

REPORT OF UNDP
“**NKITAHDIE**”
**POLICY
DIALOGUE**

SERIES 2016

Gender Equality and Women’s Participation in
Politics and Political Processes in Ghana:
The Role of Political Parties

Swiss Spirit Hotel & Suites Alisa, Accra
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Accra Ghana

UNDP Ghana Democratic Governance Cluster under the Joint Party Support and Strengthening Project (JPASS) brought together the five leading political parties in Ghana; CPP, NDC, NPP PNC and PPP to deliberate and discuss on the role of political parties in promoting gender equality and women participation in politics in Ghana.

Nkitahodie in Twi Language connotes interaction and engagement. Thus, Nkitahodie Policy Dialogue Series is an interactive forum created by UNDP Ghana to provide platform and avenue for policy makers, politicians, civil society, researchers and public to interact and find solutions to key governance issues in Ghana.

Disclaimer

The analysis and policy recommendations in this publication do not necessarily represent those of the United Nations, including UNDP, or the UN Member States.

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*Series Editor: Chika Charles Aniekwe and
Charlotte Naa Odey Arday*

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Executive Summary

The Joint Party Strengthening and Support (J-PASS) is a UNDP project anchored within five political parties¹ and the Electoral Commission of Ghana, wherein UNDP provides technical and financial support. The project's aims are: strengthening the internal democracy of the political parties; developing the political parties' capacities to become gender sensitive and inclusive; building trust in election results; as well as increasing the participation of women and youth in decision making processes in political party democracy. The project also aimed to promote increased public confidence and participation in Ghana's 2016 elections. The J-PASS project largely aligns with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and UAP 2012-2016.

The "Nkitahodie"² Policy Dialogue on Gender, titled "Gender Equality and Women's Participation in Politics and Political Processes in Ghana: The Role of Political Parties," forms part of UNDP's J-PASS project, which aims to deconstruct the role of political parties in promoting gender equal political participation, while also highlighting the political parties' roles in supporting women's inclusion and participation in political processes at all levels. The first edition of the "Nkitahodie" Policy Dialogue series was organized in partnership with the Gender Center for Empowering Development (GenCED) and SHEROES Foundation, and took place on October 20, 2016 at the Swiss Spirit Hotel & Suites Alisa, Accra. Over 150 participants attended, and these were

primarily female parliamentary candidates of the five political parties under the J-PASS project: The Convention's People Party (CPP), National Democratic Congress (NDC), People's National Convention (PNC), New Patriotic Party (NPP), and the Progressive Peoples' Party (PPP). Other participants were from civil society organizations (CSOs), academia, global embassies and high commissions, development partners and government institutions, including the Department of Gender.

"Nkitahodie" is a word in the Twi language word which connotes interaction and engagement.

The Dialogue consisted of two main sessions. Session one comprised a discussion on political parties as vehicles for women's political participation and leadership, while session two provided an opportunity to reflect on the practical challenges of women's participation in politics, and it included an open forum. Panelists from Nigeria, Kenya, Senegal, Liberia, and Ghana shared their experiences as women and men on the political leadership front.

1: The criteria for selecting parties were if the parties had representation in parliament and if at the last general elections, the parties crossed a minimum threshold in terms of number of people who voted for it.

2: "Nkitahodie" is a word in the Twi language word which connotes interaction and engagement.

The objectives of the “Nkitahodie” Policy Dialogue were:

1. To identify the constraints of gender equality, equal participation, and leadership in political processes in Ghana.
2. To offer an opportunity to political parties, practitioners, and advocates to interact and begin a process of building common groups for improving gender balance in Ghana’s politics.

The objectives were realized as the participants of the open forum pointed out obstacles which hinder women’s participation and leadership in political processes in Ghana. The methodology of the Dialogue offered a rare opportunity for interaction among all stakeholders’ present. The interactive nature of the Policy Dialogue re-enforced the point

that achieving gender parity is a shared responsibility.

The first “Nkitahodie” Policy Dialogue on gender largely achieved its objectives, as will be shown in this report. It is hoped that the political parties will use this agency in government to strive towards eliminating the gap that exists between men’s and women’s participation and representation in politics and government in Ghana, and that this can be achieved by learning from other country’s shared examples.

Participants recommended the following:

- Continual education of women and the political parties, and self-development for building the capacity of women;





1.0

Introduction and Context

Ghana is a country in West Africa with an estimated population of 28,595,023 as of April 2017.³ Ghana has made economic and democratic progress over the last two decades. The 2016 UNDP Human Development index ranks Ghana as 139 out of 187 countries and territories, with a Human Development Index value of 0.579.⁴

Ghana's fourth republican democratic dispensation spans over 25 years. It has gained international recognition with its consistent peaceful elections and transfer of power. Notwithstanding the political and democratic progress, few women participate effectively, and women are generally less represented in Ghana's political structures, decision making processes, and positions. Although the 1992 Constitution guarantees equal political, economic, and social rights to all citizens irrespective of gender, politics in Ghana is dominated by men, with very minimal participation by women. Such minimal participation by women is caused by cultural, religious, and traditional practices, and these are unfortunately overlooked by government institutions as well as political parties.

In 2016, Ghana was awarded the African Gender Award by the Africa Union and UNECA in recognition of its efforts in promoting gender equality, and President John Mahama 'noted progress towards women's equitable representation in government' as one of the

- A concerted effort by women to push for the passage of the Affirmative Action Law;
- The formation of a non-partisan coalition of women in various political parties to champion the construction and implementation of a gender policy for all parties;
- Female politicians must utilize their asset of being the majority of the population and focus on electing women into leadership positions;
- The immediate adoption and implementation of a quota system by all political parties;
- NGOs to provide financial and other relevant support to help women get into political leadership.

3 : <http://countrymeters.info/en/Ghana> [Accessed: April 15, 2017]

4 : <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/GHA> [Accessed: April 15, 2017]

achievements.⁵ Indeed, Ghana has made significant progress through its electoral system, and 'recent efforts appointing women in the Executive have been an important step forward. Yet Ghana still lags far behind other countries on the continent in terms of the level of representation of women in the Legislature, with women forming only 13.5% of MPs.'⁶ Given that women and girls make up more than 50.9% of the total population, they are clearly underrepresented at the highest level and there are still significant strides needed for this gap to be closed. As such Ghana falls short, in this respect, of the expectations placed upon it as Africa's leading example of democratic rule. Comparing this with Rwanda, for example, the World Bank found that in 2016 64% of seats were held by women in national parliaments, the highest number in the world.⁷ In the same year Senegal, 43% of seats were held by women in national parliaments.⁸

Of the top 20 countries with the highest percentage of women in national parliaments, six are African countries, including South Africa (41%), Namibia (41%), Mozambique (40%), and Ethiopia (39%) respectively.⁹

Studies have shown that 'experience elsewhere shows that a multifaceted approach and strong political commitment

is required to address these challenges'.¹⁰ Rwanda, for example, enshrined within its 2003 constitution the stipulation that women should occupy 30% of all governmental "decision-making bodies".¹¹ Senegal similarly adopted a gender parity law in 2010, resulting in the number of women parliamentarians almost doubling.¹² The ruling party of Ghana, the New Patriotic Party (NPP) recently committed to a more representative government, pledging in its 2016 manifesto to achieve the 'appointment of women to at least 30% of available public office positions'.¹³ However, recent appointments have not matched those promises as only 19.09% of appointed executives and officials are women.

1.1 About the J-PASS Project

The UNDP's J-PASS project was designed to address some of the identified issues that limit women's effective participation and representation in politics in Ghana.¹⁴ J-PASS was proposed by and is anchored within five political parties¹⁵ and the Electoral Commission of Ghana, wherein UNDP provides technical and financial support. J-PASS was aimed at promoting increased public confidence and participation in the 2016 elections, and more generally to increase trust in election results, and the participation of women and youth in decision making

5 : Gaere (2016), Development of Political Party Policies For Gender And Inclusion In The Republic Of Ghana

6 : Ibid

7 : http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SG.GEN.PARL.ZS?page=5&year_high_desc=true

8 : Ibid

9 : Ibid

10 : Gaere (2016), Development of Political Party Policies for Gender and Inclusion in The Republic of Ghana

11 : <https://www.opendemocracy.net/westminster/sarah-jane-cooper-knock/gender-politics-and-parliament-in-rwanda>

12 : <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2012/7/following-elections-proportion-of-senegal-s-female-parliamentarians-almost-doubles>

13 : <http://newpatrioticparty.org/docs/2016-manifesto-full.pdf>

14 : These issues include: institutionalised masculinity in governmental and state institutions, the lack of commitment in the form of positive affirmative action from government, the lack of commitment towards gender equality from political parties, and the lack of understanding of gender issues by political parties and voters.

15 : The criteria for the selection of the parties were if the parties had representation in parliament and if at the last general elections, these parties crossed a certain minimum threshold in terms of number of people who voted for them.

**The “Nkitahodie”
Policy Dialogue
is one of the
principal
activities under
J-PASS project.**

processes in political party democracy. The main pillars of the J-PASS project are: (i) strengthening internal democracy, (ii) women & youth empowerment, and (iii) election results monitoring.

The J-PASS programme also fits within the Ghana UNDAF-UAP’s implementation strategy — which advocates for programme delivery and support to government agencies and key institutions through “capacity development”. Most importantly, the “Nkitahodie” Policy Dialogue on Gender hoped to contribute to achieving UNDP’s fifth proposed outcome of “*a fast progress in achieving development issues via a reduction in gender inequality and promoting women’s empowerment*”. Through this Dialogue, the J-PASS project also recognizes and complements the central role of political parties in promoting gender equal political participation, and the role parties can play in supporting women’s inclusion and participation in political processes at all levels.

The “Nkitahodie” Policy Dialogue is one of the principal activities under J-PASS project. The first edition on gender was organized in collaboration with the Gender Center for Empowering Development (GenCED) and SHEROES Foundation. GenCED is an independent, not-for-profit research and advocacy organization which shares UNDP’s goal of reducing gender inequality and promoting women’s empowerment and inclusion. GenCED’s work primarily seeks to help increase women’s participation in decision-making and governance processes while aiming to carry out further research on women’s experiences and participation in policy making to influence the level of advocacy women need to increase their understanding of Ghana’s democratic process. The SHEROES Foundation is a Ghanaian-



based international non-profit organization committed to supporting and promoting women in all facets of life.

1.2 Dialogue Objectives

The objectives of the Dialogue were:

1. To identify the constraints of gender equality, equal participation, and leadership in political processes in Ghana.
2. To offer an opportunity to political parties, practitioners, and advocates to interact and begin a process of building common groups for improving gender balance in Ghana's politics.

1.3 Expected Outcomes

The "Nkitahodie" Policy Dialogue expected that the discussions will unearth the constraints to gender equality, and effective participation and representation of women

in leadership and political processes. The Policy Dialogue also expected that the platform created will offer an opportunity to political parties, practitioners, and advocates to interact and begin a process of building a common ground on improving gender balance in Ghana's politics.

2.0

Methodology, Summary of Presentations, and Key Issues

2.1 Methodology

The "Nkitahodie" Policy Dialogue employed a mixture of presentations, moderated panel discussions, and open fora for questions and answers. Using dialogue, participants could relate to and appreciate the need for political party involvement in championing women's

political leadership participation. The subject of unequal participation and representation of women in politics and governance has been broached by many institutions, but is yet to receive the required national attention and prompt action. It was also clear that the pragmatic nature of the Dialogue enlightened the participants, particularly female parliamentary candidates, by clarifying the roles and responsibilities of the political parties and briefing the candidates on what difficulties to expect in their political journey. It created an avenue for the sharing of information and best practices, rather than imposing methods for achieving gender parity in politics.

2.2 Opening Remarks

In the opening remarks, Mr. Mulugeta Abebe, the Deputy Country Director Operations, UNDP-Ghana thanked the participants for attending. He identified the state of women's political participation across Africa,

highlighting countries that have succeeded in increasing women's participation as well as the means and strategies adopted to achieve success. Referring to other countries in the African, he observed how legislation boosted women's political participation and representation in their respective countries. He emphasized that though Ghana has strong democratic credentials in Africa, it also has a poor record of women's political participation. He recommended that Ghana must strive to pursue and adopt, where practicable, the strategies of countries with better records. He also noted that Ghana is bound by the signing and ratification of treaties and conventions at the regional and international levels to contribute to women's effective participation in politics and political processes.

2.3 Panel Discussions

There were two panel discussions, each of which was followed by an open forum. This forum facilitated discussions, interactions,



and exchanges among the panellists. The open session also allowed the participants to ask questions, make recommendations, and comment on issues.

2.3.1 Panel Discussion 1: Political Parties as Vehicles for Women's Political Participation and Leadership

The first panel discussion interrogated the topic; *“Political Parties as Vehicles for Women's Political Participation and Leadership”*. The panellists included: Madame Fatou Diop (President of the National Gender Parity Observatory in Dakar, Senegal), Dr Ekuru Aukot (Founder, Thirdway Alliance, Kenya), and Mrs. Hamida Harrison (Convener of the Women's Manifesto, Ghana).

The common threads in the panellists' presentations were as follows:

- **Political campaigns:**
Political parties should ensure that interests of women are considered during campaigns, including offering support that increases the visibility of women candidates.
- **Strong political will:**
Political parties must demonstrate strong political will at that party and governmental levels by ensuring that women are adequately represented in party leadership as well as in government. The political will should be extended to:
 - Creating and adhering to the appropriate legal environment, particularly the sub regional, regional, and international instruments on gender equality;
 - Domestication and implementation of all ratified instruments; and
 - Removal of de facto discrimination against women.

Referring to other countries in the African, he observed how legislation boosted women's political participation and representation in their respective countries.

- **Consensus building, networking and advocacy:**
Multiparty consensus building and interparty dialogue amongst female politicians is critical for ensuring effective participation and representation in politics.
- **Women need to set the agenda and be visionaries:**
There is the need for women to strategize to avoid being cast as “choreography politicians”, who are only good for singing, dancing, and mobilizing votes for male politicians. The women's wings of political parties need to be strategically placed to engage with government and the upper echelons of political parties.
- **Role of legislation:**
The panellists asserted that the framing of electoral laws is critical to promoting

These veterans shared practical insight on their different political trajectories, including the challenges they faced.

women's effective political participation and representation. For example, Madame Fatou Diop noted that the framing of the Senegalese Electoral Law aided the balancing of gender in political parties and government in Senegal. Madame Diop equally noted that legislating Affirmative Action and quota systems has been found to be the best way of increasing the number of women in political decision making positions — at least at the initial stages.

- ***Role of CSOs:***

Panellists also recognized that CSOs can contribute to promoting women's effective political participation and representation through the provision of capacity building, such as training and mentoring for prospective female political aspirants. CSOs can also engage in advocacy, lobbying, and awareness-raising on the issues of women's inclusion and equality to generate public interest and debate.

2.3.2 Panel Discussion 2: Practical Challenges of Women's Participation in Politics

The second panel reflected on the practical challenges of women's participation in politics. The panellists were mostly veteran female politicians from parties in Ghana including: Hon. Sherry Aryeetey (Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development); Hon. Acarous M. Gray (Member, House of Representatives, Liberia); Hon. Dame Maureen Tamuno (House of Representatives Candidate, Nigeria); Hon. Munah Pelham – Youngblood (MP Montserrado County, Liberia); and Ms Iris- Natalie Tagoe (CPP Central Committee Member). These veterans shared practical insight on their different political trajectories, including the challenges they faced. They



also provided practical recommendations for overcoming some of those challenges based on their experience.

Some of the challenges/barriers they identified included: the deeply patriarchal nature of African politics, and its negative effect on women's political involvement; the lack of a quota system to correct historical inequalities that exist in the political participation and representation of women in Ghana; the lack of or inadequate knowledge and skills of some women; the stereotyping of female politicians, libellous press coverage of female politicians; inadequate commitment by political parties to the cause of gender parity; and the lack of support for female aspirants and candidates.

The panellists made the following recommendations:

- Constitutional reform and amendments to address inequalities through legislating and adopting Affirmative Action/ a quota system to increase women's representation in political decision making positions. This may include political system review;
- The support of CSOs for female politicians through training, mentoring, and financial means. This might include creating funds to support prospective female candidates;
- Professional development by the female politicians; acquiring the necessary knowledge and skills needed for politics. Skills in mobilization, fundraising, lobbying and advocacy. The women's wing of political parties and CSOs could help greatly by facilitating the processes;
- Local level advocacy, especially in culturally-sensitize communities, in order to change

socio-cultural perceptions and constraints to embrace women’s participation.

2.4 Assessment of the Discourse against the Objectives and Expected Outcomes

The “Nkitahodie” Policy Dialogue delivered on its objectives and anticipated outcomes. The presentative and discursive approach made it interactive and inclusive, and created a platform and positive space for panellists as well as the participants to share their experiences from different levels of political party engagement. As most of the participants were female parliamentary candidates for their respective parties, experiences shared by panellists from Senegal, Kenya, Nigeria, and Liberia acted as confidence boost for many female parliamentary candidates.

The open forum session was also an avenue for participants to contribute to this

discussion. Participants sought clarification on legal, practical, and advocacy implications. The shared experiences of the panellists indicated that political parties play a key role in integrating women in political processes and in ensuring their participation and leadership in decision making.

Reflecting on the practical challenges of women’s participation in politics, participants demonstrated an understanding of the effects of entrenched gender roles¹⁶ on women’s effective participation and representation in politics. They understood that women must be integrated in political party leadership beyond the role of organizers/ mobilizers of other women. Participants understood that they needed to do more to engage community and political gatekeepers to ensure cultural and religious positive shifts. These are strong grounds for solidifying the gender equality/equity concept. The Dialogue also highlighted the need for Ghana to ensure



16 : Women’s triple gender roles – productive, reproductive and community gender roles – and how these, if not managed well, become obstacles/hindering forces on women’s effective political participation and representation

full domestication and implementation of ratified normative instruments on gender.

2.5 Key issues and Lessons Learnt

- Mobilization of women by women is crucial;
- Socio-cultural constraints are still embedded in parts of Ghana;
- Party efforts to encourage increased participation of women must improve;
- Political parties are important and primary stakeholders that must be engaged to improve women participation;
- Multi-party advocacy and coalition building must be encouraged amongst women in different political affiliations;
- Women must engage in collective advocacy and strategize as women;
- Political parties must adopt strategies/policies to promote effective female participation. Some of these strategies should be capacity building including: education, training, and mentorship. Other strategies are economic empowerment, equitable role sharing, and amendment of political party constitutions.
- All political parties must rally and support the Affirmative Action bill for passage into law;
- Ghana should learn by example from Rwanda and other countries that have practised quota system. A national policy backing an affirmative action is not an escape route for women. Quota systems must be adopted to close the discriminating gap created against women

in political participation and representation. It was observed that sitting women parliamentarians lost their seats due to the absence of political party quota;

- Education and capacity building for prospective female candidates.

3.0

Conclusion

Africa's, and more particularly Ghana's, cultural and traditional systems, which project male superiority, assign strict gender roles, and have strong religious belief systems are undoubtedly the primary instigators of discrimination against women in the political arena. Women are widely regarded as unfit to run political positions. Political parties are encouraged to tackle the root causes of gender inequality in politics and ensure that women are included in activities and programmes and take leadership positions.

The Dialogue was unique in that it provided an avenue for an interactive way of identifying and helping resolve the political gender gap. The key problems identified are: the lack of policy implementation by political parties coupled with the deep-seated patriarchal systems, and stereotyped gender roles.

Annexes

Annex 1: Concept Note

“Nkitahodie” Dialogue: Gender Policy Dialogue Gender Equality and Women’s Participation in Politics and Political Processes in Ghana: The Role of Political Parties

I. Introduction

The political system and democracy of Ghana have served as examples of a strong democracy in Africa, especially the West African sub-region, since Ghana transformed its politics from military to democratic rule in 1992. Ghana has consistently conducted and transferred power peacefully without resorting to conflict or violence, and has gained respect from international and regional actors, states, and institutions. Despite its strong democratic showing, women’s views are not always taken into consideration in planning and policy implementation. The participation of women in public affairs has been minimal, hindered by cultural and traditional practices and overlooked by government institutions and political parties.

At the national level, the 1992 Constitution of Ghana guarantees equal political, economic, and social rights to all citizens irrespective of gender. Ghana is also a signatory to several international and regional instruments that support and promote gender equality, and women’s full participation in politics. Ghana has signed and ratified internal frameworks and instruments including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD),

and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Ghana adopted the Beijing Platform for Action and, most recently, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, while serving as a champion country.

At the continental level, Ghana is a signatory to the African Charter on Democracy Elections and Governance, and has ratified the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, which strongly supports and advocates for the political, social, and economic rights of women in Africa. In 2015, the African Union (AU) launched [Agenda 2063](#) to ensure that women occupy 50% of elected public offices and half of the managerial positions in both public and private sector by the year 2063. The Agenda is a vision anchored on the commitments of AU Member States and in line with the AU instruments like the MAPUTO Protocol, the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights and on the Rights of Women, and the Charter on Popular Participation. The Agenda has been accepted by all the AU Member States as a comprehensive road map for African development. Ghana is one of the democratic voices at the continental level.

Despite these commitments and the strong democratic standing of Ghana in Africa, and particularly in West Africa, Ghana’s politics



have largely been a contest in masculinity. While women play an important role in campaigning and mobilising votes, they are rarely considered for high level political positions. Little consideration is given to women’s participation in political leadership and decision making. Political parties consider ethnic, religion, and regional background in the selection of nominees, but not gender. Available evidence from the previous elections indicates that women’s participation as candidates in elections in Ghana is very low. In 2008, there were 133 females out of 1332 parliamentary candidates. The same deficit and unequal representation occurred in the 2012 election.

Ghana is currently ranked 150 out of 185 in the [Inter-Parliamentary Union](#) ranking on women’s representation in parliament across the world. Out of 275 Members of Parliament

“While women play an important role in campaigning and mobilising votes, they are rarely considered for high level political positions.”

only 30 are women, representing a marginal 10.9% of the total number of Members of Parliament. In 2012, women parliamentarians constituted merely 10.1% of the members of parliament while in 2008, it was around 10.7%. The situation at the local and district levels is like the national outlook. Only 7% of women got elected into the local assemblies during the 2010 elections, a reduction from 10.10% in 2006. At the executive level, only 6 out of 18 Cabinet Ministers are women and only 18 out of 216 district Assembly Chief Executives are women. This does not bode well for Ghana's democratic standing in the committee of nations, and therefore makes gender representation an important issue in Ghana.

The persistent lack of attention to gender equality and women's participation in political leadership is largely due to institutionalized socio-cultural beliefs and the prevalent masculine nature of politics in Ghana. Women are considered as social agents, while men are viewed as political change actors¹⁷.

Preparations for the 2016 elections focused attention on electoral violence, particularly

prevention of gender based violence. For example, there were various programmatic interventions on mobilisation of women against electoral violence, providing platforms for women to report cases of electoral violence, and training of female police workers to carry out their duties and on the Election Day. While this is noteworthy, greater attention should be paid to increasing awareness of the need for more female representation

II. Rationale for Focusing on Political Parties

Over the past two decades there has been growing recognition of the role and centrality of political parties to the achievement of gender parity in politics and decision making. Gender advocates, institutions, and policy makers are increasingly calling for engagement with political parties as a way of leading a demand-based advocacy to gender equal participation and leadership in politics. Frameworks such as the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing

“The persistent lack of attention to gender equality and women's participation in political leadership is largely due to institutionalized socio-cultural beliefs and the prevalent masculine nature of politics in Ghana.”

17: The low participation of women in politics and decision making processes in Ghana can be summed up to be because of institutionalised masculinity in governmental and state institutions, lack of commitment in the form of positive affirmative action from government, lack of commitment towards gender equality from political parties, and lack of understanding of gender issues by political parties and general voters.

Declaration and Platform for Action, and the SDGs as well as other instruments on civil and political rights have firmly articulated the commitments of political parties. The Maputo Protocol specifically encouraged African States to take specific positive action to promote participative governance and the equal participation of women in the political life of their countries through affirmative action, enabling national legislation, and other measures to ensure that women participate without discrimination in elections, that women are represented equally with men in all electoral processes, and that they are equal partners with men at all levels of development and implementation of State policies and development programmes.¹⁸

In December 2015, the AU convened a High-Level Dialogue on Democracy, Human Rights and Governance with the theme “Women’s Equal Participation and Leadership in Political Parties in Africa”. At this Dialogue, political parties were identified as the main vehicles for the acceleration of women’s participation and leadership in politics and governance. As the institutions, responsible for preparing individuals for government positions and offices, political parties are primarily mandated to seek political offices and become the foundation for the effective participation of women at every level of government. A recent study commissioned by the UNDP Joint Party Support and Strengthening Project (J-PASS) on Gender Policies within political parties in Ghana also found that political parties give little attention to gender, and most of the parties do not have existing gender policies. The parties lacked understanding of their role in



promoting women’s participation in politics, lacked the capacity to understand their commitments to promoting women’s equal participation in politics, and there was a sense of ownership by male political elites.

The proposed Dialogue on gender equal participation and leadership in politics and electoral processes in Ghana forms part of the “Nkitahodie”¹⁹ Dialogue series. It seeks to bring gender activists, practitioners, academics, political parties, and policy makers together to examine and address the state of gender equal participation and leadership in politics and electoral processes in Ghana. The Dialogue aims to deconstruct the role of political parties in promoting gender equal political participation, and the role political parties can play in supporting women’s inclusion and participation in political processes at all levels.

18 : Protocol to The African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa

19 : “Nkitahodie” is a Twi word which connotes interaction and engagement. The Gender Dialogue aims at providing space for fruitful interactions among all stakeholders on gender equality and women’s participation in political processes in Ghana.

III. Objectives

The Dialogue will provide a space for honest and critical reflection on the role of political parties in promoting gender equal participation in politics and political processes. The Dialogue seeks to address the following critical issues:

- What is the state of women's representation in politics and political processes in Ghana?
- What are the normative and institutional framework hurdles, including the effects of various electoral laws and political systems, on gender and women's participation in politics?
- What are the political and economic constraints, especially political financing and economic imbalance, on women's political participation?
- What are the role of political parties in promoting women's participation and gender equality in political processes?
- What comparable lessons can Ghana learn from other African countries?

IV. Speakers and Moderator

The main speakers are:

1. Dr. Ekuru Aukot; Founder— Thirdway Alliance, Kenya; Former Chair of Selection Panel, Independent Electoral & Boundaries Commission (IEBC), Kenya.
2. Madame Fatou Diop; President, National Gender Parity Observatory, Senegal.
3. Mrs. Hamida Harrison, Convener of the Women's Manifesto, Ghana.

4. Dr. Rose Mensah-Kutin; Executive Director, Abantu for Development – Moderator

V. Expected Outcomes

One of the main expected outcomes from the Dialogue will be a thorough analysis and account of the constraints to gender equal participation and leadership in political processes in Ghana. It will also offer an opportunity for political parties, practitioners, and advocates to interact and begin a process of building common ground on improving gender equality in Ghanaian politics. Secondly, a comprehensive report that will capture analytical details of the discussions will be prepared and circulated as a knowledge product from the dialogue.

VI. Methodology for the Dialogue

The Dialogue will consist of two main sessions and an open session. The first two main sessions will have presentations by key panellists, followed by a question and answer session to generate interaction and exchange between the panellists and participants. The third session will be an open session where participants are allowed to make comments and provide recommendations.

Annex 2: Programme

UNDP “Nkitahodie” Gender Dialogue

Topic: Gender Equality and Women’s Participation in Politics and Political Processes in Ghana: The Role of Political Parties

Accra-Ghana: October 20, 2016

Time	Activity	Responsible Party
9:00 – 10:00	Arrival and Registration	All Participants
10:00 – 10:10	Welcome Remarks	Dominic Sam Country Director UNDP Ghana
10:10 – 10:15	Session One: Introduction of the issue: Political Parties as Vehicles for Women’s Political Participation and Leadership	Moderator Dr. Rose Mensah-Kutin Executive Director, ABANTU for Development Accra, Ghana
10:15 – 11:00	Intervention by the Key Speakers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Ekuru Aukot Founder - Thirdway Alliance, Kenya; Former Chair of Selection Panel, Independent Electoral & Boundaries Commission (IEBC), Kenya Madame Fatou Diop President, National Gender Parity Observatory, Dakar, Senegal Mrs. Hamida Harrison Convener of the Women’s Manifesto, Accra, Ghana
11:00 – 11:30	Coffee Break	All Participants
11:30 – 12:30	Session Two: Veterans Reflection on the Practical Challenges of Women’s Participation in Politics	Reflections from selected Veterans
12:30 – 13:30	Open Forum: Reactions Contributions and Questions	Moderator
13:30 –	Closing and Lunch	

Annex 3: Panellists and Moderator Biographies

“NKITAHODIE” POLICY DIALOGUE

Theme: “Gender Equality and Women’s Participation in Politics and Political Processes in Ghana: The Role of Political Parties”

October 20, 2016

Accra, Ghana

Biographies of Main Speakers



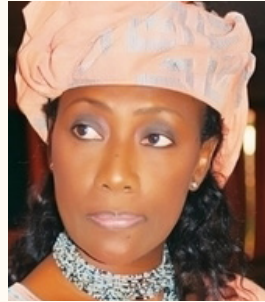
Dr. Ekuru Aukot,
Founder- Thirdway Alliance,
Kenya; Former Chair of
Selection Panel, Independent
Electoral and Boundaries
Commission (IEBC), Kenya.

Ekuru Aukot is from the Turkana County of the former Northern Frontier Districts. He is the Founder of Thirdway Alliance Kenya (www.thirdwayalliance.org), initially founded as a political movement advocating for alternative and transformative leadership in Kenya, but currently undergoing full registration as a Political Party. He recently declared his Presidential bid (www.ekuruaukot.co.ke) in the forthcoming 2017 Elections. From January 2014 to May 2016, he was UNDP’s Chief Technical & Senior Constitutional Advisor to the Liberian Constitution Review Committee (CRC). As the Expert on Constitutional Processes (February-April 2016), he assisted The Mountain Kingdom of Lesotho to develop a roadmap for constitution-making process. Since 2010, Aukot has toured to speak on the Kenyan Constitution building process around the world. In 2011, following a Parliamentary approval, he was appointed to Chair the Selection Panel that recruited the Independent Electoral & Boundaries Commission (IEBC) of Kenya; he successfully directed as its Director/CEO & Member the

writing of Kenya’s 2010 Constitution by the Committee of Experts (CoE).

He consulted for two United States-based corporations, the Universal Strategy Group Inc., (USGI) & the Development Alternatives Inc., (DAI) as Senior Advisor on Policy & Planning, Ministry of Defense, Republic of South Sudan (2010-2011); He taught Constitutional & Administrative Law at the School of Law (2000-2005), University of Warwick (UK), and at Kenya School of Law (2006-2009); has been a Visiting Law Lecturer on the Law of Refugees & IDPs at School & Faculty of Law, University of Nairobi, and at the East African School on Refugees & Humanitarian Affairs, and at Refugee Law Project, Makerere University, Uganda; he edited (2008-2010) the African Section of the Refugee Law Reader. Has expertise in constitutional law, policy, human rights, governance and forced migration. He is writing his memoir, “A Constitution is Not a Shopping List”, on Constitution-building and implementation process. He studied for PhD and LLM in International Refugee Law,

& Law in Development at the University of Warwick, UK; LLB (University of Nairobi) and Dip., in Legal Practice (Kenya School of Law); he is an Advocate of the High Court of Kenya, a Commissioner for Oaths & Notary Public; and the Founder of EA Law Consulting (www.ealawconsulting.com); He is the Founder & President of Ekuru Aukot Foundation, which supports education of nomadic and pastoralists boys and girls.



Madame Fatou Diop,
President, National Gender
Parity Observatory, Senegal

Fatou Diop is the President of the National Gender Parity Observatory, the institution in charge of monitoring gender parity in public policies in Senegal. She is a gender and decentralization specialist and also an activist in Senegalese women's advocacy for parity. She is the former President of the Senegalese Council of Women, a CSO that conducted the advocacy for parity law five years prior to its adoption. Fatou was a Board Member of the Public Procurements Regulation Authority, representing CSOs.

Diop graduated in Arts from the University of Dakar and pursued further specialization in Decentralization. She has published a book on the Parity law in Senegal.

Biography of the Moderator



Dr. Rose Mensah-Kutin is the Director of the Accra-based, West African Regional Office of ABANTU for Development, a women's rights organisation that

works to promote gender responsiveness in policies in Ghana, West Africa, and Africa generally. She was the Convenor of the Network for Women's Rights in Ghana (NETRIGHT) from 2005-2008. NETRIGHT is a membership organisation that focuses on economic justice and women's land rights. Dr. Mensah-Kutin holds a PhD in Gender and Energy Studies from the University of Birmingham, UK. She also holds an MA in Development Studies from the Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, The Netherlands. She attended the University of Ghana, Legon, for her First and Graduate Diploma Degrees. She first worked at the "Daily Graphic" rising from the position of Staff Writer to Assistant Editor. During that period, she undertook several socio-economic and political assignments, particularly as they related to women, and edited an innovative column, "Women for Change". Dr. Mensah-Kutin is known as having initiated the production, coalition building and wider dissemination of "The Women's Manifesto for Ghana", a political document that outlines critical national issues of concerns to women and makes demands for addressing them. She serves on a number of boards, committees, and councils such as the International Gender and Energy Network (ENERGIA) based in The Netherlands. She has also written papers and published on gender equality issues in areas such as governance, energy, climate change, and peace building.

Bio of Mrs. Hamida Harrison



Mrs. Hamida Harrison is the Convenor of the Women's Manifesto for Ghana, which is hosted by ABANTU for Development. She has played a seminal role in the movement

building efforts around the Manifesto since its production in 2004.

She holds Masters Degrees from the USA and Ghana in development administration and development communication. Her work experience as a lecturer in both local and foreign universities makes her an effective training resource person. She has conducted numerous skills and capacity-training programmes for aspiring women candidates into legislative structures.

Mrs. Harrison has participated in many local and international conferences on Women's Rights, Direct Foreign Investment, Aid Effectiveness, and the Beijing review processes at the United Nations. She is a member of many women and other professional associations.



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