

Appoint more women into leadership positions — Women advocates

By Augustina Tawiah

THERE must be gender equity in the appointment of people into leadership positions, especially in politics, some gender advocates have stated.

They described the low representation of women in Parliament, the Executive and Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) as woefully inadequate.

In line with that, they have reiterated the call for the passage of the Affirmative Action Bill into law to ensure fairness in appointments in the country.

The concerns were expressed by the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ghana, Prof. Nana Abo Appiah Amfo; a

Deputy Commissioner of the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ), Mercy Larbi; the Deputy Director-General and Chief Research Scientist of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), Prof. Marian D. Quain, and a retired



• Marian Ayiwa Dzokotoe — Retired Educationist

educationist, Marian Ayiwa Dzokotoe, in separate interviews in Accra.

It formed part of activities to commemorate International Women's Day (IWD) which is being observed globally today.

Female population

They said since women formed the majority of the country's population, it



• Prof. Marian D. Quain — Deputy Director-General CSIR

was only appropriate that they were put in positions of trust to reflect on their numbers.

"When you go to Parliament, how many women are there, 40 out of 275 MPs? In decision making, the men who are less in the population are more than the women," she said and added that the same situation existed in the executive and other sectors.

Prof. Amfo also said "Leadership



• Mercy Larbi — Deputy Commissioner, Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice

across the board still needed lots of women in the boardroom. "The UN standard is for us to have 30 per cent representation in leadership, but we are not yet there. We need the critical mass of women in leadership positions to make a significant impact in society," she said.

The VC said investing in women would have a rippling effect on the fortunes of the country.



• Prof. Nana Abo Appiah Amfo — Vice-Chancellor, University of Ghana

Prof. Amfo said the university had over the years worked towards mainstreaming gender in all sectors of administration.

The retired educationist, Mrs Dzokotoe, also said when the Affirmative Action Bill was passed into law, it would go a long way to address the low representation of women in political leadership.

She said it was good to invest in

women because they were trustworthy, committed to their work and also offered their best when entrusted with work.

Investment

For her part, Prof. Quain called for funds to support women, especially in science and research to help empower them to effect change for accelerated development.

"Women in the agricultural sector also lack access to land, while some cultural beliefs forbid them to go to farms when they are in their menses," she added.

Prof. Quain also called for investment in girls' education to be more targeted in disciplines they were not participating much in, while policies at the workplace must be made flexible for women to ensure better outcomes.

For CHRAJ, Mrs Larbi said they had made some investment in women, including advocating against early and forced marriages in some parts of the country.

She said her outfit had also introduced policies and laws such as the Domestic Violence Act as part of efforts to promote gender mainstreaming.

All four distinguished women acknowledged that after many years of gender mainstreaming, the country had chalked up some successes.

These include having three female Chief Justices; a female Speaker of Parliament; the establishment of the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, and the development of a national gender policy.

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