



**VOLTA
RIVER
AUTHORITY**

NEWS

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VRA Loses GH¢ 90.2 Million in 2012

The Chairman of the Volta River Authority (VRA), Prof. Akilagpa Sawyerr, recently announced that the Authority recorded a Net Income Loss of GH¢90.2 million for the 2012 financial year, compared to a Net Profit of GH¢82.6 million for 2011.

Presenting the 2012 VRA annual report at the Authority's 4th Annual Stakeholders' meeting, the Board Chairman said the primary cause of the reversal was the doubling of the unit cost of a kilowatt of electricity produced by the VRA, as the Authority was compelled to turn to the use of expensive light crude oil in place of gas.

The situation, he said was worsened by the failure of the PURC to grant the VRA any tariff increase since 2011, in the face of the esca-



Minister of Energy & Petroleum, Mr. Kofi-Buah, VRA Chief Executive, Mr. Kweku Andoh Awotwi, and Board Chairman Prof. Akilagpa Sawyerr

lating cost of production. Thus, although revenue from sales rose from GH¢1,111 million in 2011 to GH¢1,749 million in 2012, he remarked, this was offset by the more than 200% increase in the cost of crude oil required to run the Authority's plants. The unsurprising consequence, he said, was the enormous and persistent liquidity crisis experienced by the Authority that

not only handicapped regular operations, but also stunted VRA's business growth.

On the positive side, however, Mr. Akilagpa Sawyerr touched on a number of generation expansion projects which the Authority undertook as part of efforts to ensure electricity availability and accessibility. In particular were the following: The commissioning of a 132MW

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OUR VISION

**SETTING THE STANDARD
FOR PUBLIC SECTOR
EXCELLENCE IN AFRICA**

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He said although 2012 was a financially challenging year, the Authority registered improvement in thermal operations. He called for a stable gas supply and a regulatory framework to promote sustainable



Present at the meeting were the Deputy Minister of Energy and Petroleum, Mr. John Jinapor; the MP

for Talensi and member of the Parliamentary Select Committee on Mines and Energy, Mr. Robert Morsore; Togbi Gbordzor III, a traditional ruler and VRA Board Member; Management and Staff of VRA, and representatives of the Public Utilities Regulatory Commission (PURC), Ghana Grid Company (GRIDCo), Electricity Company of Ghana (ECG); Energy Commission and the Ministry of Finance. ■

VRA Hydro	VRA Thermal	VRA Solar	IPP Thermal	Bui Hydro
47%	36%	0.1%	12%	5%

A career at VRA is one to be proud of. Opportunities abound in personal development, rewards and aspirations. What is more, you would be challenged to think outside the box while contributing to the growth of an industry leader. Whatever it is you do at VRA, you would know you are contributing to a cause which not only impacts Ghana, but also the West African sub region. All these and an organisation deeply committed to accountability, teamwork, integrity and trustworthiness. Welcome aboard!



According to Pastor Kwasi Asante Krobea, the Akosombo-Anum District Pastor of the Church, the donation formed part of the 125th anniversary celebration of the S.D.A Church in Ghana.

4TH ANNUAL STAKEHOLDERS' MEETING

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

As part of its stakeholder engagement, the Volta River Authority held its 4th Annual Stakeholders' meeting at Cleaver House, Accra. The meeting was to afford the Authority the opportunity to apprise its stakeholders of the Authority's performance for 2012.

Below is the full text of the Board Chairman's statement:

Good Morning, Ladies & Gentlemen. Welcome to VRA's 4th Annual Stakeholders' Meeting.

This is our opportunity as an Authority to share with you, our key stakeholders, a report on our performance in 2012, achievements and challenges, and our perspective and insights for the future. Other government-owned limited liability companies would typically hold an Annual General Meeting; as an Authority, it is appropriate for us to have a stakeholders' meeting.

The year 2012 has been a challenging and demanding economic period. The robust financial and operational results attained by the Authority in 2011 were more than offset by the coincidence of factors, including the following:

- Disruption in supply of gas to fuel VRA's thermal plants, as well as that of Sunon Asogli, resulting from the accidental rupture to the West African Gas Pipeline off the coast of Togo
- Insufficiency of the capacity reserve margin available in Ghana's electricity system, resulting in peri-

odic country-wide load-shedding, that continued into 2013, and

- Tariffs that barely covered operational and maintenance costs, not to speak of investment in generation expansion.

The Authority ended the fiscal year 2011 with a net income loss of GH¢90.2 million, compared to a net profit of GH¢82.6 million in 2011, a swing of over GH¢170 million within twelve months! The primary cause of this reversal in the profit situation was the doubling of the unit cost of a kilowatt of electricity produced by the VRA, as we were compelled to turn to the use of expensive light crude oil, occasionally diesel, in place of gas. Among the practical effects were the destabilisation of the electricity system and the load management programme that persisted for almost a year.

The situation was exacerbated by the failure of the PURC to grant the VRA any tariff increase since 2011, in the face of the escalating cost of electricity production. Thus, though revenue from the sale of electricity rose to GH¢1,749 million from GH¢1,111

million the previous year (an increase of 58%), this was offset by an over 200% increase in the cost of the crude oil required to run our plants. The unsurprising consequence was the enormous and persistent liquidity shortage experienced by the Authority to this day, which we have barely survived by resort to direct government assistance with the purchase of crude oil requirements, but which has stunted business growth for the VRA.

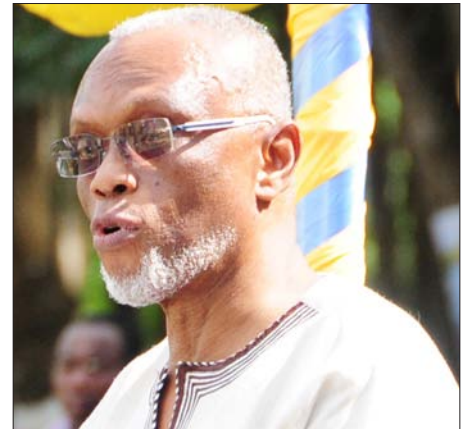
On behalf of the Authority, I am pleased to report that over the period the Government of Ghana paid to the VRA an amount of GH¢361 million to make up for the acknowledged shortfalls in tariffs, effectively a subsidy to domestic consumers in Ghana.

Turning to generation and power supply, the Akosombo and Kpong plants combined performed at 96.8% above our own and the PURC's performance benchmarks; the Takoradi Thermal Plants registered 75.7% plant availability and 57.6% capacity utilisation, while the new Tema

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4TH ANNUAL STAKEHOLDERS' MEETING ← *Contd. from pg.3*

"...our results would continue to be driven in part by factors outside our control, such as the uncertainty in gas supply and volatility in crude oil prices. The Authority's challenge is, therefore, to optimise the internal factors that lie within our control, in particular, plant availability and keeping a tight lid on our administrative overheads."



VRA Board Chairman,
Prof. Akilagpa Sawyerr

Thermal Plants performed satisfactorily. Additionally, the Takoradi steam unit, which had been out of service for a year for repairs, is now back in service and operating at full capacity. Although, the Takoradi Thermal Plant, in particular, did not perform to the PURC benchmark of 85%, the overall 2012 thermal performance establishes the substantial secular improvements we have seen over the last four years.

Clearly, our results would continue to be driven in part by factors outside our control, such as the uncertainty in gas supply and volatility in crude oil prices. The Authority's challenge is, therefore, to optimise the internal factors that lie within our control, in particular, plant availability and keeping a tight lid on our administrative overheads.

Portfolio Growth

You will be glad to hear that while the grievous challenges of 2012 took their due toll on our energies and time, they did not dim our vision, nor did they slow our efforts at transforming the Authority into a stronger, world class organisation in

the medium term. We are satisfied that in 2012 we continued to lay the groundwork for driving productivity and increasing efficiency for the future.

We focused on a number of generation expansion projects designed to ensure electricity availability and accessibility, and expected to add 500MW in new capacity in the short-to-medium term. These include:

- Commissioning, in 2012, of a 132MW (T3) (Magellan) plant at Aboadze;
- Conversion of the 220MW Takoradi International Company (TICO) Thermal Plant into a 330MW Combined Cycle Plant. Financing arrangements have been concluded and construction work started in 2012;
- Development of the first 2MW solar power plant, commissioned in 2013;
- Commencement of feasibility studies for the development of 140MW of hydro dams at Pwalugu and Juale in the Northern Region;
- Commencement of feasibility studies for expanding the 110MW Simple Cycle Tema Thermal Plant (T1TPP) into a 330MW Combined Cycle Plant by PB Power, an interna-

tional engineering services company;

- Expansion of electricity accessibility and availability under the Ghana Energy Development and Access Programme (GEDAP). This project, which is in two parts, involves the development of the Kumasi Second Bulk Supply Point and distribution networks, funded by the African Development Bank (AfDB); and a sub-component of GEDAP, the NEDCo Intensification Project, which seeks to improve electricity accessibility, funded by the International Development Association (IDA) of the World Bank. This project is expected to improve network operation, supply reliability, power quality and safety, increase access to prospective customers, and secure additional revenue.

Takoradi 3 Project Status

The Takoradi 3 (T3) Simple Cycle Plant was partially completed in 2012, and the entire combined cycle project came on stream in early 2013. Unfortunately, there was an explosion in one of the units in June, which led our contractors recommending a complete plant shutdown for preven-

tive and maintenance work. Two of the units are expected to take 3 to 6 months to repair, and two more damaged units, 6 to 9 months.

The Takoradi 3 project was commissioned in 2008, in the wake of the 2006-7 energy crisis. The equipment was procured and purchased directly by the government, and only recently handed over to VRA to manage. In retrospect, a more seamless approach, with VRA playing a more proactive technical role in the specification and acquisition of the equipment, may have avoided some of the current difficulties of dealing with new and unfamiliar technology. Anyhow, we look forward to the independent contractor's report, which would form the basis for how we operate these new machines in the coming years.

Strategy Review

The fragility of our gas supply system has made its resolution the highest priority for us. We have deepened our exploration of other alternatives of gas supply, talking with gas producers in Nigeria, and in Ghana, including ENI, the holders of the Sankofa Non-Associated Gas Field. We have led initiative to explore the possibility of securing additional gas supplies through re-gasified Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG), imported from around the world. If successful, these supplies would complement current sources in Ghana and Nigeria, and go a great way to stabilise the Authority's operations and electricity supply generally in the country.

Commercialisation of Non-Power Generation Functions

Perhaps, the most important milestone achieved in 2012 was the op-



A cross-section of Management and Stakeholders

erationalisation of the Northern Electricity Distribution Company (NEDCo), into a standalone subsidiary, on course to becoming a full-fledged, autonomous, self-sustaining commercial enterprise. This was in recognition of the need to remove the distribution bottlenecks in the sector. In order to attract the necessary resources to minimise the inefficiencies and distribution losses in the sector, and to make it a profitable endeavour it was, and remains, critical for VRA to work with NEDCo – and this we are doing.

We have also continued our efforts to refocus our non-core functions to make them self-financing Strategic Business Units (SBUs), so we could concentrate our efforts on our core functions. Happily, we have witnessed steady improvements in the Authority's non-power areas. Of our operating subsidiaries—Akosombo Hotels Limited (AHL) and Volta Lake Transport Company (VLTC) – the former recorded its second continuous year of profit in eleven years while the latter registered a loss, primarily because of a very large depreciation charge brought about by a

substantial revaluation of its assets. Business plans have been developed for four other areas: Kpong Farms Limited (KFL), the Schools, the Health Services, and the Real Estate Department.

Performance Management: *The Balanced Scorecard*

As previously reported, a new performance management system - the Balanced Scorecard (BSC) - was introduced in 2011 to provide a framework for aligning individual performance with departmental and corporate goals, and for assessing and rewarding performance. Applied in 2012, for the second year in a row, the BSC has become a primary lever in our efforts to create a performance-driven organisation.

Corporate Social Responsibility

The Authority launched a re-formulated and re-focused Community Development Programme (CDP) in 2012. The programme consists of a framework for guiding support for

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The Minister, Board Chairman, Management and some Stakeholders in a group photograph

development of all communities affected by the operations of the Authority, and for improving the existing Community Development Initiative (CDI) Framework, which aims at empowering the communities to take action for development. The thematic focus areas are:

- Water
- Health
- Agriculture

It is hoped that this focusing would yield long-term benefits in the coming years.

The Authority sponsored a number of priority programmes in rural electrification, health, education, water resources, capacity building, culture, community development and democratic governance, and made various donations to governmental and non-governmental organisations. A total of GH¢200, 000 was committed to sponsorships, donations and philanthropy, generally.

The Authority also committed the cedi equivalent of US\$500,000 to the VRA Resettlement Fund, in support of projects for environmental improvement, social welfare, public health, education, electricity, potable water supply and sanitation.

Conclusion

As I have indicated, and as everybody knows, 2012 was a difficult year – precisely as foreshadowed in my report a year ago, even before the West African Gas Pipeline was broken, with all its specific consequences. Unfortunately, many of the issues I highlighted then, in particular the need for a holistic sector-wide effort to address the challenges of the electricity sector remains unaddressed. After the trauma of last year, the need to address these issues has become even more urgent. I fervently hope that the new Authority when estab-

lished, would seize the challenge to provide the necessary leadership and work effectively with the rest of the sector in addressing those and other fundamental, transformative issues.

Speaking for my colleagues on the Authority, I would like to express to Management and staff our pride and gratitude for their efforts in helping the Authority undergo the process of re-inventing itself, right through the trying times of the last twelve months. We are confident this would continue and, thereby, ensure the successful attainment of the Authority's vision of being a world-class organisation in the medium term.

It has been a privilege for us to serve the people of Ghana through service on the Volta River Authority, and we thank the Government for allowing us that opportunity. ■

Akilagpa Sawyerr
CHAIRMAN

Kpong Retrofit Project Begins



Chief Executive of VRA, Mr. Kweku Andoh Awotwi and the Head of Sales, Andritz Hydro, Mr. Michael Haslinger - signing the contract for the Kpong Generating Station retrofit project.

The Volta River Authority (VRA) has signed an agreement with Andritz Hydro of Austria for the retrofitting of the Kpong Generating Station (KGS).

Speaking at the ceremony the Chief Executive of VRA, Mr. Kweku Andoh Awotwi, said the work was expected to reduce the downtime of the machines at KGS owing to the unavailability of parts. He said the retrofit project was designed to replace the old generators and auxiliary parts with modern machines, to enhance efficiency and ensure

prolonged life for the plant.

He thanked officials of Andritz Hydro for accepting to undertake the project and expressed confidence that the project would be completed on time. He was optimistic that cooperation between the two organisations would be maintained, to ensure a successful execution of the project.

The Head of Sales of Andritz Hydro, Mr. Michael Haslinger, pledged the commitment of Andritz to high quality of work.

The Deputy Chief Executive, Engineering & Operations, Mr. Kirk Koffi, recalled that KGS underwent mini retrofits between

1991 and 2011. These, he said, had concentrated on modification of the generators. He was hopeful that this major retrofit would lead to greater efficiency.

The Head of Sales of Andritz Hydro and the Chief Executive of the VRA signed the contract to mark the beginning of the project.

Present at the ceremony were the Deputy Chief Executive (Finance), Ms. Alexandra Totoe, Deputy Chief Executive (Services), Mr. Maxwell E.Y. Odoo, and the Project Manager, West Africa Power Pool (WAPP), Mr. Francis Kyere. ■

Ing. Kirk Koffi Speaks on Kpong Retrofit Project

A couple of months ago the VRA signed a contract with Andritz Hydro of Austria for the retrofitting of the Kpong Generating Station (KGS).

To find out more about the project, the Corporate Communications Unit (CCU) had an up-close chat with the Deputy Chief Executive, Engineering & Operations (E&O), Ing. Kirk Koffi, on the purpose of the project, and what stakeholders could expect during and after the project.

Below are excerpts of the interview:

VRA News (VN): Sometime in June 2013 the VRA signed a contract with Andritz Hydro of Austria for the retrofit of the Kpong Generating Station (KGS). What are the main details of the contract?

Ing. Kirk Koffi (Ing. KK): KGS was started somewhere in 1972 and completed in 1981. It has been running ever since. Over its life in service, we have undertaken a number of initiatives. For a hydro plant, the normal life for some equipment is around 25 years. So as it's done the world over, 25 years down the line we see what we can do to bring the station back to its original condition. I recall that at the Akosombo Generating Station a similar exercise was carried out where after 25 to 30 years we shut down the whole plant and modernised it and that's why Akosombo is what it is today. We were able to increase output and improve efficiency there. It is a similar thing we are doing at KGS. Looking at the benefits we are now getting at Akosombo, we have thought it right to start this project now. We started



Ing. Kirk Koffi, Deputy Chief Executive, Engineering & Operations, VRA

sometime back with an audit of the plant. We went through the process to select a contractor who could do the job. Then we had an international competitive bidding and shortlisted four companies. During the evaluation, Andritz Hydro of Austria was selected. The project is being funded by the AFD (Agence Francaise de Development). Therefore, all the processes went through their hands for approval. As we speak, if we are

able to make an advance payment by September 1, (2013) then the project can start. The start of the project includes mobilisation, which takes nine months, and another eight to nine months to complete work on each machine. It takes nine months to mobilise because these are major jobs involving a lot of engineering and the fabrication of parts. The first machine would go down as soon as the project has started.

VN: What are the details of the contract?

Ing. KK: The idea is to modernise the entire station, particularly the generator, where we have had a few problems with the rotor and the stator. The stator, the stationary part of the generator, is going to be rewound, while the rotor, the rotating part, is going to be replaced completely. Based on our experience of running the plant over the years, these are what we have observed to be our problems.

I used to be the manager of that plant several years ago, so I know it quite well. The generator is going to be completely rewound and the governor is also going to be changed. Bear in mind that the station was

steel and guard beams. This should increase efficiency by a marginal 0.5 per cent.

Prior to that, we have already done some work on the cranes which are to be used for this work. The power crane has been retrofitted and the controls changed. The intake cranes are also being modernised. The idea is to restore the plant to its original condition.

VN: Can you explain why Andritz Hydro was selected to undertake the project?

Ing. KK: Well, when you do a bid and evaluate, you choose the best evaluated price; you also look for the contractor's competence among other factors. Luckily for us, Andritz is the same company that carried out the retrofit of the Akosombo plant. So there would be some similarities in after-sales support, training and equipment. It would interest you to know that even though Andritz

fixed the turbine at Akosombo, the generator, too, was originally manufactured by GE Hydro of Montreal. Andritz has bought that company, so the whole of Akosombo is Andritz. When we have any problem with the generator or the turbine we go to Andritz. And, of course, they gave us the best quotes for this project.

VN: Can you tell us why this project is being undertaken in the first place?

Ing. KK: The practice is that after 20 to 25 years, you modernise your plant; you want to make sure that it is always available and generating. The problem is that if today something is broken down, you only have

to wait for parts from the manufacturers and it takes forever. But when you replace parts ahead, you avoid the breakdown of parts altogether. That is why our hydro stations at Akosombo and Kpong are available 98% of the time and delivering. The standard is 94% but they are always above that.

It would interest you to know that even at the Akosombo plant that was retrofitted in 1992, we are already replacing some parts. The reason is that the moment you are unable to get that high level support from the original equipment manufacturer, it tells you that it is time to change it. The moment you find more modern and more efficient equipment or parts on the market that can easily be supported, you better go for them. Some things which were analogue have now been digitised. The retrofit is also a good way to train people and bring them up, so they are all up to the task of maintaining the facility.

VN: Has KGS undergone any retrofit in times past?

Ing. KK: No. what we did was a technical audit when I was the Plant Manager in 1991. After that we did a mini retrofit. After 10 years of running we did an audit to see how the plant was doing. KGS has a peculiar problem with the concrete. There is a movement of the concrete that has brought about some deformations, which have distorted the stationary part. At present it is very quiet and the rate is low. But I have worked in stations in Canada where the noise is even more pronounced. Because of this we did a re-wind of all the stators. The edge gap between the rotor and the stator should be about

The moment you find more modern and more efficient equipment or parts on the market that can easily be supported, you would better go for them.

completed in 1981, so it is more than 30 years old. A lot of these things cannot be supported by the equipment manufacturers, so we need to make them more modern.

Even though the station is running and we have able men to maintain it, you get to the stage where you cannot guarantee the reliability of the station and that is exactly why we are undertaking this project.

Besides the generator we would work on the transformer. We have bought two step up transformers. The 80-gauge would be modernised and the controls changed. An assessment of the turbines show that we cannot improve efficiency so they would be maintained but we would have to do some modification to the

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8mm but in the case of KGS, it has become oval because of the easing of the stator. There are portions where the edge gap is as high as 10mm, and other portions that are below the minimum edge gap of 4mm. Those, and the water patterns, were some of the problems that called for the mini-retrofit. We don't have surplus generation, and cannot have the luxury of not retrofitting on time, so we always go ahead of our own schedules. We change things well ahead of schedule.

VN: What benefits would the KGS retrofit bring to the power generating system?

Ing. KK: Improvement in reliability and efficiency. What I tell people is that many of the people at the station came when the plant had already been built. By getting them involved in this retrofit, they would get to understand the plant better; they would understand and get to build better capacity for running the plant. As I sit here I can take any decision on KGS, because I worked there for many years. The retrofit would also help us improve those capacities, employ new people and engage them after that.

VN: What are the detailed deadlines for the execution of the project?

Ing. KK: If we are able to make the advance payment on September 1 (2013), then nine months from then the first machine would come down. Normally, we give ourselves eight months for each machine, but it's likely the first machine would take a bit longer, perhaps 9 or 10 months. The other machines may take much less time, about 7 months each. You shut down one machine and start dismantling everything; you throw

the old pieces away and fix new ones. That is the way it works.

VN: So there won't be a shutdown of the whole plant?

Ing. KK: No, just one machine at a time. There are four machines at KGS; you shut one down, work on it, commission it and bring it back on line. And so goes all the other machines. It would take some time. I'm sure by the time they finish, I would be on retirement. But that's the way it goes.

VN: So we are looking at between how many years?

Ing. KK: The project duration is about 41 to 42 months but this includes mobilisation, anyway.

VN: Would there be load management?

Ing. KK: No. One machine at KGS is 40MW installed, but 35MW in actual generation. So the station would manage that.

VN: Who is financing the project and how much is involved?

Ing. KK: The project is being financed by Agence Francaise de Development (AFD), the French financing agency. The estimated cost, is 36 million Euros, US\$2 million and GH¢4 million. Luckily for us, we've engaged a consultant, Hatch, who is helping us manage this project. Hatch used to be called Acres and were our engineers on the Akosombo retrofit project. They were the consultants for the Volta River Project more than 50 years ago and we've dealt with them ever since.

The cost of Hatch's work is about US\$4 million, also to be funded by Agence Francaise de Development.

VN: What would be your concluding words?

Ing. KK: Well, looking at the Authority's recent supply deficit challenges, I think it is appropriate to ensure that our systems are readily available and running while efforts are made to increase generation.

As you may be aware, not long ago we installed our first 2MW solar plant at Navrongo. We hope to add more to it. Furthermore, our wind energy project is taking shape. The mandatory one year wind measure-

Improvement in reliability and efficiency. What I tell people is that many of the people at the station came when the plant had already been built. By getting them involved in this retrofit, they would get to understand the plant better.

ments are on course and expected to be completed soon to pave way for the commencement of the full project.

As Deputy Chief Executive in charge of Engineering & Operations, I look forward to the day when the Authority would have more than enough generation capacity so that the required reserve margin would be observed. This would ensure that we avoid situations similar to those that confronted us not so long ago.

VN: Thank you for your time.

Ing. KK: My pleasure.■

2013 Workshop on Emergency Preparedness & Environmental Management Ends

VRA's annual workshop on Emergency Preparedness and Environmental Management, has ended at Keta.

It was organised for six districts and two municipalities identified as potentially impacted communities in the event of a spill or dam failure at the Akosombo or Kpong Dams.

Beneficiaries of the workshop are the Shai Osudoku and Ada East Districts (Greater Accra Region); Lower Manya Municipality and Asuogyaman District, (Eastern Region); South Tongu, Central Tongu, and North Tongu Districts and the Keta Municipality (Volta Region).

The workshop series, which started in 2011, is in fulfillment of the legal requirement for dam operators, to ensure that stakeholders in identified communities are able to respond appropriately during dam emergencies.

The workshop aims at installing a mechanism for warning and possible evacuation of people living within reach of a potential flood wave, caused by a spillage or dam failure.

The Environmental Management Plan (EMP), approved by the Environmental Protection Agency, also aims at adopting international best practices for dam operators.

This year, Environmental Preparedness Plan (EPP) presentations were facilitated by Planning Officers from the district assemblies, with assistance from the EPP Coordinator, Mr. Kwame Darkwah. The idea was to encourage district officers familiarise with the EPP tools and enhance their understanding and

implementation of the procedure.

Another feature of this year's workshop was the introduction of the "table-top" exercise. This involved a simulation of an emergency, situation and the use of a notification procedure to alert stakeholders and people likely to be affected in an emergency; with the aid of appropriate forms provided in the EPP document. The objective was to reinforce stakeholder participation to enhance their understanding and appreciation of their roles in an emergency.

The simulation exercise engendered considerable interest among the participants.

The Coordinator of the EMP, Mr. Ulysses Ocran Hammond, briefed stakeholders on the objectives of the EMP and outlined various measures taken by the VRA to mitigate the effects of a dam failure. These measures include aquatic weed management, dredging, schistosomiasis control and a number of afforestation programmes. Among other issues highlighted included scholarships for communities within the operational areas of the VRA, as well as projects identified by various communities. He said VRA, was discussing with Safewater Network to undertake the projects. He took the opportunity to inform stakeholders of the membership of the EMP Steering Committee tasked to oversee the implementation of the EMP.

The EMP & EPP team comprised Kwame O.M. Darkwah (EPP Coordinator), Afua Adwubi (Assist.

EPP Coordinator); Ulysses Ocran Hammond (EMP Coordinator), Bennet Dobgey (Supervisor, Dredging Unit).

Rhoda Arthur and Samuel de-Graft-Johnson of the Corporate Communications Unit addressed the concerns of the participants during

The workshop aims at installing a mechanism for warning and possible evacuation of people living within reach of a potential flood wave, caused by a spillage or dam failure.

the workshop. Other participants were traditional rulers, opinion leaders, members of the District Assembly; DISEC members, and the media. ■

Editor's Note:



Mr. Timothy Akyea-Obeng,
Secretary, VRA/PSWU

In our last edition, Mr. Timothy Akyea-Obeng, was inadvertently referred to as the Chairman of the VRA/PSWU. Mr. Akyea-Obeng is in fact the Secretary of the VRA/PSWU. We are sorry for any inconvenience this may have caused.

VRA, Safe Water Network to Provide Safe Drinking Water



The Chief Executive of the Volta River Authority, Mr. Kweku Awotwi, has expressed the commitment of the Authority to improve the quality of life of communities along the Volta Lake with the provision of potable water.

Speaking at a ceremony where an MoU was signed with Safe Water Network (SWN), Mr. Awotwi expressed enthusiasm about the partnership and said the VRA was pleased to develop a framework of partnerships to solve the water problem faced by communities along the Volta Lake.

The Country Director for SWN, Mr. Charles Nimako, expressed the

hope that the partnership would extend further to benefit neighbouring communities.

Present at the ceremony were the Deputy Chief Executive, (Services), Mr. Maxwell Odoom, the Ag. Deputy Chief Executive, Finance, Mr. Richmond Evans Appiah, Ms. Abba Fiadjoe, Director, General Services, Ag. Director, Legal Services Department, Mr. Agban, Mr. Coleman, Mgr. Gen. Maintenance, and representatives of Safe Water Network.

Giving a background to the partnership, Ms. Fiadjoe said as part of the Authority's Corporate Social Responsibility, the VRA had developed a Community Development Programme that aims at identifying ways of controlling bilharzia among

communities along the Volta Lake. The partnership with Safe Water Network was therefore, timely, she noted.

Mr. Awotwi and Mr. Agban, signed for the Authority while Mr. Nimako and Mr. Mark Owusu; Head of Administration and Finance, initialed for Safe Water Network respectively.

Under the MoU, VRA would provide capacity building support to SWN, select communities in need as well as the appropriate water treatment solutions. VRA would also provide 50% match funding from 2013 to 2015, while SWN provides, logistics to monetary, and human resources.■

VRA Adds Value to Lives



Director, Human Resources, Mr. Isaac Aidoo, delivering the Welcome Address

The Volta River Authority (VRA) has as part of its corporate social responsibility, and in line with its Community Development Programme (CDP), awarded scholarships to 60 brilliant but needy students in its operational areas.

The sponsorship programme aims at giving the brilliant students an opportunity to maximise their potential and be able to contribute to national development in the future.

Forty-six (46) of the awards were presented to students in the Southern sector at a programme at Akuse. While other fourteen (14) would be presented to those in northern sector at a later date.

In a speech read on his behalf by the Deputy Volta Regional Minister, Mr. Francis Ganyaglo, the Deputy Minister of Education (Tertiary), Mr. Samuel Okudjeto Ablakwa, commended the VRA for instituting the scholarships. He said education plays a pivotal role in Ghana's development and the Authority's initiative was crucial in driving development in the beneficiary communities.

Mr. Okudjeto Ablakwa, praised the VRA for initiating a development dialogue with leaders of the various communities that would ensure the holistic development of those communities along six thematic areas comprising social, infrastructure, health services, education, environmental sustainability, culture and training.

The Chief Executive of VRA, who was represented by the Director, Human Resources, Mr. Isaac Aidoo, recounted the beginnings of the scholarship scheme and recalled that on its 50th Anniversary the Authority, decided to introduce the scholarship scheme, designated "VRA Golden Jubilee Scholarship Scheme" and tenable at the senior high school, to 50 brilliant but needy students selected from communities impacted by the operations of the VRA.

The scheme, initially a one-off programme terminating after its first cycle, has now been revised. The Chief Executive noted that "to set out our development dialogue in context, in April 2012, we launched the Community Development Initiative framework document to establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationship with communities affected by our operations. The process led to improved dialogue, cooperation and understanding, and increased visibility of the VRA in the communities."

To deepen the relationship he said, VRA launched the re-formulated and re-focused Community Development Programme, consisting of a framework for guiding support for the development of all areas affected by the VRA's operations. One significant outcome of our development dialogue is the development of human resources in our communities through education, he said.

The Chief Executive said the Authority had this year, partnered with Safe Water Network (SWN), a non-governmental organisation, to provide safe and affordable water to several communities along the banks of the Volta River. The project, to be co-funded by the VRA and Safe Water Network, would form the

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VRA Adds Value to Lives ← Contd. from pg.13



Mr. Francis Ganyaglo (sixth from left) and Mr. Isaac Aidoo (fifth from left) flanked by other dignitaries, staff of the VRA, and award recipients



Mr. Francis Ganyaglo delivering the Keynote Address



An award recipient receiving her certificate from the Director, HR

foundation for a cluster of water systems that VRA and Safe Water Network seek to develop over the next three years for 100 communities in the Volta Basin.

He noted that the VRA's funding of this project would cover training and support required to develop the capabilities necessary for the villages to become self-sufficient in managing the water stations. The Authority, he said, was looking forward to deepening and expanding its commitment by awarding scholarships to students, tenable at tertiary institutions.

He congratulated the award winners and urged them to study diligently and make their parents, communities and the VRA proud.

A beneficiary of the scheme, Teye Nukpo Teye noted that but for the Authority's timely intervention he and many others would have lost out on furthering their education and wondered where they would have



A cross-section of the award recipients

ended up. He thanked the VRA for keeping to their tagline of "Adding Value to Lives" and urged his colleague beneficiaries to work harder to ensure that the objective for the implementation of the scheme was sustained. ■

VRA Begins Schistosomiasis Reduction Programme

The Volta River Authority has donated hand-held tools to five Lower Volta communities in the Eastern and Volta Regions as part of efforts to reduce the prevalence of schistosomiasis in the Lower Volta Basin.

The beneficiary communities include: Adome (Small London), in the Asuogyaman District in the Eastern Region, Mafi Atitekpo and Mafi Devime, both in the Central Tongu District, Alikekoe and Dzetorkoe in the South Tongu District, all in the Volta Region.

The donation is part of the Community Shoreline Weed Clearing Initiative instituted by the Public Health Unit of the Environment and Sustainable Development Department to reduce the incidence of the disease in the communities.

Research Officer at the Bilharzia Control Unit, Ms. Elizabeth Kisson, noted that the donation of the tools wheelbarrows, cutlasses, rakes and water boots, were in fulfillment of the Authority's assurances to communities vulnerable to water borne diseases. This, she said, would enable them to clear their water contact points and destroy aquatic plants that serve as a habitat for the bilharzia

snail vectors that cause the disease in the human host.

She explained that the parasites complete their life cycle inside the snails, which release the parasites into the water at certain periods of the day. These parasites enter the

incentives to motivate them to work harder after careful evaluation and analysis of their inputs.

Mrs. Rhoda Arthur, Information/Publicity Officer of the Corporate Communications Unit, assured community members that the VRA



human body through the skin, causing the schistosomiasis infection that makes those infected pass out bloody urine and faeces. She advised the residents to report to the nearest Health Centre any excessive body itching, which is the immediate symptom of the disease.

Ms. Kisson said Community-Based Organisations had been formed that would undertake periodic clearing of aquatic weeds in their fresh water sources. This, she said, would go with reward packages and

was committed to building a sustainable partnership with them. She urged them to continue clearing the weeds in order that their water ways would be clear of all weeds, so that they would be safe against re-infestation after treatment.

The Assemblymen, Community Heads and Opinion Leaders who received the implements on behalf of their communities, expressed appreciation to the VRA for the support.■

DODI Island Comes Alive

Hundreds of settlements and thousands of people who live along the Volta Lake and its tributaries depend largely on this magnificent body of water that flows from the north to the south of the country.

Mainly fishermen, fishmongers and farmers, men and women alike revere this body of water that sustained their ancestors and continues to sustain the present generation.

The country also relies heavily on the river for the generation of hydro-electric power for domestic and industrial use.

Until recently the largest man-made Lake in the world, the Volta Lake attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors every week. Being among the first to generate hydro-electric power and its momentous importance to the country is aptly captured in Professor Atukwei

Okai's poem, "The Bond of 1962: Somersaulting Into Light" which is reproduced on the next page.

Cruising on the Volta Lake

Travelling on the Volta Lake can be an exciting adventure and an awe-inspiring endeavour for first-timers. The lake serves as the cheapest and main means of transporting dry cargo, especially fertilizer, from Akosombo to Yeji and Buiepe in the north and of yam and grains down south.

It also serves as a tranquil hotspot for leisure activities. Akosombo Hotels Limited manages and organises a two-hour cruise from the Maritime Club House at Akosombo to Dodi Island on-board the Dodi Princess. Recently I was privileged to be part of a selection of media on a cruise on-board the Ohemaa LXI.

As one sails on the lake, one can see the Akosombo dam, the Presidential chalets, Dwarf Island, the

tilapia farm and scenic views of the Kwawu Mountains. The beloved Dodi Princess, which can seat up to 400 people, is currently under reconstruction and is expected to be back in service by the December festive period, when a lot of people do take the trip to Dodi Island. A brand new second cruise boat, which can seat 176, is also expected to be procured by December.

Besides the two-hour cruise to Dodi Island, the Maritime Club House offers water sport lovers a host of activities. There are kayaks and speed boats for water sports enthusiasts. Those with aquaphobia, will enjoy the view of the lake and the surrounding mountainous landscape, as well as the fresh breeze as they sip on fresh fruit juice or enjoy some hot-grilled tilapia fresh-caught from the lake.

On arrival at Dodi, one is welcomed by the inhabitants of the island with lively cultural music and

The Bond of 1962: Somersaulting Into Light

And it is awesome!

*Upon the creation of our
beloved land,
The common man commands:
Let there be light!
And there was light!*

And it is awesome.

*And the Eisenhower-Kennedy
turbines,
Like the agitated adrenaline
of destiny,
combine to massage the innocent
water into light!*

And it is awesome.

*At the confluence of concerns
of souls thirsting at Canaan
in Galilee,
He, the young Nazarene,
Questioningly heeding a beloved
mother's appeal-command,
Turned innocent water into
instant ancient wine's sparkling
glee*

*Along the boulevard of blinding
darkness's degrading blight,
we command water*

*and coerce her to stingingly
somersault into light!*

*Of you I dream, O Volta River;
and of your sacred sources
which made the soothsayers
quiver
on remembering that he did not
look much deeper
into the tortured intestines of a
destiny
bound to give birth to the reaper
of a harvest
manufactured by One Ultimate
and Indisputable Giver
of all that is benevolent above
and beneath the face of the
Earth.*

*Of you I dream
O serene and brooding Volta
River!*

*Of you I sing,
Of you O multi-tentacled
Volta Lake,
you who caused the
Timbuktooyan contours of
Songhaian horizon*

*to querulously quake
And furiously scatter asunder
All that which was perilously
fake
And could cause your banks to
Horrendously break*

*Nothing could dissipate your
Spirit mandated to create the
foundations
Of a land destined to be great.*

*Of you I sing,
Of you, O legendary Volta Lake.*

*At the confluence of concerns
of souls thirsting at Canaan in
Galilee, He, the young Nazarene,
questioningly heeding a beloved
mother's appeal-command,
turned innocent water into
instant ancient wine's sparkling
glee;*

*Along the boulevard of blind-
ing darkness's degrading blight,
we command water and coerce
her to stingingly somersault into
light!*

traditional dance; it's truly a lovely experience. A section of the rocky island is inhabited by some 300 people. The other half, where people usually visit, belongs to the VRA. The island hitherto had nothing noteworthy to attract hundreds of visitors who may want to sleep over or spend some money when they visit. That is changing now.

The VRA is creating a park on the unadorned Island. There is now an ostrich park, bush buck park and two large bird cages with assorted, colourful local and foreign birds. The three large ostriches I encoun-

tered were friendly- you should, however, be mindful of their innate protective nature when they feel threatened. For air ostrich can dislodge the human eye with just a peck of its hard-formed beak. More friendly animals are expected to be added within the coming months.

The Volta River, Dodi and its investment potential

The VRA, which owns the Akosombo (Volta) Hotels, the cruise boats and the Maritime Club House and is responsible for all activities

on the Volta Lake, is seeking a new majority shareholder in its subsidiary, Volta Hotels. It is also seeking an investor for its Dodi Island Park project.

The Dodi Island Park Project will have restaurants, accommodation and ancillary facilities that are expected to attract hundreds of visitors every week.

Indeed, the enormous potential of the lake for leisure activities makes it an attractive investment proposition. VRA is the biggest asset owner in the country besides

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DODI Island Comes Alive

← Contd. from pg.17

the Government of Ghana. It owns the lake-front lands along the Volta Lake at Akosombo and other lake-front lands up-stream, together with numerous islands. So prospective investors wouldn't face the challenge of acquiring lake-front lands for commercial leisure development.

Additionally, the potential for water related activities is limitless. There can be practically daily cruise trips, rowing competitions, fishing expeditions, speed boat rides and other water sports that can rake in a fortune.

The Authority has indicated clearly that it welcomes investors willing to partner it to explore the enormous potential of the lake for leisure.

"We must find strategic investors to partner us. We hope in the next few months we'll find a good



Different species of parrots and assorted birds at the aviary at the game park

partner for our hotel and real estate projects. Our thinking is that these will be majority partners who will have an interest and also run the business. VRA will step back, take a minority share, earn our dividends and focus on our core business" Mr. Kweku Andoh Awotwi, Chief Exec-

utive Officer of VRA, says.

The Volta Hotels, Dodi Island and the Volta Lake present a unique investment opportunity for pragmatic investors in the hospitality and service industries. ■



Ostriches enjoying their new environment at the game park

CORPORATE ACCOUNTING SCANDALS

We continue our series on corporate governance focusing on high profile accounting scandals that rocked the business community between 2000 and 2002.

Accounting scandals, or corporate accounting scandals, are political and business scandals associated with the disclosure of misdeeds by trusted executives of large public corporations and private companies. Such misdeeds typically involve complex methods for misusing or misdirecting funds, overstating revenues, understating expenses, overstating the value of corporate assets or underreporting the existence of liabilities, sometimes with the cooperation of officials in other affiliates. Does the auditor come to your mind?

The executive of corporate entities can also accelerate accounting of expected expenses, delay accounting of expected revenue, engage in off balance sheet transactions to make the company's profitability appear temporarily poorer or richer, or simply to promote and report severely conservative (ie. doubtful) estimates of future earnings. More so, top executives sometimes do everything they can to window dress their company's earning forecast.



In public companies, this type of "creative accounting" can amount to fraud and investigations are typically launched by government oversight agencies, such as the Economic and Organised Crime Office (EOCO) and the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of Parliament. Scandals are often only the 'tip of the iceberg'. They represent the visible catastrophic failures, more often having antecedents traced to bad corporate governance. It is worth noting that in some instances abuse can be completely legal or quasi-legal.

Role Played By Employees

Top executives do not cause all accounting scandals. Sometimes managers and employees are pressured to, or willingly, alter financial statements for the personal benefit of individuals in the company. Manage-

rial opportunism plays a large role in these scandals. For example, Managers who would be compensated more for short term results would report inaccurate information, as short-term benefits outweigh long-term ones such as pensions.

Notable Outcomes and Audit Failures

A variety of complex factors created the conditions and the culture in which a series of large corporate frauds occurred between 2000 and 2002. The spectacular, highly publicised frauds at Enron, WorldCom, and Tyco, exposed significant problems with conflicts of interest and incentive compensation practices. The analysis of their complex and contentious root causes contributed to the passage of SOX in 2002 by

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CORPORATE ACCOUNTING SCANDALS ← Contd. from pg.19

President George W. Bush (Jnr).

The Enron scandal was touted as one of the biggest audit failures of all time. The scandal involved utilising loopholes found within the GAAP (General Accepted Accounting Principles).

CEO Jeffrey Skilling had a way of hiding the financial losses of the trading business and other operations of the company; it was called mark-to-market accounting. This is used in the trading of securities, when you determine what the actual value of the security is at the mo-

method, Enron could basically write off any loss without hurting the company's bottom line.

Fraud: What was the scheme? The mark-to-market practice led to schemes that were designed to hide the losses and make the company appear to be more profitable than it really was. In order to cope with the mounting losses, Andrew Fastow, a rising star who was promoted to CFO in 1998, came up with a Machiavellian plan to make the company appear to be in great shape, even though many of its subsidiar-

cised for having a brief meeting only a few times a year that covered lots of material. By January 17, 2002, Enron decided to discontinue its business with Arthur Andersen, their auditor, claiming they had failed in accounting advice and related documents. Arthur Andersen was judged guilty of obstruction of justice for getting rid of many emails and documents that were related to auditing Enron. From this incident, little less than 100,000 employees lost their jobs. The image of Arthur Andersen had been damaged beyond repair, and the company were never able to come back to its full operating capacity.

In July 2002, WorldCom filed for bankruptcy protection, in what was considered the largest corporate insolvency ever at the time.

On a lighter note, the 2002 Nobel Prize in Economics went to the CEOs of those companies involved in the corporate accounting scandals of that year for "adapting the mathematical concept of imaginary numbers for use in the business world".

In 2005, after a scandal on insurance and mutual funds the year before, American International Group (AIG) was investigated for accounting fraud. The company lost over US\$45 billion worth of market capitalisation because of the scandal. Investigations also discovered US\$1 billion of errors in accounting transactions. The New York Attorney General's investigation led to a \$1.6 billion fine for AIG and criminal charges for some of its executives. CEO Maurice R. "Hank" Greenberg was forced to step down. ■

ment: a method that can work well for securities, but can be disastrous for other businesses.

In Enron's case, the company would build an asset, such as a power plant, and immediately claim the projected profit on its books, even though it had not made anything yet. If the revenue from the power plant was less than the projected amount, instead of taking the loss, the company would then transfer these assets to an off-the-books corporation, where the loss would go unreported. This type of accounting created the philosophy that the company did not need profits, and that, by using the mark-to-market

ies were losing money. That scheme was achieved through the use of Special Purpose Entities (SPE). An SPE could be used to hide any assets that were losing money or business ventures that had gone under; this would keep the failed assets off the company's books. In return, the company would issue to the investors of the SPE, shares of Enron's common stock, to compensate them for the losses. This game could not go on forever, however, and by April 2001, many analysts started to question the transparency of Enron's earnings.

For auditing a big company such as Enron, the auditors were criti-

Risk Awareness Process: Establish the Context

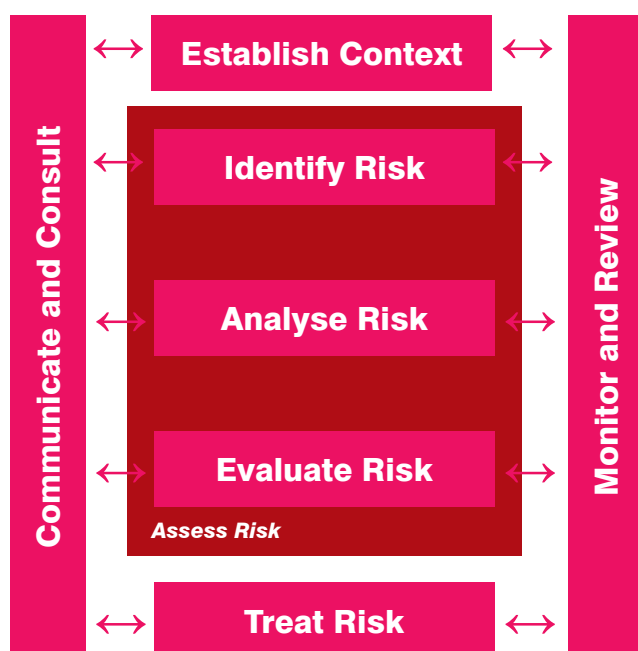


Figure 1 : The Risk Management Process



This article is the third in the risk management awareness series. The article discusses the first stage in the Risk Management process: Establish the Context (Figure 1). The main steps of the Risk Management process, as outlined within the ISO Standard 31000:2009: i.e., Risk Management – Principles and Guidelines are: Establish the Context, Identify Risks, Analyse Risks, Evaluate Risks and Treat Risks.

The second article dealt with Communication and Consultation, that run through each stage of the Risk Management process.

What is Establishing the Context?

Establishing the context is concerned with understanding the background of an organisation and its risks, working that the risk management activities being undertaken, and developing a structure for the risk management tasks to follow.

Why do it?

The objective of this step is to provide a comprehensive appreciation of all the factors that may have an influence on the ability of an organisation

to achieve its intended outcomes.

How to Establish the Context of an Organisation

This process requires the following key steps:

1. Understand the organisation's external context
2. Understand the organisation's internal context
3. Develop the organisation's risk management context.

Refer to fig. 2 next page.

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Figure 2: Establish the Risk Management Context



i) Understand External Context

According to the Standard, the external context defines the external environment in which the organisation operates. It also defines the relationship between the organisation and its external environment.

Understanding the external context is important in ensuring

that stakeholders and their objectives are considered when developing risk management criteria, and that externally generated threats and opportunities are captured during the “risk identification” step.

ii) Understand Internal Context

Understanding the organisation is required before commencing

any risk management activity, at any level. Understanding the internal context is important, because:

- ▶ risk management takes place in the context of the goals and objectives of the organisation.
- ▶ the major risk for most organisations is that they fail to achieve their strategic, business or



project objectives, or are perceived by stakeholders to have failed.

- ▶ organisational objectives, policies, and processes help define the organisation's risk management policy, specific objectives and criteria of a project.

iii) Develop Risk Management Context

After understanding the internal and external context, the next step is to develop the risk management context for your organisation. The Risk Management Standard recommends taking into consideration the following when developing your risk management context: objectives and strategies for risk management; scope, i.e. parts of the organisation where you apply the risk management processes; parameters for risk management activities; resources required; and records to be established.

The outcome of this process is to ensure that the risk management approach adopted is appropriate and proportionate to the situation of the organisation and to the risks affecting the achievement of its objectives.

Risk Management Context application: Risk tolerance

Once the risk management context is understood and established, a key output of the process is risk tolerance. Risk tolerance is defined as an organisation's readiness to bear the risk, after treatments in order to achieve its objectives.

Organisations are prepared to 'tolerate' some risks under certain circumstances in return for specified benefits. Tolerance levels may vary by context and are influenced by the:

- ▶ ability and willingness of the Board and Executive to take and manage risks.
- ▶ size and type of organisation.
- ▶ maturity and sophistication of risk management processes and control environments.
- ▶ financial strength of the organisation and its ability to withstand shocks
- ▶ sector in which the organisation operates.

Risk Management Context application: Risk criteria

Having established its risk tolerance, the organisation can now develop its risk criteria. The risk criteria take into consideration the risk management context. It is the basis on which risks are analysed and evaluated.

Risk criteria express the organisation's values, objectives and resources. Some criteria may be imposed by, or derived from, legal and regulatory requirements and other requirements to which the organisation subscribes.

Risk criteria should be consistent with the organisation's risk management policy, be defined at the beginning of any risk management process and be continually reviewed.

Conclusion

The importance of setting the correct context in which to start identifying business risks cannot be understated. The better and more thorough this is done the better and more thorough the resulting risk analysis would be, as setting the wrong context is in itself a risk. ■

Heart Patient Gets Support



The Volta River Authority, has given financial support to Ms. Grace Adua, a 46 year old heart patient.

According to a medical report cited by the VRA dated March 13, 2013 and signed by Dr. M. Tamatey of the National Cardiothoracic Centre at Korle-Bu, Ms. Adua had two heart defects, which the doctors call Mitral Valve Incompetence (MVI) and Aortic Valve Incompetence (AVI), both of which have had grievous effects on her health.

To correct them, Ms. Adua needed to undergo open-heart surgery estimated to cost GH¢36,000. The amount in-

volves the cost of surgery, anaesthesia and intensive care. The Ghana Heart Foundation is to bear half the cost. A Senior Assistant Registrar of the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA), Mrs. Victoria Kunbour, said when she heard Ms. Adua's

plight more than 10 years ago, she began seeking support for her from a number of institutions.

The patient, a subsistence farmer at Bolgatanga, now lives with her sister in Accra. Mrs. Kunbour was happy to have raised a total of GH¢18,500 so far, and expressed appreciation to the VRA, and other institutions for their support.

Last May VRA made a similar donation towards the open heart surgery of Michael Fynn, a fifteen month-old child from Abuesi in the Shama District of the Western Region. These gestures are part of the Authority's quest to ensure that lives are saved.■



Mrs. Victoria Kunbour receiving a cheque from Staff of the Corporate Communications Unit on behalf of the patient

VRA PSWU Holds Quadrennial Congress

The VRA Chief Executive, Mr. Kweku Andoh Awotwi, has stated that “all over the world the numbers of public sector workers are dwindling, owing to globalisation. The only way workers could overcome that, he said, was for them to constantly upgrade themselves, in order to become relevant.

Mr. Awotwi gave the advice when he addressed the Quadrennial Delegates Conference of the VRA Public Service Workers Union (PSWU) at Akuse. The two-day

“We must all exhibit our core values of Trust, Team work, Accountability, Integrity and Commitment in all that we do”

conference was under the theme: “Achieving Public Power Sector Excellence: The Role of the Union”.



Executives and some invited guests singing the labour anthem

Mr. Awotwi urged the workers to work towards achieving excellence, inspite of the recent challenges of the VRA.

The Chief Executive said the Union today was no more a tool of confusion, but a vibrant tool for partnership and progress. He, therefore, challenged the staff to develop their skills and be able to overcome the challenges of globalisation. He said strengthening the capabilities and

skills of staff was a management priority. Because the Authority required from the emerging energy market dedicated, well trained, disciplined and motivated staff, whose efforts were vital to achieving the corporate objectives and ensuring that VRA survived in a competitive market.

He said, the Authority was designing various strategies to ensure that it provided competitive conditions of service.

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VRA PSWU Holds Quadrennial Congress

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CE in a group photograph with delegates

The Chairperson of the VRA Division of PSWU, Mrs. Esther A. Asafo, said the Union chose the theme: "Achieving Public Power Sector Excellence: The role of the Union" to place emphasis on commitment and service quality. She urged her colleagues to perform their duties with diligence to support the Authority achieve its corporate vision.

The Deputy Secretary-General of the TUC, Dr. Yaw Baah, commended workers of the VRA on their hard work. "You are part of a very important organisation and I wonder where Ghana would have been today if the VRA were not in existence," he said. He advised all public sector workers to pursue excellence to forestall any attempts at selling public sector assets.

The General Secretary of the Public Service Workers' Union (PSWU), Mr. Richard Ampaabeng, advised workers to be united and be able to overcome challenges. "We have been able to survive the attacks and chal-



A Section of the delegates

lenges from within and outside the Union, in the past few years because we are united", he said. He urged the staff not to allow any circumstances to take them out of the Union but resolve to be part of the larger family of workers.

He urged Ghanaians to accept to pay economic tariffs, to enable the VRA to become viable. ■

Accra VRA Ladies Induct New Officers



Old and New Executives of the VRA Ladies Association



New Executives taking the Oath of Office



Mrs. Esther Agboh left, president & Mrs. Gloria Tagoe right, Vice President taking the Oath of Office



The newly sworn-in Executives

The Accra Branch of the Volta River Authority Ladies Association, has held an induction ceremony for newly elected executives.

The executives were sworn into office by Mr. Kwame Amankwah-Twum of the Legal Department.

In a speech, Mrs. Stella Dey, the Outgoing president, gave a brief background of the association and mentioned some of the challenges she faced as president. She expressed hope that the Incoming President would continue building from where she left off.

The National President of the VRA Ladies' Association, Mrs. Tandy Chothia, said the Accra branch was noted for being the most hardwork-

ing and expressed hope that the New Executives would keep up the good work.

Mrs. Esther Agboh expressed gratitude for being elected president and promised to contribute to the work and objectives of the VRA. She suggested that the ladies get to know fellow members' residences, to bridge the communication gap.

Present at the ceremony were Mrs. Ama Ocansey Arthur (the outgoing Financial Controller), Mr. Winfred Amanu (National Chairman of the Senior Staff Association), Mrs Cynthia Ann Aglah, who facilitated the programme, and Mrs. Rachel Debrah (the outgoing Treasurer). ■

Names and Positions of Newly Elected VRA Ladies Executives

NAME	POSITION
Mrs. Esther Agboh	President
Mrs. Gloria Tagoe	Vice-President
Mrs. Monica M. Kudu	Financial Secretary
Mrs. Antoinette Armah	Secretary
Mrs. Veronica Parku	Vice-Secretary
Mrs. Mabel Aboagyewaa Gasu	Organising Secretary
Mrs. Hussein Fahematu	Assistant Organising Secretary
Mrs. Emelia Obani-Addipah	Treasurer

Gayheart Quarshie

Fetes Kids

Mr. Gayheart Tekpor Quarshie, former supervisor of the Akuse Club House, has hosted a party for children of the Christ Is the Answer International School at Akuse to mark the commencement of his retirement.

Mr. Tekpor retired on July 7, 2013. He first joined the Publicity Unit of the VRA at Akosombo and was later reassigned to re-activate and manage the Dobson Club House and the Akosombo swimming pool, after the two facilities had almost collapsed. His ability to revive the fortunes of the facilities necessitated his transfer to Akuse as supervisor, with the responsibility of reviving the Akuse Club House, which was also near collapse.

Mr. Tekpor effectively applied his managerial skills to successfully revive the Club House.

In an interview, he said: “I started with a number of colleagues, some of whom did not live to the retirement age.” He expressed gratitude to God for seeing him through 40 years of pleasant and challenging times at the Authority and explained that the party for the children was his way of expressing his gratitude to God and the community in which he had lived throughout his working life.

He thanked Management, supervisors and colleagues, both past and present, for supporting him during his service and prayed for success for the Authority and the staff.

He encouraged the school children to study hard and aim to become good public servants in the future.

The school children were feted with a sumptuous meal. ■



Mr. Gayheart Quarshie



Pupils enjoy thier meal



Mr. Quarshie, with the pupils

Refurbished VRA Morgue Commissioned



Director, Health Services, Dr. Mrs Acquaaah Arhin, and her team

Work on the refurbished ultra-modern central refrigeration system for the Akosombo Hospital Mortuary has been completed.

The six-week project replaced the old cold room freezers which could not function properly. The job was undertaken by Marko Refrigerating & Air Conditioning Limited.

Speaking at the ceremony, the Director of Health Services, Dr. Mrs. Rebecca Acquaaah-Arhin, noted that the old freezers posed a grave danger to the hospital, including staff of the mortuary, as bodies deposited at the morgue deteriorated at a fast rate. The situation, she said,

led to the closure of the mortuary for about six weeks to allow for the refurbishment.

Dr. Acquaaah-Arhin said, "the refurbishment was crucial to the hospital, since it would mark an end to challenges encountered at the morgue, and increase work efficiency". She said, the morgue would soon undergo a massive expansion to increase its current capacity of 36 cold rooms to 150 body cold rooms.

The Senior Administrative Officer of the Health Services Department, Mr. Ralph Punamane, expressed satisfaction with the completion of the project and expressed the belief that it would help save cost and minimise the work load at the morgue".

Handing over the project, the Managing Director of Marko Refrigeration and Air Conditioning, Mr. Kwabena Amaning-Darko, said his company was able to meet all deadlines without sacrificing quality. He added that the new cold rooms come with multi-cabinet mortuary freezers, each containing thirty six corpses, condensing units, evaporating units, copper wiring, and switches.

The newly installed anti-corrosive condensing units have a total working capacity of 500 horsepower and can operate between -5° and +5°, ensuring that bodies in the freezers were not over-frozen. ■

My First Experience with Thermal Generation

The heat that greeted me was more than enough to have me turn back without achieving the purpose for which I had gone there with my digital camera. But with two lady Technician Engineers right inside the room, attending to some maintenance work, I gathered courage and stood my ground. After all, is it not said that “What women can do, men also can, and even do it better”? Did I hear you say it is the other way round? Well, just permit it to stand as it has been rendered, for very good reasons.

I had been transferred from the Training & Development Division of the Human Resource Department, Akuse, to the Corporate Communications Unit, Aboadze.

I was in my fourth week or so and needed to take some photographs within the plant.

My morale for work at my new location was very high. There was much for me to learn, know about power gen-

eration by hydro and by thermal means. Even before I could be taken through some formal orientation, I could tell the “Dada-ba” of the two systems of power generation, just by comparing the noise made by the machines at the two locations, Akuse and Aboadze.



My personal opinion that thermal power generation requires much closer attention, as done to a “Dada-ba,” was soon confirmed. I was privileged to have attended operating briefings each morning, when daily challenges, observations, repairs and maintenance were discussed. The

team of managers, supervisors and sectional heads discussed the way forward for problems as were brought to the fore. One thing I noticed, as a new team player was the spirit in which all the team members accepted issues as they came up for discussion, without any acrimony.

The issues were seen as purely technical and operational challenges that needed solutions; no attacks were levelled against individuals responsible for particular operational areas that came up for discussion.

I got impressed by this show of camaraderie among the staff and hoped such effective collaborations would be replicated across the organisation.

On this note, I congratulate our gallant men and women who work harmoniously behind the scenes in various capacities and locations, to power economies and raise the living standards of the people of Ghana and West Africa. ■

Maintenance of Akosombo Roads Commences

The Akosombo Town Management has commenced work on the resealing of potholes and the repair of damaged portions of link roads in the Akosombo Township.

The rehabilitation work is expected to be extended to include the renovation of the main lorry station.

Mr. Edward Kwame Ofori, Ag. Town Manager, made this known to VRA News in an exclusive interview at Akosombo.

The interview focused on a wide range of issues, bordering on security, sanitation, infrastructure and the future development of the community. One of the aims of the interview was to give the Town Management the opportunity to react to public allegations that Akosombo was no longer a model township.

Mr. Ofori refuted the allegations and said that his administration was committed to the entire development of Akosombo community.

Addressing the issue on bad roads in the community, he said the Town Management, with support from management had procured 120 barrels of bitumen from Gbe-



Mr. E.K Ofori,
Acting Town Manager, Akosombo

wa, a Company in Tema to start the resealing work.

He admitted to the late start of the project which, he said, was due to a delay in the procurement process and a shortage of bitumen at the suppliers end.

Meanwhile, the rehabilitation work has started and residents have witnessed portions of the roads being resealed by staff of the Town Management, with support from workers of the Engineering Department who are executing the project.

Touching on security, Mr. Ofori noted that the Akosombo Management Committee (AMC) performs local authority functions, including well managed security systems in the community on behalf of the VRA, through its sub-committee on security.

He said the security sub-committee had introduced long and short term measures to help address and improve security and safety of residents and visitors.

“In the short to medium term, we have formed a taskforce to patrol the town, especially on Sundays and week days; we provide fuel to this taskforce to perform its patrol duties. We have constituted the Akosombo Volunteer Corps (AVC) to beef up security”, Mr. Ofori said.

The Ag. Town Manager also said although a football team has been given permission to use Akosombo as its base, the spate of accusations of theft against footballers was worrying, hence the need to beef up security. He said as part of the security measures, the security sub-committee met with the football administrators, who had agreed that the profiles of their footballers, together with their photographs, finger prints and other security details be taken by the District Police Crime Office.

He said the Senior Staff Association was discussing with the Town Management on the engagement of the services of a private security firm as a long term measure to improve

Contd. on pg.34 →

THE VALUE OF HARD WORK

The Akans have a proverb which says “Adwumaden nkum Nipa,” which translates as, “Hard work breaks no bones”. There is also the adage, “There is dignity in labour.” These expressions have impacted on the lives of people at different times. However, between October 2012 and August 2013, these words assumed a new meaning in my life.

In October 2012, I was posted to the Volta River Authority for National Service, and assigned to the Corporate Communications Unit. My first day at work was intriguing. Interacting with several pleasant people gave me the impression that life in VRA was going to be one great pleasant experience. Little did I know that all those people were looking for the outstanding qualities of hard work and excellence.

One incident that brought out those qualities in me were how my supervisor “told me off” for not being able to deliver as expected, on an assignment, “You don’t want to learn; see the premium you have placed on yourself,” were her words I felt so bad that I cried for close to 30 mins. From then, I thought life, as I had presumed, was not what it seemed. I still remember that day as though it was yesterday.

My bitter experience with the supervisor compelled me to quickly improve upon my performance by applying the principle of excellence taught me by another super-



visor. He has advised me to always strive to achieve perfection. “One may feel the pain of hard work only when the fruits of one’s labour are not recognised or appreciated.” He noted that discipline, determination and dedication promote excellence.

I have now created a world of my own in which I outline my tasks, keep to schedules and deadlines and ensure I am effective and efficient in the office. I have felt great and on top in the world ever since my supervisor started commending me on my new sense of purpose and direction. I have come to appreciate that hard work inures to a sense of ownership, confidence, and of belonging. This conscious effort has, indeed, enhanced my perception of perfection.

My experience with the Corporate Communications Unit between October 2012 and August 2013 was most challenging, and very educative. I can confidently say that I now have a great asset, which is the ability to strive hard for excellence. ■

BLESSED INTERNSHIP

"Internships have become the new entry level," says Lou Gagliini, Associate Director for Employer Relations and Recruiting at Boston College Career Centre. "Employers like to know you can hit the ground running." And that is exactly what my 8-week internship at the Corporate Communications Unit (CCU) of VRA has given me preparation for a career in Corporate Communications.

I have always wanted to be in the field of communications, so although my first degree is in Physics, I studied communications at the graduate level and this afforded me the opportunity to do a mandatory 8-week internship (part of my conditions for graduating) in one of the best public institutions in Ghana - VRA.

I consider VRA to be one of the best public institutions in Ghana, because just as their corporate vision says, "Setting the Standard in Public Sector Excellence in Africa", the Authority is all about public sector excellence. How many public sector organisations in Ghana continually sponsor their staff for training and I mean con-



stant training? How many public sector organisations and even private organisations, in Ghana have an e-library that subscribes to all the major academic journals in the world (please don't mention the Universities)? How many public sector organisations run an almost paperless system? And, finally, how many public sector organisations in Ghana have a computerised employee monitoring system such as the Balance Score Card (BSC)? While the internship was unpaid, the experience was priceless. I met many great people and

many others, who, I am sure, are going to be life-long friends.

Most often, I felt like an employee of the company, not just an intern. I was treated with respect and given real responsibilities, and staff at the CCU frequently reached out to me with advice and friendship.

The 8-week internship at the VRA has been a great learning experience and, indeed one of constant learning. Many of the theories I learnt at school have now come to life - they have been made practical. ■

HUMOUR BREAK



Source: instanthurmour.com

Maintenance of Akosombo Roads Commences

← Contd. from pg.31

security in Akosombo. Moreover, he said, staff are being given tips to make them security conscious.

Mr. Ofori said the Town Management had gone far in its bid to invite estate developers to help reduce the housing deficit in the town. "We really need the support of real estate developers and investors to tackle the accommodation deficit in the town."

Mr. Ofori said the Authority was in the process of getting the Real Estate Department to operate as a non-core entity. "There is, therefore the need to finalise that commercialisation process before private developers could come in." Mr Ofori explained.

He suggested that in the meantime developers who want to partner the VRA in its development agenda could channel their resources into development of adjoining commu-

nities near Akosombo and the waterfront areas of the Volta Lake, until plans to privatise the department are completed.

On sanitation, Mr. Ofori said the Akosombo Management Committee (AMC) has been collecting refuse in the township once a week, to ensure proper maintenance of sanitation and to forestall the outbreak of diseases.

He asked the general public to maintain a high level of cleanliness and ensure proper sanitation management in their homes, so that they could restore its description as the cleanest Community at both regional and national levels.

Akosombo was adjudged on two occasions as the Cleanest Town in the Eastern Region in 1997 and 1998 by the Ghana Tourist Board. The Akosombo township, covering a land area of about 15.1km², was

established in the early 1960s to provide residential accommodation for local and expatriate staff who constructed the Akosombo hydroelectric dam.

The population of Akosombo at the time was about 600. Now it stands at about 19,600.

In 1963, the AMC was constituted to perform local council functions; with the advent of the District Assembly concept in 1989, an Executive Instrument EI 42, was promulgated to champion the VRA's local authority role in managing the Akosombo Township.

This gave the AMC whose membership is constituted every four years, the mandate to perform 87 non-political functions, as stipulated in EI 42. ■

New Foreign Service Officers Visit Aboadze

A delegation of new Foreign Service Officers on Saturday, July 27, 2013 paid a day's working visit to the Aboadze Thermal Power Plant.

Speaking on behalf of the delegation, Mr. Marcel Domayeley said the purpose of their visit was to familiarise themselves with the operations of the plant and to see



The delegates in a group photograph with the Plant Manager, Ing. Alfred D. Sackeyfio.

Contd. on pg.38→

Youth Entrepreneurship Forum For Akosombo Youth

Youth Entrepreneurship Forum (YEF), a non-profit organisation, has held a five-day forum for the youth in the Akosombo Township, on creating and sustaining self employment.

The YEF- an initiative by Mr. Willis Ampiaaw a tutor at the Akosombo International School, aims at addressing graduate unemployment and to position the next generation of Ghanaian youth who want to venture into and succeed in the private sector.

Opening the forum a former Director, VRA Health Services, Dr. John Nkrumah-Mills, told participants and the youth in general to make use of the numerous opportunities readily available to them today. He noted that the youth have several opportunities to turn their career objectives around to improve their living standard.

Mr. Willis Ampiaaw remarked that the idea of youth entrepreneurship was borne out of his conviction that entrepreneurial skills should be the core of the country's educational system, so as to give real meaning to the assertion that the private sector should be the Ghanaian economy's engine of growth. He said, "the sale of public corporations to private entities



Participants of Youth Entrepreneurship Forum

had worsened the fortunes of the country as population continues to increase and as many youth look to the public sector for employment."

The initiative, he said, was to use the forum to enlighten the participants on the need for entrepreneurship and to expose them to long-term self-employment opportunities, while providing hands-on demonstrations and skills for prospective entrepreneurs.

Speakers at the function demonstrated expertise in their own fields. Among the topics treated were: The Challenges of Unemployment and the Opportunities for Young Graduates; Entrepreneurship: Foundational Knowledge and Skills; What One Needs to Know to Start a Business in Ghana Today; Financing Your Business: The Options Available;

and How to Discover Your Business Potentials and Identifying Business Opportunities.

The speakers for the occasion included; Mr. Anthony Blay, Director, Volta River Estates Limited; (VREL), Mr. Ebenezer Kojo Abakah, Teacher, Akosombo International School; Mr. Clement Akyeampong, a Procurement Analyst, Volta River Authority (VRA); and Ing. Mrs. Sophia Abena Tijani, Senior Electrical Engineer, VRA. Others were: Mr. Henry Osborn Quarshie, a Computer Forensic Expert and Lecturer, Regent University College; Dr. Charles Sedem Este, Suhum District Director, Procurement Management and Internationally-funded Projects, Ministry of Food and Agriculture; and the Very Rev. Amos Justice Po-

Contd. on pg.38→

Welcome to **AKUSE**



Refurbished Colonial Bungalow



"The once say your last prayer" dreaded Akuse Prison

When it comes to tourism, Akuse obviously plays second fiddle to Akosombo. The reason may not be far fetched - the historical nature of the Akosombo Dam which, contains the largest man-made lake in the world, and which can be seen even from outer space, has made it more attractive to visit Akosombo.

But, the truth is that Akuse has more interesting historical sites than Akosombo, even if they currently remain undeveloped and unrecognised. Right from the Akuse Junction on the Tema – Akosombo road through to Asutuare, there are delightful places that can compete with any other known tourist sites in the country.

Krobo Mountains

Did you know that the Krobo Mountains, which serve as a place of pilgrimage for the Krobo people during their festivals, have a male face and a female face? Do you know what they look like? On your

way from the Akuse junction just look at the mountains on your right and see whether you can identify the faces.

Alexandre Dumas

Did you know that the grandson of Alexandre Dumas, who wrote, "The Three Musketeers," once lived at Akuse? Did you know that he was in the textile trade and that the cloth, 'dumas,' was named after him?

Colonial Bungalow

Did you know that Dr. Kofi Abrefa Busia, former Prime Minister of Ghana, was a District Commissioner at Akuse during the colonial period and that his bungalow still stands solidly?

Prison Mosquitoes

The Akuse Prison became notorious and most feared because of the giant mosquitoes from there. If you were sent to Akuse Prison, then you might as well say your last prayer. I once saw one of this special breed of mosquitoes and, I

swear, it was huge, with long, dotted and hairy legs! This type has largely disappeared because of the decrease in rice farming in the area. But if you are lucky you would see and capture one for a souvenir.

Good old days

For those who do not know, Akuse used to be the commercial hub of the district and beyond more than 100 years ago. The Senchi Ferry Crossing and the Amedeka Landing Sites made Akuse famous as stop-over town for entry into the Volta Region. However, with the construction of the Adomi Bridge in 1956, Akuse lost its vintage relevance to Kpong, and Senchi lost its glorious position to Atimpoku. But relics of the good old days still exist and can be seen at Akuse. You only have to visit Akuse to be historically born again.

Kpong Dam

The Kpong Dam at Akuse has an artificial dyke (unlike the Ako-

Contd. on pg.38 →

I am Checking My Fingers!

Some people are easily forgotten as soon as they retire or leave the service of the Authority. But this man would be forever remembered for his quotable quotes, which have been dutifully compiled by some close friends and associates.

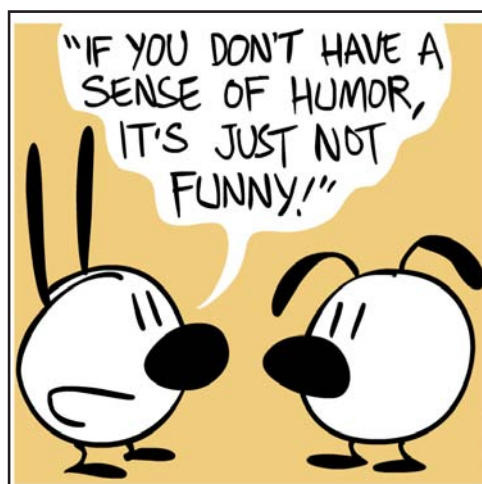
1. While most staff would only show a casual interest in the FIGURES on their pay slips – after all, it is the lodgement at the bank that matters- he was found scrutinising his pay slip one day. ‘I am checking my FINGERS, he explained.

2. He had made it abundantly clear that he was not a NATIVE of the town. So why were people still asking him whether he was?. ‘I am not a NEGATIVE of this town’, he insisted.

3. He had been working very hard and was liked by everybody. Then why would the people SQUEEZE their faces when he asked for some items. ‘When they saw me they EXCUSED their faces,’ he lamented.

4. He did not want to be disturbed especially when he was EXPECTING an important call. Yet some people bothered him with petty talk. ‘Please, I am RESPECTING a call,’ he warned.

5. He had come to appreciate pieces of advice from his friends and colleagues,



to use his own DISCRETION when faced with major challenges. ‘I use my own DISTINCTION,’ he announced.

6. He was busy putting finishing touches to his building project, in anticipation of a peaceful retirement. His magnificent building had special features such as TERRAZZO. ‘I have a TERRANO house,’ he revealed.

7. His retirement plan did not involve going to school or college; he would stay within the COVERAGE area, so that he could easily get in contact with his friends. But if you made a call to him and he did not respond then it would not be intentional. ‘I would be out of the COLLEGE area,’ he explained.

8. It is very ANNOYING when people say things about you that you have not done. What do you say, brother? ‘Yes, it is very, very ‘ANNOINTING’, he agreed.

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS▶

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- ◆ Mavis Yayra Gana - National Service Person, Corporate Communications Unit

Entrepreneurship Forum For Akosombo Youth

← Contd. from pg.35

bee; a Superintendent Minister of the Methodist Church.

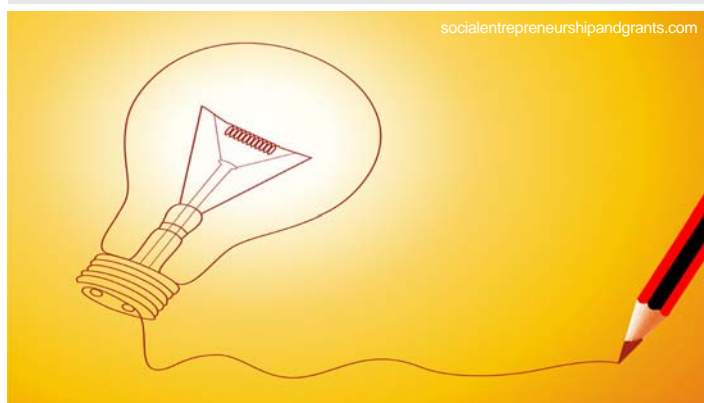
All the 73 participants, including the seven facilitators were presented with certificates of participation endorsed by the Chief Executive of VRA. The programme was also supported by the VRA.■

Welcome to AKUSE ← Contd. from pg.36

sombo Dam which has a natural dyke) which gives an unhindered view of the head pond all the way to Atimpoku. Along its borders are dotted some of the most romantic holiday resorts, including the Sajuna Recreational Centre and the wooded VRA Executive chalets on the eastern bank of the dam. They represent the modern face of the town.

VRA Club House, Akuse

The VRA Club House Complex at Akuse, which has a tennis court, a badminton court, a swimming pool, a football field, a conference room facility, inner and outside bars and a first class motel, added to the serene and botanical environment, puts one in the perfect mood for relaxation away from the city.■



New Foreign Service Officers Visit Aboadze ← Contd. from pg.34

how best they could sell to foreign investors, Ghana's need for more independent power producers.

Briefing the delegation, the Plant Manager of the Aboadze Thermal Plant, Ing. Alfred D. Sackeyfio, explained to them the processes involved in thermal power generation, challenges confronting the Authority, as well as the VRA's long term projec-

tions for containing the nation's power supply needs.

Mr. Sackeyfio told the group it was important to have a more effective means of collaboration among the agencies within the power sector, and to educate users of electricity and the public at large on energy conservation to ensure smooth operations.

The delegation wondered why Ghana has not

considered nuclear energy as an option, since nuclear power was a safe option for Ghana.

Accompanying the delegation were personnel from the Western Regional Coordinating Council, led by the Planning Officer, Mr. Samuel Amihere. The group was grateful for the warm reception. ■

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT CANCER

PART TWO

Spotting the signs of Cancer:

In its early stages, cancer may have no symptoms, but eventually a malignant tumour would grow large enough to be detected.

As it continues to grow, it may press on nerves and produce pain, penetrate blood vessels and cause bleeding, or interfere with the function of a body organ or system.

Notice the stability of your weight. Persistent weight loss may occur along with any type of cancer. Unintentional loss of weight can reach up to a drop of ten pounds or more and may start at the onset of the disease

Observe how often you feel tired. Extreme exhaustion or constant feeling of fatigue is a typical sign of cancer. It may start during the early stage of the disease.

Monitor how frequently you feel pain. Pain can be an early indication of cancer such as in cases of bone or testicular cancer. Pain can also be a constant companion of cancer, especially on more progressed or advanced cases.

A headache that is far more severe than the usual, lasts for days, and fails to improve with medication, can be a sign of cancer. Constant pain in the back and pelvic area are common among patients with ovarian cancer.

Take note of some changes in your stools and bowel habits. The consistency, calibre, and appearance of your stool may come out

different than normal. Stools may appear bloody or dark and are as thin as pencils such as in cases of colon and rectal cancer..

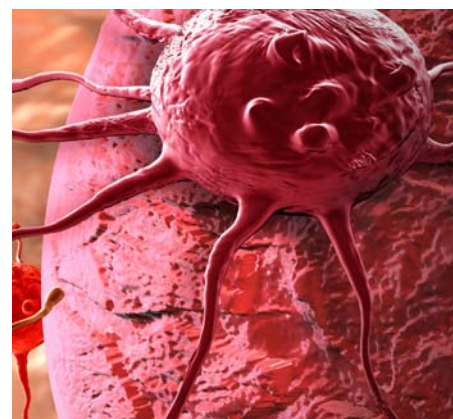
Try to observe if you had undergone changes in bladder function. Cancer can cause urinary problems that may include pain during urination, blood in the urine, and changes in the urine flow.

Keep an eye for non-healing sores around your body. Bleeding of the skin is common among skin cancers, which may appear like non-healing sores. Sores that do not heal around the testicles or vagina may possibly be a sign of cancer.

Palpate the surfaces of your body for some existing lumps or swollen lymph nodes. Lumps are often harmless but for those that do not go away and cause severe pain as you touch them, may be related to cancer.

Keep an eye on unusual discharge of blood in your system. Abnormal bleeding may occur during the early or later stage of cancer. Coughing of blood or blood in the phlegm may indicate cancer of the lungs. An unusual vaginal discharge may be a sign of cancer in the uterus or cervix.

Breast cancer can show signs of an abnormal discharge of blood from the nipple. A bloody or dark stool may be indicative of colon or rectal cancer; and blood in the urine (hematuria) may be a sign of bladder or kidney cancer.



Observe if you have frequent indigestion or if you find it difficult to swallow. Both of these symptoms may be due to other causes, but they can also be a sign of an existing cancer.

Check with your doctor if you experience persistent cough and hoarseness. Constant coughing that lasts for more than a month along with blood expectorations may be a sign of lung cancer.

Cancer Prevention

Making some simple changes to your lifestyle can significantly reduce your risk of developing cancer.

- ◆ Healthy lifestyle
- ◆ Exercise and proper breathing
- ◆ Balanced diet
- ◆ Complete rest and sleep
- ◆ Water (8 to 10 glasses daily)
- ◆ Eating on an empty stomach
- ◆ Avoid being overweight or underweight, and limit weight gain during adulthood to less than 11 pounds

Preventing Cancer through Diet

TYPE	DECREASED RISK	INCREASED RISK
Lung	Vegetables, fruits	Smoking, some occupations
Breast	Vegetables, fruits	Obesity, alcohol
Colon/Rectum	Vegetables, physical activity	Meat, alcohol, smoking
Prostate	Vegetables	Meat or meat fat; dairy fat
Bladder	Vegetables, fruits	Smoking, coffee
Cervix	Vegetables, fruits	Smoking
Liver	Vegetables	Alcohol, contaminated food
Stomach	Vegetables, fruits, food refrigeration	Salt, salted food
Oesophagus	Vegetables, fruits	Deficient diet, smoking, alcohol
Mouth/Throat	Vegetables, physical activity	Salted fish, alcohol, smoking

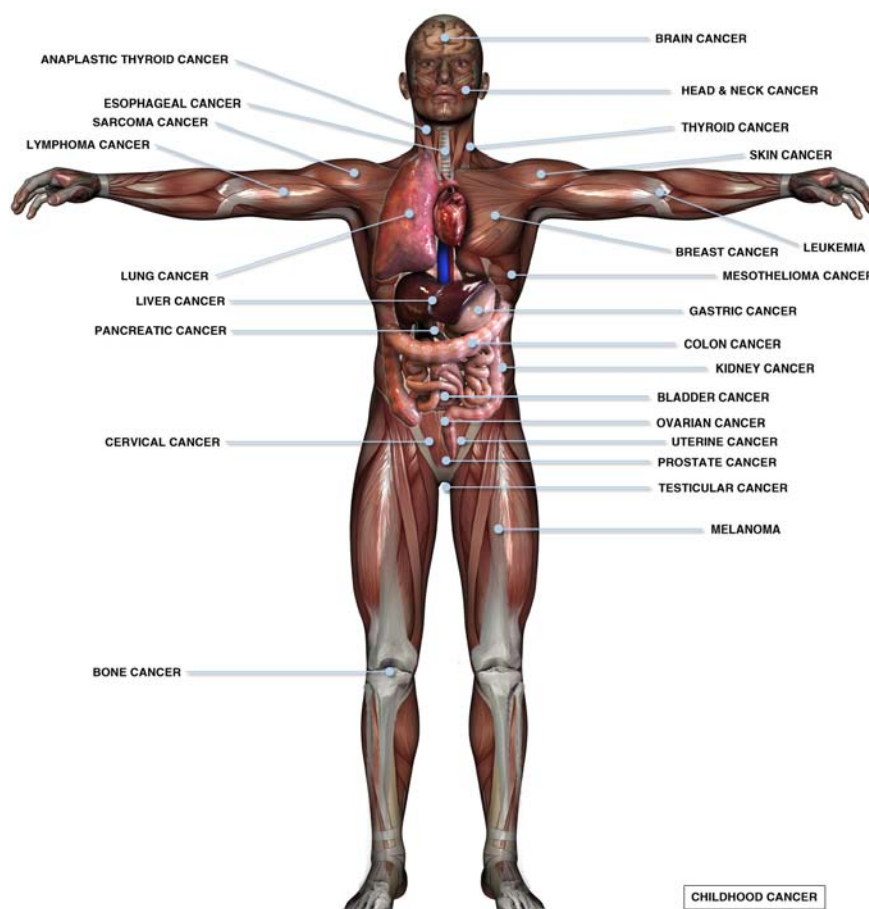
Preventing Cancer through Lifestyle

TYPE	DECREASED RISK	INCREASED RISK
Lung	Consume at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables	Tobacco use, some occupations
Breast	Engage in physical activity for at least 4 hours per week, consume lots of fruits and vegetables	Obesity and weight gain, alcohol consumption, hormone replacement therapy
Colon/Rectum	Engage in regular, moderate physical activity, consume lots of fruit and vegetables	High intake of red meat, smoking, alcohol consumption, salted food
Prostate	Eat at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables daily	High intake of red meat and high-fat dairy products
Stomach	Eat at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables daily, refrigerate food	Salted foods, helicobacter pylori bacteria
Mouth/Throat	Eat at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables daily	Tobacco use, obesity, alcohol consumption, salted foods



Additional tips from some Cancer researchers:

- ◆ If you don't get much exercise at work, take a 1 hour brisk walk or similar exercise daily, and exercise vigorously for at least 1 hour a week
- ◆ Eat 8 or more servings of cereals and grains (such as rice, corn, breads and pasta); legumes (such as peas); roots (such as beets, radishes and carrots); tubers (such as potatoes); plantains (including bananas)
- ◆ Limit consumption of refined sugar.
- ◆ Limit alcoholic drinks to less than two a day for men and 1 a day for women.
- ◆ Limit intake of red meat to less than 3 ounces a day, if at all.
- ◆ Limit consumption of salted foods and the use of cooking and table salt. Use herbs and spices to season foods.



Source: NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR CANCER RESEARCH (NFCR), www.nfcr.org

Cancer treatment

Each specific type of cancer has its own set of treatment methods.

However, many cases of cancer are treated using chemotherapy (powerful cancer-killing medication) and radiotherapy (the controlled use of high-energy X-ray). Surgery is also sometimes carried out to remove cancerous tissue.

Occurrence of Cancer in Different Groups (Epidemiology)

The prevalence of cancer in different regions of the world varies, depending on the type of cancer occurring in that particular region. Epidemiological studies suggest that breast cancer and prostate cancer are common in the developed countries of the world, whereas cervical, and stomach cancers oc-

cur more frequently in developing countries. Lung seem to have high incidence in both developed and developing countries.

The differences in the prevalence of cancer in different regions of the world can be explained through heredity, medical practices, lifestyle changes and environmental exposures, like different diets, tobacco and pesticides. Studies suggest that the incidence of colon cancer is seen more in people who are obese.

Studies suggest that men are more prone to develop colorectal cancer than women. Obesity increases the prevalence of breast cancer in postmenopausal women by 30 to 50%. Other kinds of cancer related to obesity include endometrial, pancreatic, kidney, liver cancer, gall bladder, etc.

Studies from developed countries show that cancer is exceeding cardiovascular diseases and has become a major cause of death, compared to underdeveloped countries where infectious diseases is the major cause of death. ■

Variations in Rates: Rates have large variations among populations

444.6 Per 100,000 African Americans

402.1 Per 100,000 Whites

272.4 Per 100,000 Hispanics

279.3 Per 100,000 Asian Pacific Islanders

152.8 Per 100,000 Native Americans.

EAT RIGHT; KEEP FIT; LIVE HEALTHY!

Dr. Daniel Mensah, consulting dietician at the VRA Clinic, Accra, has said that 90% of chronic non-communicable diseases are as a result of lifestyle choices made earlier in life.

He, therefore, advises young people to make healthy food and lifestyle choices now in order to remain healthy in the future.

He said this at a presentation for staff of the Corporate Communications Unit and Legal Services Department.

Dr. Mensah enumerated the benefits of exercise, and said a 30-minute workout keeps the body burning fat for 24 hours. He advised staff to exercise at least one hundred and fifty hours a week in order to stay healthy and live longer.

He said people eat primarily for nutrition and energy. He defined food as anything that nourishes the body,

sustains life and maintains a healthy body.

A nutritious diet, he said, must be calorie controlled, balanced, adequate, have variety, eaten in moderation and in the proper pattern. Touching on each of these, Dr. Mensah said that a balanced diet should have 50-60% carbohydrates, 10-15% proteins (20% for children) and 25-30% fats and oils. Calorie control implies eating according to the energy one expends, while eating in moderation involves taking in small quantities of salt, sugar, fats and oils and alcohol.

The dietician advised that meals should be eaten at consistent times and at uniform frequencies. He recommended that breakfast should be eaten between 6 and 8am, lunch 12 and 2pm and supper before 6:30pm. He identified skipping breakfast or eating it late, eating less than three regular meals daily, eating supper late at night and eating meals at irregular times as poor eating patterns that must be done away with. Starvation or frequent skipping of meals, he warned, could lead to high blood cholesterol, weight gain, and nutrient deficiencies, among others. He also advised that people should avoid late night eating and eat to at least three hours before bedtime.

Dr. Mensah also warned that excessive intake of salt can cause hypertension and advised that salt should be taken sparingly. He added; “Natural spices, should be used in lieu of arti-



ficial spices which are high in monosodium glutamate and which, like salt, can cause hypertension when eaten in excess.”

Alcohol, the consulting dietician said decreases the absorption of calcium from the intestines and causes deficiencies in Vitamin D and magnesium - both of which are important to bone health. Excessive intake of alcohol, he said, can also cause hypertension, increase the risk of cancers (mouth, throat, esophagus, liver, colon, and breast) and liver diseases.

Giving healthy diet tit bits, Dr. Mensah advised the following:

- Buy lean meat instead of fatty cuts.
- Eat whole meal cereals
- Eat plenty vegetables of all colours
- Eat fish more often than meat
- Use 1 to 2 dessertspoonfulls of evaporated milk or one dessert spoonfull cream milk powder.
- Do not add salt to prepared foods; it would help remove the salt shaker from the table!
- Use natural seasonings and spices rather than artificial ones (e.g., garlic, ginger, onions, herbs) to season foods instead of salt.
- Replace canned, frozen and other processed foods with fresh fruits and vegetables. ■



RETIRED STAFF |

NAME	DESIGNATION	DATE OF RETIREMENT
Mr. Doku, Stephen Kwakye	Director, Special Engineering Projects, Accra	July 13, 2013
Mr. Otoo, Isaac Nee Commey-Tettyey	Manager, Corporate Administration, General Services, Accra	August 21, 2013
Mr. Ayisi, Kwame Obuobi	Manager, Management Accounting, Planning and Business Development Department, Accra	July 11, 2013
Mrs. Addo, Martina Ayikai,	Manager, Corporate Planning, Planning and Business Development, Accra	September 15, 2013
Mr. Dokyi, George Ampaw Kwadwo	Senior Steward, Real Estate and Security Department, Accra	July 01, 2013
Mr. Asante-Boateng, Alexander	Fire Supervisor, Projects and Systems Monitoring Department, Tema.	July 05, 2013
Ms. Ashie, Sarah	Senior Community Health Nurse, Health Services Department, Akosombo	July 06, 2013
Mr. Yiriferee, Anthony Anderson Abawe	Senior Night Watchman, Real Estate and Security Department, Accra	July 11, 2013
Mr. Kaba, James	Accounting Assistant Grade 1, NEDCo, Bolgatanga	July 21, 2013
Mr. Abuu, Dramani	Senior Maintenance Mechanic, Grade 1, NEDCo, Sunyani	August 02, 2013
Mr. Tekpor, Gayheart Quarshie	Assistant Grade 1, Real Estate and Security Department, Akuse	August 07, 2013
Mr. Yeboah, Joseph	Accounting Assistant Grade 1, NEDCo, Techiman	August 08, 2013
Mr. Ahiavey, Francis Sodji	Senior Word Processing Operator Grade 1, Real Estate and Security Department	August 20, 2013
Mr. Tamatey, John Narh	Principal Driver, Hydro Generation Department, Akosombo	August 23, 2013
Mr. Anim, Samuel Danso,	Supervising Technical Officer, Engineering Services Department, Akuse.	August 26, 2013
Mr. Dzidodo, Samuel Yaw	Head Washerman, Health Services Department, Akosombo	August 27, 2013
Mr. Dagadu, Daniel	Senior Auto Mechanic Grade 1, General Services Department, Akuse	September 03, 2013
Ms. Ntiamoah, Ofosua Evelyn	Principal Nursing Officer Grade II, Health Services Department, Akosombo	September 7, 2013
Ms. Bampo, Alice	Senior Superintendent II, VRA Schools, Akuse	September 7, 2013
Mr. Tsigbe, Kwame David	Principal Driver, General Services Department, Accra	September 09, 2013
Mr. Onwona-Mensah, Nana Evans Robert	Senior Administrative Assistant, NEDCo, Techiman	September 20, 2013
Mr. Agbeveade, Vincent Kwasi	Accounting Assistant Grade 1, NEDCo, Bolgatanga	September 21, 2013
Mr. Osei Basoah, Dickson Nana	Principal Driver, Health Services Department, Ako- sombo	September 23, 2013
Mr. Ansah, Benjamin	Senior Tradesman, Real Estate and Security Department, Accra	September 29, 2013

AIS & CEB Schools

Mark 20 Years of Collaboration



Students and staff of A.I.S and CEB schools in a group picture

The VRA's Akosombo International School (A.I.S) and its counterpart schools from Communaute d'Electricite du Benin (CEB) and Togo have marked this year's annual exchange programme with a call on participating students to take full advantage of the programme.

In a welcome address, the General Manager of VRA Schools, Mr. Arnold Seshie, noted that the programme was to encourage the students to upgrade their French and English-speaking capabilities, to enhance communication in both

languages. He said French-speaking in Ghana has long been a national problem and should be firmly inculcated in our society, as the country shares borders with three French-speaking countries."

Mr. Seshie noted that job placements in international organisations, such as the United Nations (UN), require qualification in these two languages. He, therefore, urged the students to take their lessons seriously and desist from discriminating against one another and to make the most of the academic exchange programme.

This year's event, the 20th in the series, brought together 83 students from the Basic and Senior High

School Departments and seven teachers from Togo and Benin. Its aim is to foster bilateral relations between the participating countries and, even more important, to promote the speaking and writing of French and English among pupils and students in the schools of the two power utility organisations.

The month-long programme included sporting activities, cultural exchanges, an excursion to the Ada Estuary, a four day socialisation with the Akuse Summer School and two weeks stay in Togo and Benin by students of AIS and a reward package for hard working students. ■

Comments on VRA News and Services of the Corporate Communications Unit

The publication has become bigger and more informative, which is very good. I think the Corporate Communications Unit should work hard at getting the public to know the work and significance of VRA, as the feature on the Public Perception of VRA showed ignorance on the part of many people.

We should be pushing towards making it really online and reduce our paper footprints

Whilst I agree that the circulation of VRA News has been good. I believe that the circulation of the soft copy is good enough, unless some identifiable group have need for hard copies because they don't have access to the Outlook. THE COST-SAVING AGENDA

How are you treating the artisans who do not understand the content of information being circulated. I recommend that you organise a forum to explain what is in the VRA News.

I think VRA News should only be sent via Outlook to staff, in order to save the cost of printing.

The circulation of VRA News through the Outlook is great. Staff should, therefore, be informed about that, so that there would be fewer printouts or hard copies. The circulation/printout also comes out very late. For example, volume 2, ie; April - June 2013, came out in August.

I suggest that what Town Management is doing should be published in VRA News

Generally the publication is good and provides information, especially about some VRA activities that go on behind the scenes. Secondly, the quality is good and I commend the Corporate Communications Unit for that. I would, however, request that you open it up so that more people can contribute to the publication.

VRA News reports mostly activities in and around Accra, Akosombo and Akuse. Content would be enriched with more of Western and Ashanti news.

The information flow via electronic is great. More work, must however, be done to get the quarterly VRA News out within two weeks of the end of the preceding quarter. Overall, progress is encouraging. Keep up with the good progress as we aspire to be excellent in all areas.

A few hard copies could be provided for staff who for various reasons, are not able to utilise the Internet.



SHAWN KUWORNU

GOES HOME

The mortal remains of the late Headmaster of the Basic Department of Akosombo International School (A.I.S), Mr. Shawn Kofi Kuwornu, have been interred at his hometown, Dodome-Aveha, in the Ho West District of the Volta Region.

Mr. Kuwornu joined the Volta River Authority (VRA) Basic School in October 16, 2000 as a Graduate Master, teaching Agricultural Science and Biology at Akosombo and Akuse International Schools. He rose through the ranks to occupy various positions, including Senior Graduate Master and Principal Graduate Master.

Mr. Kuwornu's ambition to soar high in his profession culminated in his appointment as Headmaster of the Akosombo Basic School on June 1, 2011, a position he held until his death on May 24, 2013.

He held various positions, such as; Chairman of the Entrance Examination Committee; Patron, Science and Wildlife Clubs; Member, Timetable Planning Committee; Coordinator for the British Council Climate Change and School Community Project; Chairman, Akosombo International School Welfare Association (AKISWA), among others.

Mr. Kuwornu is also fondly remembered by the school for assisting in undertaking a major landscaping on the main campus during the school's 40th anniversary in 2002. He was instrumental in the Eco-School programme, when he and his students undertook several tree planting exercises to green the environment.

A pre-burial service was held on Thursday July 18, 2013 at the Mount Sinai Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Akosombo, where he fellowshiped. The Very Rev. Justice Amos Po-bee, Ag. School Chaplain, preached at both his residence and at the school on the first day of the funeral. On Friday, teachers and students from Akuse Schools, and the Basic and Senior Departments of A.I.S. paid their last respect to their colleague and Headmaster.

The late Kuwornu was buried at Dodome-Aveha on Saturday, July 20, 2013.

In attendance were Deputy Chief Executive (E&O), Ing. Kirk Koffi, Director, Risk Management, Ing. Joseph Sutherland, General Manager, AIS, Mr. Arnold Seshie, Rev. S.L.O. Okine, Director, Human Resource Department, Mr. Isaac Aidoo, former Director, VRA Schools, Mrs. Grace Mannieson Anancy, former Headmaster, AIS, Mr. E.K Tawiah, the Ag. Akosombo Town Manager, Mr. E.K Ofori, the clergy, and a host of VRA staff.

Mr. Kuwornu left behind a wife and five children.

Memorial Service in Pictures...



The Headmaster of AIS Snr. High and Acting Headmaster of AIS Basic School, reading a tribute to the late Mr Kuwornu



Delegates from the National Senior Staff Association



AIS School Choir singing a dirge to the late tutor



The remains of the late Mr Kuwornu being driven to the cemetery



Our Mission:
The Volta River Authority exists
to **Power Economies & Raise**
the living standards of the
peoples of **Ghana & West Africa**

OUR VALUES

- ☀ **Commitment**
- ☀ **Integrity**
- ☀ **Trust**
- ☀ **Teamwork**
- ☀ **Accountability**



Do You Know These?

Water Quality Tips Around the House *Part 1*

IN THE BATHROOM

The Sink:

- Repair leaky taps and always turn off your taps tightly so they don't drip.
- Even a small drip can waste tons of water.
- Use an aerator and a water-flow reducer attachment.
- Turn off the water while brushing your teeth or washing your hands.

DID YOU KNOW?

A tap leaking one drop of water per second wastes more than 25L of water a day! That's 9,000L a year!

Shower/Tub:

- Repair leaky taps and always turn off your taps tightly so they don't drip.
- Have showers instead of baths and keep them short (5 minutes).

- Install low-flow showerheads.

DID YOU KNOW?

A five-minute shower with a standard showerhead uses 100L of water. A five-minute shower with a low-flow showerhead uses 35L of water.

Toilet:

- Repair any toilet tank, bowl or base leaks. You can check the tank for leaks by adding food colouring and observing whether it spreads to the bowl without flushing.
- Never flush garbage of any kind down the toilet.
- Install a low-flush toilet (that uses 6 litres or less per flush), or place a toilet insert or weighted plastic bottle filled with water in the water tank.

DID YOU KNOW?

About 65% of indoor home water use occurs in our bathrooms, and toilets are the

single largest water users. Toilets use over 40% more water than needed!

IN THE KITCHEN

The Sink:

- Repair leaky taps and always turn off your taps tightly so they don't drip. Even a small drip can waste tons of water.
- Use an aerator and a water-flow reducer attachment.
- Don't run the water continuously while thawing food, hand washing dishes or while washing fruits and veggies; use a partially filled sink instead, with a quick rinse afterward.

DID YOU KNOW?

Only 10% of our home water supply is used in the kitchen and as drinking water, but a whopping 65% is used in the bathroom.

To be Continued.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE:

- ◆ Delivering World Class Power Supply
- ◆ Effective Writing

Please send your concerns, questions, congratulatory messages, issues, worries, suggestions, etc., to corpcomm@vra.com

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