

Foreword

“TOWARDS A MORE INCLUSIVE SOCIETY” which is the theme for this year’s National Human Development Report, captures not only the vision of this government, but also the objectives and targets of the UN’s Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It recognises also the agenda of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) including the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), to which Ghana was the first to submit herself for review. The recommendations are being implemented.

Ghana’s plan for promoting inclusiveness has been incorporated in national economic development programmes, such as the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS I) and the Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS II). Government has also launched an ambitious Public Sector Reform Programme with a monitoring and evaluation component, to improve efficiency in policy implementation and also to develop a new and positive mindset for Public/Private Partnership for accelerated growth. The UNDP is among the key partners supporting these programmes.

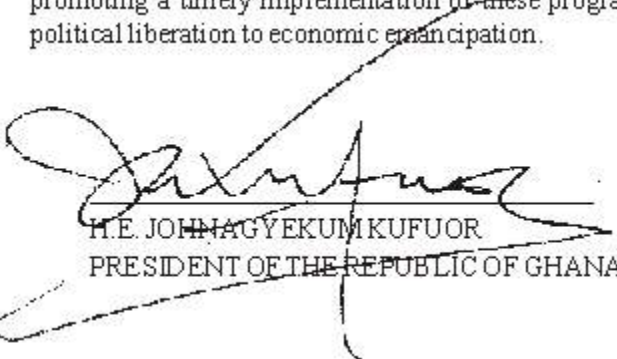
Among the critical steps already taken, also for inclusiveness is the National Social Protection Strategy which focuses on “social risk” and the “dynamics of poverty”. The flagship of the strategy is the “Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty” (LEAP) and Social Grants Programme which aims at achieving its objectives through investments in human capital, better enforcement of labour laws, protection of informal sector workers and social grants.

Sensitive to gender representation at the highest possible levels, the Public Services already include females in the cabinet and as administrative heads of Ministries, Departments and Agencies. The Chief Advisor to the President is another female, but indeed the greatest manifestation of this development is the epochal appointment of the country’s first female Chief Justice and Head of the Judiciary.

Government shares the conclusion of this Report that despite the progress made, including the decline in the level of poverty as indicated by recent studies, the numbers in the poverty category are still too high. Every effort is, therefore, being made through the local governance system, to enlarge opportunities for employment and creating wealth, thereby reducing poverty further.

Government expects this publication to generate objective debate in the thematic areas of gender equity, empowerment of the vulnerable, youth employment and extensive community involvement in governance. It is important to sustain debate to achieve the MDGs and a middle income status in the shortest possible time.

As an important legacy of the celebration of Ghana’s 50th anniversary of Independence, government is promoting a timely implementation of these programmes to move the country quickly and more decisively from political liberation to economic emancipation.



H.E. JOHN AGYEKUM KUFUOR
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF GHANA