

OFFICE OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR



LAUNCH OF PHASE II OF THE AFRICA EDUCATES HER (AEH) CAMPAIGN

ADDRESS BY:

**PROFESSOR NANA ABA APPIAH AMFO
VICE-CHANCELLOR, UNIVERSITY OF GHANA**

TUESDAY, APRIL 8, 2025

GREAT HALL

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

Honourable Minister for Education, Hon. Haruna Iddrisu

CEO, Environmental Protection Authority, Prof. Nana Ama Browne

Klutse

Director, Centre for Gender Studies and Advocacy, Professor

Deborah Atobrah

Director, Girls Education Unit, Ghana Education Service, Madam

Gifty Asiedu

Deans and Heads of Departments present

Faculty and Staff

Distinguished Guests

Dignitaries

Stakeholders

Development partners

Policy makers

Representatives of Civil Society Organizations

Students

The Media

Ladies and Gentlemen

A warm welcome to you all.

I am deeply honored to serve as the Chairperson for this significant event—the launch of Phase II of the ***Africa Educates Her*** (AEH) Campaign in Ghana.

I extend my warmest welcome to the Honourable Minister for Education, Hon. Haruna Iddrisu, for his leadership and commitment to empowering Ghana's future through education. I also welcome our keynote speaker, Prof. Nana Ama Browne Klutse, whose remarkable achievements in the STEM field inspire us all.

Ladies and gentlemen, permit me to express my gratitude to the Ghana Education Service (GES) and its Girls' Education Unit (GEU) for spearheading the ***Africa Educates Her*** (AEH) initiative here in Ghana, along with the support of all their strategic partners, which includes my colleague Professor Deborah Atobrah and her team at the Centre for Gender Studies and Advocacy (CEGENSA) here at the University of Ghana (UG), for their support and dedication to

promoting gender equity in the country's pre-tertiary education sector.

Importance of the AEH Campaign

Today marks a pivotal step forward as Ghana joins other African Union (AU) member countries in launching Phase II of the ***Africa Educates Her*** (AEH) Campaign at the national level. This campaign reflects the deep commitment of the African Union to barriers that impede girls' access to education, especially in the aftermath of the global COVID-19 crisis.

The continental theme, “***Keep girls in school, empower their futures,***” underscores the urgent need for affirmative policies and collaborative efforts to ensure learning recovery strategies for girls and young women. In Ghana, we embrace this call under the tailored theme, “***Unlocking Girls’ Potential — STEM Education and Beyond.***”

We stand united in our mission to enable every Ghanaian girl to reach her full potential, not only by staying in school but by thriving

in STEM fields and other areas that prepare them for tomorrow's challenges.

Achievements and Ghana's Role

Ghana has been an active participant in the ***Africa Educates Her*** (AEH) Campaign from its inception following the global outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in the year 2020. The government of Ghana, through the Ministry of Education (MOE) and the Ghana Education Service (GES), rolled out the ***Back-to-School Advocacy Campaign***, which galvanised various innovative interventions to ensure the safe return of Ghanaian schoolchildren, including girls, to the classroom in the midst of the COVID-19 crisis.

The ***Back-to-School Advocacy Campaign***, which again had the Girls' Education Unit (GEU) of GES playing a leadership role, signified Ghana's successful involvement in Phase I of the ***Africa Educates Her*** (AEH) Campaign, which has then paved the way for the launch of Phase II focusing on consolidating the gains beyond the COVID 19 era.

Ladies and gentlemen, last year (2024), during the AU ***Pan-African Conference on Girls' and Women's Education*** held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Ghana's delegation, made up of representatives from the MOE, GES and some selected girls Senior High Schools (SHSs), made a bold statement to sustain the momentum of the ***Africa Educates Her*** (AEH) Campaign. However, the government's commitment to immediately launch Phase II of the AEH Campaign was compromised by the electioneering calendar. As such, many AU member countries, including Uganda, Mozambique, Côte d'Ivoire, Chad, Malawi, Togo, Seychelles, Sahrawi, Burundi, Senegal, Eswatini and the Central African Republic (CAR), took the lead in launching theirs in 2024.

Today, we, as a country, have gathered in this Great Hall to launch the Phase II of the ***Africa Educates Her*** (AEH) Campaign, and to renew our national commitment to investing in girls' education as a transformative force — one that equips our daughters with the tools they need to become visionary leaders, innovators and agents of change.

This launch of the AEH Campaign (Phase II) is a collaborative effort spearheaded by the Ghana Education Service (GES) and its Girls' Education Unit (GEU) under the auspices of the Ministry of Education (MOE). This initiative is designed to mobilise multi-sectoral partnerships, bringing together stakeholders from various sectors, including government, civil society, academia, the development community and the private sector, to continuously create an enabling environment for girls to thrive in education. The approaches for this campaign will involve advocacy, research, capacity-building and sensitization.

Championing STEM Education

In the evolving digital age, STEM education stands as a beacon of opportunity. We must encourage our girls to venture into areas underrepresented by women — Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. These fields open doors to countless possibilities and enable them to contribute meaningfully in this ever-evolving 21st-century job market.

On this front, on behalf of Management, I wish to reaffirm the commitment of the University of Ghana (UG), through our Centre for Gender Studies and Advocacy (CEGENSA), to this campaign, to ensure that girls, regardless of their background or location, have access to quality education and the resources needed to excel.

CEGENSA will continue to be a strategic partner, providing technical expertise and research to foster gender equity and inclusion in education. Our commitment, in itself, is premised on research, which indicates that educating girls leads to numerous socio-economic benefits, including improved health outcomes, increased economic productivity and enhanced community development. We, however, also acknowledge that COVID-19 exacerbated existing inequalities, which pushed some girls out of school and threatened their futures.

The African Union's commitment to girls' education, as was articulated at the 2024 Ethiopia conference, underscores the urgent need for affirmative policies and programmes that address these challenges. It is in this vein that the AEH Campaign aligns with the continental **Agenda 2063** framework and the global **Sustainable**

Development Goal (SDG) 4, which aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education for all.

Together with the Ministry of Education (MOE), Ghana Education Service (GES) and the Girls' Education Unit (GEU), the University of Ghana (UG) as a community, and CEGENSA as a unit, remains steadfast in supporting initiatives that empower girls and young women across the country.

Call for Multi-Sectoral Partnerships

On this note, I urge all stakeholders to unite in support of this campaign—government, development partners, policymakers, civil society organizations, academia, private sector actors, faith-based organizations, and traditional leaders.

Our shared vision demands action across all sectors. By pooling our resources, ideas, and expertise, we can create an environment where girls not only return to school but also flourish in safe, nurturing settings that foster their academic and personal growth.

Recognizing Women Leaders and Role Models

As the first woman to hold the office of Vice-Chancellor in this University, I am acutely aware of the power of education in transforming the lives of girls and women. I salute the trailblazers, including Her Excellency Professor Naana Jane Opoku Agyemang, for demonstrating what is possible for women. She became the first female Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cape Coast (UCC) and is now the first female Vice President of the country. Our keynote speaker for today's launch, Professor Nana Ama Brown Klutse, also comes up as Ghana's first female and youngest professor of physics, specialising in the area of climate change.

We, together with all others as role models, exemplify the potential that lies within every girl if only she is given the opportunity to shine.

The Broader Vision

Ghana's efforts are part of a broader vision — a continental movement to promote girls' and women's education as a vehicle for

sustainable development. The ***Africa Educates Her*** (AEH) Campaign should therefore resonate with everybody gathered here today. When we empower girls with education, we empower entire communities, as Dr. James Kwegyir Aggrey once said. The ripple effect of educated girls and women permeates society, leading to progress in health, economic stability and social cohesion.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I ask all of us gathered here to commit ourselves to unlocking the vast potential of our girls, not just for their benefit but for the greater good of Ghana, Africa and the world.

To all the students here today, particularly the girls, you are the reason we gather. Your dreams, aspirations and determination fuel our efforts. You must therefore know that education is not just a privilege; it is your right! Embrace it, and let it transform your future.

I thank everyone present for your dedication to this cause. Let us stand united in ensuring that every Ghanaian girl stays in school, excels, and leads with confidence into the future.

Together, we can achieve the extraordinary. On this note, I humbly accept to chair of today's event.

Thank you.

Prof. Nana Aba Appiah Amfo

Vice-Chancellor

April 8, 2025