

Plan International women empowerment programme phases out

By Augustina Tawiah

PLAN International Ghana has held a close-out ceremony for one of its projects that has so far empowered 81 women's rights organisations (WROs) across 15 regions of the country and over 3,200 women.

Known as Women's Voice and Leadership - Ghana Project (WVL), it supported WROs in capacity-building, funding and grants to enable them to impact women and girls with vocational training, and also sensitised them to their rights, including gender-based violence, social norms and access to and control of resources during the five years of its implementation.

The project was funded by Global Affairs Canada, in partnership with Plan International Ghana.

At the event, which saw the beneficiary women exhibit some of their finished products, the Country Director of Plan International Ghana, Constant Tchona, said the gains of the WVL project were a testament to the transformative

Highlight

■ A total of 81 women's rights organisations, and over 3,200 women across 15 regions of the country have been empowered.

power of women leaders and limitless possibilities that arose when they embraced diversity, inclusivity and home-grown solutions.

"Together, we have the opportunity to redefine leadership, to amplify women's voices, and to create a future where gender equality is not just a distant dream, but a lived reality," he said.

Challenges

The director, however, said that WROs were faced with organisational effectiveness

difficulties such as inadequate capacity in governance, human resource management, external donor engagement, as well as a dwindling funding landscape in the gender space.

These factors, he explained, have had huge impact on their vibrancy, sustainability and the quality of services they provided to the women and girls in their localities.

Mr Tchona said as a human rights organisation, Plan International Ghana was ready to help improve the lives of children, especially girls and young women who were the most vulnerable in society, adding that Plan goes beyond the "symptoms" of the many challenges affecting girls and young women.

The Project Manager of WVL, Theodora Asare, expressed hope that in the long term, through the vocational skills acquired and the knowledge gained about gender and sexual-based violence, the beneficiaries would generate income to support their homes.

The Director, Head of Cooperation of the Canadian High Commission in Ghana, Kathleen Flynn-Dapaah, said Canada believed that designing outcomes that put the poorest and the most marginalised, specifically women and girls, at the heart of interventions would create real and lasting change in the world.

She explained that the WVL project, which was the flagship initiative of Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP), had a vision to reach 400 women's rights organisations with the funding and capacity support they needed to advance gender equality, change in policies and legislation that negatively impact women and their rights.

The Principal Programme Officer at the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, Vera Karikari Bediako, said the WVL project would contribute to empowering women and girls to enable them to participate fully in decision-making processes.



• Constant Tchona (right), Country Director, Plan International Ghana; Vera Karikari Bediako (2nd from right), Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, and Kathleen Flynn-Dapaah (3rd from right), Director, Head of Cooperation, High Commission of Canada to Ghana, admiring products by the beneficiaries. Picture: ESTHER ADJORKOR ADJEI