Annual Report 2015

Reports of GenCED’s Activities in 2015
Dear Friend and Family of GenCED

Through the kind support of individuals, groups and organizations, GenCED was able to implement its programmes under the 2015 operational plan. We are very grateful to the women’s rights and gender based NGOs and civil society organisations who worked assiduously with us in all the regions we worked in Ghana.

We wish to commend our local and international partners especially those who honored their commitment to us in our work even in the face of a global recession. Here, we would like to sincerely thank the United Nations democracy fund (UNDEF) for their support.

We would also like to congratulate the Board, Management and our hardworking staff for their commitment and dedicated service which has put the organisation on the pinnacle. It is our fervent hope that all our partners will remain committed in sustaining the gains so far made in promoting women’s in governance in Ghana.

Please Join GenCED and support a worthy cause.

Sincerely and God bless you,

Esther Tawiah

Executive Director

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Executive Summary
GenCED has successfully completed another year of promoting women’s representation and participation in decision-making and gender inclusion in Governance. The year 2015 was a landmark in GenCED’s history as we enhanced our credibility as a non-governmental organisation (NGO) dedicated to gender and policy advocacy. We started implementing programmes under the 2011-2015 Strategic Plan.

Throughout 2015, GenCED maintained its cutting edge efforts in gender and policy advocacy, a feat that has been achieved through our coalition building and networking approach. We worked collaboratively with other civil society organisations to ensure women’s rights and gender equality issues were prioritized at all levels of policy-making. We have also strengthened the capacity of different constituencies of women such as district assembly women, women politicians and tertiary students who are now more able to engage, interrogate and scrutinize public policies and programmes to demand for women rights, social justice and accountability.

Again, feminist research and publications that promote gender equality and women’s rights were produced to benefit a wider reach of women and men in their institutions and organisations. These publications provided the basis for our engagement with government, policymakers and other actors. In this annual report, we provide information on the programmes implemented during the 2015 calendar year under each of GenCED’s four functional areas.

Highlights of the year include the following:

- Training
- Civic Education
- Accountability Audit

HISTORY AND BACKGROUND OF GENDER CENTRE FOR EMPOWERING DEVELOPMENT (GenCED)

About Us

Gender Centre for Empowering Development (GenCED) is a Non-governmental Organisation that seeks to empower women and youth for sustainable development in our communities. Established in May 2011 as an independent, not-for-profit, research and advocacy organisation, GenCED is currently focusing on the following key areas of development as enclosed in the 12 Critical Areas of Worry in the Beijing Platform for Action: Governance, Social interference Issues and Entrepreneurship.
The inspiration behind GenCED’s work is that, the emergence of multiparty democracy provides the opportunity to enhance civic participation, social accountability and economic governance which includes mechanisms/platforms to increase men and women’s access to increased knowledge, participate in decision-making processes and demand accountability from their duty bearers. Gender equality and equity principles are yet to be fully integrated into democratization processes, structures of power and decision-making procedures countrywide. The current weak gender equality in politics and decision-making is a pressing human rights issue, for example, governance is still an ideal situation that most women particularly strive to achieve. Lack of civic knowledge among women has worsened their participation and representation in decision-making, election and governance. This is particularly reflected by their slim percentage in parliament, district assemblies, corporations and other public positions. For example, after more than two decades of implementation of Ghana’s decentralization policy, several challenges still remain to be addressed as women participation compared to men in governance and development is still low.

Education is the lifeblood of GenCED, all our work is educational. We integrate education, particularly for women and the youth, into all our programs. GenCED intends to become increasingly involved in policy dialogue as it emerges, to help broaden women and youth understanding, participation in governance and on their socio-economic development. Women are the custodians of indigenous information, which is critical to family and community welfare, particularly in the areas of health, environmental sanitation, politics and religion, however these type of information will disappear, unless women are integrated into modern systems of politics and democracy since societies and communities are urbanised and modernise in democracy and governance.

GenCED’s work is therefore aimed at helping increase women’s participation in decision-making and in the governance process. GenCED also seeks to do more research on women’s experiences, participation in policy making and their representation in governance to influence the level of advocacy and outreaches which the women need to increase their understanding of the democratic process and also influence national and regional policies on women.
VISION
GenCED’s vision is to become a leading grassroots’ organization, through empowering the marginalised, especially women, economically, politically and socially.

MISSION
GenCED seeks to close the gender deficit in our governance by building the capacity of marginalised especially women through the provision of political education and sustainable human resources development services to participate in district and national electoral politics to catalyse democracy. GenCED seeks to achieve this through evidence-based research, advocacy, training, community outreach and information sharing. GenCED was established to:

- Boost the capacity of women, to participate in development
- Increase the participation of women in the political and economic structures of the country.

OBJECTIVES
As a community focused civil society organisation that seeks to empower women and youth for sustainable development in our communities through advocacy, training, research. GenCED aims at working towards achieving these by upholding key principals like not-for-profit and nonpartisan giving some specific objectives of GenCED include;

- Promoting democracy, decentralisation and good governance
- Educate women on issues that affect their development, climate change, food security and socioeconomic issues
- Promote women and youth participation in good local governance at all level.
- Promote sustainable livelihood programmes
- Build the capacities of women on entrepreneurial skills development.

Programme Priorities
Governance

Women participation in decision-making has consistently been at the centre of the global agenda since the adoption of the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women in 1985. In Ghana gender equality and equity principles are yet to be fully integrated into democratization processes, structures of power and decision-making procedures. **Women participation compared to men in governance and development is still low, nevertheless some women have exhibited the qualities of good leadership.**

However, for women to be efficient and effective, they need education and advocacy to encourage their participation in decision-making. This project develops research and advocacy materials to demystify governances and demonstrate women’s need to participate effectively in electoral politics. There will be advocacy activities which are more geared towards more discussion and participation of women in our governances and also with political parties to increase seats for women within parties and also in national and district assembly elections. GenCED drive is to encourage, promote and strengthen women to be in governance. If women who form majority of Ghana’s population actively participate in good governance by seeking transparency, efficiency and accountability, poverty would significantly be reduced. The general lack of civic knowledge among women has worsened their participation and representation in decision-making, election and governance. This is particularly reflected by their slim percentage in parliament, district assemblies, corporations and other public positions.

There project is aim at giving an intensive political education (electoral issues, policies of governances and women involvement in governance) to women about our national and district authority. The general objective of the Women and Governance project is to educate the women in the localities to be able to participate in politics to enhance their participation in governance. This will include women’s empowerment through advocacy, research, knowledge sharing and networking (to address gender equity and equality).

The specific objectives of the project are to

- Increase women’s awareness of their civic rights and responsibilities;
- Increase the pool of informed women who can participate in the electoral process as candidates and voters;

- Increase women’s representation in decision-making positions in the public and private sectors and thereby improve their capacity for development-related decision-making;

- Increase community members’ control of the electoral process and promote the principles of free and fair elections;

- Create awareness of the virtues of accountability, transparency, and good governance;

- Increase the opportunities for communities to update their information on governance;

- Encourage women to assume key leadership positions at local and national levels by participating in governance;

- Network and build coalition with partners and critical actors to influence decentralization/local governance to promote gender responsiveness;

- Tracking parliamentary proceedings that centre on gender issues.

**Entrepreneurship Development Programme (EntDEP)**

EntDEP focuses on developing economically marginalised women and unemployed youth through the provision of financial advisory services, education and entrepreneurial development initiatives. The nation’s greatest asset is her human resource, the unemployed youth and women have the propensity to boost the economy by increasing current production level. The rising unemployment rate and seeming lack of jobs informed GenCED to address this concern by providing training and capacity building on wealth creation for the youth and women. The wealth creation aims at poverty reduction and self-reliance.

This program seeks to provide a comprehensive and adoptable approach to human resources development and also to empower youth for employment or self-employment. The program assists vocational trainees, young entrepreneurs, community-based business groups, and farmer
groups. Training in credit management, financial literacy and business education are integral parts of the financial support package.

GenCED Governances Programs for 2015

➢ Community Outreaches

Community education was conducted in all project districts to sensitize them on the need to strengthen women participation in geographical deprived communities on local governance and decentralization system in Ghana. The objective of this education was to increase women participation in local governance and as a result, greater percentage of the women and the community as a whole were enlightened on the issue of participatory planning, participatory budget and participatory Expenditure tracking.

The issue of participatory planning was well understood by women in the project communities. The participatory planning emphasize on the involvement of the entire community in the strategic and management processes of community level planning processes.

Again, all other persons who had the opportunity to take part in the programme had an increased knowledge on the preparation of budget at the district level. The program demonstrated the process by which governments create and approve budget to every service department at the national and district level.
Radio Program

The Radio Programmes were held in three community radio stations in the Districts. In Bia, the radio programme was organized at BIA West community radio (Vision 102.7 FM) to direct the attention of the general public to strengthening the capacity of women in local governance in Ghana. Through this radio programme WOMGA group leaders and the district NCCE officers educated the general public on how to monitor government project and also women involvement in social accountability and the tracking tool for government expenditure at the district level. Through these radio program a greater population of the women in the project communities had a heightened confidence to participate in community activities, also the knowledge of the women and the communities as a whole on all matters concerning decentralization and local governance system in Ghana, in the Bia West district and other districts who had the opportunity to listen to the programme was increased.

In Juaboso, the radio programme was organized at Juaboso community radio (Radio Rainbow 107.7 FM)

During the programme the district NCCE officer Mr. TIKOLI entreated community women to actively participate in all activities such as monitoring all government projects and also participating in district budget and planning processes in their respective communities and further urged all government institutions to create room for WOMGA members to participate in all activities.

With a wide coverage of the radio station, the women in the host community and beyond through the radio programme were enlightened on local governance and decentralization systems in Ghana and the need to actively participate in these program.
In Sefwi Wiawso, the radio programme was organized at the Wiawso community radio (Unique FM).

During the programme, the WOMGA leader in the Sefwi Wiawso Municipality, Madam Cynthia Boateng urged women especially to participate in all activities such as monitoring government projects and participate in the district budget and planning processes that were going on in their respective communities. She said it was only through this effective participation that their development needs could be taken on board by the Assembly. The radio discussions have helped the women in the project communities and beyond to gain confidence and the zeal to participate in community activities. Most of the women now appreciate the local governance system and their duties and responsibilities as well as their rights under the system.

- **Monitoring and Evaluation**

  The monitoring and evaluation of the project was evident in the various communities of the three project districts, this activity was carried out purposely to acquaint members with what goes in service delivery and the execution of government projects and to further engage duty bearers to find ways of improving service delivery. The monitoring activities took place in the health, educational, agriculture sectors of the communities and revealed the following outcomes;

**Health**

During the monitoring activities on health, some Community Health Centers were closely monitored by the group. Through these activities, the team identified some shortfalls which include: shortage of medicine, few beds and mattress to accommodate patients, no bungalow for the workers, poor lighting system, lack of respect on the part of some health workers, extortion of monies from patients, clients of the NHIS with limited knowledge on services and medicine covered by the NHIS, the deplorable state of the CHIPS compound and lack of water resources as a result doctors had to refer patients to neighboring community health centers for treatment.
……With reference to the poor lighting system, few months ago, a woman died during delivery because, she was at the theatre for surgery and in the process, there was a power outage. The facility had no power standby to switch to during the power outage and this led to the death of the patient……..

“...The nurses over here do not give us the due respect; they talk to us as though we are from another planet and sometimes insult us. We can’t go back to the hospital because we know they cannot address our issues with the attitude they exhibit”

Madam Agnes Tano, Essam and Kwamebikrom village

Uncompleted health center and deplorable state of the CHIPS compound

Education

During our monitoring activities on education in the target district, the first visit to Elluokrom community in Bia revealed that a new classroom block has been constructed for D/C primary but teachers complained of the absence of portable drinking water for pupil and the teachers as well. They said, the pupils get their sources of drinking water from a nearby stream and in most cases never return to the classroom afterwards. Also the monitoring activity revealed, Inadequate teaching and learning materials, school blocks built in less than one year in deplorable state but complaints to Assembly yielded no results, pupils compelled to pay extra classes fee, Absenteeism on the part of some teachers, lack of JHS block in some communities hence pupils walked long distance to access JHS education, lack of teachers accommodation, Delay in payment of teachers salaries affecting their output and amongst others.
There are no appropriate classrooms for the community where the children will sit comfortably to learn. As a result of this they will have to run home anytime the rain threatens........

**Agriculture**

During the monitoring activities, the WOMGA members realize the unequal distribution of fertilizer and agro-chemicals amongst the citizenry.
An encounter with the Queen mother of Kwamtawiahkrom in one of the districts revealed the destruction of their green forest due to illegal chain saw operators from most timber companies. The Agric officer in the communities refuses to provide the farmers with the necessary chemical to help curb diseases affecting their crops hence most of their cocoa beans are affected by black pod diseases. In addition to this, cocoa seedling that was sent by government to the district for the farmers for free are now sold to farmer. The chief of Asempaneye community also complained bitterly about the destruction of their lands and farms by the Chinese illegal miners (Galamsey).
Lands and cocoa farms that has been destroyed by illegal miners (Galamesey)
Pictures during monitoring and Evaluation activities

These were some of the problems identified during monitoring activities in the entire project communities of the Districts.

Financial Reports

GenCED maintains financial records with supporting documentation in accordance with general accepted accounting principles. Pertinent program records are maintained and available for examination by independent auditors on yearly basis by authorised funding agencies upon request. Annual auditor’s reports include Independent auditor’s reports and compliance.

The total income for the year 2015 amounted to including miscellaneous income. The table below provides information on the income & expenditure for 2015

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<th>SOURCE OF FUNDS</th>
<th>2015</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GHS</td>
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<td>United Nation Democracy Fund</td>
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<td>BOARD OF DIRECTORS</td>
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<td>TOTAL</td>
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Conclusion

The project really helped in creating awareness among the women to demand quality service delivery from the district assembly. Citizens were full of commendation for GenCED and the United Nations Democracy fund for such a brilliant initiative; they proposed that the education and the formation of the platform should be extended to other parts of the country.