



**REMARKS BY  
NIYI OJUOLAPE, UNFPA REPRESENTATIVE  
ON THE OCCASION OF THE 2019 ANNUAL CHIEF JUSTICE  
MENTORING PROGRAMME  
ON THURSDAY, 20 JUNE, 2019 IN ACCRA**

**Protocol:**

- **Distinguished Chairperson,**
- **Her Ladyship Justice Sophia A.B. Akuffo, Chief Justice of the Republic of Ghana**
- **His Lordships and Ladyships Present,**
- **Honourable Members of the Bar and Bench,**
- **All Students Present,**
- **Our “Orange Girls” from across the Country,**
- **Distinguished Invited Guests,**
- **Friends from the Media,**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen:**

I am excited to be part of this year’s mentoring programme, which as usual will expose the students to the functions of the judiciary and the administration of justice in Ghana and stimulate their interest in the legal profession.

The importance of this initiative by the Honourable Lady Chief Justice cannot be overemphasized for us at UNFPA, who work rigorously with government and many other stakeholders to ensure that the potential of every young person is fulfilled.

Even more gratifying, is the opportunity that has been offered by Her Ladyship and the judiciary throughout the years for us at UNFPA to include vulnerable adolescent girls such as the Kayayei (and now girls with disabilities, adolescent mothers, refugee girls, girls at risk and affected by Child Marriage) in this programme.

The inclusion of these girls brings a new dimension to the mentoring programme and supports the global agenda of leaving no one behind as stressed in the Sustainable Development Goals. We are also pleased to



highlight that the inclusion of the vulnerable girls has motivated some of them to aspire higher and moved on to continue their education.

Currently, a past Kayayei mentee of the programme is in the final year at the University of Cape Coast Distance Programme whilst another has completed a course for teachers and is currently teaching at the Future Leaders' Academy, a school that has been established for the children of the Kayayei at Agbobloshie.

### **Her Ladyship,**

Many more such stories of the marginalized girls who have been privileged to be part of this innovative programme and exposure, including the motivation to escape child marriages, exist. That is why UNFPA from this year will be institutionalizing an annual follow up session with the marginalized mentees so that we can document and share such success stories.

As already highlighted, UNFPA works to deliver a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person's potential is fulfilled.

Consequently, the programme in Ghana focuses on empowering young people to enable them make informed choices and become drivers of change. UNFPA therefore partners with young people including marginalized and vulnerable adolescent girls, especially those out of school to ensure their participation in decisions that affect them, thereby strengthening their ability to advance human rights and other developmental issues to fulfil their potential, and this is where we identify with the objective of the CJ's Mentoring Programme.

### **Her Ladyship,**

As UNFPA celebrates its 50years anniversary and 25years of the ICPD, it's important for us to continue to support such innovative approaches that reach out to the youth including vulnerable young people, who otherwise will not have the opportunity to be part of such discussions that demystifies the legal profession and inculcates in them that their dreams



are possible. In fact, the engagement with the CJ on this programme falls in line with the key principles of the ICPD agenda and UNFPA thus pledges her continuous support.

### **Friends from the Media**

For us at UNFPA, we work to improve the health and ability of women, adolescent girls and young people in general to participate in the decision-making process on the issues that affect their lives, whether those decisions are made at the individual, family, community or national levels. This is why UNFPA is on board with the mentoring programme which we believe will empower these young ones to do just that.

### **Honorable Members of the Bar and Bench**

It is our hope that as this Mentoring Programme is being rolled out at the sub-national level, there will be more opportunities for the inclusion of more vulnerable young people, especially adolescent girls with the support of UNFPA to ensure that, no one is left behind.

Thank you for your attention.