



ENGAGE & INFLUENCE NEWSLETTER

Impact Note from our Senior Governance Advisor



DR. GIFTY ADIKA

SENIOR GOVERNANCE ADVISOR

In the second quarter of 2026, ACEPA's work continued to move from participation to transformation, strengthening democratic institutions, deepening partnerships, and applying knowledge to advance democratic governance.

One of the key highlights was the GAC-funded Inclusive Legislatures for Gender-Responsive Policies (ILGRP) Project, which is supporting Parliaments in Ghana, Kenya, and Togo to embed gender-responsive approaches across their legislative, oversight, budgeting, and administrative functions. Parliamentary staff and Members of Parliament sharpened their capacity to scrutinize laws, policies, and budgets with a gender lens, ensuring governance reflects the needs of women and marginalized groups.

These advances are not isolated activities; they represent shifts in how parliaments operate and how citizens' voices are reflected in decision-making. With technical support and shared learning, ACEPA and its implementing partner, the Parliamentary Centre, are working alongside parliaments to institutionalize inclusive practices that strengthen accountability and ensure governance responds to all citizens.

With support from the Embassy of Switzerland's Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA), ACEPA delivered key activities under the Political Inclusion and Consensus Building Project. We facilitated knowledge exchange and dialogue among political actors, policymakers, and governance stakeholders. A key milestone was a study visit to Geneva and Bern, where parliamentary leaders engaged with international institutions to learn about democratic governance, oversight, consensus-building, and inclusive political processes. This visit highlighted the importance of peer learning and international collaboration in strengthening democratic institutions.

ACEPA's commitment to inclusive governance also extends to promoting meaningful youth and child participation in democratic processes. Through Kampus Konnect, a civic engagement initiative, young people are introduced to governance, active citizenship, and democratic leadership. Engagements at Amasaman Senior High Technical School and Tema Mission Technical Institute encouraged discussions on citizenship, leadership, and public participation, empowering students to become informed and engaged citizens.

In partnership with UNICEF Ghana and the Parliament of Ghana, ACEPA further supported initiatives that strengthen child participation in governance. The **Mini Parliament** Initiative provided young students with practical exposure to parliamentary democracy, enabling them to better understand legislative processes and the role of Parliament in national development. Building on this commitment, ACEPA facilitated the establishment of the **Parliamentary Caucus on Children**, bringing together Members of Parliament to champion children's rights and advance child-responsive legislation and policies. These initiatives underscore ACEPA's commitment to ensuring that the voices of children and young people are reflected in governance and decision-making processes.

ACEPA also sustained its work in the Evidence-informed Policy Making (EPIM) space, reinforcing democratic national governance through media engagements, research, publications, and digital civic education. A key milestone was the release of the Data for Accountability Project (DAP) flagship report, which strengthened evidence-based representation and paved the way for the transition to the Constituency Evidence System (CES) — a platform designed to help parliaments and policymakers ground decisions in credible data and citizen priorities.

ACEPA remains committed to advancing inclusive, accountable, and effective governance.

Finding Their Voice – Inspiring the Next Generation of Democratic Leaders

The Problem

Many young people view democracy mainly through elections, political leaders, and national debates. However, they have limited opportunities to engage directly with democratic institutions or understand their role in governance.

The Intervention

This quarter, to address the gap in youth participation in governance, ACEPA introduced two landmark initiatives, Kampus Konnect and the Mini Parliament Initiative, each designed to give young people meaningful entry points into democratic processes.

Kampus Konnect: ACEPA launched Kampus Konnect, a civic engagement initiative that connects young people with Parliament and democratic processes. The program provides platforms for youth to learn, engage, ask questions, and share perspectives on issues affecting their communities and the nation.

ACEPA engaged students at Amasaman Senior High Technical School and Tema Mission Technical Institute, facilitating discussions on citizenship, leadership, public participation, and the role of youth in shaping Ghana's future.

Mini Parliament Initiative: ACEPA partnered with the Parliament of Ghana and UNICEF Ghana to launch the Mini Parliament Initiative, allowing young people to experience the role of lawmakers. Through mock parliamentary sessions and active participation, students learned how Parliament debates issues, represents citizens, and makes decisions that influence national development.

The Change

Kampus Konnect engagements encouraged students to reflect on governance challenges, identify desired changes, and consider how they can contribute to national development. Many participants gained a new understanding of Parliament as both a lawmaking body and a forum where citizens' voices can influence decisions.

The Mini Parliament Initiative at the Parliament of Ghana expanded this vision by offering young people practical experience with parliamentary processes and the responsibilities of democratic leadership. Through Kampus Konnect, ACEPA is investing in a generation of informed and engaged citizens who understand that democracy requires ongoing involvement, not just participation during elections.



Beyond Differences: Strengthening Democratic Dialogue Through Global Learning and Consensus Building

The Problem

Democracy thrives when diverse voices can engage, deliberate, and reach common ground. In complex political environments, fostering dialogue and consensus is essential for effective governance.

The Intervention

With support from the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) of the Embassy of Switzerland, ACEPA's Political Inclusion and Consensus Building Project creates opportunities for political actors, policymakers, and governance stakeholders to strengthen collaboration and promote constructive engagement.

A key milestone this quarter was a study visit to **Geneva and Bern**, Switzerland, where parliamentary leaders and officials engaged with international institutions, including the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the Swiss Parliament, and explored approaches to democratic governance, dialogue, and consensus-building.

The Change

The visit offered participants valuable insights into how institutions manage differences, encourage cooperation, and build public trust through inclusive decision-making. Beyond knowledge exchange, the experience reinforced the importance of continuous learning and collaboration in addressing governance challenges. Participants identified lessons that can be adapted to Ghana's democratic context, particularly to strengthen relationships between political actors and institutions.

Through this initiative, ACEPA continues to promote a democratic culture in which differences become opportunities for dialogue, negotiation, and shared solutions rather than barriers to progress.

This project is implemented by the African Centre for Parliamentary Affairs (ACEPA), with support from the SWISS Embassy's Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA. Read more about this project [here](#).



Laws and Policies that Shifted

The second quarter was marked by impactful engagements and meaningful progress across our programmes, further advancing ACEPA's mission to strengthen democratic governance and parliamentary development. Throughout the quarter, we implemented a range of activities and interventions under our key projects, each contributing to stronger institutions, more inclusive policymaking, and greater citizen participation.

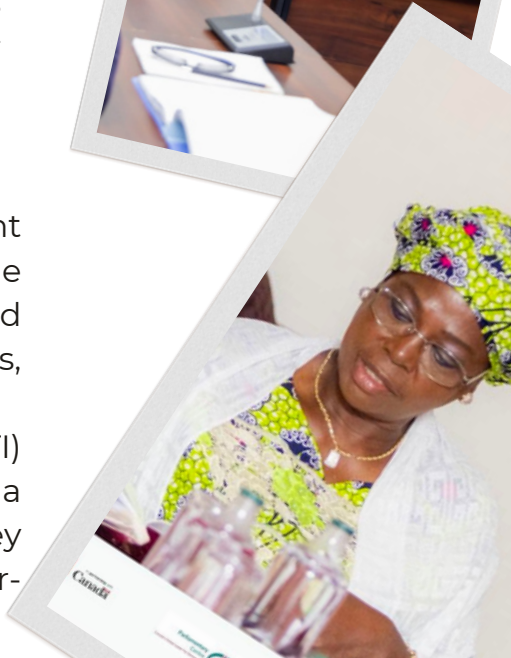
These included the Inclusive Legislatures for Gender-Responsive Policies (ILGRP) project, implemented by the African Centre for Parliamentary Affairs (ACEPA) and the Parliamentary Centre, with funding from Global Affairs Canada; the Enhancing the Capacity of Parliament to Address Children's Issues initiative, implemented in partnership with UNICEF Ghana; and the Political Inclusion and Consensus Building project, supported by the Swiss Embassy through the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA).

Gender-Responsive Budgeting — Ghana & Kenya

- Parliamentary staff in Ghana were taken through a four-day mentoring session on gender-responsive budgeting (GRB), covering gender analysis, budget statement review, and evidence-based recommendation writing.
- Day 2 of the GRB working session deepened staff skills in triangulation research, sex-disaggregated data collection, and report writing — bridging the gap between policy commitments and real impact.
- Kenya's parliamentary staff finalized a Gender-Responsive and Inclusive Budgeting Toolkit; the refined guideline was submitted to parliamentary research leadership for approval — a concrete step toward institutionalization.

Institutional & HR Policy Reform — Ghana

- ACEPA and the Parliamentary Service's HR Department marked HR Week 2026 under the theme "Empower People to Lead Change." The open forum during HR Week tackled anti-harassment mechanisms, promotions, code of ethics, and staff accountability frameworks.
- ICT, HR, and the Parliamentary Training Institute (PTI) worked through adapting gender training modules for a new Learning Management System (LMS) e-platform, a key step toward institutionalizing accessible, scalable gender-responsive training across Parliament.



Citizen Accountability & Oversight Tools — Ghana

- Validation meeting for the Citizen Engagement & Oversight Guides and the Step-by-Step Guide for Integrating Gender into Committee Oversight, with staff drawn from across Parliament's Committee clusters.
- Committees, ICT, and Public Engagement staff met to prioritize mechanisms for digitized citizen participation — outcomes included a field-monitoring framework and an outreach roadmap spanning legislation, oversight, deliberation, and representation.
- ACEPA participated in the Strategic Implementation and Communication Workshop for Ghana's Open Parliament Working Group, advancing the Open Parliament Action Plan.

Child-Friendly Parliamentary Spaces — Ghana

- Parliamentary Visitors Centre staff and Marshals Department officers trained on child rights, safe engagement, and Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) under the UNICEF-supported project.
- Media Relations and Broadcasting Department staff trained on ethical, child-safe reporting, covering informed consent, age-appropriate language, and alignment with the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Political Inclusion Consensus Building — Ghana

- Young Parliamentarians Forum (YPF) members undertook a study visit to Switzerland to explore consensus politics and cross-party collaboration, including a visit to the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Headquarters led by ED Dr. Rasheed Draman, where the delegation met incoming Secretary General Anda Filip, who will become the first woman to lead the IPU in its 135-year history.



Digital & Inclusive Participation — Ghana & Kenya

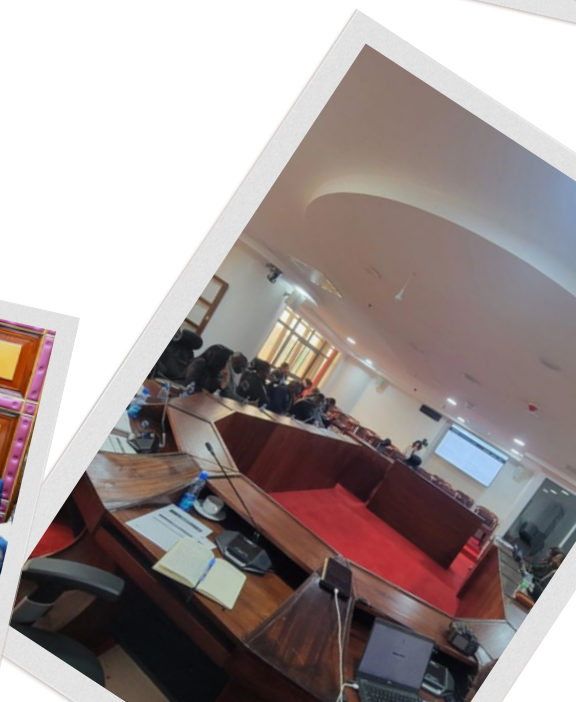
- Working session with the Parliament of Ghana's ICT Department on expanding inclusive digital public engagement.
- ACEPA and the Parliamentary Centre kicked off a week of meetings with the Kenyan Parliament and civil society partners to design a tailored digital hub giving youth and women new channels to participate in legislative and oversight processes.

Regional & Global Influence

- ACEPA joined the Global Data Festival & Kenya Space Expo in Nairobi, including the African Regional Forum on Statistical Use in Parliament (PARIS21), where ACEPA shared Ghana's Data for Accountability Project (DAP) experience.
- ACEPA represented at the Africa's Future Conference in Accra, joining leaders from 20+ African countries to reflect on Family, Sovereignty, and Values.
- Dr. Draman moderated a panel at the 4th Ghana Civil Society Forum on democratic consolidation and inclusive development.

Evidence-Informed Policy Communication

- ACEPA opened the International Data Masterclass for MPs with Parliament, Ghana Statistical Service, and the UK's ONS — building MPs' capacity to access, interpret, and use data in their constitutional oversight role.
- ED Dr. Draman spoke at the Evidence to Action (E2A) Conference on ACEPA's DAP experience, emphasizing trusted intermediaries as essential to closing the evidence-to-policy gap.





Q2 2026 Impact Snapshot



Q2 2026 Impact Snapshot

Our second quarter in ***numbers***

5

Training sessions

1

Constituency Engagement

1

Study visit to Switzerland

1

Mini Parliament Launched

2

Campus Engagements

2

New Initiatives (Kampus
Konnect & Mini-Parliament)

Partner and Stakeholder Voices

"This capacity-building visit for selected young parliamentarians, organized by Parliament, the Swiss Government, and ACEPA, has deepened my appreciation of the importance of consensus-building, consultation, and compromise in effective parliamentary governance.

It has enhanced my understanding of how these principles can be applied within the Ghanaian Parliament. It also offered valuable lessons and best practices from the Swiss parliamentary system that could help strengthen parliamentary work and collaboration in Ghana."



Hon. Mavis Nkansah-Boadu

Member of Parliament, Afigya Sekyere East



Samuel Kobla Gafah

Assistant Clerk, Cluster of Committees (Subsidiary Legislation and Judiciary Committees)

"The town hall engagement has shown me the importance of evidence-based decision-making.

It helps us gather the voices of citizens, build trust with communities, and ensure that parliamentary oversight is more inclusive, gender-responsive, and focused on creating meaningful change for society."

"This programme has been an eye-opener for our students. It has helped them better understand how Parliament works, how laws are made, and the important role they can play as informed citizens.

We hope this becomes an annual engagement so that more students can benefit."



Joseph Nii Tackie Adams

Principal, Tema Mission Technical Institute

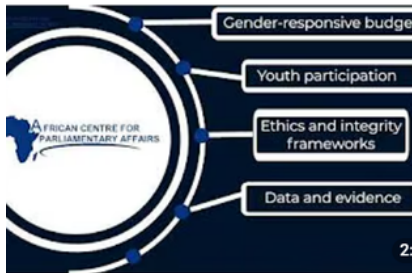


Sulemana Saaka

Research Assistant to the Member of Parliament for Salaga South

"The Constituency Evidence System is a valuable tool that will strengthen evidence-based decision-making by helping Members of Parliament identify and respond to the most pressing needs of their constituents.

Ultimately, it will support more targeted interventions and contribute to the overall development of our constituencies."



[ACEPA's Institutional Video](#)



[Validation Meeting of the Citizen Engagement & Oversight Guides](#)



[ACEPA Explains - Committee on Employment, Labour Relations, and Pensions](#)



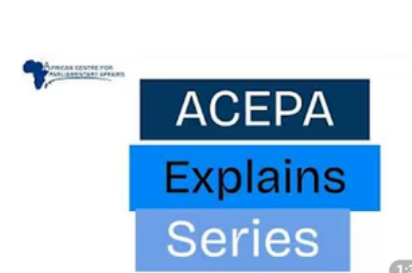
[Mini Parliament Initiative Launched](#)



[Kampus Konnect Engagement at AMASTECH](#)



[Tema Mission Technical Institute - Kampus Konnect](#)



[ACEPA Explains- The Difference Between Parliament and Government](#)



[Ghana Tonight 16/07/2026](#)



[Inside ACEPA Meet Emmanuel Benchie](#)



Helena Kyeremanteng

Administrative and Programme Assistant

Helena Kyeremanteng is an Administrative and Programme Assistant at the African Centre for Parliamentary Affairs (ACEPA). She serves as a central hub for the team, coordinating the logistics and administrative processes that support the successful implementation of programmes and organizational activities. Prior to joining ACEPA,

Helena served in a dual capacity as an Administrative and Teaching Assistant during her national service at the Department of Classics and Philosophy, University of Cape Coast (UCC). In this role, she supported departmental logistics, assisted with academic administration, and facilitated undergraduate tutorials.

Helena holds a Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy and Classics, which equips her with strong analytical and critical thinking skills that she applies to her administrative and programme support responsibilities. She is committed to delivering efficient administrative and programme support while contributing to a well-coordinated and productive team environment.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT 🎉🌟

As we reflect on the milestones and progress achieved this quarter, we extend our sincere appreciation to our partners, funders, parliamentarians, parliamentary staff, civil society actors, and all stakeholders who continue to walk with us in advancing accountable, inclusive, and responsive governance.

This newsletter highlights some of the collective efforts, engagement, and achievements made possible by these partnerships. We remain grateful for your continued commitment to building stronger institutions and more inclusive democracies.

The Parliaments of Ghana, Kenya and Togo

Civil Society Organisations

William and Flora Hewlett Foundation

UNICEF Ghana

SWISS Embassy

Parliamentary Centre

STAR Ghana Foundation

Global Affairs Canada

Ghana Statistical Service

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



AFRICAN CENTRE
FOR PARLIAMENTARY
STUDIES

The ACEPA Team



Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA

Q1 in Pictures



A student speaking at the Mini Parliament launch



A group picture of participants engaged in Salaga South



A cross-section of participants in the ILGRP project training in Togo



Students captured during Kampus Konkret Engagement in Tamale Technical University



Dr. Rasheed Draman on a panel at the Evidence to Action (E2A) Conference 2026



Some participants at the E4A Conference



A picture of some participants at IJM's meeting on Financing Anti-Human Trafficking Efforts in Ghana



Workshop on child's rights ongoing



Media persons at the CES project engagement in Salaga South



Students at Kampus Konkret Engagement

Q2 in Pictures



Cross-section of participants at a workshop



The ILGRP Ghana team at Parliament's HR Week 2026.



Second from the extreme right is Dr. Draman and some participants at the release of the Regional and District Multidimensional Poverty Index Factsheets



MPs captured during a workshop on the use of the Community Scorecard



Two participants captured at a workshop in Togo under the ILGRP project

***This newsletter was produced by the ACEPA
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