Strategy Document on Promoting Gender Equality in the Ghanaian Media

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The development of this Strategy Document is part of activities under the Equal Voices Project. It was implemented by the Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA) in partnership with Canal France International (CFI), the French media development agency. The document was developed based on insights, recommendations, and inputs gathered through strategic dialogues with key stakeholders in Ghana, including academics, media managers and journalists, media associations, policymakers, and gender-focused Civil Society Organisations (CSOs).

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AU	African Union
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CFI	Canal France International
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
GBC	Ghana Broadcasting Corporation
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GBVH	Gender-Based Violence and Harassment
GIBA	Ghana Independent Broadcasters Association
GIJ	Ghana Institute of Journalism
GJA	Ghana Journalists Association
HR	Human Resource
ILO	International Labour Organization
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
MFWA	Media Foundation for West Africa
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NMC	National Media Commission
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
WILDAF	Women in Law and Development in Africa

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Foreword

Globally, the subject of gender equality has enduring interest and is a matter of debate in scholarly, policy and industry circles. Perhaps, nowhere is the subject of gender equality more contentious than in media where it has both supply and demand side dynamics. Within media, gender equality is a subject of contention from varied perspectives. On the one hand are issues residing at the level of the product, media content, where debate surrounds unequal representations and portrayals of women and men in media content. Representations in content remain a pain point for gender equality advocates and activists because of its implications for audiences and the notions they are led, through media products, to form about men and women in society. Then, there is the issue of gender equality at the level of work within media organisations where disparities in entry, growth, remuneration, working conditions, harassment experiences have been well-documented and articulated.

The issues outlined make it imperative to initiate interventions that make media attractive career destinations for both women and men while ensuring that the products of their work contribute to promoting a more inclusive society. Past efforts towards gender equality in media have been fragmented, with their impacts derailed by a lack of consolidation and synergy. Future efforts must, therefore, be conceptualized differently, calling for an integrative strategic direction. We need solutions that acknowledge the intersections between the challenges while unlocking the potential of equitable practices. This is the need that this strategy document, titled 'Equal voices: Promoting gender equality in media in Ghana addresses.

Gender equality in media is both a business and moral imperative and we need to accelerate action towards its achievement. With this strategy document, such action is possible. It outlines the fault-lines and presents actionable steps to drive change and improvements. I am excited at the opportunity to achieve more with this document.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

i. Introduction

The *Equal Voices: Promoting Gender Equality in Media in Ghana Strategy Document* (hereafter, Strategy Document or Document) provides actionable recommendations to: increase the number of women in leadership roles in the media; achieve gender parity in media content; promote gender-sensitive workplaces and policies; enhance capacity for gender advocacy; and foster multi-stakeholder collaboration.

The media plays a critical role in shaping societal norms, influencing cultural values, behaviours and attitudes, and promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. Sadly, the media in Ghana continues to perpetuate gender inequalities and reinforce stereotypes that contribute to limiting the representation of women in leadership and denying them agency. Within the media industry, systemic challenges such as underrepresentation of women in leadership positions, workplace inequities, gender-based violence (GBV), such as sexual harassment, lack of access to maternity protection, and related biases continue to persist. Therefore, this Strategy Document was developed to promote gender equality in the media as part of activities under the *Equal Voices Project.*

ii. The Strategy Document

The development of the Strategy Document was informed by extensive baseline research and four strategic dialogues, which were held with key stakeholders in the Ghanaian media in 2024. The aims of these dialogues were to identify the barriers to gender equality in the Ghanaian media and propose solutions to these barriers. Thus, the Strategy Document is an important outcome of these dialogues. It projects obstacles to gender equality and provides a roadmap with actionable steps to address gender disparities in the media. This roadmap aligns with Ghana's

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commitments to international frameworks such as the Beijing Platform for Action, the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5, international labour standards and the African Union (AU) Gender Policy.

iii. Key Observations

The baseline studies and stakeholder dialogues pointed out several factors that hinder the attainment of gender equality in the media. The following were the five main challenges highlighted:

- **Leadership gap:** Women hold less than 30% of leadership positions in Ghanaian media organisations and even fewer senior roles, such as editor-in-chief or Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

- **Content bias:** Women and girls make up only 25% of news subjects and are often relegated to reproductive, stereotypical or hypersexualised roles in media narratives.

- **Workplace challenges**: Female journalists face significant barriers to their advancement in media organisations. These include violence and sexual harassment, pay inequality, lack of systems and structures to support their biological and reproductive roles, and limited professional development opportunities.

- **Lack of coordination in advocacy efforts:** There are various stakeholders within the Ghanaian media making efforts to improve the condition and status of women in the media. However, these efforts are not coordinated, targeted, and context-driven. This has led to duplication of efforts, resource inefficiency, and a slow pace of progress in achieving the desired results.

- **Bystander effect**: There is an entrenched bystander effect when it comes to men and matters of gender. Men do not immediately and necessarily identify themselves as critical contributors or allies in resolving the gender inequalities within the Ghanaian media; thus, perpetuating a cycle of inaction and resistance to change.

iv. Key Goals of the Strategy Document

Therefore, the Strategy Document outlines five key goals towards addressing these challenges, including:

- **Increase the number of women in leadership roles in the media**: The progressive increase of the number of women in leadership positions in Ghanaian media organisations should be pursued through actionable and targeted interventions.

- **Achieve gender parity in media content:** There should be balanced media coverage of men and women by 2030. This coverage should reflect their diverse perspectives and stories.

- **Promote gender-sensitive workplaces and policies:** Comprehensive gender-responsive policies which tackle violence, harassment, and discrimination of all forms, including pay inequality within media organisations, should be developed, implemented, and enforced.

- **Enhance capacity for gender advocacy:** Contextual gender training targeted at men in the media, and middle and senior managers in media organisations should be provided to promote gender-sensitive reporting and leadership development. These, in turn, are expected to deal with the bystander effect with respect to men and gender in the media space.

- **Foster multi-stakeholder collaboration:** Partnerships between civil society organisations (CSO), academia, and policymakers should be built and strengthened to drive advocacy and implement evidence-based strategies for gender equity in media.
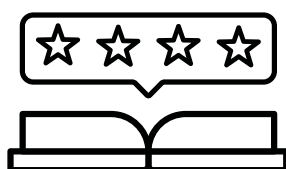
v. Recommendations for Achieving Gender Equity in the Ghanaian Media

To achieve these goals, the Strategy Document provides actionable recommendations, including the following:

Increase the number of women in leadership roles in the media

- **Leadership targets:** Introduce quota systems and policies requiring media organisations to allocate at least 30% of leadership positions to women by 2030, including via recruitment among others, in accordance with the Affirmative Action (Gender Equity) Act, 2024 (Act 1121).

- **Mentorship and coaching programmes**: Develop structured mentorship and coaching initiatives; pairing experienced women leaders with aspiring female journalists.

- **Leadership training:** Collaborate with relevant organisations to provide leadership and development training programmes for women in media.

- **Policy incentives**: Offer incentives such as tax benefits or recognition awards, to media houses demonstrating significant progress in promoting women to leadership roles.

- **Directory of female experts:** Develop a database of women experts in different sectors who can serve as expert sources for media reporting.

Achieve gender parity in media content

- **Gender representation audits:** Media organisations must conduct an annual content audit to assess the representation and participation of men and women in their stories.

- **Content guidelines:** Develop and enforce guidelines that promote gender-responsive and sensitive language and framing and balanced representation in reporting. These

guidelines should include sexualisation and objectification of women.

- **Capacity-building**: Provide journalists with training on gender concepts, gender-based violence and harrassment (GBVH), and on how women and other marginalised groups are affected by policy and legislative interventions differently.

- **Public accountability:** Develop and establish gender-responsive mechanisms through which the audience can report all forms of discrimination, violence, harass-ment, abuse, and gender bias in media coverage and the swift, transparent and fair intervention of media houses to address disparities can be ensured.

Promote gender-sensitive workplaces and policies

- **Policy development:** All media organisations must adopt and implement compre-hensive gender-sensitive workplace policies that deal with gender pay gaps and other pay inequalities and all forms of discrimination and GBVH. These policies should be developed in line with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the following International Labour Organziation (ILO) Conventions: Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100), Maternity Protection Convention (Revised), 1952 (No. 103), Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111), and Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190).

- **Confidential gender-responsive reporting mechanisms**: Establish anonymous, safe and secure channels for reporting workplace violence and harassment, similar to Kenya's Media Council model. This should consider accessibility and the diversified nature of users; noting people with disabilities and language barriers, among others.

- **Periodic policy reviews:** Conduct periodic reviews of workplace policies on internally agreed upon timelines to ensure alignment with gender equity goals.

- **Legal support:** Partner with legal organisations to provide female journalists with access to legal advice and support in cases of violence, harassment or discrimination.

- **Maternity protection**: Respect women's right to maternity protection. This pertains to their biological roles, including pregnancy, childbirth and other reproductive roles. This should be carried out by upholding provisions in Part 6 of the Labour Act, 2003 (Act 651) and the ILO's Maternity Protection Convention (Revised), 1952 (No. 103), which has been ratified by Ghana.

- **Childcare facilities:** Establish childcare facilities to support women, as stipulated in Article 27 (1-3) of the Constitution of the Republic of Ghana, 1992.

Enhance capacity for gender advocacy

- **Specialised training:** Organise gender-sensitive reporting workshops for middle and senior managers to advance gender-sensitive and inclusive editorial practices and programmes.

- **Leadership boot camps:** Host leadership development programmes for female journalists inspired by AWiM's initiatives in Nigeria.

- **Recognition programmes:** Create awards to celebrate journalists and media houses who/that demonstrate excellence in gender-sensitive reporting and programming.

- **International partnerships:** Collaborate with global organisations like the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and other development partners and funders, to provide funding and resources for capacity-building projects.

Foster multi-stakeholder collaboration

- **Establish a gender equity taskforce:** Form a taskforce involving CSOs, trade unions, academia, media organisations, and policymakers to drive systemic reforms.

- **Advocacy and campaigns:** Launch public awareness campaigns highlighting the importance of promoting gender equity in media and leveraging platforms, such as the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women's (UN Women) HeForShe initiative.

- **Research and data sharing:** Conduct collaborative studies on gender representation in the media and share findings with stakeholders to inform policies.

- **Policy engagement and implementation:** Work with policymakers to draft regulations promoting gender equity and implement existing regulations in media organisations.

EQUAL VOICES

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The media wields immense power to drive societal transformation, shape perceptions, spark public discourse, and challenge the status quo regarding gender inequality. In Ghana, as across Africa, this influence places the media at the forefront of efforts to advance gender equality in all aspects of society. Gender inequalities, entrenched in content and institutional structures, continue to undermine the ability of the media to reflect and champion the diversity of the Ghanaian society.

Globally, women feature in just 24% of news stories (Macharia 2015, 2020); a trend echoed in Ghana, where studies by the Ghana Institute of Journalism (GIJ) reveal that women are often relegated to secondary or stereotypical roles in reporting (Azanu et al., 2025). Women rarely appear as experts, decision-makers or leaders in news coverage; perpetuating harmful gender norms. Similarly, within media organisations, a recent report by the Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA) found that women occupy fewer than 15% of leadership roles; reflecting systemic barriers, such as workplace discrimination, harassment, and limited access to mentorship and training, which impede their career progression (Media Foundation for West Africa, 2021).

This underrepresentation stifles women's voices and diminishes the richness and accuracy of media narratives. For example, during the 2024 general elections in Ghana, a cursory look at media reporting revealed that male political commentators overwhelmingly dominated news panels; side-lining critical perspectives from female experts on governance, labour, economic, policy, and social issues. Such imbalances reinforce a media landscape that is neither inclusive nor fully representative of the Ghanaian population.

The urgency to address these disparities extends beyond equity. It is essential for the credibility and sustainability of the media industry itself. Countries like Rwanda have demonstrated that intentional policies, such as gender quotas and inclusive content guidelines, can significantly shift media representation of women. Rwanda's efforts have resulted in 51% of its parliamentary seats being held by women; a reflection of broader societal attitudes fostered by equitable media practices. Ghana, too, can lead in this regard; leveraging the

recently passed Affirmative Action (Gender Equity) Act, 2024 (Act 1121) to create a vibrant media environment to champion gender equity.

Gender-sensitive policies and practices within media organisations are aspirational and economically strategic. Studies show that organisations with diverse leadership are more innovative and financially resilient. During recent gender and empowerment training sessions organised by the MFWA, several young female journalists recounted their challenges in breaking through the "glass ceiling" of their newsrooms. This is a reality shared by many talented women across the industry. Addressing these barriers can unlock untapped potential; allowing Ghanaian media to thrive in an increasingly competitive global environment. Failing to confront these inequities risks entrenching harmful stereotypes, perpetuating workplace inequities, and diminishing the media's ability to serve as a credible driver of democracy and development.

Globally, women feature in just
24% *of news stories*

- Macharia 2015, 2020

Radio

TV

Digital Media

Newspaper
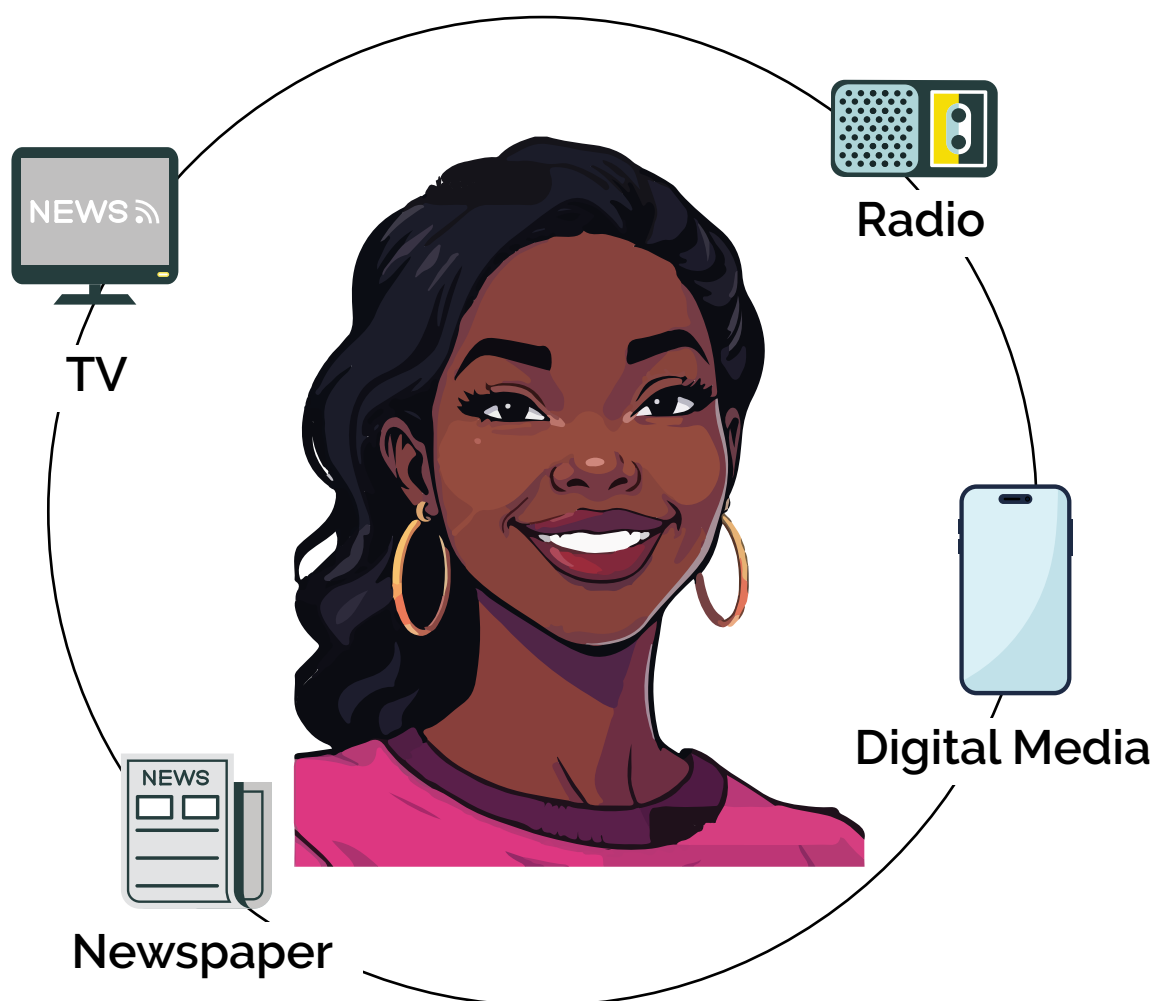
1.1 The Strategy Document

The Strategy Document offers a pragmatic path forward, which is grounded in local research, legislative and policy reviews, global best practices, and actionable recommendations from media stakeholder dialogues. By tackling systemic and structural barriers, fostering representation, and driving transformative change, this Document aims to position the Ghanaian media as a leader in gender equity; ensuring that its stories, policies, and leadership reflect the richness and diversity of its people. An equitable media is not just a reflection of progress but also of the solid foundation and the engine that drives it.

The Strategy Document is crafted from the outcomes of extensive stakeholder consultations with policymakers, journalists, civil society organisations (CSO), and academia. It seeks to, among other things:

- Highlight the systemic and structural barriers to gender equality in Ghanaian media.

- Propose actionable multi-stakeholder strategies to overcome identified challenges to gender equality within the Ghanaian media.

- Build a Ghanaian media environment that values and projects gender inclusivity in its content and leadership.

1.2 The Equal Voices Project

The Equal Voices: Promoting Gender Equality in Media in Ghana project was implemented by the MFWA in partnership with Canal France International (CFI). It was aimed at addressing the challenges identified in global, regional, and national reports on the status of women in the media and within media organisations. The project mainly drew on the findings of the 2020-2021 study on *Gender equality in the media and media content in sub-Saharan Africa*, which highlighted high levels of discrimination and violence against women in the media, the marginalisation of women in specific sections of media such as politics and economics, and persistent stereotypes that portray women in subordinate or hypersexualised roles in media content. This empirical evidence led the project to focus on gender-sensitive reporting training for selected journalists, women's empowerment training for selected female journalists, and the co-creation of context-specific gender-sensitive policies for media organisations. The project also purposed to empower media professionals, both men and women, to identify and report gender-based violence (GBV), and advance inclusive workplace practices to deal with the issues identified in project workshops and strategy meetings.

1.3 A Snapshot of Gender Inequality in the Ghanaian Media

The *Status of women in the Ghanaian media: Providing evidence for gender equality and advocacy project* report showed that women are underrepresented in media leadership roles and content (Yeboah-Banin et al, 2020). Despite forming a significant proportion of the workforce in journalism schools and entry-level positions, their presence diminishes significantly at decision-making levels. For instance, women make up less than 30% of leadership positions in media organisations, with even fewer occupying roles, such as editor-in-chief or Chief Executive Officer (CEO) (Yeboah-Banin et al, 2020).

This underrepresentation of women in the Ghanaian media is compounded by workplace cultures that often fail to support their advancement. Challenges such as pay disparities, lack of mentorship, and limited family-friendly policies, creates a "glass ceiling" that prevents women from reaching their full potential.

Ghana has demonstrated its commitment to gender equality by ratifying international frameworks, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and aligning its policies with the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5. Sadly, these commitments have not translated into local realities. Nationally, the 2015 *National gender policy* outlined four areas for critical interventions to promote gender equity across sectors (Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, 2015). However, the media sector remains a key area where these policies have yet to be fully realised.

The co-existence of progressive laws with customary norms and practices presents a unique challenge to forging sustainable advancement of women in all professional spheres of life. In media organisations, these contradictions manifest as systemic impediments to equal opportunities; often limiting women's participation in decision-making and leadership.

1.4 Setting the Scene for Change

The timing for this intervention is critical. As media organisations navigate a rapidly evolving landscape influenced by technological advances and shifting societal expectations, there is an opportunity to embed gender equity at the core of their operations. By tackling gender disparities, the Ghanaian media can enhance its credibility and contribute to promoting a more equitable society. This Document outlines a comprehensive roadmap that combines immediate, mid-term, and long-term strategies to promote gender equality in the Ghanaian media. It is both a call to action and a guide for stakeholders committed to creating a more inclusive media landscape.

Ghana has made significant progress in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment; culminating in the passage of the Affirmative Action (Gender Equity) Act, 2024 (Act 1121). This milestone legislation addresses systemic barriers to women's participation in leadership, governance, and decision-making; signaling a renewed commitment

to fostering gender equity. The next section traces the historical milestones, contemporary challenges, and emerging opportunities in Ghana's gender empowerment journey, with a focus on its implications for the media landscape.

1.5 Historical Milestones in Women's Empowerment

Ghana's trajectory towards achieving women's empowerment and gender equality is underscored by significant historical milestones that reflect its commitment to global, regional, and national frameworks. Central to these efforts is the ratification of key international conventions; notably— CEDAW in 1979 and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, commonly referred to as the Maputo Protocol in 2003, and international labour conventions. These frameworks have played a critical role in shaping Ghana's national policies and legislative efforts by establishing a foundational commitment to deal with gender disparities and advancing women's rights.

The implementation of the *National Gender Policy* in 2015 was a strategic effort to institutionalise gender equality across economic, social, and political spheres. The policy identified priority areas, such as women's economic empowerment, leadership, and governance, and emphasised the critical role of the media in challenging entrenched gender stereotypes. By cultivating partnerships between gender advocates and media institutions, the policy sought to create a more inclusive narrative that promotes equity and confronts systemic barriers to women's participation in all sectors of society (Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, 2015).

The recently enacted Affirmative Action (Gender Equity) Act 2024 (Act 1121), also represents a landmark legislative achievement in the country's efforts towards gender equality. This law represents a significant step in dismantling structural obstacles to women's representation in decision-making. Some of its key provisions are gender-responsive budgeting for government agencies, quotas for women's participation in political parties' electoral and appointive processes, and comprehensive measures to increase access to leadership positions across sectors. The Act's enactment reflects a deliberate effort to ensure women's voices are integral to governance and development; thereby, tackling long-standing gender imbalances in representation (Affirmative Action (Gender Equity) Act, 2024).

In addition to legislative and policy advancements, Ghana has made notable progress in education and healthcare, two critical areas of women's empowerment. Female enrollment in tertiary institutions has consistently increased, creating a cadre of educated women ready to contribute to various fields, including governance, academia, and the media. In healthcare, national policies targeting maternal health and family planning have improved women's well-being; reducing maternal mortality rates and enabling greater participation in economic and professional domains. These advances signify the success of integrated strategies that address both social determinants and institutional impediments to gender

equality (Ghana Statistical Service, 2023; World Health Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund, 2022).

Ghana's multifaceted approach to women's empowerment demonstrates the interplay of international commitments, national legislative frameworks, and grassroots action in addressing gender disparities.

1.6 Historical Antecedents of Contemporary Gender Inequities in Ghana

Women in the Ghanaian media encounter not only overt difficulties but also subtle and invisible barriers that hinder their progression to higher ranks; despite having the necessary qualifications and experience. These barriers stem from a complex interplay of legislative progress and persisting patriarchal norms. While Ghana has made significant strides in legislative developments aimed at gender equality across various spheres, the media sector still reflects deep-seated gender inequalities. Sociocultural norms entrenched over generations continue to delineate gender roles and perpetuate systemic inequalities. The influence of patriarchal attitudes, deeply ingrained in both traditional and contemporary societal frameworks, affects women's access to resources and opportunities for decision-making; often sidelining them in favor of their male counterparts. This situation is compounded by a notable disconnect between formal legal provisions and customary practices, as highlighted by Coker-Appiah and Cusack (1999), which leaves women especially vulnerable to economic disparities and dispossession. Furthermore, Bawa and Sanyare (2013) have pointed out that societal pressures and the fear of ostracisation significantly deter women from asserting their legal rights; exacerbating the challenge of achieving genuine gender equality in the media landscape of Ghana.

1.7 Under-representation of Women in Leadership Positions within the Ghanaian Media

Various studies, like the *Global media monitoring report*, have evidence of women's low participation in leadership positions within media organisations (Macharia, 2015). In Ghana, women's participation in leadership positions in the media remains critically low; reflecting broader trends of gender disparity in governance and decision-making spheres.

Studies have shown that women occupy less than 25% of top management positions in African media organisations, with cultural perceptions about women's roles, limited access to mentorship, and unequal opportunities for advancement cited as major factors for this imparity (Wasserman, 2021). The *Status of women in the Ghanaian media:Providing evidence for gender equality and advocacy project* report echoed these findings and indicated that 'few women occupy positions in the upper echelons of media organisations and tend to be in middle management rather than decision-making positions' (Yeboah-Banin, 2020, p. 20). The report also highlighted that gendered roles in newsrooms usually confined women to reporting on "soft news;" limiting their professional growth and visibility.

Although the Affirmative Action (Gender Equity) Act, 2024 (Act 1121) represents a turning point, it is yet to be seen how this Act can lead to an increase in the representation of women in governance. The passage of the Act and the implementation of several ongoing initiatives in Ghana can create significant opportunities to accelerate gender empowerment. The Act provides a robust framework for increasing female representation in governance, leadership, and decision-making roles. By instituting quotas and gender-responsive policies, the Act lays the foundation for women to occupy more significant positions in political and administrative domains (Affirmative Action (Gender Equity) Act, 2024). If applied in the context of the media, these measures can yield long-term benefits by enhancing representation and shifting societal perceptions of women's roles in leadership.

The role of CSOs has been instrumental in fostering national dialogue on gender issues. Through advocacy, education, and strategic partnerships with stakeholders, these CSOs have catalysed public awareness and mobilised support for policies that promote gender equality. Their continued collaboration with the media represents a powerful opportunity to amplify these efforts; shaping public discourse and driving behavioural change on a national scale (Women in Law and Development in Africa – Afrique de l'Ouest, 2024).

Educational advancements also underscore the potential for gender empowerment in Ghana. The steady increase in female enrollment in tertiary institutions, including in specialised disciplines, such as journalism, highlights the growing pool of skilled and educated women poised to assume leadership roles. These educational gains are critical not only for closing the gender gap in key sectors but also for empowering women to influence policy and societal norms from positions of authority (Ghana Statistical Service, 2023).

The media plays an especially pivotal role in this transformative process. As a societal influencer, the media is uniquely positioned to challenge gender stereotypes, project women's achievements, and advocate for equity. By adopting gender-sensitive policies and practices within their organisations, media outlets can lead by example and serve as catalysts for broader societal change. Additionally, targeted programming and content development that promote gender equity can further embed these ideals in public consciousness; creating a supportive environment for women's empowerment (Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, 2015).

These opportunities, collectively, illustrate the multifaceted potential of legislative frameworks, advocacy, education, and media influence in advancing gender equality. By leveraging these interconnected avenues, Ghana is well-positioned to sustain and accelerate progress towards achieving a more inclusive and equitable society.

CHAPTER TWO: THE MEDIA LANDSCAPE IN GHANA

The Ghanaian media enjoys a reputation as one of the most vibrant and independent media sectors in Africa. Since the media's liberalisation in the early 1990s, the sector has expanded rapidly; cultivating a pluralistic environment that plays a critical role in democracy, governance, and societal transformation. However, gender imbalances within this sector in leadership and content production remain a significant problem; impeding the Ghanaian media's ability to fully represent the diversity of Ghanaian society. The Ghanaian media is a multifaceted landscape encompassing print, radio, television, and online platforms. Its pluralistic nature allows for diverse voices and perspectives, and reflects the media's pivotal role in shaping public discourse and amplifying societal diversity (National Communications Authority, 2023). The media is vital for promoting transparency and accountability as a cornerstone of Ghana's democracy. Political debates, investigative journalism, and civic education contribute immensely to the country's democratic consolidation. By engaging the public and scrutinising governance, the media reinforces its position as a key player in ensuring democratic practices and an informed citizenry (Fosu, & Akpojivi, 2015).

Digital platforms have emerged as transformative forces within the Ghanaian media space in recent years; re-democratising the media space, giving its practitioners a voice, and enabling their participation in national discourses, particularly, the younger generation. The shift towards digitalisation highlights the evolving dynamics of media consumption and the growing importance of digital platforms in contemporary communication (Amadu, 2024). Social media and other online channels have redefined how information is consumed and disseminated; offering new avenues for public engagement and participation.

Despite these strengths, the Ghanaian media continues to grapple with notable challenges. Structural inequalities, including the underrepresentation of women in leadership roles, persist as significant issues. Furthermore, biases in content production and systemic disparities hinder the media's ability to fully mirror and address the diversity and complexities of Ghanaian society. These challenges underscore the need for continued and coordinated efforts to achieve greater equity and inclusivity within the media landscape (Owusu-Addo et al., 2018).

2.1 Media Ownership and Structure in Ghana

Media ownership in Ghana reflects a complex and evolving landscape that is characterised by diversity in ownership, a media conglomeration and an interplay between public, private, and community interests. The growth of the media since the early 1990s also presents challenges related to ownership concentration, political influence, and the sustainability of smaller media entities.

As of 2023, Ghana had over 500 registered radio stations reaching approximately 85% of the population daily; making radio the most dominant medium in the country, (National Communications Authority, 2023; Afrobarometer, 2023). Radio's accessibility and affordability have cemented its role as a primary source of information, education, and entertainment for Ghanaians; particularly, in those in rural areas. Stations, such as Adom FM, Peace FM, and Joy FM, owned by private conglomerates, like Despite Media Group and Multimedia Group Limited, dominate urban markets where advertising revenue is concentrated. In rural areas, community radio stations, for example A1 Radio and Radio Ada, provide localised content tailored to specific linguistic and cultural contexts.

Television is the second most consumed medium, with approximately 70% of Ghanaian households owning a television set (National Communications Authority, 2023). The proliferation of television stations has created a highly competitive market, with over 120 active stations offering news, entertainment, and educational programming. The state-owned broadcaster, the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC), remains an important play-er; especially, in rural areas where private broadcasters are yet to penetrate. Private enti-ties, such as UTV, TV3, and Joy News, dominate urban media and provide diverse content that caters to varied demographics. Satellite and digital platforms have further expanded the reach of television; making it an important medium for advertisers and policymakers to engage large audiences.

Print media, while historically influential, has faced major difficulties in maintaining reader-ship in the digital age. Leading newspapers, like the Daily Graphic, the Ghanaian Times, and the Daily Guide, remain critical sources of information for policymakers, academics, and urban professionals. Nevertheless, declining circulation numbers reflect a shift in consumer preferences towards online news sources. For example, the Daily Graphic, Ghana's oldest and largest newspaper, has seen its daily circulation drop to approximately 70,000 copies in 2023, down from its peak in previous decades (Gadzekpo, et al, 2020). This trend under-scores the growing dominance of digital media and the need for traditional print outlets to adapt to changing consumer habits.

In the last decade, online media has become a dominant force in Ghana's media landscape; mainly, among younger, tech-savvy demographics. Platforms, such as MyJoyOnline, Citi Newsroom, and Pulse Ghana, have established themselves as leading sources of digital news; leveraging social media to expand their reach and engage audiences. Data from 2023 indicates that over 60% of Ghanaians access news online daily, with a significant proportion

doing so via mobile devices (Afrobarometer, 2023). This shift towards digital media presents both opportunities and challenges. On the one hand, it allows for greater access to diverse content and real-time updates but on the other hand, it raises concerns about misinformation and the lack of regulatory frameworks to ensure accountability in the digital space.

The structure of media ownership in Ghana projects the stark dominance of private entities; predominantly, in urban markets where they have conglomerates. For instance, there are Media General with brands like TV3, Onua FM, 3 FM and Connect FM, Multimedia Group Limited, which owns leading brands, like Joy FM, Joy News, and MyJoyOnline, and Despite Media Group, which operates UTV and Peace FM. All these media organisations hold substantial market shares. Although their success has driven innovation and competition, it has also led to concerns about ownership concentration, which has implications for the diversity of viewpoints in the media. Additionally, the political affiliations of some media owners raise questions about editorial independence and the prioritisation of public interest over political agendas.

Even though community media is less prominent in terms of its reach and resources, it plays a crucial role in confronting contextual or localised information and cultural needs. Stations such as A1 Radio, Radio Ada and other community broadcasters, provide programming in local languages and focus on grassroots issues; fostering inclusivity and representation. Yet, these outlets often struggle to compete with bigger, urban-based media due to limited resources and advertising revenue.

Nonetheless, Ghana's media sector remains one of Africa's most lively and free media spaces; acting as a critical pillar of democracy and public accountability. The Ghanaian media's role in shaping public discourse and speaking truth to power underlines its importance in the country's governance and development. As the landscape evolves, inclusivity, sustainability, and independence will be essential in maintaining the media's positive contribution to Ghanaian society.

The Media in Ghana

Radio
500 registered radio stations reaching approximately 85% of the population daily - NCA 2023

Television
Over 120 active stations offering news, entertainment, and educational programming - NCA 2023

Print media
Ghana's oldest and largest newspaper, has seen its daily circulation drop to approximately 70,000 copies in 2023 - Gadzekpo, et al, 2020

Online Media
over 60% of Ghanaians access news online daily - Afrobarometer, 2023

2.2 Challenges in Gender Representation in the Ghanaian Media

Gender dynamics in the Ghanaian media are shaped by deeply ingrained systemic, structural, institutional, and cultural biases that limit women's visibility and influence. At the heart of these challenges are two intertwined phenomena: the professional roles and status afforded to women within media organisations and the manner in which women are depicted across media platforms. This dual facet points to a prevailing gender disparity; undermining the pursuit of equity and inclusivity within the media.

In spite of the strides made towards increasing female enrollment in journalism schools, a disparity remains stark in the upper echelons of Ghanaian media organisations where women are notably underrepresented. The representation of women in senior editorial and managerial positions is disproportionately low; highlighting an enduring "glass ceiling" that curtails women's ascent into decision-making roles and, by extension, their ability to shape organisational policies and editorial directions (Yeboah-Banin et al., 2020). This phenomenon is symptomatic of broader workplace gender norms, which often relegate women to roles associated with administrative tasks or "soft news" beats, such as health, entertainment, and lifestyle, whereas men are more likely to be found in hard news and investigative reporting domains (Naaikuur et al., 2024; Yeboah Banin et al., 2020; Ross, 2010; Djerf-Pierre & Edström, 2020). These structural impediments not only obstruct women's career progression but also perpetuate professional inequities. Furthermore, the portrayal of women in media content is fraught with biases and stereotypes; leading to their underrepresentation as subjects and experts.

Women feature in only 25% of news subjects, a statistic that underscores their marginalisation in media narratives (Macharia, 2015; Yeboah-Banin et al., 2020). When present, women are frequently depicted in roles that are stereotypical or hypersexualised; thereby, reinforcing traditional gender norms that sideline their societal contributions. Pertinent issues affecting women, such as reproductive health, GBV, and economic empowerment, are often sensationalised or underreported; detracting from the visibility of women's achievements and hampering the advancement of gender equality.

The workplace setting further exacerbates the difficulties faced by women in the Ghanaian media, through systemic barriers like pay disparities, sexual harassment, and a scarcity of mentorship opportunities. The absence of family-friendly policies within many media organisations complicates women's efforts to balance professional and family obligations; reflecting institutional failures to support women's career aspirations and overall well-being. Compounding these challenges are cultural and sometimes religious hurdles, deeply entrenched in patriarchal norms, that shape organisational dynamics and content production. These norms promote recruitment and hiring practices and access to promotion and professional development opportunities that disproportionately favour men; confining women to roles perceived as less authoritative. Moreover, societal expectations disproportionately burden women with familial responsibilities; hindering their career progression alongside the lack of supportive workplace policies.

Cultural and religious perceptions that frame leadership as a male prerogative further diminish women's confidence and dissuade organisations from elevating women to leadership positions; reinforcing the "glass ceiling" that limits women's visibility and influence within the Ghanaian media. To navigate these entrenched barriers, a concerted and sustained effort is necessary to challenge gendered societal and patriarchal norms. Media organisations are called upon to prioritise equitable representation of women in their content; showcasing diverse roles and achievements that defy traditional stereotypes. By addressing these systemic barriers head-on, the Ghanaian media can evolve into a more equitable and inclusive platform; truly representative of the principles of gender equality and inclusivity.

Ultimately, these obstacles are mutually reinforcing: cultural and patriarchal expectations keep women out of decision-making circles, while their minimal presence in leadership perpetuates biased portrayals and content. Transforming the Ghanaian media landscape requires deliberate policy reforms, institutional support for women's career advancement, and a reevaluation of entrenched societal norms. By centering women's voices and experiences, media organisations in Ghana can create a more equitable platform that embodies and supports gender equality.

'Photos of some of the participants from the strategic dialogues sessions

CHAPTER THREE: STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES FROM THE STRATEGIC DIALOGUES

The *Equal Voices Project* conducted strategic dialogues and working sessions with key stakeholders to identify the barriers to gender equality and propose solutions for advancing gender equality in the Ghanaian media.

3.1 Challenges Identified during Strategic Dialogues

- High attrition rates among female media professionals due to hostile workplace environments and cultures.

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- Absence of gender-sensitive policies addressing critical issues like discrimination, representation, participation, gender-based violence and harassment (GBVH) in most private media organisations.

- Limited mentorship programmes and research on gender-specific issues in the media.

- Prevalence of GBV within media organisations; particularly, sexual harassment, sexual corruption (sextortion), economic, and financial abuse

- Widened gender inequality, including a gender pay gap.

- Ad hoc training on gender-sensitive reporting, done by competent institutions.

- Lack of commitment by media organisations to bridge the gender inequality gap within their newsrooms.

- Misdiagnosis of the challenges within the media; for example, sexual corruption labelled as sexual harassment and so on.

- Absence of gender mainstreaming in media and journalism curriculum in communication and journalism schools.

- Weak collaboration between CSOs and media houses to promote gender-sensitive reporting.

- Entrenched structural and systemic biases within newsroom cultures, which reinforce gendered divisions of labour.

- Limited female voices as expert sources in areas such as economics, politics, etc.

3.2 Interventions and Opportunities for Change

During the strategic dialogues, stakeholders from various sectors, including academia, media organisations, advocacy groups, regulators, and policymakers, identified practical interventions to dismantle systemic barriers, empower women, and embed gender-sensitive practices within the Ghanaian media.

The following sub-sections outline the main interventions suggested by each group of stakeholders.

3.2.1 Academia

Promoting Women's Empowerment in the Media

- Establish dedicated and adequately resourced desks to focus on women's issues.

- Develop frameworks to monitor and enforce gender-sensitive policies.

- Address sexual and reproductive health rights like menstruation, menopause and so on by providing support and care facilities for women in the media.

- Respect and promote women's right to maternity protection as guaranteed by law, including the establishment of child care facilities.

- Establish and develop gender-responsive systems that effectively tackle GBVH in the workplace including providing support services.

Regulatory and Accountability Mechanisms

- Advocate for an external independent regulator to oversee gender-related issues.

- Implement "name and shame" policies to deter misconduct.

- Establish clear grievance-handling procedures with escalation mechanisms for unresolved cases.

Capacity-Building and Education

- Conduct workshops and training sessions on gender-sensitive reporting, stereo-type-free content framing, and proposal writing for funding.

- Sensitise media personnel on ethical practices and the professional code of conduct.

Reward Systems and Recognition

- Introduce awards for media houses demonstrating gender sensitivity, potentially, sponsored by CSOs.

- Award a "gender certificate" to recognise gender compliant organisations that could aid their access to contracts and partnerships.

Policy Development and Monitoring

- Develop measurable objectives and key performance indicators (KPI) with clear time-lines for the institution's specific gender equality goals.

- Establish feedback systems, including surveys, to assess the effectiveness of gender policies and address gaps.

- Publish annual gender equality reports to track progress.

Equal Opportunities and Representation

- Ensure that rewards and incentive-based schemes are not denied to females; especially those on or returning from maternity leave, as guaranteed by law.

- Advocate for increased representation of women in decision-making roles through the Affirmative Action (Gender Equity) Act, (2024) (Act 1121).

- Engage and establish gender committees ("media police") to enforce gender-related policies within media houses.

Other Interventions

- Institute independent and/or external reporting lines to address power dynamics in reporting GBV in media organisations.

- Create anonymous reporting systems to protect complainants and ensure transparency.

- Leverage collaboration with civil society, media bodies, and advocacy organisations.

- Develop gender-focused programmes and initiatives to sustain momentum.

- Encourage continued engagement and feedback from stakeholders to refine strategies.

3.2.2 Policymakers and Media Associations

Policy and Infrastructure Improvements

- Develop and implement comprehensive gender policies that are approved at the highest levels of media management.

- Establish facilities within media organisations to support women's reproductive health, including breastfeeding and childcare spaces.

- Create robust mechanisms for reporting sexual harassment, supported by senior-led counselling units to ensure safety and accountability.

- Advocate for external regulatory bodies to enforce compliance with gender-sensitive practices and oversee grievance redress processes.

Building Capacity and Women's Leadership in the Media

- Organise regular workshops and training programmes focused on gender-sensitive reporting, stereotype-free content, and effective proposal writing to attract funding.

- Follow up on training sessions to monitor their effectiveness and address challenges faced by participants.

- Promote mentorship initiatives and role models to guide and inspire women within the media industry.

- Conduct regular gender empowerment training programmes that coach female journalists to prepare them for leadership roles in media organisations.

Recognition and Accountability

- Introduce "name and shame" policies to hold individuals and organisations accountable for gender-based misconduct, following due diligence investigation.

- Recognise media houses demonstrating exemplary gender-sensitive practices with awards.

- Publish annual reports on gender equality in media to track progress, highlight successes, and identify areas in need of improvement.

Monitoring and Feedback Mechanisms

- Develop clear and context driven KPIs to assess the effectiveness of gender-related initiatives.

- Establish feedback systems, including surveys and evaluations, to collect insights on the success of implemented policies and areas in need of enhancement.

- Utilise tools like gender audits and trackers to monitor the progress and implementation of gender equality policies across media organisations.

Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement

- Partner with gender-focused organisations, advocacy groups, and regulatory bodies to strengthen efforts towards achieving gender equality.

- Build networks of shared accountability among regulators, academia, activists, and media practitioners.

Inclusive Practices and Representation

- Ensure equal opportunities and pay for women, particularly, those returning to work after maternity leave.

- Advocate for greater representation of women in decision-making roles within media organisations.

- Adopt gender-sensitive content-framing practices to challenge stereotypes and stigma in media narratives.

3.2.3 Gender-Focused Civil Society Organisations

Policy Development and Implementation

- Establish comprehensive workplace policies, including anti-harassment frameworks and pay equity structures.

- Place GBVH policies outside the human resource (HR) structure.

- Enforce the provisions of the Affirmative Action (Gender Equity) Act, 2024 (Act 1121) to increase female representation in leadership roles.

Capacity-Building

- Train focal persons in media organisations to conduct periodic staff training on safety and GBV in the workplace.

- Conduct in-house training on gender-sensitive reporting and ethical representation.

- Organise leadership development programmes to empower women to take up senior roles in media organisations.

- Media organisations must promote balanced media narratives that challenge stereo-types and highlight women's contributions.

Workplace Environment Improvements

- Develop mechanisms to confront and report workplace violence and harassment.

- Create supportive environments through flexible work arrangements and mentor-ship programmes for female journalists.

- Promote and prioritise the realisation of the Decent Work Agenda, regardless of workers' employment status.

Stakeholder Collaboration

- Foster partnerships among media organisations, CSOs, academia, and policymakers to promote gender equity and proffer solutions to the problems identified regarding gender equality and the Ghanaian media.

Monitoring and Accountability

- Publish annual gender equality scorecards to track progress and ensure transparency.

- Conduct periodic gender audits to evaluate organisational practices and refine strategies.

3.2.4 Media Managers, Editors and Journalists

Media Managers

- Implement robust safeguarding policies to foster inclusive work environments.

- Establish anti-harassment frameworks and equitable pay structures.

- Set clear targets for gender parity in recruitment and promotions.

- Invest in training programmes on gender-sensitive reporting and ethical representation.

- Create mentorship programmes to support women in mid-level roles and build a leadership pipeline for these women.

Editors and Journalists

- Adopt editorial guidelines to achieve gender-balanced sourcing in media content.

- Ensure equal representation of women as experts, subjects, and contributors in media narratives.

- Train journalists to report on gender-sensitive issues, such as sexual harassment and GBV, with professionalism and empathy.

- Establish recognition programmes to reward teams and individuals for exemplary gender-balanced reporting.

Inclusive Media Environment

- Take actionable steps beyond just documenting policies; focusing on implementation and monitoring outcomes.

- Create specific desks managed by women to enhance their inclusion in reporting.

- Address challenges and safety concerns for women working late shifts and the need for supportive infrastructure.

- Develop specialised training programmes for female media practitioners to boost their confidence and authority in areas such as health reporting.

Accountability and Enforcement Mechanisms

- Publish a league table ranking media houses based on compliance with gender equality policies.

- Incorporate gender-specific policies into HR documents to ensure equitable treatment.

- Develop gender policies with support for such initiatives.

- Highlight the importance of training and capacity-building for journalists on gender-sensitive reporting.

Gender-Inclusive Media Practices

- Institute mentorship programmes to support the career development of female journalists.

- Establish conducive work environments, including care centers and flexible work schedules.

- Conduct regular training and sensitisation on gender issues for both journalists and management.

- Issue gender certificates to media houses that comply with gender-responsive mechanisms.

Measurable Objectives and Monitoring Frameworks

- Institute quarterly reviews of gender-sensitive stories for accountability.

- Create an independent body to monitor and evaluate gender-sensitive media practices.

- Establish a national awards scheme to recognise gender-sensitive media practices.

  Involve the National Media Commission (NMC) in monitoring and enforcing gender policies.

Action Items for Enhancing Gender Inclusion in the Ghanaian Media

- Establish mentorship programmes to support women's career progression.

- Implement flexible work arrangements to accommodate the needs of new and nursing mothers.

- Conduct regular in-house training on gender sensitivity and harassment policies.

- Advocate for the NMC to include gender policy compliance as a requirement for media licensing.

- Initiate a national "Ghana Gender Awards" scheme to recognise and incentivise gender-responsive media practices.

- Establish a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework at the organisational level to track progress on gender mainstreaming.

- MFWA should develop model gender, safety and health, and GBVH policies as blueprints for media houses.

CHAPTER FOUR: ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan for this Strategy Document provides a detailed roadmap for implementing its recommendations. It includes specific activities, timelines, responsibilities, and expected outcomes to ensure accountability and measurable progress towards achieving gender equality in the Ghanaian media. It is structured into immediate, mid-term, and long-term actions to be undertaken by the various media stakeholders engaged during the life-span of the *Equal Voices Project*, as explicated the tables that follow.

Table 1

Action Plan	Timeline	Activity
Immediate Actions	6 months	All media organisations should develop and implement gender and safeguarding policies, which include anti-harassment policies that are separate from the organisation's HR Policy.
	6 months	Initiate mentorship and coaching programmes and launch gender-sensitive reporting workshops for all media workers; focusing on men and media managers.
Mid-Term Actions	6 – 18 months	Conduct national gender audits of the status of women in Ghanaian media.
	6 – 18 months	Establish national awards for gender-sensitive reporting, through the Ghana Journalists Association (GJA) and similar associations.
	6 – 18 months	Create a system where media organisations are either named and celebrated or exposed and held accountable for their actions with respect to promoting or impeding gender equality in their content and within their organisations.
Long-Term Actions	18 months+	Mandate institutions of higher education that train journalists and media communication professionals to mainstream gender into their curricula.
	18 months+	Promote continuous and context-driven approaches to monitoring and evaluating the progress of gender objectives across all stakeholder groups, through annual gender equity scorecards and by refining strategies based on outcomes.

Key Policy and Institutional Activities for Reform

Table 2

Policy/Institutional Activity	Activity	Timeline	Responsibility	Outcome
Adopt GBVH Policies	Develop and circulate workplace harassment policies in media organisations	Within the first 6 months	Media organisations, HR departments and GJA	Reduction in workplace harassment and improved reporting mechanisms
Integrate Gender Provisions into Media Regulations	Collaborate with regulatory bodies to amend licensing requirements to include gender audits	12 months	NMC, policymakers, and CSOs	Enhanced accountability and compliance with gender equity standards
Align Organisational Policies with the Affirmative Action (Gender Equity) Act, 2024 (Act 1121)	Conduct workshops to educate media organisations on the provisions of the Act	Within the first 3 months	Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection and NMC	Increased awareness and implementation of gender equity measures
Capacity-Building				
Conduct Gender-Sensitive Reporting Workshops	Organise bi-annual workshops for journalists and editors	Launch within 3 months, and continue bi-annually	CSOs, media training institutes, and international partners	Improved quality and inclusivity of media content
Establish Mentorship Programmes	Pair senior media leaders with aspiring female journalists for career guidance.	Launch within 6 months.	Media organisations, and journalism schools	Increased representation of women in leadership roles

Introduce Gender Studies into Journalism Curricula	Partner with academic institutions to integrate gender studies into journalism programmes	Within the first year	Universities, CSOs, and media training institutes	Improved understanding and application of gender-sensitive reporting principles among journalism graduates

Inclusive Media Content

Develop Editorial Guidelines	Create and distribute gender-sensitive editorial policies to media houses	Within 6 months	Media organisations, CSOs, GJA, and academia	Balanced gender representation in news content
Conduct Annual Content Audits	Review media content annually to assess progress in achieving gender parity	Ongoing; starting within the first year	NMC and academic institutions	Transparent reporting and accountability
Establish Gender-Sensitive Reporting Awards	Create national awards to recognise excellence in gender-sensitive reporting	Within 9 months	Media organisations and professional associations	Improved status of women in media organisations

Advocacy and Collaboration

|				
Engage Policymakers	Hold quarterly dialogue sessions with policymakers to review progress on gender equity initiatives	Ongoing	CSOs and Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection	Strengthened enforcement of gender policies and laws

Launch Public Awareness Campaigns	Use media platforms to highlight the importance of gender equality and showcase success stories	Launch within 3 months, and continue quarterly	Media organisations and CSOs	Increased public support for gender equity initiatives
Facilitate CSO-Media Partnerships	Develop joint advocacy campaigns; focusing on key gender issues	Within 6 months	CSOs and media organisations	Enhanced collaboration and shared resources
Monitoring and Evaluation				
Establish Gender Equality Monitoring Systems	Develop tracking tools and dashboards to monitor progress in leadership representation and content parity	Within 6 months	NMC and CSOs	Data-driven decision-making and accountability
Publish Annual Gender Equity Scorecards	Evaluate and rank media organisations based on their gender equality performance	Annually; starting within the first year	NMC and academic institutions	Public accountability and recognition of progress
Close the Pay Gap and Erase Pay Inequality	Evaluate current pay structures and pay inequalities that exist	Annually; starting after the implementation of the gender policy	Trade unions, women's groups and CSOs	Pay parity in the media

Review and Refine the Action Plan	Conduct annual reviews to assess the effectiveness of the action plan and make the necessary adjustments	Annually	Steering committee comprising stakeholders from media, CSOs, and government	Continuous improvement and sustained momentum

Implementation Timeline – Starting from 2025

Table 3

Stakeholder	Action Area	Outcome	Timeline
Gender Experts/Consultants and GJA	Safeguarding/GBVH policies	Improved workplace safety	6 – 12 months
CSOs, Media Organisations, and Media Training Institutes	Gender reporting workshops	Inclusive content production	Annually
Media Organisations and CSOs	Mentorship programmes for female journalists	Increased female leadership	Annually
NMC, Academic Institutions, and CSOs	Gender audits	Transparent progress tracking	Periodic
Media and Advocacy Groups	Public awareness campaigns	Enhanced public support for gender equity	Quarterly
NMC and CSOs	Gender assessment equity scorecards	Accountability and recognition of complaint media organisations	Annually

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

Pursuing gender equity within Ghana's media sector is both a democratic and a strategic obligation. As a powerful institution shaping public discourse, the media critically challenges stereotypes, influences societal norms, and amplifies diverse voices. However, entrenched gender disparities in leadership, workplace policies, and content production continue to undermine the sector's capacity to reflect the inclusivity and equity that Ghana aspires to achieve.

This Strategy Document represents a collective effort to reimagine the media landscape as a representative, fair, and empowering model. Grounded in stakeholder consultations and scholarly insights, and in alignment with global and national frameworks, including the Affirmative Action (Gender Equity) Act, 2024 (Act 1121) and the *National Gender Policy* (2015), this Document outlines actionable strategies for dismantling systemic barriers and fostering gender equity. These recommendations reflect the collective input of academia, media associations, media practitioners, policymakers and CSOs, creating a unified roadmap for progress.

The success of this roadmap hinges on the commitment and collaboration of all stakeholders. Media organisations must lead the process by adopting inclusive workplace policies, prioritising gender-balanced content, and actively supporting women's career advancement. Policymakers and regulators have a responsibility to enforce compliance with gender equity laws and provide clear guidelines and incentives to support media organisations in this transformation. Civil society and academia are uniquely positioned to drive public awareness, conduct rigorous research, and offer capacity-building resources that can strengthen the media sector's ability to embrace gender equity. Finally, the public plays a crucial role in holding media organisations accountable and advocating for fair and balanced representation in content.

This Document does not merely provide a framework for addressing gender inequality; it also presents an opportunity to redefine the Ghanaian media as a catalyst for societal transformation. By embracing the strategies outlined, stakeholders can build a media landscape that is equitable, inclusive, and reflective of the diverse voices and talents within Ghana's society. The vision for a gender-equal media sector is not just aspirational, it is attainable with the commitment, collaboration, and perseverance of all its stakeholders.

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