

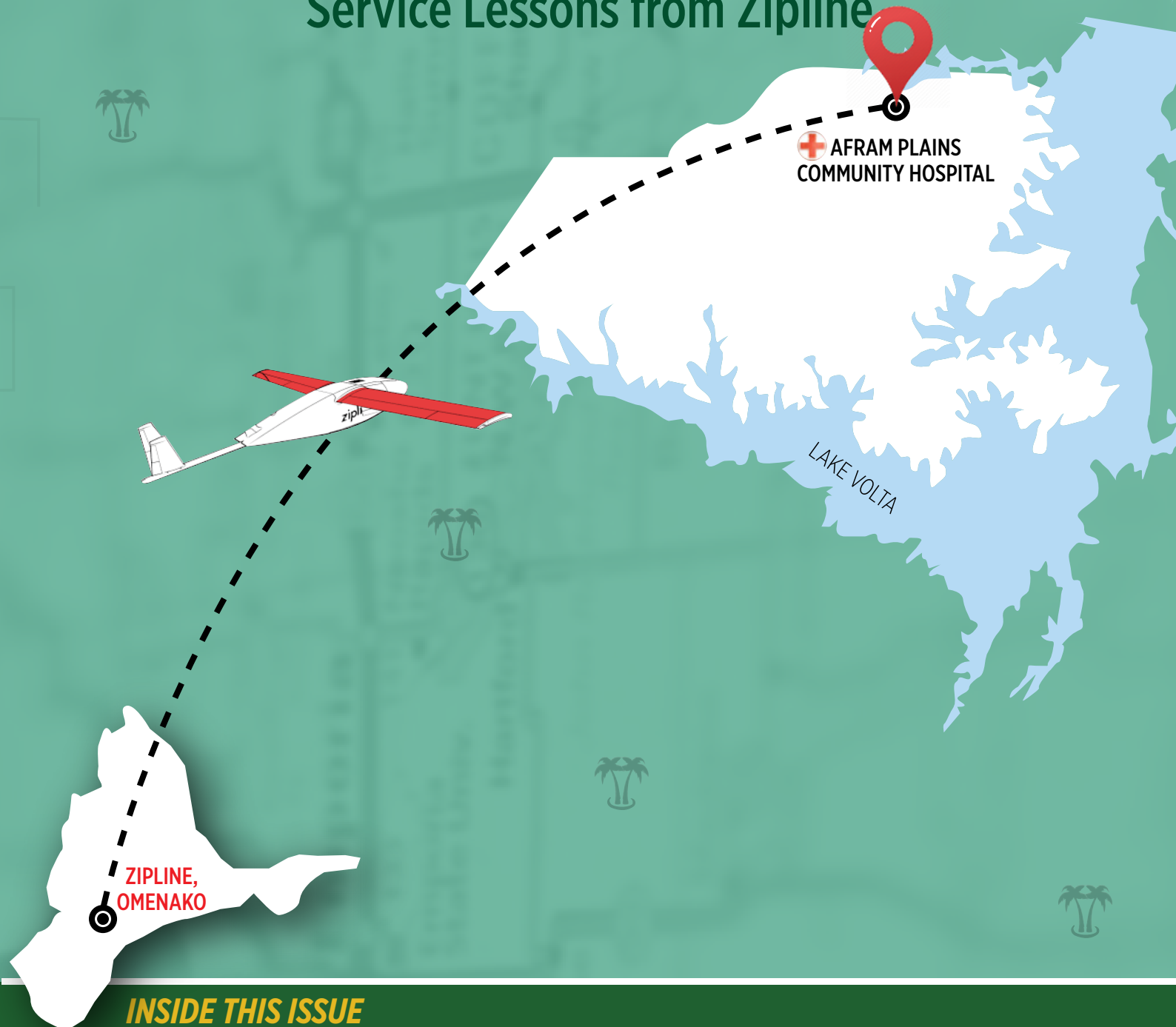
T H E  
**RURAL BANKER**



Issue 7  
Q3, 2019

FROM **OMENAKO** TO  
**AFRAM PLAINS** IN 45 MINUTES

Service Lessons from Zipline



**INSIDE THIS ISSUE**

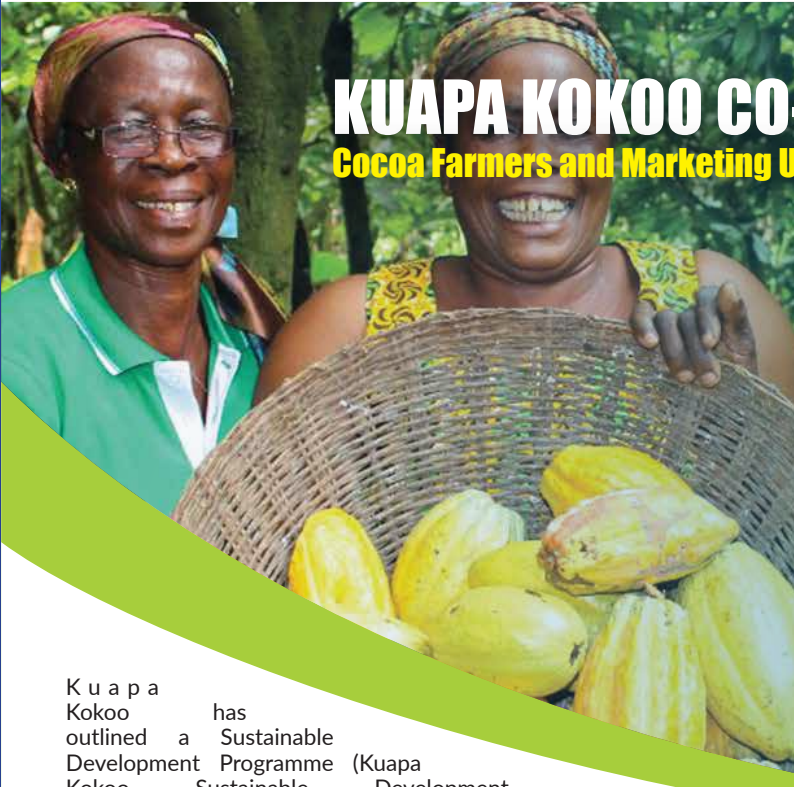
- Zipline's lifeline
- Meet our people

- Mponua Rural Bank
- Mumuadu Rural Bank

- Customer service lessons
- The uniqueness of RCBs

# KUAPA KOKOO CO-OPERATIVE

## Cocoa Farmers and Marketing Union Limited (KKFU)



## Who we are

Kuapa Kokoo Co-operative Cocoa Farmers and Marketing Union Limited (KKFU) currently has committed membership of 100,000 cocoa farmers in six cocoa regions of Ghana who are producing an average of 150,000 metric tonnes of multiple certified cocoa annually. KKFU is under the leadership of Madam Fatima Ali, a 38-year old cocoa farmer as president. Kuapa Kokoo Limited (KKL) is a Licensed Buying Company owned by KKFU that mobilizes member's cocoa for Cocoa Board and the certified global market. Kuapa Kokoo undertakes social and economic interventions through the Kuapa Kokoo Sustainable Development Programme (KKSDP), a collaborative programme between KKFU and Millennium Promise Alliance (MPA) aimed at achieving the SDGs. KKSDP is anchored on the following key components:

Kuapa Kokoo has outlined a Sustainable Development Programme (Kuapa Kokoo Sustainable Development Programme) a collaborative programme between KKFU and Millennium Promise Alliance (MPA) aimed at developing the human capital and the productive capacities of the farmers in the creation of healthy and sustainable communities. KKSDP is anchored on the SDG framework for transforming farmers, farming and farmer communities.

The key components of KKSDP are:

### Kuapa Kokoo/MPA TeleAgric

The Kuapa Kokoo/MPA TeleAgric seeks to bridge the communication gap between academia and best farm practices. It also aims at advancing Agricultural extension services in to the hard to reach farmers in Ghana. Leveraging on SDG 9 to support over 100,000 farmers with inputs and best farming practices systems in 6 local languages to aid easy communication with these farmers, Extension Officers and academia have been identified and trained to support these farmers through the TeleAgric Programme. Farmers dial in on their cell phones from their various farm locations to a TeleAgric Centre (call centre) in Kumasi, Ashanti region and speak to experienced Extension Officers and Disease and Pests Specialist about their planting, input application, disease and pests, soil and other growing challenges and receive the needed support in their own local languages. The TeleAgric programme is the first of its kind in Africa to provide real-time information to farmers and increase extension coverage.



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### Back 2 School Project

The aim of this project is to contribute to the achievement of the SDGs on Nutrition, Education and Child Labour (SDGs 2, 4 & 8) by introducing innovative local interventions to increase access, enrolment, quality and retention of children in schools in 12 cocoa growing districts in Ghana. The project centers around ensuring accessible, affordable, quality education at the basic level; promoting functional literacy and numeracy; fostering community involvement in sustaining educational interventions and; attracting and retaining teachers in rural schools in the project districts. Etc.



### Visit by Prince Charles of Wales

In November 2018, the prince of Wales, Prince Charles recognizing the quality of cocoa beans produced by KuapaKokoo farms in Kona, a community in Ashanti Region. This was a great motivation to the members of the farmers union who trooped in solidarity.



## Kuapa Kokoo, Papa! Paa!!

HEAD OFFICE: Asokwa - Kumasi Ghana  
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Some of the projects include, the provision of educational infrastructure. The Bank constructed a temporary pavilion, to replace a dilapidated classroom block for Osino Presby Junior High School (JHS). "The previous structure was like a death trap for the students and was on the verge of collapse.

## 43 Rural & Community Banks are unique

The rural banking concept was introduced in 1976 with a view to providing financial intermediation in rural areas. The first rural bank to be established was Nyarkrom Rural Bank in the Central Region. It is gratifying to note that the number of rural banks has grown from the initial stage of one to over 140.

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Inlaks, one of Africa's leading information technology solutions provider, has hosted a successful Digital Summit in Lagos, the commercial capital of Nigeria. The summit, was held on Saturday, October 19, 2019 at the plush Lagos Continental Hotel on Victoria Island on the theme: "Unlocking the Opportunities in the Digital Banking Age".

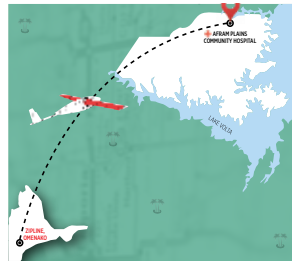
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The success of any organization depends on many factors. One of such is the people factor. Every organization needs people for its operations. How they are managed, contributes in no small measure to the success of the organization.

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## 38 PARADISE HOTELS - EXCITED CUSTOMER OF MUMUADU RURAL BANK

Paradise Hotel is located on the Accra to Kumasi highway, which makes them very visible and easy to locate.

They provide rest stop services for commuters using the highway. The hotel provides commercial washrooms for travelers, restaurant services, super markets, fuel and gas service stations and hotel...



## 40 LINDA DOR HOSPITALITY GROUP - MOST RECOMMENDED REST STOP

Linda Dor, which was originally located at the SOS Village at Kyebi, has been noted for the best meat pies. Passengers of the Accra to Kumasi road who patronized the road before the diversion to Bunso Junction, could testify to their sumptuous meat pies.

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**6 FROM THE MD'S DESK**  
In this issue, I would like to make some remarks in four areas that I am convinced deserved some comments from my desk: the Zipline "miracle"; our annual managers conference; digital banking age summit; and our people.

When I heard about the launch...

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## FEATURE STORY 2

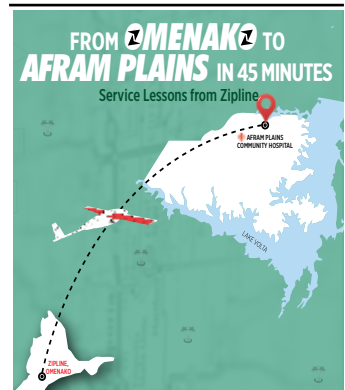


### 32 MUMUADU RURAL BANK - OSINO'S HERITAGE

With its headquarters nestled in the heartland of Osino in the Eastern Region, Mumuadu Rural Bank (MRB) was founded in November 1982 by five sons of the soil with strong ambitions for developing the local economy of Osino.

Seth Adom-Asomaning remains the only one amongst the founders of the Bank on the current Board of Directors of the Bank. The rest of the founders are, Mr J.W. Sackey, Mr Noah Ansa Darkwa...

## COVER CONCEPT EXPLAINED



It takes four and half hours to move from Omenako to Afram Plains by road. When it comes to health care delivery, even a minute's delay can be fatal. The cover concept depicts how Zipline, using advanced drone technology, makes the journey in only 45 minutes to deliver critical drugs to health facilities in the Afram Plains.

### Editor-in-Chief:

Kojo Mattah

### Editorial Team

Gordon P. D. Dery  
Halima Torto  
Akorfa Kpodoh  
Henrietta Malm  
Veronica Ossom  
Kwame Baah

### Contributing Writers

Francis Enimil Ashun  
Joseph Akossey  
Dr Alhaji Yahaya Abdul-Raman

### Design & Print

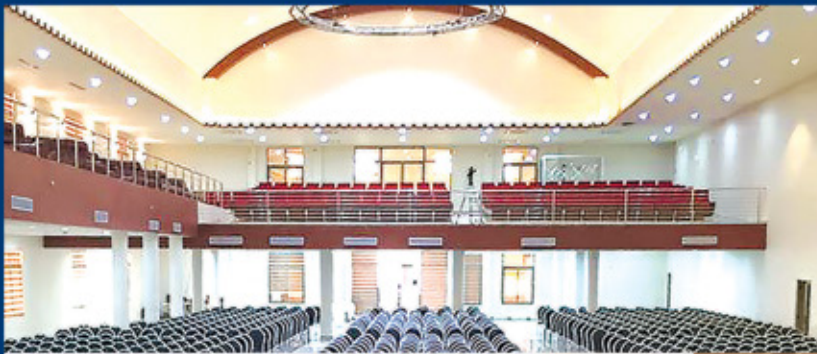
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### The Publisher

ARB Apex Bank: No. 5, 9th Road, Gamel Abdul Nasser Avenue, South Ridge, Accra | P. O. Box GP 20321, Accra  
Telephone: 0302 - 771738 / 772129 / 772034 | Fax: 233 - 302 772260 |  
Email: apex@arbapexbank.com  
GPS Address: GA 0537581

All questions, comments and submissions should be sent to the Editor at theruralbanker@arbapexbank.com

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# EDITORIAL

Maximus Attah

## WE HAVE A RICH CADRE OF MANAGERS

**I**n 1976, when rural banking was introduced in the country, most of the key officers who worked with the first few banks were seconded from the Rural Banking Department of the Bank of Ghana (BoG). The secondment of officials from the Central Bank was believed to be the best way to ensure a seamless running of the Rural and Community Banks (RCBs).

The intention of the Government and the BoG at the time, therefore, was to allow experienced central bankers who were trained in countries, which had several years of experience in rural banking, to train and transfer their rich knowledge and expertise to the newly-recruited rural bank staff.

As the rural banking concept was novel in Ghana at the time, coupled with the fact that the first few banks were located in the rural areas, which were under-

developed and had little amenities, the initial banks did not attract very well qualified and experienced personnel. Even the boards of RCBs in the 1970s through to the early 1990s, could not boast of qualified and experienced personnel.

From the mid-1990s, however, the rural banking sub-sector began attracting qualified and experienced staff, from the officer corps to management through to the boards.

Today, the basic requirement for employment at any of the RCBs in Ghana is a first university degree or an analogous professional qualification. The RCBs can now boast of Lawyers, Chartered Accountants, Marketers, Master of Business Administration and PhD holders, heading the banks.

The boardrooms are also staffed with accomplished men and women with varied experiences who determine the strategic direction for the RCBs.

That is why *The Rural Banker* has decided to tell the unique stories of our RCBs, by publishing the profiles of the General Managers and Directors of our banks.

From this current issue and in subsequent editions, *The Rural Banker* would be bringing our readers, short profiles of our General Managers and the Board Chairs, who take the key decisions in our banks.

In this Issue # 7, we have profiled 10 General Managers as well as five (5) Board chairs.

It is also delightful to add that this Issue carries the corporate profile of Mponua Rural Bank in the Eastern Region, which is one of the few RCBs headed by a woman.

Take a read and get to know more about the people making the major decisions on behalf of the Shareholders of the RCB near you.

Indeed, the RCBs have the men and women!

# FROM THE MD'S DESK



**Kojo Mattah**  
Managing Director, ARB Apex Bank

**I**n this issue, I would like to make some remarks in four areas that I am convinced deserved some comments from my desk: the Zipline 'miracle'; our annual managers conference; digital banking age summit; and our people.

## **The Zipline 'Miracle'**

When I heard about the launch of Zipline Ghana's operations, to support the health care delivery in hard-to-reach areas, I heaved a sigh of relief because I have in my many travels around the country,

come face-to-face with the health challenges facing many rural areas. In the close to four decades of my work with rural communities, I have had to traverse the smallest hamlets located in the very remote parts of Ghana. The nature of our roads is another story to be told at an appropriate forum.

To learn at first hand and to understand the real story behind the razzmatazz that greeted the launch of the medical drone delivery service, I decided to pay a 'curiosity' visit to the Omenako 'miracle' facility. I had no expectations, and was totally blown away to see highly competent and well

trained professionals who were working with so much zeal and commitment to ensure health care delivery and support to rural dwellers.

A trained pharmacist and team leader at the fulfilment centre, Nana Akosua Okyerewaa Okyere, told me "we live and work in this community, my happiness comes from seeing essential medicines delivered to people who truly need them and who would but for the arrival of these medical drones, have been dying from basic ailments such as snake bites".

As Ralph Emerson, the American philosopher, once said, "The first wealth is health", and I believe this initiative by Zipline Ghana is God sent and should be supported by all and sundry.

As these services are rendered to people who are mainly in the catchment areas of rural and community banks, I found my curiosity to be well placed since 'a life saved is a customer gained'.

We at ARB Apex Bank can only appeal to the Government and other partners to consider making payments for services rendered by Zipline Ghana through our RCBs because we are located in every area of the country. We are equally ready to provide banking services to the staff of Zipline and the institutions they serve.

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### 2019 Managers Conference

I was extremely delighted to host the CEOs and GMs of the RCBs at the 2019 Managers Conference in Sunyani, under the theme:

#### ***Sustaining Rural and Community Banking through Digitalization.***

The theme resonated so well with them such that they all resolved to push the 'digi' agenda, because without the adoption of appropriate technology, notwithstanding how expensive it might be, the cost of doing nothing would no doubt be significantly much higher.

I dove my hat to the teams that organized the confab and the phenomenal resource experts, especially Dr Noel Tagoe and Dr Emmanuel Hopeson, who shared their knowledge and experiences with us. The positive feedback was so overwhelming that I glory in the belief that our tagline – *together for progress* – is well on course.

When I shared the story of Nokia CEO during a press conference to announce Nokia being acquired by Microsoft and ended his speech by saying 'we didn't do anything wrong, but somehow, we lost'; I saw light bulbs in everybody's eyes. I was therefore not surprised when some of them remarked to me 'we either change or we get changed'. And to that I can only respond: 'the time to change is now'!!

### Inlaks Digital Summit

I had not finished reveling in the success of the Sunyani confab when I got an invite to attend the maiden edition of Inlaks Digital Summit in Lagos. This event which was under the theme 'Unlocking the Opportunities in the Digital Banking Age' brought participants from Gambia, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Kenya, Uganda, Egypt, etc. The organizers did a fantastic job and presentations were top notch. I would like to encourage Inlaks to ensure this becomes an annual

event and should not hesitate to have Accra host the next one.

The 'digi' strands that run through the Sunyani and Lagos meetings were so revealing and a clear indication that if you don't change, the 'digi' train would leave you stranded at the station.

### Our People

Most often I get surprised to learn that people still think rural and community banks are led and or managed by unqualified directors and staff. The contrary is actually the situation on the ground. Most of our directors, general managers and staff hold doctoral and post graduate degrees in business and other sciences; some are chartered bankers, chartered accountants, lawyers, economists, ICT gurus and entrepreneurs. They are seasoned practitioners in their fields of choice.

*The Rural Banker* would like to throw the searchlight on the quality of people who abound in our boardrooms and banking premises to assure our teeming customers that we are sufficiently well endowed and poised to offer them the quality of service that they expect. Which is why we have introduced 'our people' pages to provide brief profiles of chairpersons and general managers who are in the helm of affairs of our rural and community banks.

Together, we pledge to exceed your expectations!!





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# MPONUA RURAL BANK – keeping faith with small businesses

## MEET FELICIA BOAMAH HALL: A TRAIL BLAZER

**F**elicia Boamah Hall, Supervising Manager of Mponua Rural Bank (MRB) is one of the few female General Managers in a male-dominated field. Felicia was confirmed as General Manager of MRB in 2017 after acting in the position for two years. She joined the Bank in December 1991 as a Clerk and by diligence and hard work, she rose through the ranks to become the first female General Manager of the Bank.

Felicia Boamah Hall, Supervising Manager of Mponua Rural Bank (MRB) is one of the few female General Managers in a male-dominated field.

Felicia was confirmed as General Manager of MRB in 2017 after acting in the position for two years.

She joined the Bank in December 1991 as a Clerk and by diligence and hard work, she rose through the ranks to become the first female General Manager of the Bank.

### Education

She holds a BSc Administration (Banking and Finance) from the Presbyterian University College

of Ghana, Abetifi in the Eastern Region.

### Family life

She is married and is a devout Christian.

### Product and service offering

According to Felicia, “Mponua Rural Bank can boast of products and services, which are tailored to satisfy the needs of our customers. The most valuable and sought after product amongst our products is the uniquely-designed Susu”.

She stressed that “every bank’s lifeline is its deposits and Susu is our flagship small scale deposit product, which has greatly impacted positively on the deposit mobilization drive of the Bank”.

“The nature of the product allows people who have busy schedules and cannot make it to the banking halls make deposit with ease and depositors are able to use their savings as security to access credit facilities to support their businesses on sustainable basis”, she added.

Another product that requires mentioning is ‘Agric loan,’ which is popularly termed as “Akuafu

Ahomeka Loan”.

This product she noted, “is specially designed for cocoa farmers since our catchment area mostly comprise cocoa farming communities. The Bank has instituted the Akuafu Ahomeka Loan product to help farmers in these communities to increase their yield and to enhance their financial and economic wellbeing”.

She said the product was designed to meet the needs of the farmers, who form out grower groups in order to qualify for loans to support their farming activities.

Felicia stated that “since its inception the product has witnessed prompt repayments due to the flexible repayment terms and this has significantly impacted on the fortunes of the Bank”.

### Performance brief

In a chat with *The Rural Banker*, Felicia revealed that “the total Assets increased by 22.77 percent to GH¢28.55 million in 2018, generally due to the growth in Deposits and Shareholders’ Funds, which also grew by 23.38 percent and 15.73 percent to the

▶▶ Pg. 12



**FELICIA BOAMAH HALL**  
*Supervising Manager, Mponua Rural Bank*

levels of GH¢23.49 million and GH¢3.94 million respectively”.

According to her, “the inflows were prudently deployed in Earning Assets of Loans and Investments that grew by 25.03 percent and 17.14 percent respectively with the end-of-year balances of GH¢6.40 million and GH¢15.58 million respectively”.

Felicia added that, “with the little resources at our disposal, we were able to turn things around, which resulted in favourable financial ratios over the past three years. The efficient management of the resources coupled with hard work have resulted in the Bank being ranked the Number ONE Rural Bank in Ghana by ARB Apex Bank Rating for the First Quarters of 2018 and 2019”.

**Branch network**

The Bank currently has eight (8) active agencies, which are located at New Abirem and Amuana Praso in the Birim North District, Obogu and Asankare in the Asante Akyem South District, Nkawkaw and Asuboni Rails in the Kwahu West Municipality, Koforidua in the New Juaben Municipality, and Konongo in the Asante Akyem Central Municipality. According to the General Manager, “Konongo Agency is the last agency opened in December, 2017, adding that, all the branches are performing well and contribute positively to the Bank’s profitability”.



*Felicia Boaham Hall, Supervising Manager (seated) with George Osei Ameyaw, Board Chairman of Mponua Rural Bank*

**Staff strength**



The staff strength of MRB has grown from 85 in 2016 to 100 by the third quarter of 2019, representing an 18 percent growth in the staff numbers.

**Major initiatives**

Felicia stated that “a number of initiatives have been introduced since I took office in March, 2016. Notable among them are the renovation of some agencies, introduction of annual vacation (leave) to our mobile banking agents, and the introduction of performance based bonus”.

“We have also enforced our internal staff transfer policy to ensure effective internal controls, updating some of the subsidiary records, brought in motivational gestures to staff assigned special duties, and restructuring of the remuneration scheme for mobile bankers”, she added.

The General Manager also added that MRB had introduced structured training programmes for mobile banking agents, to help improve their efficiency on the job. She said the Bank was very particular about its human resource management strategies because it was aware that was the only way of building a holistic human resource base.

  
***A number of initiatives have been introduced since I took office in March, 2016. Notable among them are the renovation of some agencies, introduction of annual vacation (leave) to our mobile banking agents, and the introduction of performance based bonus.***  




*Bismark Agyekum  
Assistant Internal Auditor*



Eric Osei Ameyaw  
Head, Credit

**Lonely journey?**

According to Felicia, “in a perfect world, men and women are on equal footing in the workplace. Unfortunately, we do not operate in a perfect society. As a female GM leading a team of largely male staff, it feels challenging and refreshing at the same time”.

She stated that “in a sector that

is largely dominated by males, it is commonplace to find women occupying managerial positions facing big challenges”.

In Felicia’s situation however, she reveals “I am fortunate to be working with a cooperative and supportive male dominated team”.

She said the position required courage and firmness, two qualities she believed she always brought to bear and “that is how I have succeeded in managing to lead the team thus far”.

One major factor that contributed to her success was the co-operation, encouragement and appropriate oversight of the Board of Directors.

**Women empowerment**

In an effort to empower my female subordinates, Felicia said “I am employing the managerial tool of separation and devolution of duties where specific tasks are assigned to members of staff”.

She believed that “by doing this, it helps them to acquire the necessary skills and confidence to take up higher responsibilities in the future. Also, tailored programmes are sometimes organized for my female subordinates in order to enhance their prospects.

Mentorship programmes such as having a female resource person with vast experience to share her story and empower female staff have been planned. We believe these are key because the female staff are meticulous, affable, considerate, and are imbued with the fear of God to protect the resources of the Banks”.

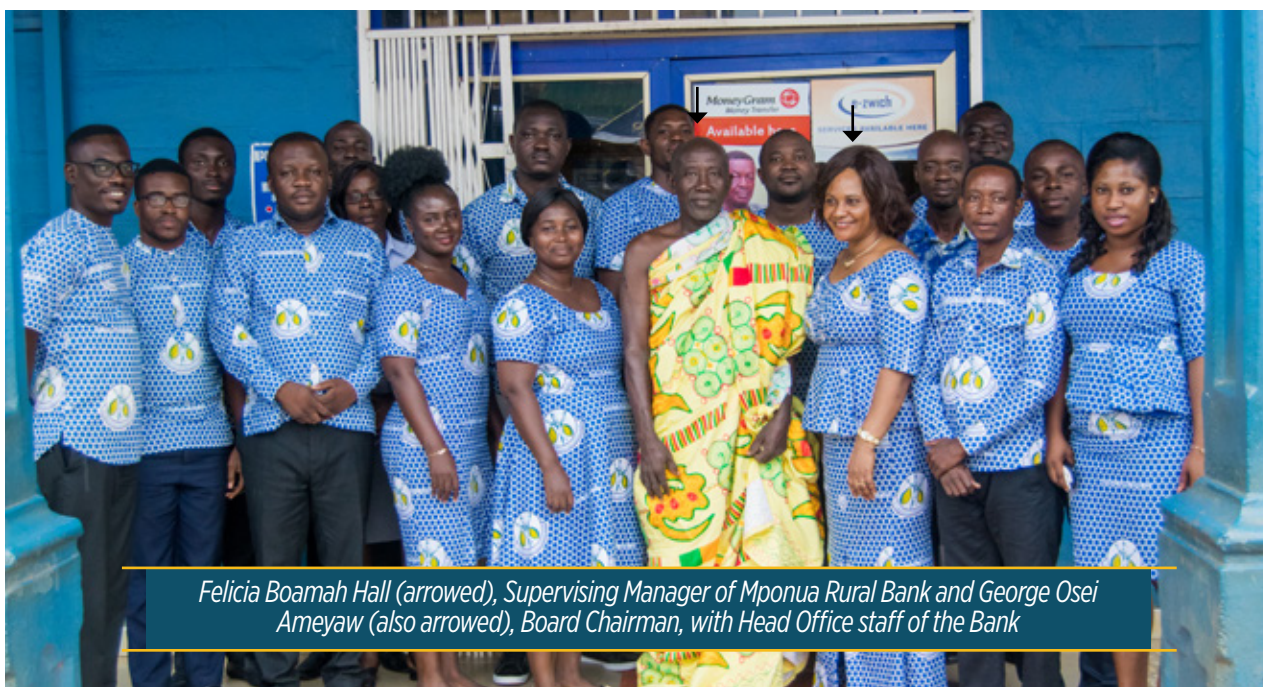
Felicia added that other measures including promoting the fulfillment of women’s potential through enrolling for tertiary education programmes were being put in place to help empower “my female colleagues”.

She called on female workers to aspire to become Managers of sister RCBs “since women managers contribute significantly to the work environment, leading to enhanced performance and satisfaction”.

**Looking into the crystal ball**

According to Felicia, it is the vision of MRB to become one of the top performing and most well managed banks in the country.

She also believed that joining the Ghana Club 100 Rankings would be very good for the Bank and “seeing MRB join the prestigious Ghana Club 100 would be a dream come true”.



Felicia Boamah Hall (arrowed), Supervising Manager of Mponua Rural Bank and George Osei Ameyaw (also arrowed), Board Chairman, with Head Office staff of the Bank



George Osei Ameyaw, Board Chairman of Mponua Rural Bank

Felicia said she wanted to be remembered for being the manager under whose tenure many of these and other landmark performances were chalked.

“I want to be an example and beacon so that everybody would believe that indeed when women are given responsible and challenging tasks, they are able to perform creditably”.

Felicia boldly touted the selfless performance of the Board of Directors who were able to return MRB to winning ways after the Bank faced serious challenges in the year 2000. She said “the turnaround story of Mponua is something sister RCBs which may be currently facing challenges should pick a leaf from, adding that with focus and determination from the Management and Staff and a clear direction from the Board, it is possible to resuscitate any ailing bank”.

**Board chairman’s take**

According to Mr George Osei Ameyaw, current Board Chair of the Bank, “MRB was established on September 16,

*I want to be an example and beacon so that everybody would believe that indeed when women are given responsible and challenging tasks, they are able to perform creditably.*

1983 with initial shareholders who spearheaded the establishment being: Opanyin Kwaku Anin (deceased), Nana Ahenkora Marfo II – Krontihene of Amuana Praso, Nana Gyamua Amonu I, Queen Mother of Amuana Praso, and Mr S.L. Ofori-Owusu- first Board Chairman of the Bank”.

Mr George Osei Ameyaw has been Board Chair of MRB for the past 12 years.

**Current Directors**

The Board was reconstituted in 2007 and members who have held the directorship to date are:

- Mr George Osei Ameyaw – Chairman
- Mr Andrews Ameyaw – Secretary
- Mr Charles Ofori-Owusu – Member
- Mr Peter Ackah – Member
- Mr George Okyere – Member

Unfortunately, Mr Emmanuel Atta Asamoah who was the Vice-Chairman of the Board for 12 years passed on, on September 12, 2019. According to Mr Ameyaw, “the late Vice-Chairman served our Bank with selfless dedication and his exit would create an immeasurable vacuum, adding that,



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George Awuah Boateng  
Internal Auditor

Mr Ameyaw revealed that “a core value of the Bank is to provide permissible financial services to enhance the standard of living in its operational areas. This places the Bank in the forefront to promote any Government initiative that drives economic empowerment in our catchment areas, particularly in the areas of Trade and Commerce as well as Agriculture”.

**Future plans**

According to the Board Chair, “in our quest to promote and support Government’s flagship developmental programmes, we are laying the structures to liaise with Government agencies in our operational districts to finance well established and economically viable projects such as oil palm production, large scale tiger nut



Isaac Aboagye-Nyame  
Head, Risk and Compliance

may his humble soul be favoured for a peaceful rest with the Lord God”.

**Shareholding**

The Bank has 1,117,300 total numbers of shares with current value of GH¢2.00 per share. Below are the proportion of shares held by various categories:

Category	No of Individuals	% of shares
Public	1,816	95.23
Employees	99	3.77
Directors	7	1.00

*in our quest to promote and support Government’s flagship developmental programmes, we are laying the structures to liaise with Government agencies in our operational districts to finance well established and economically viable projects such as oil palm production, large scale tiger nut and rice cultivation , etc.”*

in the Birim North and Asante Akyem South District respectively with various building materials. The Bank also constructed a counter for the Ghana Police Service at Koforidua.

“MRB has also been making yearly donations of farming inputs to Kwahu West Municipal Assembly, Birim North Districts Assembly and Asante Akyem South District Assembly during their annual Farmers’ Day celebrations”, Mr Ameyaw added.



Augustine Manu  
Head, Marketing

and rice cultivation , etc.”

In respect of the above, he said, “flexible financing and repayment plans are being designed to facilitate such initiatives at a reasonable rate of interest, which shall ensure credit facilities are accessed and repaid in a timely manner”.

**Giving back to communities**

He said the Bank was also strategizing to finance the construction of Senior High Schools in the operational areas. The bank in its quest to give back to society supported Amuana Praso Senior High School and Oduro Apenteng Senior High School – Obogu



Patrick Asare Asamoah  
CCC Officer





*Cherub Keni Okoto  
Accountant*

started turning out well for the Bank.

With the spirit of self-belief, selfless service, teamwork, mutual respect, and total support of all members, the Bank emerged from being rated as distressed into one of the strongest banks in our sector”.

Rating as a strong bank consistently from 2016 to 2019 is one of the most refreshing news that one could ever receive and we believe the sacrifice of Shareholders, Board, Management, and Staff are paying positive dividends”, he added.

  
***Due to the various effective strategies, progressive policies and programmes to ensure efficient and viable operations, things started turning out well for the Bank.***  


**Highs and lows at the Board**

The Board Chair commended fellow Directors for their punctuality at meetings, effective contributions during meetings, selfless service, and hard work, which led to the success of the Bank.

He said “we took over the Directorship from a dissolved Board when the Bank was rated distressed. Due to the various effective strategies, progressive policies and programmes to ensure efficient and viable operations, things



*Kwabena Larbi Donkor  
Head, Operations*

Its performance shows that with the right support from shareholders, customers, effective supervision as well as state support, any of our rural banks could become giants in their own areas.

This shining example is one of the key reasons the Editor of this Magazine believes that Government agencies should endeavour to channel their funds through our RCBs, because they forever remain the financial livewire of the rural economy of Ghana.



*Janet Somuah  
Manager, Nkawkwaw Branch*

**Appreciation**

Mr Ameyaw expressed his deepest appreciation to Mr Asamoah an Advisor, for his knowledge and role in helping to turn around the fortunes of the Bank.

He also thanked the Editorial Board of this Magazine for offering the opportunity for MRB to tell some of its story to members of the public ■

**Editor’s note**

Mponua Rural Bank (MRB) became distressed in 2000. With the selfless dedication by the Board of Directors, support from shareholders and the tenacity of Management and staff of the Bank, they have turned the corner and have become a strong Bank, according to the Efficiency Monitoring Unit of the Bank.



*Anthony Osei Mireku  
Head, IT*

# MADAM DOCIA ADJEI, DELIGHTED BY MPONUVA RURAL BANK



Madam Docia Adjei is a sole proprietor who operates under the name, Docia Adjei Enterprise. She has been in business for the past 20 years and is a distributor of Coca Cola products.

**H**er business is located at the Nkawkaw market in the Eastern Region, which makes it very easy to locate. Docia has been doing business with Mponua Rural Bank for over 15 years.

She told *The Rural Banker* that Mponua Rural Bank has always provided her with banking services such as loan facilities and savings products, which have helped her to grow her small business into a bigger one.

In addition, she started with a small shop that deals in Coca Cola products and other alcoholic beverages and “with the help from the Bank, I have

been able to open three other shops, all of which I manage myself”.

*The Rural Banker* visited the two (2) shops at Nkawkaw. Her third shop is located in the Afram Plains. Docia is currently the highest loan client of the Bank. According to her, she sometimes repays her loans even before they fall due. She added that the Bank sometimes granted her overdraft facilities when she is “expecting goods and does not have enough money to purchase them, especially during Easter and Christmas festivities”.

The Bank also provides her with financial advice, which helps her to improve her business and the Bank officials also visit Docia regularly to enquire about the progress of her business.

Docia stressed that Mponua Rural Bank has been the financial pillar for her business, adding that, “I would always recommend the Bank to other customers”.



get it  
**DONE!**

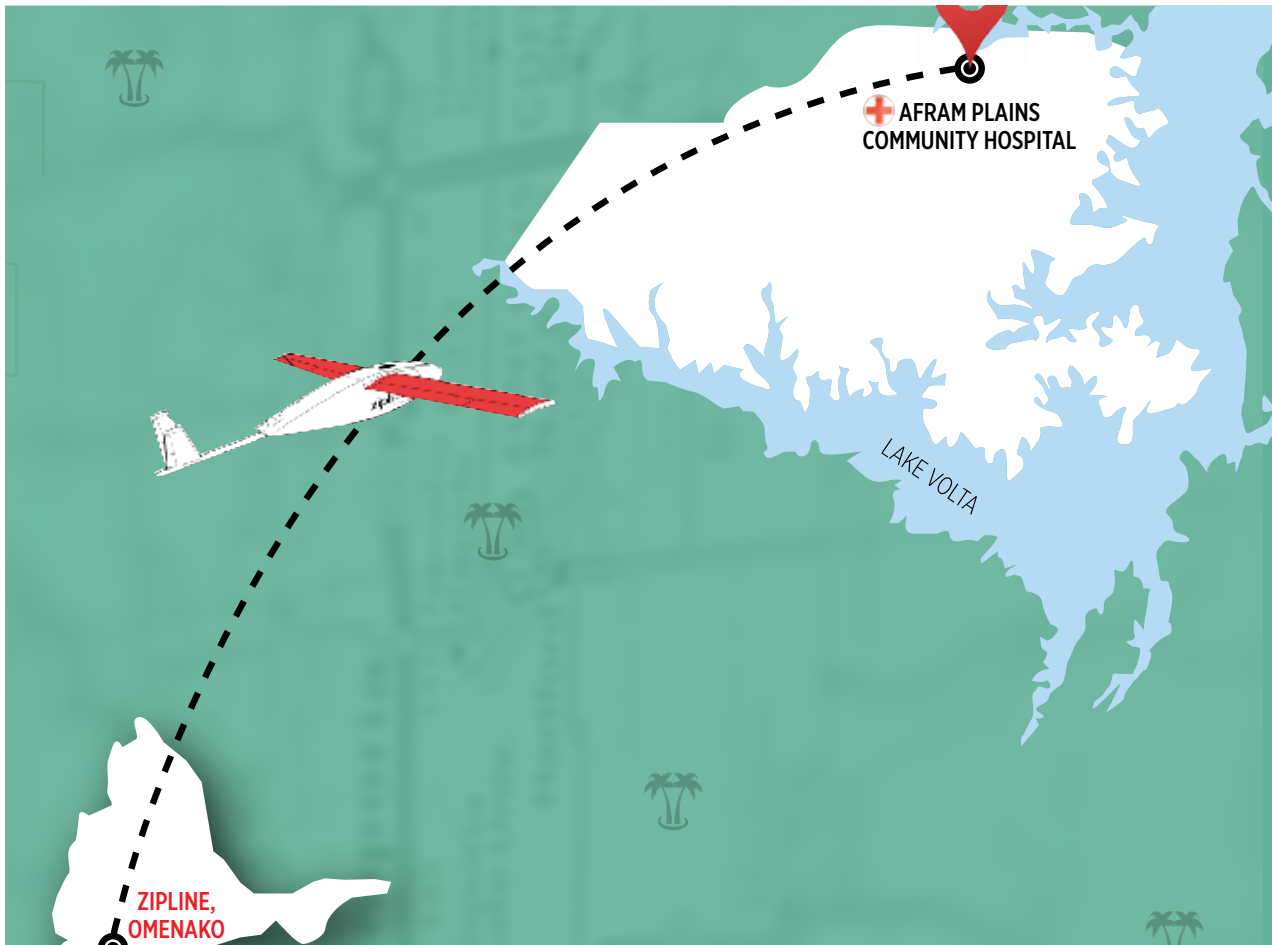


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# ZIPLINE DRONES: BRINGING HOPE TO GHANA'S HARD-TO-REACH AREAS

**T**he journey begins from the national capital, Accra and takes visitors an average of an hour and a half to the little village called Omenako in the Suhum-Krabo-Coalter district in the Eastern Region of Ghana. The pristine Omenako village, a predominantly cocoa farming community, was one of the major contributors to Ghana's once leading cash crop.

It is cocooned from the hustle and bustle witnessed by dwellers of Accra and other major cities, where people are struggling daily to glean a chip off Ghana's expanding gross domestic product (GDP).

The country has been touted by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other development agencies as one of the fastest growing economies in sub-Saharan Africa. The IMF in its recent World Economic Outlook forecasts an annual growth rate of 8.8 percent for 2019.

Last year, the country's economy expanded by 5.9 percent putting Ghana in the sixth position, behind Angola, Ethiopia, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, and South Africa.

Many experts believe however, that the main reason why citizens are complaining about the "jobless growth" of the Ghanaian economy is because one major contributor to the nation's GDP is crude oil, where many of the citizens do not have the expertise to man key positions, thereby enjoying the fruits of the oil boom".

**Digitalization agenda**

Government believes that the most viable option for getting more young people into employment, particularly into the services sector, which contributes more than 57 percent of the nation’s GDP and employs more than 40 percent of the population is to “boost technological innovations and get more young people involved in sustaining and improving the country’s economic performance”.

Of course, Ghana has always chalked many firsts since gaining political independence from Britain in 1957.

Google, the world’s largest search engine operator recently opened its Artificial Intelligence (AI) laboratory in Accra. Hosted at the Accra Financial Centre in the Central Business District of the capital, the Google AI lab provides jobs to many innovative and creative youths in Accra.

Experts however believe that many of these innovations need to be properly harnessed to address pressing needs in critical sectors such as health delivery system in the country.

Although, life expectancy improved from 63.65 years in 2018 to 63.91 years in 2019, an increase of 0.41 percent,



Nana Akosua Okyerewaa Okyere, a Fulfilment Operator



The Omenako office of Zipline

many Ghanaians continue to die from basic ailments such as malaria, snake bites and unavailability of much needed blood in emergency cases. Health care delivery in the country is often hampered by bad road network.


**Zipline drones to the rescue**

The Government of Ghana signed a landmark memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Fly Zipline Ghana in 2017. The service agreement between the Government and Zipline Ghana was approved by the Ghanaian parliament to enable the use of drones to distribute essential medicines to remote areas in Ghana.

Today, the small village of Omenako in the Eastern Region of Ghana is host to the world’s largest medical supplies delivery.

The Omenako facility, which was the first of four to be established, delivers essential medicines and supplies to remote areas, otherwise referred to as overseas areas in the Eastern, Central and Volta regions respectively.

*The Rural Banker* team paid a visit to the facility to acquaint ourselves with the operations of the facility, which has been described as lifesaving and timely.

  
**Today, the small village of Omenako in the Eastern Region of Ghana is host to the world’s largest medical supplies delivery.**  




Anita Djoletto, a Fulfillment Operator

**Akwaba to 1000th flight**

*The Rural Banker* team arrived at the facility a few minutes after 9 in the morning. The place was already buzzing with a lot of activity.

Churches, schools, and social clubs had converged at the frontage of Zipline Ghana to catch a glimpse of how the unmanned aerial vehicles are operated. According to Komla Etonam Buami media consultant and tour guide at the facility, “since we began operating in Ghana, we have attracted so many visitors. People come here a lot for excursions and our doors are always open, because we want the public to know our story”.

The team was pleasantly surprised to witness the 1000th flight of the drones, which is what inspired the creative concept on the cover page of *The Rural Banker*, “from Omenako to Afram Plains”.

Komla revealed that the facility was “a very small structure but as you can see, we are doing very wonderful things here. We have two major divisions, the flight operations and the fulfillment operations centre”.

The fulfillment centre is where they

receive orders and store medications and blood supplies.

“When the orders come, we receive and store them and we also launch and operate the flights or the drones because we refer to the drones here as Zips”, he said.

All members of the team were given protective foot wears and sunglasses before the tour began. The team was first taken to the nest, where the drones are assembled and stored.

**Fulfillment centre**

Nana Akosua Okyerewaa Okyere, a



***Nana Akosua Okyerewaa Okyere, a Fulfillment Operator, a pharmacist by profession trained at the prestigious College of Pharmacy at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi leads a team of professionals at the fulfillment centre.***

***Zipline Ghana distributes orders to district hospitals, CHPS compounds, and health centres.***



Fulfillment Operator, a pharmacist by profession trained at the prestigious College of Pharmacy at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi leads a team of professionals at the fulfillment centre.

She said there are three stations at the fulfillment warehouse, namely, order taking station, receiving station, and order packing table. The order taking station, “is where we receive orders from clients”. She said the orders come through phone calls and SMS, “we pack the orders and then fulfil them by delivering the orders through Zips”. She noted that before the engineers set out delivery routes, a team from Zipline Ghana goes to the remote villages and train the medical personnel on how to place orders as well as receive them.

According to Nana Akosua, Zipline Ghana distributes orders to district hospitals, CHPS compounds, and health centres.

“We distribute blood to the district hospitals only because the CHPS compounds and health centres are not allowed to do blood transfusion”, she said.



Sadat Anum, a flight engineer

*Zips were made up of three components, which made it easier to carry, modify and allowed for efficient maintenance.*

She said they collaborate with the district hospitals through a WhatsApp messaging platform for each facility, which has hospital administrators. “For the district hospitals, we have WhatsApp groups for both the pharmacies and the labs because they are allowed to receive and undertake blood transfusion”, revealed Nana Akosua.

For supervisory purposes, “the hospital administrator, medical superintendent and some key personnel at the hospitals are also part of the WhatsApp platform”.

Products are also wrapped with a special protective rubber in a form of a parachute. The order taker alerts the flight operator via radio and the package is sent to the flight operating unit for dispatch. The flight operating unit has a team of 18 engineers.

**Flight operations area**

Sadat Anum, an engineer at the flight operations area took the visiting team through the operations of the Zips. He said the Zips were made up of three components, which made it easier to carry, modify and allowed for efficient maintenance.

He revealed that the parts were manufactured in the US and assembled at Omenako by the team of local engineers.

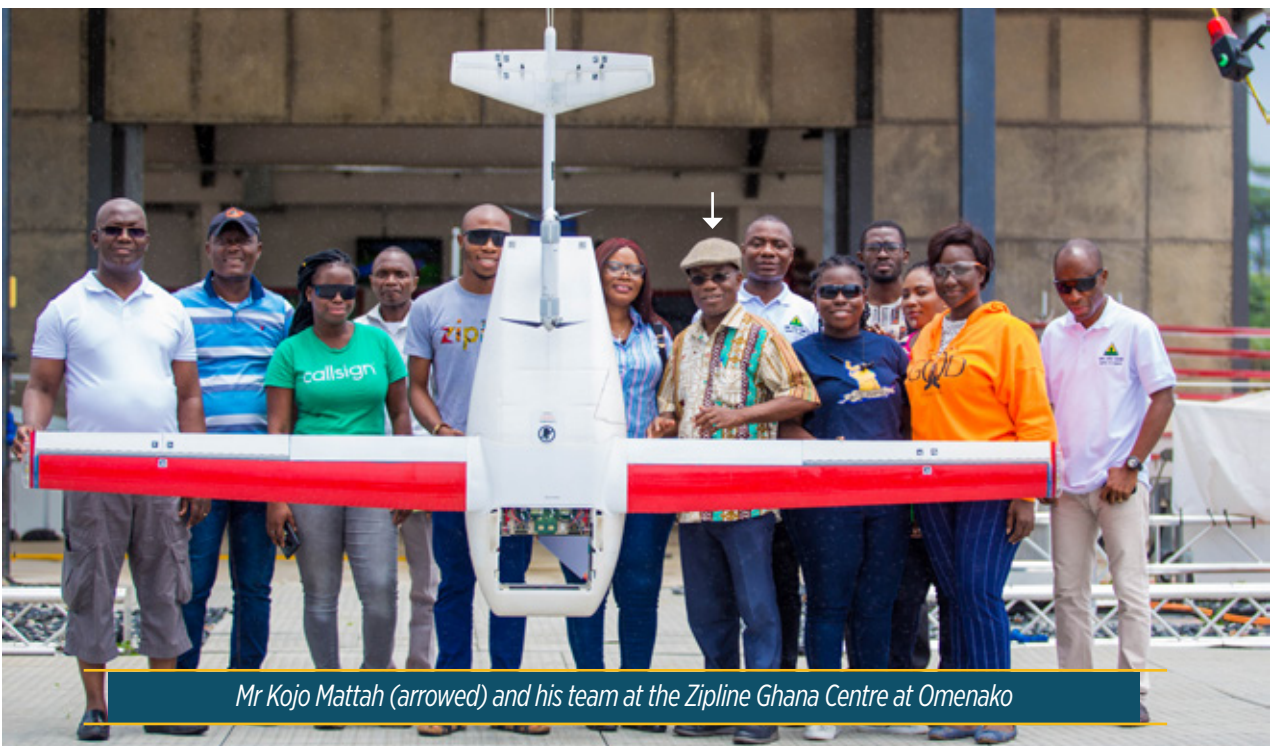
Mr Anum said the drones were fitted with twin engines and precision navigation global positioning systems (GPS) “to ensure accurate delivery of medical supplies”.

He indicated that “in the unlikely event of one of the engines failing, the second engine would be able to make sure the drone delivers the products and is able to get back to base safely”, adding that “there has not been any crashes since we began operations”.

**Frequently requested medication**

Nana Akosua said the facility currently stored 148 medical products, which were all currently not delivered “because we deliver as and when orders are placed”.

One of the key guidelines of Zipline Ghana is its adherence to high quality standards, which Nana Akosua said was “very important because we want to avoid cross contamination of blood and blood products so as to prevent infection”.



Mr Kojo Mattah (arrowed) and his team at the Zipline Ghana Centre at Omenako

Anti-snake and anti-rabies serums were the most requested medical supplies from the centre, something, “which could take days to deliver to villages but is now literally dropped at the doorsteps of citizens within minutes of request and the good thing is that the facility operates 24/7, bringing a huge lifeline to rural dwellers in hard to reach areas”.

Another essential medicine requested often by pregnant women with eclampsia was magnesium phosphate. Omenako to Afram Plain is about 5 hours but with Zipline, essential medical supplies are delivered to those hard to reach areas within 45 minutes, cutting down the time by over four hours, “helping to save precious lives”.

**Communities served**

The Omenako Zipline drones delivery centre “currently serves 35 health facilities across three regions of the country and is the largest medical drones’ delivery centre and only the second of such facility in the whole wide world”.

The first Zipline medical drones’ delivery centre is in Rwanda and now supplies 20 percent of Rwanda’s blood needs.



*Komla Etornam Buami,  
An External Communications Advisor*



*The 1000th flight of Zipline*

**Beginning of Zipline**

The drone journey began in Rwanda and the success story influenced the Rwanda government to expand the centre to two (2) different areas.

The Omenako Zipline drones delivery centre in Ghana is funded by Zip Line and its partners. Every equipment including the drones was funded by Zip Line. The facility is wholly owned by Zipline Ghana and the government of Ghana pays for the delivery of medical products to health centres.

As part of its operations, the centre does 15 deliveries per day and has the capacity to deliver to over five hundred (500) medical centres.

The Omenako facility is manned by an all Ghanaian staff, made up of pharmacists and engineers who were trained in Rwanda.

Zip Line currently operates three centres in Ghana, including Omenako, Mampong, and Walewale. These three (3) have been confirmed and a fourth one is under consideration. Each Zip Line facility has about fifty (50) staff.

“

***As part of its operations, the centre does 15 deliveries per day and has the capacity to deliver to over five hundred (500) medical centres.***

”



### Why the Zip Line Project

“With Zipline, medical doctors are able to attend to patients due to easy accessibility of medical products and blood. The no bed syndrome has reduced in some hospitals since they are treated and discharged the same day”, noted Komla.

Medical products are received from the regional medical stores in Koforidua and the National Blood Service (NBS). “Zip Line serves as a hub in that, whenever there is medical shortage at any health centre, Zip Line is always ready to provide blood and other medical products to that health centre”, Komla added.

### How orders are received

When orders are received by Zip Line Centre, the order taker processes the order using the Zip Line procurement system. The procurement system was created by internal engineers from California.

Orders received are also prioritized based on emergencies and regular supplies. Every medical product or blood that is supplied has a special Zipline identification number and special package number, which are both scanned into the system.

### How medical centres receive orders

Orders are made available to health centres using the unmanned aerial vehicles popularly called drones. The drones do not land but descend to a certain level in order to drop the packaged medical items.

It takes about forty-five (45) minutes to deliver packages to health centers. Zip line currently delivers to Greater Accra, Volta and Eastern Region.

### No bed syndrome is over

Komla said he believed that the project is one of the major ways of solving the no bed syndrome in many of Ghana’s health facilities.

It was also a major intervention in providing medical supplies in a timely manner to many of the areas in the country which would hitherto, have not been able to attend to medical emergencies due to the nature of the roads.

### Touching lives

Zipline Ghana is truly a lifeline to the health needs of rural dwellers in Ghana. An amazing story was told about the timely delivery of oral rehydration salt (ORS) to the Mangoase Health Centre, to treat more than 133 students of Mangoase Senior High School (SHS), who were suffering from acute diarrhoea.

According to Seth Tawiah Agbesi, Headmaster of Mangoase SHS, “the school did not have a bus to convey the sick students to the nearest hospital and therefore the timely delivery of ORS to us by Zipline Ghana, saved us from a major disaster in our school”.

This and many more stories are emerging since Zipline Ghana came to the rescue.

*The school did not have a bus to convey the sick students to the nearest hospital and therefore the timely delivery of ORS to us by Zipline Ghana, saved us from a major disaster in our school.*



*A flight operating engineer preparing a package for delivery*



Mr Kojo Mattah, Managing Director of ARB Apex Bank and the Managers in a group photograph with Nana Bofotia Boaponsem II, Krontihene of Sunyani Traditional Council, at the 18<sup>th</sup> National Managers' Conference

# LET'S TAKE ADVANTAGE OF DIGITALIZATION

**M**r Kojo Mattah, Managing Director of the ARB Apex Bank has called on Managers of Rural and Community Banks (RCBs) in the country to endeavour to make the most of all the business opportunities presented to them to help the banks tap from the many transformations taking place on the business landscape.

Mr Mattah stated that the opportunities available in the digital banking space are vast and charged the RCBs to explore all the potentials to their fullest.

Speaking at the 18th Annual National Managers' Conference which took place at Sunyani in the Bono Region from October 3 to 6, 2019 on the theme: **"Sustaining Rural and Community Banking through Digitalization,"** Mr Mattah drew a parallel to the Managers on how Nokia, one of the world's most revered mobile phone manufacturers lost the opportunity to leverage their comparative advantage and therefore lost out.

He said the theme was carefully chosen to help the RCBs "critically examine the potential opportunities and to strategize to take advantage of the digital banking revolution".

Mr Mattah noted that, "We remain undoubtedly the largest bank branch network in the country with the largest retail customer base".

"This is a major strength that the other banks can only envy, and it is the envy of the universal banks as one CEO told me recently: "you have what any bank should kill for", he added.

"The Managers' Conference, is therefore, an opportunity to rehearse how we can leverage on our strengths to help reposition our individual RCBs and the industry as a whole to stake a major claim in the digital banking cake", Mr Mattah added.

He encouraged members to take advantage of the E-Learning tools being provided to upgrade their knowledge.

#### **Omanhene of Sunyani**

In a speech read on his behalf by the Omanhene of Sunyani Nana Bosoma Asor Nkrawiri II, said though

he believed in the banking sector clean-up, he thought that the Banking Supervision Department of the Bank of Ghana should have been more proactive in their supervisory duties.

Nana Nkrawiri II said “if they were proactive and did their work diligently, they would have prevented the decay which befell the banking sector”.

“If the Bank of Ghana had done its supervisory duties well, there would not have been the need to pump in more money to help save the banks in the way the country had to scrape for scarce resources to save the sector,” he said.

He charged the General Managers to conduct their affairs with humility because the resources entrusted to their care was not their personal resources.

**National Association of Rural Banks**

In her remarks, Mrs Comfort Owusu, Executive Director of the National Association of Rural Banks stated that there was much to be gained by the banks through the provision of enhanced customer service to the public.

She called on the RCBs to partner with technology firms to pilot programmes and projects that would inure to the benefit of their customers.

Mrs Owusu took the opportunity to invite members of the public to join in the celebrations of the Rural Banking Week which would be taking place at the Takoradi Technical University from the 16th of November 2019.

She thanked the ARB Apex Bank and the Bank of Ghana for donating a pick-up truck each towards the operations of the National Association of Rural Banks.

**Brong and Ahafo Chapter President of the Association of Rural Banks**

In a brief remark, Mr Joseph Tachie-Djan, Bono and Ahafo Chapter President of the Association of Rural Banks called for staff training and coaching amongst staff of RCBs.

Mr Tachie-Djan advised that “the



*Kojo Mattah, MD, ARB Apex Bank, delivering a speech at the conference*

younger members of staff should be trained by the more experienced ones to groom them for future managerial roles”.

He cautioned the General Managers to focus on dignity and honour instead of working for wealth and fame alone. “You the Managers are the eyes of the Rural and Community Banks (RCBs) in the various towns you operate in and therefore you should be minded by this and conduct your affairs with tact and care”, he added.

**Self-pampering**

Speaking on the topic: “Nurturing Self-pampering for Personal Resilience in the Workplace”, Dr Emmanuel Hopeson, revealed that the greatest gift people could give themselves was to put on a smile, “saying that it is not happy people who are thankful but thankful people who are happy”.

He said smiling make us live longer. “Do something to make you laugh. Play baby. Make yourself laugh”, because these things make you more

“

***The younger members of staff should be trained by the more experienced ones to groom them for future managerial roles.***

”

healthy and live longer.

He added that self-pampering was not the same as extravagance. It was about getting the best for oneself without necessarily being overly expensive. Dr Hopeson said bad emotions could make people take very unpleasant decisions including tendering in their resignations and even killing themselves.

Self-awareness is very important

in managing our relationships. “In our lives, we need relationships. We need love and should extend love to people”.

“Do something that makes you happy so that you would always be energized to achieve more on the job. That is what would help us increase productivity for our shareholders”, Dr Hopeson stated.

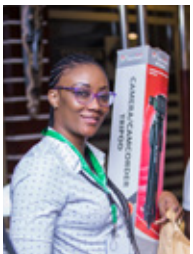
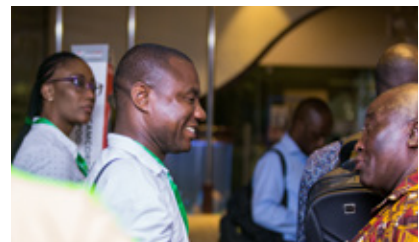
“Wear your snickers and some modern

T-Shirts on Saturdays to make you look young, refreshed and trendy to make you look more attractive to your partners”, he added.

Dr Hopeson said self-pampering is the best and less expensive form of helping busy managers to increase productivity in their work places ■

## THE 18<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL NATIONAL MANAGERS’ CONFERENCE IN PICTURES

### ARRIVAL & REGISTRATION



## OPENING CEREMONY



## PRESENTATIONS



# SYNDICATE GROUPS





# MUMUADU RURAL BANK - OSINO'S HERITAGE

*With its headquarters nestled in the heartland of Osino in the Eastern Region, Mumuadu Rural Bank (MRB) was founded in November 1982 by five sons of the soil with strong ambitions for developing the local economy of Osino.*

**S**eth Adom-Asomaning remains the only one amongst the founders of the Bank on the current Board of Directors of the Bank. The rest of the founders are, Mr J.W. Sackey, Mr Noah Ansa Darkwa, Mr Kwasi Asumang Adu, and Mr Gyasi Twum.

## Current Directors

The current Board of Directors of the Bank is chaired by Mr Seth Adom-Asomaning with Dr K. Osei-Bonsu as the Vice-Chair. Other Directors include: Mrs Caroline Duncan-Amoah, Ambassador K. Baah-Duodu, Mr Samuel Otu-Boateng, Mr Samuel Opoku-Agyemang, Mr J. Amofo Danquah, and Dr Nicholas Yeboah Aninagyei.

## Branch network

From its headquarters branch which was opened in November 1982 at Osino, the Bank currently has seven (7) other branches,

bringing the total branch network to eight (8).

These branches include; Begoro Branch, opened in 1989, Kyebi Branch, opened in 1995, Koforidua Branch, opened in 1998, Suhum Branch, opened in 2004, Nkawkaw Branch, opened in 2007, New Abirem Branch, opened in 2013, and the Nsawam Branch, which was recently opened in 2017.

## The people story

According to Mr Benedict A. Agabeh, one of the key initiatives he introduced when he assumed the helm as General Manager of the Bank in 2014 was a deliberate policy to increase the total staff strength from 78 to the current 155.

Mr Agabeh said, at the time he took over as General Manager, the Bank was under-staffed, "hence the need to shore up the numbers from 78 in 2014 to 155 by 2019 because the number of branches kept growing".

There are currently 91 males and 64 female members of staff, "spread across all eight branches of the Bank and serving our customers with delight". "This strategy is meant to help attain gender parity

in our branches", he revealed.

He explained that "the Bank has an enviable succession plan with a mix of experienced, talented and qualified professionals to always assume leadership positions".

## Landmark initiatives

Mr Agabeh revealed that he would love to be remembered for four (4) strategic initiatives he has taken since becoming General Manager of Mumuadu Rural Bank. These are: increasing the staff strength "to help meet the increasing demands of our growing customers".

He also led the opening of the eighth and most recent branch of the Bank at Nsawam, initiated commencement of the construction of a two-storey Head Office Annex building, and has expanded and created strategic departments and strategic business units to help better manage operations of the Bank.

## Offerings

The Bank specializes in three key areas including, Credit, Deposit taking as well as Advisory Services. Its Credit suite include:

- a) Consumer Loan Scheme
- b) Individual Loan Scheme
- c) Monthly Overdrafts Scheme
- d) Susu Credit Scheme
- e) SME Lending
- f) Microfinance Group Credit Scheme





**BENEDICT AGABEH**  
General Manager, Mumuadu Rural Bank



*Benedict Agabeh, General Manager of Mumuadu Rural Bank with the management team of the Bank*



*Philip Appenteng Larley, Head HR*

**The Deposit offerings include:**

- a) Current Account
- b) Savings Account
- c) Fixed Deposit Account
- d) Special Savings Account
- e) Susu Savings Account
- f) Lien (Compulsory) Savings Account

**Advisory Services**

- a) Entrepreneurial Skills Development
- b) Basic Accounting Principles
- c) Business Record Keeping



*Francis Kotoko, Deputy General Manager*

According to Mr Agabeh, the unique products offered by Mumuadu Rural Bank are “the key indicators of the Bank’s success stories over the years in the sector with a hallmark of timely delivery”.

**Performance**

Below is a three year performance of the Bank showing an impressive growth over the years; showing clearly that the Bank is a positive trajectory. Deposits grew from GH¢44.18 million in 2017 to GH¢50.62 in 2018; total loans disbursed also grew from GH¢41.00 million in 2017 to GH¢48.49 million in 2018. Shareholders’ funds also grew from GH¢9.49 million in 2017 to GH¢10.15 million in 2018, and the Bank’s stated capital as at 2018 stood at GH¢3.92 million, which is well above the Bank of Ghana’s GH¢1.0 minimum capital requirement.

**Silverwares won by Mumuadu Rural Bank**

The Bank has won many awards including; being ranked 31 on the Ghana Club 100 in 2018; being recognized as Banking Institution

of the Year 2018 at the Small and Medium Enterprise Ghana Awards; Long Service Award of the Year 2018 by Small and Medium Enterprise Ghana Awards; and being a recipient of the Rural Banking Impact Award 2018 by the Ghana Business Awards.

**Expectations from Apex bodies**

Mr Agabeh expects the Bank of Ghana and ARB Apex Bank to be proactive in solving issues



*Johnny Osei Animi, Head of IT*



*The Bank has won many awards including; being ranked 31 on the Ghana Club 100 in 2018; being recognized as Banking Institution of the Year 2018 at the Small and Medium Enterprise Ghana Awards; Long Service Award of the Year 2018 by Small and Medium Enterprise Ghana Awards; and being a recipient of the Rural Banking Impact Award 2018 by the Ghana Business Awards.*



*The headoffice of Mumuadu Rural Bank at Osino*

that emerge on the rural banking sector to ensure that Rural and Community Banks (RCBs) do not suffer the plight suffered by other banks.

**Benedict Agabeh leads the Team**

Benedict A. Agabeh, became General Manager of the Bank in 2014 and has worked in the Bank for a total of 21 years and five years as the General Manager. He joined Mumuadu Rural Bank in 1998 as a project officer.

Mr Agabeh holds a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration (Banking and Finance) from the Paris

Graduate School of Management.

**Chairman’s perspectives**

According to Mr Seth Adom-Asomaning who chairs the Board, “Mumuadu Rural Bank has eight (8) branches strategically positioned in over eight districts of the Eastern Region. The branches spread form Nsawam- Adoagyri Municipality through Abuakwa, Fanteakwa, Kwahu to New Abirem. These vibrant branch networks are ready to deliver all the needed financial intermediations to support the Government’s One-District-One-Factory (1D-1F) projects”.



*Emmanuel Anor Addo  
Internal Auditor*



*Seth Adom Asomaning, Board Chairman, Mumuadu Rural Bank*



Stephen Bakoe Boadu,  
Microfinance Coordinator

“Our Bank sponsored the Government’s Clean Ghana Campaign by financing four of the 21-seater toilet facilities at Nsawam in the Nsawam-Adoagyiri District and Somanya in the Yilo Krobo District”, Mr Adom-Asomaning revealed.

He said the Bank was also participating in the Rural Enterprises Project of the Government, where over GH¢ 1.2



Michael Otu,  
Head of Compliance

**Transparent Governance**

Mr Seth Adom-Asomaning, Board Chair and a passionate advocate for good corporate governance, said the Bank is very transparent in their dealings with shareholders, investors, customers, and society at large. It therefore decided to make full disclosure on all investors in the Bank, “since that would serve as a catalyst for attracting other investors to the Bank”.

**Community support**



Samuel Techie Larbi,  
Credit Officer

million had been disbursed to individuals, groups as well as small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Mr Adom-Asomaning stated that the “Bank has supported the payment of medical bills for some indigenes of the area amounting to over GH¢20,000.00, renovated the Osino Police Station, paid for the repair of the Osino Clinic and provided the Clinic with water storage tanks, and donated two computers each to nine basic schools in the catchment area”.

**Editor’s note:**

Mr Seth Adom-Asomaning, Board Chair of the Bank is an avid

*The Bank specializes in three key areas including, Credit, Deposit taking as well as Advisory Services.*

supporter of *The Rural Banker* magazine. His insightful article on corporate governance was published in Issue # 6 of the magazine.

We promise to bring readers his next feature article on the Ghanaian currency, the Cedi. The article promises to be riveting.

Book copies of the magazine in advance.



Joseph Odame Yeboah,  
Head Office Branch Accountant

# MUMUADU RURAL BANK LIMITED HONOURED WITH **3 AWARDS** IN 2018



Rural Banking Impact  
Award of the year,  
(Ghana Business Awards)



Mumuadu Rural Bank Limited  
Ranked No. 31  
(Ghana Club 100)



Banking Institution of the year,  
Long Service Award & Citation  
(SME Ghana Awards)

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Awarding Body





# PARADISE HOTELS - EXCITED CUSTOMER OF MUMUADU RURAL BANK

**P**aradise Hotel is located on the Accra to Kumasi highway, which makes them very visible and easy to locate.

They provide rest stop services for commuters using the highway. The hotel provides commercial washrooms for travelers, restaurant services, super markets, fuel and gas service stations and hotel accommodation for

travelers.

Mumuadu Rural Bank provides them with various banking services including credit facilities, savings, and investment products.

Paradise Hotel has been doing business with the Bank for the past five years.

The Bank also provides them with cash collection services, “and therefore frees us from the hustle of having to always carry cash to the Bank” ■



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*Linda Dor Hotel located along the Kumasi to Accra highway*

# LINDA DOR HOSPITALITY GROUP - MOST RECOMMENDED REST STOP

**L**inda Dor, which was originally located at the SOS Village at Kyebi, has been noted for the best meat pies. Passengers of the Accra to Kumasi road who patronized the road before the diversion to Bunso Junction, could testify to their sumptuous meat pies.

Even at the present location, the rest stop still provides extraordinary meat pies, good meals, and accommodation services.

Linda Dor has therefore earned the most recognized 'rest stop' brand for commuters, especially travelers along the Kumasi to Accra highway. They are indeed the pace setters in the Ghanaian rest stop

industry.

The hotel provides commercial washrooms for travelers, restaurant services, super markets, fuel and gas service stations.

Linda Dor Hotel, a customer of Mumuadu Rural Bank, has been doing business with the Bank for the past 17 years.

Mumuadu Rural Bank provides them with various banking services, including credit facilities, savings, and investment products to help grow their businesses.

As a prestige customer of the Bank, the Bank supports the hotel with advisory services, to help streamline their operations.

The Bank also provides Linda Dor Hotel with cash collection services on a daily basis "thereby allowing the hotel to operate its business in peace. The Bank concentrates on banking and we concentrate on our hotelier services".

Mr Benjamin Sam, General Manager of the hotel indicated that "with support from Mumuadu Rural Bank, we have been able to grow the business into a very strong brand, which remains till date, the most recommended rest stop for travelers along the Accra to Kumasi Highway".



*The Executive Restaurant located at Linda Dor*





Osino Presby JHS

# MUMUADU RURAL BANK GIVES BACK TO COMMUNITIES

*With an understanding that having a good rapport with the communities in which they operate is key to a sustainable business, Mumuadu Rural Bank has been engaging in corporate social responsibility projects in the communities in which it operates.*

## SUPPORT FOR SCHOOLS

Some of the projects include, the provision of educational infrastructure.

The Bank constructed a temporary pavilion, to replace a dilapidated classroom block for Osino Presby Junior High School (JHS).

“The previous structure was like a death trap for the students and was on the verge of collapse. The new pavilion is currently serving as a classroom for some for the students. An

amount of Ten Thousand Ghana Cedis (GH¢10, 000.00) was also donated to the school for the renovation of the other classroom blocks”.

Mr Benjamin Osafo, the Headmaster of the School indicated that “Mumuadu Rural Bank provide the School with a lot of support. The Bank buys football jerseys for the school during inter school sports competitions and also supports the school anytime we call on them for help”.

### Renovation of Osino Police Station

The Bank also repaired “some leaking roofs by replacing old worn out roofs with new roofing sheets”.

In addition, the Bank renovated the “washrooms of the Osino Police

Station to serve both inmates and officers. The washrooms were in a very deplorable state. The Bank provided new washroom facilities for the police station last year and the work was completed by also providing a gutter to link the main sewage system”.

### Osino Clinic Water Project

The maternity wing of the Osino Clinic was renovated by the Bank and also donated a microscope to the clinic. It has provided a mechanized borehole for the clinic “to supply water to patients, the staff bungalows and especially the maternity ward. In addition, two water storage tanks were donated by the Bank to store water for use by the facility” ■

## SOME CSR PROJECTS OF MUMUADU RURAL BANK IN PICTURES



# RURAL & COMMUNITY BANKS ARE UNIQUE

*Joseph Akossey*

**T**he rural banking concept was introduced in 1976 with a view to providing financial intermediation in rural areas. The first rural bank to be established was Nyarkrom Rural Bank in the Central Region.

It is gratifying to note that the number of rural banks has grown from the initial stage of one to over 140. Currently there are over 850 branches of the Rural and Community Banks (RCBs) spread across the country. The RCBs therefore have the largest bank branch network in Ghana.

The regulated deposit taking institutions in Ghana are made up of universal banks, savings and loans companies, RCBs, microfinance companies, among others. In this article, we consider the uniqueness of these banks.

## **The uniqueness of RCBs:**

### **Community based**

RCBs are community based financial institutions because they are owned by resident and non-resident members of the community through share subscriptions. They are also managed and



**Joseph Akossey**  
Head, Proven Trusted Solutions

patronized by the people in the area in which they operate.

It can therefore be said that rural banks are established for the communities in which they operate. Per the Bank of Ghana licensing requirements for RCBs, community participation in terms of shareholding should not be less than 20 percent of the total shares.

The nuanced shareholding structure is meant to ensure that people in the community have a high level of participation in the running of affairs of the banks. That is also why the choice of names of some RCBs signal to the people in the area that the bank belongs to them. The following are typical examples of RCBs bearing the names of the communities in which they started: Fiaseman Rural Bank, Nzema Manle Rural Bank, Juaben Rural Bank, Ahantaman Rural Bank, Kintampo Rural

Bank, Nsoatreman Rural Bank, Asawinso Rural Bank, Adansi Rural Bank, etc.

As community based financial institutions, scores of directors of rural banks are natives of the towns in which they operate. This helps the directors to take decisions that reflect the needs and wants of the customers that they serve.

In contrast, the universal banks are not community based financial institutions. Therefore, they are not able to design programmes that meet the direct needs of the customers in the specific localities in which they operate.

### **Serving deprived communities**

A lot of the branches of the RCBs are located in rural areas, where the level of economic activities are low and hence mobilizing deposits can be challenging. The universal banks view such areas as unattractive and therefore prefer to do business a lot more in the cities and urban centres.

### **Giving bank to the communities**

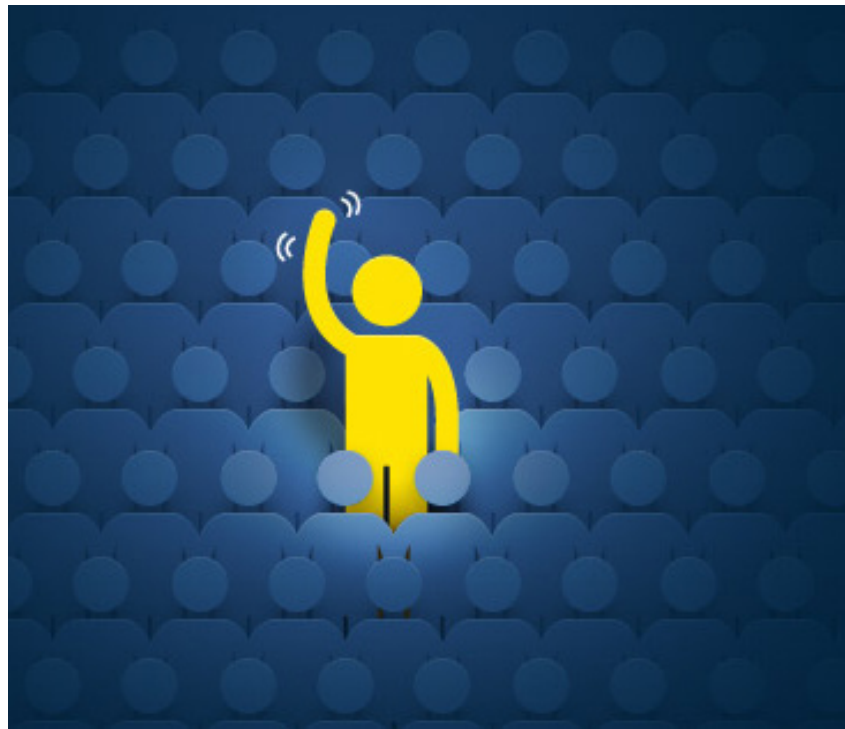
As community based financial institutions, most RCBs tend to use part of their profits for corporate social responsibility programmes in their catchment areas. Some of these corporate social responsibility programmes include scholarships, cash donations, construction of classroom blocks, supply of medical equipment to health facilities, etc.

For example, Atwima kwanwoma Rural Bank in Ashanti Region has constructed a Senior High School (Atwima Kwamwoma Presby Senior High) for Pakayi No. 2 community. The Bank also makes cash donation of Ten Thousand Ghana Cedis (GH¢ 10,000)

every year to support the same school. In addition to the cash donation, the Bank has been supporting the school with study materials and other logistics. It is noteworthy to mention that school enrolment in the community has increased.

Other RCBs and their CSR investments for 2017 are highlighted below:

<i>Name of Rural Bank</i>	<i>Investment in CSR for 2017</i>
Lower Pra	409,475
Nwabiagya	96,905
Amanano	114,671
Adansi	104,985
Juaben	55,618
Odotobri	216,140
South Akim	58,390
Amenfiman	159,000
Atwima Kwanwoma	43,980
Ahantaman	198,027



Another important way that RCBs give back to the communities is the fact that, they mobilise deposits from their catchment areas and grant credit to deserving customers in the same catchment areas. This helps to boost economic activity in the communities they serve. In contrast, some universal banks mobilise funds in a particular locality and lend to big businesses outside that locality. This tends to starve businesses, individuals and households with the needed resources to meet their varying economic needs.

**Focusing on unserved market segment**

Most of the major banks tend to target corporate entities, high net worth clients and other profitable clients. Customers at the bottom of the pyramid are often viewed as not profitable.

In contrast, RCBs focus on low income earners, petty traders, micro enterprise operators, small holder farmers and other economically active but poor people. This has gone a long way to bridge the gap between the banked and unbanked.

Some customers of the RCBs can apply for as little as GH¢500 micro-credit to start a petty trade.

The vast majority of the universal banks might not have time for such a borrower, because the transaction might be deemed unprofitable in terms of interest income generation. Scores of RCBs have Mobile Bankers who go to the door steps of customers, particularly low income earners such as street vendors, hawkers, drivers, artisans, just to name a few, to collect deposits as low as GH¢2.00 daily.

**Easy access to key management staff**

In view of the structure of RCBs and the fact that they are community based, it is easy for existing and potential customers and other stakeholders to have access to the key management staff.

Most of the key management staff operate visit branches in their catchment areas as part of their routine monitoring. This affords customers the opportunity to meet them to address their problems. It is difficult for the ordinary customer of a universal bank to have access to key management staff because the managers are at the head offices which are far away from the branches.

**Flexible lending Methodologies**

It is easy and faster to access a loan

*RCBs focus on low income earners, petty traders, micro enterprise operators, small holder farmers and other economically active but poor people. This has gone a long way to bridge the gap between the banked and unbanked.*



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*Pace Setters In Rural Banking*

facility from RCBs than from the universal banks. Branch Managers of several RCBs have limits when it comes to lending without requiring prior approval from the head office.

Even where big loans have to be approved by credit committee at the head office or the board sub-committee on credit, it is still faster because the approval authorities live in the localities.

In contrast, at most of the most of the universal banks loan requests have to be referred to the head office for approval.

Again, most of the universal banks do asset-based collateral lending and this makes it difficult for individuals and small business operators who do not have property or other assets to serve as collateral to access small loans. On the contrary, scores of rural banks offer less than normal collateral loans depending on the amount.

#### Dual supervision

Savings and Loans Companies, Finance Houses, Microfinance Companies and RCBs, are supervised and regulated by the Bank of Ghana.

The Bank of Ghana does this through onsite inspection and off site monitoring. However, RCBs are unique in the sense that the ARB Apex Bank, which serves as a 'mini' central bank also supervises, inspects and monitors their operations for the purpose of complementing the supervisory role of the central bank.

The staff of ARB Apex Bank Audit department periodically visits individual RCBs to audit their operations.

The onsite visit of ARB Apex Bank Audit staff helps to improve compliance in the areas of Know your customer (KYC), capital adequacy ratio, primary and secondary reserve requirements, and corporate governance practices.

#### Ownership Structure

A greater number of Specialised Deposit Taking Institutions in Ghana are owned by one person, family or a few individuals. This therefore makes them private limited liability companies. This implies that returns on investment benefit a handful of people.

In contrast, RCBs are community base financial institutions owned by a large number of people through purchase of shares. In other words, RCBs are public limited liability companies. This means that, profits go back to the masses who are shareholders in the form of dividend.

Per the licensing requirements for RCBs individual shareholding should not exceed 30% of total shares. This is meant to avoid the situation in which one person dominates in the management of RCBs.

In view of the ownership structure, every year RCBs organize annual general meetings (AGMs) to enable board of directors to account for their stewardship to shareholders. The AGM also affords the shareholders the opportunity to fix directors' remuneration, elect directors in place of those retiring or vote to rotate managers. Fiaseman Rural bank in the Western Region which is one of the top leading RCBs had their AGM on the 8th June, 2019 and this afforded the shareholders opportunity to demand accountability from the board.

#### Conclusion

The rural banking sector has a number of distinguished features, which make the players unique as compared to the orthodox banks.

The RCBs should therefore leverage their uniqueness to reach out to the unbanked and also attract customers of other financial institutions. They should leverage their uniqueness about the fact that RCBs are community based and belong to the people of the communities in which they operate.

Moreover, the uniqueness of RCBs should serve as a positioning strategy. The general public should therefore have confidence and trust in the RCBs because they are resilient in diverse ways.

**The Author is the head of Proven Trusted Solutions, an employee training and development and marketing research firm.**

**Contact: 0207725859 / 0244517833**

**Email: jakossey@yahoo.com / proventrustedsolutions@yahoo.com**



***RCBs individual shareholding should not exceed 30% of total shares. This is meant to avoid the situation in which one person dominates in the management of RCBs. In view of the ownership structure, every year RCBs organize annual general meetings (AGMs) to enable board of directors to account for their stewardship to shareholders.***



# MEET OUR RICH CADRE OF GENERAL MANAGERS

## Pobi Antwi Donkor

*General Manager, Ahafo Community Bank*



### Education

Mr Pobi Antwi Donkor is a native of Asante Mampong in the Ashanti Region. He started his elementary education at St. Anthony's Roman Catholic Primary and Middle School. He attended to St. Joseph's Seminary Secondary – Mampong Ashanti for his 'O' Level and proceeded to St. Hubert Seminary – Kumasi for his 'A' Level.

He then obtained BA (Sociology and Political Science) degree from University of Ghana, Legon. He is a Chartered Banker from Chartered

Institute of Bankers – Ghana.

### Experience

Mr Donkor joined Ahafo Community Bank as a Credit Manager on January 2, 2006 and rose to become the General Manager of the Bank on July 1, 2016.

### Family Life

Mr Pobi Antwi Donkor is married to Madam Sabina Pokuaa and God has blessed them with four children: Nyantakyiwaa, Adutwumwaa, Amankwaa and Antwiwaa ■

## Felix Dompseh

*General Manager, Brakava Breman Rural Bank*



International Trade' in April 2009 during the CIB Associateship examinations held in that subject paper.

He also holds HND (Accountancy) from Accra Polytechnic (Accra Technical University). He had his 'A' levels and 'O' Levels at Ghana Secondary School, Koforidua.

Mr Felix Dompseh has undertaken several courses in Strategic Management, Banking Operations and Finance, Credit Administration and Microfinance at the Ghana National Banking College, Management Development and Productivity Institute, GHAMFIN, ARB Apex Bank and the Bank of Ghana.

### Education

Mr Felix Dompseh is a Chartered Banker (ACIB-GH). He received the Merchant Bank, Ghana prize for 'Finance of

### Experience

He was appointed General Manager of the Bank in November 2017. He has a wealth of experience in Banking and

Microfinance spanning over 30 years. Mr Dompseh previously worked with South Akim Rural Bank as the Microfinance Manager, Manya Krobo Rural Bank as the Operations Manager, and Adonten Community Bank as the General Manager.

He has served in other capacities including Branch Management, Credit Administration, Micro Finance Restructuring, Business Development and Training.

### Family life

He has a wife and three (3) children.

### Hobbies

Mr Dompseh loves sight-seeing, reading and research. He is also a lay preacher at the Methodist Church. ■

# King W. Jawol

*General Manager, Ejuraman Rural Bank*



## Education

King Wisdom Jawol began his schooling at the SDA Preparatory School in Yendi and proceeded to Jilo Junior High School (JHS) in Bimbilla after which he joined Pope John's Secondary School in Koforidua for his SSSCE Certificate.

He graduated from Central University with a first class degree in Agribusiness Management in 2007 and earned an MBA in Strategic Management and Consultancy from the KNUST Business School in 2012.

He also holds a certificate in Agricultural Lending from the Food

and Agriculture Organization through AFRACA- Kenya.

## Experience

King who described himself as a General Manager with Diverse Background, was engaged by newly re-licensed Ejuraman Rural Bank as Chief Risk Officer; a position he occupied until February 1, 2019, when he was appointed as the General Manager by the Board. His experience spans three major industries including Banking, Agribusiness and Education. He worked with the United Bank for Africa as a Relationship Manager at their KNUST Branch in Kumasi until 2013. He resigned to pursue a passion for Agribusiness with Wienco Cotton Company Limited, as their Monitoring and Logistics Manager in the Northern and Upper East Regions.

In 2015, he was appointed as Assistant Professor of Management at Tubman University in the Republic of Liberia.

He taught courses in Management, Banking and Entrepreneurship until July 2017 when he joined Ejuraman Rural Bank (ERB).

## Achievements

King is noted for injecting the ethos of banking into the fairly young staff

of the Bank and leading the restructuring of Operations and Human Capital, setting ERB on the path of real growth. He took over three branches and recently added a fourth branch.

At UBA, King was part of the Best Performing Marketing Team on two occasions. He also received Management commendation for courageous and responsible behaviour for "solely acting against a disaster" which could have cost the Bank.

King is a Rotarian, an awardee of the Duke of Edinburgh International Award for young people, a 1999 Cultural Ambassador of Ghana to Staffordshire County in the United Kingdom and a Gold Medal recipient from President J. A. Kuffour under the Head of States Award Scheme for Young People in July 2001.

## Family Life

King is married and is blessed with three children, a daughter and two sons.

## Hobbies and Personal Interest

He loves writing and debating and is interested in learning new languages.

A polyglot, he speaks six (6) local and three (3) foreign languages.

# Dickson Owusu Ansah

*General Manager, Kaaseman Rural Bank*



## Education

Dickson Owusu Ansah holds a Commonwealth Executive Masters Degree in Business Administration (CEMBA) from the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology.

He also graduated in Banking and Finance from Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA).

## Experience

Mr. Dickson Owusu Ansah was appointed General Manager of

Kaaseman Rural Bank Limited in January, 2014. He however, joined the bank as a clerk in 1989 after obtaining his Advanced Level Education. He rose through the ranks from Clerk through Branch Manager, Accountant and Deputy General Manager, until he was appointed as the General Manager. He has been in the banking industry for the past thirty (30) years.

## Family life

He is married to and blessed with five children.



# Michael Agyeibi Agyekum

*General Manager, Kwabibirem Rural Bank*



## Early life and Education

Born on September 4, 1954 at Adanwomase, Michael Agyeibi Agyekum had his Secondary education at the T.I Ahamadiyya Secondary School in Kumasi from 1970 to 1976, where he obtained O' and A' Level Certificates.

He attended the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology from 1977 to 1980, where he obtained

a Bachelor of Arts degree in Social Sciences. He is a fellow of Micro Finance Association, United Kingdom.

## Work life and experience

He is a veteran in the Rural and Community Banking (RCB) industry, having worked with banks including, Adonten Community Bank, Ahafo Community Bank, Denkyiraman Rural Bank, and Kwabibirem Rural Bank where he currently serves as the General Manager (GM).

He was initially posted to Kwabibirem as a relieving GM, but after three months, he was hired as the substantive GM. He believed that an encouragement from the MD of the ARB Apex Bank made him to take up full time responsibility at Kwabibirem Rural Bank.

He did his National Service at Sogakope Secondary School, where he was a Geography Tutor. He worked briefly after National Service as an Assistant Planning Officer in the Department of Transport and

Communications.

Mr Agyekum then joined the Great African Insurance Company in 1983, worked briefly and finally landed at the now defunct National Savings and Credit Bank in 1984 as Manager Trainee. He was also instrumental in the setting up of Atweabam Rural Bank in Duayaw Nkwanta.

He has a combined managerial experience of over 40 years.

## Training

In 1989, he was nominated by NSCB to attend a 12-week course in FinAfrica Institute in Milan-Italy. After the course, he was awarded Diploma in Banking Economics. He gained a lot of experience in savings mobilization and project appraisal from FinAfrica.

His experience at NSCB-Tepa Branch prepared him well for his entry into the Rural Banking sector. In 1994, NSCB was merged with Social Security Bank (SSB) now SG-SSB.

# Alhaji Siibawaih Yakubu

*General Manager, Yapra Rural Bank*



## Education

Alhaji Siibawaih Yakubu started his

Primary education at Prang in the Bono East Region. He proceeded to Ghana Senior High School in Tamale for his Secondary education.

He obtained a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and Social Work and an Executive Master's in Business Administration both at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi.

## Experience

Alhaji Siibawaih Yakubu was appointed to the current position of General Manager in December 2003. He joined the Bank as a Clerk in 1991. He has a total of 27 years in Rural Banking. At the time he was appointed, the Bank had only five (5) Agencies,

including the Head Office. As at 2019, he and his team have managed to open four (4) more agencies located at Kwame Danso, Kajaji, Parambo/Sawaba and the latest being the Salaga Agency.

He was also able to move the Bank from the marginal position to a satisfactory position within four years based on the ARB Apex Bank Efficiency Monitoring Unit (EMU) ratings.

## Family life

Alhaji Siibawaih Yakubu is married and blessed with children.

## Hobby

Football is his greatest hobby.

# Gordon Kenneth Wotortsi

*General Manager, Citizens Rural Bank*



## Education

Mr Gordon Kenneth Wotortsi began his education at the Koforidua Technical University where he studied for the professional Accounting Technician qualification. He is also a graduate of the Institute of Chartered Accountants Ghana (ICAG) and is an Accounting Technician of West Africa (ATWA qualified) in 2007.

He also obtained a Bachelor of Science (Accounting) degree and a Master of Business Administration (Accounting

and Finance) from the University of Professional Studies Accra (UPSA) in 2013 and 2016 respectively. Mr Wotortsi is currently a level III student of the Institute of Chartered Accountants Ghana (ICAG).

## Experience

With an inspiring beginning, Mr Wotortsi started work after completing Senior High School (SHS) as a Mobile Banker and Cleaner at Akim Bosome Rural Bank at the Akim Oda Branch in 2001. He later became an Accounts Clerk between 2003 and 2004 before resigning to pursue more laurels in education.

He did his mandatory National Service at the Islamic Education Project (IEP), Accra as a teacher between 2007 and 2008.

He later joined Inter-Class Associates Ltd – (ICAL), a firm of Chartered Accountants, Management Consultants and Chartered Tax Consultants at Koforidua, Eastern Region from 2008 to 2010.

He then joined Akim Bosome Rural Bank Ltd in 2010 as an Internal Audit Assistant and rose through the ranks

to the level of Head of Internal Audit in 2014 to 2017. He also headed the Micro Finance Department of Akim Bosome Rural Bank for a year and served as a Branch Manager for seven months. He moved to Citizens Rural Bank, as the Head of Internal Audit in November 2017 and was appointed as the Acting General Manager in August 2018.

## Achievements

Mr Wotortsi was directly involved in bringing a lot of reforms in all the places he has worked, including his current employers, Citizens Rural Bank. He said he considers his noble strides humbling and is excited to be at the apex of his career in the rural banking sector at the age of 36.

## Family life

Born on February 14, 1983, Mr Wotortsi is married with one lovely boy.

## Hobbies and Interests

He likes watching games, especially wrestling, football, action movies, and reading novels. He also loves listening to good music and plays football and tennis at his leisure times.

# John Ametepe Aheto

*Chief Executive Officer, Agave Rural Bank*



## Education

Mr John Ametepe Aheto had his Secondary School education at St.

Martin's Secondary School, Adoagyiri, Nsawam and Nkroful Secondary School, Nkroful.

He proceeded to University of Cape Coast, where he had B.Ed (Hons) degree in Psychology and Economics.

He later obtained an MBA (International Business) from the Paris Graduate School of Management.

## Experience

Mr Aheto began his financial sector career from Sinapi Aba Trust in 2002 and rose through the ranks to become the Branch Manager in Ho.

After six successful years, he moved on to Intercontinental Bank Ghana as

a team leader (Relationship Manager) for Personal and Enterprise Banking at the Osu Branch in Accra.

He joined Agave Rural Bank in May 2011 as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

## Exponential growth

Under his leadership, Agave Rural Bank has experienced a tremendous growth with the balance sheet growing from GH¢3.9m in 2011 to GH¢14.8m in 2018.

## Family Life

John is married with four children, Delali, Selasi, Fafali and Eyram.

## Hobbies

John likes reading, listening and studying the word of God.

# Lucy Opoku-Arthur

*Supervising Manager, Kwahu Praso Rural Bank*



## Early life and Education

Mrs Lucy Opoku-Arthur was born to Mr E.E Antwi a former Head Master of Presby Boys School, Begoro and Mrs Janet Antwi all of blessed memory. She completed Begoro Presby Secondary School in the year 1992 and continued to the S.D.A Training College where she pursued her Post-Secondary Teacher Training Education for three years as a

Trained Teacher.

Mrs Opoku-Arthur obtained a Higher National Diploma in Accounting from the Koforidua Polytechnic in 2001 and graduated with an Executive MBA in Banking and Finance at the Paris Graduate School of Management in 2013.

## Experience

She taught for three years. She did her National Service with Adonten Community Bank and given permanent employment with the Bank in 2003 due to her hard work. Lucy worked as an Assistant Accountant at Head Office and was later appointed as the Branch Manager of the Koforidua Branch of the Bank.

By dint of hard work, good customer relation and prompt response to issues, she was invited for an interview when the Bank was looking for an Accountant at the Head Office.

She then became the Accountant at the Head Office in charge of all operations of the Bank.

Mrs Opoku-Arthur worked with Adonten Community Bank Ltd for a period of 13

years and rose through the ranks to the position of Acting General Manager. She then resigned from Adonten Community Bank in the year 2014 and joined Kwahu Praso Rural Bank.

She has been the Supervising Manager of Kwahu Praso Rural Bank for the past five years. Kwahu Praso Rural Bank has experienced an impressive growth under her supervision.

With the help of the Board and her management team, she has opened two additional branches for the Bank, at Anyinam in the Eastern Region and Ejisu in the Ashanti Region.

The Bank's deposit portfolio has grown by a remarkable 400 percent under her able watch, something she attributes to "the team work by the management and the mobilization drive put in place".

## Family Life

Mrs Opoku-Arthur is married to Mr John Opoku-Arthur who is the Eastern Regional Accountant of the Ghana Cocoa Board. They are blessed with two children: Nana Yaw, and Paa Yaw.

# Isaac Sasah

*General Manager, Gomoa community Bank*



## Education

Mr Isaac Sasah began his Secondary education at Snaps College of Accountancy and Secretariyship in Accra in the 1988/89 academic year to pursue Accountancy programme (RSA II and III) and completed in the year 1992. He did the GCE 'O' and 'A' Level within the same period.

Mr Sasah further obtained a Bachelor of

Science in Administration (Accounting) from the Central University and a Master of Business Administration (Accounting) option from the University of Cape Coast. He also holds a Chartered Institute Bankers Intermediate and Part Two of Institute of Chartered Accountants Ghana (ICAG)

## Experience

Mr Sasah started his banking career at Amenfiman Rural Bank after completing his National service from 1992 to 1993. Due to hard work, humility, selfless service rendered during his National Service with the Bank, he was employed by the Board of Directors as a Clerk Grade One in October 1993.

He rose through the ranks to the position of Senior Assistant Accountant, the position he held until July 2005, when he left for Accra to continue with his education.

He gained a broad experience in the areas of Credit, Internal Audit, Remittances and Banking Operations while working with the bank. Mr Sasah was employed by Kermah's

Enterprise/ J & D Textiles in Accra as an accountant on August 1, 2005.

He later joined Gomoa Rural Bank as a Manager in July 2012 and subsequently appointed as General Manager of Gomoa community Bank after the merger of three erstwhile banks (Gomoa Rural Bank, Gomoa Ajumako Rural Bank and Eastern Gomoa Assin Rural Bank) in 2016.

## Achievements

Some of his major achievements include:

- Part of the team which helped to ensure a successful merger of the three banks
- Led a team to work on the staff salary and grade rationalization after the merger
- Restored the confidence of customers and members of the public to continue banking with Gomoa Rural Bank

## Family life

Mr Sasah is married to Aneeta and they are blessed with five children, Stephen, Yvonne, Joycelyn, Mildred, and Elsie.

# SERVICE QUALITY AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN RURAL AND COMMUNITY BANKS (RCBs)

*Dr Albaji Yahaya Abdul-Raman*

At the commencement of rural banking, almost all the customers of RCBs did not have choices of financial services. They had to deal with the only rural bank that was available in their communities.

The customers of RCBs in the early years of rural banking are no more the same. Gradually, the level of awareness of those customers is steadily rising due to many factors, such as increases in the level customer education, education levels of customers' children and relations, increasing interaction with other persons from urban communities, the gradual entry into rural communities by other financial institutions that were initially operating only in urban areas, and the availability of more options for financial services, such as the mobile money services (Momo) from the Telecommunications companies.

The concepts of service



Dr Albaji Yahaya Abdul-Rahman  
Board Chairman

quality and customer satisfaction are just like the two sides of a coin, but they are both integral parts of what is recently termed customer service. In this piece, the author attempts to avoid a heavy dose of academic and theoretical approach, but will concentrate more on relevant material that can be useful to practitioners in rural banking.

In this magazine, service quality and customer satisfaction will be published in about three or more parts. Overall, the full coverage of service quality and customer satisfaction will deal with i) relevant key concepts, ii) the determinants of service quality and iii) approaches to the assessment and measurement of customer satisfaction as well as the practical application of service quality and customer satisfaction in the RCB sector.

## Relevant Concepts and Key Pillars

This section deals with the key concepts and pillars that will constitute the framework for ensuring quality customer service and excellent customer satisfaction. These concepts and pillars of service quality are explained in the immediate ensuing paragraphs.

## Customer Service

Customer service refers to all organizational efforts that are inter-related and directed towards ensuring that high or excellent customer satisfaction is attained, through the delivery of excellent service quality. Instead of focusing on the debates in the literature on customer service, there is the need to pay attention to some practical tips on how to improve on customer service, as suggested by some writers and researchers. Such tips include the following:

a) Treating your customers like human beings. This means treating them with dignity and not being annoyed at them for interrupting your day.

This also means expecting them to act like responsible adults. Too many businesses believe that good customer service means bowing to the whims of every customer who has a complaint.

That solves the immediate problem of an angry customer, but sometimes it is not the best. Know when there is a real problem that



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- The growth of your small business is our focus
- Start your small business, we are there to support you.

*We Nurture Your Growth*



needs fixing and fix it well, but do not let people walk all over you.

b) Go beyond the minimum to make your customers love you. If there is a real problem, and you can do just a little more to make a customer's day, he or she is going to remember it. You will get a lot more repeat business (regular business from the same customer), and word-of-mouth advertising (from the customer to others), if you over-deliver.

c) Do not make excuses. If it is your fault, say so. Never try to blame it on the customer. It is amazing what a difference it can make if you just say "An error has been made, but I will make it right". Your customer will see you a lot differently if you do not make excuses.

d) Do not take it personal. The customer is directing his/her frustration at you. However, the customer is angry about the situation, not angry at you, specifically. Taking things personally just introduces anger into the situation and makes it harder to fix the problem.

e) Listen to your customers. Do not assume you know what they want. Your customers may have some good things to say, even if they are not experts in your business.

f) Think about what you are promising to your customer. It is easy to get carried away and offer more promises than you can easily deliver. Always pay close attention to what you are promising, and do not let a customer talk you into doing the impossible.

g) Allow the customer to feel like he/she is a priority. Do not answer the phone call of your customer whilst doing something else. Spend the few minutes it takes effort to really pay attention to your customer.

h) Get to tackle the problems right away. No one wants to deal with something unpleasant, but if you let a complaint sit, it is not going to



get any better on its own. Follow up. Call after a problem has been dealt with.

unavoidably and closely linked to the concept of service quality.

#### **Service quality and customer satisfaction**

According to many writers and researchers on this subject, a service is basically an intangible performance delivered to another party by an individual, a group or an entity. The terms "quality" and "service" are

The three key characteristics of services are intangibility, heterogeneity, and inseparability. This point is further reinforced by the fact that services, by their nature, do not lend themselves to counting, measuring, testing and inventory. Given these characteristics, firms are constantly put in very difficult situations where they have little or no control in determining how consumers perceive and assess the quality of their service.

*The three key characteristics of services are intangibility, heterogeneity, and inseparability*

Some experts have pointed out that that "quality" is the meeting of a customer's requirements. Whilst this definition is useful, many have maintained that it is very tedious to define quality. Many support the definition that quality is based on the perception of the customer; and therefore quality is defined as whatever the customer perceives as quality. This article adopts the meaning of service quality given by Gerson (1993) that is based on the customer's perception and judgement;

which states that **quality is what the customer says it is.**

Based on the close linkage between service quality and customer satisfaction, it is generally accepted that a customer who rates a service as good quality is a satisfied customer; whilst a customer

who rates a service as poor quality is a dissatisfied customer.

Achieving high levels of customer satisfaction requires that organizations continually monitor and examine the experiences, opinions, and suggestions of their customers and people who are potential customers. Improving service quality to meet customers' standards is an ongoing part of doing business.

**Captive Customer**

A captive customer is a customer who keeps doing business with an organization because he/she has no other option even if he/she is dissatisfied. In many of our rural bank agencies, there are no other financial institutions. The fact that our customers continue to do business with our banks does not mean that they are satisfied with our services. They have no choice. This situation makes them "captive customers". One indicator that our customers are satisfied with our service is that customers continue to do business with our bank, even after a competitor has appeared in our business environment.

**Satisfied and dissatisfied customers**

In studies and surveys to assess or measure customer satisfaction and service quality, various categorizations

or classifications can be made; and these are described in the ensuing paragraphs.


**Satisfied Customer:** Only a good service quality will result in a situation where there are satisfied customers. In the measurement of customer satisfaction, there can be further sub-classifications for a satisfied customer, such as a satisfied customer and a very satisfied customer.

**Dissatisfied Customer:** A dissatisfied customer can be found in a situation where there is poor service quality. In the measurement of customer satisfaction, there can be further sub-classifications for a dissatisfied customer, such as a dissatisfied customer and a very dissatisfied customer.


**Partial Satisfied/Dissatisfied Customer:**

In many studies on customer satisfaction and service quality, some customers do not rate a service as good quality or poor quality, but rather rate it as marginal quality.

Where a study finds out that a service delivered is of marginal quality, the customers who provide such a rating or assessment are described as partially satisfied customers or partially



***Only a good service quality will result in a situation where there are satisfied customers***



**MAYE HOT COMMUNITY BANK-SERVICE CHARTER**

S/No.	Performance Standard	Maximum Duration (Example)
1	Opening of a new account by a new customer	40 minutes
2	Opening a new account by an existing customer	20 minutes
3	Making an Inquiry and receiving a response	20 minutes
4	Receiving a requested cheque book-new customer	7 working days
5	Receiving a requested cheque book-old customer	5 working days
6	Provision of an ATM Card	3 working days
7	Providing a requested bank statement	5 minutes
8	Acknowledging a correspondence	Same day
9	Approval/disapproval of a loan request	5 working days
10	Approval/disapproval of an overdraft request	5 working days
11	Renewal of a loan/overdraft facility	3 working days
12	Making a deposit	10 minutes
13	Making a withdrawal	10 minutes
14	Receiving a requested Payment Order	10 minutes
15	Making a transfer to another bank	5 minutes
16	Making a transfer to another account in the same bank	

dissatisfied customers.

### Customer Service Charter (CSC)

A Customer Service Charter contains key service performance standards in a customer-focused organization. Standards of customer service identify and communicate what constitutes satisfactory performance for all employees and customers. These standards provide uniform measures for all staff, and promote consistent strong customer service. Once those performance standards are in place, an organization can hold employees accountable for performing below the expected performance standards. The CSC (which contains the performance standards) is like the performance-compass for a customer-focused organization. A typical specimen of a CSC contains the following, among other requirements:

### Client Service Unit (CSU)

A client-focused bank must have a CSU. The CSU monitors how employees are complying with the service standards within the service charter. The CSU is the place where dissatisfied or aggrieved customers can go to seek redress. Despite the existence of a CSU within a bank, all employees must continuously keep in mind that the maintenance of quality service and ensuring customer satisfaction is the responsibility of all employees. Every employee must play his/her role excellently.

### Internal customers and suppliers

In all organizations, employees have to work in a well-coordinated manner so as to satisfy the external/final customer. In a situation within an organization, the work of employee B may start from where the work of A ends. In this simple situation, B is the internal customer of A who is the internal supplier of B. Where B's work output becomes the input for the work of C, B now becomes an internal supplier to C who is B's internal customer. Internal suppliers and customers are employees. Where there is poor coordination between internal suppliers and internal customers, customer service may be poor, and service quality can be assessed or rated to be of poor quality, thereby, resulting in customer dissatisfaction. The external customer eventually suffers from the poor coordination between internal

suppliers and internal customers.

### External customer

The external customer is the final customer in the chain of service delivery. He/she is the final recipient of the final output, whether a tangible product or a service, which is intangible. He/she is an outsider and is not part of the organization. It is the perception of this external customer that matters. In the banking sector, the account holder (of a savings, current, fixed deposit account) is the bank's external customer. When assessing or measuring service quality, it is the perception of the external customer that matters. It is this perception that determines whether a bank's service is good quality, very good quality, marginal quality, poor quality or very poor quality. Whilst this publication is the beginning, the methodology of measuring service quality will be the final stage of the series of publications on this subject.

### Determinants of service quality and customer satisfaction

Understanding the determinants of service quality and customer satisfaction is the heart of this subject on customer service. It is the concern for excellent customer service that compels service providers to know and how to improve upon the key determinants of service quality. Focusing on the determinants of

service quality and customer satisfaction will be the main component of the next publication or the part II of this article.

*To be continued...*

### About the author

Dr Alhaji Yahaya Abdul-Rahman is a Practicing Chartered Accountant since 1995 and holds a PGD from Coady Institute, Canada. He holds a BSc Admin (accounting), an M. Phil in Social Work and a Ph D in Public Admin, all from Legon, with research experience in service quality and customer satisfaction. Outside rural banking, Dr Yahaya has occupied positions (1995-2008) as Chief Auditor, Credit Manager, HR Manager, and Financial Controller at places such as GCB Bank, ELF Oil (now Total) and GIPC. Dr Yahaya has been associated with rural banking since 1984-85, when he was a manager trainee at the Nandom and Naara Rural Banks. Between 1985 and 1990, he managed the Sonzele and Bessfa Rural Banks. Dr Yahaya has over 20 years consulting and lecturing experience with the EU, EC, UNDP, World Bank, VRA, Ghana Govt, the National Banking College, UPS, and UDS. He is currently the CEO/Managing Partner of Ruyan Consult, a firm of Chartered Accountants and Management Consultants.

# CUSTOMER SERVICE





# OUR BOARD CHAIRMEN

## Hon. Anthony Effah

*Chairman of the Board of Directors, Brakwa Breman Rural Bank*



### Education

Hon Anthony Effah qualified as a Chartered Banker in 1998, having come out as the overall best student at the final examinations of the Chartered Institute of Bankers, Ghana. In October 2012, he was awarded a Fellowship of the Institute for his invaluable contribution to the banking industry in Ghana.

He holds a first degree in Economics (1985) and Executive Master's Degree in Finance. He has pursued various professional courses in Ghana and abroad including USA, Britain, Dubai, South Africa, Kenya and Senegal. He also has a wide

experience in teaching Economics and Banking at various academic and professional institutions in Ghana.

### Experience

He worked with Merchant Bank from 1990 to 1999, and subsequently worked with Fidelity Discount House from 1999 to 2005, United Bank for Africa from 2005 to 2006, and Fidelity Bank from 2007 to 2011.

While at Fidelity Bank, he held various executive management positions, first as Director, Credit Risk Management, Director Corporate Banking and later Director, Risk Management and Compliance.

Hon Effah became the Managing Director of Express Savings and Loans Company from July 2011 to February 2013 when he resigned and set up his own company, A E Microfinance Company Limited.

He is the Member of Parliament for Asikuma-Odoben-Brakwa Constituency in the Central

Region of Ghana.

### Directorship

He was elected to the board of Brakwa Breman Rural Bank on August 14, 2010 and is currently the Board Chairman.

### Hobbies

Hon Effah is a philanthropist and has a passion for youth development.

# Sampson Amofa-Kra

*Chairman of the Board of Directors, Atwima Mponua Rural Bank*



## Education

Mr Sampson Amofa-Kra holds a Master of Education (M.ED.) in Educational Administration from the University of Cape Coast, where he wrote a thesis on the topic: "Personal Participation in School Financial Administration: the Case of Public Boarding Secondary Schools in the Cape Coast Municipality of Ghana". He also holds a Teacher's Certificate 'A' (4-Year) and a BA in Economics and Sociology from the University of Ghana, Legon. He also holds a Post-Graduate Certificate in Education from the University Cape Coast.

## Directorship

He was initially co-opted to the Board of Directors of Atwima Mponua Rural Bank on June 1, 2015 and was officially elected as a member of the Board on December 18, 2015 and subsequently voted as Chairman of the Board of Directors on July 30, 2019. Mr Amofa-Kra was also a Board Member of St Peter's Cooperative Credit Union, Kumasi for eight (8) years, where he was Board Secretary and also served as Chairman to the Education sub-

Committee.

His church, the Methodist Church Ghana, appointed him Administrator for the Freeman Centre for Leadership Development, Kumasi (2001 – 2004) and Administrator for the Methodist Women's Training Centre, Kwadaso (2009 – 2013).

## Innovations and Achievements

As a Director of Education (2003-2007), complying with a directive from the then Minister of Education to take action on "The spate of embezzlement recorded in the District by the Auditor-General", Mr Amofa-Kra, virtually single-handedly recovered to Government Chest, unearned incomes from Officers of the then Ahafo-Ano South (Mankranso) District Education Office in the Ashanti Region, amounting to over GH¢75,000.

From 2002 to 2003, he was the National Reconciliation Commission (NRC), Zonal Manager for both Ashanti and Eastern Regions; 2011 to 2017 he was a Board Member, representing the Director-General of Ghana Education Service (GES) on the Board of Governors of two (2) Senior High Schools (SHS) in the Ashanti Region, namely

KNUST SHS, Kumasi, and T.I. Ahmadiyya SHS, Fomena; and from 2015 to 2016, he was a Council Member, representing Director-General of GES on the College Council of Offinso College of Education.

## Family Life

He is married with four (4) children who have all been independent adults for many years. His main family responsibility and source of joy since his father died in 1977 is that his 107-year-old mother has been living with him since 2008.

## Hobbies and Personal Interests

Mr Amofa-Kra loves driving, listening to music, watching movies, and listening to discussions on national issues, especially Newsfile on Joy News TV and Joy 99.7 FM on Saturday mornings. He is also a proponent of the practical demonstration and teaching of transparency and accountability in the corporate governance process.

# Bright Dogbefu

*Chairman of the Board of Directors, Ejuraman Rural Bank*



## Education and experience

Mr Dorgbefu holds a Bachelor of Arts and M. Phil degrees, both in Economics from the University of Ghana. He has attended several local and international training programmes in the areas of Executive Leadership, Corporate Governance, Oil and Gas, Project Management, Structured and Trade Finance, Advanced Credit Analysis, Corporate Finance, Marketing and Relationship Management, Negotiation Skills, Maritime Rules, etc.

An Economist, he is also a Corporate Banker and Entrepreneur with over fifteen years of professional working experience spanning Banking, Energy, Construction, Real estate Development, Telecommunication, and Business Advisory.

He is the co-founder and Executive Director of BF Petroleum Limited (an Oil Marketing Company, licensed by National Petroleum Authority).

Prior to co – founding BF Petroleum in March 2012,

Mr Dorgbefu worked with the erstwhile UT Bank Limited, between January 2010 and February 2012 as a Senior Relationship Manager in charge of Telecommunications, Oil and Gas, Mining and Construction. He also worked at Access Bank Limited, as a Relationship Manager in charge of the same portfolio.

He began his Banking career with United Bank of Africa (Ghana) Limited (UBA) in September 2004. During his four-and-a-half years (between September 2004 and June 2009) working with UBA, he held several positions including, Head of Energy Desk, Relationship Manager in charge of Multinational Corporations, Mining, Telecommunication and Construction sectors. He has extensive experience in Corporate Finance (including Project/Property Financing), Credit and Relationship Management.

## Directorship

As Chairman of the Board of Directors of Ejuraman Rural Bank, Mr Dorgbefu works with colleague Directors to institute good corporate governance structures, and instill rigorous risk and credit regimes at the Bank.

Mr Dorgbefu also currently sits on other Boards,

including, Best Link Global (Ghana) Limited (a licensed Cocoa Buying Company), MBP Limited (a Civil Construction Company), BF Properties Limited (a Real Estate Development Company) and BF Energy Limited (an Oil Trading Company)

## Family Life

Mr Dorgbefu is married with four (4) children.

## Hobbies

He loves reading, watching football and playing lawn tennis.

# Michael Morant Ezan

*Chairman of the Board of Directors, Ankobra West Rural Bank*



## Education

Mr Michael Morant Ezan holds an Associate Diploma from the London Institute of Bankers and was awarded a Fellowship of the London and Ghana Institute of Bankers in 1977.

## Directorship and involvement with Association of Rural Banks

Mr Ezan has been Director of Ankobra West Rural Bank since 1978. A founding member of the National Association of Rural Banks, he was its first National Treasurer from 1981 to 1993 and had acted as President of the Association when the idea of having an Apex Bank (on the lines of the Rabo Bank) was proposed.

He co-signed a letter with the late J. A. Bronyah, the then National Secretary of the Association of Rural Banks, to Bank of Ghana proposing the consideration of the establishment of an Apex Bank for the future growth and sustainability of Rural Banking in Ghana.

Mr Ezan actively encouraged and provided technical advice to promoters for the establishment of Ahantaman Rural Bank and Lower Pra Rural Bank.

He proposed the new name Ankobra West Rural Bank to replace Esiam Rural Bank, for approval by Shareholders at an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM), which was adopted and ensured a reactivation of Ankobra West Rural Bank in the year 2000.

As Chairman of the first Rural Bank in Western Region, he organized seminars under the auspices of the National Association of Rural Banks to help educate directors in the Western Region on board meeting procedures.

He acted as lead resource person in the mid-1980s when the Association of Rural Banks organized its Rural Banking education for directors throughout the country.

The seminars focused on “Basic Banking Procedures”, “Rural Banking Accounting”, “Basic Lending Principles”, and “Preparation of Bank of Ghana Prudential Returns” and “Rural Banks Balance Sheet” (Understanding and

Appreciation). The seminars attracted the attention of the World Bank.

## Hobbies

He loves golf and football and has held the positions of Captain, Vice-President and President of the Achimota Golf Club, Achimota. He is keen in Rural Banking education and was an examiner and moderator on Rural Banking for the Professional Examination at the Ghana Institute of Bankers.

# Kwame-Gazo Agbenyadzie

*Chairman of the Board of Directors, Agave RB*



He held several executive positions and served on various committees in both local and international insurance organizations. He also served as the President of the Ghana Insurers Association, Vice-President of the Chartered Insurance Institute of Ghana (CIIG), member of the Executive Council of the West African Insurance Companies Association and the African Insurance Organization.

## Directorship

He joined the Board of Agave Rural Bank in August 2006, serving in several positions including Vice-Chairman of the Board and Chairman of the Audit, Risk, Compliance and Finance Committee of the Bank. He assumed the Chair of the Board in August 2019.

He also serves on the Board of Dabala Senior High School. Mr Kwame-Gazo currently serves as the Chairman of the Professional Standards Committee of the CIIG and also sits on the Board of the industry regulator, the National Insurance Commission. He also serves as a Non-Executive Director on Boards of other companies in the insurance and pensions industry.

## Education

Mr Kwame-Gazo is a Chartered Insurer, an Associate of the Chartered Insurance Institute (ACII), U.K., a Fellow of the Chartered Insurance Institute of Ghana, the Actuarial Society of Ghana, and the West African Insurance Institute.

He holds an Executive MBA in Finance from the University of Ghana Business School, and a Bachelor of Science degree in Statistics and Mathematics from the University of Ghana, Legon. He also holds a Post-Graduate Diploma in Actuarial Science from the City University, London, UK, and a Diploma in Insurance and Risk Management with distinction from the West Africa Insurance Institute.

## Experience

He has over three decades of experience in insurance. His last position in executive management was as the Chief Executive Officer of Metropolitan Insurance Company (MET Insurance), now Hollard Insurance Ghana, a position he held until his retirement in 2015.

## Hobbies

Mr Kwame-Gazo is a well-known supporter of development programmes and an opinion leader in the Agave Traditional Area.

# Nana Bram Okae II

*Chairman of the Board of Directors, Ga RB*



## Education

Nana Bram Okae II, holds a Bachelor of Arts honours from the University of Ghana, Legon (1971), Post Graduate Diploma in Linguistics and Language Teaching (Edinburgh, 1975), and Masters in Education (Exeter, 1980).

## Directorship

He first joined Ga Rural Bank as a shareholder in 2010 and became a Director in 2011. He was elected Chairman of the Board of Directors in 2013, when Mr G.S.K. Anku exited the Board as its chairman.

## Achievements

Under the leadership of Nana Bram, Ga Rural Bank has seen an unprecedented growth in its fortunes, culminating in the opening of four (4) new branches (agencies) within the last seven years in the catchment area. The agencies are located at Kwabenya, Medie, Djanman-Pokuase, and Ablekuma.

The old branches are Amasaman (headquarters), Achimota, Taifa, Kokrobite and Mallam, making a

total of nine branches. The branch network expansion is in line with the Bank's policy to get very close to the unbanked population with its bouquet of services.

## Products under his tenure E-Susu

Recently, Ga Rural Bank embarked on E-Susu banking, where agents of the Bank go to the field to collect deposits from depositors who are registered customers of the Bank. This micro-savings strategy is in fulfillment of the Bank's quest to increase its deposit base and also create jobs for the youth in the community.

E-Susu employs a technology known as mobile cash collection. It provides a unique way of mobilizing funds for the Bank and it has been very useful in enhancing the deposits of the Bank since its inception two years ago. The key objectives for the introduction of the E-Susu scheme are:

- a) Bring banking to the doorstep of everybody, especially those with little or no financial services
- b) Provide a channel for savings through daily cash collection
- c) Provide effective and efficient personal banking services to lower income earners and micro-traders through innovative solutions.

## Ga-Connect

Ga-Connect, a digital banking solution is a form of electronic channel (solution), which offers convenience to customers. It is one of the surest ways the Bank intends to leverage on technology to attract new customers as well as retain existing ones.

The Ga-Connect runs on a short code \*365\*212# and provides an enhanced transactional platform to deepen the quality of the Bank's customer engagement and their experience of doing business with the Bank.

It enables customers to have full control of their accounts in the comfort of their homes. Customers can seamlessly perform banking transactions such as make deposits, withdrawals, transfers, payment of school fees, payment of subscription for DSTV, GOTV, ECG Bills, etc., without physical interaction, through their mobile phones.

## Family Life

He is married with four adult children, the last of whom is 40 years old.

## Hobby

Nana Bram was a columnist for the Daily Heritage newspaper for several years.

# Kennedy Obiri-Yeboah

*Chairman of the Board of Directors, Okomfo Anokye RB*



## Education

Mr Obiri-Yeboah is a Chartered Accountant by profession and a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants, Ghana. He holds two (2) Master's Degrees: Commonwealth Executive Master's in Business Administration (CEMBA) and Master of Business Administration (Accounting option), both from the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi in 2013 and 2015 respectively.

In 2007, he studied at the Graduate School of Business at the University of Cape Town, (UCT) South Africa and earned the degree of Associate in Management, (AIM) (Management Practice major), an intermediate management development programme, organised by the UCT Graduate School of Business (GSB) in collaboration with the management of AngloGold Ashanti.

He entered Osei Tutu Secondary School at Akropong in Kumasi in 1977, where he earned his GCE 'O' Level in June 1982 and then continued to Swedru Secondary School, Agona Swedru, in the Central Region, completing his GCE 'A' Level in June 1984. He has attended many post qualification and on the job training programmes in Ghana, UK and South Africa. He has also attended many workshops organized by Bank of Ghana, ARB Apex Bank, Association of Rural Banks and the Okomfo Anokye Rural Bank all aimed at sharpening his skills as a Director and a Corporate Governance expert.

## Experience

He started his Accountancy training at Kumasi Polytechnic (now Kumasi Technical University) in 1986. He did his National Service at Krachi Secondary School between 1989 and 1990 where he taught and mentored students for GCE O level Principles of Accounting. His professional work experience began at Ashanti Goldfields Company Limited (AGC), Obuasi in 1993. He was transferred to the Bibiani Mine in 1999 as a Senior Accountant and rose to become the Finance Manager for Central African Gold and Noble Gold Bibiani Limited, from 2007 to 2013. He is currently a Senior Accountant at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi where he is in charge of Financial Reporting.

## Directorship

Mr Obiri-Yeboah joined the Board of Okomfo Anokye Rural Bank at the end of the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of shareholders of the bank in November 2003. At that time the Bank was undergoing restructuring. The relieving Manager was Mr Antwi-Appiagyei who recommended Mr Obiri-Yeboah and three others, namely, Mr Raphael Tufuor (formerly of the Controller and Accountant General's Department), Lawyer Kwasi Bempa, a private legal practitioner and Mr Opoku Debrah, to join the reconstituted Board. The Chairman of the Board at the time was Mr Kofi Anokye Manu, then Headmaster of Okomfo Anokye School High School who had been on the previous Board for some time. Mr Obiri-Yeboah was appointed Chairman of the Board of Directors of Okomfo-Anokye Rural Bank in March 2014.

## Achievements

Throughout his tenure as a Director and Chairman, his one major or

priority achievement has been championing the computerization of the operations of the Bank. He championed the introduction of payroll preparation and reporting, core banking, assets register, attendance clock-in device, car tracking device and Human Resource Management software, with emphasis on performance management.

As Chairman of the Audit Committee, he helped improve control systems at the Bank. This standard has been maintained and has resulted in reduction in fraud cases.

Over the last 15 years as Director, branches of the Bank have grown from 4 (four) in 2003 to nine (9) in 2019, two of which were added during his chairmanship. Deposits have also grown from GH¢2.3 million in 2007 to over GH¢50 million in 2019 and profit soared to almost GH¢1 million in 2017. Between 2014 and 2019, deposits have grown from GH¢18.2 million to GH¢50 million, a whopping 175 percent growth. The Bank's stated capital is well over the regulatory requirement and increases marginally each year.

## Family life

He is married to Juliet, a Social Studies Tutor at Osei Tutu Senior High School with whom he has four (4) children; namely Mercy (23 years old), George Duncan (21 years old), Reginald (19 years old) and Kennedy Junior (11 years old).

## Hobbies

Mr Obiri-Yeboah's hobbies include listening to current affairs programmes on Radio and Television, watching soccer and browsing the Internet for professional and other political news from around the world.



*Kojo Mattah (extreme right) receiving the coveted Best Rural Banking Services Provider award*

## INLAKS HOSTS SUCCESSFUL DIGITAL BANKING CONFERENCE

**I**nlaks, one of Africa's leading information technology solutions provider, has hosted a successful Digital Summit in Lagos, the commercial capital of Nigeria. The summit, was held on Saturday, October 19, 2019 at the plush Lagos Continental Hotel on Victoria Island on the theme: "Unlocking the Opportunities in the Digital Banking Age".

The maiden summit, brought together over 500 experts on information technology and cyber security, governors of central banks in Western and Central Africa, Managing Directors and Chief Executive Officers of Africa's top tier banks, to deliberate on how to leverage on technology to improve customer experience in African banks.

Over 28 speakers and well-respected thought leaders in the financial services, technology solutions and allied companies presented papers on strategic areas on technology, banking, regulation, and digitalization on the West African banking ecosystem.

In a short presentation, Ade Shonubi, Deputy Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), noted that the Regulators of financial institutions are more concerned about the social dynamics and the cost of changes in the financial sector than the bottom-line.

Shonubi noted that, "at the CBN, we operate as Social Scientists and we concern ourselves more about the social impacts that all these technological disruptions would have on the jobs of the people". Shonubi commissioned state-of-the-art intelligent automated teller machines (ATMs) being introduced to the Nigerian market. The first batch of the ATMs, which offer a variety of banking solutions are being deployed by First Bank of Nigeria.

Managing Director/CEO of Inlaks In a welcome address, Femi Adeoti, Managing Director/CEO for Africa Operations at Inlaks, stated that technology was evolving very fast "and Africa could not afford to be left behind".

Mr. Adeoti expressed his gratitude to the Regulators, partners of Inlaks, and other conference participants for accepting their invitation and participating in the maiden Inlaks Digital Summit.

He said it was an honour to serve all their clientele, adding that, "despite the challenges Inlaks faced in the past, we are happy today about the organization we have built together". He stressed that the banking industry, like many other sectors of the economy has been facing a myriad of challenges, with old technologies giving way to new ones through disruption.

Mr. Adeoti said it was therefore gratifying that diverse speakers were



selected to cover several topics, including, how to take advantage of disruptive technologies in the banking space.

According to him, “many years ago, no one could have predicted the volume of electronic transactions we are witnessing today”, adding that “by the year 2025, many people would think of only device based materials as the store of value for their bank accounts, instead of physical materials such as cheque books and debit cards delivered to the customers by banks”. He said some of the technology disruptions we are witnessing today were once witnessed by hitherto market leaders such as Blockbuster, Blackberry, Kodak, etc.

“One of the experiences we learn from some of these market leaders of their time is that, no industry is immune from disruption. Financial institutions need to understand that very shortly, they would not be competing against other banks, instead they would in addition to competing with banks, be competing against technology players like Amazon, Facebook, Apple, Google, and possibly, Alipay”, Mr. Adeoti



Mr Femi Adeoti, MD/CEO of Inlaks



Ade Shonubi, Deputy Governor of CBN with microphone, commissioning the intelligent ATM

stressed.

He therefore charged banks to adopt and evolve concrete digital banking strategies to prepare them for the future.

He said “four of the top five reasons banking customers would switch is because of the customer experience”, adding that “African banks must focus on customer experience”.

He added that banks should enhance their human resources with innovative talents, in addition to the traditional bankers, because such innovative talents would appreciate modern trends such as machine learning, block chain, cloud computing, and artificial intelligence solutions.

Executive Director According to Tope Dare, Executive Director, Infrastructure Business Unit at Inlaks, there were four key takeaways from the summit, which were, launching new digital brands for companies, how to digitalize internal processes to serve customers better, modernizing the digital experience, and launching a new digital banking process.

He stated that the 2019 Inlaks Digital Summit was meant to bring a whole new digital banking experience to the people of Nigeria and Africa at large. “It was meant to shift the digital banking experience to put together and expose participants to the global

security trend in the banking arena”, he added.

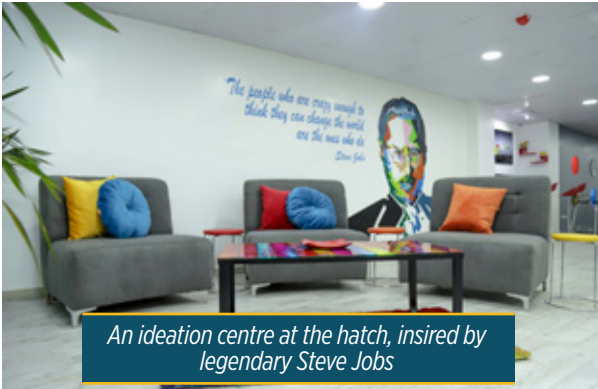
He said the summit was meant to address the needs of the young and internet savvy population with the right and customized banking solutions.

He encouraged participants to use digital solutions to solve the pressing financial needs of the growing population on the African Continent.

Tour of the “hatch”

One of the highlights of the summit was a tour of their Lagos Headquarters by key partners, and summit participants. The tour of the facility, which was facilitated by Olufemi

“  
**four of the top five reasons banking customers would switch is because of the customer experience**  
 ”



An ideation centre at the hatch, inspired by legendary Steve Jobs



A work station at the hatch

Muraino, Executive Director, Financial Business Unit, was meant to acquaint the partners and Digital Summit participants about the full operations of the company.

According to Mr. Muraino, the “hatch” was set up to host young talents from across the African Continent who could nurse their ideas and innovate creative solutions to the customers’ needs. He revealed that, since its creation, the “hatch” has hosted a Hackathon Summit for technology nerds from Ghana and Nigeria, adding that, “all of the participants in our maiden hackathon have been employed by Inlaks because they brought on board very creative ideas”.

He stated that the facility was not configured along the lines of the regular office setting, but rather provides a relaxed atmosphere to help the “technology geeks who work with Inlaks, to identify issues and solve problems for our clients from all over the world”.

“You can see here that we even have concepts such as the village concept building, and play grounds to help the tech innovators to wind down; it has changing rooms because our tech nerds can stay on for odd hours. It also comes with a sick bay; thereby providing a one-stop shop for our young innovators”, Mr. Muraino added.

#### About Inlaks

Inlaks is a leading system integrator in Sub-Saharan Africa. The company partners with leading OEMs in the technology industry to provide world-class information technology solutions that exceed the needs of its customers. Over the years, Inlaks has built a

reputation as the foremost ICT and Infrastructure Solutions Provider, helping customers effectively seize new market and service opportunities.

With an impressive customer base that includes six Central Banks in West Africa, 18 of the 24 banks in Nigeria and other major customers in the West African region, Inlaks has become the dominant Information Technology Company in Africa.

Inlaks’ customers cut across various segments including Banking, Telecommunication, Oil/Gas, Power, Utilities and the Distribution sectors of the economy. For more information, please visit [www.inlaks.com](http://www.inlaks.com) [www.summit.inlaks.com](http://www.summit.inlaks.com)

ARB Apex Bank chalks another first As part of the 2019 Digital Summit hosted by Inlaks, ARB Apex Bank was awarded the ‘Best Rural Banking Services Provider’ at the well-attended ceremony.

The award is confirmation of the seamless transformation ARB Apex Bank is bringing to the rural banking space in Ghana.

Kojo Mattah, Managing Director of ARB Apex Bank who picked the award on behalf of the Bank said, “We are happy to be recognized at this important international summit for our role in deepening rural financial inclusion in

Ghana”.

He said the award would spur the Bank on further to improve its service delivery to its network of 144 Rural and Community Banks.

CAL Bank, Consolidated Bank, Opportunity International, and the Bank of Ghana were also awarded with various silverwares.

Overall, over 24 awards were won by various financial services industry players from across the African Continent.

#### Editor’s note:

The “hatch” at Inlaks is one of the most innovative idea incubation labs in Africa. With the evolving working space and the desire of millennials to be accommodated in a more flexible working environment, the “hatch” by Inlaks provides the perfect fit for them to test their ideas.

The work environment is cozy and provides the nuanced ambiance for the “young talents who are willing to test the boundaries of crazy but productive ideas”.

Millennials do not want to go to work in three-piece suits and get tied down to a desk in the typical 8 am to 5 pm routine and regimented working environment. Inlaks’ ideas hub is the true ideas laboratory for the millennials.



A relaxing work station at the hatch fitted with a game console, atypical of the traditional working space



L-R: Adewale Babayemi, Technical Head, FBU; Jonathan Shalomi, Head of Financial Business, Technical Operations, Inlaks (Ghana); Olufemi Muraino, Executive Director, FBU; Edna Kimurwa, Country Manager, Kenya; Femi Adeoti, MD, Africa Operations; Yacoba Amuah, Head, Sales and Strategy (Ghana); Emmanuel Orororo, Sales Manager.

# INLAKS bags a double-win at the Temenos MEA Partner Awards

We added to a streak of wins this year 2 more endorsements, at the the just concluded Temenos MEA (Middle East and Africa) Partners Conference and Awards held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE).

The awards, “**Best Implementation Africa**” and “**Temenos Learning Community Most Improved**” was given by our partner organisation, Temenos.



*We dedicate this award to all our cherished clients!*

*Francis Enimil Ashun*

# MAKING EMPLOYEES MORE PRODUCTIVE THROUGH ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT

**T**he success of any organization depends on many factors.

One of such is the people factor. Every organization needs people for its operations. How they are managed, contributes in no small measure to the success of the organization.

Employees are assets that must be developed for the growth and success of the firm. A corporate organization must add value to its people, to motivate them to in turn add value to the organization. To achieve high productivity, organizations must among other things, make employee engagement a priority. Many studies have proven that employee engagement is a very important factor in the success of any corporate entity whether large, small or micro. The higher the percentage of employees engaged, the higher the productivity and the



**Francis Enimil Ashun**  
Manager, Lower Pra Rural Bank

higher the chances of success of the organization.

### **Employee engagement**

Many managers confuse employee engagement with employee happiness or satisfaction. Engagement concerns the emotional commitment or loyalty that an employee has towards their organization. This commitment emanates from how an employee perceives their personal goals as well as how their values align with those of the organization. An engaged employee is one who is enthusiastic and feel fully involved with their job or organization. An engaged employee would make

every effort to contribute to the success of an organization.

### **Should organizations emphasize employee engagement?**

There is every reason for an organization which wants to improve on the productivity of its staff to actively seek to find innovative ways to bring about a well thought through staff engagement policy. It is the responsibility of every manager to ensure that employees are engaged to the highest possible level. Successful corporations are built around fully engaged employees, the ones that take the entity to the next level. Making staff feel engaged, makes them feel they are an active part of the organization and help boost their morale, which when properly harnessed, may increase productivity. An engaged employee would be more likely to provide superior customer service to clients. Engaged employees become champions of the firm's culture and would make the office a fun place to work in. They become great ambassadors of the firm.

Corporate organizations must make the effort to evaluate their employees to identify the needs and wants in order to formulate policies and programmes aimed at putting them at the centre making them feel important and involved.

When employees feel that they come

first in all decisions or policies or programmes of the organizations, they tend to feel belonged and recognized and therefore give off their best. An engaged employee is able to innovate, thereby elevating their organizations to higher productivity levels. Making your employees feel engaged and recognized leads to more successful and profitable businesses.

It is said that Steve Jobs of Apple, the makers of the iconic iPhone, always made his employees feel they were the originators and creators of their products, even though he was heavily involved in their design from concept to realization. He was able to transfer this character traits to even the temporary salespeople.

The book “Make More Money by making your Employees Happy”, quoted in a Jackson Organization study, states that companies that effectively appreciate employee value, enjoy a ratio on equity and assets more than triple that of businesses that do not. Employees want recognition and firms that actively recognize their employees experience low staff turnover. Everyone wants some form of engagement to motivate them to excel at what they do. Without that, they become disillusioned and less committed affecting productivity.

Employee happiness and well-being both at the workplace and outside must be at the centre of all policies and programmes if an organization recognizes its employees as their greatest assets. The work environment must be a place where the employee would be at ease to give off their best. An environment that terrifies or oppresses employees would certainly not produce the best in your staff.

It is no wonder organizations like Apple, Facebook, Google, etc. provide campuses that offer a variety of facilities to enhance the self-esteem of their employees. A Gallup research (2006), found that disengaged employees cost American companies about \$300 billion annually in lost productivity.

#### **Workplace rapport**

A good organizational rapport is good to boost the morale of staff and other



*Employee happiness and well-being both at the workplace and outside must be at the centre of all policies and programmes if an organization recognizes its employees as their greatest assets*

employees. Having a good relationship with management allows employees to work easier and happier. There is an expression that “people don’t quit their jobs; they quit their bosses,”. Feeling part of a team can have major effects on engagement and motivation. It is important to optimize the frequency of communication between colleagues and between employees and senior management. It is also valuable for employers desirous of improving productivity to know how employees feel about the mission, core values, and direction of the company. This helps with engagement and gives clear meaning to why they are there.

There are many employees in organizations that feel disconnected or disengaged from their employers. A disengaged employee would not be satisfied with their job. Enquire from them their organization’s vision and mission statements and some would find it hard to tell you. It would not be that they do not want to know but that the organizational culture is not enabling enough for the staff to feel part of it and so try to detach themselves. The employees are just there for their pay cheques and when they find a better job prospect, jump ship immediately, without any feeling

or sense of disloyalty to their former organization. They are not committed to the organization at all.

### **Making employees feel engaged**

Employers must get all employees engaged or involved in planning and the decision-making process. That way, they would feel they have a vested interest in seeing the project through to success. Employers or managers must communicate the vision of the organization clearly, to enable employees appreciate the direction of organization. Employers must know how their staff feel about the core values and the sense of direction of the organization.

Employers must also put in place a system for getting regular feedback to and from employees. Regular feedbacks keep them in the know, aiding them to quickly adapt to any changes in the direction of the organization. Managers must hold regular meetings to communicate organizational strategies. Information relevant to every level must be released in a timely manner to help dispel rumours. Timing is critical in letting employees know about upcoming changes, in order to reduce uncertainties.

Managers must respect the sensibilities of their staff, by staying clear of words that may hurt people's ego. There is a story told of a CEO of a Ghanaian company who told his staff at a general meeting that he can find one thousand and one reasons why a staff cannot work with his organization and if the board of directors does not accept the reasons, he would tender in his resignation for them to decide between the staff and himself (CEO). It is very demotivating for the CEO to communicate his displeasure to his staff in such manner as it would give an indication to the staff that the CEO does not respect them thereby leading to low morals and despondency.

Goodman and Truss, in the *Journal of Change Management* (2004) stressed the importance of good communication especially in difficult times. Managers must use their judgement, wisdom, and experience to create

a supportive environment. When problems arise, examine the circumstances, understand the context, that is only when you can pass judgement. Some managers rush to take decisions that affect the future of their staff without examining all circumstances surrounding the matter.

Managers must respect and trust their teams and they would get the same in return. If they make a mistake, they must apologize and admit their wrong. This would make their employees relate better to them, and appreciate their honesty.

Good bosses pay attention to the broader picture, and care about both the end products or the services provided and the employees. A good way to show that is to be involved in all the processes of the organization, and pay attention to what is going on.

To keep them more engaged and weaved into the fabric of the organization, managers must consider putting more resources into career development and training.

There are organizations that actively encourage their staff to seek higher qualifications. When staff acquire higher academic or professional qualifications, the knowledge acquired is applied in improving the fortunes of the business. This enhances productivity, if the employees know that they would be recognized for their efforts even if they undertook the study or training privately.

### **Conclusion**

Getting employees engaged for higher productivity is an area of study that is still developing. It must be recognized that every organization should be able to fashion a way to increase the enthusiasm of their employees. With enthusiasm, comes the feeling of belonging leading to higher productivity. The ultimate responsibility of the any manager is to do everything possible to make all fee they belong. This would help them to support the vision and mission of the organization. ■



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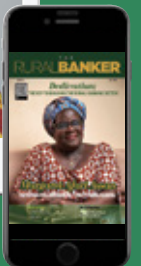
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