

Project on women's participation in governance launched

By Juliet Akyaa Safo

A PROJECT to advance the rights of women and girls to political participation and increase advocacy to garner citizen's support for women's leadership has been launched in Accra.

The two-year project would, among others, focus on supporting citizens' initiatives at all levels of governance to secure the best gender equality outcomes for women and other marginalised groups.

Known as Strengthening Activism for a Gender-Responsive Elections 2024 in Ghana (SAGES), the project also seeks to draw attention to the perennial low representation of women and other marginalised groups in policy-making spaces through legislative remedies in this year's elections and beyond.

The project was launched by a non-governmental organisation, Abantu for Development, with support from the African Women's Development Fund (AWDF), in Accra, last Thursday, April 18.

The Executive Director, ABANTU, Dr Rose Mensah-Kutin, said the project also intended to

increase citizens' actions for an inclusive, credible and peaceful general election in 2024.

She explained that this year's elections offered another opportunity to deepen efforts to promote gender sensitivity in the electoral processes, as well as enhance knowledge and skills of aspirants and other stakeholders.

Dr Mensah-Kutin said the project would advocate for political parties to reform their party structures, develop party manifestos that were gender responsive, as well as equip and genuinely support women in their various political parties to contest and win their seats.

Commitment toward equity

In a speech read on her behalf, the Director of the Department of Gender, Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP), Faustina Acheampong, said the project was timely and appropriate for the 2024 elections.

She reiterated that despite the significant strides made towards gender equality in various sectors, the political landscape continued to grapple with systemic barriers that hinder women's full participation and representation in decision making. The Director commended

ABANTU and the Affirmative Action Coalition for sustaining the advocacy for the passage of the Affirmative Action Bill into Law and supporting women at national and sub national levels to participate in decision-making processes.

She urged CSOs and the media to help raise public awareness on the importance of women's participation in decision-making, politics and the 2024 elections.

A member of the Commission on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Hilary Gbedemah, said the project called for the need to revive and intensify activism on women's rights.

She urged women in leadership positions to build their capacities, and identity and craft strategies and messages encompassing all areas to stay relevant in any sector of society.



• Hilary Gbedemah (2nd from right), member of the Commission on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW); Rose Mensah-Kutin (left), Executive Director, ABANTU, Rebecca Colecraft (3rd from right), Assistant Director, National Commission for Civic Education, and other dignitaries launching the project. Picture: EDNA SALVO-KOTÉY