



**Convention on the Elimination
of All Forms of Discrimination
against Women**

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**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women**

**Combined eighth and ninth periodic reports submitted by
Ghana under article 18 of the Convention, due in 2018^{*,**}**

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* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

** The annexes to the present document may be accessed from the web page of the Committee.



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List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Description
AAT	Arms Trade Treaty
AFHQ	Armed Forces Headquarters
AGYP	Adolescent Girls and Young Persons
AGYW	Adolescent Girls and Young Women
AHSTIP	Anti-Human Smuggling and Trafficking in Persons
AHTU	Anti-Human Trafficking Unit
ANC	Ante-natal Care
ART	Anti-retroviral Treatment
ARV	Anti-retroviral
BNI	Bureau of National Investigations
CAMFED	Campaign for Female Education
CBE	Complementary Basic Education
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CHRAJ	Commission for Human Rights and Administrative Justice
CPC	Child Protection Compact
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DDP	Deputy Director of Prisons
DFID	Department for International Development
dHTS	differentiated HIV Testing Services
DOC	Department of Children
DOG	Department of Gender
DOVVSU	Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit
DSW	Department of Social Welfare
DV	Domestic Violence
EC	Electoral Commission
eMTCT	elimination of Mother-to-Child Transmission
EOCO	Economic and Organised Crime Office
EUFA	European Football Association
FAW	Fall Army Worm
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
FSW	Female Sex Workers
GAF	Ghana Armed Forces
GALOP	Ghana Accountability for Learning Outcome Programme

GBA	Ghana Bar Association
GFA	Ghana Football Association
GHALCA	Ghana League Clubs Association
GLSS	Ghana Living Standards Survey
GNHR	Ghana National Household Registry
GOC	Ghana Olympic Committee
GPS	Ghana Police Service
GSFP	Ghana School Feeding Programme
GSOP	Ghana Social Opportunities Project
HTMB	Human Trafficking Management Board
HTS	Human Trafficking Secretariat
HTS	HIV Testing Services
IBBS	Integrated Bio-Behavioural Survey
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
ISS	Integrated Social Services
JHS	Junior High School
LEAP	Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty
LIPW	Labour Intensive Public Works
MASLOC	Microfinance and Small Loans Centre
MDA	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MELR	Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations
MILOB	Military Observers
MIWE	Mastercard Index of Women's Entrepreneurship
MMDA	Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assembly
MMDCE	Metropolitan, Municipal and District Chief Executive
MOFA	Ministry of Food and Agriculture
MoGCSP	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection
MoI	Ministry of the Interior
MoJAGD	Ministry of Justice and Attorney-General's Department
MSM	Men who have sex with Men
MTCT	Mother-to-Child Transmission
NBSSI	National Board for Small Scale Industries
NCCE	National Commission for Civic Education
NCCE	National Commission for Civic Education
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation

NHIS	National Health Insurance Scheme
NSA	National Sports Authority
NSP	National Strategic Plan
NSPP	National Social Protection Policy
PFJ	Planting for Food and Jobs
PLHIV	Persons living with HIV
RFJ	Rearing for Food and Jobs
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEIP	Secondary Education Improvement Programme
SEIP	Secondary Education Improvement Programme
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-based Violence
SHS	Senior High School
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SPD	Social Protection Directorate
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
SWCES	Single Window Citizens Engagement Service
SWIMS	Social Welfare Information Management System
TFR	Total Fertility Rate
UHC	Universal Health Coverage
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WIAD	Women in Agricultural Development
WOSPAG	Women Sports Association of Ghana
WTOM	Women in Tractor Operation and Management

I. Common Core Report

A. Background and period of coverage

1. The Republic of Ghana is pleased to present its Combined 8th and 9th Periodic Report on Implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) to the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW Committee) pursuant to her obligation under article 18 of CEDAW. The CEDAW Committee considered Ghana's Combined 6th and 7th Report ([CEDAW/C/GHA/6-7](#)) during its 1253rd and 1254th Meetings on 24 October 2014 and issued its Concluding Observations on 14 November 2014. Ghana submitted her responses to the Concluding Observations ([CEDAW/C/GHA/CO/6-7/Add.1](#)) on 14 November 2018 and provided information on progress made in some areas. The Combined 8th and 9th Report therefore provides a holistic update on progress made from 2015 to date.

B. Demographic, economic and social characteristics of Ghana

Geography

2. Ghana's territorial location has remained the same as previously reported, however 6 new Administrative Regions were added to the existing 10 within the period under review. The 10 former regions were officially established in 1987. Following the constitutional review process which ended in 2011, 6 new regions were proposed to be added, all of which were approved during a referendum held on 27 December 2018. Consequently, the 16 regions are: Ahafo Region, Ashanti Region, Bono East, Bono Region, Central Region, Eastern Region, Greater Accra Region, North East Region, Northern Region, Oti Region, Savannah Region, Upper East Region, Upper West Region, Volta Region, Western North Region, and Western Region. These Regions are further divided into 216 Districts, Metropolises and Municipalities. Figure 1 in the Annexes shows the 16 Regions and their capitals.

Population and health

3. Ghana's population has grown five-fold from 6,726,815 in 1960 to 30,832,019.¹ Females (50.7%) outnumber males (49.3%) by 0.4 million.² More than one-third of persons in Ghana live in Greater Accra Region or Ashanti Region. Regions in southern Ghana have the highest population concentration. Greater Accra Region is six times as densely populated as the next densely populated region (Central Region).³

4. The Total Fertility Rate (TFR) In Ghana is 3.9 per woman which is a decline from 4.2 children per woman in 2014. The median age at first birth among women aged 25–49 is 21.5 years. 14% of women aged 15–19 have begun childbearing, while one in four married women aged 15–49 use a modern method of contraception (25%).⁴

¹ Ghana Statistical Service, *Ghana 2021 Population and Housing Census General Report Volume 3A – Population of Regions and Districts* (2021) p. 25.

² Ghana Statistical Service, *Ghana 2021 Population and Housing Census General Report Volume 3B – Age and Sex Profile* (2021) p. 30.

³ Ghana Statistical Service (n1) p. 26–30.

⁴ See generally, Ghana Statistical Service, *Ghana Maternal Health Survey, 2017* (2018).

C. Political & legal system and economy

5. Ghana remains a constitutional democracy under the guidance of the 1992 Constitution, which establishes a mixed Presidential and Parliamentary system of government. The Executive is headed by the President – currently His Excellency Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo – assisted by 30 Sector Ministers, 16 Regional Ministers. The Parliament is a unicameral one composed of 275 Members elected from single member constituencies. The Judiciary comprises a hierarchical system of courts founded on the Common Law legal tradition with the Supreme Court at the apex and headed by the Chief Justice.

6. Ghana continues to deepen its democratic credentials and remains one of the most peaceful and stable democracies in Africa. During the period under review, the country successfully held two Presidential and Parliamentary elections in 2016 and 2020 respectively that saw the election and re-election of President Akufo-Addo.

7. As a member of the comity of nations, Ghana has also ratified several United Nations (UN) and African Union (AU) human rights treaties. A list of the treaties relevant to the protection of women's rights are provided in the Annexes.

8. Ghana has a mixed economy with the services, industry and agricultural sectors contributing to GDP from the largest to the lowest in that order. The country rapid economic growth of 7% in 2017-2019 was however hampered by the COVID-19 pandemic, the lockdown in March 2020 and a sharp fall in commodity exports, according to the World Bank.⁵ The drop in economic growth had a resultant effect on households with the poverty rate estimated to rise slightly from 25% in 2019 to 25.5% in 2020. Overall fiscal deficit in 2020 increased twofold to 15.2% in 2020, with public debt at 81.1% of GDP. Growth however showed a positive outlook in the first and second quarters of 2021, despite a sharp contraction in mining and the second wave of the pandemic.

II. Progress report on implementation of the articles of the Convention

Article 1: Definition of discrimination against women

Legal framework

9. The 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana provides a comprehensive definition of discrimination against women.

Article 2: Obligation to eliminate discrimination

10. An Affirmative Action (Gender Equality) Bill has been for the consideration and approval of Cabinet and its enactment by Parliament to become Law. The Bill, when passed would significantly enhance Ghana's efforts to eliminate discrimination in fulfilment of its Convention obligations. The Bill provides for specific measures to be undertaken by various institutions of State to achieve gender equality in political, social, economic, educational and cultural spheres in accordance with the Constitution and various international instruments ratified by Ghana. The First Schedule of the Bill requires all the institutions and organisations stated in the Bill to adopt gender policies and plans and subsequently submit annual reports toward

⁵ The World Bank in Ghana, 'Overview' [Online]. Available at <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/ghana/overview#2>.

evaluation of their progress to meet the progressive benchmarks set from 2020 to 2030 (from 20% to 50% gender equality). The Second Schedule lists the international and regional conventions including CEDAW with the respective targets and national efforts required to achieve them. The Third and Fourth Schedules then provide for specific measures to be adopted by independent Constitutional bodies and public service institutions respectively in achieving gender equality, while Fifth and Sixth Schedules similarly provide for measures to be adopted by the Judiciary and Political Parties respectively. In sum, when passed into law and fully implemented, it will significantly boost Ghana's efforts to implement its obligations under article 2 of CEDAW. Notwithstanding the delay in the passage of the Bill, various State institutions have taken steps to address discrimination against women.

11. As noted in the measures taken under article 16 in this Report, the Land Act, 2020 (Act 1036) includes provisions that ensure equality between men and women in conveyance of title and other aspects of land and property acquisition. It is also instructive to note that the Supreme Court of Ghana in 2020 affirmed its principle of "equality is equity" in the distribution of spousal property acquired during the marriage, albeit noting that the rule does not apply in every circumstance in the case of *Amoakohene v Amoakohene*⁶. The principle requires that properties acquired during a marriage are presumably jointly acquired and consequently should be shared equally.

Article 3: Appropriate measures to ensure the full development of women

12. Ghana has adopted various measures during the years under review to ensure the full participation and development of women in key areas.

13. Gender Units and Desks have been established in the various Security Services and Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) through the instrumentality of the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP). These include the Anti-Human Trafficking Units in the Ghana Police Service (GPS), Economic and Organize Crime Office (EOCO), the Anti-Human Smuggling and Trafficking in Persons Unit (AHSTIP) and the Anti-Trafficking Desk in the Attorney General's Department to handle specific issues of human trafficking. Desk officers have been trained in District Offices to handle gender-related issues. The Ghana Armed Forces (GAF), Ghana Immigration Service (GIS), GPS among others have adopted policies and strategies to mainstream gender in their operations and administration. The National Intelligence Bureau (NIB) has also established a gender office with a Senior Officer as the Head. Currently, the NIB has 52% of women of its total staff population.

14. Despite the slow increase rate of women playing more significant roles in political and public life, evidence from research conducted by the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) suggests that Ghanaians envisage more women in leadership roles. According to the 2016 Study on Matters of Concern to the Ghanaian Voter, 58.6% of respondents preferred to vote for a woman as President compared to 50% of respondents in the 2012 study, while those who were averse to voting for a woman reduced from 48.9% to 41.4% respectively. Evaluating civic participation in the 2020 election, the NCCE's 2020 study however noted that slightly more males (51.7%) than females (48.3%) were willing to vote in the Presidential elections and similarly, 51.9% and 48.1% in the Parliamentary elections respectively.

⁶ *Amoakohene v Amoakohene* (J4 2 of 2019) [2020] GHASC 18 (13 May 2020).

15. The Electoral Commission of Ghana (EC) has established Gender and Disability Desk at the EC's Head Office and in all Regional Offices across the country to enhance the participation of women in political and public activities. The Desks are tasked to assist the EC in addressing gender and disability issues in election activities and to generally advise the Commission on these issues. Other measures include:

- Inclusive voter education and information such as pictorial educational posters for easy understanding by women and persons with disabilities;
- Sensitised and educated groups of women in Faith and Community-Based Organisations, CSOs, Queen-mothers, market women, beauticians, hairdressers and dressmakers associations on electoral processes and addressed their concerns;
- Enhanced ballot designs for the less educated, majority of whom are women;
- Built capacity of female candidates to increase their knowledge and understanding of the electoral processes to facilitate their full participation;
- Provided preferential treatment to pregnant women, lactating mothers, sick and the aged at polling stations and assisting them through the voting process;
- Provided opportunities for qualified women to be polling officials with a view to enhancing their knowledge of electoral systems and processes and motivating them to contest elections in future;
- Assisted women through the proxy voting process by District Electoral Officers.

Article 4: Temporary measures (Affirmative Action) for the acceleration of equality between men and women

16. The Affirmative Action (Gender Equality) Bill, currently awaiting Cabinet consideration and approval contains provisions aimed at eliminating gender roles and stereotypes. These include:

- Clause 17 provides for complaint to the Commission for Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) by a victim of gender-based discrimination in processes for recruitment into Public Service;
- Clause 18 gives recourse to the provisions of the Bill by the governing body of a public service institution in filling vacancies for positions of authority and decision-making;
- Clause 19 ensures gender equality in the Security Services;
- Clause 21 ensures gender equality in the Judiciary (for example, section 21(1) requires equal representation of men and women on the Judicial Council);
- Clause 22 requires the Speaker and leadership of Parliament to ensure gender equality in appointments to leadership positions and Committees of Parliament.

17. The MoGCSP in close collaboration with key Ministries⁷ introduced special initiatives to promote women empowerment. A mentorship programme for girls has begun to build their leadership capacity nationwide. Again, girls have been empowered to take active participation in developing their potentials and that of their communities as well as the nation as a whole. Over 8,000 girls and boys have been engaged. A database for all girls' groups in Ghana has been developed to help identify them for support.

⁷ Ministry of Communication and Ministry of Finance.

18. The MoGCSP also initiated a special TV programme dubbed ‘Girlz Girlz Power Talk Show’ to discuss issues of gender equality, gender-based violence and cybercrime among others. This programme has aired three (3) seasons with thirteen (13) episodes each.

19. The Government of Ghana launched the ‘*HeForShe*’ National Campaign in 2017 as part of the UN global agenda to ensure gender equality, equity and empowerment. The Campaign seeks to promote the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 5 aimed at achieving Gender Equality and the Empowerment of all women and girls. His Excellency the President, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo as the Co-chair of Eminent AU Gender Champion is also the Ambassador extraordinaire for the *HeForShe* Campaign in Ghana. MoGCSP has extended the campaign to all the regions in the country. Over 4000 men and boys have committed to the Campaign online.

Article 5: Gender roles and stereotypes

20. Ghana has established legislative and policy frameworks aimed at addressing stereotypes, discrimination and harmful practices in the State. A National Gender Policy was developed and launched in 2015 and its Strategic Implementation Plan in 2016. Similarly, the provisions of the Affirmative Action (Gender Equality) Bill would facilitate the elimination of gender roles and stereotypes.

21. To address harmful practices, the Criminal Code (Amendment) Act, 1994 (Act 484) under section 69A criminalises the practice of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) punishable by a minimum jail term of five years and not more than ten years. While this has reduced the practice, some girls are still smuggled out of the country to neighbouring countries for FGM. Institutions including Department of Gender, Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ), the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit (DOVVSU) of the Ghana Police Service are collaborating to eliminate the practice of FGM in the country.

22. MoGCSP, CHRAJ and other NGOs have also continued to campaign against all other forms of harmful and dehumanizing cultural practices such as widowhood rights, forced marriages, ritual servitude and maltreatment of women accused of witchcraft. Consequently, the number of *trokosi* shrines has decreased significantly over the past years. MoGCSP will continue to monitor activities of the shrines and advocate for safe release of women and girls in servitude and reintegrate them into society. Again, the Ministry is implementing educational programmes, inter-sectoral dialogues and referral of legal aid services in support of women’s rights. The National Gender Policy further serves as a framework within which MoGCSP and its stakeholders seek to eliminate harmful practices and mainstream gender equality and women empowerment in Ghana.

23. The practice of witchcraft accusation in Ghana is an affront to human rights and it inhibits the rights to life, liberty and security, particularly of women. MoGCSP and some members of the Parliamentary Select Committee on Gender and Social Welfare paid a working visit to some of the witch camps in Gnani and Kpatinga, in the Yendi and Gushegu Municipalities. Following the visit, MoGCSP undertook a data collection exercise which identified areas requiring support as Gnani-Tindang & Gambaga camps in the North East Region and Kukuo, Leli-Dabari, Nabuli & Tindan Zhie camps in the Northern Region. The Ministry provided relief items including food stuff, mattresses, and pillows for the inmates of the camps. The residents of the alleged witch camps (largely, aged women and girls) and their dependents were provided with emergency cash transfers under the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) programme as part of the Ministry’s COVID-19 Response. They have also been enrolled on the LEAP programme to enable them receive regular bi-

monthly income support from Government to smoothen their consumption and ensure their livelihoods are improved. They were also sensitized and educated on the COVID-19 protocols. Again, sanitizers and nose masks were distributed to them. Government registered all the residents of the alleged witch camps and their dependants on the National Health Insurance Scheme for ease and access to health care services to promote and protect their welfare.

24. The Ministry of Chieftaincy and Religious Affairs and the National House of Chiefs have the responsibility of codifying all traditional practices and eliminate outmoded ones as specified in the constitution. The Ministry in collaboration with the National House of Chiefs commissioned the Eliminating Harmful Traditional Practices Project in 2015 with the goal to investigate the nature and extent of harmful practices such as widowhood rites, female genital mutilation (FGM) and confinement of alleged witches, in the then Northern, Upper East and Upper West Regions. The project also identified interventions to address the adverse effect of such practices and beliefs on the rights of persons affected, mostly women.

25. The legislative framework to combat witchcraft allegations has been boosted with the submission to Parliament of a Private Member's Bill by 3 Members of Parliament in 2021 to prohibit the practice of witchdoctors and punish witchcraft accusers. The Criminal Offences (Amendment) Bill, 2020 will criminalise the profession of witchdoctors and witchfinders, accusation of witchcraft and encouragement of any of these acts by a chief or headman.

26. MoGCSP has developed a National Framework for Ending Harmful Practices, especially against women, girls and vulnerable persons in Ghana which will promote advocacy and engagement on these issues with the support of Traditional and Faith-Based leaders.

27. MoGCSP has established the Domestic Violence Secretariat to coordinate the implementation of the Domestic Violence Act 2007. Parliament has also passed the Domestic Violence Regulations, 2016 (L.I. 2237) to fully implement the Law. The Domestic Violence Policy and National Plan of Action (2009) are currently under review. The Cyber Security Authority has been established under the Cyber Security Act, 2020 (Act 1038) with the responsibility to protect children especially the girl child and women online.

28. MoGCSP launched the Orange Support Centre (Figure 2 in the Annexes) and the Boame Mobile Application (Figure 3 in the Annexes) as part of the commemoration of the 2021 International Women's Day.⁸ The centre and mobile application are to facilitate quick response and referrals to appropriate institutions for redress. A multi-disciplinary team of experts is available to provide a range of services to victims and survivors of gender-based violence. Further, MoGCSP has renovated the shelter for domestic violence survivors.

29. As part of the Government's digitalisation agenda, MoGCSP has launched a web-based online system known as Social Welfare Information Management System (SWIMS) (<http://www.mogcsp.gov.gh/swims/>) (Figure 4 in the Annexes) to document and report on the provision of social welfare services (child protection, social protection and gender-based violence). SWIMS is based on standard national data collection forms, workflows, referral pathways and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for use by staff of MMDAs, NGOs, CSOs, and Residential Care Facilities

⁸ UNFPA, 'UNFPA continues to work towards achieving its mandate of zero recorded cases of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence' [Online]. Available at <https://ghana.unfpa.org/en/news/unfpa-continues-work-towards-achieving-its-mandate-zero-recorded-cases-sexual-and-gender-based>.

responsible for social protection, child protection, justice for children and gender-based violence related services in their operations.

30. Some other notable developments undertaken by MoGCSP during the period under review include the following:

- Creation of a Facebook page (Ghana Ends Child Marriage) and Twitter (@ChildMarriageGh) account which are continually being used to engage audience with the right information using the #GhanaEndsChildMarriage. The Facebook page currently has 28,089 Likes, with more people visiting the page by the day;
- Conducted and launched a Research Report on Domestic Violence in Ghana in 2016;
- Organized sensitization workshops on Teenage Pregnancy and Adolescent Reproductive Health for *Kayaye* (female head porters) in the Ashanti, former Brong-Ahafo, Western and Greater Accra Regions for over 2,000 participants;
- Developed and distributed 1000 copies of the National Strategic Framework on Ending Child Marriage;
- Launched a National Campaign to “End Child Marriage”. National dialogues have been held for over 10,000 key stakeholders including media houses to enable them to use their platforms to discuss issues on child marriage;
- Conducted high level meetings with paramount Chiefs and Queen mothers from across the country to sensitize them on early marriage, female genital mutilation and obstetric fistula. More than one thousand (1,000) Pastors, Imams and Traditional Rulers were sensitised on issues of Domestic/Gender-Based Violence;
- Trained 1,000 Police Officers on domestic violence case management and counselling to understand issues of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) for effective and efficient prosecution of cases in court;
- Designed, developed and printed 1000 copies of a training manual on SGBV which were distributed to all the Police training schools;
- Designed, developed and printed 2000 copies of a Protocol and Codified Handbook for case management of DV/SGBV which were distributed to Police Officers to serve as a one-stop information source for both personnel of DOVVSU and other Police personnel;
- Trained Police Officers on disclosure, case tracking system and child friendly policing.

Challenges

31. The following are the challenges, obstacles and gaps in addressing violence against women:

- Family interference in domestic violence cases which halt prosecution and justice;
- Strong influence of tradition and cultural practices. The existence of negative traditional practices such as FGM and widowhood rites among others;
- Witchcraft accusations;
- Inadequate funding;
- Inadequate shelters for abused women.

Article 6: Appropriate measures including legislation to suppress all forms of trafficking in women and exploitation of prostitution of women

32. Ghanaian women and children are trafficked to other parts of West Africa, Europe and the Middle East for forced labour and sexual exploitation. Unscrupulous employment agencies entice unsuspecting and vulnerable women and girls (and men as well) with seemingly lucrative job opportunities. The traffickers exploit, imprison and extort funds from their victims, who report all forms of physical, emotional and sexual abuse and violence meted to them upon their return.

33. Ghana also records cases of women and girls from other sub-regions of Africa (and from Nigeria in particular), who are trafficked into Ghana under the pretext of being employed in promising jobs. They however end up being forced into prostitution to repay huge debts for their transportation and lodging. Other instances of trafficking include Nigerien and Chadian nationals recruited to beg in some principal cities in Ghana.

34. Given the situation of trafficking both in Ghana and outside, the State has enhanced its legislative, policy and institutional response to the phenomenon as follows:

- Human Trafficking Prohibition Regulations (Protection and Reintegration of Trafficked Persons) 2015 (L.I. 2219);
- Ghana Immigration (Amendment) Act, 2012 (Act 848). (This Act had not been previously reported on, hence its inclusion in the current Report. The amendment caters against the smuggling and trafficking of migrants and related offences);
- National Plan of Action for the Elimination of Human Trafficking in Ghana (2017–2021);
- Standard Operating Procedures to Combat Human Trafficking in Ghana with an emphasis on Child Trafficking, 2017;
- Intersectoral Standard Operating Procedures for Child Protection and Family Welfare (Guidelines, Tools and Forms for Casework and Management), 2020;
- Effective collaboration between MoGCSP and MDAs, MMDAs, law enforcement agencies and the media who play a direct role in combating human trafficking in Ghana;
- Commemorates World Day Against Trafficking in Persons annually;
- Holds periodic statutory meetings of Human Trafficking Management Board (HTMB);
- Coordinate the implementation of the Child Protection Compact (CPC) Agreement in conjunction with the International Organization for Migration and Free the Slaves;
- Established shelters to care for rescued and at-risk victims of human trafficking;
- Trained shelter staff in shelter management, shelter security and safety, victim care, interview skills, standards operating procedures and case management among others;
- The Human Trafficking Secretariat (HTS) supported 4 shelters which were rehabilitating rescued victims of trafficking with an amount of Twenty-seven Thousand, Eight Hundred Ghana Cedis (GH¢27,800.00);

- Human Trafficking Fund Account created with a seed amount of Five Hundred Thousand Ghana Cedis (GH¢500,000.00). The Government further released One Million Ghana Cedis (GH¢1,000,000) for victim protection and implementation of the Human Trafficking National Plan of Action;
- Operationalisation of children's shelter in 2020 to provide victims with comprehensive trauma informed care and support;
- Held training programmes for staff of HTS, Department of Social Welfare (DSW) and relevant child related social service providers in 2020 on shelter management, victim support and support for child trafficking victims;
- Held several collaborative activities with national and international organisations to address different aspects of human trafficking affecting Ghana.

35. The Ghana Police Service in 2020 received and investigated 64 cases of human trafficking and secured 8 convictions out of 10 prosecuted suspects. The Service also rescued 141 victims of human trafficking. Again, all new recruits to the Ghana Police Service were trained on issues of human trafficking, child labour, irregular migration and child-friendly policing. The Ghana Immigration Service, within the same period also intercepted and rescued 38 victims, investigated 14 cases and arrested 4 perpetrators. The Service embarked on 20 awareness-raising campaigns nationwide within the period.

Challenges

36. In the fight against human trafficking, the State is often faced with these challenges:

- Individuals unwilling to change their attitude and perceptions about seeking supposed greener pastures despite the lure and dangers of human trafficking;
- Victims unwilling to testify in court proceedings;
- Prolonged adjournment of court cases;
- Inadequate shelters across the country.

Article 7: Representation of women in political and public life

37. Ghana has been witnessing a gradual increase in the number of women in key decision-making positions, both in the political and public spheres. Key progressive developments are as follows:

- Women's participation in the legislature has seen an improvement over the years. Table 1 in the Annexes provides an overview of the number of women who have held seats in Ghana's Parliament since 1960 to date. Currently, there are 40 women out of the 275 Members of Parliament;
- There has been a marginal increase in women in the Judiciary of Ghana in 2021.⁹ Statistics from the Judicial Service of Ghana show that in the Supreme Court, of the 16 Justices, 5 are women, compared to 4 women in 2020. At the Court of Appeal, 15 out of the 34 Justices are women, compared to 11 in 2020. In the High Court, there are 53 female Justices out of a total of 118 Justices, having increased from 45 in 2020. At the Circuit Court, there are currently 37 female judges and 40 males, compared to 25 female judges and 38 males in 2020. The

⁹ Information on female judges available at <https://news.dennislawgh.com/2021-gender-statistics-of-judges-in-ghana-indicates-a-marginal-increase-in-female-representation/>.

District Courts have currently 59 female judges and 99 males, the same figure as in 2020;

- In the Executive, the 2016 Presidential elections saw one female candidate contesting out of 7 candidates while the 2020 elections saw 3 females contested out of 12 candidates. Of the 36 Central Government Ministers in 2017, 9 were females, compared to 6 in 2014. Currently, there is a drop in the number with 6 female Ministers out of the 36 Central Government Ministers and 2 females out of 16 Regional Ministers. As at 2021, Ghana had deployed 56 Ambassadors to its missions abroad out of which 24 were women representing 42.85% as against 41% in 2017;
- The Council of State, established by Article 89 of the 1992 Constitution to counsel the President in the performance of his functions, currently has 25 members of which 5 are women (2017 to date), as compared to 3 women out of 18 members in the Council from 2013 to 2017;
- The Civil Service has also witnessed an increase in the number of women serving in senior managerial positions, although, a marginal drop in 2021. Table 2 in the Annexes shows the number of female Chief Directors in the Ghana Civil Service from 2017 to 2021;
- The Ghana Armed Forces (GAF) has also recorded an increase in women serving in higher ranks during the period under review. Tables 3 and 4 in the Annexes give a breakdown of the percentage of women in decision-making, policy and programmes in the Armed Forces.

Challenges

38. In efforts to enhance the participation of women in political and public life, these challenges remain:

- Gender stereotyping continues to impede and close spaces for women's political participation;
- Monetization of politics.

Article 8: Representation of women at the international level

Participation of women in missions

39. Ghana continues to have women serving in high-profile positions at the international level. As at 2021, there were 7 women serving in UN and African Union (AU) positions and 24 serving as Ambassadors and High Commissioners in Ghana's Missions abroad as captured in the Annexes.

Participation of women in peacekeeping operations

40. During the period under review, Ghana reviewed its National Action Plan on UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (GHANAP 1325) and developed GHANAP 2 (2020–2025). Consequently, under the guidance of GHANAP 2, the Ghana Armed Forces (GAF) is focusing on women's leadership, participation and gender perspectives in conflict and post-conflict processes. Furthermore, women's position and role in crisis management and peace-building activities have been enhanced. During the reporting period, women constitute 29% of the GAF's strength. Other remarkable achievements include:

- The GAF has improved its data analysis register on their personnel and Peace Support Operations indicating female Officers-in-Command and at Base Orderly Rooms;
- The GAF has organised durbars and short courses on gender issues at its Bases. It has organised a breast cancer awareness campaign. The Armed Forces Head Quarters (AFHQ) continues to exercise its oversight role over Gender Advisors at Bases. Also, it has established liaison to regulate reporting systems;
- A summary of the deployment of GAF personnel in UN Peacekeeping operations is provided in table 4 in the Annexes. As may be observed, the percentage of female soldiers in GHANBAT Contingents of 27% is higher than the UN Gender Parity Standard of 15%. There is also gender parity (50%) among Military Observers (MILOB) and Staff Officers and the secondment of 2 female Officers to the UN Headquarters compared to 1 male Officer within the last 4 years.

Challenges

41. Key challenges being faced in improving women's participation in peacekeeping operations and missions include inadequate funding for tailor made programmes and courses for women.

Article 9: Women and nationality

42. The situation with the discriminatory provisions in the Citizenship Act, 591, which repeat article 7(5) and (6) of the 1992 Constitution has not changed since the last Report. The Constitution Review Commission (CRC) recommended that the provisions of article 7 should be made gender neutral,¹⁰ which was accepted by the Government in its White Paper.¹¹

Article 10: Education

43. The 1992 Constitution guarantees the right to education for every child without discrimination as to age, gender, location, religion, or any other status. The Ministry of Education has adopted the Education Strategic Plan (2018–2030) which spells out the major strategic objectives and thematic areas that the education sector would focus on in delivering education within the period. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education is developing its sector specific gender policy document to mainstream gender concerns in the education sector.

Gender parity in education

44. During the period under review, Ghana has made significant progress in achieving gender parity across all educational levels, as indicated by data from the Education Management Information Systems (EMIS). This is due to the free basic education policy that is complemented with school feeding, enrolment drives and capitation grant. Figure 5 in the Annexes gives a snapshot of the rate of gender parity across all educational levels within the reporting period in fulfilment of SDG Goal 4.

¹⁰ Constitution Review Commission, *Report of the Constitution Review Commission* (2011) p. 639, para. 53.

¹¹ *White Paper on the Report of the Constitution Review Commission presented to the President* p. 42.

45. Transition rates for girls especially from Junior High to Senior High schools have improved since 2017 when the Free Senior High School (SHS) Policy began. Girls who would have otherwise dropped out after the Junior High School (JHS) due to family and/or financial difficulties have mostly transitioned into the SHSs.

46. The Ghana Accountability for Learning Outcome Programme (GALOP) run by the Ministry of Education as well as interventions by Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) such as the Model Schools for girls in deprived areas of Ghana have also enhanced transition rates.

47. Travelling school times and distances have been reduced for girls as some projects have provided them with bicycles to commute to other communities to attend school. Again, the siting of schools (primary and secondary) closer to communities have reduced travel time for girls.

48. **Addressing high drop-out rate of girls due to child marriage and teenage pregnancies:** The rate of child marriages has reduced due to the “End to Child Marriage Programme” that has been rolled out by the MOGCSP. Secondly, the “Guidelines for the Prevention of Pregnancy and Re-entry of Teenage Mothers to School” being implemented by the Ghana Education Service (GES) has raised awareness and granted many teenage girls the opportunity to continue with their education and complete at least the Senior High level.

49. Addressing sexual abuse and harassment of girls in schools and the negative impact of harmful practices such as forced and early marriages: The Safe School Policy addresses all forms of harassment and violence in schools. It places a ban on corporal punishment, enforces the use of positive disciplinary tools, bans bullying in schools as well as calls for the eradication of gender-based violence in schools. The formation of District Task Forces at the district level have enhanced collaboration, networking and easy referral of gender-based violence cases in schools.

50. **Addressing the lack of education facilities and qualified teaching personnel especially in rural areas:** The Secondary Education Improvement Programme (SEIP) has trained teachers, provided funding for teaching and learning materials and provided I-Boxes (online learning materials accessed by students). Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) programmes have also been organized for deprived schools under the SEIP.

51. The institution of the Teacher Licensing Exams ensures that quality teachers are posted to schools and retained. There are special incentives such as transfer and further studies packages for teachers who are posted to rural and deprived areas as a means of motivation for them to remain at post. T-Tel, an NGO in the education sector, is providing high quality technical advice, research and implementation support services using local talent and expertise to enable Ghana’s education system to reach greater heights.

52. **Interventions for specific groups of girls:** Educational scholarships have been instituted for brilliant but needy girls in basic schools by the District Assemblies.

53. The Complementary Basic Education (CBE) programme provides lessons in literacy and numeracy in the mother tongue to out-of-school children aged 8 to 14 years to facilitate their re-entry into the formal education system. Over 240,000 out-of-school children have gone back to formal education since its commencement in 2013. With a special focus on girls’ education, over 50% of beneficiaries of CBE are girls and women constitute over 60% of the management structure at the community level. Furthermore, over 20% of CBE facilitators are women.

Challenges

54. Key challenges faced by the education sector in realising the rights of girls to education include the following:

- Inadequate teaching and learning facilities;
- Cultural resistance to change.

Article 11: Women and employment

55. Article 17 of the 1992 Constitution guarantees equal rights to all citizens and prohibits discrimination on grounds of gender, race, colour, ethnic origin, religion, creed or social or economic status. Consequently, the provision enjoins the State to establish measures to promote women's rights and gender equality at all levels consistent with SDG 5. In this regard, Ghana has established MoGCSP, adopted a National Gender Policy, created Gender Desks in various Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) as well as Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) to mainstream gender issues into their sector plans, budgets and activities. Again, Ghana has ratified relevant International Conventions and Treaties to promote gender concerns and has appointed women into very-high profile positions including Chief Justices, Chairpersons of the Electoral Commission and a Chief of Staff among others.

56. The 2019 Labour Force Survey Report of the Ghana Statistical Service (GLSS 7) indicated that more males (66.9%) compared to females (63.3%) are employed, thus, a relatively higher proportion of females without jobs. However, the private and informal sectors account for more women (4.6 million) in employment than men (3.8 million) according to the 2015 Labour Force Report.

57. Civil Service staff strength increased by 15.8% from 2019 to 2020. This was most noticeable by the significant increase of female staff (16.3%) as compared to male staff (7.6%) in 2020. The Civil Service agenda for gender parity includes the reinforcement of policies to encourage women to actively participate in governance and decision-making processes to enhance gender balance in the sector. As shown in table 2 in the Annexes, the number of female Chief Directors in the Service has significantly increased from 4 in 2017 to 11 in 2020. Again, the proportion of females recruited into the Civil Service increased from 28.4% in 2019 to 47% in 2020. The Civil Service has therefore made considerable progress in addressing gender parity.

58. **Ratification of ILO Convention 189 (Domestic Workers Convention):** Following the passage of the Labour (Domestic Workers) Regulations, 2020 (L.I. 2408), the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations (MELR) engaged the Ministry of Justice and Attorney General's Department (MoJAGD) on the ratification of ILO Convention 189 (Domestic Workers' Convention). However, with the ongoing implementation of L.I. 2408, which has already incorporated certain relevant provisions of the Convention 189, the ratification of the ILO Convention has been put on hold. This is to enable monitor the full implementation of the L.I. 2408 in the medium term before the ratification.

59. **Ratification of ILO Convention 183 (Maternity Protection Convention):** Ghana expects to ratify ILO Convention 183 in 2022. The ratification would obligate the State to extend the minimum period of maternity leave from the current twelve (12) weeks to fourteen (14) weeks. Tripartite Partners have long agreed to the 14 weeks provided by ILO Convention 183. There are various stakeholders and interested groups including the Ministry of Health and the Office of the First Lady of the Republic of Ghana who are advocating for maternity leave to be extended even

beyond the provisions of the Convention. MELR intends to mobilize resources for a broader stakeholder engagement on the subject for onward submission to Cabinet for consideration. The stakeholder engagement process would either affirm the 14 weeks maternity leave originally agreed or otherwise in lieu of prevailing circumstances.

60. Special Pension Benefits (Arrangements) for Women: Currently, there is no specific law or special arrangement for pension benefits for women. The existing National Pensions Act, 2008 (Act 766) establishes and provides Three-Tier Pension benefits for all workers including women. The first and second tiers are mandatory for all workers in the formal sector. The third Tier is voluntary and mainly targeted at workers in the informal sector, majority of whom are women as evidenced by the Report of the Seventh Round of the Ghana Living Standards Survey (GLSS 7, 2019). The GLSS 7 notes that 68.3% of females ages 15 years and above work in the informal economy or sector and therefore recommends that a specific informal sector pension scheme be established for women under the Third-Tier arrangement to expand pension coverage.

61. Promoting women's rights through gender equality and empowerment: The overall goal of women's empowerment policies is to attain gender equality and equity in political, social and economic development systems and outcomes. To achieve this goal, the following interventions are being pursued:

- Expediting action on enactment and implementation of the Affirmative Action (Gender Equality) Bill;
- Attaining gender balance on all Government-appointed Committees, Boards and official bodies;
- Increasing Government of Ghana funding to institutions responsible for gender mainstreaming;
- Institutionalising gender-responsive budgeting and training on gender equality in the public service;
- Implementing policy and administrative directives to reserve 30% of poverty alleviation funds of Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) to service women's enterprises;
- Allocating 50% of Microfinance and Small Loans Centre (MASLOC) funds to women's applicants;
- Exempting head porters (otherwise known as "*Kayaye*") from the payment of market tolls and taxes to MMDAs, in addition to improving their access to education, healthcare, skills training and decent employment opportunities; and
- Implementing the quota system of 30% women representation in public appointments.

62. Ratification of ILO Convention 190 (Violence and Harassment Convention): In Ghana, various partners including Action Aid Ghana and the MELR have engaged stakeholders on understanding and deepening discussions on the ratification of ILO Convention 190. MoJAGD has also given approval for the MELR to ratify the Convention, having affirmed that ILO Convention 190 is consistent with Ghana's laws. Thus, to expedite action on the ratification process, the MELR would need to undertake the following activities:

- Conduct a survey on the incidence of violence and harassment at work to inform a Memorandum for Cabinet's consideration;
- Validate the survey report at a stakeholders' workshop;

- Disseminate the final survey report;
- Sensitise policy makers on the ratification of Convention 190;
- Develop a National Workplace Harassment Policy.

63. **Other institutional measures:** The Ghana Armed Forces (GAF) has made some significant effort in improving the condition of its female members. Some of the measures adopted include the following:

- In postings and attachments, consideration is given to pregnant women, medical cases and couples on compassionate grounds (for example, by attaching spouses to Bases where their partners are on mission or operations), consideration of family issues and consideration on academic grounds;
- Females are considered for training, capacity-building, military courses, study leave and are given priority in case of limited slots for opportunities;
- In terms of logistics (uniforms), there are ongoing amendments to GAF Dress Regulations (promulgation of a Dress Code) to address various shortfalls in clothing to eliminate gender biases.

Article 12: Equality in access to health care

64. The health of the individual is a critical prerequisite for the enhancement of human development. As a result, the Government of Ghana accords high priority to the improvement of the health status of women, men and children by pursuing policies aimed at reducing the incidence of disease and improving health. The Convention requires State Parties to increase women's access throughout the life cycle, to appropriate, affordable and quality health care, information and related services. Similarly, the State is required to strengthen preventive health programmes, promote and disseminate information on women's health, increase resources and monitor follow-up for women's health. The implementation of the National Health Insurance Scheme therefore increases access to quality healthcare for women.

65. A significant bottleneck and gap that has become quite apparent during this period of review is cancer screening and treatment. Access to cervical and breast cancer screening is limited in Ghana. The entry point for cervical cancer screening is family planning services, with the main method being visual inspection with acetic acid and cryotherapy services for those found to be at risk of developing cervical cancer. Screening by pap smear is also available in a few family planning outlets in both the public and private sector. Breast cancer screening is also done in a few secondary and tertiary level hospitals. To address the issue of cervical and breast cancer screening, a cancer board was inaugurated on 9 April 2018 by MoGCSP.

66. The First Lady of the Republic of Ghana, Mrs Rebecca Akuffo Addo, has equally refurbished the maternal block of the Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital in Kumasi to accommodate more pregnant women and give them adequate health care and is doing same at Korle-bu Teaching Hospital to reduce maternal mortality. As part of the safe delivery project, the Samira Empowerment and Humanitarian Project (SEHP), initiated by the Second Lady, visited new and expectant mothers at the Eastern Regional Hospital in Koforidua and donated electronic fetoscopes to the Antenatal Unit.

67. MoGCSP, Ministry of Health and the Ghana Health Service together with Development Partners and CSOs continue to create awareness on obstetric fistula as a maternal health issue in prevalent communities by targeting Chiefs, Queen mothers, women and girls and men, as well as opinion and religious leaders. There are also

sensitization programmes with the media for education on fistula to go wide to end stigmatization and support sufferers of fistula through surgery and reintegration. (Development partners ECOWAS and UNFPA).

68. **Health-specific measures taken to address HIV/AIDS:** Generally, Ghana has a relatively low prevalence of HIV and AIDS pandemic. However, the epidemic is characterized by pockets of high prevalence in some geographical areas and in sub-populations. The country has slowly but steadily made modest progress in its response to the HIV and AIDS epidemic. The 2020 National and sub-National HIV and AIDS Estimates Report indicates the national adult HIV prevalence of 1.68% (down from a prevalence of 1.70% in 2019) and the adult (15–49) incidence rate of 0.09%. The report also reveals that 346,120 people are living with HIV and the HIV prevalence varies across all 16 Regions of the country. Regional HIV prevalence ranged from 2.5% in the Bono Region as the Region with the highest prevalence to the lowest of 0.6% occurring in Northern and North East Regions. Eight Regions namely, Ahafo, Ashanti, Bono, Bono East, Eastern, Greater Accra, Western and Western North exceeded the national prevalence, with the remaining regions below the national prevalence. HIV prevalence among young people (15–24 years), a proxy for new HIV infections, remains at 0.70%.

69. Ghana AIDS Commission developed a new National HIV&AIDS Policy in September 2019. This new policy provides the overarching direction for Ghana, as it continues its journey to achieve the 90-90-90 treatment targets by 2020 and ultimately SDG 3, specifically target 3.3 which calls for an end to the AIDS epidemic by 2030. December 2020 was the milestone for the 90-90-90 Global Fast Track HIV treatment targets. Like many other African countries, Ghana's performance results of 63%-95%-73% were far lower than the global targets. Therefore, the National Strategic Plan (NSP) 2021–2025 represents Ghana's renewed commitment to achieve the new UNAIDS Global Strategy's 95-95-95 Fast Track Treatment Targets. The lessons learned and the momentum generated over the period of implementation of the previous NSP will drive the country's efforts at achieving the 95-95-95 treatment targets by 2025.

70. **Joint Program Review of the NSP 2016–2020:** The Joint Program Review of NSP 2016–2020, conducted in January 2020 in a consultative manner with key stakeholders, identified successes, impacts as well as gaps in the implementation of the plan. The findings and recommendations of the Joint Programme Review informed the development of NSP 2021–2025. A few of the review findings are summarized as follows:

HIV prevention

71. At the end of 2020, the percentage of pregnant women accessing ante-natal care (ANC) services and receiving HIV Testing Services (HTS) was 70%, with 87% of those testing positive and receiving ART, while mother-to-child transmission (MTCT) rate was 11.4%.

72. Over 26 million condoms were distributed in 2020; about 7 million were given to key populations. Female condom uptake had continued to be low compared to male condoms due to many socio-cultural factors surrounding its use by women.

73. Despite increased funding and rapid scale-up of key population programmes over the years, HIV prevalence among Female Sex Workers (FSW) (4.6%) and men having sex with men (18.10%) remained several folds higher than the national average. Stigma and discrimination were found to be significant hindrance to uptake of services by key populations.

74. Program priority for HIV prevention in the NSP 2016–2020 for the general population was targeted at behaviour change intervention. However, available funds during implementation focused on key populations and pregnant women. There is still the need to identify innovative ways to implement HIV prevention interventions in the general population.

75. In 2020, a total of 208,811 persons living with HIV (PLHIV) received antiretroviral (ARV) drugs. The high uptake of treatment was attributed to regular supply of ARV drugs in the country, the provision of drugs at ANC centres for pregnant women, and the use of Models of Hope to provide counselling and support.

76. There were efforts to ensure systematic enrolment of all HIV/TB co-infected patients on anti-retroviral treatment (ART). The program reported an increased percentage of TB patients who tested for HIV; 1,856 TB patients who tested positive for HIV were on ART as of 2019. In 2020, a total of 138,507 HIV positive clients were screened for TB, and all 936 co-infected individuals were put on treatment.

77. At the end of 2020, Ghana had achieved 63-95-73 of the 90-90-90 treatment targets. Out of a population of 346,120 PLHIV, 218,741 (63%) knew their HIV status; 208,811 (95%) of them were on ART, and 152,365 (73%) of those on ART were virally suppressed. Despite the introduction and implementation of the Test and Treat policy, high defaulter rates and poor access to viral load tests and receipt of results continued to be important challenges.

Critical social and programmatic enablers

78. The political commitment to tackling HIV in Ghana has been demonstrated through the development of appropriate policies, establishing leadership and coordination structures from national down to the district level.

79. Communities (PLHIV, CSOs and NGOs) have been at the forefront of the national response to HIV. They are critical in both raising awareness and providing support for PLHIV or persons who are affected by HIV (orphans and vulnerable children).

80. Stigma and discrimination at the facility level persist despite continuous efforts at mitigating them at health facilities. Key informants noted that internalised or self-stigma among PLHIV is also high. One-third of the FSW surveyed in the Integrated Bio-Behavioural Survey (IBBS) in 2015 had negative attitudes towards PLHIV. Men who have sex with men (MSM) in the 2017 Ghana Men's Study (GMS) II reported that they were treated well by healthcare providers when they accessed services.

81. Young key populations face widespread discrimination, stigma and violence and specific vulnerabilities associated with youth, including power imbalances in relationships. They also have lower knowledge of HIV risks and lower ability to mitigate those risks.

82. Gender inequalities and barriers persist to the disadvantage of women, girls and key populations across sectors. These include harmful gender norms and gender-based violence, which fuel the disproportionate burden of HIV and economic inequality among women and girls.

83. **Universal Health Coverage:** In December 2019, Ghana launched the Roadmap for Attaining Universal Health Coverage 2020–2030 (UHC) with the goal of **“Increased access to quality essential health care and population-based services for all by 2030”**. The Roadmap is the commitment of the Government of Ghana to shape the future of health care in the country. It reflects carefully on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-being, Declaration on Primary Health Care in Astana (2018), UHC 2030 Compact, Initiatives

of UHC 2030 and the Political Declaration of UHC adopted at the UN High Level Meeting in September 2019. Through broad based consultations and consensus building with various stakeholders including public and private sectors, civil society and Development Partners, a set of priority services and interventions have been agreed to be made universally accessible to all persons living in Ghana.

84. The Ghana AIDS Policy is consistent with and supports other gender sensitive initiatives including those that reduce the impact of HIV and AIDS on women and girls. These include:

- National Gender Policy, 2015 that aims to mainstream gender equality and women's empowerment concerns into the national development process and promote commitment throughout the government to empowering women;
- Strategic Plan for a Comprehensive Response to Human Rights Related Barriers to HIV and TB Services in Ghana, 2020-2024 that seeks to remove human rights-related barriers to HIV and TB services and to improve access to quality HIV and TB healthcare and support services through pragmatic implementation strategies;
- Fast track commitments - UNAIDS 2016 to 2021 Strategy on the Fast-Track to end AIDS; and
- African Union Maputo Plan of Action on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights that promotes the delivery of integrated family planning, STIs, and HIV and AIDS services.

85. ***Women and Girls living with HIV in Ghana:*** HIV and AIDS is a health condition that has higher incidence among women and girls than men and boys in Ghana. The overall HIV prevalence in Ghana for the year 2020 was 1.68%, while the prevalence among young women (aged 15-24 years) being 2.5 times higher (1.0%) than their male counterparts (0.4%). According to the 2020 National HIV Prevalence and AIDS Estimates Report, Ghana has an estimated 346,120 people living with HIV (PLHIV), comprising 229,755 (66%) females and 116,364 (34%) males. Of children younger than 15 years, majority (68%) is female. The total AIDS deaths for the year 2020 was 12,758 with 51.5% (6569/12758) being females.

Article 13: Economic and social rights of women

Overview of progress

86. Ghana in recent times has globally been ranked the third highest country producing the most female entrepreneurs, with an estimation of about 36.5% according to the 2020 Mastercard Index of Women's Entrepreneurship (MIWE). According to the Mastercard Index, women in Ghana own almost half of all businesses in the country. The rising figures of female entrepreneurs are boosting business innovations in emerging markets. This shows that the entrepreneurial activities of women are the anchors of economic growth and development in the country. Despite the existence of challenges such as access to finance and information, women in Ghana are overcoming hindrances and thriving in their various ventures.

87. Ghana's National Board for Small Scale Industries (NBSSI) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Campaign for Female Education (CAMFED) in 2018. The partnership seeks to train more young women to make a successful transition from school to entrepreneurship, employment or further study. This builds on CAMFED and the MasterCard Foundation's established Transition

Program and will further champion the economic rights of young women through advocacy and policy engagement.

88. The country passed the Youth Employment Agency Regulations 2016, (L.I. 2231) to provide the needed skills through training and internships for unemployed youth to make them employable and self-dependant to meaningfully contribute to national development.

89. The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP) identified and trained 400 *Kayayei (Female head porters)* with vocational and employable skills from 2015-2017. MoGCSP through the Social Protection Directorate (SPD) developed (in 2015) and launched (in 2016) the National Social Protection Policy (NSPP). The Policy seeks to achieve 3 key objectives and 8 targets that in turn address the needs of all vulnerable groups in Ghana of which women and girls are inclusive. Also, governance structures, which are the Social Protection Inter-Sectoral Technical Committee and the Social Protection Sector Working Group have been established to consolidate all social protection policies and programmes run by various Ministries and Agencies. The Ministry conducts sensitization workshops annually at the national and sub-national levels for key stakeholders on Social Protection interventions in Ghana.

90. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, MoGCSP distributed relief items comprising food rations, sanitizers, nose masks to thousands of vulnerable persons. Additionally, over 2.7 million units of packed cooked food were provided to several thousands of poor and vulnerable Ghanaians to prevent hunger and enable them to meet their daily nutritional needs during a partial lockdown following the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic in Ghana. MoGCSP in collaboration with the Ghana Food and Drugs Authority (FDA) produced and distributed over 15,000 sanitizers to key stakeholders including frontline workers in the fight against the pandemic. MoGCSP through its established Helpline of Hope (0800 800 800 and 0800 900 900) received calls and supported victims mostly vulnerable persons during the pandemic.

91. As part of efforts to increase coordination among Social Protection programmes, the Social Protection Single Window Citizens Engagement Service (SWCES) was established and operationalized in December 2017. The SWCES has three (3) integral parts, which includes the Helpline of Hope to receive complaints and inquiries through a toll-free number **0800 800 800/ 0800 900 900** and SMS on a short code **8020**, a web-based Unified Case Management System (UCMS) for receiving, logging, classifying, attribution of cases to appropriate programmes, as well as provision of feedback to complainants and a Referral Mechanism. Between 2017 and end of 2020, 7,144 cases ranging from disability issues, general enquiries, legal issues, financial assistance, domestic violence, marital issues, human trafficking, psychological issues and enquires/grievances on social protection interventions have been received and 5,875 have been redressed.

92. As part of Ghana's efforts to ensure that all vulnerable and poor persons have access to quality health care, MoGCSP partnered with the National Health Insurance Authority and provided valid NHIS cards to 13,000 prison inmates. MoGCSP with support from its partners also implemented the Ghana Luxembourg Social Trust (GLST) and the African Health Market for Equity (AHME) projects which provided valid NHIS cards to indigenes in selected districts of the country. The Ministry also ensured effective implementation of the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) programme, which currently covers 334,023 beneficiary household. This translates to 1,516,421 individuals comprising 831,222 (54.8%) females. Per the program design, all beneficiaries of LEAP are registered and provided with valid NHIS. LEAP 1000 (piloted between 2015 and 2018), provided cash transfer to 6,217 pregnant and mothers with children under 1 year. This was aimed at improving

maternal, child health and nutrition in extreme poor households. This project has now been integrated into the LEAP programme. Further, the Ministry with support from its Development Partners provided emergency cash transfer (emergency LEAP) which targeted 125,000 vulnerable individuals that were economically affected by the coronavirus pandemic in Greater Accra and Ashanti regions, residents in alleged witch camps, persons affected by floods and other vulnerable persons in the northern part of the country. As at December 2020, 54,088 of the targeted beneficiaries have been paid majority of which are women.

93. MoGCSP through its Social Protection Directorate also instituted the Social Protection Community Dialogue Series. The essence is to sensitize women, men and leadership of deprived or impoverished communities on social protection issues such as human trafficking, sexual and gender-based violence, child marriage, rape, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), witchcraft accusation etc. with the objective to empower and garner their support in addressing social protection issues in Ghana. Within the reporting period, about 226 communities have been engaged with community leaders and members pledging to support government to combat poverty and related social issues.

94. **Women in Agriculture:** The objective of interventions carried out is to help improve the nutritional and income status of all actors along the agricultural value chain. Accordingly, the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MOFA) has instituted the following programmes on social protection: Rearing for Food and Jobs (RFJ), Planting for Food and Jobs (PFJ), Greenhouses, Control of Fall Army Worm (FAW), Small Dams, Improved Extension Delivery, Women in Tractor Operation and Management (WTOM). The successes chalked in these programmes are captured in table 6 in the Annexes.

95. **Progress by the Women in Agricultural Development (WIAD) Directorate, MOFA in 2019:** The Directorate trained 224 WIAD new officers on WIAD programme areas across the country, with 21 staff yet to be trained in the Greater Accra Region. It also held a sensitization and training of trainers for Tuo Zaafi Flour processors and handlers in four communities in the Greater Accra Region - Madina, Nima, Mamobi, and New Bortianor, comprising 57 females and 39 males. Other activities were: an exhibition of locally processed foods to promote local production; utilization of local rice (3 males, 44 females), orange-fleshed sweet potato and soybean (20 males, 100 females) in nutrition-sensitive agriculture; cultivation of mini home gardens for safe and nutritious food; vegetable demonstrations (carrots, cabbage, pepper, onion, cucumber, tomatoes, lettuce); radio program on aflatoxin; training of 29 males and 91 females on drying, labelling packaging of cereals and legumes; and training of 45 males and 75 females in garden egg flour processing.

Challenges

96. Some of the main challenges faced by the Directorate in implementing its mandate include farmers spraying their farms without the appropriate personal protective equipment; inadequate knowledge in FAW management by newly-recruited staff; sustainability of training programmes, regarding funding, especially for WOTM; late release of funds for activities under the Modernizing Agriculture in Ghana (MAG) Project; inadequate funding at regional and district levels; inadequate provision vehicles and poorly-equipped laboratories and equipment for trials.

97. **Women and Sports:** The Sports Act, 2016 (Act 934) establishes the National Sports Authority (NSA) as a corporate body with 14 functions including adoption of policies regarding gender equality, equal opportunities and access to sports, child protection in sports and safe/drug-free sports.

98. Recent competitions show that women's representation improved at the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games with 37 females out of 70 athletes presented. The Ghana Olympic Committee (GOC) has reported that the number of women competing in the Olympic Games had significantly increased from 34% at Atlanta 1996 to 48.8% at Tokyo 2020 with a commitment to reach full gender parity at the Games in Paris 2024.

99. The Government of Ghana has also lined up several measures to promote sports and recreation including development and maintenance of sports and recreational infrastructure and gender equity in sports disciplines.

100. A Sports Development Fund is to be established to support the training of sports personnel and provide a cash award scheme to enhance competitiveness among sports men and women. A Youth in Sports module is to be created to support young sportsmen and women.

101. Other significant measures taken by the State to promote women's participation in sports include the following:

- Donation of \$10,000 by Government to Hasaacas Ladies football team to support their participation in the 2021 CAF Women's Champions League Zone B competition as Government's commitment to support the development of women's sports;
- Instituted a support package of GH¢500.00 monthly allowance for female athletes, including professional footballers under the Youth Employment Agency;
- Government, through the Ghana Football Association (GFA), has approved a policy for Regional Football Associations to commence the Women's Juvenile League in the 2020/21 football season to promote more girls into the game;
- Trained 30 Under 15 Girls Coaches in the regions of Ghana by the GFA through its partnership with the European Football Association (EUFA) Assist Programme. Currently, the entire Women's Premier League and Women's Football Association (FA) Cup matches are officiated by women referees who are trained by women instructors;
- The Women in Sports Commission of Ghana inaugurated in 2019 under the auspices of Ghana Olympics Committee (GOC) to help reshape, promote and establish cordial relationships among women in sports at both local and international levels;
- Commitment by GOC in 2019 that women should constitute 30% of the next GOC Executive Board to boost women's leadership in sports administration;
- Organised a Women's Sports Empowerment Colloquium by the Women's Sports Association of Ghana (WOSPAG) under the theme, 'Gender Advocacy and Empowerment through Sports';
- Organised the maiden edition of the First Lady's Cup competition (female version of the President's Cup) launched by the First Lady in 2021 opening a new chapter in women's football in Ghana;
- Establishment of a school programme by the Ghana League Clubs Association (GHALCA), Ministry of Youth and Sports and Ministry of Education to develop girl child football talent in line with FIFA's Books for Boots Project.

Article 14: Women in rural areas

102. Several gains have been made through the implementation of social protection programmes across the country which have benefited women, particularly those in rural areas and other vulnerable groups of women. The Ghana National Household Registry (GNHR), for example, has successfully completed data collection in the Upper West and Upper East Regions by registering 137,500 and 184,593 households respectively in 2020.

103. To ensure a sustained focus on addressing the needs of persons with disabilities, a framework on disability mainstreaming in MMDAs has been developed. The provisions in the framework serve as a guide to MMDAs on how to include disability issues in development plans.

104. The provision of credit facilities to women, particularly those in rural areas have been strengthened. The Microfinance and Small Loans Centre (MASLOC) is a Government of Ghana initiative which provides micro and small loans for start-ups and micro businesses with fast, easy and accessible credit to enhance job and wealth creation. Between 2018 to 2021, MASLOC has disbursed an amount of GH¢172,000,000 in loans and other financial support to over 148,000 women majority of whom are in the rural areas. Generally, loans disbursed to women constitute 80% of MASLOC's loan portfolio.

Article 15: Equality before the law

105. The Judicial Service of Ghana has undertaken measures to improve justice delivery for all persons and enhance access to justice for women and children. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and the imposition of restrictions on movement by the President of the Republic of Ghana in 2020, the Judicial Service instituted several measures including prioritising critical cases, applying strict case management practices such as restricting court attendance to lawyers, parties and their witnesses. The Service received several donations of sanitation supplies and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) from benevolent institutions. Similar donations were also made to the Child-friendly Courts handling domestic violence cases. Again, disinfection of court buildings and offices of the Judicial Service was carried out by the government.

106. The reporting period also witnessed the leveraging of technology in justice delivery. In August 2020, the Judicial Service piloted Virtual Court sittings in 9 High Courts and the Gender-Based Violence Court in the Greater Accra Region. Staff of the Judicial Service, members of the Ghana Bar Association (GBA) and Police Prosecutors were trained on the virtual sittings. The Judicial Service was also provided with 5 Zoom Enterprise Software Licences to facilitate simultaneous internal and external meetings hosting up to 500 participants at a time.

107. The Judicial Service held sensitisation programmes to educate the public on the work of the judiciary, bail hearing, offences, spousal property rights and access to justice. Figures 6 to 11 in the Annexes show pictures of the programme.

108. The e-Justice component of the e-Ghana project conceptualised in 2012 has the policy objective of improving case management by expanding the ICT infrastructure at the courts to move from a paper-based to a paperless system. Following the successful pilot, the President of the Republic, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo formally launched Ghana's Paperless Court System in March 2019 and described the system as a 'means of revamping public confidence in the judicial process and Ghana's Judiciary in

general.¹² The e-Justice system can be accessed at <https://ejustice.jsg.gov.gh>. Figures 12 and 13 in the Annexes show the e-Justice system.

109. Another significant measure adopted by Ghana to enhance women's access to justice is the establishment of the Gender-Based Violence Courts (GBVCs). The GBVCs were conceived as part of the reform initiatives which began by the former first female Chief Justice Georgina Theodora Wood to improve the administration of justice through specialized courts. The GBVCs are situated in 9 Regional capitals across the country.¹³ In 2016, UNICEF introduced the child-friendly justice approach as part of juvenile justice reforms, leading to the establishment of the Child-Friendly Court in 2017 by the Judicial Service. The GBVCs has now been made the model Child-Friendly Court. Therefore, the name of the court has changed to the Child-Friendly Gender-Based Violence Court (CF-GBVC). The key features of the Court are: a Victim Protection System (Figure 15 below), a two-way tele-video conferencing facility to enable victims testify more comfortably, testifying room equipped with toys and comfortable furniture. Others include, children's waiting room (Figure 14 below) designed with colourful paintings, toys and playmats for children's comfort to accommodate child witnesses. Again, the court room is fully air-conditioned with heavy curtains to ensure privacy as well as equipped with CCTV cameras and monitors. Furthermore, a Gender-Based Violence Operations Guide has been developed to standardise operations of Judges and Court Staff.

110. Since its establishment, the number of cases filed at the CF-GBVC increased significantly between 2016 and 2019. 115 cases were recorded at the end of 2016 and 180 between January 2018 and May 2019. Most of the cases (85%) were defilement cases with victims aged between 11 and 15 years.

Article 16: Equality in marriage and family

111. During the period under review, Ghana's Parliament passed the Land Act, 2020 (Act 1036). The Act seeks to revise, harmonise and consolidate the laws on land to ensure more sustainable administration, management and efficient use of land. The Act also has a human rights and gender focus as it seeks, among others, to incorporate international best practice in land management including the outcomes of the Rio Summit on Sustainable Development, the AU Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges and the SDGs. Some of the progressive provisions related to gender equality in the Land Act, 2020 include the following:

- Section 11: prohibits discriminatory decisions and practices on land under customary tenure on grounds of place of origin, ethnic origin, political opinions, colour, gender, occupation, religion or creed, disability or social or economic status, and therefore void;
- Section 38(3) and (4): subsection 3 provides that in a conveyance of property for valuable consideration jointly acquired during a marriage, the spouses will be deemed to be parties to the conveyance, unless and contrary intention is expressed in the conveyance. However, subsection 4 provides that where a conveyance or interest in land is made to only one spouse, it is deemed that the spouse holds the interest in trust for the spouses unless a contrary intention is expressed in the conveyance;
- Section 47: restricts transfer of land by a spouse to the effect that unless expressly stated by a written agreement between the spouses, a spouse cannot

¹² Judicial Service of Ghana, *Judicial Digest* Vol 11, June 2020 p. 42.

¹³ Judicial Service of Ghana, *Judicial Digest* Vol 12, June 2021 p. 40.

transfer or convey any interest in land acquired for valuable consideration during the marriage without the express written consent of the other spouse, unless a contrary intention is expressed;

- Section 97(4) and (5): in an application for registration of land jointly acquired during the marriage, subsection 4 provides that the spouses shall be stated as the applicants, unless a contrary intention is expressed in the conveyance. Subsection 5 then provides that if only one spouse applies for registration, it shall be deemed that the application is being made on behalf of the other spouse, unless a contrary intention is expressed in the conveyance.

112. Parliament is also considering the Intestate Succession Bill, 2018. The Bill seeks to correct the anomalies in the current Intestate Succession Act, 1985 (PNDCL 111), which include the disparities in customary approaches to distribution of property and the influence of the extended family, the abuse often suffered by surviving spouses (especially widows) in seeking a share of the deceased spouse's estate and discrimination in the rules of succession under PNDCL 111, with widowers getting a greater share than widows. The Bill therefore aims to establish a uniform set of rules on intestate succession, irrespective of the type of marriage contracted and more importantly, provides for percentages to guide the distribution of property, instead of the ratios/fractions in PNDCL 111. It is expected that Parliament will pass the Bill soon for Presidential assent to establish the new legal regime on intestate succession in Ghana.
