



**NETWORK FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN
GHANA (NETRIGHT)**

**Mobilising for Women's
Rights in Ghana**



NETRIGHT
FEMINIST ECONOMICS SCHOOL

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CONCEPT NOTE

THEME

Whose Economy? Whose Future?
Building Collective Power For Economic Justice



Our Website
www.netrightghana.org

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT



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Economic policies and decisions have a profound impact on women's rights, livelihoods and access to resources. Decisions on taxation, public expenditure, debt, social protection, trade, employment, natural resources and financial systems can either advance gender equality or deepen existing inequalities. Yet, women's rights organisations (WROs) and other civil society actors often have limited opportunities to engage meaningfully in economic policy processes, particularly where these processes are highly technical, dominated by economic institutions and characterised by limited access to timely information and data.

In Ghana, persistent gender inequalities demonstrate the need for stronger engagement by WROs and civil society organisations (CSOs) in economic policy and decision-making. The Ghana Statistical Service's 2021 Population and Housing Census found that the proportion of economically active women was 53.0%, compared with 63.5% for men. The gender gap was even wider in rural areas, where 51.5% of women were economically active compared with 63.6% of men. The Census also shows that women are highly concentrated in sectors and forms of employment that tend to offer lower levels of economic security, with women accounting for 81.3% of employment in agriculture, forestry and fishery, services and sales, and craft and related trades, compared with 68.9% of men.

The structure of Ghana's labour market further reinforces these inequalities. The Ghana Statistical Service's 2025 Labour Statistics Bulletin notes that informality continues to dominate the labour market, with more than half of employed women being self-employed without employees, while men are more likely to be engaged in wage employment. The report highlights the need for gender-inclusive employment policies, stronger job creation and measures to address the vulnerabilities associated with informal work.

Women's economic participation is also constrained by the unequal distribution of unpaid care and domestic work. Data from Ghana's Time Use Survey show that women spend significantly more time on unpaid care and domestic work than men. Recent analysis using Ghana Living Standards Survey and Time Use Survey data found that women nationally spend an average of 147 minutes per day on unpaid care work compared with 49 minutes for men. In northern Ghana, the disparity is even greater, with women spending more than four times as much time on unpaid care work as men.

These inequalities are not simply social or household-level issues; they are closely linked to economic policy choices. The availability and quality of public services, social protection, childcare, healthcare, water and sanitation, transport and other public infrastructure can either reduce or reinforce the disproportionate burden of unpaid care carried by women. Similarly, taxation and public expenditure decisions influence the resources available to finance services and programmes that support women's economic participation and wellbeing.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT



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Ghana's broader fiscal and economic environment makes civil society engagement in these issues particularly important. Fiscal pressures, public debt, revenue mobilisation and expenditure constraints have placed significant attention on how scarce public resources are raised, allocated and spent. The IMF's fiscal projections, for example, demonstrate the continuing importance of fiscal consolidation and debt management to Ghana's economic policy environment. In this context, questions of who pays, who benefits, whose needs are prioritised and whose voices are represented in economic decision-making are central to advancing economic justice.

Gender-responsive budgeting provides one important entry point for influencing these decisions. UN Women notes that gender-responsive budgeting can help governments identify gender gaps, direct resources towards addressing inequalities and strengthen accountability for public spending. However, globally, only 26% of countries have comprehensive systems for tracking gender equality allocations in national budgets, demonstrating the continued importance of civil society capacity to monitor public resources and advocate for gender-responsive financing.

Against this backdrop, there is the need to strengthen the capacity of WROs and gender-focused CSOs to understand, interrogate and influence economic policies and processes. Women's rights organisations (WROs) bring important perspectives on the lived realities of women and marginalised groups, but their ability to engage effectively in economic policy spaces can be constrained by limited access to economic analysis, policy information, data and specialised advocacy skills.

NETRIGHT'S Economic Justice Capacity Building Programme



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The Feminist Economics School forms part of NETRIGHT's Economic Justice thematic area and specifically contributes to the Economic Justice Capacity Building Programme component of its work.

The programme recognises that advancing economic justice requires more than generating evidence and engaging in individual policy processes. It requires a critical mass of informed civil society actors who can analyse economic policies from a gender and rights perspective, identify opportunities for influence and collectively advocate for alternative policy choices.

The School is therefore designed as a cohort-based capacity development and movement-building initiative. Rather than functioning as a standalone training, each cohort will bring together representatives of civil society organisations, with a particular focus on women's rights and feminist organisations, who will participate in a structured learning process and remain connected beyond the School.

The cohort model will provide participants with opportunities to build relationships, exchange experiences, learn from one another and develop a shared understanding of economic justice issues. It will also create a foundation for sustained collaboration and collective advocacy beyond the training period.



RATIONALE

There is an urgent need to build a stronger constituency of women's rights organisations that can engage effectively with macroeconomic issues and advocate for policies that address structural inequalities. While organisations may have strong expertise in areas such as violence against women, political participation, health, livelihoods or social protection, there is often limited capacity to connect these issues to broader macroeconomic (and fiscal) policy issues.

For example, decisions on taxation affect household incomes and the availability of public resources; budget allocations influence the quality and accessibility of public services; debt and fiscal consolidation can affect public spending; and labour and trade policies shape women's employment opportunities and working conditions. These connections need to be understood and articulated more strongly within women's rights advocacy.

The School will therefore strengthen both technical knowledge and advocacy practice. Participants will learn how to analyse economic policies through a gender and feminist lens, interpret relevant data, identify policy entry points, develop evidence-based advocacy messages and engage strategically with decision-makers and other influential actors.

Importantly, the School will also contribute to building a collective of women's rights organisations advocating on economic justice issues. The cohort will provide a foundation for sustained peer learning, joint analysis, knowledge sharing and coordinated advocacy. Over time, this collective can contribute to strengthening the voice and influence of the women's rights movement in national economic policy debates.



EXPECTED OUTPUTS

The school is expected to result in:

1.

Cohorts of CSO representatives with strengthened knowledge on economic justice and feminist economic policy.

2.

Increased capacity of participating organisations to undertake gender-responsive economic policy analysis.

3.

Improved advocacy and policy influencing skills among cohorts.

4.

Joint advocacy strategies or initiatives developed around selected priorities.

5.

Strengthened relationships and collaboration among participating organisations and growing community of practice/collective of women's rights organisations working on economic justice.

6.

Increased engagement of participating organisations in relevant economic policy and accountability processes.

Objectives



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Main Objective



To strengthen the capacity, collaboration and collective action of civil society organisations, particularly women's rights organisations, to influence economic policies and processes towards greater gender equality and economic justice.

Specific Objectives

1.

Strengthen participants' understanding of economic justice, feminist economics and key economic policy issues affecting women's rights.

2.

Build the capacity of women's rights organisations to analyse economic policies, budgets and reforms from a gender and rights perspective.

3.

Strengthen participants' skills in evidence-based advocacy, policy influencing, strategic communications and engagement with decision-makers.

4.

Create a cohort of CSO actors with a shared understanding of economic justice and a commitment to collective advocacy.

5

Facilitate the identification of shared economic justice priorities and opportunities for joint policy influencing.

6

Strengthen relationships, collaboration and knowledge exchange among women's rights organisations working on economic justice.





KEY THEMATIC AREAS

The School addresses interconnected policy areas that shape economic outcomes and women's rights. The six thematic areas provide a framework for learning, analysis, and advocacy that links macroeconomic policy to gender justice.

01 Feminist Economics and Economic Justice



Understanding how economies, markets and policies affect women differently and advancing fairer alternatives.

Macroeconomic Policy and Fiscal Justice



Connecting women's rights advocacy to taxation, budgets, debt, fiscal consolidation and public spending.

Gender-Responsive Budgets and Public Services



Examining budget allocations, accountability and the quality and accessibility of essential services.

Care, Labour, Trade and Social Protection



Exploring unpaid care work, women's employment, working conditions, trade policies and social protection systems.

05 Evidence, Data and Policy Analysis



Using gender-disaggregated data, feminist analysis and evidence to identify policy entry points and build strong arguments.

06 Advocacy, Communications and Collective Action



Developing clear advocacy messages, engaging decision-makers, strengthening public support and coordinating action among women's rights organisations.



EXPECTED OUTCOMES, PARTICIPANTS & METHODOLOGY

1.

EXPECTED OUTCOME

The School will contribute to the emergence of a stronger and more coordinated collective of women's rights organisations with the knowledge, skills, relationships and confidence to advocate collectively on economic justice issues.

In the longer term, the initiative is expected to contribute to increased and more effective participation of women's rights organisations in economic policy processes and greater influence on policies and decisions affecting women's economic rights, access to resources and wellbeing.

2.

PARTICIPANTS

The School will target 15-20 participants per cohort drawn primarily from civil society organisations, with a focus on women's rights and feminist organisations. Participants will include CSOs working on economic justice, gender equality, public finance, taxation, governance, social protection, livelihoods, labour rights and natural resource governance. Selection will consider organisational experience, interest in economic justice advocacy and potential to apply the learning and contribute to collective action.

3.

METHODOLOGY

Participatory and practice-oriented learning through expert inputs, facilitated discussions, peer learning, group work, case studies, data and policy analysis, advocacy planning, and reflection.



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CONTACT US

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For more information, collaboration and opportunities to engage on economic justice, please contact NETRIGHT.



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Together, we can advance economic justice
and women's rights in Ghana.

