

Implement gender-sensitive policies — IDEG urges political parties

BY ABIGAIL ANNOH

POLITICAL parties have been implored to adopt and implement gender-sensitive policies to fully align with Ghana's Affirmative Action (AA) law.

The Affirmative Action (Gender Equality) Act 2024, which was passed after decades of advocacy, seeks to increase the participation of women and other marginalised groups in governance and decision-making spaces by at least 30 per cent by 2026, with a goal of full gender parity by 2034.

Speaking at a forum organised by the Institute for Democratic Governance (IDEG) in partnership with GenCED to deliberate on strategies for effective implementation of the law, a Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Expert with GenCED, Sandra Sagbohan said research conducted by the organisation revealed that



• The participants after the programme

most political parties in the country lacked clear policies to advance gender equality.

“Political parties must go beyond rhetoric and deliberately design party statutes, allocate resources and develop programmes that empower women and support inclusivity,” she urged.

In his view, Senior Research

Fellow at IDEG, Professor Kwesi Jonah, called for the adoption of a mixed member proportional representation (MMP) system with quotas reserved for women to deepen inclusivity, particularly at the local government level.

Explaining the concept, Prof. Jonah said the MMP system combined the current winner-takes-all

elections (where individuals contest and win seats in their constituencies) with a party list system, where parties are allocated additional seats based on the proportion of votes they win nationally.

The Deputy Presidential Spokesperson at the Office of the President, Mrs Shamima Muslim, assured that the government

remained committed to promoting gender equality, including through appointments made at various levels.

For her part, the Convenor of the Affirmative Action Law Coalition, Mrs Sheila Minkah-Premo, commended the judiciary for being one of the few institutions that had achieved near gender parity, with about 49 per cent of judges being women.

She, however, lamented the general underrepresentation of women in governance and called for adequate resourcing of the Gender Equity Committee to drive sustained progress.

Convening government officials, political parties, members of parliament, CSOs, academia, development partners, and the media, the forum also developed actionable plans for collaboration between political parties and civil society towards promoting inclusive democratic governance and gender equity frameworks.