



# Participation of vulnerable youth, women in local govt key in devt

—RISE-Ghana

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A CIVIL society organisation based in the Upper East Region, RISE-Ghana, has urged local government officials to acknowledge the contributions of women, individuals with disabilities, and other marginalised groups in local governance activities.

It emphasized the importance of fostering inclusivity and elevating the voices of marginalised groups during a time when President John Dramani Mahama urged collective efforts to reflect on, assess, and realign the nation towards prosperity.

This was made known at a bi-annual grassroots regional networking and advocacy strategising meeting held in Bolgatanga of the Upper East on Tuesday.

The meeting formed part of the Heard Everywhere And Repre-

sented Daily (HEARD) project launched under the auspices of RISE-Ghana, with funding support from Norsaac.

The Project Officer, Bernice Atanga, stated that to enhance the involvement of women and vulnerable youth in rural areas within local government, the organisation was engaging with respected stakeholders to gather their insights.

This initiative, she said aims to draft and submit a petition to the Municipal and District Chief Executives (MDCEs), who have yet to be appointed.

“Today, we have called some youth, women’s group and CSOs to discuss the development cause of the PWDs, youth and women. In the previous government, we engaged the MDCEs on the challenges associated with these vulnerable persons on decision making at the local level,” Ms Atanga noted.

The petition, according to her, would highlight critical issues on inclusion, access to information and accountability under key laws,



• Participants in the Regional Networking and Advocacy meeting

such as the Right to Information Act, the Local Governance Act among other related legal provisions.

Ms Atanga further said the current government had pledged to reflect, review and reset the economy for prosperity, and it would be difficult to attain that agenda without the views and contributions of some illustrious stakeholders, including women and the youth.

Conrad Biliarh Duti, Programme Manager for Trade Aid Integrated, said his outfit had embarked on projects and programmes tailored at promoting gender equality, and that, women’s

participation in decision taking remained the topmost priority of the organisation.

He disclosed that the organisation was also pushing harder for a quota for women and PWDs in the appointment of Assembly Members by the government.

Mr Duti mentioned that, as part of their advocacy role, the non-governmental organisation was rallying four district and municipal assemblies in the region; namely Bongo District, Talensi District, Kassena-Nankana and Bolgatanga Municipalities, to review their byelaws to promote and encourage women’s participation in

agriculture and business development.

Judith Atambire of the Forum for African Women Educationists (FAWE) Ghana, challenged chiefs and opinion leaders in the region to rise to spare some women from being subjected to inhumane cultural practices which, she said, undermined their growth and progress.

She said: “We want the men to help the women progress in their education, business without any obstacles. This will help us build an inclusive society together”.