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# COE THIS MONTH

**JANUARY  
2023 EDITION**

## About "COE"

**T**he Planned Parenthood Association of Ghana (PPAG) has been designated as a Center of Excellence (CoE) for youth programming among International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) Member Associations in Africa. With support from Rutgers International and IPPF, the CoE works to increase and improve the uptake of quality integrated gender and rights-based youth

centered SRH information, education and services for young people in Africa; and offers a unique opportunity to consolidate technical expertise and disseminate contextual best practices on Reproductive Health Education (RHE) and Youth Friendly Services among Member Associations of the IPPF and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs).



# Throwback Edition to 2022 Key Activities

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PRAISES STAFF FOR A GOOD RUN IN 2022: ENCOURAGES MORE RESULTS IN 2023

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“I am so proud of our achievements this year, and in the coming year let us double our efforts in order to meet and exceed our targets.” These are the words of the Executive Director of the Planned Parenthood Association of Ghana (PPAG), Madam Abena Adubeah Amoah in her end of year message to management and staff of the Association.

In her address that was preceded by a carol, she expressed excitement especially about the Associations recognition by the Chartered Institute of Marketing, Ghana as the Not for Profit Organization of the year. Madam Abena Adubeah Amoah added that, this and other feats have come by, by dint of hard work and persistence even in the face of the challenges that the Association might have encountered in the year under review.

She thanked the Directors for being supportive to her in delivering the Association’s mandate and called on management and staff to work towards expanding access and improving the service delivery statistics.

She conveyed Council’s commitment to provide staff with the necessary resources in the discharge of their duties.

She concluded by wishing staff the best of the festive season and urged them to have a restful season, rejuvenate and return to work in 2023 with innovate ideas to deliver the Association work plan.





# CAPACITY BUILDING FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS, CONTACT CENTRE AGENTS & KEY STAKEHOLDERS ON IMPLEMENTING FULL SELF-CARE

The Planned Parenthood Association of Ghana (PPAG) with funding from the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) has trained key persons on increasing women and girls access to quality services and support for self-managed medical abortion, within a package of comprehensive abortion care (CAC) and integrated SRH services.

As part of the workshop, participants were taken through guidance on Ghana's policy environment regarding abortion care, WHO's new Abortion Guidelines (2022), Ghana Health Service's new Comprehensive Abortion Care Standards and Protocols (2021) and the IPPF IMAP Statement on Abortion Self-Care (2021). In addition to these, other legal ramifications and

linkages between providers and community cadres, particularly support for pharmacists and drug sellers.

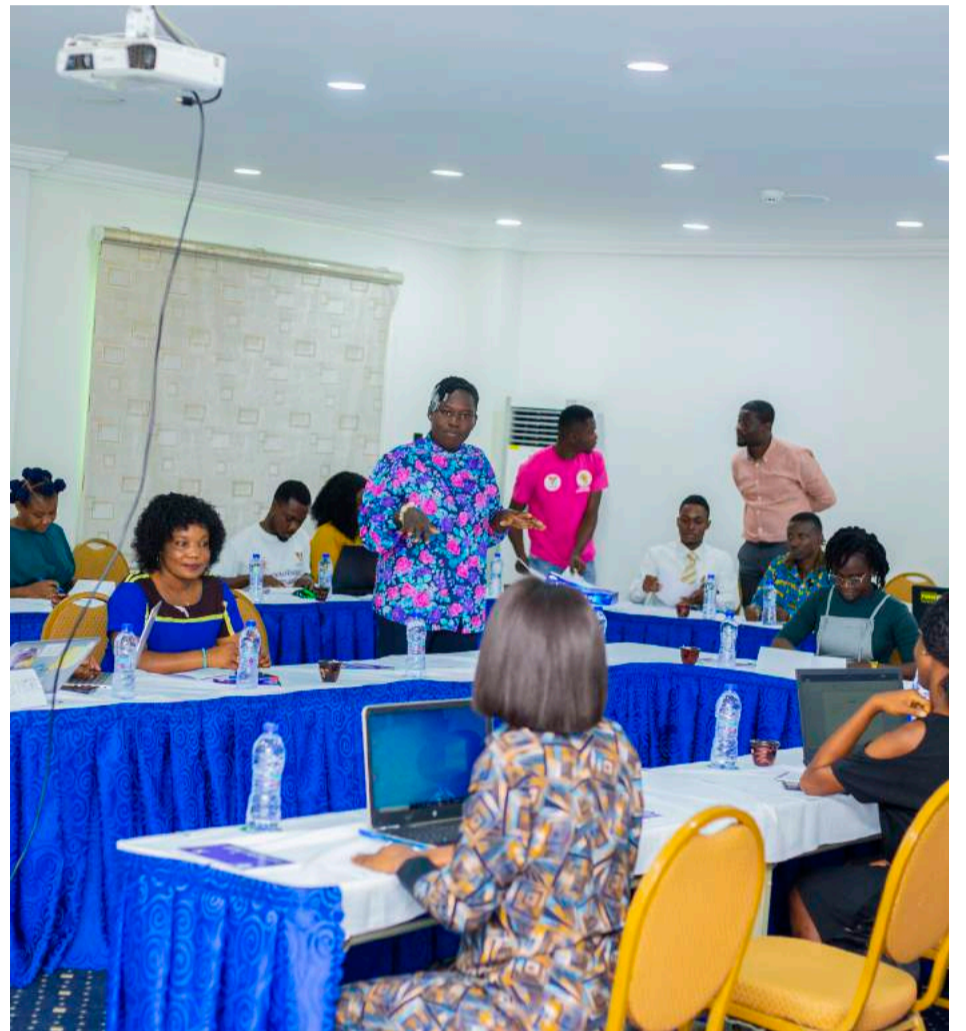
The participants comprised PPAG service providers, contact centre agents, Project Team, and the Technical Advisory team.





# CAPACITY BUILDING FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS, CONTACT CENTRE AGENTS & KEY STAKEHOLDERS ON IMPLEMENTING FULL SELF-CARE

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# PINK OCTOBER: REDUCING BREAST AND CERVICAL CANCERS

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**B**reast and cervical cancers have emerged as a major public health challenge among women in Ghana. Despite the fact that breast and cervical cancers are preventable through early detection of precancerous state, screening is still very underutilized in Ghana. In many cases, this is due to time constraints caused by a hectic work schedule, combined with the increased cost of screening. During the annual breast cancer awareness month, PPAG provided education, visual inspection of the cervix with acetic acid and clinical breast examination for staff of the Ghana National Fire Service. This activity was part of PPAG's efforts to expand access to information and services for women and girls.



# STIGMA AND NON-DISCRIMINATION TRAINING FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS

**S**tigma and discrimination (S&D) are central issues that often impedes societal growth. Persons who are stigmatized or discriminated against often face social judgment and isolation, violence, loss of employment, physical abuse and limited access to health services. These negatively affect efforts in addressing other sexual and reproductive health issues. These negative impacts are compounded by intersectional stigma, leading to poorer health outcomes for the most vulnerable populations. Against this backdrop, PPAG organized a three-day training for selected service providers and franchisees with funding from SIDA through RFSU under the “Advancing International Legal, Policy and Financial Commitments to Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights: The project aims to secure increased political, legal, domestic and international financial commitments on safe abortion, comprehensive sexuality education, sexual rights and non-discrimination, as well as contributing to the implementation of commitments already adopted. The project is also focused on influencing SRHR policies and commitments at the global, regional and national levels towards improving the sexual life for all. Service providers received training on non-discrimination as a component of sexual and reproductive health and right information and service delivery. Another component of the training was various intersectionality and compounded discrimination and stigma for sexual and gender minorities (SGM) from diverse backgrounds and experiences.

# ADOLESCENT BOYS RECRUITED AS CHAMPIONS OF SRHR

**G**reater proportion of SRHR challenges are experienced by adolescent girls and often perpetrated by boys. However, SRHR interventions have paid little attention to boys who are usually identified as the perpetrators of SRHR challenges that affect both boys and girls either directly or indirectly. In view of this, the Planned Parenthood Association of Ghana (PPAG) with support from the United Nations Population Fund under the Adolescent Girls Empowerment programme has recruited and engaged adolescent boys as champions to support and advocate for adolescent girls SRHR rights. This has become necessary to increase male inclusion as well as devising interventions that focus more on the adolescent boys. This intervention seeks to increase and improve adolescent boys' involvement in fighting adolescent SRHR challenges in Ghanaian communities.

Key activities included the recruitment and training of adolescent boys to serve as a positive peer influence for other boys in the project sites and beyond. Media education and awareness to advocate for adolescent girls SRHR rights were held. SRHR issues addressed included teenage pregnancy, child marriage, sexual harassment, defilement, rape, Sexual

and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV).

The boys' champions will use these forums to speak-out, educate, and advocate for the SRHR issues affecting adolescent girls. The intervention will also be extended to other districts across the country.

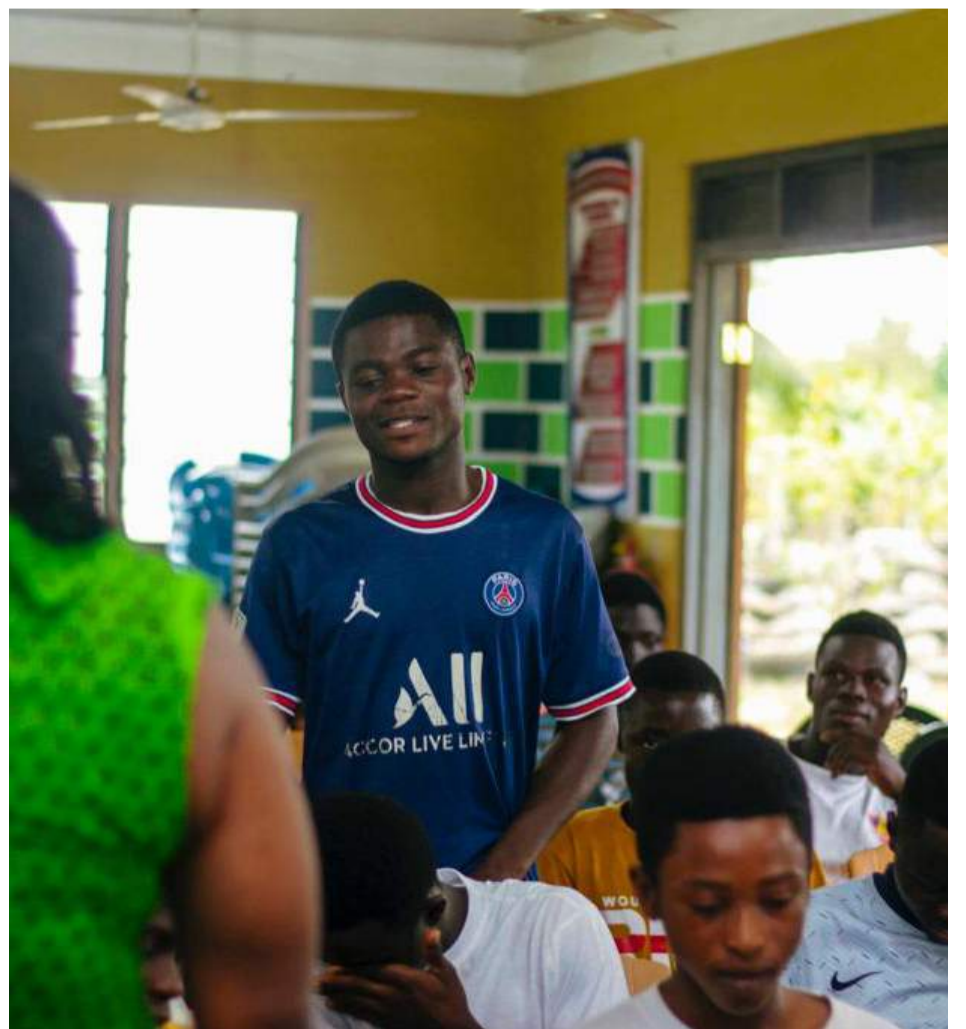
Present were the Divisional head of Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit(DOVVSU) of the Ghana Police Service and the District Assembly focal person on SRHR.





# ADOLESCENT BOYS RECRUITED AS CHAMPIONS OF SRHR

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## IPPF HOLDS INVESTMENT VOUCHER TRAINING ON GENDER EQUALITY AND INCLUSION IN PROGRAMMING

Under the auspices of the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), a series of Investment Voucher Trainings have been held. Key among them is that on gender equality and inclusion in programming held in Abidjan to build the capacity of 15 Member Associations (MAs) on the use of tools developed by IPPF on gender mainstreaming and the inclusion and the provision of service to people of different sexual orientations and gender identities (SOGIESC). It sought to train MA representatives on the use of the Gender Self-assessment Toolkit (GAT); the organizational self-assessment tool on gender mainstreaming and the consideration of SOGIESC based on the tool developed by IPPF.

Participating countries included Ghana, Cameroon, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire and Ethiopia. Others were, Guinea Bissau, Lesotho, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Sao Tome, Seychelles, Togo, and Cape Verde. PPAG was represented by its Gender Focal Person- Miss Naadu Awuradwoa Addico



In the introductory remarks of the IPPF Africa Regional Director, Marie Evelyne Petrus-Barry, she noted that foresees the Federation growing to better influence public policies and reach areas where the need for Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) services is not being met. She also insisted on meaning youth participation in the work of the Federation and its Member Associations in accordance with the new strategic framework.

“We want this workshop to be a real opportunity for you as young people to express your desires and hopes for your sub-region, for your Member Associations and for IPPF more broadly.”

The meeting was also an opportunity to develop an action plan that materializes the new vision of IPPF articulated around the objectives of its new strategic framework for the period 2023-2028.



# THE WARRIOR MIDWIFE

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**A**mpanyin is one of the communities in Komenda Edina Eguafo Abrem (KEEA) Municipality in Central Region of Ghana and its a fishing community. Teenage Pregnancy is extremely common and its normal to give birth than to end pregnancy in that community.

Among other reasons accounting for the high rate of Teenage Pregnancy in the community, it is the interesting belief of the fishermen, that if they have sex with a lady just before they set off to shore, it's a blessing which will get them bumper catch. As part of the deal, the lady has a share in the catch. That aside, most of the fishermen are dating the girls and luring them with fish for themselves and their family. This means that some parents are very much aware of such relationships their daughters find themselves in because they directly and indirectly benefit.

The community believes that when one gets pregnant, she must give birth regardless. They frown on abortion and so stigma is very high and for fear of being found out, some resort to unsafe abortion. However, as soon as the parents find out that their daughters are pregnant, they will ensure that they give birth instead of ending it.

The churches preach against abortion and the traditional leaders do same. This clearly shows how difficult the terrain is to advocate for Comprehensive Abortion Care.

The midwife and facility in charge of Ampanyin Health Centre among her many effort to make the service accessible despite the challenges decided to reduce the cost of service from the standardised GH 150.00 by the Regional Health Directorate of Central Region to GH 100.00 and in some cases GH 50.00 for those who really do not have and she does not turn anyone away even if they do not have any money on them. She has also formed SISTAS Club where she educates the girls on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights to enable them make informed decisions for themselves to reduce teenage pregnancy, unsafe abortion among other health concerns.

She also created another exit for people who come for CAC by making them exit via her house which is close to the facility where no one will see them.

She recently went all out by using the Community Information Centre Radio to reach out to the community in the evening where almost everyone was home. She educated them on Comprehensive Abortion Care and the implication if the service is not provided at the facility. Phone in segment was opened and one of the religious leaders of the town called in to ask why the facility will allow abortion to end lives. The midwife responded that already the people are into

unsafe abortion which is ending the lives of the pregnant women and the foetus. She added that those who go the unsafe way end up with so many complications which are brought to her facility. After a few healthy back and forth between the midwife and the religious leader, he decided to end it there.

Others called in with concern that if its legal then more people will go in for it. Others too were of the view that the cost of service should be covered by NHIS and another also called asking if people will be able to get pregnant and deliver after CAC.

Two days after the community radio programme, one of the traditional leaders in the town brought a teenager to the facility seeking for CAC. According to him, it is an issue of incest and he listened to the midwife on the radio talking about the law. The midwife offered the service for free because they couldn't afford. She has decided to work with him to advocate for Safe Abortion Services as against the unsafe in the town.





# HEALTH WORKERS SCHOOLED ON THEIR ROLE IN ENDING UNSAFE ABORTION

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PPAG and Women First Digital have organized a webinar on abortion care. The panel discussion, themed: “The Role of Healthcare Workers in Ending Unsafe Abortion” forms part of plans to educate different health cadres on current abortion policies and revised comprehensive care guidelines in Ghana. The session discussed strategies to end abortion-related stigma through client-centered care, and to ease the burden of unsafe abortion in Ghana. Participants, ranging from physicians, midwives, pharmacists, medical students, and community health workers were equipped with the necessary skills to provide care for women seeking medical abortion up to 13 weeks gestation.



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