

# Gender

## I'll champion maternity leave extension to 4 months

— Naa Momo Lartey

By **Dickson Worlanyo Dotse,**  
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**T**HE Minister designate for Gender, Children, and Social Protection, Dr Agnes Naa Momo Lartey, has stated that if given the nod, she intends to champion the extension of maternity leave from the existing three months to four in line with the party's campaign promises.

Appearing before the Appointments Committee for her confirmation hearing yesterday, she said the additional one month was not only necessary for the mothers to take better care of their newborn babies but to also heal their bodies and feel much better after the birthing process.

"Men are still advocating for paternity leave and if it is important for them to take a break to support the family, then it is more important for women to have a prolonged period not only to take care of the children but to also heal properly," Dr Lartey, who is also the Member of Parliament (MP) for Krowor, said.

### Maternity leave

She was answering a question from the minority side of the committee about reviewing the Labour Act concerning maternity leave as promised by the National Democratic Congress (NDC)

during the 2024 general election campaign.

### Daycares

The Minister designate for Gender, Children, and Social Protection equally urged companies and organisations to consider giving a minimum of six months maternity leave if they could.

This would demonstrate a strong commitment to employee well-being, gender equity, and family support reflecting an understanding of the critical early months of a child's life and the importance of allowing parents adequate time to recover, bond with their child, and adapt to their new responsibilities.

It would also signal that such organisations had a forward-thinking approach to work-life balance, employee retention, and fostering a culture of inclusivity and care.

Dr Lartey also advocated the creation of daycares in organisations to make them more child-friendly stressing that such an initiative would make parents of newborns more productive because their minds would be at ease.

"You can have her there working for you but to have the utmost output, we should ensure a holistic approach. So I will sit with all stakeholders including civil service organisations (CSOs) who are deep into it. I'll join them to look at what is best, ensure that we push it and if the



• **Dr Agnes Naa Momo Lartey, Minister designate for Gender, Children, and Social Protection, answering questions before the Appointments Committee of Parliament.** Picture: ELVIS NII NOI DOWUONA

people of Ghana agree, I'll be the number one champion," she added.

On the issue of paternity leave, Ms Agnes responded; "I would love to advocate for that but beyond that, I would love to ensure that there are measures put in place to ensure that when men take the paternity leave, they spend it with the family."

### Sanitary pads

In response to a query on the cost and availability of sanitary products to girls from the MP for South, Dayi Rockson-Nelson Etse K. Dafeamekpor, the nominee stated that if put in charge of the ministry, she would take a critical look at

how to make sanitary pads available to girls, particularly those in vulnerable communities to ensure their education was not affected.

She acknowledged that the situation had deteriorated over time due to the high cost of such products resulting in poor families prioritising feeding and other household expenses over providing sanitary pads for young girls.

"In the meantime, while we haven't waived off the taxes on pads to ensure that they are affordable to all, we have to find a way of making sure that we can supply, especially to the underprivileged," she said.