication to social justice, gender parity, and sustainable development.

1.1 Objective

Enhance women's empowerment and address gender disparities comprehensively through the review of the National Gender Policy of Ghana.

Specific Objectives

1. Strengthening mechanisms to foster a culture of gender equality and social justice by identifying and addressing discriminatory attitudes and behaviours within various sectors.
2. Promoting the mainstreaming of gender perspectives into governance and decision-making processes at all levels of society, ensuring equitable representation and participation.
3. Improving women's access to essential services such as healthcare, education, and economic opportunities while enhancing their presence in political leadership roles and capacity-building programmes will reduce systemic gender disparities in Ghana.

1.2 Expected Outcomes

1. Increased advocacy efforts improve the recognition and protection of women's rights, facilitating equal access to economic opportunities and decision-making roles.
2. Women experience enhanced livelihoods across multiple domains, including political, economic, health, and educational sectors, reducing gender disparities.

¹ National Gender Policy, 2015. Retrieved from [Link](#)

² Chalwyn Caulker, Jana Elhorr, Adaorah Oduah, Alema E. Siddiky, To reach Gender Equality Ghana needs to prioritize social and economic inclusion, March, 2023. Retrieved from [Link](#)

³ United Nation, International Women's Day: Gender equality benefits everyone, March 2020. Retrieved from [Link](#).

⁴ Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, Ghana's Report Progress on Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, [LINK](#)

3. Workplace and community barriers obstructing women's meaningful engagement are identified and systematically eliminated, fostering a culture of social responsibility and promoting women's leadership in governance roles.

2. SWOT ANALYSIS

Below is the progress of implementing the National Gender Policy 2015 using the SWOT Analysis.

STRENGTH	WEAKNESS	OPPORTUNITY	THREATS
The government's full support for the policy showcases a commitment to tackling gender disparities head-on.	Limited resources, including financial stability and infrastructure, hinder supporting women in need.	Enhancing the capacity of government agencies and civil society enables more effective implementation of gender programmes and policies.	Changes in political power pose a risk to the continuity and sustainability of gender equality efforts.
The policy comprehensively addresses key aspects of gender equality crucial for women's development, spanning education, health, and economic stability.	Ghana's entrenched cultural norms present barriers to effective interventions, learning, and accountability.	Mobilising support through awareness-raising and advocacy for victims of gender inequality presents an opportunity for driving change.	Resistance from cultural leaders may impede efforts to promote gender equality and women's empowerment.
Collaboration with stakeholders such as the UNFPA, UNICEF, and UNWOMEN offers avenues to address outstanding issues and grasp their implications for policy objectives.	Improved monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are required to track progress and pinpoint obstacles to enhancement.	Partnering with the private sector facilitates resource mobilisation and knowledge exchange to bolster gender equality initiatives.	Global economic uncertainties have reduced donor funding and international backing for gender equality programmes, limiting resources for implementation.
The policy emphasises economic empowerment as a key factor in achieving gender equality, promoting women's access to financial services and entrepreneurship opportunities.	Economic empowerment initiatives can be undermined by the continued economic dependency of women on male counterparts.	There is an opportunity to collaborate with financial institutions to create more inclusive services tailored to women's needs.	Economic downturns and market fluctuations can disproportionately affect women's economic ventures and employment opportunities.
The policy supports educational initiatives aimed at increasing girls' enrollment, retention, and performance in schools.	Persistent educational gaps, especially in rural areas, can limit the effectiveness of these initiatives.	Leveraging technology can provide innovative solutions to bridge educational gaps and improve learning outcomes for girls.	Inadequate educational infrastructure and resources can threaten the sustainability of educational initiatives for girls.
The policy aims to improve women's access to healthcare services, including reproductive health.	Disparities in healthcare access and quality between urban and rural areas remain a challenge.	Partnerships with private healthcare providers can enhance the availability and quality of services for women.	Challenges in policy implementation and coordination across different levels of government can hinder the effectiveness of healthcare initiatives for women.

Based on the analysis provided, the findings offer valuable insights for crafting strategies to enhance the efficacy of the National Gender Policy.

3. ACTIVITIES IN ALIGNMENT WITH POLICY STRATEGIES

In alignment with the National Gender Policy of 2015, the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection (MoGCSP) of Ghana has undertaken a range of initiatives to uphold gender equality and empower women:

- i. **Specialised Units for Women's Rights:** Recognising the critical need to address gender-based violence, the MoGCSP has established specialised units within its structure to tackle specific issues such as domestic violence and human trafficking. These units serve as focal points for coordinating efforts to combat these forms of violence against women, providing support services, legal assistance, and shelter for survivors.
- ii. **Institutional Framework for Advancing Women:** Building on the policy framework outlined in the 2015 National Gender Policy, the MoGCSP launched a comprehensive five-year strategy in 2016, the Ghana National Action Plan II (2020-2025)⁵. This strategy aims to advance women's rights and gender equality across various sectors. It involves redefinition of the nation's strategic direction, policy objectives, and strategies within the ministry's institutional framework. This strategic plan provides a roadmap for integrating gender perspectives into national development policies and programmes, aligning Ghana's efforts with international gender and development goals.
- iii. **Women's Participation in Governance:** The MoGCSP actively promotes women's participation in governance and decision-making processes. As part of this effort, the Ministry collaborates with other government agencies and civil society organisations to implement programmes that empower women politically. The Ministry provides training and capacity-building programmes to women aspiring to enter politics or leadership positions. MoGSP identified social protection as a key training need in its 2020/2021 capacity-building plan. A certificate course on social protection was offered to help participants deepen their understanding of gender, vulnerability, and social protection issues. Topics covered in the course included social policy design and planning, the policy framework for social protection in Ghana, and reforms and innovations to strengthen social protection programme delivery. Moreover, the MoGCSP advocates for gender-inclusive policies and practices within political parties and electoral systems to ensure equitable representation of women in elected offices.
- iv. **Economic Empowerment Programmes:** Recognising the importance of economic empowerment in achieving gender equality, the MoGCSP implements various programmes to support women's entrepreneurship and financial inclusion. These initiatives include access to microcredit schemes, vocational training, and business development support services tailored to the needs of women entrepreneurs. By enhancing women's economic opportunities, these programmes reduce poverty, empower women economically, and promote active participation in the formal economy.
- v. **Gender Mainstreaming in Education and Healthcare:** The MoGCSP works closely with the Ministry of Education and Health to mainstream gender considerations into education and

⁵ National Action Plan for the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace & Security GHANAP 2, (2020 – 2025). Retrieved from [Link](#)

healthcare policies and programmes. This includes initiatives to promote girls' education, address gender disparities in access to healthcare services, and eliminate harmful practices such as early marriage and female genital mutilation. By addressing gender inequalities in these key sectors, the ministry aims to ensure equal opportunities for women and girls to access quality education and healthcare, thereby improving their overall well-being and social status.

- vi. **National Care Reform Roadmap:** The MoGCSP, in partnership with UNICEF, unveiled the National Care Reform Roadmap (2024-2028), which focuses on protecting children and aligning with the gender policy's objectives to support vulnerable groups.
- vii. **Combating Sexual and Gender-Based Violence:** The ministry launched an Orange Support Center and the Boame App to address Sexual and Gender-Based Violence and harmful practices in Ghana. These platforms provide resources and support for victims and work towards the prevention of such violence.
- viii. **Review and Update of the National Gender Policy:** The MoGCSP has been reviewing and updating the National Gender Policy to include emerging issues such as climate change, ensuring that the policy remains relevant and effective in addressing current and future challenges.
- ix. **Capacity Building in Social Protection:** The ministry has identified social protection as a key area for capacity building. It offers training courses to deepen understanding of gender, vulnerability, and social protection issues, contributing to the development of informed policies and programmes.
- x. **Advocacy and Awareness Campaigns:** The MoGCSP conducts advocacy and awareness campaigns to promote understanding of gender equality and women's rights. These campaigns aim to change attitudes and behaviors that perpetuate gender inequality and discrimination.
- xi. **Partnerships for Resource Mobilisation:** The ministry partners with international organisations and the private sector to mobilise resources for gender equality initiatives. This includes financial support, knowledge exchange, and technical assistance to strengthen the implementation of the gender policy.

Through these multifaceted initiatives, the MoGCSP demonstrates its commitment to advancing gender equality and women's empowerment in Ghana, which aligns with the objectives outlined in the National Gender Policy.

5. CHALLENGES

- Limited financial resources pose a significant obstacle to policy implementation across various sectors, including health, employment, and political representation. The inability to raise awareness about the ongoing prevalence of gender inequality through media and other channels leaves victims marginalised and silenced.
- Fear of stereotypes and ridicule impedes women's pursuit of leadership positions and roles.
- Women and girls in rural areas face restricted access to media, leading to minimal awareness about gender inequality issues and potentially exacerbating disparities.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the SWOT analysis, here are five strategic recommendations:

1. Strengthening Financial and Infrastructure Support:

- **Recommendation:** Increase investment in financial stability and infrastructure to support women in need.
- **Action Plan:** Seek additional funding from international donors, allocate a larger portion of the national budget to gender equality initiatives, and prioritize infrastructure projects that benefit women, such as healthcare facilities, educational institutions, and entrepreneurship hubs.

2. Cultural Sensitivity and Advocacy:

- **Recommendation:** Implement culturally sensitive programmes and intensify advocacy efforts to combat entrenched cultural norms.
- **Action Plan:** Work with local cultural leaders and influencers to create awareness campaigns that highlight the benefits of gender equality. Develop educational programmes that respect cultural values while promoting gender equality. Engage in community dialogue sessions to address resistance and foster a supportive environment.

3. Enhancing Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanisms:

- **Recommendation:** Improve monitoring and evaluation (M&E) mechanisms to ensure effective implementation and track progress.
- **Action Plan:** Develop comprehensive M&E frameworks with clear indicators and regular reporting schedules. Train government and civil society staff on best practices in M&E. Utilize technology for real-time data collection and analysis to quickly identify and address obstacles.

4. Leveraging Technology for Education:

- **Recommendation:** Use technology to bridge educational gaps and enhance learning outcomes for girls.
- **Action Plan:** Partner with tech companies to provide digital learning tools and resources to schools, particularly in rural areas. Develop online platforms for teacher training and student learning. Implement mobile learning programmes to reach girls who are unable to attend school regularly due to various barriers.

5. Private Sector Partnerships for Economic and Healthcare Initiatives:

- **Recommendation:** Collaborate with the private sector to boost economic empowerment and healthcare services for women.
- **Action Plan:** Engage financial institutions to develop tailored financial products and services for women entrepreneurs. Form alliances with private healthcare providers to expand access to quality health services, particularly in underserved areas. Launch public-private partnerships to drive resource mobilization and knowledge exchange for gender equality programmes.