

# 2015 - 2019

## NETRIGHT STRATEGIC PLAN



[ To create a society that pays equal attention to the ways in which national processes, policies and practices affect Ghanaian men and women ]

|  | VISION  | MISSION  | PRIORITY AREAS                                     | STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES  |
|--|---|--|--|---|
|  | <p>To create a society that pays equal attention to the ways in which national processes, policies and practices affect Ghanaian men and women.</p> | <p>To promote women's rights in Ghana through the critical analysis of gender dimensions of national processes and policies and to advocate for policy change.</p> | <p>1. Enhancing Visibility of the Organisation</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Organise Annual General Meetings at both national and regional levels.</li> <li>b) Consistently provide a response to national issues that affect women in a swift manner.</li> <li>c) Liaise with ISODEC and IDEG to learn how it could be more involved in national processes including budget development processes.</li> <li>d) Redesign the organisation's website in a more attractive manner.</li> <li>e) Make NETRIGHT's publications (research documents; annual reviews; newsletter) available both online and in print.</li> <li>f) Publish the newsletter Akoben quarterly.</li> <li>g) Identify different media spaces (one radio station, major newspaper, social media) on which to discuss pertinent issues affecting women on a regular basis.</li> <li>h) Make presentations at the CSW on an annual basis to increase the visibility of the organization at an international level.</li> </ul> |
|  |   |  | <p>2. Institutionalisation of the Organisation</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Embark on a membership drive to increase the membership of both individuals and organizations in all regions of the country.</li> <li>b) Provide a permanent physical location for the organization.</li> </ul>   |
|  |   |  | <p>3. Governance of the Institution</p>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Replace the Steering Committee with a Board of Directors whose members will be elected at the national AGM to serve a three-year tenure of office with the possibility of reelection for another 3 years.</li> <li>b) Replace the Convenor with the position of Executive Director.</li> <li>c) Strengthen the Secretariat through the recruitment of professional and competent staff with fundraising and communications experience.</li> </ul>   |
|  |   |  | <p>4. Financing of the Institution</p>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Identify a funding source whose values are aligned with NETRIGHT from whom multi-year funding lasting a minimum of 3 years can be sought.</li> <li>b) Maintain NETRIGHT's strategic partnerships with AWDF, FES and the Japanese Embassy for emergency funding.</li> <li>c) Establish relations with the donor community (DFID, French Embassy, EU, USAID) so as to solicit funding from those who offer resources in line with our core mandate and values.</li> <li>d) Organise high level annual dinners for donors and corporate organizations that serve as fundraisers and opportunities to expand the network.</li> <li>e) Devise a system to ensure that membership dues are paid more regularly.</li> <li>f) Establish relationships with African philanthropists who can be persuaded to commit to our values, vision and mission.</li> </ul>   |
|  |   |  | <p>5. Programme Activities</p>                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Determine the core programmes that will serve as the organization's focus.</li> <li>b) Develop a multi-year set of activities for each programme area.</li> </ul>   |

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## 1. Preamble

The Network for Women's Rights in Ghana (NETRIGHT) is a network of civil society organisations (CSOs) and individuals with a clear interest in working together to bring a gender perspective to national processes as well as policy content and implementation. NETRIGHT began in November 1999 when a group of women's rights and gender-oriented NGOs, activists and advocates having identified the absence of a collective platform to respond to issues of national importance and its implications for gender equality in national processes and policies set out to address that gap.

The organisation aims to draw attention to violations of women's rights and to campaign for changes to achieve women's equality. Other aims include the creation of a space to debate and articulate more clearly the different positions within the women's movement in Ghana. There are three (3) core areas of NETRIGHT's work and these are economic justice, movement building and natural resources. To ensure inclusiveness, NETRIGHT provides a national advocacy platform for CSOs around national and international processes and educates the public about gender equality and women's rights issues. A cardinal principle of NETRIGHT is to avoid duplication or competition with its members and rather support their interventions by publicising and helping to identify resource persons.

Over the last fifteen years, NETRIGHT has built an enviable record of accomplishments and credibility as one of the few organisations working consistently on gender and economic justice with an additional ability to organise high-level meetings on women's rights. It is therefore highly regarded in the country as well as both on and off the continent.

NETRIGHT's membership strength currently stands at 74 organisational and 154 individual members located across all ten regions of Ghana. The network's activities are coordinated by a Secretariat, located in Accra. The Secretariat has a lean staff strength of six (6), comprising a Senior Program Officer, 3 Program Officers, a part-time Finance Officer and a Cleaner. This six-member Secretariat carries out a variety of functions including information dissemination, outreach, membership and public education, networking, advocacy, research, publications and capacity building.

The network is governed by a nine (9)-member Steering Committee (SC) headed by a Convenor and Deputy Convenor. The once yearly Annual General Meeting (AGM), the highest decision making organ of NETRIGHT discusses the network's achievements and sets its agenda for the ensuing year. The SC provides leadership and policy direction for the network. Members meet quarterly to assess the progress of the network. The network is represented in the regions by focal points.

Over the fifteen (15) years of its existence, NETRIGHT's administrative and management structures have been maintained largely due to a set of core norms and practices. The Secretariat has operated a non-hierarchical and semi-formalised organisational structure and the SC is led by a volunteer Convenor who serves as a line manager of the Secretariat. The network has, however, out-grown its current governance and management system. The lean Secretariat and the volunteer Convenor/SC-led Secretariat are no longer effective for managing the network's activities, guiding its agenda-setting processes, securing funding for the network,

and ensuring a high level of network national visibility and active membership. This is limiting the network's ability to sustain its operations and maintain its national presence.

This Strategic Plan is therefore designed to provide the organization with a clear sense of purpose and direction for the next years as well as a roadmap for how to achieve these goals. The ultimate goal of the plan is to ensure that the organization is restructured in a way that clarifies the roles and responsibilities of each member of staff and ultimately ensures the long term-sustainability of the network.

## **2. An overview of NETRIGHT's environment**

To understand NETRIGHT's ability to work effectively for national development, it is important to take account of the context in which NETRIGHT works and the internal/external factors that influence its work. While NETRIGHT works primarily in the Ghanaian context, the international environment also influences the state and the actions that it takes. There are four major sets of factors that influence the work of NETRIGHT; socio-cultural; political; legal; economic.

### **2.1 Socio-cultural factors**

Ghana's socio-cultural environment determines the nature of gender relations and has implications for the work of NETRIGHT. A number of socio-cultural factors can be identified at both the national and international level and include:

- Local and global popular culture
- Processes of gender socialization
- Institutional (religious, educational, media – social, print) influences on conceptions of gender
- Global and African women's movement

### **2.2 Political factors**

The attitudes and perspectives of those who exercise power in Ghana with respect to gender equality and equity influences the ease with which NETRIGHT is able to advocate successfully for changes that favour women. While it is important for more women to participate fully in the political administration of the nation, it is equally important that these women share values that are similar to that of NETRIGHT in order to ensure that NETRIGHT's advocacy efforts achieve results. Some of the critical political factors that shape the work of NETRIGHT include

- A general lack of gender sensitivity among representatives of political parties.
- A disregard for women's rights by the political authorities.
- The lack of commitment on the part of political authorities at district, regional and national levels to effect gender equitable changes.
- The government's satisfaction with tokenism in administrative appointments.
- Inadequate resources and capacity of women's caucus in Parliament.

### 2.3 Legal/administrative factors

The legal structures in Ghana provide the framework within which the state allocates resources and carries out the responsibilities that the citizens require of them. The principles of gender equality require that these legal structures are drawn up in a manner that is sensitive to the different circumstances and needs of women and men in the country. By and large, however, the legal structures in Ghana do not take gender issues into account. Gender mainstreaming is therefore a slow and ongoing process in the Ghanaian public space. While in the last two decades, a number of laws have been passed that help to secure the rights and interests of Ghanaian women, a lot more still needs to be done to ensure that women in this country are afforded the same rights and responsibilities as their male counterparts. In addition, the resources and administrative structures that need to be put in place to ensure that these laws have the intended effects have not always been provided. Below, we identify some of the crucial legal factors that impinge on the work of NETRIGHT:

- Poor integration of gender issues into the legal and policy documents of the country.
- Insufficient resource allocations for gender interventions.
- Low capacity of personnel tasked with the responsibility of gender mainstreaming in the various offices in the country.
- Lack of an all-encompassing gender-equitable legal framework guiding actions in the country.
- The lengthy timeliness between passage of bills and the development of legislative instruments to facilitate the operationalization of the bills.

### 2.4 Economic factors

The importance of economic issues to NETRIGHT's work is evident in both the ways in which the neoliberal economic environment affects the livelihoods of women in Ghana, an issue about which NETRIGHT expends a lot of advocacy efforts and in the fact that NETRIGHT's work is only made possible with adequate resourcing. Some of the critical economic features that have implications for the work of NETRIGHT are:

- The global neoliberal economic environment that determines the nature of policies that the Ghanaian government adopts
- Micro and macro-economic trends in Ghana that have a differential impact on women and men.
- Lack of multi-year funding to run the activities of NETRIGHT

The issues raised above provide the basis for conducting a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis of NETRIGHT.

## 2.5 SWOT analysis

A SWOT analysis is important to be able to identify the strategic direction of the organization, the assets it has to capitalize on as well as the threats it needs to mitigate. These are elaborated below:

### **Specific Strengths**

- The organisation's ability to draw on the human and technical resources of both the steering committee members and the wider network of women's organisations.
- The sustained ability of the organization to raise the needed funds to carry out its activities.
- The credibility of the Steering Committee members.
- The commitment of the staff, steering committee and wider network of organisations and individuals to women's rights.
- The low turnover of staff at the organization
- The continuity of some programme activities over time
- Reasonable governance structures and activities in place such as the quarterly membership meetings, the annual general meeting, the end of year event
- Strong relationships with some constituencies such as market women and TUC women
- The existence of the three coalitions and the various processes they coordinate to which NETRIGHT contributes
- The national and international recognition of NETRIGHT as the go to centre for women's rights work in Ghana.
- ECOSOC status of NETRIGHT

### **Desired Strengths**

- Ability to secure multi-year funding to enable NETRIGHT carry out its core programming activities
- Adequate complement of core and administrative staff (Executive Director, fundraising specialist, accountant, communications expert) with the requisite capacity to carry out the organisation's mandate.
- A permanent physical location.
- National and international reputation for results-oriented policy advocacy for gender equality and women's rights – active participation in public spaces, quick response to national developments
- A coherent and innovative set of programme activities
- A strong, vibrant network comprising member organisations from across all ten regions and individuals of different age groups all of whom are strongly committed to issues of gender equality and equity
- A national organization with a stronger presence felt at the regional level

## **Weaknesses**

- Limited funding (time bound and short term) for programme activities
- Inadequate staffing situation
- Over-stretched and over-extended group of steering committee members
- Voluntary contract of the Convenor

## **Opportunities**

- Availability of international funding sources for gender-related work
- Global interest in issues of gender equity and equality particularly as we assess the Millennium Development Goals and implement the framework for the post 2015 agenda
- The African Union's efforts to consolidate democracy and improve citizen participation
- Linkages with other women's groups on the continent and beyond
- Commitment of focal point members to the work of NETRIGHT
- Commitment of steering committee members and larger network to the changes envisioned in the strategic plan
- Improvements in ICT to facilitate the work of the organization locally
- A vibrant political and media space

## **Threats**

- Cumbersome procedures for accessing funds internationally
- Lack of qualified personnel to handle some aspects of the work of the organization (such as fundraising, accounts, communications)
- Programmatic shift to suit demands of funders
- Changing donor approaches to funding civil society organisations
- Ghana's middle income status which may disqualify NETRIGHT from assessing some international funds
- Ongoing global financial, fuel and food crisis which has long term implications for the prospects of lower middle income countries such as Ghana

### **3. The Planning Process**

This strategic plan document represents the views of a cross-section of individuals and representatives of organisations that make up the membership of NETRIGHT who deliberated over a two day period in July 2014 over the direction that NETRIGHT should take.

### **4. Vision**

To create a society that pays equal attention to the ways in which national processes, policies and practices affect Ghanaian men and women.



## 5. Mission

To promote women's rights in Ghana through the critical analysis of gender dimensions of national processes and policies and to advocate for policy change.

## 6. Strategic Priorities

Having undertaken a critical review of the external and internal environment, NETRIGHT has identified four priority areas which will define its success in the coming years.

### Priority 1: Enhancing Visibility of the Organisation

#### *Strategic Objectives*

- Organise Annual General Meetings at both national and regional levels.
- Consistently provide a response to national issues that affect women in a swift manner.
- Liaise with ISODEC and IDEG to learn how it could be more involved in national processes including budget development processes.
- Redesign the organisation's website in a more attractive manner.
- Make NETRIGHT's publications (research documents; annual reviews; newsletter) available both online and in print.
- Publish the newsletter Akoben quarterly.
- Identify different media spaces (one radio station, major newspaper, social media) on which to discuss pertinent issues affecting women on a regular basis.
- Make presentations at the CSW on an annual basis to increase the visibility of the organization at an international level.

### Priority 2: Institutionalisation of the Organisation

#### *Strategic Objectives*

- Embark on a membership drive to increase the membership of both individuals and organizations in all regions of the country.
- Provide a permanent physical location for the organization.

### Priority 3: Governance of the Institution

#### *Strategic Objectives*

- Replace the Steering Committee with a Board of Directors whose members will be elected at the national AGM to serve a three-year tenure of office with the possibility of reelection for another 3 years.
- Replace the Convenor with the position of Executive Director.
- Strengthen the Secretariat through the recruitment of professional and competent staff with fundraising and communications experience.

#### Priority 4: Financing of the Institution

##### *Strategic Objectives*

- Identify a funding source whose values are aligned with NETRIGHT from whom multi-year funding lasting a minimum of 3 years can be sought.
- Maintain NETRIGHT's strategic partnerships with AWDF, FES and the Japanese Embassy for emergency funding.
- Establish relations with the donor community (DFID, French Embassy, EU, USAID) so as to solicit funding from those who offer resources in line with our core mandate and values.
- Organise high level annual dinners for donors and corporate organizations that serve as fundraisers and opportunities to expand the network.
- Devise a system to ensure that membership dues are paid more regularly.
- Establish relationships with African philanthropists who can be persuaded to commit to our values, vision and mission.

#### Priority 5: Programme Activities

##### *Strategic Objectives*

- Determine the core programmes that will serve as the organization's focus.
- Develop a multi-year set of activities for each programme area.

## 7. Key performance Indicators (Operationalisation of the Plan)

| Priority Area               | Strategic Objectives  | Time Frame                   | Key Performance Indicators   |
|-----------------------------|---|------------------------------|--|
| <b>Enhancing Visibility</b> | Organise Annual General Meetings at both national and regional levels.  | December 2017                | Multiple AGMs held   |
|                             | Consistently provide a response to national issues that affect women in a swift manner.   | Ongoing beginning June 2016  | Increased frequency of references to NETRIGHT in media                     |
|                             | Liaise with ISODEC and IDEG to learn how it could be more involved in national processes including budget development processes.                            | December 2016                | Media documentation of participation in national processes                 |
|                             | Redesign the organisation's website in a more attractive manner.  | June 2017                    | A more user-friendly website   |
|                             | Make NETRIGHT's publications (research documents; annual reviews; newsletter) available both online and in print.   | June 2017                    | A well-populated and up-to-date website                                    |
|                             | Publish the newsletter Akoben quarterly.  | December 2017                | Availability of regular issues of Akoben on the website                    |
|                             | Identify different media spaces (one radio station, major newspaper, social media) on which to discuss pertinent issues affecting women on a regular basis. |                              | Increased frequency of references to NETRIGHT's perspectives in news media |
|                             | Make presentations at the CSW on an annual basis to increase the visibility of the organization at an international level.                                  | Ongoing beginning March 2016 | Online references to NETRIGHT event at CSW                                 |
| <b>Institutionalisation</b> | Embark on a membership drive  | Ongoing                      | 10% increase in individual and organisational membership annually          |
|                             | Provide a permanent physical location for the organization  | December 2019                | Organisational move to new location  |

|                   |  |                           |  |
|-------------------|--|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Governance</b> |  |                           |  |
| <b>Governance</b> | Replace the Steering Committee with a Board of Directors   | December 2015             | New Board of Directors with a three year term    |
|                   | Replace the Convenor with the position of Executive Director.  | November 2015             | Executive Director at post and introduced at AGM |
|                   | Strengthen the Secretariat through the recruitment of an accountant and communications expert.   | December 2016             | New hires at post                                |
| <b>Financing</b>  |  |                           |  |
| <b>Financing</b>  | Identify a funding source whose values are aligned with NETRIGHT from whom multi-year funding lasting a minimum of 3 years can be sought.  | December 2016             | Multi-year funding grant available to NETRIGHT   |
|                   | Maintain NETRIGHT's strategic partnerships with AWDF, FES and the Japanese Embassy for emergency funding.  | Ongoing                   | Two way correspondence with strategic partners   |
|                   | Establish relations with the donor community (DFID, French Embassy, EU, USAID) so as to solicit funding from those who offer resources in line with our core mandate and values. | December 2016             | Two way communication with new partner           |
|                   | Organise high level annual dinners for donors and corporate organizations that serve as fundraisers and opportunities to expand the network.                                     | Ongoing beginning in 2017 | Resources from annual fundraisers                |
|                   | Devise a system to ensure that membership dues are paid more regularly.  | December 2016             | Increased revenue from member                    |
|                   | Establish relationships with African philanthropists who can be persuaded to commit to our values, vision and mission.   | December 2017             | Signed memorandum of understanding               |
| <b>Programmes</b> |  |                           |  |
| <b>Programmes</b> | Determine the core programmes that will serve as the organization's focus.   | December 2016             | Event to outdoor new direction of NETRIGHT       |
|                   | Develop a multi-year set of activities for each programme area   | December 2016             | Clear programme of activities presented at AGM   |

## 8. NETRIGHT Strategic Plan: One Page Blueprint

### Enhancing Visibility of the Organisation

- Organise Annual General Meetings at both national and regional levels.
- Consistently provide a response to national issues that affect women in a swift manner.
- Liaise with ISODEC and IDEG to learn how it could be more involved in national processes including budget development processes.
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### Institutionalisation of the Organisation

- Embark on a membership drive to increase the membership of both individuals and organizations in all regions of the country.
- Provide a permanent physical location for the organization.

### Governance of the Institution

- Replace the Steering Committee with a Board of Directors whose members will be elected at the national AGM to serve a three-year tenure of office with the possibility of reelection for another 3 years.
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- Devise a system to ensure that membership dues are paid more regularly.
- Establish relationships with African philanthropists who can be persuaded to commit to our values, vision and mission.

### Programme Activities

- Determine the core programmes that will serve as the organization's focus.
- Develop a multi-year set of activities for each programme area.