Annual Report 2016

Reports of GenCED’s Activities in 2016
Dear Friend and Family of GenCED

Through the kind support of individuals, groups and organizations, GenCED was able to implement its programs under the 2016 operational plan. We are very grateful to the women’s rights and gender based NGOs and civil society organizations 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 Development Programme, UNWomen, Norwegian government, Canadian government, UNOWAS and National Endowment for Democracy 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 in governance in Ghana.

Please Join GenCED and support a worthy cause.

Sincerely and God bless you,

Esther Tawiah

Executive Director
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 2016 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 programs under the 2016-2020 Strategic Plan.

Throughout 2016, 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 organizations 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 programs 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 organizations. These publications provided the basis for our engagement with government, policymakers and other actors.

In the area of Gender and Peace, we continued with our training programs for women’s groups and community sensitization on the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 which calls for women’s participation and representation in peace building initiatives.

While we have made some significant achievements during the past year, we need to continue to explore new strategies to bring our vision of a just and equal society to fruition. We therefore call on governments and all relevant agencies such as the African Union (AU) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to enforce its commitment to women’s rights and the gender equality principles.

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, Peace and security 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 types of information will disappear, unless women are integrated into modern systems of politics and democracy since societies and communities are urbanized and modernize 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 advocatory 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.

The 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 undertakes the following activities under EntDEP;

- Creating platforms for the youth to meet entrepreneurs who will share their experiences and give practical advice on how to set up and run a business.
- Create a common ground for youth to network, form partnership leading to creation of businesses
- Organise conference and seminars where various state and non-state actors collaborate to grant support to vocational trainees.
- Build capacities of women and young entrepreneurs on financial literacy.
- Educate the youth and women on the importance of savings, accessing funds and controlling expenditure
- Help communities to identify, explore and develop economic opportunities in an area (Agriculture, food processing etc.)
GenCED Governances Programs for 2016

Women Political Participation

From the local to the global level, women’s leadership and political participation are restricted. Women are underrepresented as voters, polling agents, as well as in leading positions, whether in elected office or the civil service. This occurs despite their proven abilities as leaders and agents of change, and their right to participate equally in democratic governance. But it should be noted that gender equality and women’s empowerment are not only human rights; they are also imperative for achieving inclusive, equitable and sustainable development.

In Ghana, women tend to be overrepresented at the grassroots level or in supporting roles (as assembly women, women group leaders) and underrepresented in positions of power (member of parliament). Without access to establish networks of influence, and with very limited resources, few role models and mentors, and sometimes even limited family and community support, it is understandable that women’s participation in political parties has remained very low than that of men. Regarding the above challenges affecting women participation in politics, political parties have been identified as the main vehicle for the acceleration of more women participation and leadership in politics.

With funding from the National Endowment for Democracy undertook a gender capacity building program for five major political parties’ executives in all the ten regions of the country. The training focused on addressing issues linking gender and elections violence, political party funding, and gender stereotypes, gender mainstreaming and actions political parties can take to support women’s participation. The program started on the 7th of August, 2016 and ended in December 2016. It trainings were divided into three zones, the northern zone comprising (Northern, Upper East and Upper West regions) training was held in Tamale, the middle belt comprising (Ashanti, Brong Ahafo and Eastern regions) training was held Kumasi and the southern zone comprising (Central, Greater Accra, Volta and Western regions) training was held in Cape Coast.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The core objective of the project was to improve the understanding of gender issues and the importance of women’s political participation by political parties and the citizens of Ghana and further increase the participation of Ghanaian women in the electoral process.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

GenCED carried out all of its proposed activities which was effective and efficient implementation of the project. Detailed project activities in line with the work plan include:

- Initial interaction with stakeholders
- Dialogue sessions with the leadership of the political parties
- Workshop on Gender Mainstreaming in political party activities
- Media Outreach
- **Initial interaction with stakeholders**

There was an initial interaction between GenCED and the five major political parties, which includes the National democratic congress, the Convention People’s Party, Progressive People’s Party, New Patriotic Party and the People’s National Convention which introduced the organization and the entire project. These meetings helped to design strategies and working structure for the entire project. Again there was also regular party meeting that reviewed and approved draft reports and further discussed appropriate interventions.

- **Dialogue sessions with the leadership of the political parties**

Dialogue sessions were also held with the leadership of political parties to advocate for the adoption of the gender policies and the inclusion of important provisions of the policy in the political parties’ constitution. There was a gender policy dialogue in collaboration with the UNDP J-PASS which engaged the key members of the various political parties as well as all the female parliamentary candidates. The panel had foreign veterans who shared their experiences and encouraged the women to press on with their aims and never be intimidated by the men.

- **Workshop on Gender Mainstreaming in political party activities**

The training workshop targeted the regional chairman, woman organizers and women parliamentary candidates of the five major political parties in Ghana. In three zones of the country—Northern, Middle Belt and Southern, GenCED implemented a series of capacity-building trainings for a total of 150 members of the five major political parties members across the ten regions in Ghana. The trainings improved the understanding of gender issues and highlighted the importance of women’s political participation by political parties and the citizens of Ghana, and strategies to adopt in order to increase the participation of Ghanaian women in the electoral process.
The 2016 election also gave GenCED the opportunity to campaign for women parliamentary aspirants. A documentary, jingles and posters were developed to support the campaign.

During this activity, GenCED used multiple media platforms such as the TV, Radio and the press added up to the success of the entire project. There were several Television and radio advert that campaigned for the need to vote more into parliament. It was quite evident that some of these campaigns in a way shifted the voting style of the Ghanaian people hence the number of women voted into parliament increased as compare to the previous parliament.

Peace and Security

Women Situation Room- Ghana

The rationale behind this project was to deepen GenCED’s efforts to promote peace in the 2012 general election. Since the return to democratic multi-party democracy in 1992, election management and transition of power from one government to the other has been largely peaceful, with minor incidence of violence. Ahead of the 2016 general elections, the Women Situation Room (WSR) initiative was introduced to contribute to the consolidation of peace, before, during and after elections in Ghana. The Women’s Situation Room (WSR) was initiated by the Angie Brooks International Centre (ABIC) to ensure the Liberian elections of October and November 2011 was peaceful. Following the Liberian experience, the Gender Is My Agenda Campaign (GIMAC) of the AU adopted the WSR as a Best Practice in January 2012 and called on ABIC to promote and replicate it in all African countries having elections and President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf was invited to be Champion of the WSR. During this process GenCED played the role as one of the conveners. The process was funded by UNDP, Norwegian Embassy, Government of Canada, UN Women and UNOWAS. GenCED as a convener for the initiative handled the financial and over see the implementation of the entire project.

PURPOSE & OBJECTIVES

- Purpose
The main purpose of the project was to ensure that in accordance with UNSCR 1325 and the Gender Is My Agenda Campaign (GIMAC) of the AU, women in collaboration with youths participate in peacebuilding before, during and after the December 7, 2016 elections in Ghana.

➢ Objectives

1. To provide a platform for women’s groups to strategize, plan and respond rapidly to elections related issues that could culminate into violence in a coordinated manner.
2. To establish a network of women peace activists in Africa who are equipped with the requisite skills knowledge and experience to prevent and respond to violence during elections
3. To successfully replicate the AU Best Practice as part of the Gender Is My Agenda Campaign (GIMAC) in countries having elections in Africa
4. To strengthen women’s solidarity beyond borders in Africa and showcase their ability to constructively launch preventive measures to ensure elections take place in a manner that fosters an enabling environment and an all-inclusive process.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Stakeholder meetings were held in all ten regions of Ghana. Major stakeholders like the police, Electoral Commission, Faith-based leaders, civil society organisations, political parties were introduced to the WSR concept. The meetings helped WSR-Ghana to design the working structure and further identified the key hotspot, the officers to include for the regional hubs. Not only was GenCED present at all project activity grounds to handle the financial aspect but helped in the facilitation and coordination of these activities. Detailed project activities include:

Orientation workshop for the regional hubs

40 regional and deputy coordinators were oriented and further informed on how to carry out the initiative in all regions to ensure peaceful electoral process Ghana.

Capacity Building Workshop for Women & Youth Regional Coordinators

The workshop equipped the newly recruited Regional Coordinators with the relevant knowledge and skills to coordinate and roll out the elements of the WSR at regional levels and ultimately improve and ensure an effective advocacy campaign for peaceful elections before, during and after the elections.
Setting up of a Contact Group of Eminent National Women

A list of eminent women was selected based on a criterion agreed upon by the women groups.

**Eminent African Women:**

Eminent women from Africa were invited by ABIC to the Ghana’s Women’s Situation Room to support the National Eminent Women in managing the physical Situation Room and respond to incidents from the field on polling day and after.

**WSR-Ghana Regional Hubs**

Ten regional hubs were set up and comprised of women Coordinators and deputies including female youth, to complement the efforts of the conveners of the WSR-Ghana by mobilizing and engaging grassroots women and communities and gather their support for peaceful elections.

**Training of Focal persons**

115 focal persons were trained from all ten regions of Ghana to help the WSR initiative to identify, verify and share threats and incidents of violence within some hotspot communities to the WSR-Ghana Secretariat as well as information on emerging incidents of violence ahead of elections.

**Media training**

Two 1-day Training Building Workshops on the topics “Responsible Reporting” and “Reporting with a Gender Lens” were held on Monday, 25th October 2016 in Koforidua, Eastern Region for 31 media practitioners from five regions in the Southern Zone and a second on Friday, 28th October 2016 in Kumasi, Ashanti Region for other 36 media practitioners. The goal is to provide media practitioners with the knowledge and skills for a positive role in ensuring peaceful elections and overcome the many familiar obstacles to gender mainstreaming in reporting and create a level playing field for women to participate during the electoral process.

**Eminent women retreat**

A one-day consultative meeting was held for the eminent women with the aim of introducing the WSR concept. Attendee were the Director of Operations of Police and two other superintendents to assess the potential for violence during the elections, there was consensus on the need to replicate the WSR in Ghana focusing on hotspots identified in all ten regions. The various roles the eminent women played
during the process were mediation, negotiation and peace advocacy. The police present at the retreat expressed willingness to participate in the WSR process.

**The Youth Peer Peace Process**

Youth leaders from various youth groups across the country were trained on various topics including the Ghana Constitution, elections laws and the Elections Offences Courts and Communication. The trained youth were given the necessary logistical support, IEC materials including banners and t-shirts and the platform including airtime to raise a sustained awareness campaign on the need for peaceful elections among their peers.

**The WSR-GH Inter-Party Tripartite Dialogues**

Dialogues with political party representatives such as women’s organizers and youth organizers. The dialogues got a lot of publicity and goodwill messages from political party representatives. A key activity was the engagement of political parties through Interparty Tripartite Dialogue Forums to capture their views on the process leading to the December 7 polls and where necessary intervene to ensure political parties support the call for an enabling environment. In this regard, a 1-day dialogue forum was held for women organizers from the following six political parties: CPP, PNC, PPP, NDP, NPP and NDC on 16th November 2016 at the Ellking Hotel in Accra. National and regional women organizers from the above political parties were invited to dialogue on their issues and concerns on the electoral process ahead of the polls. They were also encouraged to commit to peace by actively preventing electoral violence and serving as peace ambassadors within and beyond the parties.

**1000 Women’s March for Peaceful Elections in Ghana**

The WSR-Ghana organized 1000 women from all walks of life carrying placards with the powerful message of peace. The women marched to the offices of the two major political parties in Ghana on the call for peaceful elections. At each party office, the woman read and after hand over a statement on behalf of the women of Ghana calling on political parties to conduct their campaigns and participate in the elections in a peaceful manner. This was done simultaneously in all ten regions to ensure that there is impact on political parties while reaffirming the important role of women in peace building. Ultimately, it is expected that the statements delivered to politicians will be adhered to, for a peaceful electoral process.

**Launch of the WSR Ghana**
In the Greater Accra Region, the 1000 women peace march culminated in the official launch of the WSR-GHANA at the Accra International Conference Centre which hosted women from all walks of life to participate in the ceremony. The goal of the launch was to show case Ghanaian women’s peacebuilding capacity and initiative and mobilize women to understand and own the WSR process in all ten regions of Ghana. These women’s peacebuilding mechanism to mitigate conflicts before, during and after elections in Ghana by mobilizing women in collaboration with youth to lobby and advocate key stakeholders to support the call for peaceful elections.

**Elections Observers Training**

400 women and female youth observers were trained and deployed to observe and report on the elections in conformity with the rules and procedures of the electoral authorities.

**Setting up of the physical Situation Room**

The physical situation was set up with well-equipped operations center where threats of violence and crisis that arose during the elections were received and handled timely because it had police and EC desks that addressed these threats.

**Youth Peace Torch for Peaceful Elections in Ghana**

The WSR-Ghana organized a youth peace torch caravan peacefully in five districts in each of the ten regions. This was done simultaneously in all ten regions to ensure that there is impact on political parties while reaffirming the important role of the youth in peace building processes.

**Media Engagement and Coverage**

There was a robust and sustained campaign through the media working with women and the youth in the hotspots were rolled out. Conveners and ABIC were on various national TV for discussions stations like GTV, Metro and GH one Number of press release was sent out during the Opening Ceremony and Handing over of Peace Torches to Eminent Women, after the polls. Contents for WSR Ghana social media platforms were also developed. Newsletter and fliers with the toll free number were developed and distributed. There was an advert in the daily graphic for WSR. In-house media interviews for WSR Ghana and eminent women at 3FM, GH One, Viasat One and Joy News (Multi TV) in the physical situation room by the eminent women. Jingle produced, distributed to major stakeholders and aired on various media platforms.
Report preparation and dissemination

Audio-visual reporting of the entire process including the outcome, impact and lessons learned will be done through comprehensive narrative reports and video recordings and shared with women, political and other actors including donors as well as wider public.

Outcome of the Project

The governance initiates for 2016 contributed a lot to the 2016 election by having to increase the number of women into parliament from 30 to 37 and also increase the awareness of gender mainstreaming in political parties. The Women Situation Room concept on promoting peaceful elections has contributed to deepening the engagement and role of women in the peace process. These reaffirm the UNSCR 1325.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Opportunities

- The gender training program for the political parties should be periodic workshop of the sort to equip political parties of such knowledge.
- WSR-Ghana initiative should be replicated in every election.
- The gender training program for the political parties should be implemented ahead of elections and not close to the election period so that the political parties can incorporate gender issues into their policies.
- One of the challenges of the trainings was the duration. It was not enough as it was sometimes one and half day training and was a great challenge as participants needs to really understand the topic so real impact will be felt.
- Again another challenge was the country ownership visa via ABIC technical role to the country.
- One of the challenges faced during the gender training program was that the political party members felt it was too late to incorporate such policies into their constitutions as it was close to elections.
- Another challenge was that, because it was an election period the members had to squeeze through their schedules to attend such a training program.
- There should be follow up on the political parties after the training to make sure that the proposed policies and the drafted communique by participants are well included in their various party constitutions.
The adverts and radio announcements that campaigned for voting more women into parliament should be continued even after the end of the project so that it will remain in the minds of the people.

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 2016 amounted to including miscellaneous income. The table below provides information on the income & expenditure for 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOURCE OF FUNDS</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>USD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Nations Development Programs</td>
<td>US$1,000,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Endowment for Democracy</td>
<td>US$40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOARD OF DIRECTORS</td>
<td>US$ 5000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td><strong>1,045,000.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusion

The project really helped in creating awareness among the women and first time voters to articulate of all by exercising their franchise in the elections and not allowing themselves to be used for violence purpose.

Overall Conclusion

In conclusion, GenCED on implementing these projects has been able to effectively carry out the project activities with the help of well-structured designed programs and above all achieved its overall objective. Interaction with the political party members after the trainings gives a clear indication that the project and the activities as a whole had a great impact on their political spheres. GenCED aside the above projects, have been able to complete successfully the UNDEF project in the Western region. The WSR-Ghana also ended in December successfully. Although, the duration for the GenCED-NED project ended last year, the required follow up after the project (sustainability) may require an extension of the entire project to achieve its complete success.