

**IN THE THIRD SESSION OF THE THIRD
PARLIAMENT OF THE FOURTH REPUBLIC
OF GHANA**

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**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON GENDER
AND CHILDREN ON THE 2003 ANNUAL
BUDGET ESTIMATES OF THE MINISTRY OF
WOMEN AND CHILDREN'S AFFAIRS**

20TH MARCH, 2003.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

In accordance with Article 179 of the 1992 Constitution and Order Number 140(4) of the Standing Orders of Parliament, the Draft Budget Estimates of the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs for the fiscal year 2003 was referred to this Committee, Gender and Children, for consideration and report, following the presentation of the 2003 Annual Budget Statement by the Minister of Finance on Thursday, 27th February 2003.

2.0 DELIBERATIONS

In considering the Estimates the Committee held a meeting with the Honourable Minister, the Technical Directors and the Principal Officials of the Ministry to seek their clarifications on the Estimates. The Committee is very grateful to them for their assistance.

3.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

The following reference documents were used by the Committee during the deliberations:

- i) The 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana,
- ii) The Standing Orders of Parliament.
- iii) The Sessional Address of H.E. the President.
- iv) The Budget Statement and Economic Policy of the Government of Ghana for 2003 Financial Year.

- v) The report of the Committee on the 2002 Budget Estimates of the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs.
- vi) The 2003 Draft Budget Estimates of the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs.

4.0 **BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF THE SECTOR MINISTRY**

4.1 **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs is to "unify all stakeholders involved in the promotion of gender and children issues and create an environment conducive to the integration of women and children in all sectors of the economy".

The Ministry is responsible for:

- I. Policy formulation, coordination and monitoring of institutional framework and activities of women and children programmes,
- li. Advocacy of gender sensitivity in sectoral plans and business promotions, programmes and projects,
- iii. Collaboration with donor agencies, NGO's and other development partners to facilitate the integration of women and children in national development; and
- iv. Dissemination of government policies, research findings on women and children to assist in the development process.

5.0 **OBJECTIVES OF THE MINISTRY**

The Ministry has the following as its main objectives:

- I. to develop policies and programmes that will promote gender equality and child development at all levels of society,

- ii. to establish a national framework for women issues through the institution of affirmative action on women's participation in public life,
- iii. to analyse the impact of economic reform on women and children and initiate a process which will empower them to participate fully in the design, management and implementation of socio-economic programmes,
- iv. to coordinate, monitor and evaluate gender-based programmes and projects, using existing structures; and
- v. to improve institutional and human resource capacity of "Women and Children in Development".

The above-mentioned policies and programmes are implemented through the following affiliate agencies:

- (i) National Council on Women and Development (NCWD)
- (ii) Ghana National Commission on Children (GNCC)

6.0 **A REVIEW OF 2002 BUDGET ESTIMATES**

In the 2002 fiscal year, an amount of Six billion, Seven hundred and Nine million Cedis (¢6,709,000,000.00) was approved by this House to the Ministry to meet its expenditure. However, it was realised that not all the approve sum was released to the Ministry to execute its programmes and activities as scheduled. As a result, the general performances of the Ministry was affected.

7.0 **TOTAL BUDGETARY ALLOCATION OF THE MINISTRY FOR 2003**

The Committee observed that a total budgetary allocation of **Nine billion, Six Hundred and Sixty-nine million Cedis (9,669,000,000.00)** has been provided for the operations of the Ministry for the year ending 31st December 2003. This is made up of:

ITEM		ALLOCATION
i. Personnel Emolument	-	2,915,000,000.00
ii. Administration	-	2,500,000,000.00
iii. Services	-	4,000,000,000.00
iv. Investment	-	254,000,000.00
Total	-	<u>9, 669,000,000.00</u>

- Details of the budgetary allocation for the Ministry and its affiliate agencies are shown in the table below:

7.1 2003 BUDGETARY ALLOCATION FOR THE VARIOUS EXPENDITURE ITEMS IN CEDIS

ITEM	MIN. OF WOMEN & CHILDREN'S AFFAIRS (TOTAL)	HEAD QUARTERS (GEN. ADMN.)	GHANA NATIONAL COUNCIL ON WOMEN AND DEV'T.(NCWD)	GHANA NATIONAL COMMISSION ON CHILDREN (GNCC)
Personal Emolument	2,915,000,000	600,000,000	1,640,000,000	675,000,000
Administration	2,500,000,000	950,000,000	780,000,000	770,000,000
Service Activity	4,000,000,000	1,500,000,000	1,260,000,000	1,240,000,000
Investment	254,000,000	127,000,000	63,500,000	63,500,000
TOTAL	9,669,000,000	3,177,000,000	3,743,000,000	2,748,500,000

7.2 BREAKDOWN OF ITEMS UNDER THE BUDGET

The expenditure of the Ministry and its agencies has been examined under four main headings below:-

7.3 **PERSONAL EMOLUMENT**

An amount of **¢2,915,000,000.00** has been allocated to the sector Ministry to cater for Personal Emolument i.e. Wages and Salaries and allowances of the existing staff and new recruits. Out of this amount, **¢600,000,000.00** is to take care of the main Ministry (Headquarters), **¢1,640,000,000.00** for the National Commission on Women and Development whilst **¢675,000,000.00** is earmarked for the Ghana National Commission on Children.

7.4 **ADMINISTRATION**

For administration, an amount of **¢2,500,000,000.00** has been allocated to the sector to take care of its expenses on utilities, consumables, travels, transport and maintenance. Out of this, **¢950,000,000.00** is allocated to the Headquarters of the Ministry, **¢780,000,000.00** to the National Council on Women and Development (NCWD) and the Ghana National Commission on Children is to receive an amount of **¢770,000,000.00** for its administration expenses.

7.5 **SERVICES**

A budgetary allocation of **¢4,000,000,000.00** has been provided for Services Expenses. Out of this, an amount of **¢1,500,000,000.00** is to go to the Ministry's Headquarters, **¢1, 260,000,000.00** to the National Council on Women and Development whilst the Ghana National Commission on Children receives **¢1,240,000,000.00**.

7.6 **INVESTMENT**

Out of the total sum of **¢254, 000,000.00** allocated to the sector for its Investments Expenses, **¢127,000,000.00** has been allocated to the Headquarters whilst **¢63,500,000.00** goes to the Ghana National Commission on Children and **¢63,500,000.00** to the National Commission on Women Development.

8.0 **OBSERVATIONS**

Mr. Speaker, the Committee observed during the review of the past year's activities of the Ministry that, the total amount approved by this House for the Ministry to set up its machinery to start running its programmes and policies, even though not adequate, was not released by the Ministry of Finance. For instance, out of the total budgetary allocation of ₦6,999,081,318, the actual release to the Ministry was ₦3,181,230,908.

The long delay in the release of the allocated funds and sometimes non-release of the funds during the entire period resulted in the Ministry and its agencies difficulty to operate effectively and thereby constraining the Ministry from achieving its overall set objectives.

Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding the above stated difficulties, the Committee learnt with satisfaction that the Ministry was supported with an amount of ₦24,199,500,000.00. Out of this amount, ₦9,199,500,000.00 came from HIPC Fund and ₦15,000,000,000.00 from Women's Development Fund (WDF).

8.1 **Personal Emolument**

The Committee observed that, the allocation made for the Ministry's Headquarters for payments of salaries and allowances to the staff was not utilised in the year 2002.

This was due to the fact that, the Ministry had not been given the authorisation to embark on staff recruitment to meet its manpower requirements. For instance, the Ministry has only 6 staff at its headquarters instead of 41 and a total of 214 for the two other agencies.

8.2 **Service Activity**

Mr. Speaker, it was noted that the Ministry in the year 2002 embarked on a number of Service Activities including a programme dubbed "Operation Bring your Child Home". The idea was to meet with women

in the Districts all over the country and discuss with them the obvious problems affecting their lives and how best the problems could be tackled.

It was realised at the end of the Programme that, parents who engage in activities such as "Child Trafficking" do so out of poverty.

Therefore, the Ministry in the year 2002 embarked on a Micro-Credit Scheme where Women were given some seed monies, either as individuals or as groups to start some projects.

The Ministry in 2003 has outlined a number of Service activities to continue its programme of financing Women and training them to undertake Small Scale Businesses to support the policy of Government on Poverty Reduction among Women. These activities include:-

- i. Organising workshops on salt processing,
- ii. Workshops for beneficiaries of Micro-Finance to identify training needs (Gari, Tomato and sheanut processing)
- iii. Providing support to institutions and NGOs to provide Entrepreneurial/Managerial Skills Training for Micro-Credit beneficiaries, Bankers and MOWAC staff.

8.3 Investment Activity

The Committee further observed that, the amount provided for the Investment Activities in both last year and this year's Budget Estimates was inadequate. An amount of ₦319,000,000.00 was allocated to the Ministry for Investment last year. This amount could not purchase even the vehicle for the minister's day-to-day activities. The Ministry was left with an outstanding bill of ₦183,000,000 with an annual interest of 20% to settle. The Ministry is also indebted to the tune of ₦45,000,000 for the supply of 3 computers. The total outstanding debt is ₦264,600,000 which is even higher than the allocation for Investments this year.

Mr. Speaker, it was also observed that, all the revenue accruing from the use of the Children's Park go into the consolidated fund. The returns from the Park for the year 2002 alone was ₦47,460,000.00. However, the Committee observed that provision under the investment activities for the Commission on Children, which could be used to maintain the park was woefully inadequate.

The Committee also observed that, the Ministry as a means to enhance learning and has embarked on a distribution of "Leisure Boxes" to some deprived Districts in the Country. Some of these Districts are in the three Northern Regions and the Central Region. These boxes contain a lot of library books and playing materials to help Children in their studies.

It was also noted that, the problem of Child Trafficking, especially, in the Coastal areas is gradually becoming a national canker even though the Ministry is putting measures in place to curb the situation. The Committee was informed that, at one of the Ministry's sensitisation workshops, a young boy of about 8 years appeared with his eye covered. Upon enquiries it was realised his eye had been seriously injured by a tree stump during the course of deep-diving activities he was compelled to undertake.

Mr. Speaker, this is just one of the horrifying experiences that children encounter with their "masters".

9.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- i. The Committee therefore recommends that, the Ministry of Finance gives the authorisation to embark on its recruitment exercise as soon as possible and also release the ₦976,000,000.00 allocation to the Ministry of Women and children Affairs this year to enable it operate at full capacity.
- ii. The Committee recommends that the Ministry endeavours to put in place Monitoring and Evaluation mechanism to supervise the

various projects that are being carried out in the various Districts, so as to enable the it assess the successes and failures of the exercise.

- iii. The Committee is of the view that, the Ministry needs a lot more help than they are getting now. As a new ministry, it should be given some seed money to embark on a lot of investments to enable it take off properly and effectively.
- iv. The Committee urges the Ministry of Finance to allow some percentage of the proceeds of Children's Park to the Ministry's National Commission on Children for proper maintenance of the Park.
- v. The Committee recommends that, the Ministry should extend the distribution of the Leisure Boxes to other parts of the Country to make learning interesting to all children.
- vi. The Committee recommends that the Ministry collaborates with the National Commission on Civic Education (NCCE) and the Department of Social Welfare to embark on a serious campaign to sensitise the public on the dangers involved in Child Trafficking and other related activities.

10.0 CONCLUSION

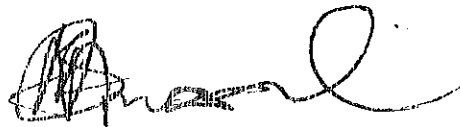
Mr. Speaker, it is important to note that the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs has a significant role in ensuring that Ghanaian women and children are given prominence as far as development is concerned.

Notwithstanding the above observations, a critical assessment of the programmes and activities earmarked for this year by the Ministry of Women and Children suggest that a higher budgetary allocation ought to have been made. The minimum should be the amount that has been spelt out in the Ministry's budget estimates.

The Committee therefore strongly recommends that the total amount of **¢ 9,669,000,000** allocated to the Ministry for the year ending 31st December 2003 be approved by this august House.

The Committee further request the Ministry of Finance to ensure the early and full release of the allocation.

Respectfully Submitted,



**HON. ANGELINA BAIDEN-AMISSAH (MRS)
(CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON
GENDER AND CHILDREN)**



**JOANA ABENA SAKYI ADJEI (MRS)
(CLERK TO THE COMMITTEE)**

(20TH MARCH 2003)