

MINISTRY OF GENDER, CHILDREN AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

Government Accountability Series — Speaking Notes

Presenter: Dr. Agnes Naa Momo Lartey (MP), Hon Minister

Estimated speaking time: 20minutes

SLIDE 1 Title — Empowering Women, Protecting Children, Strengthening Social Protection, Caring for Ghana's Vulnerable

Hon Minister, Chief Director, NC/GSF, Directors and Heads of the Ministry, Departments and Agencies, distinguished ladies and gentlemen, members of the press, good morning.

It is my privilege to report to the people of Ghana on the progress of the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection for 2026.

Over the next few minutes, I will walk you through what this Ministry has delivered on social protection, gender equality, child protection, disability inclusion and the fight against violence and exploitation and where the work for the rest of 2026 must still be done.

SLIDE 2 Five Priorities Guiding the Ministry's Work

Everything I will report on today traces back to five commitments the government of H.E. John Dramani Mahama made to the people of Ghana: a stronger social protection system; gender equality and women's empowerment; child protection and family strengthening; protection of vulnerable and excluded persons, including older persons and persons with disabilities and ending violence, abuse and exploitation.

SLIDE 3 Impact At A Glance

Let me start with scale, because these numbers are easy to state and easy to underestimate.

- Every single school day, **4.53 million** Ghanaian children eat a hot, nutritious meal through the Ghana School Feeding Programme (an increase from 4.03m in 2024).
- The average LEAP grant (per cycle) has increased by **70%** since 2024, from GHC360 to **GHS569.14 in 2026**.
- The LEAP programme ceiling has also expanded from 350,000 to **450,000** households.
- **11.24 million** Ghanaians are now profiled in our National Household Registry.
- **7 in 10** citizen grievances that reach us are resolved;
- **19,760 persons** with disabilities have benefited directly from the Disability Common Fund.

I will unpack these figures as we progress.

SLIDE 4 Enhanced Social protection

One of the biggest structural change this Ministry has delivered is ensuring the legal framework is in place to support the implementation of social protection services. In 2025, Parliament passed the Social Protection Act, 2025 (Act 1148) and its accompanying Legislative Instrument, Social Protection Regulations, 2026 (L.I. 2521), was passed in 2026, establishing, for the first time, a social protection law for Ghana.

The Act does three things that matter enormously in practice:

- it makes the Ghana National Household Registry the sole official mechanism for targeting social protection nationwide, ending the days of fragmented, programme-by-programme beneficiary lists;

- it creates a dedicated Social Protection Fund to finance coordination, delivery and emergency relief; and
- it further gives us the legal basis to launch the National Shock-Responsive Social Protection Strategy, together with its Standard Operating Procedures and implementation plan, so that when the next flood or crisis hits, this country does not have to improvise its response from scratch.
- Social Assistance has been provided to over 1270 vulnerable persons responding to urgent requests for resettlement, reintegration, psychosocial support, food and medical support for victims of abuse and disaster.

Ghana now runs social protection on one law, one national registry, and one dedicated fund.

SLIDE 5 Taking Social Protection to the People: Community Dialogues

Legal reforms and bigger grants only work if communities are partners, not just recipients. That is why this Ministry has taken social protection directly to the people through Community Dialogues.

From Big Ada and Ada Foah, to Nungua Zongo, Tema, Teshie, Osu, Chorkor, Nanton, Bolgatanga East, Builsa North, and many more communities across the country, we are reaching people directly, with averagely three hundred participants at every sitting.

These are not one-way information sessions. Working with the National Health Insurance Authority, we used these dialogues to register and renew NHIS coverage on the spot for eligible, vulnerable residents. We used them to correct

misconceptions about LEAP and NHIS, including the simple but important fact that these programmes are not political. We further use the platform to raise awareness on gender-based violence, child abuse, substance abuse and human trafficking, right in the communities most affected.

SLIDE 6 Listening and Responding to Citizens (SWCES)

Legal reform means little, if citizens can't reach us when something goes wrong. Through the Single Window Citizens' Engagement Service, we received 520 grievance cases, and resolved 364 of them (70%)

The toll-free line — 0800 800 800/ 0800 0900 0900, is free from any network, and I want every Ghanaian watching to know it exists and to use it.

SLIDE 7 Ghana School Feeding Programme: Feeding the Future

The Ghana School Feeding Programme remains one of the most visible ways this Ministry touches the lives of Ghana's school children every single day.

In 2024, government allocated GH¢1,393,000,000 to the programme, feeding 4,029,580 pupils, at a grant of GH¢1.50 per meal.

In 2025, the government of H.E. John Dramani Mahama raised the grant to GH¢2.00 per meal - the first increase in years, backed by a budget of GH¢1,788,000,000, reaching 4,231,000 pupils.

The 2026 year's allocation saw further increment to GH¢1,982,000,000, a 42% increase, holding the grant at GH¢2.00 per meal while reaching 4,527,636 children daily.

Alongside that funding growth, we have cleared all caterer arrears from 2024 and paid the 1st and 2nd terms of the 2025/26 academic year.

We scaled our compliance monitoring from 4,419 schools in 2025 to 8,270 schools this year, 2026. We have trained 20,171 caterers and head cooks in practical nutrition standards.

Slide 8 Older Persons: From Charity to Legal Entitlement

For older Ghanaians, the Social Protection Act now affirms something that used to depend on charity: a legal right to free healthcare and social assistance.

We continue to deliver welfare services to fifty elderly residents at the Central Destitute Infirmary in Bekwai, which has now been fully renovated to better meet their needs.

Support for older persons has moved from charity to legal entitlement, backed by a dedicated Fund, with LEAP and the National Health Insurance Scheme as our critical delivery mechanisms.

SLIDE 9 Persons With Disabilities: Law, Funding and Jobs

On disability, Cabinet has approved the amendment of the Persons with Disability Act of 2006 to align it with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, a reform this community has waited so long for.

In practical terms, 19,760 people with disabilities have benefited from the Disability Common Fund across 208 MMDAs. We have held sensitisation on

disability-inclusive disaster risk management across eleven regions. Working with GES, 272 PWD graduates are being formalised into the Ghana Education Service, creating jobs for PWDs.

SLIDE 10 Closing the Digital Divide for Students With Disabilities

Working with the Ministry of Communication, Digital Technology and Innovation, through the Ghana Digital Acceleration Project, ICT equipment have been procured for seven special schools. The items include, desktop computers, laptops, accessible software, Braille displays and embossers, graphic tablets.

Installation is complete in three of those schools, with the remaining four underway. For students who have never had hands-on access to this kind of technology, this is the first.

Schools that have been Resourced

1. Senior High Technical School for the Deaf- Mampong Akuapem
2. Volta School for the Deaf and Blind- Hohoe
3. Dzorwulu Special Needs School - Accra

Remaining Schools to be Resourced

1. Wa Methodist School for the Blind
2. Wa School for the Deaf
3. Bechem Technical institute for the Deaf & Basic school for the Blind
4. Special Needs Technical Institute - Jachie Pramso
5. Cape Coast School for the Deaf and Blind

SLIDE 11 A Binding Legal Framework for Gender Equity

On gender equality, the implementation framework for the Affirmative Action Gender Equity Act is now operational. The Gender Equity Committee and Secretariat required by the Act have all been established and operational. The accompanying regulations, L.I. 2522, matured in June this year.

The Ministry has sensitised 2,321 stakeholders on their obligations under the Act, and 47 institutions; ministries, municipal and district assemblies, and private sector organisations, have already submitted compliance reports. A further 37 sensitisation programmes reached almost 11,000 people on sexual and gender-based violence, child marriage and harmful cultural practices.

Ghana has moved from advocacy to enforcement: institutions are now legally obligated to act on gender equity, with monitoring tools in place to hold them to it.

SLIDE 12 Safer Childhoods, Stronger Families

For children, 5 separate bills and policies have advanced through Cabinet this year: the Early Childhood Care and Development Policy, the Domestic Violence Policy, the Children's Amendment Bill, the Children and Young Persons Justice Administration Bill, and the Domestic Abuse Bill.

On the ground, 291-one vulnerable children received care, counselling and education across 5 residential and sub-vented homes, and 1,168,278 Ghanaians were reached through a nationwide child-rights awareness campaign. Our Child

Care Centre supported sixteen children, with six graduating into stable, longer-term care.

SLIDE 13 Zero Tolerance, Backed by Real Services

Zero tolerance for gender-based violence has to be backed by real services. 152 survivors of domestic violence received counselling, legal and financial assistance. We commissioned a shelter in Accra and supported two more, in the Upper West and Eastern Regions on our path toward sixteen regional shelters nationwide.

On human trafficking, one-thousand-four-hundred-and-thirty-two victims received rehabilitation support, one-hundred-and-eighty-one received trauma-informed care at our shelters, and sixty-nine were referred onward for further support.

For any survivor of sexual or gender-based violence watching today, the Orange Support Center is reachable, toll-free, on 0800 111 222 or by WhatsApp on 055 1755 7575.

SLIDE 14 Ghana National Household Registry: A Nation, Counted

None of what I have just described would be possible without the Ghana National Household Registry, the evidence base underneath this entire social protection system.

Data collection is now complete in all sixteen regions. The Registry covers 2,906,288 households nationwide, 11,244,027 individual Ghanaians profiled in the Register, including 508,870 extreme poor households for targeting.

For the first time, Ghana has a single, reliable national database to target social protection. This we share with institutions and partners intending to undertake Social Protection intervention for the vulnerable.

SLIDE 15 LEAP: Bigger Grants, Wider Reach,

The Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) programme has undergone the most significant transformation in its history. The bi-monthly grant has climbed from an average of Ghc334 in 2024, to Ghc424 in 2026, to 569 this year (70%) now protected going forward by an indexation mechanism, so it doesn't erode with inflation.

We completed a comprehensive reassessment of 350,000 beneficiary households using data from the National Household Registry, which has allowed over 226,000 households to graduate out of extreme poverty. The programme ceiling has expanded from 350,000 to 450,000 households.

SLIDE 16 LEAP Payments — New Grant Rates Take Effect This Month

This is the news I most want media houses to help me carry across to the general public.

Following the national reassessment, about 450,000 eligible households are being retained or enrolled within the approved programme ceiling. From, Monday, 14th September 2026, the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection begun disbursing the first and second payment cycles of 2026.

Each eligible household will receive twice the applicable bi-monthly amount, as the two cycles will be paid together. The applicable bi-monthly grant rates are set out as;

Household size	With a vulnerable member	Without a vulnerable member
1-2 members	GH¢392.00	GH¢380.00
3-4 members	GH¢474.00	GH¢452.00
5 or more members	GH¢630.00	GH¢594.00

I kindly request the media to help us communicate these arrangements, manage expectations and refer any enrolment or grievance case to the LEAP Management Secretariat, the number is **0303 969 399** or the toll-free lines **0800 800 800** and **0800 900 900**.

Any eligible member who has been enumerated/assessed but with biometric yet to be taken should not panic as the process has been carefully designed to onboard all 450,000 households by the close of 2026, with all entitlements.

SLIDE 17 Where We Still Have Work To Do (Challenges)

It is only fair to also let the country in on some of the persisting challenges. We continue to face high incidence of violence against women, children and other vulnerable groups, and the persistence of negative socio-cultural practices that undermine our legal protections.

Persons with disabilities still face discrimination in mainstreaming efforts, and the National Council on Persons with Disabilities continue to work towards adequate staffing and resourcing.

With plan to construct 2-3 shelters in 2027, the ministry acknowledges the need to speed up these efforts to curtail the continuous struggle for shelter from time to time.

We will continue paying the bi-monthly LEAP grants and school feeding grants on schedule. Having received Cabinet approval, we will submit the Persons with Disabilities Bill, the Children's Bill, the Children and Young Persons (Justice Administration) Bill, and the Domestic Abuse Bill to Parliament at its next sitting.

We will continue providing care for survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking, building nationwide awareness on child rights and gender issues, and implementing the Affirmative Action Gender Equity Act and related legislation. And we will keep both the Orange Support Center and the SWCES toll-free lines open and staffed, because grievance redress only works if it's always available.

SLIDE 18 Thank You

Hon Minister, distinguished guests, the mission of this Ministry is clear: to build a harmonious society in which the well-being and development of women, men, children, persons with disabilities and all vulnerable people are protected and guaranteed.

Today, we have shared how far we have come towards that mission, while recognising that important work remains and our commitment to deliver on our mandate, is unwavering.

I wish to thank the staff of this Ministry, our development partners, the media and all stakeholders whose continued support makes this progress possible.

As we conclude, once again, permit me to share our call numbers. Every Ghanaian should know where to seek information, report a concern or receive support when it is needed. For grievance redress, please call the **toll-free lines 0800 800 800 or 0800 900 900**. Survivors of gender-based violence can contact the Orange Support Centre on **0800 111 222**. For Enquiries regarding LEAP, please reach us on **0303 969 399**.

Thank you for your attention and partnership. May God bless our homeland, Ghana.