



SANÉ

Monthly Newsletter



CENTER FOR LAW & INNOVATION POLICY

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International Literacy Day - Preserving Language Diversity through Policy, Technology and the Law

Today, there are approximately 7,000 living languages, unevenly spread across about 200 countries with higher degrees of diversity in sub-Saharan Africa, Asia and the Pacific. For legal and administrative purposes however, most countries identify as monolingual. Language policies adopted by colonial and post-colonial governments have influenced patterns of multilingualism, and hundreds of languages have already become extinct. In many African countries, Ghana included, the official languages adopted after independence were foreign languages introduced by colonial authorities relegating local languages into the shadows.

The technology gap

In digital spaces especially, linguistic diversity is greatly reduced; [the famous engine \[Google\] that recognises 30 European languages recognises only one African language and no indigenous American or](#)

IN THIS ISSUE

WORLD LITERACY DAY



This issue explores ways in which we can use technology, policy and the law to help preserve language diversity.

UNEQUALLY EQUAL



We are sharing the first in our series, Unequally Equal - real stories on women's equality.

SDG 5 - GENDER EQUALITY



A sneak peek into next month's headliner - eliminating harmful practices against women/ girls.

FEEL BETTER EVERYDAY



A quick feature on Self Care.

[Pacific languages.](#)



Language is a fundamental attribute of cultural identity and empowerment, and if not preserved and revitalized, could disappear with the cultures, histories, and traditions associated with them. But did you know that with some ingenuity, computers can help preserve both vanishing languages and language diversity? It is no secret that several native language speakers in Ghana lack [popular literacy](#). It is not for lack of writing systems though. Virtually every language spoken in Ghana has alphabets, created centuries ago, and we have books, dictionaries and often, a translation of the Bible, but not much beyond this.

The Law, Education Policy and Language Diversity

In 2002, a law was passed in Ghana that mandated the use of local languages for instruction at primary levels one to three. In response to public concerns and protests, the Ghana Education Service implemented the National Literacy Accelerated Program (NALAP) in 20 districts during the 2009/2010 academic year, to pilot this concept. 11 languages (Asante twi, Akuapem twi, Dagaare, Dagbani, Dagnme, Ewe, Fante, Ga, Gonja, Kasem and Nzema) were identified to test the efficacy of this strategy. In a research study by the Department of Family and Consumer Services, of the University of Ghana Legon, ([Mother Tongue Usage in Ghanaian Pre- Schools: Perception of Parents and Teachers](#)), two main arguments against the use of local languages were identified, (1) the perceived importance of english language and (2) the paucity of learning and teaching materials in our local languages.

How can we Leverage Technology

Ending Child Marriage



Did you know that in Ghana, [1 out of 5 children is married before the age of 18?](#)

Child-marriage occurs when one or both of the spouses are below the age of 18 and is a violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that “Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.”

Women should have the same right as men to “freely choose a spouse and to enter into marriage with their free and full consent [and the “betrothal and marriage of a child should have no legal effect](#)

According to the National Strategic Framework for Ending Child Marriage, about 5% of females got married before the age of 15 with parental consent, in Ghana between 2017 and 2026, despite global and communal effort to ending child marriage.

To learn more about Child Marriage and what pertains in Ghana, look out for the next issue of Sané.

Feel Better Everyday

brought to you by

This is where computers, technology and the internet come in. Not only can people use computers to write in previously non-written languages, computers can reduce the cost of publishing, help preserve language diversity and enable authors to produce literature in their own languages. However, the computer-based ability to publish books raises a question, since very few native-language communities can afford computers and desktop publishing systems. This technology is however not too expensive for governments, development agencies, or even wealthy individuals. Of course local language instructors would have to be trained and the appropriate curriculum and instruction materials would have to be developed.

Access to the internet offers the opportunity to document and preserve languages, to share teaching material to encourage speakers, to translate information for marginalized groups, and even create virtual communities of speakers. The United Nations General Assembly has declared 2022-2032 the International Decade of Indigenous Languages (IDIL) and so on International literacy day, let us take up the challenge thrown by UNESCO to governments, to [develop comprehensive language related policies](#) that support linguistic diversity and multilingualism.



Self care is so important for our well-being. Sometimes it's as simple as reminding ourselves that we're worth a little indulgence, asserting our boundaries or even life -saving choices – making the time to create and sustain routines that support and improve our mental health and physical well-being.

Changes be they large or small can transform our lives – to live better, happier, healthier, longer. You have to figure out what eating well means to you, and be honest with yourself about bad days.

Creating a few mid-level stages where you can have some room to maneuver always helps. Ultimately, Reach Health Consult will be with you on your health and fitness journey, helping you to overcome the obstacles that get in the way of consistency and long term results.

“If we could give every individual the right amount of nourishment and exercise, not too little and not too much, we would have found the safest way to health”Hippocrates

Unequally Equal: 26 Stories on Women's Equality from Ghana.



“A woman is human. She is not better, wiser, stronger, more intelligent, more creative, or more responsible than a man. Likewise, she is never less. Equality is a given. A woman is human.”

-Vera Nazarian, The Perpetual Calendar of Inspiration

Long and difficult, the fight for women's equality has made incredible advancements in recent years. Women have fought for and prevailed in many significant battles, from the right to vote to the right to work to the right to choose. However, the battle is far from over. Equality, in this context encompasses equal access to opportunities and benefits, such as promotions and pay parity. In order to review and remove some of the barriers engendered by societal norms, it is necessary to share real life experiences to demonstrate the impact of inequality and equity. In Unequally Equal, we will share a collection of 26 perspectives from Ghanaian women on what women's equality means to them and the challenges that they confront on a regular basis.

NOTE: Pseudonyms are used to protect the identities.

This is Jane's story - #1

“My husband's transfer at work necessitated me moving to a new area. My parents used to watch my first child, who was four months old at the time, while I was at work. I had to quit my job and get a new one at my husband's new station.

As a result, I had to give up the child care assistance my parents had been providing me while I was at work. At my new, more demanding job, I had to get up about 6 am to drop my baby off at a daycare that opens at 7 am [this was the earliest I could find], prepare breakfast for my family, and travel almost an hour and a half to work because of traffic. Due to highly traditional gender roles that a man was meant to provide while a woman was supposed to take care of the home, my husband, who left for work after 7:30am, was of little help to me. As a result of my endless stress and worry, especially when the daycare closed at 4 p.m. because my shift at work didn't end until 5 p.m. On three occasions, my child had been left with the security guard. I eventually had to resign.

The fight for gender equality is an uphill battle, especially because the social norms and conventions that represent ideal gender roles have been so thoroughly ingrained into our culture that they are accepted as the standard, and shifting the needle from the standard is no mean task.

Upcoming Events



EVENT
Busy Speakers
DETAILS
Toastmasters Club

SEP
11

Christ the King International
School, Accra

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At CLIP our goal is to be a focal point for addressing issues across the legal, policy and innovation platforms leading to people centered solutions.