

**COMMUNIQUE ISSUED BY THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GHANA AT THE
END OF THE 2021 NATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTATION FORUM
ORGANIZED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL
SERVICES IN ACCRA FROM 19TH – 22ND OCTOBER, 2021**

PREAMBLE:

The Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG), held its Department of Development and Social Service (DSS) 2021 Consultation Forum at the Presbyterian Women's Centre, Abokobi, in Accra from 19th to 22nd October 2021, under the theme "*Demonstrating the light of Jesus Christ through Social Services*". The objective was to review the activities and performance of the Units within the DSS for the past year, identify key challenges and critical issues for policy direction by the church as well as outline strategies to best address the challenges, hereby acknowledges the following;

1. The Presbyterian Church of Ghana is the first Faith-Based Organization to establish a health facility in Ghana.
2. Presently, the Presbyterian Church of Ghana is the third largest single provider of health services in the country and runs a total of fifty-five health facilities spread over eleven (11) political regions, with a total workforce of over three thousand six hundred and fifty (3,650).
3. The Church established the Presbyterian Agriculture Service (PAS) in the late 1960s to complement the Government's effort at reducing poverty through sustainable agriculture. PCG, currently, has seven (7) agricultural stations spread over five (5) political regions and works with smallholder farmers in the nineteen (19) Presbyteries of the Church spread across the country.
4. The PCG is committed through its Non-Governmental Unit, Presbyterian Relief Services and Development (PRESED) in promoting activities such as Disaster Preparedness and Management, Economic Justice, Water Sanitation and Hygiene, the Empowerment of Women and the Youth in achieving sustainable income, among others.
5. PRESED is immensely contributing towards the economic empowerment of the less privileged and disadvantaged persons, especially women and the youth through skills development, capacity building, mentorship, and counseling.

6. The Presbyterian Church of Ghana acknowledges the mutual benefits of the partnership between the Government and the Church in Health, Agriculture, Relief and Development Services.

The PCG DSS Consultation Forum therefore resolves as follows, that;

A. PRESBYTERIAN HEALTH SERVICES (PHS):

1. The Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) lauds the Government of Ghana for its immense support through the Ministry of Health, demonstrating the Government's commitment to the partnership between the Government of Ghana and the Church, in providing essential health services to the people of Ghana.
2. The Church appreciates, among others, the construction of a new District hospital at Aburi in the Akuapem South District to replace the first-ever Mission health facility in Ghana which was established by the Basel Missionaries in 1885 (136 years ago).
3. The Presbyterian Church of Ghana reaffirms its commitment to ensuring that its health facilities provide quality services that reflect the mandate of the Church's Social Services programs. The Church, thus, urges its Managers and Staff to focus on Patient-Centered Care, particularly, for the poor, underprivileged and marginalized who are typically located in the difficult to reach communities in Ghana.
4. The Church pledges its support for Agenda 111 which is the plan by the government to construct 111 health facilities to ensure that every District or Region in Ghana, has access to quality health service.
5. The PCG suggests to the Government to partner with the Christian Health Association of Ghana (CHAG) in managing and operating some of these hospitals after their completion.
6. The Church highly recommends that, in support of the laudable objective of the Agenda 111 initiative, Government also considers refurbishing some existing health facilities to ensure they conform to modern standards. The PCG also calls on Government to advance the construction of uncompleted health facilities and ensure they are in operation to address the health needs of Ghanaians.
7. The Presbyterian Church of Ghana reiterates its support for the implementation of the National Health Insurance Scheme as a social intervention that is critical to achieving Universal Health Coverage in Ghana.

8. The Church expresses her deep concern about the delays in reimbursing submitted claims which are affecting the quality of care provided by our health facilities.
9. The Church urges the Government to ensure that the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA) expedites action to reimburse our facilities' claims which are in arrears for several months.
10. The PCG Consultation Forum also appreciates the effort being made by the Government in providing some infrastructure and equipment to complement what is largely provided by our facilities from Internally Generated Funds (IGF) as well as our Development Partners.
11. The PCG wishes to urge Government to increase its support in the area of provision of infrastructure and equipment to our facilities to facilitate sustainability of quality care, following the withdrawal of financial support by most of our partners in the face of current global challenges.
12. The PCG would like to appeal to the Ministry of Health to grant tax waivers and exemptions to our facilities to make the clearance of donated medical equipment and supplies at the port easier and faster. This is because the exorbitant charges associated with clearing donated medical items have become unbearable to our financially over-burdened health facilities.
13. The PCG further wishes to call on the Ministry of Health to put in place pragmatic measures to address the challenge of some health professionals, especially medical officers, refusing posting to some parts of the country.

B. PRESBYTERIAN AGRICULTURE SERVICES (PAS):

1. The PCG lauds the Government of Ghana for the immense support the Church has enjoyed from the Ministry of Food and Agriculture and the support from the Ghana Agriculture Sector Investment Programme for the production of rice and soya beans in the West Akyem and Northern Presbyteries.
2. The Church positions itself to take advantage of the government flagship programmes which ensures the supply of subsidized agricultural inputs and machinery to individual farmers and groups.

3. The PCG appeals to the Ministry of Food and Agriculture to assist the Presbyterian Agriculture Stations in procuring agricultural machinery such as tractors and accessories to facilitate their farming operations.
4. The Ministry of Food and Agriculture considers ceding some of its programmes to the Presbyterian Agricultural Services for implementation, especially in Northern Ghana. Such arrangements would serve as a means of strengthening the Church-State partnership in the Agricultural sector.

C. PRESBYTERIAN RELIEF SERVICES AND DEVELOPMENT (PRESED)

1. PCG partners government and its agencies as well as other NGOs to mobilize resources to bring relief to distressed communities, and to consolidate efforts in mitigating the adverse effects of disasters.
2. The Presbyterian Relief Services and Development Unit scales up the implementation of the digitized Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA) model to ensure people in rural areas have access to credit and financial literacy and become economically empowered.
3. PRESED collaborates with generational groups in the church to embark on economic and social empowerment projects to improve their livelihoods.
4. PRESED commits to expanding the construction of mechanized boreholes in deprived schools and communities to ensure they have access to safe water.
5. PCG leverages the synergy between the Presbyterian Relief Services and Development, and the Agricultural Unit to jointly work on projects and initiatives vis-à-vis income-generating ventures along with the various development interventions and value chains that are of mutual benefits to each other.
6. The Church scales up its efforts in providing social services to complement efforts being made by the government to improve the living conditions of the good people of Ghana.

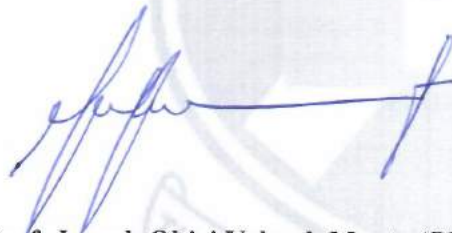
D. COVID-19

The Presbyterian Church of Ghana, in a time of global uncertainty and fear, strongly believes that Jesus Christ will be our Light as the world is slowly restored after a time of darkness at the height of the Covid-19 crisis. We are grateful to God for His divine protection for the people of Ghana that despite the devastations of the Covid-19 pandemic, His mercies continually abound for us. The PCG also expresses its immense gratitude to the Government of Ghana for the unrelenting efforts in the provision of PPEs for health workers and the timely provision of vaccines for the Ghanaian population in the management of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The PCG thanks God for how far He has brought the Department of Social Services and the opportunity offered to the Church to continue the holistic ministry of Our Lord Jesus Christ, as found in Mathew 25:31-40.

MAY GOD BLESS THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GHANA (PCG)!!!

MAY GOD BLESS GHANA!!!



Rt. Rev. Prof. Joseph Obiri Yeboah Mante (Ph.D.)

(Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana)

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