CIVIL SOCIETY COMMUNIQUÉ ON THE 2026 NATIONAL AND MID-YEAR BUDGET: ADVANCING INCLUSIVE, GENDER AND CLIMATE-RESPONSIVE PUBLIC FINANCE IN GHANA

We, the Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), members of the Kasa Initiative Gender and Climate Platform, commend the Government of Ghana for its increased investments in climate action, gender equality, and social protection as reflected in the 2026 National Budget. We call for these commitments to be translated into transparent, adequately funded, and accountable programmes with measurable outcomes that improve the resilience and livelihods of women, youth, persons with disabilities, and other climate-vulnerable communities.

Issued by Civil Society Organisations - Members of the Kasa Initiative's Gender and Climate Platform

Background and Context

Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) working on climate change, gender equality, natural resource governance participated in the CSOs–Ministry of Finance Budget Consultation Workshop held from 10–12 June 2026 in Accra. The workshop was organised under the Strengthening Investments in Gender-Responsive Climate Adaptation (SIGRA) Project, implemented by Cowater International with support from Global Affairs Canada, in partnership with Kasa Initiative Ghana and ABANTU for Development. The consultation forms part of ongoing efforts to strengthen citizen participation in public financial management and promote evidence-based dialogue between civil society and government on national budget priorities.

The sessions strengthened the capacity of CSOs to engage in Ghana's budget processes and assessed the extent to which the 2026 National Budget responds to climate change, gender equality and social inclusion priorities. Key outcomes of the workshop were the strengthening of the Gender and Climate Platform, which will sustain CSO engagement ahead of the 2026 Mid-Year Budget Review and the 2027 National Budget process; and also the platfom members were trained in full budget analysis methodology and toolkit, comprising document review and budget analysis, comparative policy alignment against national frameworks such as the Medium-Term National Development Policy

Framework (MTNDPF) and Ghana's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), and cross-sectoral assessment of vulnerable groups, alongside dedicated tools such as the Budget Extraction Matrix, Climate and Gender Budget Tagging, the Policy Alignment Scorecard, Cross-Sectoral Nexus Mapping, Year-on-Year Comparison, and the Expenditure Share Calculator. This communiqué thus presents the collective observations, concerns and recommendations of participating CSOs and seeks to contribute to constructive dialogue on climate-responsive and gender-responsive public finance in Ghana.

Civil Society Position

We commend the Government of Ghana for increasing investments in climate action, social protection, environmental management and gender-responsive initiatives.

However, increased allocations alone do not guarantee impact. Climate and gender expenditure must be transparent, measurable and accountable. Citizens should be able to track how public resources are allocated, released and spent, and vulnerable groups should be able to see tangible improvements in their livelihoods and resilience.

We therefore call for stronger budget transparency, enhanced monitoring systems, improved climate and gender tagging, and greater citizen participation in budget accountability processes.

Mid-Year Update: Matching Allocations to Actual Releases

Government's 2026 Mid-Year Fiscal Policy Review, presented to Parliament in July 2026, offers the first opportunity to test whether the encouraging allocations noted above are being matched by actual releases at the midpoint of the fiscal year. CSOs welcome this disclosure and highlight the following:

- We commend Government for completing the 100th LEAP payment cycle, reaching approximately 1.5 million individuals, and for the reassessment that has moved 226,930 households above the extreme poverty threshold. However, only GH¢485 million of the GH¢1.1 billion allocated to LEAP for 2026 had been released by June about 44 percent at the year's midpoint. This pace must accelerate if the most vulnerable are to be reached as intended.

- We similarly commend the Ghana School Feeding Programme for now reaching over 4.5 million pupils and supporting more than 34,000 caterers and cooks. Yet only GH¢877 million of the GH¢1.98 billion allocated for 2026 had been released by June, also around 44 percent, underscoring the need for consistent, timely disbursement through the second half of the school year.
- We commend the National Anti-Illegal Mining Operations Secretariat (NAIMOS) for intensifying enforcement – 200 intelligence-led operations across six regions, 207 arrests and the seizure or destruction of 168 excavators and 2,800 Chanfang platforms. However, only GH¢16 million of the GH¢150 million allocated to NAIMOS in 2026 had been released by June, barely 11 percent of the year's allocation. Given the deplorable state of our forests and water bodies from illegal mining, this level of disbursement is not good enough and risks undermining the enforcement gains already achieved.
- We are concerned that the GH¢350 million Parliament approved from the Contingency Fund for emergency response to the June 2026 floods in Greater Accra could not be accessed because the Fund was subject to a court garnishee order, forcing Government to reallocate GH¢226 million from within the existing budget of the Ministry of Works, Housing and Water Resources, while a permanent flood solution has been pushed to the 2027 Budget. Public emergency funds meant for climate-vulnerable communities should be protected from such encumbrances.
- The tagging gap CSOs flagged at the June workshop persists at mid-year: the GH¢915 million released for Ministry of Education goods and services was reported jointly for "sanitary pads and the Capitation Grant," with no disaggregated figure for the free sanitary pads programme specifically. Citizens still cannot independently verify how much reached girls in schools.
- On a more encouraging note, we welcome the reported roll-out of the first phase of the Women and Youth in Aquaculture Programme, already active in 80 districts with 4,000 beneficiaries organised into 80 cooperative groups – a concrete step toward the gender-climate integration CSOs have called for.
- With real GDP growth of 6.4 percent in the first quarter of 2026 and the primary balance recording a surplus on both a cash and commitment

basis, Government has more, not less, fiscal room to fully release the climate- and gender-tagged allocations it committed to in the 2026 Budget.

Recommendations and Calls to Action — Towards the 2027 Budget and Beyond

1. Increase investments in gender-responsive climate adaptation, particularly for women farmers, fisherfolk, youth and climate-vulnerable communities.
2. Prioritize investments in northern Ghana, coastal communities, forest-fringe communities and flood-prone urban settlements.
3. Establish a national monitoring framework to track climate and gender outcomes, not merely expenditure levels.
4. Institutionalise Climate and Gender Budget Tagging across all Ministries, Departments and Agencies.
5. Publish simplified annual climate and gender budget reports showing allocations, releases, expenditures and results.
6. Strengthen participatory budget monitoring through CSO engagement, Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys and district-level accountability processes.
7. Restore and strengthen investments in ecosystem restoration programmes, including Tree for Life, with measurable targets and reporting requirements.
8. Accelerate the release of allocated funds to NAIMOS and other frontline environmental enforcement agencies in the second half of 2026, given the continuing degradation of forests and water bodies from illegal mining.
9. Ring-fence the Contingency Fund and other disaster and emergency response resources from legal encumbrances that could delay life-saving climate response, and disaggregate in-year expenditure reporting for programmes such as free sanitary pads that are currently bundled with other budget lines.

Conclusion

We recognise the progress reflected in the 2026 Budget and commend Government for the increased attention given to climate resilience, gender equality and social protection. The 2026 Mid-Year Fiscal Policy Review confirms that some of these commitments are being honoured, including sustained LEAP and School Feeding payments and intensified anti-illegal mining enforcement, and CSOs commend Government for this. However, the same review shows that release rates for critical lines particularly NAIMOS, and the Contingency Fund's exposure to legal encumbrance during the June floods continue to lag behind allocations at the year's midpoint. Achieving meaningful results therefore requires stronger accountability, transparent reporting and deliberate, timely disbursement that reaches women, youth and vulnerable communities. Ghana has an opportunity to become a leader in climate-responsive and gender-responsive budgeting, but this will require sustained collaboration between government, civil society, development partners and citizens. CSOs remain committed to supporting this process through evidence generation, policy engagement and budget monitoring through the 2027 Budget cycle.