

# GHANA NATIONAL EDUCATION CAMPAIGN COALITION-GNECC

## GLOBAL ACTION WEEK 2011

### CONCEPT NOTE

The Ghana National Education Campaign Coalition is a network of Civil Society Organizations in Ghana that is working to promote access to Free Quality Universal Basic Education in Ghana. With a membership of about 200 nationwide, the coalition works to influence policies, practices and resources in favour of quality education in Ghana.

One of the coalition's major annual activities is the celebration of the Global Action Week Celebration (GAW) on education. The GAW is an initiative of the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) of which GNECC is a member. The celebration networks organizations worldwide to advocate for quality and equal education for all. While we understand it is the duty of governments to ensure that everyone has an education, it is our duty to keep reminding governments not only of their commitments but also of their obligations towards ensuring education for all. GNECC is the lead agency organizing GAW 2011 in Ghana which will take place from the **2nd -8th May, 2011**.

Ghana knows well the effect women's education has on the life of the family and community. This is because women with formal education are much more likely to use reliable family planning methods, delay marriage and childbearing, and have fewer and healthier babies than women with no formal education. It is estimated that one year of female schooling reduces fertility by 10 percent. Also, girls' education yields some of the highest returns of all development investments, yielding both private and social benefits that accrue to individuals, families, and society at large. Indeed, it is widely acknowledged that investing in girls' education is a strategy that will fulfil the rights of all children to a quality education and propel all other development goals.

There are several other benefits associated with girls' education, which include the reduction of child and maternal mortality, improvement of child nutrition and health, enhancement of women's domestic role and their political participation, improvement of the economic productivity and growth, and protection of girls from, abuse and exploitation as well as diseases such as HIV and AIDS. Educating the girls and women has been proven to increase family income while increasing productivity for employers and thereby yielding benefits for the community and the society.

Literacy increases women's participation in both private and public spheres, in household decision-making, community affairs and as active citizens in national life. Adult literacy

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Call the GNECC Secretariat on 0302 521 650/1 or 027 200 1005 for further clarification.

programmes have a dramatic impact on women's self-esteem, empowering them to unlock economic, social, cultural and political resources. A recent estimate suggests that improvements in women's education explained half of the reduction in child deaths between 1990 and 2009.-EFA Global Monitoring report 2006.

In Ghana, GAW 2011 will take place from May 2nd to 8<sup>th</sup> under the theme "**Women and Girls Education; It's a Right, Make it work.**" This is derived from the Global theme "**Women and Girls Education**". This year's GAW aims, *inter-alia*, to pressurize government to place make policies that have been endorsed by Government in the interest of making their issues heard implemented and implemented to the later.

### How to get more girls into school

Across the world, 69 million children do not go to primary school. 54% are girls. Once in school, girls are faced with numerous challenges and are more likely than boys to stop attending before they complete primary education. Girls also have significantly less chance of progressing to secondary school in many parts of the world. Of the 759 million adults lacking literacy skills, two-thirds are women – a share that has actually increased slightly over the last decade. Poor and marginalised women and girls are disproportionately affected, with factors such ethnicity, disability and location dramatically worsening a girl's chance of entering and completing school. These facts highlight a scandalous denial of human rights. A wide range of factors prevent girls from accessing education and threaten their continued participation in school. Boys face many similar challenges unfortunately however, girls are especially vulnerable. The research outlined above provides a compelling case for prioritizing girls' education when considering the overall national economic and social benefits. However, in order to be effective, the decision to educate girls has to be taken at the level of individual families and this is more challenging to communicate and operationalise.

**Allow young mothers to come back to school.** Girls who become pregnant are often prevented from going back to school after the birth of their child. There is need to enforce policy implementation to re-admit girls, alongside challenging the stigma and associated bullying which constitute barriers that prevent girls from going back to school.

**Protect from abuse in school.** Schools are meant to be safe havens for children. This is not always the case. Schools can be a site of abuse and violence and often this is sexual. If a school is seen to be a site of physical and/or sexual violence parents will be rather reluctant to send their children in there, and the children on the other hand will be reluctant to attend.

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**Invest enough in literacy.** Good quality literacy programmes are inexpensive. Raising the current 1% budgetary allocation to adult literacy to a minimum of 3% of the education budget will go a long way to break the bondage of illiteracy and its attendant ill on this country.

It is important to provide a working national policy framework. This is because local initiatives to get girls into school work best when they have the backing a national policy that recognizes the challenges that girls face in getting into and staying in school.”.

It is anticipated that the GAW activities will raise public awareness on issues of women and girls education in Ghana and will ultimately aid GNECC’s advocacy efforts in attaining millennium goals 2, 3, 4 and 5.

- Achieve Universal Primary Education.
- Promote gender equality and empower women.
- Reduce child mortality.
- Improve maternal health

**SLOGAN: IT’S A RIGHT, MAKE IT RIGHT! EDUCATION FOR GIRLS AND WOMEN NOW!**

**ACTIVITIES:** Planned activities for GAW 2011 will include a Route Match, radio and TV discussions, a documentary and durbars. The aim will be to educate the public about issues concerning equal rights of women and girls to and in education and create a public debate on the implementation and enforcement of current related legislations. It is anticipated that this will help get all on board to make the right of girls and women to education happen.

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