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POSITION PAPER

***ADVANCING WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT IN
GHANA _ A POSITION PAPER FOLLOWING THE UKGCC-
BRITISH HIGH COMMISSION INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S
DAY DINNER (MARCH 2026)***

1st April 2026

INTRODUCTION

- In March 2026, the UK–Ghana Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with the British High Commission in Ghana, convened senior leaders from government, business, finance, and civil society to mark International Women's Day.
- The discussion reflected on the global theme “Rights, Justice, Action”, which offers a practical framework for advancing women's economic empowerment. Rights must be protected through law and policy; justice must be realised through fair institutions and enforcement; and action must translate into measurable change within organisations, markets, and value chains.
- For Ghana, the conversation highlighted an important transition point: the policy foundations for gender equity have strengthened, but the next phase requires focused implementation, accountability, and sustained leadership across sectors.

KEY MESSAGES

1. Implementation is the new frontier - Ghana's policy and legislative architecture on gender equality has evolved significantly in recent years. Key frameworks—including the Affirmative Action (Gender Equity) Act, 2024, the Domestic Violence Act, 2007, the Land Act, 2020, and the National Gender Policy — provide an important foundation for advancing women's rights, representation, and economic participation. However, the next phase of progress depends less on new policy development and more on consistent implementation, adequate resourcing, institutional accountability, and measurable monitoring frameworks that translate these commitments into tangible economic outcomes for women across sectors.

2. Representation must translate into influence - Increasing women's representation in leadership remains critical. While progress has been made, women remain underrepresented in key decision-making roles. Women currently hold 14.9% of parliamentary seats in Ghana (41 of 276) and about 25% of board seats among companies listed on the Ghana Stock Exchange [1]. Benchmarks such as the 30% representation threshold, reinforced by the Affirmative Action (Gender Equity) Act, 2024. [2], are important signals of progress. However, real change requires that women hold decision-making authority, sponsorship opportunities, and clear pathways to senior leadership.

3. Markets can work better for women - Despite progress, structural barriers remain in women's access to finance, titled assets, professional networks, and market information. Apart from the 25% of women currently holding board seats among companies listed on the Ghana Stock Exchange [3], only approximately 26% of management positions in the public sector [4] are held by women, reflecting persistent gaps in access to leadership, capital, networks, and market information. Addressing these barriers requires targeted financial instruments, stronger ecosystem support, and inclusive market design.

4. Allyship is leadership - Achieving meaningful change requires active engagement from men across leadership roles. Allyship is not symbolic; it involves challenging bias, supporting inclusive policies, and shaping workplace cultures that enable women to thrive.

PARTICIPANT REFLECTIONS

To ground the discussion in lived experience, participants completed a short reflection exercise titled **"How Far We Have Come."**

Participants assessed progress across several dimensions:

- a) Access to finance
- b) Representation in senior leadership
- c) Movement from commitments to measurable workplace action
- d) Engagement of men as allies

A consistent theme emerged: progress is visible but uneven. Participants agreed that the defining priorities for the next phase must be implementation, accountability, and sustained leadership commitment.

PRIORITY ACTIONS FOR KEY STAKEHOLDERS

For Government and Policymakers

1. **Accelerate outstanding legislative reforms** that strengthen women's economic security and asset ownership, including the Property Rights of Spouses Bill.
2. **Ensure effective implementation of the Affirmative Action (Gender Equity) Act, 2024** through clear reporting frameworks, institutional guidance, and practical accountability mechanisms.
3. **Invest in enabling infrastructure and protections** that remove structural barriers to women's participation in the economy, including:
 - a) Expanded childcare infrastructure
 - b) Stronger social protection systems
 - c) Protections for workers in the informal economy

For Financial Institutions, Investors, and Ecosystem Partners

1. **Design financing products aligned with women's asset profiles**, including:
 - a) Alternative collateral mechanisms
 - b) Cashflow-based lending models
 - c) Blended finance solutions for women-owned SMEs
2. **Provide advisory and market-readiness support** to help women-led businesses meet governance, compliance, and export standards required for participation in formal supply chains and regional markets.
3. **Expand access to networks and procurement opportunities**, connecting women entrepreneurs to anchor firms, corporate supply chains, and export platforms.

For Corporate Leaders and Organisations

1. **Adopt transparent talent processes**, including: Clear promotion criteria, Pay equity reviews and Sponsorship programmes pairing senior leaders with high-potential women
2. **Set measurable and time-bound representation targets**, aligned with national direction and organisational strategy. The 30% benchmark should be viewed as a minimum threshold, not the endpoint.
3. **Practise visible allyship** by: Sponsoring women for stretch roles, Challenging bias in hiring and promotion discussions and Ensuring balanced representation on panels and decision-making forums
4. **Normalise shared care responsibilities** through workplace policies that support flexibility without penalising career progression, while encouraging uptake across genders.
5. **Institutionalise the governance question:** *“Who is not in the room—and why?”*

CONCLUSION

- International Women's Day serves not only as a moment of recognition, but as a test of whether institutions can translate principle into practice.
- The UK–Ghana Chamber of Commerce and the British High Commission remain committed to convening stakeholders, championing evidence-based reforms, and promoting private-sector leadership that expands women's access to capital, markets, and decision-making power.
- We invite businesses, investors, policymakers, and civil society partners to adopt the priority actions outlined in this paper, track progress transparently, and sustain collaboration.
- Ghana's long-term competitiveness and resilience will depend on an economy in which opportunity is genuinely accessible to all.

SOURCES

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