

# Gender

Addressing imbalance in military intake:

## KAIPTC, GAF sensitise girls to take up combat careers

From Benjamin Xornam Glover,  
TEMA

**T**HE Women, Youth, Peace and Security Institute (WYPSI) of the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC), in partnership with the Ghana Armed Forces (GAF), has held a sensitisation programme for students of Chemu Senior High Technical School intending to empower young girls into taking up combat careers in the GAF.

The programme, which forms part of a nationwide campaign, was designed to break stereotypes and open doors to careers in the military, particularly raising women to lead peacekeeping missions.

Funded by Canada's Elsie Initiative Fund, officials say, the initiative aligns with Ghana's commitment to increasing female participation in UN peacekeeping.

The campaign, which targets senior high schools and universities across all 16 regions, aims to reach over 20,000 students.

The campaign has so far been held in

Volta, Oti, Eastern, Central, Bono, Bono East and Ahafo regions.

In Greater Accra, the team has sensitised nearly 2,500 students of Nungua, Accra Girls and St. Mary's Senior High Schools.

The campaign builds upon Ghana's existing efforts towards gender equality in the military, aligning with UN Security Council Resolutions.

### Tema

Addressing students of Chemu Senior High Technical School in Tema last week, the Gender Policy Advisor to the Chief of Defence Staff, Group Captain Theodora Agornyo, highlighted the importance of women in combat roles in the GAF.

She said while the Ghana Armed Forces had a good number of women, many were restricted to roles in administration, catering and other traditionally "feminine" positions.

### Limitations

That, Group Capt Agornyo emphasised, had placed limitations on the number of women appointed to decision-making positions, keeping men dominant in leadership.

"This campaign directly addresses this

imbalance by encouraging young women to pursue diverse opportunities within the GAF, including combat roles, enabling their appointment into leadership roles as well as serving as commanders to lead troops to peacekeeping operations", she said.

Group Capt Agornyo explained that the campaign therefore challenges traditional views by showcasing the diverse and fulfilling opportunities available to women in the military, including leadership roles in combat units.

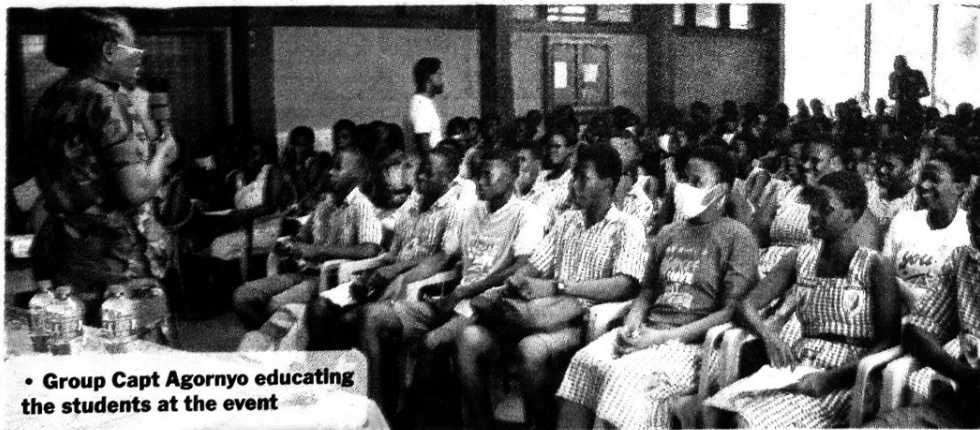
By providing accurate information, the campaign, Group Capt Agornyo hoped, would inspire young women to consider future serving their country and promoting peace globally.

Ghana, she said, recognised the vital role women played in peacekeeping and female peacekeepers often connected more effectively with local communities, especially women and children who were deeply affected by conflict.

### Gender Stereotypes

The E-Learning Officer at the KAIPTC, who also doubles as the Greater Accra Team Lead for the Campaign, Irene Elom Hatsu-Fiebor, who took the students through gender stereotypes, debunked the myth that women were not physically or mentally strong enough to take up combat roles in the Ghana Armed Forces.

She stressed that women could be strong, decisive leaders serving in a wide range of roles, including combat, intelligence, medicine, engineering and logistics.



• Group Capt Agornyo educating the students at the event

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