



Gender

Recognise unpaid care work to tackle gender inequality — Participants

From Mohammed Fugu, TAMALE

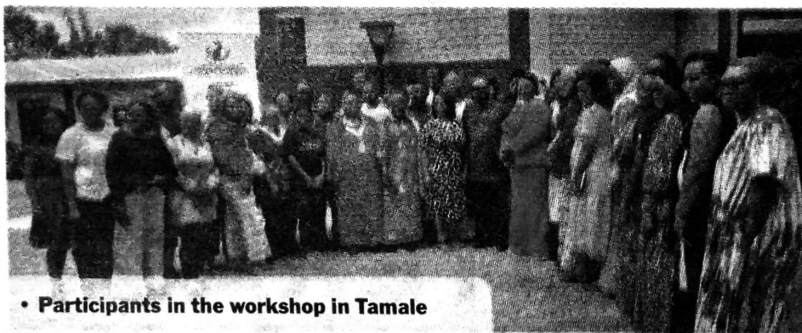
PARTICIPANTS in a workshop on Unpaid Care Work (UCW) and Time Poverty in Tamale have called for the official recognition of unpaid care work in Ghana to help reduce gender inequality and promote women's economic empowerment.

They said the phenomenon, which included childcare, household chores, and caring for the sick and elderly, placed a disproportionate burden on women, leading to time poverty and restricting their participation in paid employment and decision-making.

They pointed out that unpaid care work has been largely ignored in national development planning and macroeconomic policymaking despite evidence of its economic significance.

Event

Organised by NETRIGHT in collaboration with Alinea International, the event brought together about 40 representatives from Women's Rights Organisations (WROs) across northern Ghana to build a shared understanding of unpaid care work and time poverty,



• Participants in the workshop in Tamale

and to identify practical strategies for engagement at the district level.

The training was part of the United for Care Sensitive Approaches to Rights and Empowerment (UCARE) project, implemented in partnership with Alinea International.

Funded by Global Affairs Canada, the project aims to reduce the unequal and unfair burden of unpaid care work on women and adolescent girls in northern Ghana.

Burden

In her remarks, the Executive Director of SWIDA Ghana, Alima Sagito, said the heavy burden of unpaid care work was holding women back from pursuing income-generating activities, leadership opportunities, and

educational advancement.

She added that addressing this imbalance frees women's time, boosts productivity and enhances gender equity.

For her part, the Executive Director of Songtaba, Lamnatu Adam, noted that "when the workload is much, it affects women's professional development and worsens gender inequalities."

She stressed the need for deliberate policy measures to redistribute care work more equitably between men and women.

She added that advocacy at the district level was crucial to influencing local government plans and ensuring resources were allocated to tackle unpaid care work.

The Executive Director of the

Network for Women's Rights in Ghana (NETRIGHT), Patricia Blankson Akakpo, said the training workshop aimed to strengthen the capacity of women's rights organisations (WROs) to engage district authorities in addressing unpaid care work and time poverty.

"Unpaid care work is crucial in sustaining macroeconomic frameworks, yet entrenched stereotypical notions remain a major barrier to its recognition in policy," she said.

Citing the Ghana Living Standards Survey (GLSS), she revealed that 86.75 per cent of Ghanaians aged 15 and above engaged in unpaid care work, with women disproportionately affected.

While 93.1 per cent of women participate in UCW compared to 79.4 per cent of men, women spend an average of 19 hours a week on such work, nearly triple the seven hours recorded for men. In northern Ghana, the burden is almost twice the national average.

Mrs Akakpo warned that this entrenched inequality undermined women's economic autonomy and the country's broader goals for inclusive and sustainable development.

She stressed "successive governments have failed to prioritise unpaid care work in national development planning. We need an integrated approach embedded in government planning, implementation and monitoring frameworks — starting from the district level".

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