

The award-winning Group Chief Executive Officer of Hollard Ghana, Mrs. Patience Akyianu has said that the greatest barrier to women leadership is the mind as she challenged women to rise above demotivating perceptions such as gender stereotypes.

“Women have so much to bring to the table. Our greatest barrier to leadership is the mind. Let’s push above the unconscious bias and be intentional in dealing with the consequences of it.”

Mrs. Akyianu was speaking at the commemoration of International Women’s Day by Vivo Energy Ghana, the marketers and distributors of Shell branded products and services at a virtual ceremony in Accra.

Speaking on the theme, “Women in leadership: Achieving an equal future in a COVID-19 world”, Mrs. Akyianu said conversations on gender equality should focus on how women can flourish under any circumstance. According to her, gender equality is achievable when individuals change their perceptions and #ChooseToChallenge the status quo.”

Achieving an equal future in a covid-19 world would require women to invest and acquire skills that will position them competitively, be tech-savvy, visionary, ready to sacrifice their comfort zones and be strategic leaders. “When you flawlessly execute, gender does not matter”, says Mrs. Akyianu.

The Managing Director of Vivo Energy Ghana, Mr. Ben Hassan Ouattara re-echoed his call for more women in leadership roles. He said women are transformational leaders who are able to turnaround challenging situations and should be encouraged to aspire to the top.

He acknowledged that there may be challenges hindering the growth of some women into leadership positions. However, women must challenge perceptions that demotivate them from aspiring to the top. “I encourage them to stay confident and trust in their capabilities”, adding that “failure is part of success; when you fail, you learn and grow.”

International Women's Day is celebrated in many countries around the world. It is a day when women are recognized for their achievements without regard to divisions, whether national, ethnic, linguistic, cultural, economic or political. Since its inception, International Women's Day has assumed a new global dimension for women in developed and developing countries with support from industry, governments, educational institutions, community groups, professional associations, women's networks, charities, non-profit bodies and the media.

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