



• Awardees of African Women Leaders Network.
Picture: ESTHER ADJORKOR ADJEI

AWLN Ghana honours gender champions

By Justice Agbenorsi

THE African Women Leadership Network (AWLN) - Ghana has awarded 22 personalities for their contribution to the development of the continent and gender equality.

They are President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo; a former UN official and international expert on gender, Awa Ndiaye Seck; the UN Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the horn of Africa, Hanna Tetteh; the Special Envoy of the Chairperson of the African Commission on Women, Peace and Security, Benta Diop; the Minister of Communication and Digitalisation, Ursula Owusu-Ekuful; the Director of Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU), ACP Owusuwaa Kyeremeh, and a former

Minister of Education, Betty Mould Iddrisu.

The others are a lawyer and women's rights activist, Dorcas Coker-Appiah; the Executive Director of the Ark Foundation, Angela Dwamena-Aboagye; the Chancellor of the University of Ghana, Dr Mary Chinery-Hesse; the Chief Executive Officer of Telecel Ghana, Dr Patricia Obo-Nai; the Founder of Women in Tech Africa, Ethel Cofie; a former CEO of the Korle Bu Teaching Hospital and Paediatric Surgeon, Prof. Akua Hesse and Rev. Dr Joyce Arye, a former CEO of the Ghana Chamber of Mines.

The rest are a former Chief Justice, Justice Georgina Wood; Speaker of Parliament, Alban Bagbin; Ghanaian academic and linguist, Florence Abena Dolphyne; International development executive, Maxine Houinato; Gender and Development Consultant, Elizabeth

Akpalu; Ghana's first female Presidential Advisor on Gender and Development, Angela Asante, and Yelizoli Gaa-Naa, Naa Abiba.

They were awarded at the maiden awards ceremony organised by the Ghana Chapter of AWLN, which also saw the commemoration of the African Women's Day celebration

The occasion also served as a platform to raise funds geared towards increasing women's leadership in peacebuilding and security, greater political participation, financial inclusion for women entrepreneurs among others.

It was on the theme, "One vision, many voices: celebrating gender champions".

Awards

The Chairperson of AWLN-Ghana, Dr Charity Binka, said the awards had been

designed to recognise remarkable individuals and to inspire more men and women, both young and old to continue striving for gender equality and empowering others to do the same.

"Just as a nation honours its heroes and heroines, this awards ceremony will motivate more people to contribute to closing the gender equality gap," she said.

She said despite efforts by the government and various stakeholders to bridge the gender equality gap through gender parity at the basic education level, more women in leadership positions among other strides, there were still significant disparities that persisted.

"Women continue to face barriers in business, politics, education, healthcare and many other fields. The recent poor showing of women in the district assembly election and political party primaries highlights the urgent need to intensify our efforts to address these widening gender gaps," she said.

She commended Parliament and other stakeholders for the passage of the Affirmative Action bill.

The passage of the bill, she said, would be significant in changing the narrative of gender equality in Ghana.

She, therefore, appealed to the President to accent to it quickly, as a lasting legacy.

Opportunities

The Deputy Minister of Gender, Children and Social Protection, Dr Benjamin Sekyere Yeboah, said despite women making up over half of the country's population, they were often left behind in socio-economic development due to barriers including illiteracy and harmful cultural practices.

He stressed the need for concerted efforts from all women, especially those in leadership positions to create opportunities for underprivileged women and advocate for their rights