



### **The Affirmative Action (Gender Equity) Bill 2024**

The Affirmative Action (Gender Equity) Bill was first introduced in Parliament in 1998 to address the social, cultural, economic, and political gender imbalances in the country. These imbalances stem from historical discrimination against women and persistent patriarchal socio-cultural systems and norms.

After years of deliberation, the Affirmative Action Gender Equity Bill 2024, now known as the Affirmative Action Gender Equity Act, was read for the third time and passed into law, when on Tuesday, July 30th, 2024, the Minister for Gender, Children and Social Protection, Hon. Darkoa Newman moved the motion in Parliament to pass the bill into law.

The law aims to create more opportunities for women at the national and all levels, to increase their participation in governance and decision-making to at least 30% by 2030. Currently, less than 15% of Ghana's 275-member Parliament are women, which falls short of the 30% target set by the United Nations for all countries.

The objectives of the law are to ensure the attainment of gender equity in the political, social, economic, educational, and cultural spheres of society, and to promote policies and programmes that address gender imbalances in these areas.

### **Role of the Promoting Equal Rights for Women and Girls with Disability in Ghana (PERD) Project in Achieving this Milestone.**

The Promoting Equal Rights for Women and Girls with Disability in Ghana (PERD) Project, implemented by a consortium of Women-led CSOs in Ghana and led by the Planned Parenthood Association of Ghana (PPAG), along with Women in Need and the African Centre for Human Rights and Sustainable Development (AfCHuRSD), has supported the Affirmative Action Bill Coalition since 2022. This support was made possible through a 3-year funding from the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Ghana, using the PERD Project. The project enhanced and supported the Coalition's activities to ensure the bill's passage into law.

Madam Sheila Minka-Premo Esq., the convener of the Affirmative Action Bill (AABill) Coalition, served as the liaison for the project's support. Specifically, the PERD project collaborated with the Affirmative Action Coalition to host a dialogue dubbed "Uniting for Action to End Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Against Women and Girls with Disability to push for the passage of the Affirmative Action Bill into law". The forum was also in commemoration of 2022 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence which was held at the Netherlands embassy in Accra. Thirty (30) individuals including coalition members and stakeholders participated in the activity that sought to highlight the challenges with the process of the passage of the bill and what stakeholders can do differently. Subsequently, the project, supported the coalition to organize a virtual training for Focal Persons on the Affirmative Action Bill (AABILL) in November 2023 to equip them with resources and knowledge to effectively carry out their tasks in their respective focal regions/zones.

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It also offered a wealth of knowledge to the participants on the AA Bill and the goal of the Coalition. Again, the project team was among the delegation made up of the Steering Committee and some key members of the coalition when they paid a courtesy call on the newly appointed Minister of Gender, Children and Social Protection, Hon Dakoa Newman. The visit was to inquire about the status of the AABILL since the Attorney General was asked to review portions of the Bill. At this meeting, time lines were set and the Hon Minister assured the coalition of relaying the Bill in parliament.

Finally, the PERD project team as part of the coalition, participated in the windowing (brief meetings with at least five parliamentarians before sitting began) in parliament and supported the mobilization of women to attend parliament to give support to the Hon Minister. This was well acknowledged by the Rt. Hon Speaker.

As we celebrate this significant milestone, we express our gratitude to our donor, the **Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Ghana**, and all affiliated organizations for their tireless efforts in passing a bill that addresses socio-cultural, political, economic, and educational gender imbalances in both the private and public sectors.

This is a win for development and for inclusivity, and the PERD Consortium calls on the President to speedily assent to the bill and for the commitment of resources to see the full implementation of the Law. We also encourages all women to raise up to the occasion and make the best of the feat.

**SIGNED**

PERD Consortium