

CEGENSA Matters



Centre for Gender Studies and Advocacy, University of Ghana, Legon

Connecting the University to the Public

In September 2008, as part of activities to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the University of Ghana, the Centre for Gender Studies and Advocacy in collaboration with the ICT Directorate, mounted a photo exhibition and held a symposium to celebrate the contributions of some of the many women associated with the University over its 60-year life.



The Hon. Frema Osei-Opare, Prof. Ann Seidman, Ms. Dehab Ghebream

The photo exhibition was launched at a colourful ceremony (literally and figuratively) held at the Recreational Quadrangle on September 15th by the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Cliff N.B Tagoe. Present were a wide spectrum of people from the diplomatic corps, the University community, other sister Universities, heads or representatives from Junior and Senior High

Schools, Civil Society Organisations, the press, students and members of the general public. Invited guests were welcomed to the event with music and dance by the Ghana Dance Ensemble. Special guests included H.E Ambassador Aggrey Orleans, Chairman of the UG@60 Committee; Prof Florence Dolphyne, former Pro-Vice-Chancellor

of UG; Ms Dehab Ghebream, Cultural Attaché of the U.S Embassy; Mrs. Cecilia Bannerman, Member of the Council of State; Hon. Frema Osei-Opare, former Deputy Minister for Manpower and Employment, and M.P for Ayawaso West Wuogon, Prof. Miranda Greenstreet, former Director of the Institute of Adult Education.

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Profile: Dr. Dzodzi Tsikata

Full Name/Title: Dr. Dzodzi Tsikata

Date Entered/or were Associated with UG: attended UG from 1980-1984.

Date Graduated from UG: 1984;

What you Studied at UG: studied Law; Also has an M.Phil in Sociology at the UG (1995). Has worked at

the University of Ghana since October 1991 when employed as a Junior Research Fellow.

Key Activities/Roles/or Achievements: Research, Writing and Advocacy on women's rights and rural and urban livelihoods and land tenure. Author of several articles and books on these subjects. On the *Continued on Pg 2*



Dr. Dzodzi Tsikata, Deputy Head CEGENSA

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Did you know

- Women invented bullet-proof vests, fire escapes, windshield wipers and the laser printer.
- The book 'The Female Member' says there are 640 names for female genitals-twice as many as there are for the male genitals.

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Profile: Dr. Dzodzi Tsikata continued

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advisory board of the Journal for Peasant Studies, Feminist Africa and the African Sociological Review, among others, and the co-editor for the Ghana Social Science Journal. Deputy Head of CEGENSA; Founding member and past convener, Network for Women's Rights in Ghana (NETRIGHT), one of the most vibrant women's organizations in the country. One of the founders of Third World Network Africa. Board member of the Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD) in Abuja and CIVIC Response Ghana. Past Board Member and Board Secretary for AWID.

What are you Currently doing?: Senior Research Fellow, ISSER and Deputy Head, CEGENSA.

Dr. Dzodzi Tsikata is one of the very few women in academia who has succeeded in making a direct link between her academic interests and her activism. A lawyer by training, Dzodzi is a Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Social, Statistical and Economic Research (ISSER), and Deputy Head of the Centre for Gender Studies (CEGENSA), a position she was appointed to by the Vice Chancellor of the University of Ghana in 2005. In terms of her role in the women's movement, she is co-founder and immediate past Convener of the Network for Women's Rights (NETRIGHT) in Ghana. She contributed to the setting up of Third World Network-Africa (TWN-Af) and the Africa Women Economic Policy Network (AWEPON). She was also the Chair of the Drafting Committee of the Women's Manifesto for Ghana, a political document that outlines critical issues of concern to women in Ghana and makes demands for addressing them.

Dr. Tsikata was born at Akuse in the Eastern Region on April 25, 1962 to Evans Tsikata, a teacher and Janet Fiadzigbe, a nurse. Her family lived at Akuse, Keta, and Sekondi before they moved to Accra New Town. She and her siblings learnt early in life to be self-sufficient with little supervision because of her mother's irregular work schedule. She was tutored by her father at home and had the privilege of being registered at the Children's library of the Ghana Library Board by her

father who borrowed books on her behalf. She remembers growing up in a home where house work was not shared according to sex. All her siblings did the house chores depending on their ages.

Dr. Tsikata attended Akuse Day Nursery and Accra New Town Experimental School and later Achimota School for seven years before proceeding to the University of Ghana in 1980 to read Law. Her national service was with the Legal Directorate of the Ghana Armed Forces. She also worked with the Ghana Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA) as a legal aid officer for two years before pursuing a Masters' Degree programme in Women and Development at the Institute of Social Studies in the Hague, Netherlands, in 1989. Dr. Tsikata joined the Institute of Social Statistical and Economic Research (ISSER) as a Junior Research Fellow in October 1991. She studied for a Master of Philosophy (M.Phil) in Sociology. Subsequently, she applied for and won a competitive Dutch Fellowship to undertake Doctoral Studies from 1997 to 2003. She worked on communities affected by the Akosombo Dam for her PhD where she looked at the differential impact of the dam on both men and women.

Earlier, she had also worked as a member of a team of researchers on the project, 'Women in Public Life' which provided an update on women's conditions in public institutions and the statistical differences and inequalities between women and men in those institutions. The study also helped to understand the cultures of certain institutions and the way in which these cultures affected women. She was actively involved with the Development and Women Studies (DAWS) programme of the IAS and was appointed de facto Convener, when the then Convener was away on sabbatical. As Convener, she organised a successful international conference on bridging the gap between women's activists, policy makers and women in academia.

Dr. Tsikata's involvement in the Women's Movement in Ghana began in 1982 when she was a student at the University of Ghana. She was a member of the New Democratic Movement (NDM) as well as the Federation of Ghana Women founded

by Professor Takyiwaa Manuh, then a lecturer and now director of the Institute of African Studies (IAS). She contributed to the setting up of Third World Network-Africa (TWN) and coordinated the gender unit of the Network from 1994 to 2000. As part of her work at TWN, she initiated an eight African country study to review the extent to which governments had complied with the UN requirement to set up national machineries for women and the extent of their effectiveness. The findings of the research were published as TWN's National Machinery Series. The initiative led to the formation of the Network for Women's Rights in Ghana (NETRIGHT) as a response to the need for a common platform for women in Ghana.

Since NETRIGHT's inception in 1999, Dr. Tsikata has committed herself to working hard to strengthen and sustain the network. She was the third Convener for two terms from 2002-2005. As Convener, she initiated processes towards

“We must work hard to ensure that policy makers move away from paying lip-service to promoting women's rights as equal citizens of our country.”

a gender critique of Ghana's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (GPRS) pushing policy makers to acknowledge NETRIGHT's existence and relevance.

The Portrayal Of Women In Advertisements

By Susan Langmagne

Women form over 50% of Ghana's population and have contributed in diverse ways towards the development of Ghana. Over the years, through systematic educational and empowerment programs championed by civil society organisations, women have gradually moved from their traditionally ascribed and gender stereotyped roles into roles as professionals, bread winners and role models.

There have been significant transformations in the experiences and positions of women in Ghana's history since independence till date thus women are no longer located primarily in the reproductive sphere in their domestic roles as caregivers, housewives and homemakers, but have taken on various careers and have chalked enviable successes in their chosen fields. Some examples of such accomplished women are; Prof. Akua Kuenyehia, a judge at the International Criminal Court (ICC), Prof. Ama Atta Aidoo, a renowned writer and poet, Dr. Mary Chinery Hesse, Government advisor, Prof. Abena Dolphyne, first female Pro- Vice Chancellor, Prof. Takyiwaa Manuh, Director of the Institute of African Studies (IAS) University of Ghana, to mention just a few.

Women are in leadership and occupy some of the top most positions in our society. It is therefore very disheartening to see women portrayed in adverts as sex objects, and as individuals incapable of leading. Most adverts have sought to portray women as cooks and cleaners suggesting that these roles are the sole responsibility of women, yet most of the cooks in our hotels and restaurants referred to as "Chefs" are men, so are most of our accomplished stewards. What then makes cooking and cleaning a preserve of women?

The advertising agencies that produce these adverts, and their clients who market them, thus reinforce and uphold gender stereotypes and do not acknowledge and appreciate the current phenomenon where some men are active participants in the running of their homes.

Adverts shown both on television and bill boards depict women's bodies as nothing but channels for entertainment and for decoration. It is in this light that the current debate in the media on the "indecent dressing" of women is not only interesting but also exposes the double standards exhibited on issues affecting women. In one vein, it sounds like it is acceptable when women are portrayed as sex objects in skimpy clothes in adverts running on our national television while in another vein it is portrayed as disgusting and against our cultural values when similar clothes are worn by real women on the streets, university campuses or in our communities. The following are examples of some adverts which portray women as sex objects; Kasapreko Ogidigidi Bitters advert, Castle malt stout advert, i-mate SPL Mobile phone billboard advert and the For Men deodorant advert.

Another very misleading feature of adverts in Ghana is the situation where even when women are portrayed as having a profession or career, they are either depicted as traders; selling one thing or the other or engaged in some menial jobs. Women are rarely projected as professionals – as lawyers, Doctors, Engineers, Pharmacists, Corporate Executives just to mention a few.

Though the media has been very instrumental in the current development in women's empowerment, the media in some instances down play their own contributions by trivialis-



The author, Susan Langmagne of the Centre for Gender Studies and Advocacy (CEGENSA), University of Ghana, Legon

ing and sensationalising issues affecting women. Women are headline news when they are portrayed in the negative light, otherwise stories on women are buried in the middle of the news item.

Adverts are not only powerful tools in educating, informing and entertaining the public, but are even more dominant in influencing and shaping the opinion of people. What adverts therefore portray women to be informs people's perceptions which they carry away with them, especially the young ones. It is therefore vital that adverts portray women in ways that reflect women's achievements in the Ghanaian society. The NIIT Computer Training Institute advert is an example of a positive advert.

In doing this, the media will not only be contributing her quota to the empowerment of women and the development of Ghana but also encouraging young women to take up challenges in various endeavours and to aspire to be achievers.

Women @ UG @ 60 Photo Exhibition

Continued from Front Page

The Head of CEGENSA, Prof. Akosua Adomako Ampofo welcomed guests and thanked the “Women@UG@60” photo exhibition co-ordinating team as well as the many others who supported the work of the committee and enabled the exhibition to happen: the US Embassy, FotoStore, the Ministry of Information, and the University of Ghana (especially the Public Affairs and the ICT Directorates, the Registrar’s Offices, Volta Hall, and Balme library). She then gave a brief background to CEGENSA and some of its achievements to date and then explained that while the University of Ghana has contributed immensely towards the training of skilled man power and the development of Ghana in its 60 year life, the stories tend to miss women’s contributions. It was in this light that CEGENSA and the ICT Directorate decided to launch a photo exhibition to throw the spot light on some of the many heroines in the 60-year history of the University of Ghana and to tell their stories.

Prof. Adomako Ampofo explained that the exhibition was based on archival, historical and field research and assured the gathering that although not all pictures could be displayed, the exhibition would be mounted on line thus providing an opportunity to expand the scope of the pictures mounted. Ms. Ama Dadson, Deputy Director of the ICT Directorate and the team leader of the “Women@UG@60” photo exhibition expressed her excitement about the project. The exhibition showcased students, staff, faculty/administrators as well as some alumni, highlighting both their contributions to UG as well as to the wider society. Ms. Dadson underscored the importance of the photo exhibition not only because it told an inspiring story of over sixty women who had passed through the University of Ghana and also because



The Vice Chancellor, Prof. C.N.B. Tagoe cutting the tape to the Photo Exhibition at the bottom of the staircase to the Exhibition Hall in the Balme Library

it tapped into the digital promise of accessibility. Ms. Dadson indicated that the “Women@UG@60” would be put in an online archive offering a single access point to hundred of images and sound bites collected from all over the world.

The themes and time lines under which the pictures were mounted span 1) the 1950s (which marked the decade of the University’s establish-

ment years); 2) the 1960s (expansion, consolidation and Africanisation) through to the 1970s (the years of increasing visibility of female students); 3) the 1980s (the economic and politically tough years which included a mass exodus of lecturers); the 1990s (the Adjustment years); and the 2000s (with UG still standing and facing the future with hope) at a time when about twenty



(Left) Mrs. Eleonore Sylla Director, Goethe Institute, Accra (Right) Professors Miranda Greenstreet and Takiwaa Manu with other Guests viewing the Exhibition

women and gender studies courses are offered under the faculties of Arts, Law, Social Studies and Agriculture, and, since 2007, when female student enrolment is above 40%.

In a short speech made before he launched the photo exhibition, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ghana, Prof. C. N. B. Tagoe, acknowledged the contributions of the University's various constituents, some of whom he mentioned as the Ghanaian cocoa farmer, nationalist politicians who agitated for a separate University of Ghana and the entire Ghanaian public who gave their support to this enterprise. Prof. Tagoe noted, however, that among those whose contributions had not received enough attention were. He asserted that the mounting of the exhibition to honour women is a sign of the times and a manifestation of the University's coming of age as an institution of higher learning.

He enumerated some of the steps taken by UG to promote gender equity as:

- Increasing the in take of women into the University through Affirmative action
- Promoting access of women to all faculties of the University
- Increasing number of residential facilities for women
- Prof. F. T. Sai Fund for Girls in Science
- The Establishment of CEGENSA

He congratulated the Head and staff of CEGENSA and the ICT Directorate.



Ms. Ama Dadson, Deputy Director, ICT Directorate

“The Photo Exhibition is important not only because it tells an inspiring story of over sixty women who have passed through the university, but also because it is a practical one that taps into the digital promise of accessibility”



(L to R) Ms. Dehab Ghebreab, Cultural Attache of the US Embassy, Prof. C.N.B Tagoe, Vice Chancellor, HE Ambassador Aggrey-Orleans, Chairman of the UG@60 Committee.

Women @ UG @ 60 Symposium

The day after the exciting launch of the Photo Exhibition the Centre for Gender Studies and Advocacy held a symposium on the same theme of "Women @ UG @ 60". This event was also open to the public and special guests included members of the diplomatic corps and sister Universities.

ers. They shared with guests what life on campus had been like, the facilities they enjoyed, developments that have taken place since and the kind of University they would like to see in the next 50 years.

The first speaker was Prof. Ann Seidman. Currently an Institutional Economist at the Boston University

School of Law, she reflected on the 1960's, the decade during which she and her husband taught for 4 years at the University of Ghana. Prof Seidman spoke with a hint of nostalgia of the early years of the Nkrumah era and the dreams and sense of purpose that had captured the nation.



(Prof. Akosua Adomako Ampofo (L) and Prof. Isabella A. Quakyi (R)



Prof. A. Seidman and granddaughter Tumi

In her welcome remarks the Head of the Centre, Prof. Akosua Adomako Ampofo underscored the purpose of the symposium as being a forum to celebrate 60 years of women in the life of the University of Ghana. The chairperson for the occasion, Prof. Takyiwaa Manuh, Director of the Institute of African Studies, and an internationally-known gender and Africa specialist, excited the guests with snippets from her repertoire of experiences at UG as a student and Faculty member.

The speakers for the event had been selected to represent the different decades and contexts of the University's life, reflecting on their experiences as students or lectur-



HE Ambassador and Mrs. Aggrey-Orleans with the symposium panellists

Women @ UG @ 60 Symposium

She also spoke fondly of her memories of people and places and thus provided a delightful feel of our history as an institution and a country. The rest of the speakers were all alumni of the University of Ghana.

First came Mrs. Dorcas Coker-Appiah, a lawyer and the Executive Director of the Gender and Human Rights. She reflected on the small numbers of female students and faculty at the Documentation Centre, who represented the 1970s was not taught by a woman during her entire law schooling. Mrs Coker-Appiah also noted, with a dash of humour, that students were two to a room and enjoyed free meals served students by stewards in the dining halls. Wistfully, she reminisced on the vibrant debating clubs and the weekly publication of the Legon newsletter. Mr. Aloysius Denkabe, a Senior lecturer in the Department of English and the Acting Director of the sports Directorate,

had been invited to reflect on the 1980s. He provoked profound questioning of the university as a democratic (and gender friendly institution). Dr. Gloria Otoo, a lecturer in the Department of Nutrition and Food Sciences, reflected on the 1990s when she was a student, providing a narration that demonstrated the deep transformations that have occurred over the years – both systemic and infrastructural. She also highlighted

the benefits of mentoring from senior colleagues that played a significant role in her career choice. Last, but definitely not the least, were the refreshingly candid but also hopeful reflections of Nana Afua Twum-Barimah, a millennium graduate. Nana Afua was doing her National Service at the time of the symposium and had been a winner



of the prestigious British Council “Challenge” award. She spoke about her own student activism, disappointments at the parochial nature of student social life, concerns about the social restrictions imposed on women students and their own self-censorship, and her optimism for what Legon portends. No doubt she also left the entire gathering hopeful that the next 60 years would see the coming of age of Legon as a transformed institution.

Ambassador and Mrs. Aggrey-Orleans with Guests from the US Embassy (above), participants (L)

Report from the Sub-Committees—Highlights

1 RESEARCH AND DOCUMENTATION SUBCOMMITTEE

Chair

Ms. Ama Dadson, Deputy Director ICT Directorate

Activities

- a) Newsletter

The committee produced the first two issues of **CEGENSA Matters**, a newsletter for the Centre.

- b) Research

Research to find out students perception of sexual assault on campus is ongoing. The team leaders are Dr. Akosua Darkwah and Mrs. Fidelia Ohemeng.

- c) Upgrading of the CEGENSA Resource Unit

The resource unit was upgraded. Currently it contains 435 books, 47 Films and numerous technical and research reports and journals. This is a unique collection.

5 MENTORING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SUBCOMMITTEE

Chair

Rev. Dr. Mike Okyerefo, Lecturer Sociology Department

Activities

- a) Held a Leadership Forum for female Senior Members of the University after a needs assessment with female members of staff.
- b) Held a series of Faculty Development Workshops: “Getting Published”, “Grant Writing” & the Promotion Process” with the Faculty of Social Studies.

from all over the world.

- d) Organised the “Women @ UG @ 60” Photo Exhibition and Symposium.

Future Plans

- a) Completing the listing of all resources on the CEGENSA website.
- b) Collecting and disseminating existing research on all aspects of gender related work in the University.

2 SEXUAL ASSUALT SUBCOMMITTEE

Chair

Prof. Akosua Adomako Ampofo, Head, CEGENSA

Activities

- a) Held a Symposium “Sex and the Brain” in January 2007.
- c) In discussion with the UG Counselling and Placement Centre to collaborate in running the Counselling unit.

3 CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT SUBCOMMITTEE

Chair

Dr. Audrey Gadzekpo, Acting Director, School of Communication Studies

Activities

- a) Submitted two introductory core undergraduate Gender Courses “Gender and Development” and “Gender and Culture”, for approval to the Social Studies Faculty Board.

4 EXTENSION AND ADVOCACY SUBCOMMITTEE

CHAIR

Prof. Akosua Adomako Ampofo, Head, CEGENSA

ACTIVITIES

- Continues to hold a series of monthly Film Shows throughout the year, moderated by staff.

6 POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE

Chair

Dr Mariama Awumbila

Activities

- a) Reviewed existing policy documents of the University with a view to making recommendations for policy reforms and drafting a Gender Policy for the University.
- b) Based on a draft Sexual Harassment Report, a Sexual Harassment Policy has been drafted for review by the Advisory Board, the Vice Chancellor and the Inter-faculty committee for implementation.



Workshop with Popular Musicians

Changing the Portrayal of Women in Popular Music

In July 2008, CEGENSA held a workshop that brought together researchers, popular artistes, disk jockeys and radio presenters. The workshop was part of the research project, "Changing Representations of Women in Popular Culture/Music", coordinated by Prof. Akosua Adomako Ampofo, Head, Centre for Gender Studies and Advocacy, and Dr. Awo Mana Asiedu, Department of Theatre Arts.

This project is, in turn, part of a larger research endeavour called, Pathways of Women's Empowerment, involving an international consortium of researchers from academic institutions in Bangladesh, Brazil, Egypt, West Africa and the UK networking with women's organisations, women's rights groups and policy makers.

The consortium seeks to understand women's conceptions of empowerment; examine how policy changes affect women; explore with women their everyday lives; understand notions of sexualities and representations of women in popular culture, and influence policy discourses as well as development praxis.

The Convenor of the West Africa Hub of the project is Prof. Takyiwaa Manuh, the Director of the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon.

Also in attendance at the meeting with popular artistes were other RPC colleagues from Nigeria, Drs Bibi Bakare Yusuf and Charmaine Pereira, colleagues from Egypt, Drs Mona Ali Ibrahim and Sofa Rafaat, and from Ghana Drs Nana Akua Anyidoho and Ms Sika Ahadzie.

The project has also been working with the musicologist Prof. John Collins. The musicians and radio pre-



(Above) Workshop Participants, (Below) Dr. Mona Ali in a chat with Gyedu Blay



senters who attended the workshop included veteran musician Mr. Gyedu Blay Ambolley, president of MUSIGA, Mrs. Diana Hopeson, conscious rapper, WunLov, Radio DJs Nyame Stanley Simpe Abio (Channel One), Mr. Nii A. Dagadu (Citi FM), and Mr. Dennis Abeiku (Unique FM).

The CEGENSA Interim Consultative Committee



Dr. Mariama Awumbila ...Member
(second from left)

Prof. Adomako Ampofo..... Chair
(second from right)

Dr. Dzodzi TsikataMember
(absent from photo)

Miss. Ama DadsonMember
(far right)

Dr. Akosua Darkwah.....Member
(far left)

Prof. Takyiwaa ManuhMember
(centre)

CONTACT US:

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Dr. Audrey Gadzekpo.....Member
(absent from photo)

Rev. Dr. Mike Okyerefo...Member
(third from left)

Mr. Aloysius Denkabe.....Member
(fourth from left)

Dr. Agnes Simpson Budu.Member
(fourth from right)

Mr. Egyir-Croffet.....Member
(absent from photo)

