



# VOICES & IMPACT NEWSLETTER

# Impact Note from our Executive Director



**DR. RASHEED DRAMAN**  
*EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR*

This quarter, ACEPA's work moved beyond engagement to shaping how governance systems respond to citizens.

Across Ghana, Kenya, and Togo under the Inclusive Legislatures for Gender Responsive Policies (ILGRP) project implemented in partnership with the Parliamentary Centre, we strengthened the capacity of parliaments to embed gender responsiveness into legislative, oversight, and administrative processes. Parliamentary staff from Ghana scrutinised Ghana's 2026 State Budget through a gender lens. Gender training modules were validated and trainers equipped. HR policies within Parliament were reviewed and refined.

These are institutional shifts, not simply events. And they are matched by deeper connections between citizens and decision-makers from intergenerational dialogues in Kenya's Samburu and Baringo counties, to engagements with Ghana Parliament's Women's Caucus on the Affirmative Action Act, to a community townhall meeting.

We also launched our project on Political Inclusion and Consensus Building, expanded our global reach through the International Religious Freedom (IRF) Summit in Washington D.C., supported child-friendly parliamentary engagement through the UNICEF-funded project, and convened a landmark Regional Forum in Togo under the GAC-funded ILGRP project, bringing together Ghana, Kenya, Togo, and Canada to turn gender equality commitments into binding institutional frameworks.

Strong democracies are built not only on participation, but on systems that listen, adapt, and respond. That is the work we are doing, and this quarter we highlight the progress.

# Impact In Action

## A Law for Every Woman — Taking the Affirmative Action Act to the People - Ghana

*“I had no idea what the Affirmative Action (Gender Equity) Act, 2024 was about and its impact on my life as a female student. Through this interaction, I have come to better understand the Act, and it has motivated and inspired me to take up any leadership position that I want to.”- Eugenia Asiamah, Amasaman Senior High Technical School.*

International Women’s Day 2026 was not just a celebration at Parliament. In Trobu Constituency, it became a moment of accountability, where citizens, traditional leaders, and the MP sat together to ask: what does this law actually mean for us?

### The Problem

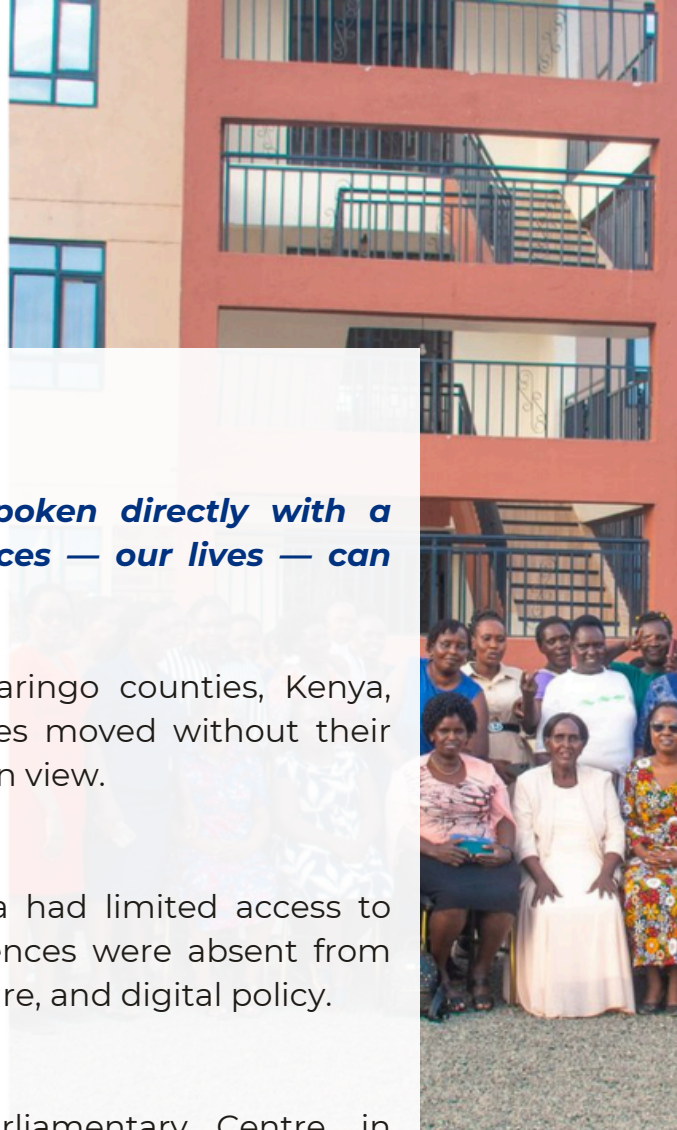
Ghana’s Affirmative Action (Gender Equity) Act, 2024 (Act 1121) represents a landmark commitment, mandating that women hold at least 30% of positions in key public and private decision-making roles by 2026. Yet awareness of the law at the community level remained limited, and the gap between policy commitment and lived reality remained wide.

### The Intervention

Under the Inclusive Legislatures for Gender Responsive Policies (ILGRP) Project, ACEPA, in collaboration with Hon. Gloria Owusu, MP for Trobu Constituency, and the Affirmative Action Coalition, convened a community town hall to mark International Women’s Day. The forum brought together traditional authorities and opinion leaders, community members, students, civil society, and development partners for an open, honest conversation about what the Affirmative Action Act means in practice.

### The Change

Community members left with a clearer understanding of their rights under the Act, the obligations it places on institutions, and the role they can play in holding decision-makers accountable. Citizens raised pertinent questions and shared feedback that will inform ongoing advocacy and education efforts. The townhall demonstrated that the passage of a law alone is not enough, implementation requires community ownership.



## Citizens Shape Parliament — Kenya

*"Before this dialogue, many of us had never spoken directly with a lawmaker. Now we understand that our experiences — our lives — can shape the decisions made in Parliament."*

For women and young people in Samburu and Baringo counties, Kenya, Parliament had long felt distant. Legislative processes moved without their input, and policies were shaped without their realities in view.

### The Problem

Marginalised women, girls, and youth in rural Kenya had limited access to parliamentary processes, meaning their lived experiences were absent from critical national debates on health, education, agriculture, and digital policy.

### The Intervention

Through the ILGRP Project, ACEPA and the Parliamentary Centre, in partnership with the Kenya Young Parliamentarians Association (KYPA) and hosted by Hon. Senator Hezema Lemaletian, convened an intergenerational dialogue in Samburu County on 29–30 January 2026. A second dialogue followed in Baringo County on 6–7 February, organised with the Kenya Women Parliamentary Association (KEWOPA) and hosted by Hon. Florence Jematiah Serгон.

### The Change

Over 150 participants, particularly women, girls, and youth from the poorest and most marginalised communities, submitted recommendations directly to Members of Parliament on six active bills, including:

- Health: The Health (Amendments) Bill, 2024; The Quality Healthcare and Patient Safety Bill, 2024
- Education: Vocational Education and Training Bill, 2022; Learners with Disabilities Bill, 2023
- Climate & Agriculture: Prevention of Livestock and Produce Theft Bill No. 12 of 2023; Agriculture and Livestock Extension Services Bill, 2022
- ICT: Digital Economy and AI for the Creative Economy

Hon. Senator Lemaletian, Hon. John Gitonga, and Hon. Serгон formally received citizen inputs to strengthen their oversight and lawmaking functions.



## ***A Regional Commitment Takes Institutional Shape — Togo***

***“Come together to present a united front.” — Mr. Ebenezer Ahumah Djietror, Clerk of Parliament of Ghana***

Building gender-responsive parliaments is not the work of one country alone. This quarter, that conviction became a regional commitment.

### **The Problem**

Despite national-level progress in Ghana, Kenya, and Togo, gender equality commitments within parliamentary institutions often remain aspirational, present in policy but absent from HR systems, operational planning, and workplace culture.

### **The Intervention**

The ILGRP Regional Forum was convened in Togo under the theme: 'Strengthening Gender-Responsive Parliaments through Strategic and Operational Planning, Inclusive Human Resource Policies, and Management Practices: Lessons from Ghana, Kenya, and Togo.' The forum brought together parliamentarians, parliamentary staff, civil society organisations, and partners from all three countries, alongside comparative perspectives from Canada and the National Assembly of Québec. The Parliament of Togo co-hosted alongside ACEPA and the Parliamentary Centre, with funding from Global Affairs Canada.

### **The Change**

Country delegations presented progress updates. MPs from Ghana, Kenya, and Togo discussed how to translate gender equality commitments into binding institutional frameworks. A Civil Society Panel provided external accountability perspectives, ensuring that the conversation was grounded in community realities, not just institutional intent.

# Laws and Policies that Shifted

This quarter, ACEPA's work contributed to tangible shifts in how laws and policies are shaped, scrutinised, and owned across three countries:

## Gender-Responsive Budgeting — Ghana & Kenya

- Parliamentary staff in Ghana are equipped with gender-responsive budgeting tools to scrutinise the 2026 State Budget across Youth Development, Agriculture, Social Protection, and Education
- Kenya's parliamentary staff supported the review and development of gender-responsive budgeting guidelines, drawing on international best practices
- GNECC engaged in gender analysis of the 2026 education sector budget — ensuring public resources reflect the different needs of women, men, girls, and boys.

## Institutional & HR Policy Reform — Ghana

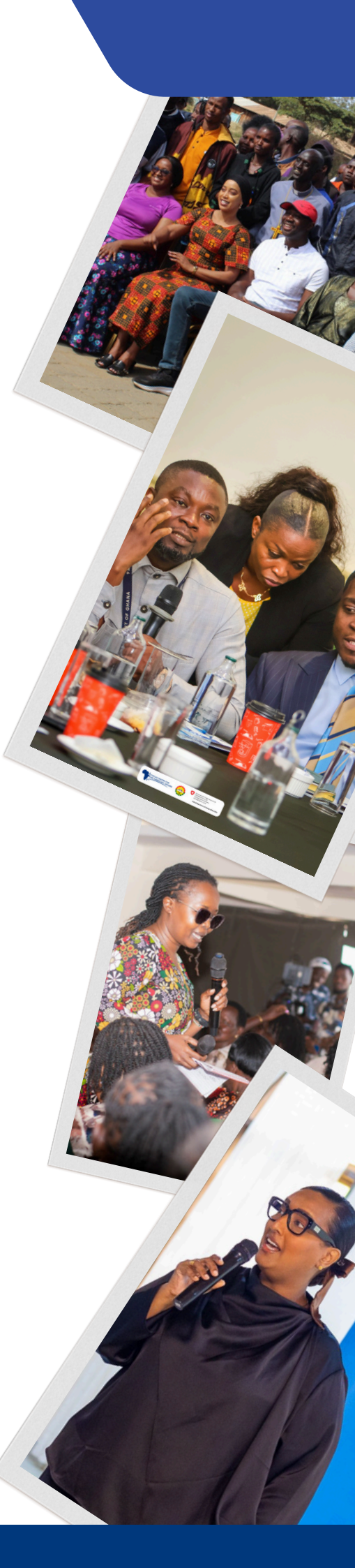
- Three critical HR policies — Gender Policy, Child Day Care Policy, and Anti-Harassment Policy, reviewed and refined by the Parliament of Ghana's Management Sub-Committee
- Gender Training Modules validated with parliamentary staff from PTI, Human Resources, ICT, Administration, and Committee departments
- Training of Trainers sessions launched to embed gender equality facilitation capacity inside Parliament.

## Citizen Accountability & Oversight Tools — Ghana

- Members of Parliament introduced to the Community Scorecard, a citizen-led accountability tool to strengthen oversight and track gender equality commitments from policy to practice
- Women's Caucus engaged on oversight strategies for the Affirmative Action (Gender Equity) Act (Act 1121)
- Community townhall in Trobu Constituency built awareness of the Affirmative Action Act, reaching traditional authorities, students, and community members.

## Child-Friendly Parliamentary Spaces — Ghana

- Parliamentary Visitors Centre staff and Marshals Dept. officers trained on child rights, safe engagement, and Prevention from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) under the UNICEF-supported 'Enhancing the Capacity of Parliament to Address Children's Issues' project
- Parliament of Ghana advancing its commitment to child-responsive governance through dedicated staff capacity building.



**Political Inclusion Consensus Building — Ghana**

- New project launched in partnership with the Embassy of Switzerland: 'Political Inclusion and Consensus Building — The Role of Political Parties and Parliament
- Initiative supporting constructive inter-party dialogue, bipartisan parliamentary practice, and inclusive decision-making.

**Digital & Inclusive Participation — Ghana**

- Working session with Parliament of Ghana's ICT Department to explore how digital tools can expand inclusive public engagement with Parliament.

**Regional & Global Influence**

- ILGRP Regional Forum in Togo established a shared framework for gender-responsive institutional practices across Ghana, Kenya, and Togo
- Knowledge exchange in Ottawa explored how Canada's parliament embeds gender responsiveness into HR management, research, budgeting, and citizen engagement
- ACEPA represented at the IRF Summit in Washington, D.C., strengthening connections on Freedom of Religion or Belief and cross-society dialogue.

**Evidence-Informed Policy Communication — Ghana**

- Senior officials from three District Assemblies trained on policy brief writing, building skills to translate evidence into decision-ready policy products.



# Q1 Impact Snapshot

**5+** Citizen-parliament dialogues and engagements convened across Ghana, Kenya and Togo

participants engaged through our programs

**1000+**

Breakdown by Category:

61

250

50

630

30

MPs

Parl. Staff

CSOs

Citizens

Media

**6**

Active bills in Kenya directly influenced through grassroots citizen input

**4**

Sectors receiving gender-responsive scrutiny: health, education, agriculture, ICT

Countries engaged: Canada, Ghana, Kenya, and Togo

**3**

Critical HR policies reviewed and refined within Ghana's Parliament

# Q1 Impact Snapshot



Regional Forum in Togo with perspectives from Canada and the National Assembly of Québec

1

2

Intergenerational dialogues in Kenya — Samburu and Baringo counties



1

Knowledge exchange in Ottawa on embedding gender in parliamentary institutions



3



1

New project launched — Political Inclusion & Consensus Building (Swiss Embassy)



UNICEF-supported capacity building for child-friendly parliamentary engagement at the Parliament of Ghana

# Partner and Stakeholder Voices



## **Awal Ahmed Karoama**

*Executive Director, RISE Ghana*

This training on how to develop Policy Briefs is very important, because we are dealing with an ecosystem where the use of evidence for development is not matured. This training has enhanced our capacity as a CSO to support MPs to make compelling arguments by presenting evidence in a manner that is accessible, attractive, and speaks to the issues of Policy.



## **Hon. Gloria Owusu**

*Member of Parliament, Trobu Constituency*

We need to educate the youth to understand that women can do it once they set their minds to it.



## **Nana Akua Dansoaa**

*Student, St. John's Grammar Senior High School*

Today marked a turning point for me. Learning about the Affirmative Action (Gender Equity) Act, 2024, was not just an academic experience; it was a personal one. As a student, my greatest takeaway is this: my gender is not a limitation. No one has the right to define my potential or diminish my worth because of it. This Act is proof that the system can be made to work for us, and that knowledge alone is empowering.



## **Joana F. B. Asare**

*Assistant Clerk, Parliament of Ghana*

The training programmes organised by ACEPA have been highly impactful in strengthening my capacity as an Assistant Clerk. The practical approach adopted, particularly through case studies, simulations, and peer engagements, improved my ability to assess how policies and programmes affect different groups, especially women, men, and vulnerable populations. This has broadened my appreciation of Parliament's role in promoting equity, inclusiveness, and social justice in national development.



## **Emmanuel Nelson Arthur**

Administrative and Finance Assistant

Emmanuel Nelson Arthur serves as the Administrative and Finance Assistant at the African Centre for Parliamentary Affairs (ACEPA), where he provides essential support in the organization's financial and administrative operations. His responsibilities include maintaining accurate financial records, assisting with budgeting and reporting, and ensuring the smooth execution of daily office functions.

Prior to joining ACEPA, Emmanuel worked as an Accounts Officer at Nissi Pharma Ltd, where he facilitated payment issuance, reconciled daily bank statements, managed financial record-keeping using Tally software, and supported supplier payments and employee tax filings. He also gained valuable experience as an Accounts Officer during his National Service at Methodist Faith Healing Hospital, Ankaase, preparing monthly allowances, reconciling bank statements, managing insurance claims, and supporting auditing processes.

Emmanuel holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration (Accounting option) from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) and a Higher National Diploma (HND) in Accounting. With a strong academic background, practical experience, and keen attention to detail, he brings diligence, professionalism, and efficiency to ACEPA's mission.

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We are deeply grateful to everyone who has supported, contributed to, and engaged with our work for the first quarter. To our partners, funders, parliamentarians, parliamentary staff, civil society organisations, and the people we serve, your commitment to inclusive governance and gender-responsive change continues to inspire everything we do.

**The Parliament of Ghana, Kenya and Togo**

**Civil Society Organisations**

**Hewlett Foundation**

**UNICEF Ghana**

**SWISS Embassy**

**Parliamentary Centre**

**STAR Ghana Foundation**

**Global Affairs Canada**

**Center for Democratic Development Ghana (CDD)**

**African Centre for Development Impact (ACDI)**

This newsletter is a reflection of collective effort, and we are honoured to share this journey with you.



# Q1 in Pictures



An MP at a capacity enhancement session



Some participants at the intergenerational dialogue in Samburu County, Kenya



From the far left is Issifu Lampo, Senior Governance Advisor at ACEPA, at the launch of the African Centre for Development Impact (ACDi)



Some participants at the launch of the SWISS Project



Lillian Bruce, Gender & CSO Advisor, ACEPA in a working session

# Q1 in Pictures



Dominic Kornu, facilitating a working session



Some participants at the ILGRP Regional Forum in Togo



A group picture of students from Amasaman Senior High Technical School at the Townhall meeting



Group picture of participants in a training



A participant at the Policy writing workshop



A facilitator during a workshop



Participants pose for a group photo during a working session with the Women's Caucus in Parliament



ACEPA team in a workshop



Participants exchange ideas during the launch of a project



Some MPs in a picture sharing ideas

***This newsletter was produced by the ACEPA  
Communications team, led by Benedicta  
Naa Odarkor Ablateye.***

## **Contact Us**



[www.acepa-africa.org](http://www.acepa-africa.org)



[info@acepa-africa.org](mailto:info@acepa-africa.org)



+233 30 295 6811



No AGR/2B Farmland  
Beach Road, Accra

## **Connect with Us**



*African Centre for Parliamentary Affairs (ACEPA)*