

WOMECA MEDIA AND CHANGE (WOMECA)

2015

ANNUAL REPORT



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Women Media and Change (WOMECE) is grateful to the staff and students of the National Community Development Vocational Institute for collaborating with the organization to organize a Forum to empower students of the Institute with leadership skills, as part of activities to commemorate the 2015 International Women's Day.

WOMECE is also deeply indebted to all the resource persons and the media practitioners who participated in the programme which ensured a successful celebration.

Indeed, this programme ensured that WOMECE at least was able to organize one activity for the year under review, despite its funding challenges.

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OUR VISION

To bridge the gap between rhetoric and action in addressing issues on gender, and empowering women to gain public voice and visibility as well as to have control over their lives.

OUR MISSION

- To conduct research on media needs of women in Ghana.
- To carry out 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.
- To advocate for the rights of women.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2015, due to funding challenges, WOMEC could not carry out a lot of activities or projects. However, with its little resources, the organization was able to organize a forum aimed at empowering girls to have a voice and also acquire skills that would ensure that women and girls have equal access to resources and opportunities to excel and impact on society.

The establishment of WOMEC in the year 2000 was to bridge the gap between rhetoric and action in addressing issues on gender, empowering women and girls to achieve their potential and gain public visibility in all spheres of national life.

WOMEC therefore partnered the National Community Development Vocational Institute to mark the 2015 International Women's Day, which is celebrated every March 8, to empower the young women to enable them contribute to national development.

WOMEC hopes to partner other stakeholder-organizations to roll-out various activities in 2016. This is to achieve its aims in the recognition that women's issues are multi-dimensional and impacted upon by factors such as education, information, technology, health, environment, housing and land rights as well as other human rights issues.

Charity Binka (Mrs)

Executive Director

PROJECT/ACTIVITY

1:0 INTRODUCTION

WOMECE in collaboration with the National Community Development Vocational Institute organized a Forum for 50 Students of the Institute on March 8 to mark the 2015 International Women's Day.

The theme for this year was: **Empowering Women, Empowering Humanity: Picture It!** WOMECE, however, chose the sub theme: **“Empowering young women for national development”**, to provide female students with leadership and life skills by creating a platform for them to interact with some women in leadership positions.

The forum forms part of a project on leadership for young women and girls. It has three objectives which are:

- To build the capacity of young women and girls as future leaders
- To train young women and girls as advocates for gender equality
- To empower young women and girls to serve as agents of change

The strategies include:

- To organize annual leadership forums/workshops for some selected groups to interact with women in leadership positions and women entrepreneurs.
- To create an annual forum for networking between the identifiable women's group and young women to dialogue with the aim of equipping them with practical experiences and skills to develop their leadership potential.

- To conduct an annual research to identify specific needs of the various groups of young women and girls to develop their leadership potential through tailor-made programs.

2.0 OPENING



The forum was opened with a welcome address by the Principal of the National Community Development Vocational Institute, Mrs. Rachel Kpelle. She was of the view that the students are able to realize their full potential and contribute meaningfully to national development if they are given sustainable and employable skills to empower them for wealth creation, eradication

of poverty which would save them from streetism, armed robbery, prostitution and unemployment.

She appealed to the community to search through the family, community, and church/mosque for young girls who need a skill in any of the trade her institution is offering, so these children could be enrolled in the institute and be nurtured.

She said that empowerment is key to progress in the society, so women should be ready to share whatever they have with the community, family and the society as a whole.



In an address, by Mrs. Charity Binka, Executive Director of Women Media and Change (WOMEC) explained that women, young and old, hold the key to the growth of communities and must be supported to harness their full potential for personal and national development.

She stressed that, the year 2015 is significant for many reasons. It is the year that many goals set by the United Nation and related

organizations are supposed to be met. It is also the 20th year since the International Women's Day became a global celebration.

She pointed out that change should begin with the individual in order to make a difference in life. She said that once the students believe they have a dream it means they have an opportunity to work towards achieving their dreams.

She appealed to the students that, since the world is dynamic and technology revolution has brought with it information overload, the students can use it to their advantage to network and work together to improve their situation.

She gave out some tips on building confidence:

- Admit to their flaws
- Say No
- Listening
- Not to Conform
- Ask for Help
- Support others.

3.0 PRESENTATIONS



Presentations were made at the Forum by two resource persons, namely: Mrs. Ellen Sam, Principal Pharmacist at the Police Hospital, and Mrs. Ernestina Agyepong, a Nutritionist.

In her presentation on **Women's Health Issues**, Mrs. Sam stated that women all over the world are faced with lots of health issues due to lack of education, poverty, discrimination and

poor access to health care.

She said sexually transmitted diseases, teenage pregnancy/ unsafe abortions and misuse/ abuse of medicines are some of the issues facing young people and the teenager.

In her view, sexually transmitted diseases are acquired through sex and if not treated well, it could lead to complications and infertility in the future. She mentioned some of these diseases to include:

- Gonorrhoea
- Syphilis
- Genital warts
- Cancroid
- HIV
- Hepatitis B
- Pubic lice
- Chlamydia
- Human Papilloma virus is the results of sexually transmitted diseases.

She pointed out what some of the signs and symptoms of the sexually transmitted diseases are:

- Pain during urination

- Shin rashes
- Genital ulcers
- Headaches
- Fatigue
- Skin rashes
- Vaginal discharges etc.

She explained that teenage pregnancy on the other hand disrupts students' education and it makes some of these teenagers practice unsafe abortion leading to complications and death.

She said "the misuse of drugs or drug abuse can lead to serious health consequences and must be avoided.

Mrs Sam appealed to the students to abstain from sex and focus on their education and urged them not to feel shy or afraid to seek for help when they see any signs of infection.



The second presentation was delivered by a Nutritionist, Mrs. Ernestina Agyepong who spoke on "**healthy diets for a healthy life**" and said we eat to satisfy our basic needs for growth, development and maintenance of our bodies and it is very important

that we make healthy and wise choices when it comes to what we eat.

She explained that food habits are formed at some points in our lives and can be emotionally linked to our likes and dislikes and during critical stages of our lives.

She posed a series of questions by asking whether we plan what we eat or we just eat anything in sight. Whether we eat when we are hungry or whether we eat because we have seen food? What makes a healthy diet?

She said “a diet that can be described as nutritionally adequate, is formally referred to as a balanced diet. Meaning all the nutrients needed by the body are in the right proportions. These are proteins or body building blocks, carbohydrates for providing the body with fuel or energy required to perform its functions and minerals and vitamins for the protection of the body.

She mentioned the following to consider when putting together a healthy diet:

Foods of plant source such as full grain cereals (millet, sorghum, maize, brown rice)

Root tubers (yam, cocoyam)

Dark green leafy vegetables (kontomire, alee Fu, borkorborkor),

Okro, garden eggs,

Legumes/beans of all types

Fish especially salmon, mackerel,

Chicken without skin

Fruits: oranges, banana, pawpaw, mangoes, watermelon, pineapples.

She stressed on the need to avoid the following:

- The use of maggi cubes due to the high sodium content
- Fry less & less, avoid deep frying
- Remove excess oil by dabbing/blot with tissue paper
- Skim excess oil from palm and groundnut soup
- Avoid red meat as much as possible & all meat with visible fat
- Avoid processed meat e.g. sausage, bacon, corned beef, luncheon meat
- Refined carbohydrates e.g. white bread, pastries.

She appealed to the students to adopt certain healthy practices like:

- Being physically active as part of everyday life

- Being as lean as possible within the normal range of body weight
- Having adequate rest and sleep
- Do not skip meals
- Breakfast is the most important meal for the day
- Limit consumption of energy-dense foods,
- Avoid sugary foods and drinks,
- Avoid alcoholic drinks
- Limit consumption of salt
- Avoid moldy grains and legumes.

4.0 OPEN FORUM



In an open forum, students were given the opportunity to ask questions concerning some issues discussed.

Some major questions asked were:

1. How to avoid Candidiasis (white)
2. Whether it was good to pile up panties for weeks before washing them?
3. How good is it to wear panties, under wears before wearing jeans trousers or dress?
4. What can be done to reduce fat since their major ingredient of baking is margarine.
5. What should replace artificial spices
6. What is the appropriate meal for breakfast since some prefer to eat heavy meal in the morning?

The two resources persons noted that it is best to

- Dry our sponge, towels and panties in the hot sun.
- To iron panties in the absence of the sun
- To wear panties that fit properly.
- To avoid fats, salts, maggi cube, sugary foods, moldy foods, avoid alcoholic drinks.

Caution was given that in this era of power outages food poison is on the increase so foods should be kept properly, eaten very hot and clothes should be properly washed and aired in the sun to prevent diseases.

5.0 CONCLUSION

This year's International Women's Day Forum was uniquely celebrated as WOMEC was able to collaborate with the National Community Development Vocational Institute to empower the students for leadership positions by making them believe that every dream is possible to achieve. Also it served as a platform for the media to focus on the potentials of the students and also gave the students opportunity to interact with some resource persons who are involved in with various health issues faced by young people.

WOMEC as part of its strategies for the future hopes to create an annual event to equip groups of young women (i.e. female students, school dropout, female porters, child prostitutes, out-of-school girls etc.) with skills through training projects to build their leadership capacity.

The organization is expected to source for opportunity to provide business openings for young women to become independent and financially sufficient in partnership with other stakeholders.

EVALUATION / WAY FORWARD

The students gave their views and evaluated the workshop. They expressed concerns about some of the issues presented by the resource persons which touched on various subjects such as: teenage pregnancy, abortion, and the dangers associated with these negative practices. About 80% students spoke on sexually transmitted diseases. A student said “we should abstain from sex” and emphasized that to become a future leader one must focus on one’s studies.

About 20% of the students touched on hygiene.

One or two students also touched on other issues such as: drug abuse and the need to adopt healthy lifestyles.

The students made suggestions on the way forward and this included the following:

- A presentation on teenage pregnancy and healthy lifestyle should be added to their school curriculum
- Documentaries should be shown to them to learn from their mistakes as pictures speak better than speeches.
- The presentations have given them the opportunity to educate their colleagues who have dropped out of school in order to help them dream big to become future leaders.
- The presentations were inspiring

APPENDIX A - PROGRAMME



**WOMEN MEDIA AND CHANGE
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY FORUM
THEME: Empowering Women, Empowering Humanity Picture It!**

Date: 8th March, 2015.

Venue: National Community Development Vocational Institute, Madina.

TIME	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY
10am-10:15am	Registration	WOMECE
10:15am-10:20am	Prayer Introduction	WOMECE
10:20am-10:30am	Welcome address	Rachel Kpelle Principal of NCDVI
10:30am- 10:55am	Speech by WOMECE Executive Director	Mrs. Charity Binka
11:00am-11:20am	Presentation 1: Women's Health Issues	Mrs. Ellen Sam – Principal Pharmacist, Police Hospital & Malarial Focal Person
11:20am-11:30am	Discussions	WOMECE
11:30am -11:50am	Presentation 2: Healthy diets for healthy life	Mrs. Ernestina Agyepong
12:05pm-12:20pm	Open Forum	WOMECE
12:20pm-12:35pm	Wrap up and Closing Remarks	Resource Person, Principal
12:35pm-12:45pm	Vote of Thanks	Students
12:45pm-12:50pm	Closing	

APPENDIX B – PUBLISHED STORIES

Online story



Female Students Advised to Acquire Skills for the

Future as the World Celebrates International Women's Day

Students have been urged to focus on acquiring employable skills and avoid being entangled in vices such as indiscriminate sex and unsafe abortion to secure their future. Mrs. Ellen Sam, a Principal Pharmacist at the Police Hospital in Accra, who gave the advice, said the students should learn to say no to sex to avoid contracting sexually transmitted diseases, which has serious health implications.

She was addressing a forum attended by students, largely made up of females from the National Community Development Vocational Institute in Madina, Accra.

The meeting was to commemorate this year's International Women's Day, which was celebrated under the global theme: "Empowering women, empowering humanity: Picture it."

The forum was organized by Women, Media and Change (WOMECE), a non-governmental organization as part of efforts to empower girls to acquire skills to enable them assume leadership positions in society.

Mrs. Sam also urged the students to avoid unhealthy practices such as skin bleaching and rather concentrate on promoting their well-being by taking very good care of their bodies and ensuring personal hygiene.

Mrs. Ernestina Agyepong, a Nutritionist, who spoke on "healthy diets for healthy life", said people are what they eat and therefore noted that it is important that everyone makes wise choices in relation to what they take in.

She said it is important to cut down on fatty and fried foods and avoid very sugary drinks and foods.

Mrs. Rachel Kpelle, the head of the National Community Development Vocational Institute, said the institute has over the years impacted on the lives of the students by equipping them with skill to help them become useful citizens.

She touched on the theme for the International Women's Day and questioned how women can be empowered if they do not have access to resources to enable them contribute to the development of society.

Mrs. Charity Binka, Executive Director of WOMEC, said the organization has been working with women such as female Members of Parliament to make women visible and give them a voice.

She mentioned various international conferences held on women such as the ones organized in Mexico and Beijing and also made reference to the MDG 3 and said despite all these moves to address issues related to women, a lot of countries are still behind in their commitments to empower women.

She urged the students to make a change in their lives by dreaming big and holding onto their vision.

By Eunice Menka

<http://womec.org/photo-gallery/6>

Print article

WOMECC Holds Forum for Young Women

By Norman Cooper

Women, Media and Change (WOMECC), a non-governmental organisation, has held a day's forum for 60 young women of the National Community Development Vocational Training Institute in Accra as part of this year's International Women's Day Celebration.

Held under the theme: Empowering Women, Empowering Humanity. Picture at the day, which falls on March 8

every year, is in recognition of the contribution of women in all spheres of life around the world.

A Principal Pharmacist at the Pui To Hospital, Superintendent (Mrs) Ellen Sam, who spoke on the topic 'Women's Health Issues,' took the young women through the various aspects on

Women's Health, especially teenage pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and the need to maintain a healthy body.

Mrs Ernestina Agyepong, a nutri-

tionist, spoke on the topic, 'Healthy diet for healthy life' and urged the young ladies who were pursuing various vocational skills for a healthy life than the craves for imported and fast food.

She educated them on balanced diet saying what you eat determine your health.

Mrs. Charity Binka, Executive Director of (WOMECC), in an address, admonished the participants to focus on

their studies at the institute and continue to upgrade themselves in order to realise their full potentials.

She said WOMECC had decided to spend the day with them as part of its outreach programme to empower young women to be self-confident in the global challenges where women were being marginalised.

Mrs. Binka praised the young ladies for their determination to pursue a vocation that would make them self-dependent.



APENDIX C – BUDGET

BUDGET FOR PROJECT ON LEADERSHIP FOR YOUNG WOMEN AT NATIONAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT VOCATIONAL INSTITUTE.

Venue: CONFERENCE, HALL DATE: MARCH 8, 2015. TIME: 10AM

ITEMS	DESCRIPTION /QTY	UNIT COST GH	SUB-TOTAL GH	TOTAL GH
<u>LOGISTICS</u>				
BANNER		1	110	
PULL UP		1	260	
STATIONERY		1	1	
P.A.SYSTEM			150	
PHONE CARDS			10	
				531
<u>PEOPLE</u>				
RESOURCE	2	100	200	

PERSONS				
MEDIA (GTV CREW)	3	100	300	
CAMERA MAN	1	100	100	
MEDIA (PRINT)	1	100	100	
WOMEK STAFF	5	40	200	
CLARA	1	195	195	
EMMANUELLA	1	40	40	
				1,135
<u>REFRESHMENT</u>				
SNACKS	MEAT PIE	100	100	
DRINKS	CAN & BOTTLES	15	105	
WATER	SATCHET & BOTTLES		21.9	
				226.9
GRAND TOTAL				
1,892.9				