



**WOMEN MEDIA AND CHANGE**

**(WOMECE)**

**2010 ANNUAL REPORT**

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## **MISSION AND VISION STATEMENT**

### **Mission**

- To conduct research on the media needs of women in Ghana.
- To undertake media skills and ICT training for women with leadership potentials, parliamentarians and mid-level career women.
- To build the capacity of media personnel to effectively report on gender and women's issues.
- To publish appropriate publications on women and gender.

### **Vision**

WOMECE's vision is to bridge the big gap between rhetoric and action in addressing issues on gender and empowering women to gain public voice and visibility as well as having control of their lives.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Women Media and Change is grateful to all funding agencies and collaborators, especially the Global Fund for Women, for their support over the years.

WOMECEC is also grateful to the Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE) for the effective partnership in organizing a National Training Workshop for Media Practitioners on the Effective Use of the Media to Promote Housing and Land Rights of Women in Ghana.

We thank all the journalists we worked with in one way or the other.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It is evident that Ghanaian women have made some progress over the past decade in the areas of education, commerce and general public life.

However, the women are still under-represented in decision-making positions in all sectors, compared to their male counterparts who form about 49 per cent of the population.

Women Media and Change (WOMECE) partnered the Centre of Housing Rights and Evictions to organize a national training workshop for media practitioners. It was on the effective use of the media to promote the housing and land rights of women in Ghana.

The workshop provided opportunity for journalists to:

- Understand better the issues pertaining to women's housing and land rights
- Have a fair idea of what the law says in relation to women and housing
- Learn more about the housing rights of women and be able to help in educating the public on the issue
- Learn the challenges women face culturally and socially regarding housing and land acquisition
- Know and understand the situation in Ghana, the input of civil society and how they work together with the media

WOMECE organized a three-day ICT training workshop for 15 female journalists from the print and electronic media in the Greater Accra Region. The workshop helped to build their confidence in the use of new information technologies.

WOMECE published its second edition of the Female Parliamentarian newsletter to celebrate the achievement of the few women in parliament leadership positions. It was a struggle to obtain interviews with the lawmakers due to their busy schedules. This led to a delay in the publication of the newsletter. But the end product justified all the hassle.

So far so good. And with the same determination as before, WOMECE is looking forward to breaking new grounds in 2011.

**Charity Binka (Mrs)**  
**Executive Director**

## **PROJECT REPORTS**

### **1. National Training Workshop for Media Practitioners on Effective Use of the Media to Promote the Housing and Land Rights of Women in Ghana**

Women's rights to adequate housing should be of great concern to all citizens of Ghana and especially those in government. This is important because women still experience gender discrimination in accessing resources and property. Many women across Ghana face housing and land rights violations as a result of tenure insecurities.

This does not only deprive women of economic independence and sources of income and therefore the inability to move out of poverty. It also impacts on their ability to take major decisions that might improve their wellbeing.

The fight for gender equality in Africa has been a slow process. Although many governments have ratified various international and human rights instruments that commit states to ending disparity against women, the implementation of these instruments has been rather slow.

It is for these reasons that the Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE), in line with its mission of ensuring the full enjoyment of the human right to adequate housing for everyone, collaborated with WOMEC to organize a one-day National Training Workshop for Media Practitioners on Effective Use of the Media to Promote the Housing and Land Rights of Women in Ghana.

The workshop was held on May 27, 2010 at the Coconut Grove Regency Hotel in Accra-Ghana. 30 participants from the media (both print and electronic) and women organizations in Ghana took part in the one-day workshop.

COHRE is a Geneva-based, international non-governmental human rights organization founded in 1994 as a foundation in the Netherlands.

### **The main objective of the workshop:**

- To share with the media knowledge on housing and Land Rights of Women and examine opportunities and challenges in reporting women's housing rights issues and violations in Ghana
- To discuss key issues on effective reporting, prioritise key ones and explore practical ways on making women's housing rights more visible in the Ghanaian Media
- To develop a MEDIA STRATEGY (Action Plan) and identify key persons to follow up on the strategy.

Ms. Agnes Kabajuni, Programme Officer, COHRE (Africa Programme), said in her presentation "WOMEN ARE HOUSING RIGHTS IN INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS LAW" that when it comes to issues concerning housing, land and water, women experience specific needs because of socio-economic problems they face.

Ms Kabajuni explained that most women often do not have equal access to land due to tenure insecurities. And because of this, violations related to inheritance, land grabbing and loss of matrimonial homes through divorce, continue to destabilize their housing rights or access to adequate housing.

She added that HIV/AIDS has increasingly exacerbated women's housing rights violations as they face stigma, rejection, disinheritance and desertion. Sometimes inadequately housed women are at risk of getting HIV/AIDS infection.

She added that one cannot talk about housing rights without mentioning other rights like land, water, sanitation, food, health, economic rights, and privacy, security of persons and home as well as protection from inhuman treatment. This is because there is a certain level of indivisibility, interdependence and interrelationship of human rights.

Ms Sylvia Noagbesenu, Manager, Women's Land Link, in her presentation on "**Forced Evictions and its impact on women's rights to housing,**" cited displacement during armed conflicts and evictions during large-scale development projects as other examples of such evictions. She said they are prohibited under International law.



## *Slums & housing conditions*



***Mrs. Charity Binka making her presentation***

Ms Noagbesenu said in rare cases where an eviction is warranted in extremely exceptional circumstance, there are still legal obligations to be followed to ensure that it is carried out in a

certain way and meet certain procedural protections.

She said there should be an opportunity for genuine consultation with those affected, adequate and reasonable notice for all affected persons prior to the scheduled date of eviction (90 days by International Standards), and information on the proposed evictions as well as the alternative purpose for which the land or housing is to be used. This she said should to be made available in reasonable time to all those affected.

Ms Noagbesenu emphasised that where groups of people are involved, government officials or their representatives must be present during an eviction and all persons carrying out the eviction must be properly identified.

Mrs. Charity Binka, Executive Director of WOMEC in her presentation titled: **Effective reporting and visibility of women’s housing rights in the Ghana media; exploring methodologies and strategies that journalists and media officers should take**” said housing rights for women is a critical issue and must be handled with caution.

She expressed concern about the story of the woman who killed her five children and committed suicide and questioned what might have informed the action.



## *Slums area after eviction*



Mrs. Binka tasked the media to put such issues on the national agenda and serve as advocates. She said the media has the power and means to do that through newspapers and magazines, national, regional and community radios as well as television shows.

Mrs. Binka said Former President Kwame Nkrumah gave women a voice by getting them into institutions like Parliament and the Army. She advised that the media must hold government accountable and spice up their reporting. “We must understand the issues and package it in a way that it will achieve results” she added. She also advised that messages should be packaged in a way that people can easily relate to.

Mrs. Binka said the media must be authentic in their reporting and passionate. She said there is so much information on the internet about COHRE and other outlets that deal with women’s housing and land rights issues. She urged the media to give stories a human face and avoid the use of embarrassing pictures and make use of photographs or footage that illustrate the plight of women particularly when they are being evicted



**Participants and resource persons**



Participants at the workshop



## **Project 2**

### **ICT workshop for female journalists**

Women's access to information is a major concern. The United Nations regards lack of access to information as the third most important issue facing women globally, after poverty and violence. There is no doubt that well-trained female journalists will be better positioned to contribute to the development of an all-inclusive Information society by participating in Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) policy formulation and implementation.

Today, our world is referred to as a global village thanks to the ICT industry. It is a known fact that women are constantly faced with unequal access and opportunities to use ICT tools compared to men and therefore very few women are ICT inclined.

Against this background WOMEC organized a 3-day ICT workshop on **Microsoft Suite 2007**, at the Center of IT Professional Development (CIPD) of the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA) in Accra, Ghana. 15 female journalists selected from the print and electronic media in Accra took part in the workshop on 23rd-25th August, 2010. It is expected that participants would develop better web-based research skills to enrich their news reportage. The theme for the workshop was **"ICT and the Media."**

Mrs. Charity Binka, Executive Director, Women Media and Change (WOMEC) who gave the opening remarks urged participants to seize the opportunity to learn more about emerging technologies and the various ICT tools. She encouraged them to improve on their knowledge of technology in order to catch up with their male counterparts in the technology and media industries.

She thanked the Global Fund for Women for supporting WOMEC. She said there are more men in the IT field and they are benefiting from the use of these tools and therefore urged the female participants to go beyond their fears and make use of technology. She further urged the journalists to go back to the newsrooms and serve as trainers of trainers and share the knowledge with their colleagues.

The workshop was basically divided into the following sessions:

#### **Day 1:**

- Introduction to computer-Presentation



- Introduction to Microsoft word-Practical

### Day2:

- Introduction to Microsoft PowerPoint-Practical
- Introduction to Microsoft Excel-Practical

### Day 3:

- Microsoft Excel (Continuation)-Practical
- Microsoft Access –Practical
- Introduction to Blogging-Practical

Participants were given online assessment forms to fill before the commencement of the workshop. This was to assess participants' levels of IT knowledge.

Some of the questions on the forms included:

- Do you have access to the computer? (Either at home or in the office)
- What definition would you give to Information Technology?
- What is your level of knowledge in IT?
- Do you use IT tools to execute your official duties?



Participants at work

Summary of the assessment showed that all fifteen participants use the computer daily. Some use it to type their stories, others use it for research activities and to edit or insert voices for broadcast. All of them had basic knowledge in Microsoft Word, six had no knowledge in Microsoft Access and Excel, and three had no knowledge in Microsoft PowerPoint. The rest had some basic knowledge in computing.

On the first day of the workshop, the journalists were introduced to the computer. They learnt the various parts and components of the computer, the various input, processing and storage devices, and the types of software. Some of the topics treated were as follows:

- What is a computer?
- Components of a Computer - Hardware and Software
- Types of hardware

The journalists were introduced to Microsoft Word in the second session of the day's activities. Highlights of the Microsoft Word session included complete coverage of the new interface, new graphic features (including SmartArt, themes, and building blocks) and publishing to PDF.

Participants were taken through the basics of Word processing. This included how to open and close it, how to use the interface, how to create basic documents, and how to save and open documents as well as how to get help.

On the second day of the workshop, journalists were first taken through the basics of PowerPoint: how to open and close a page, how to use the interface, how to create a basic presentation, how to save and open presentations and how to get help.

Participants were introduced to Microsoft Excel in the 2<sup>nd</sup> session. Highlights of the session included complete coverage of the new interface, use of Excel functions, and PivotTables.

On the last day of the three-day workshop, participants continued with Microsoft Excel.

The second session for the day was on Microsoft Access. The instructor started by explaining to participants that Microsoft Access is a database program. Highlights of the course included complete coverage of the new interface, details on how to plan and design a database

The last session to round off the three-day workshop was on blogging. Participants were introduced to blogging and were taught how to create their own blogs and publish their stories/articles.

**The project produced the following outcomes:**

- The female Journalists acquired new ICT skills to improve their work
- Participants were able to create blogs and publish articles on the blogs
- The workshop provided the platform for the journalists to network
- Participants used the opportunity to share work experiences and explore new areas of collaborations among the various media organizations they represented.

**Impact**

- The ICT training workshop helped to build the confidence of the journalists in the use of the new information technologies
- The journalists were introduced to new skills in searching for information to enrich their reports
- The programme introduced the female journalists to the new media such as blogging
- The training equipped the journalists to be able to network globally

**Evaluations obtained from participants are summarized below:**

- *I have learnt new things thanks to this ICT workshop*
- *This course is excellent since I have been introduced to new technologies*
- *The training was rewarding*
- *This training will definitely have an impact on the quality of my work*
- *This course is educative and informative*

**Lessons learned**

- More women/girls should be encouraged to learn ICT and also to take part in such workshops

- Acquiring ICT skills is no longer a luxury but a necessity to function effectively in the global village
- The training period was too short and should be extended to a week in subsequent ICT workshops.



### **Project 3**

#### **Publication of the Female Parliamentarian Newsletter**

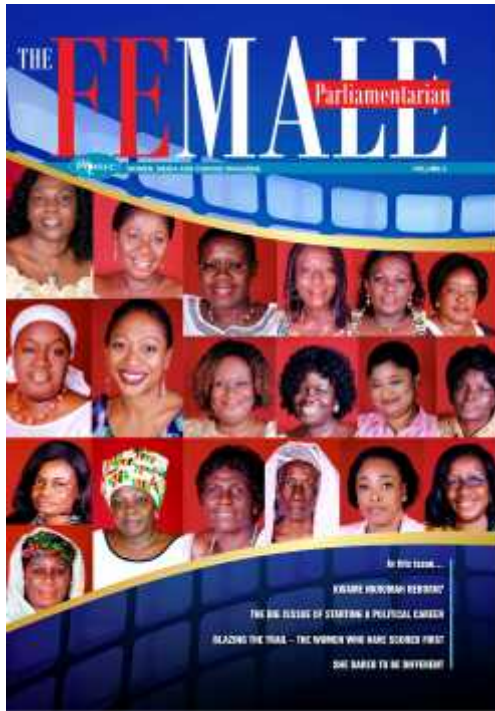


The **Female Parliamentarian** is a 24-page newsletter that focuses on the achievements and challenges of female parliamentarians and women in leadership positions. The second edition of the newsletter is meant to celebrate our women and to throw more light on the many obstacles women continue to struggle to overcome to fully participate in politics. It is also an appeal to government to show commitment to global agreements to promote the empowerment of women, gender equality and good governance.

Despite the numerous challenges faced by women, the magazine captures the outstanding contributions of women who made it to the top. Ghana's Chief Justice and the Speaker of Parliament are examples of females who have defied the odds to get to the top and are now at the helm of affairs in the Judiciary and the Legislature.

The Newsletter is in the form of articles and interviews. The content includes the following:

- *Kwame Nkrumah Reborn? Samia stepping into the big shoes of the father*
- *The big issue of starting a political career*
- *She dared to be different*
- *All Hail the First Female Driver in Parliament*
- *Unfinished agenda*
- *The MP who knows all about competing*
- *Blazing the trail – the women who have scored first*
- *She did not give up*
- *Women in Ghana- 15 years after Beijing*
- *Time for parties to show gender sensitivity*



Front page of the Female Parliamentarian Newsletter

### Main outcomes

- The achievements of women in politics and in leadership were highlighted in the Newsletter to prove that women can be trusted as leaders
- The interviews reiterated the fact that though it is very daunting to enter politics, women who persevere can expect to succeed.
- The Newsletter reiterated calls to all political leaders to get women into leadership positions and support them so as to encourage even more of them into politics.

### Impact

- The Female Parliamentarian Newsletter created the platform for the female Parliamentarians to share their experiences and encourage other women to join them
- The Newsletter created visibility for the female Parliamentarians as agents of change and role models
- The female Parliamentarians provided useful information about the trends in women's participation in politics and leadership
- The Newsletter provided the opportunity to celebrate the achievements of women in politics and leadership.

## **Lessons learned**

- There is the need to encourage more women get into politics and decision making to speed up development in Ghana
- Female parliamentarians should be willing to share their experiences to encourage other women to get into politics
- The media tends to ignore the achievements of women. It is necessary therefore to create exclusive platforms to celebrate women and to create visibility for them as credible leaders.

## **Challenges**

### **Some of the challenges encountered during the projects are:**

- Unavailability of female Members of Parliament to grant interviews for the Female Parliamentarian Newsletter. This caused undue delay in the publication of the Newsletter
- The inability of the female Parliamentarians to honour our invitation to the ICT training workshop, compelling WOMEC to organize the training programmes for female journalists instead. This accounted for the postponement of the workshop several times.
- Limited funds prevented WOMEC from obtaining more airtime to have more in-depth analysis of the situation of women.

## Journalists attend course in IT

*By Rebecca Kwei*

**FIFTEEN** female journalists have undergone a three-day course in Information Technology to build their capacity in modern ways of communicating and processing news.

The course organised by Women, Media and Change (WOMECE), an NGO with sponsorship from the Global Fund for Women, was on the theme: "ICT and the Media".

WOMECE which was founded in 1994 aims at bringing about change in women's lack of awareness of the power of the media in shaping and pursuing their goals.

Information technology officers of the Centre for IT Professional Development (CIPD) of the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA) took the participants who were drawn from both the print and electronic media through programmes such as Microsoft Word, Excel, Power Point, Access and Blogging.

A media consultant, Mrs Charity Binka, said the course was a new approach to empower female journalists not only as ICT users, but also to be creative researchers with technology.

She said information technology had become the life blood of every business and since the world was adapting more towards an information-based society, it was important for women to acquire such skills so that they were not left behind.

An IT Officer of CIPD, Mr Albert Quarcoo, encouraged the participants to build on the skills they have acquired since Information Technology changes everyday.

The Mirror-August 28, 2010

# IT training held to equip women in media

By Roberta Dzifa Kodzitse

In view of the rate at which technology is growing in our globalized world, an Information Technology training programme has been organized for 15 women in the media to equip them with computer skills.

The workshop was put together by Women, Media and Change (WOMECE) in collaboration with Centre for Professional IT Training (CIPD) of GIMPA and funded by Global Fund for Women.

The three-day crashed programme aimed at educating the women, especially those who had not undergone any ICT training, hence knew just little about the use of the computer. Thus, they only use the computer solely for work leaving out functions like designing and Microsoft excel applications.

Mrs. Charity Binka, a media consultant, said the workshop was necessary to bring to light some exceptional functions of the computer that could help make work easier and faster.

She observed that women were mostly restrained and relegated not only in the office but in IT environment because it is considered as a complex field. She believed that the participants would have been better equipped if the workshop had lasted for a relatively longer period.



Public Agenda's Dzifa Kodzitse unravels the mystery surrounding computers

She therefore urged participants not to take the opportunity for granted but to make effective use of it when they go back to their respective offices.

Participants were taken through programmes like Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Access and Blogging.

Mr. Albert Quicoe, Instructor, CIPD, urged participants to move a step further beyond using the com-

puter for just typing and gathering stories, the typical work of a journalist, but also be interested in other fields like designing in order to enhance the beauty of their job.

According to him, IT is not as complicated as many think but rather it is an interesting sector that enhances one's knowledge not only in related fields as well as improves one's thinking capabilities.

Participants agreed that the workshop had exposed them to many things about the computer that they thought were complex and that they were better placed to use the computer with less difficulty. They were also very grateful to WOMECE and CIPD, GIMPA for their tremendous efforts in ensuring the success of the programme.

Public Agenda-August 30, 2010



# Female Journalists Receive ICT Training

By Sheilla Sackey

**FIFTEEN FEMALE** journalists drawn from public and private media organisations have ended a three-day capacity building workshop in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) at the Centre for IT Professional Development (CIPD) of GIMPA.

The workshop was organised by Women, Media and Change (WOMECE) with funding from the Global Fund for Women, a US-based non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) that advances women's human rights worldwide, as well as offers grants to women-led organisations that promote the economic security, health, safety, education and leadership of women and girls.

The objective of the intensive workshop was to teach female journalists how to effectively use the computer, so as to equip them with the skill to browse the internet to expand their knowledge base, as well as enhance their efficiency through access to various aspects of ICT.

The female journalists were given an in-depth training in Microsoft office excel, advance PowerPoint, Microsoft office Access, blogging, including complete coverage of the new interface, use of Excel functions, pivotal tables, planning and designing database, among others.

In a closing remark, a Media Consultant, Charity Binka, said ICT is important in the lives of all and that Journalists need it most to aid them in their search and dissemination of information.

Mrs. Binka observed that there is a public perception that ICT is a male

domain, but stressed that there is the need for females to be more involved in ICT so as to catch up with their male counterparts in that field.

Explaining the rationale behind the preference of female journalists, Mrs. Binka said "WOMECE believes that ICT training for female journalists would offer a new approach to empower them, not only in ICT, but also as creative users of technology, and researchers." She expressed the hope that the "journalists will not go and sleep after the programme but will use it in the daily lives."

She therefore urged them to teach others since through teaching, they would also be learning and thus would not forget what they have been taught.

Albert Quaicoo of CIPD said every occupation requires one to be ICT inclined because "ICT has become part and parcel of what we do everyday".

He observed that even though the trend for the new media has changed, ICT has made life easier for journalists on the job, adding that ICT has made access to information easier through the internet.

While urging the Government to support the media with ICT training and tools to help them in the dissemination of information, Mr. Quaicoo charged participants to build on what they have learnt to enable them to be abreast of ICT.

WOMECE is a non-governmental organization founded in 1994 to promote effective use of the media for the advancement of women, and to give women a voice through the mass media, so as to expand their participation in decision making.

Daily Guide-August 31, 2010

## ICT training for female journalists

By Georgina Quaitoo & Ama Ampadu-Nyarko

**T**HE Women, Media and Change (WOMEC), a registered local non-governmental organisation which empowers female journalists to address issues relating to gender, has organised a workshop in Information Communication Technology (ICT) for female journalists.

The three-day workshop which was supported by the Global Fund for Women, a US-based non-profit making foundation, was to expose the journalists, drawn from both the private and public media with computer software skills to enhance their use of the computer. It is also aimed at helping them to be able to browse the internet for information.

The workshop was held at the Centre for ICT Professionals Development (CIPD) at the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA).

Participants were given training in Microsoft Word, Excel,

Power Point, Access and Blogging.

Mrs. Charity Binka, founder of WOMEC, told participants to impart the skills they have acquired to their colleagues.

Mr. Albert Quacoe, the ICT facilitator, urged the participants to build on what they have learnt since ICT is very dynamic.



■ A group photograph of participants and resource persons.

The Spectator-September 1, 2010



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