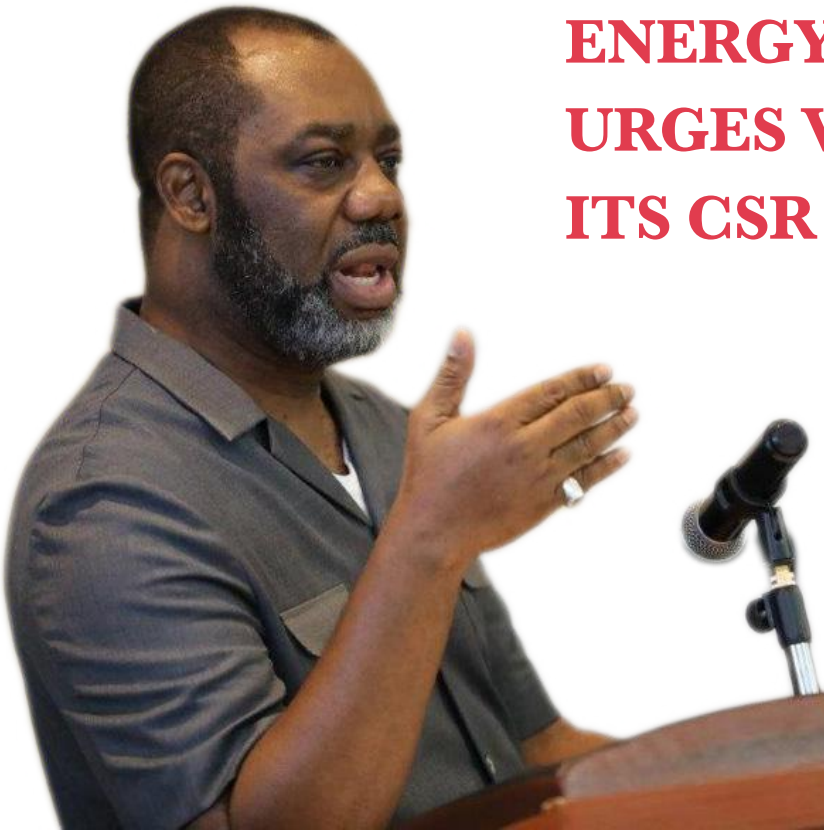


# Volta River Authority QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Quarterly Newsletter | July - September, 2023

Volume 37

## ENERGY MINISTER URGES VRA TO REDEFINE ITS CSR POLICY



By: Michael Danso, CA&ER, Accra

**T**he Volta River Authority's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Policy which mandates the Authority to conduct its business in a socially responsible manner for the benefit of communities in its catchment areas, may soon be redefined in scope to include a larger population.

This is because the Minister of Energy, Dr. Matthew Opoku Prempeh has urged the Management of VRA to take a second look at its CSR Policy by redefining it to include areas where the Authority sells power directly to customers to ensure equitable provision of services and enhance business value.

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Dr. Matthew Opoku Prempeh - Energy Minister

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EGENCO PAYS BENCHMARK VISIT  
TO VRA



**VOLTA  
RIVER  
AUTHORITY**

VRA... We Add Value to Lives



Mr. Ebenezer Kwadwo Omari-Mireku/ Mrs. Brenda Afua Konadu Mills Pappoe

## EBENEZER KWADWO OMARI-MIREKU AND BRENDA MILLS-PAPPOE ELECTED AT IIA GHANA ELECTIONS

Michael Danso, CA&ER, Accra

**T**he Director, Audit, Mr. Ebenezer Kwadwo Omari-Mireku, and Manager, Management Audits, Mrs. Brenda Afua Konadu Mills-Pappoe, of Volta River Authority (VRA) have been elected as Vice President and Council Member respectively by the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) to support the administration of the institute from August 2023 to July 2025.

Both Mr. Omari-Mireku and Mrs. Mills-Pappoe have been actively involved in IIA Ghana related activities over the years. Prior to his present appointment, Mr. Omari-Mireku served as a Council Member, Chair of Research & Publication Committee and Vice Chair of the Finance Committee; whilst Mrs. Mills-Pappoe also served as a member of the Certification & Professional Development Committee.

They were also very instrumental in the organisation of the previous IIA Ghana Annual Conference and Governance Fora as well as the recent African Federation of Institutes of Internal Auditors (AFIIA) 2023 Conference hosted by Ghana in May 2023.

On behalf of the Authority, the VRA News Team wishes to congratulate Mr. Omari-Mireku and Mrs. Mills-Pappoe and wish them well during their tenure in office. We believe that they will support the Institute to play its pivotal role of promoting best practices and professionalism in the Audit field.



## NEWLY RECONSTITUTED VRA RESETTLEMENT TRUST FUND BOARD URGED TO MAKE THE FUND SUSTAINBLE

By: Nathaniel Ekue Mensah, Community Relations Officer

The Deputy Energy Minister, Mr. Andrew Egyapa Mercer, has urged the newly re-constituted Volta River Authority (VRA) Resettlement Trust Fund Board to prioritise sustainability of the Trust Fund beyond depending on VRA for its survival.

He noted that the continuous dependence on the annual support by the VRA to the Trust Fund cannot maintain the Trust Fund forever, however, there is the need for the new Board to be innovative in developing revenue-generating measures that would be used to sustain the Fund in the long run while providing an exit strategy for the annual grant funded solely by VRA.

Mr. Mercer proposed the new mandate when he inaugurated the 16-member Board at the Ministry of Energy in Accra recently. Explaining the dissolution of the Trust Fund Board of Trustees which occurred in 2021, he indicated that, it was to re-evaluate the Trust's Deed objectives which set up the Trust Fund on July 22, 1996, and re-constitute the membership of the Managing Trustees for equitable representation and effective management.

"It is, therefore, apt that I now inaugurate the VRA Resettlement Trust Fund Board of Trustees (Managing Trustees) after some time of reflection on its mandate", he added.

The Chairman of the Board, His Worship (Rtd) Emmanuel Nana Antwi-Barima on behalf of the Board pledged their commitment to ensure that the Government's vision of making the Trust Fund a more viable entity is realised.

The Deputy Chief Executive, Services, Mr. Kenneth Mensah Arthur and Manager, Land Administration and Management, Mr. Patrick Mireku, are VRA's representatives from VRA on the Board, whereas the rest of the membership is made up of government appointees from constituencies which fall directly under VRA impacted areas such as Kpandai, Salaga, Biakoye, Krachi West, Krachi East and North Dayi as well as Members of Parliament for Yilo Krobo, Fantekwa, Mpraeso and Pru West.

## ENERGY MINISTER URGES VRA TO REDEFINE ITS CSR POLICY...

Contd. from page 1

He made the proposal when he addressed the 13th VRA Stakeholders' Interface organised recently at the Labadi Beach Hotel in Accra.

VRA through its CSR policy has over the years created a positive impact on society especially in its impacted communities by engaging in philanthropic activities, supporting social causes, and giving back to the communities through sponsorships, scholarships, outreach events, employee volunteerism, and charitable donations.

As much as the Energy Minister is pleased with these social impact initiatives, he is of the opinion that VRA's CSR catchment area covers about 40 per cent of the total landmark of Ghana but can be expanded to include areas where it makes revenue.

"Who does VRA sell power to?", he asked rhetorically, and added that communities which enable VRA to sell power directly to its customers may constitute about 5-10 per cent of the Authority's revenue base and must be given attention.

"You have customers to satisfy. Some as far as Burkina Faso. When they come, Government takes loans to allow GRIDCo to put up a transmission system so that VRA can generate and sell." He stated.

He said with the movement of the AMERI Plant to Anwomaso in the Ashanti Region, the Authority would be increasing its footprints in the middle belt of the country "and therefore cannot afford to define CSR as only where we operate."

He was of the view that, "there are some companies in Ghana that cannot have small definitions of their CSR policies such as GNPC, COCOBOD and VRA."

That notwithstanding, the Minister expressed his satisfaction about the impacts VRA has made with its CSR policy and conveyed the appreciation of Odeneho Kwafo Akoto III, Paramount Chief of the Akwamu traditional area to the Management and Staff of VRA for supporting him in diverse ways through CSR.



Mr. Kofi Tutu Agyare Board Chairman, VRA

Presenting his statement to the stakeholders, the Board Chairman of VRA, Mr. Kofi Tutu Agyare, assured them that VRA will continue to work assiduously towards fulfilling its mandate as a public sector organisation but with a private sector mindset.

"We will focus on increasing our generating capacity as well as retooling our power plants. We will do these with the objective of repositioning ourselves to enable us continue to provide reliable power and competitively priced electricity to propel the country's socio-economic development as well as increase our power exports to the sub region."

Additionally, he said, VRA had commissioned a commercial study of the Volta Lake with a view to providing a blueprint for further development which is expected by the first quarter of 2024.

# EGENCO pays benchmark visit to VRA

Michael Danso, CA&ER, Accra



Mr. Edward Obeng-Kenzo (middle) with officials from VRA and EGENCO

**A** business delegation from the Electricity Generation Company (Malawi) Ltd., (EGENCO), has paid a five-day benchmark visit to the Volta River Authority (VRA) to explore best industry practices and identify areas for operational improvement and growth that will be beneficial to the mandate of the company.

The visit was at the behest of the Management of EGENCO following a bilateral engagement between a delegation from VRA which was led by Ing. Samuel Odartey Lamptey, Director, Technical Services and their EGENCO counterparts on the sidelines of the 57th Annual Meetings of the Association of Power Utilities of Africa (APUA) in Lilongwe, Malawi this year.

The four-member delegation was led by the Director of Corporate Services and Company Secretary, Mrs. Videlia Mluwira and accompanied by the Deputy Director of Finance, Mr. Orphan Chisasa, Director, Human Resources and Development, Mr. Alexander Dzimba and Blessings Phariwa, Power station Manager, Nkula Hydro Power station in Malawi.

At a welcome ceremony organised in honour of the visitors, the Deputy Chief Executive, Engineering and Operations of VRA, Mr. Edward Obeng-Kenzo said, VRA was pleased by the decision of EGENCO to benchmark the Authority's operational and business excellence that have sustained it over the past 62 years, and added that, the visit had a promising and sustainable future for both power utilities and the broader energy landscape.

He stated that, "It is, therefore, of utmost necessity for VRA and EGENCO to collaborate to initiate and agree on how we can contribute to the needed reforms in electricity generation in Africa. It is my hope that this exchange of knowledge and best practices stands to yield mutual benefits for both entities."

The team lead, Mrs. Videlia Mluwira expressing appreciation to VRA for the collaboration noted that, the visit was to assess the secret behind VRA's successful operations over the years and seek partnership in the areas of Skills and human capital development, Increasing generation from renewable sources, Converting thermal power plants into combined cycle configuration and Promoting sustainable development of impacted communities, to enable them develop a master plan to boost performance and take advantage of opportunities for best standards.

She noted that 'the visit will help us zero in on specific areas of concern and create a collaborative platform where more staff of EGENCO will come and learn in specific technical and non-technical areas.'

She said other key factors that motivated the visit was her outfit's eagerness to understudy VRA's ability to diversify as a holding company with many subsidiaries.

The ceremony, which was attended by a cross-functional team from VRA comprising Directors, Managers, Senior Officers among others provided a platform for series of presentations to be made for the delegation on the internal business processes of the Authority by various departments and special units to serve the interests of the visitors.

# VRA engages Awoemefia and stakeholders on dam spillage

Narki Ayerh, Community Relations, Akuse



The Awoemefia (Seated) in a memorable photograph with the VRA team.

Consistent with its Emergency Preparedness Plan (EPP), VRA is collaborating with all relevant stakeholders especially, those along the downstream coastal communities to educate and inform them about the ongoing water spillage from the Akosombo and Kpong Dam reservoirs to minimise any potential impact.

The spillage of excess water from the two dams have been occasioned by consistent rise in the lake level due to high inflows following torrential rainfalls being experienced within the catchment areas of the Volta Lake, and the heavy inflows into the Akosombo reservoir for which reason the Authority is undertaking the controlled spillage.

These were the words of the Deputy Chief Executive, Services, VRA, Mr. Ken Mensah Arthur, when he paid a courtesy call on the overlord (Awoemefia) of the Anlo State Torgbui Sri III at his Palace in Keta recently.

He said the Authority owed it a social responsibility to continually collaborate with Traditional Authorities, Municipal and District Assemblies, NADMO, and all relevant stakeholders to mitigate the impact of the controlled spillage to its barest minimum.

The EPP Coordinator of VRA, Ing. Kwame O.M. Darkwah, who corroborated the information by the Deputy Chief Executive also explained that the Authority has in place an elaborate EPP which includes all stakeholders who are well versed in handling the different phases of emergency.

He, therefore, assured the Awoemefia that the controlled spilling was within Phase one of the entire process and the Authority was monitoring it with all stakeholders.

In his response, the Awoemefia expressed satisfaction about the visit and the opportunity to ascertain firsthand, issues on the ground due to the spillage. He acknowledged that the change in the rainfall pattern was indeed attributable to the global climate change phenomenon and asked Management to continue to regularly update all relevant stakeholders to ensure safety.

The Deputy Chief Executive and his entourage also visited eight Municipal/District Chief Executives of the North, South, and Central Tongu, Ada East, Anlo, Shai Osudoku, Asuogyaman as well as Lower Manya Municipal/District Assemblies.



Mr. Ken Arthur and Torgbui Sri III

# VRA receives special recognition from Institute of Directors-Ghana

Linda Appiah, CA&ER. Pictures by: Isaac Mends, Thermal Gen.



Mrs. Claudia Gyeke-Aboagye, Ms. Pamela Fafa Akapaloo (right) and Mrs. Linda Appiah pose with the award

The Institute of Directors-Ghana (IoD-Gh) a professional body committed to best professional practice of corporate directorship has awarded the Volta River Authority (VRA) for its immense contribution towards the Institute’s vision of promoting good Corporate Governance in Ghana.

The Institute which is also committed to recognising and unlocking members’ potentials through the provision of world class learning opportunities, knowledge sharing, networking, mentorship, and promotion of world class standards in corporate governance, recognised VRA with a Special Award at its Investiture of the 18th IoD-Gh Council Awards and Dinner Night held at the Labadi Beach Hotel in Accra recently.

In attendance were Mrs. Claudia Gyeke-Aboagye, the Board Secretary and Ms. Pamela Fafa Akapaloo, Administrator, Board Secretariat who received the award on behalf of the Authority.

The Assistant Registrar, Nursing and Midwifery Council of Ghana, Rev. Mrs. Angela Carmen Appiah,

was elected as the new President of the Council of the IoD Ghana. Rev. Mrs. Appiah who is the first female President of the Council, on behalf of her administration pledged their commitment to focus on raising high the flag of IoD-Gh.

The outgoing President of IoD- Ghana, Mr. Rockson Dogbegah, congratulated the new members for their successful induction into the Institute having gone through all necessary requirements and urged them to be good ambassadors of the Institute to reflect in their decisions and actions.



VRA was recognised with this Special Award

## SUZIE VAN-BROCKE IS NEW VRALA NATIONAL PRESIDENT



Mrs. Susuana Araphua Van-Brocke

By Narki Ayerh, Community Relations, Akuse

**M**rs. Susuana Araphua Van-Brocke has been elected as the fifth President of the Volta River Authority Ladies Association (VRALA) to succeed the Stella Dey led administration and uphold the mandate of the Association.

Mrs. Van-Brocke who was elected at the Association's 2023 National Delegates Congress comprising female employees of VRA and Northern Electricity Distribution Company (NEDCo), has a two-year term as per the constitution of the Association.

She will be in the helm of affairs with Fiona Freda Panin as Vice President, Georgina Ametowobla as Secretary, Jacinta Ama Hodo, Organising Secretary, Adelaide Adjetey-London, Assistant Organising Secretary, Fahematu Hussein, Treasurer, and Mary Akansia, Financial Secretary who were all elected at the congress to support her administration.

The new VRALA President, a nursing professional, comes to the high office of the Association with a rich profile covering her education and qualification, career history, social interventions and special national assignments spanning over three decades.

In her inaugural speech, Mrs. Van-Brocke expressed gratitude to the delegates and the entire membership of VRALA for entrusting her with the Association's leadership and promised to work diligently with her

team with tenacity of purpose to maintain and enhance the enviable reputation and ideals of the Association.

The Chief Executive of VRA, Mr. Antwi-Darkwa who addressed the Congress as the Special Guest of Honour on the theme "Creativity and Innovation: The Role of VRA Ladies", emphasised the importance of creativity and innovation in the energy industry and encouraged all participants to take advantage of the opportunities offered by the Authority. He also entreated the new executives to continuously collaborate with Management to ensure improved operational efficiency and service delivery for the sustainability of the VRA business.

A member of the VRA Board of Directors, Rev. Dr. Joyce R. Aryee, inspired the women to generate new ideas and think creatively. She highlighted the importance of taking risks, encouraging individuality, and buddying up to foster innovation.

Other keynote speakers included Dr. (Mrs.) I. Stella Agyenim-Boateng, former Advisor, Office of the Chief Executive, VRA and Madam Shirley Seidu, former Director, General Services, VRA. Also in attendance were Madam Janet Akosua Gyasiwaa, Board Member, VRA and representatives from SOVRAE, AVRATE, and PSWU.



# Strengthening Security: Empowering the Guardians of Volta River Authority



Newly-recruited security personnel undergoing training

In an ever-evolving world, security remains paramount for every organisation. The Volta River Authority (VRA) understands this crucial need and has taken significant strides to enhance its physical security department. With an unwavering commitment to safeguarding its assets and personnel, VRA has embarked on a groundbreaking initiative that has already yielded remarkable results. Let us delve into the remarkable journey of the department's transformation and the visionary leaders behind it.

## A Paradigm Shift in Security

The VRA's security department has been a cornerstone of the company since its inception. Recognising the need for continuous improvement, Management decided to introduce a fresh approach by recruiting new security guards. This strategic decision was aimed at enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the department and fortifying the protection of VRA's invaluable resources.

## From Novices to Protectors: A Comprehensive Training Program

In July 2021, the first batch of recruits embarked on an extraordinary journey of transformation.

These aspiring guardians were entrusted to the Naval Training School of Ghana, Eastern Command, for an intensive two-month paramilitary training. The grueling regimen equipped them with the necessary skills, discipline, and resilience needed to tackle any security challenge that may arise.

Following their rigorous physical training, the recruits underwent two weeks of classroom sessions at the VRA Academy where they were exposed to cutting-edge security protocols, advanced surveillance techniques, and the intricacies of modern security systems. This

comprehensive training empowered them to become well-rounded security professionals, prepared for any scenario.

## Results That Speak Volumes

The impact of the newly recruited security guards on VRA's physical security has been nothing short of phenomenal. Their integration into the department has yielded tangible and undeniable improvements, reflecting the astute vision of Management. Under the leadership of Lt. Cdr. (Rtd) Richard Lamptey, Head of Security, the department has witnessed a remarkable surge in effectiveness and a renewed sense of confidence.

From enhanced response times to proactive threat detection, the new recruits have elevated the security posture of VRA. Their unwavering commitment to duty, honed skills, and dedicated teamwork have instilled a sense of safety and assurance among the entire organisation. The security department has become an impregnable shield, protecting VRA's assets and ensuring the uninterrupted operation of its vital functions.

## Building on Success: Welcoming a New Wave of Guardians

With the resounding success of the initial recruitment drive, VRA has embarked on another transformative journey. This year, another batch of recruits have undergone the same rigorous training program, further bolstering the department's capabilities. The anticipation of witnessing another significant leap forward in the effectiveness of VRA's physical security is palpable among the Management and employees alike.

In a world where security threats loom large, Volta River Authority remains at the forefront of innovation and adaptation. Through its groundbreaking initiative of recruiting and training new security guards, VRA has not only strengthened its security department but has also demonstrated its unwavering commitment to the safety and well-being of its employees and valuable assets. As Commander Lamptey leads this transformative journey, VRA stands tall, ready to face any security challenge with confidence and resilience. Together, they are setting a new standard for excellence in physical security, solidifying VRA's position as a beacon of safety and trust in the industry.

## Akuse International School celebrates traditional day

By Narki Ayerh, Community Relations, Akuse



Students enthusiastically performing a traditional dance during the ceremony

**R**ich culture and tradition were showcased by pupils, students, teachers, and management of the Akuse International School as they marked this year's traditional day celebration.

The event which had the key objective of embedding cultural practices and the sense of nationalism in the children enabled them to have a better understanding and lasting memories of various customs, tribes, cultural habits, religion, and traditions which help them to grow with good morals.

The day was embellished with vibrant colours, feet-tapping rhythms which led to a jubilant celebration. It also served as one of the many events preceding the school's grand 40th Year Anniversary Celebration in Akuse. The School children who were clad in the various traditional clothes mostly representing the 16 regions in Ghana, recited poems in local languages, and danced to traditional songs.

The event was climaxed with an apt demonstration of the Homowo and Akwasidae Festivals, celebrated by the Ga's and the Ashanti's respectively and an education on the enormous benefit of Personal Hygiene.

The Ag. Headmaster, Mr. Benjamin Narh, expressed his satisfaction about the event and said it was necessary to ensure that Ghanaian children know the country's history, heritage and culture so they are not lost over time.

Speaking in an interview, a parent, Madam Leticia Osei lauded the idea behind instituting the day as it was a great opportunity to assist students develop the spirit of patriotism and nationalism. She noted that this was a great way to make the students grow to love Ghana as well as its customs and traditions.

## KTPS tests emergency preparedness with fire & medical simulation exercise

Linda Appiah, CA&ER, Kpone



Staff of the Kpone Thermal Power Station actively participated in the exercise

A joint team comprising fire safety and medical emergency handlers at the Kpone Thermal Power Station (KTPS) have conducted a comprehensive fire and medical emergency simulation exercise to pre-test the preparedness of staff, visitors, and relevant stakeholders at the station.

The exercise, which was led by the Fireman at KTPS, Mr. Jerome Doe with support from fire experts from the Ghana National Fire Service (GNFS) and Medical Staff from the Narh Bitra Hospital, modeled fire emergency scenarios and tested the emergency elements at the station to ensure the safety and security of staff and other stakeholders in a real fire emergency.

According to Mr. Doe, the station embarked on the Fire and Medical Emergency to enable them to be on guard for actual situations that would require first aid and evacuation of victims to a nearby medical facility.

He demonstrated and taught participants some activities that should be avoided during emergency situations such as running back to restricted areas and hotspots to pick valuable items.

The Ag. Plant Manager, Ing. Prosper Diabah praised the staff for their swift response to the emergency alarm and convergence at the Assembly Point which preceded the simulation exercise.

Speaking after the exercise, a Safety Officer of the Technical Services Department, Mr. Augustine Asiamah, impressed on staff to extend lessons learnt from the exercise to their homes to ensure personal and domestic safety.



Firefighting experts demonstrating how to douse wildfire

# VRA Resettlement Trust Fund inspects CSR projects in the Bono East Region

By: Nathaniel Ekue Mensah, Community Relations Officer



One of the VRA Resettlement Trust Fund school complex

A project inspection team from the Volta River Authority Resettlement Trust Fund has embarked on inspection of existing and on-going facilities constructed by the Authority as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives in some resettlement communities within the Pru East District of the Bono East Region.

The inspection team visited communities such as Prang, Labum, Buma and Yeji as part of the Fund's routine inspection to ensure that existing facilities are being maintained or identify defects where necessary and ensure that the appropriate actions are taken to correct them.

A Senior Technical Officer, Mr. Anthony Agblevor, who led the team comprising Community Relations Officer, Mr. Nathaniel Ekue Mensah, and Mr. Mat Bonney, Finance Officer expressed worry about the deteriorating nature of some of the facilities visited especially at Buma where the Authority through the VRA Resettlement Trust Fund built teachers and nurses quarters.

In a meeting with some of the occupants of the facilities, Mr. Agblevor noted that as part of efforts to ensure that the facilities were well maintained by the occupants, there was a need to imbibe a sense of ownership of the facilities in them instead of seeing the facilities as belonging to the Authority.

“The Trust Fund is introducing some measures which would include payment of a determinable amount of money by the occupants of the facilities which will be set aside for renovation when the need arises. This we believe would make you responsible to some extent when it comes to taking care of the facilities”, he noted.

At Yeji, the team inspected an on-going Six-Unit Classroom Block project being built by the Volta River Authority (VRA) in partnership with the Ghana Education Trust Fund (GETFund) which was nearing completion and for subsequent handing over to the community.



The project inspection team in a discussion with an occupant



VRA Resettlement Trust Fund built teachers and nurses quarters

“We need to chart a new course to ensure we remain relevant and competitive.”

— Mr. Emmanuel Antwi-Darkwa, CE, VRA



## 2023 HR FAIR HELD ACROSS VARIOUS WORK LOCATIONS

Michael Danso, CA&ER, Accra

The Human Resources (HR) Department of the Volta River Authority (VRA) has held its corporate-wide HR Fairs across the various work locations in Accra, Tema, Akuse, Akosombo and Aboadze.

The HR Fair annually affords the HR Department a prime opportunity to engage directly with employees across all the work locations to strategically communicate, engage, educate, motivate, and introduce employees to various aspects of HR practice, such as Organisational Changes, Work Culture, Staff Retention among others to improve performance, productivity, and job satisfaction.

Speaking to participants at the EV Conference Room in Accra, the Director, Human Resources, Mr. Eric Mensah Bonsu noted that the Fair was to bring HR to the doorstep of staff to help create a working environment in which all employees feel safe and engaged in their roles.

He said such an environment contributes to overall productivity that benefits both the Authority and its employees and called for active participation by all.

This year's Fair which was under the theme: "Unlocking Creative Potentials and Professionalism, For Efficiency and Sustainability", witnessed presentations on the new VRA Core Values by the Corporate Strategy Department and HR Responsibilities & Initiatives by the HR Department as well as panel discussions segments.

# EXPLORING CAREER BOOST: THE BENEFITS OF DEPARTMENTAL ROTATIONS FOR NATIONAL SERVICE PERSONNEL

Gloria Koomson



The transition from education to the professional world can be both exciting and daunting. For many young adults, national service offers a bridge between these two phases, providing them with an opportunity to contribute to their country while gaining valuable experience. One of the most impactful strategies employed by the national service program in the Volta River Authority (VRA) is departmental rotations. These rotations, which involve moving personnel through different departments or roles during their service, offer a plethora of benefits that extend far beyond the duration of the program and this article seeks to discuss a few.

## 1. Diverse Skill Acquisition:

Departmental rotations expose national service personnel to a variety of roles, tasks, and responsibilities. This exposure enables individuals to acquire a diverse skill set that is applicable across multiple industries and sectors. For example, a participant might start in a Customer Service role, then move to a Data Analysis position, and later transition to Project Management. This

breadth of experience does not only make participants more versatile but also hones their adaptability and problem-solving skills. The ability to navigate different roles foster a sense of self-assurance that is essential in the dynamic modern job market.

## 2. Holistic Understanding of Operations:

Participating in departmental rotations provide individuals with a comprehensive view of an organisation's operations. This holistic understanding helps participants connect the dots between different departments and recognise how their individual contributions influence the overall success of the organisation. A participant who has rotated through departments like Marketing, Finance, and Human Resources, for instance, is better equipped with firsthand information in those fields to collaborate and communicate effectively with colleagues from different backgrounds.

## 3. Networking Opportunities:

One of the most invaluable assets in any career is a strong professional network. Departmental rotations expose national service personnel to a wide array of colleagues, supervisors, and mentors. Building relationships within different departments enhance not only the participant's understanding of the organisation but also their potential for future collaboration and mentorship. These connections can extend beyond the national service program and prove beneficial in future career pursuits.

## 4. Informed Career Decision-Making:

National service personnel are often at a stage in life where they are deciding on their long-term career paths. Departmental rotations provide an opportunity to "test drive" different roles and responsibilities, helping individuals make more informed decisions about their career trajectories. Gaining practical experience in various departments allows participants to discover their strengths, preferences, and areas of interest, which can guide their choices in further education or future job applications.

**5. Enhanced Problem-Solving and Innovation:**

Exposure to different departments and roles encourages creative problem-solving and innovation. As personnel encounter diverse challenges, they are compelled to think outside the box and draw from their multifaceted experiences to find solutions. This can lead to a culture of innovation within the organisation, as individuals bring fresh perspectives from their various rotations.

**6. Personal Growth and Resilience:**

Departmental rotations are not just about acquiring professional skills; they also foster personal growth and resilience. Moving between different roles can be mentally and emotionally challenging, but it also cultivates adaptability, patience, and a willingness to embrace change. These qualities are not only valuable in the workplace but also in navigating life's uncertainties.

**7. Stronger Leadership Potential:**

Leadership is often about understanding the bigger picture and effectively guiding teams toward shared goals. Departmental rotations cultivate this skill by exposing participants to different facets of an organisation and teaching them how to manage and motivate diverse teams. Individuals who have experienced various roles are better equipped to empathise with the challenges faced by different departments and develop strategies that promote collaboration and cohesion.

In conclusion, departmental rotations are a cornerstone of national service programs that offer participants a myriad of benefits. From skill diversification to informed career decisions, these rotations contribute to personal and professional growth that extends well beyond the program's duration. The holistic perspective gained from exposure to different departments equips national service personnel with a unique advantage in their future careers, fostering adaptability, problem-solving skills, and a strong sense of self-confidence. As countries continue to invest in their national service schemes, the value of organisational rotations remain a crucial element in shaping well-rounded, capable, and forward-thinking individuals.

Judging from my above submission, I would like to recommend that Management of VRA make it a bidding policy for the Human Resources Department to have a rotation program for National Service Personnel who are posted to the Authority.

This will be a distinctive way to allow all service personnel to acquire knowledge, transfer experience, share skills and most significantly contribute to the accumulation of experience in the Authority's human capital for organisational growth.





## Isaac Ewuah

Finance and Investment Analyst

Pensions & Investments



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## WHAT IS THE IDEAL AGE FOR RETIREMENT?

Continued from the previous issue.

### What are the effects of retiring early from active service?

We are continuing our discussion on the topic; WHAT IS THE IDEAL AGE FOR RETIREMENT? In this series I would like us to concentrate on the effects of retiring early from active service.

Retiring early from active service can also have a significant impact on an individual's life. While some may view it as a chance to relax and enjoy their golden years, others may struggle to adjust to the sudden change in lifestyle. In this article, we will explore the effects of retiring early from active service and provide tips on how to make the transition as smooth as possible.

### Financial Implications

One of the most significant effects of retiring early from active service is the financial implications. Retiring early means that you will have less time to accumulate savings and build up your retirement nest egg. This can result in a lower retirement income and a reduced standard of living. It is important to plan ahead and consider all sources of income, such as pensions, social security, and personal investments.

Loss of Identity

For many individuals, their job is a significant part of their identity. Retiring early can lead to a loss of identity and purpose, which can be difficult to cope with. It is important to find new hobbies and interests to fill the void left by work. What do you intend doing after retirement?

### Social Isolation

Retiring early can also lead to social isolation. Many individuals form close relationships with coworkers and may struggle to find new social connections after retirement. It is important to stay connected with friends and family and consider joining social clubs or volunteer organizations within your immediate community and church.

### Health Concerns

Retiring early can also have an impact on an individual's health. Without the structure and routine of work, it can be easy to fall into unhealthy habits such as a sedentary lifestyle or poor diet. It is important to prioritize physical activity and healthy eating habits to maintain good health in retirement.

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# What is the ideal age for retirement...

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### Increased Leisure Time

One of the benefits of retiring early is having more leisure time. This can be an opportunity to pursue hobbies and interests that were previously put on hold due to work obligations. It is important to find a balance between leisure activities and maintaining a sense of purpose and structure in retirement.

### Travel Opportunities

Retiring early can also provide more opportunities for travel. Without the constraints of work schedules and limited vacation time, retirees can explore new destinations and cultures. It is important to plan ahead and budget for travel expenses to ensure that retirement savings are not depleted too quickly.

### Family Dynamics

Retiring early can also have an impact on family dynamics. For example, if one spouse retires early while the other continues to work, it can lead to tension and conflict. It is important to communicate openly and work together to find a balance that works for both individuals.

### Mental Health

Retiring early can also have an impact on an individual's mental health. Without the structure and routine of work, it can be easy to feel lost or purposeless. It is important to prioritize self-care and seek support if needed, such as through therapy or support groups.

### Volunteer Opportunities

Retiring early can also provide opportunities for volunteering and giving back to the community. This can be a fulfilling way to stay engaged and make a positive impact in the world. It is important to find volunteer opportunities that align with personal interests and values.

### Flexibility

Finally, retiring early provides a level of flexibility that may not have been possible during the working years. Retirees can set their own schedules and prioritize activities that bring them joy and fulfillment. It is important to embrace this newfound flexibility and make the most of it.



## Mrs. Marian Atta-Benyah

Human Resources, Aboadze

### WORK EFFICIENCY

**W**ork efficiency is the ability to get the most output from the least possible input. The inputs include materials, energy, money, and time. It means doing more with less as defined by Tony Robbins, Life and Business Strategist. In a more general sense, it is the ability to do things well, successfully, and without waste. According to Management Study Guide (MSG), efficiency in the workplace is when employees carry out the correct tasks in the right way, with the least waste of time and effort.

Efficiency in the workplace can be calculated as follows:

$$\text{Efficiency} = \text{output/input} * 100$$

Where output is the standard labour hours, and the input is the actual hours worked by employees.

#### Myth about Work Efficiency

Our beliefs about productivity and work efficiency can actually hold us back from achieving our goals. To improve efficiency, stop buying into these common myths highlighted by Tony Robbins.

“Busy equals productive”

Our society is a “cult of busy” that has trained us to think that we are being productive if we

are constantly working on something. But being buried beneath a pile of tasks that shows no sign of abating is not the way to improve efficiency. Stop mistaking movement for achievement and start prioritizing. True productivity is achieving your desired results with less effort and time.

#### “Multitasking is a must”

Multitasking is not a must – it is a myth. The truth is that if you are doing everything at once, you are really not doing much at all. “Where focus goes, energy flows” - and multitasking fractures that focus so your energy is flowing in all different directions. It is much more efficient to give your full focus to one task at a time in order of priority.

Every organization pays its employees for their hard work and efficiency. Individuals need to achieve the assigned targets within the desired time frame. It is essential for employees to meet deadlines and deliver results on time. Employees need to be efficient and proactive for better productivity.

Employees need to get their work done on time to expect timely appraisals and appreciation from not only Managers but also external clients. Delaying work leads to no solution. One needs to

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# WORK EFFICIENCY...

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adopt a systematic approach to be efficient at the workplace. Do not start a new task unless and until you are through with your previous assignments. Employees tend to be efficient when they take their work seriously and do not treat it as a mere source of burden.

Your motive in life should be very clear. Why do you come to work? Is it only for money? Or is it to grow professionally and make a mark of your own? If you show up at the office just to receive your monthly pay, then check, and think again!!!

### Application of Workplace Efficiency

Ensuring efficiency at the workplace is very vital to the achievement of the Authority's (VRA) overall goals and objectives. Staff are required to work and make judicious use of resources available to them. A conscious effort is expected of all to accomplish work with minimum time and resources to achieve a specific task. Staff and Management are stewards of the resources which are made available to execute tasks. It is, therefore, incumbent on us to safeguard the Authority's resources and ensure their prudent use.

Another application of work efficiency is the optimum use of time at the workplace. Staff are expected to use the working hours for only official duties. Let us all desist from using official time to do our personal things.

### How to improve Workplace Efficiency

Self-improvement plan takes time and effort to implement, and learning how to work efficiently is no different. You are essentially forming new habits that will contribute to your productivity instead of detracting from it. Here are some strategies highlighted by Tony Robbins. Set reasonable goals, take breaks, tweak your time management practices, ditch your digital devices, learn to say NO, create a routine you love and connect with your purpose. When we set our minds to improve work efficiency it will surely lead to increased productivity, which is a hallmark of every organization.

### Conclusion

As we spice our Braise Strategy, sustaining our operational and service excellence cannot be overemphasized as work efficiency is a key aspect for its realization. To this end, staff are implored to work assiduously to ensure the sustainability of VRA, as a model of excellence for power utilities in Africa.



Ruth Owusu, RTI Officer

# RIGHT TO INFORMATION (RTI) CORNER

## REFUSAL OF ACCESS TO INFORMATION: THE APPEAL PROCESS

**H**ello reader, in the second quarter edition of the VRA NEWS, the focus on this column was **Offences and Sanctions upon Violation of the Provisions of the RTI Act, 2019 (Act 989)**.

Today, our focus will be on the various basis upon which access to **information can be refused under the RTI Act**. We shall further discuss the **appeals available** to an applicant who is refused access to his/her right to information.

In the case where an applicant meets all the requirements provided under Section 18 (Procedure for Access) of the RTI Act, the Authority is obliged, by this Act, to grant access to the information requested for, **unless the Information is exempt from disclosure, or the application is manifestly frivolous or vexatious (S 27 (1))**. The Authority may also refuse to continue to process an application, **where the applicant has not paid the prescribed processing fee for the reproduction of information within the period specified in the notice (S 26 (1))**.

After submission of a request to the Authority, it is expected of the Authority to respond within fourteen days. If an applicant does not receive the response to his/her request for information within the specified period, the RTI Law allows the applicant to deem it as a denial of access to the information.

It should be noted that a refusal to grant access to information or discontinue the processing of an application for any of the reasons stated above is subject to review and appeal.

The review of a decision follows a laid down procedure to ensure that persons are not unreasonably denied their right of access to information. The appeal process

is indicated as follows:

**Right to Internal Review:** An applicant aggrieved by a decision of the Authority's Information Officer may, firstly, submit an application for Internal Review of that decision to the Chief Executive within thirty days from the date of the refusal.

After the application for Internal Review, the Authority has fifteen days from the date of the resubmission of the appeal to make a decision and respond to the applicant. In the case where the Chief Executive fails to give a decision on the request for Internal Review within fifteen days, the Chief Executive is deemed to have affirmed the original decision of the Information Officer (**S 35**).

**Review of the RTI Commission:** Any person who is dissatisfied with a decision from the Internal Review may apply to the RTI Commission for a review of the decision. The Commission may order the Authority to grant the applicant access to the information requested for or uphold the decision of the Authority after examination and determination.

**Application to High Court for Judicial Review:** In the case where the applicant is aggrieved by the decision of the Commission, he/she shall lodge an application for Judicial Review of the decision to the High Court within twenty-one days after refusal of the application. The High Court shall make an appropriate order after hearing the application and presentations brought before it.

*For further information and enquiries on the implementation of the RTI Law in the Authority, you may contact the RTI Officer via telephone: 0575423335 and email: [vra.rti@vra.com](mailto:vra.rti@vra.com).*

## MY NATIONAL SERVICE WITH VRA HAS BEEN INCREDIBLY REWARDING

Emmanuel Ebow Dadzie, NSP, Human Resources, Aboadze

Over the years the National Service scheme has been synonymous with the development of skill and human capital through practical training with public and private institutions. This obviously is to promote national unity and strengthen the bonds of citizenship especially among young Ghanaian adults who partake in the Service.

As someone who studied Human Resource Management, I was excited to have the opportunity to serve my country through National Service with the Volta River Authority (VRA). Working with the Human Resources Department of VRA in Aboadze was a great experience and I won't trade it for anything.

My year-long National Service experience with the HR department was a fantastic opportunity for me to learn and grow. There were many nuggets of valuable corporate work culture and "spirit" that I will forever live to cherish. These include Teamwork, Commitment, Safety, Resilience, Excellence and the "Can-do-spirit" exhibited by staff every day.

Apart from that, some other key workplace etiquette such as communication, collaboration, human relations, attention to detail, organisation, creativity, and innovation will forever stay with me. I will also miss the HR Fairs, Safety Meetings, Annual Thanksgiving Service, VRA Day celebration among other flagship events on the VRA corporate calendar.

I am eternally grateful to my supervisors who were incredibly supportive and always encouraged me to work hard and achieve my goals be it, short, long, or medium term.

They gave me the opportunity to assist with a wide range of tasks and projects including preparation of official letters, memos, minutes, and reports. In addition, I had the opportunity to assist with the recruitment and hiring processes by reviewing resumes, conducting phone screens, and scheduling interviews.



In effect, working with the Aboadze Area HR Department has helped me gain hands-on experience and develop skills to prepare me for the fast-changing and dynamic work environment. It has also helped me contribute to real business projects and initiatives and gained insights into the complexities of the HR profession by working closely with these experienced HR professionals.

I am extremely grateful for the impact made on my career goals as a result of the mentorship, support, and guidance I received from my supervisors, Mr. Joseph S. Hutchful, Ms. Fortune K. Dzamade and Mrs. Marian Atta-Benyah.

To conclude, I wish to state that my National Service experience with the Volta River Authority was incredibly rewarding, and I am grateful for the opportunity to be part of such a world-class organisation to learn and grow both personally and professionally.

# THE ADVOCATE OF THE VOLTA'S EDGE

By: Karen Eyram Hayibor



The tranquil village of Adzokoe

**N**estled amidst vast stretches of green fields, where the majestic Volta River flowed, lay the tranquil village of Adzokoe. Here, time seemed to flow as gently as the river, and the people lived in harmony with the land that had been their home for generations. It was a place where the customs of old still held sway, and where the breeze carried the whispers of stories yet untold. It was a place where the rhythms of rural life danced to the tune of tradition, where generations tilled the land and upheld age-old customs. However, winds of change were blowing, carrying the knowledge of a daughter of the land, back to her homeland.

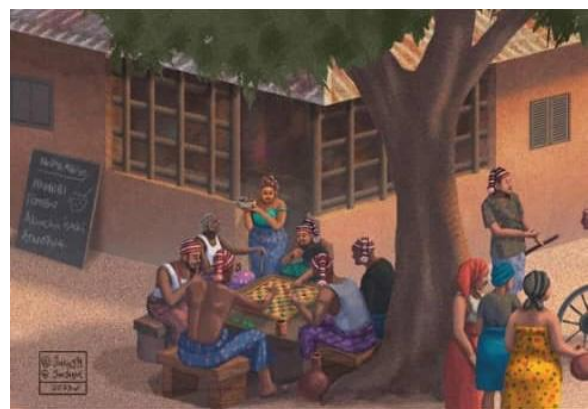
One sunny day, a daughter of Adzokoe returned to her village. Kekeli Kuma had embarked on a remarkable journey that had led her to the bustling city and the halls of justice. She had become a lawyer, and her heart was now drawn back to her homeland, to help the indigenes with the knowledge she had acquired.

The news of her return reached the Chief and elders of the village as the talking drum thundered over the green fields and the Volta River, startling the hornbill and its chick. The women folk returning from the market square with their daily wares scuttled to the village square, menfolk congregated, the atmosphere was thick with anticipation. The Town Cryer stepped forward and bellowed “by this decree do we declare the return of Kekeli Kuma, a prolific daughter of the land who sojourned to the big city to study their ways. We shall all assemble in front of the palace at sunset.”

The villagers gathered in the Chief's palace, their colorful garments and joyful chatter a vibrant tapestry of tradition. Chief Torgbui Adzokoe III, a man of great wisdom and dignity, presided over the gathering, flanked by his council of Elders.

“Welcome home, Kekeli!” Chief Torgbui boomed, his voice carrying the weight of history. “We have awaited your return with great anticipation. Share with us your journey and your dreams for our beloved Adzokoe.”

Kekeli, standing tall and proud, spoke of her travels, of the towering buildings and the maze of laws in the city. She shared the most important thing she had become—a lawyer, a guardian of justice. The villagers listened with rapt attention, their eyes gleaming with hope.



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With humility and determination, Kekeli revealed her plans for Adzokoe. “Noble Chief and Elders,” she began, “I propose the establishment of a local tribunal within this palace—a traditional court that will help us resolve conflicts peacefully and fairly. We will honour our traditions while embracing the law.”

A hushed silence fell upon the gathering as the villagers absorbed her words. The head of the market women in the community, Akosua, who is well known for her cheerful nature and love of novelty, could not contain her excitement. “Oh, what a splendid idea, my daughter!”

She broke out into song under the blanket of a starry sky and the people gathered, dancing to the rhythm of traditional drums, the sound of borbobor, and the sweet melodies of songs passed down through generations.

However, not everyone shared in Akosua’s enthusiasm. A few of the indigenes raised concerns with one declaring “ We’ve managed our conflicts for centuries without such interference.” Kekeli was, however, undeterred, she knew that change was often met with resistance, but it was also the path to progress. She informed the people that she will make her plans clearer in the days to come.



As the sun dipped below the horizon, Chief Torgbui Adzokoe III called for an adjournment of the meeting to the next market day. He stood before the villagers, his voice carrying the sound of hope. “Tonight, we celebrate the return of our daughter,” he proclaimed. “She is our guiding star, bringing light to our beloved village. Let us give her the chance to showcase her new found knowledge. We must embrace change and work together to build a brighter future.”

The villagers moved back to their various homes, excitedly discussing the potential of the tribunal.

In the following weeks, Kekeli conducted educational sessions at the local school, where she shared stories of her sojourn to the big city. “Children,” Kekeli told them, “Our village may be small, but it can produce greatness. Your dreams are like seeds waiting to be sown. Water them with knowledge and hard work, and you will grow into giants.”

On a cool afternoon, as Kekeli walked through the village, an elder named Tordia Zanu approached her with a case. It was a matter of marriage; he has two wives with each demanding equal share of his properties while he is still alive. Kekeli smiled, her first case has arrived and she had to prepare accordingly.

As she walked home that evening, watching the birds flit over the Volta River, and for the first time since she left the big city, she felt she was truly home.

# AN ODE TO THE VOLTA RIVER

By Karen Hayibor



In Ghana's heart, where legends flow,  
The Volta River's currents glow,  
A tale of waters, strong and free,  
I sing of thee, oh Volta

Beneath the African sun's embrace,  
You wind your way, a vital grace,  
From humble source to mighty tide,  
Through valleys deep, you are our guide.

In northern hills, your journey starts,  
A dance of life, where nature imparts,  
Your waters glisten, clear and pure,  
As whispers of the past endure.

Through lush green forests, you course along,  
A serenade of nature's song,  
With every turn, you forge ahead,  
A lifeline for the land you spread.

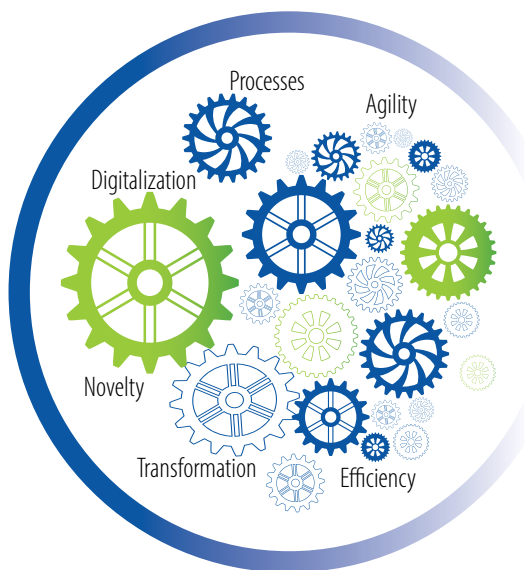
Upon your banks, communities thrive,  
Their hopes and dreams, in you, alive,  
You quench their thirst, you feed their soul,  
In your embrace, they find their goal.

In days of old, and still today,  
You bring the gift of life our way,  
A sacred river, strong and wide,  
Forever in our hearts, you bide.

O Volta, in your waters deep,  
A story of our people's keep,  
You bind us all, a living stream,  
In Ghana's heart, you are our dream.



# LET'S 'SPICE' UP OUR 'BRAISE' STRATEGY



# Creativity & INNOVATION

The Anchor for Our Sustainability

## IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- VRA marks Safety Awareness Day
- Aftermath of the Spillage
- End-of-Year Courtesies

Please send your concerns, questions, congratulatory messages, issues, suggestions, etc., to [corpcomm@vra.com](mailto:corpcomm@vra.com)

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