

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OUTLINES STRATEGY FOR THE 'NEW VRA'

The Chief Executive of the Volta River Authority, Mr. Emmanuel Antwi-Darkwa has reiterated the need for the Authority to undergo a rigorous restructuring and re-orientation exercise.

This according to him is to ensure a rapid turn-around of VRA's fortunes, if it is to remain relevant and competitive in the emerging energy market.

He made the comment when he addressed Staff during the Authority's 57th Anniversary; celebrated on the theme; the "NEW VRA, Powering the future".

The Strategy is the 'BRAISE'

According to the Chief, the key issues to VRA's recovery: low asset utilization, decline in the Authority's market share in the Power Market, competition from IPPs, short-term leadership gap, weak financial performance, has informed the formulation and

execution of the six (6) strategic themes termed:

'BRAISE' the acronym for:

- **Build, nurture and develop VRA's Human Capital**
- **Restore VRA's Finances**
- **Advance Internal and External Business Process**
- **Improve Operational & Project Implementation Efficiencies**
- **Sustain VRA's Position as a Market Leader**
- **Ensure Development in a Sustainable Manner.**

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Ing. Emmanuel Antwi-Darkwa

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE OUTLINES STRATEGY FOR THE 'NEW VRA' - cont'd

B – Build, nurture and develop VRA’s Human Capital: The objective is to ensure Staff in the ‘NEW VRA’ would undertake their activities with a private sector mindset. That the Staff equipped with the required skills and knowledge, would promote a customer satisfaction and value-driven culture. In addition, the strategy is to inure to a succession plan that would cater for the gaps created as a result of a rapidly aging work force: “Strengthen our Human Resource to Realize our Strategic Intent”

R – Restore V R A ’ s Finances: The purpose is to provide effective financial management across all levels of the organization to ensure we strengthen our balance sheet, sustain financial liquidity to guarantee our short to long term financial sustainability, and in the long run wean off from Government of Ghana’s financial support: ‘VRA Beyond Aid’.

A – Advance Internal and External Business Process: Mainstreaming technology including IT in all our business

and operational processes to ensure we reduce our administrative and operational cost and still operate in an efficient and effective manner: “Meeting the Needs and Expectation of the Customer”.

I – Improve Operational & Project Implementation Efficiencies: The

expanding our business portfolio with the view to growing sales and profitability: “Meeting the Needs and Expectations of the Energy Consumer”

E - Ensure Development in a Sustainable Manner: The idea is to take advantage and invest in the natural/renewable energy resources in

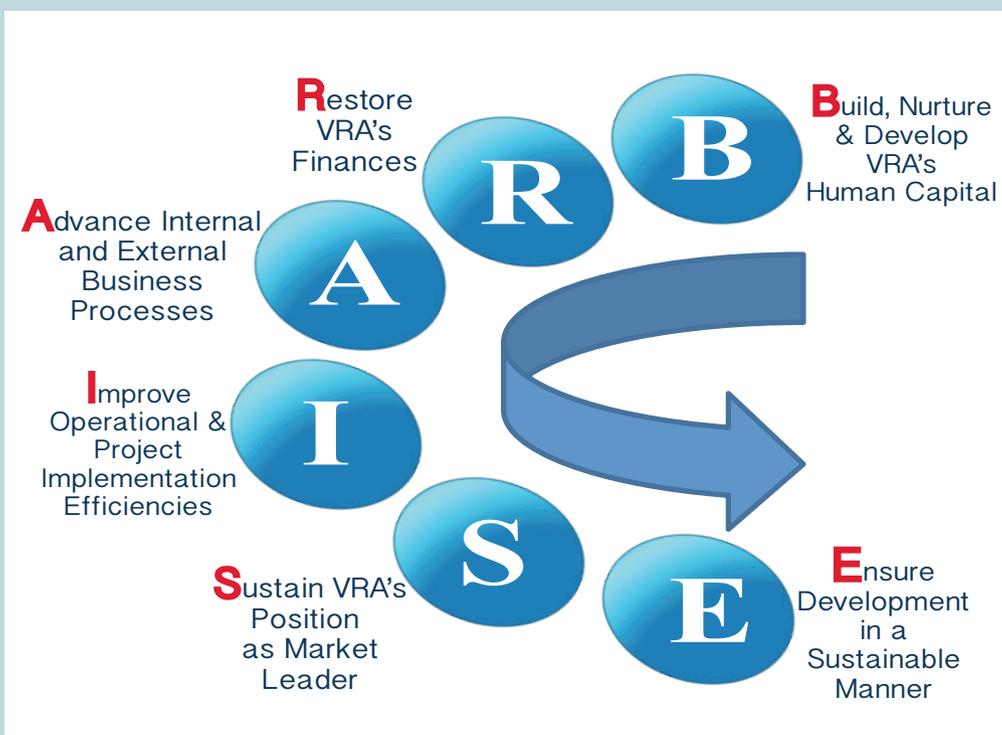
Ghana to remain Leaders in the climate change agenda, this is referred to as: “Leadership in the Climate Change Agenda”

Already Management has shown commitment to implement various initiatives including a 3 - year Financial Recovery

Programme (FRP) and Organizational Restructuring by the year 2020. The Executive and the Corporate Strategy Department have therefore initiated various staff consultations and townhall meetings to sensitize and bring staff up to speed on the programme. The onus now lies on us to rise above the occasion and collectively work towards the singular purpose of making the VRA the Resilient, Sustainable and Growing Multi-Business Holding Company.

rational is to optimize operational costs through competitive procurement of all goods, works and services; optimizing inventory levels, implementing “best practices”, developing bankable projects etc., to become: A Model of Excellence for Power Utilities in Africa.

S- Sustain VRA’s Position as a Market Leader: The aim is to ensure the ‘NEW VRA’ is able to compete favourably in the emerging energy market by diversifying and



BOARD CHAIRMAN SPEAKS ON 'NEW VRA'

As part of the activities marking VRA's 57th Anniversary, the Board Chairman, Mr. Kweku Awotwi, granted an interview to Israel Laryea on a range of issues.

Below are excerpts from the interview:

Board Chairman of the Volta River Authority (VRA), Mr. Kweku Andoh Awotwi, has expressed optimism that plans to restructure VRA into a Multi-Business Holding Company has great potential to succeed.

According to him, though there are no guarantees in life, his certainty is confirmed by the caliber of Board Members appointed to lead the organization. He said, these are men and women with in depth understanding of the issues, and a good sense of the commercial environment. He added, the keenness on the part of Government to

push the agenda as well as the desire of the Management team who actually understand the need for the restructuring gives me a lot of hope.

The Board Chairman made the remark on "Joy News Prime", when he granted an interview to Israel Laryea," as part of activities marking the Authority's 57th Anniversary celebration.

Speaking on the restructuring of the organisation into the 'NEW VRA', he noted that restructuring VRA had actually been long in gestation, adding that several efforts to restructure had been made in the past. He stated that during his time as Chief Executive, similar efforts were made. A lot of ground work

was done at the time. Unfortunately, that was curtailed.

According to him, the new approach is to build VRA into a Resilient, Sustainable and Growing Multi-Business Holding Company, comprising of hydro, thermal and non-power subsidiaries. He said, the idea is to make VRA a much more profitable company with better running efficiencies across board. He explained that the old ways of doing things will not work and so there was the need to make VRA more efficient, more competitive



Mr. Awotwi with Israel Laryea

and more customer phasing”.

Mr. Awotwi stated that ‘the introduction of Independent Power Producers into the system has knocked the Authority of its monopoly status although it still produces about half of the country’s power.’ In that case, the idea of the ‘NEW VRA’ is to partner with the private sector in a joint venture. “We will contemplate the idea that they are the majority partners with about 51% shares; but we would be substantial minority partners in running them”, he added.” He was emphatic VRA would not be just a 10/15% passive investor as we will

bring on board our people, our expertise and our knowledge. Hopefully, they will bring their capital and best practice, which would give us the platform to leverage outside the country.

Doing this he said, will offer VRA the capacity to aggressively go out beyond our frontiers to secure new businesses, on the back of the West African Power Pool, which is slowly connecting all the countries with high voltage transmission lines. This, ultimately, he said, should among others, help address some of

our real liquidity challenges.

On the Non-Power subsidiary, he stated that, they were in the process of re-registering them, putting in new Management Boards and eventually starting the process of finding partners for them.

Responding to the question on whether Staff of VRA had been involved in the drive towards the ‘NEW VRA’, the Board Chairman stated that, the involvement of the Staff is critical at least to the extent of knowing what was going on. He explained that the Staff will be fully apprised once plans are concretized enough to be communicated to them.

All things being equal, if we do things right; we shall succeed in creating a VRA that is financially sustainable, has the capacity to compete favourably in the energy market and has the ability to sustain its position as the market leader, he said.

SENIOR KENYA MILITARY OFFICERS VISIT AGS

Nathaniel Ekue Mensah, General Services Department/Akosombo



Ing. Kenneth Arthur making a presentation to one of the military officers.

Twenty-Nine Senior Military Officers from the National Defense College of Kenya have paid a familiarization visit to the Akosombo Generating Station (AGS).

Receiving the Kenyan delegation who were accompanied by 9 Ghanaian Military Officers, Plant Manager of the AGS, Ing. Kenneth Arthur, acknowledged that the Authority over the years has built a very strong mutual relationship with the Ghana Armed Forces resulting in a number of foreign

military delegations paying working visits to the AGS.

He told the delegation that “As part of VRA’s audacious vision to become a Model of Excellence for Power Utilities in Africa, it was embarking on an initiative that would enable VRA show

leadership in the climate change agenda by investing in Renewable Energy.

The leader of the Kenyan Military delegation and Deputy Commandant of the Kenyan Defence Staff College, Brigadier Simon M. Wachira, commended VRA for the way the station has been operated

over the years. “It is amazing to learn that this Plant was constructed in the 1960s and is still working in a manner that meets modern trends within the energy sectors across the world”. He disclosed that the team’s visit to Ghana was to afford them the opportunity to enhance their knowledge of the social, political and economic sectors of the country.

Chief Technician Engineer (Operating), Mr. Foster Temeng, conducted the guests around the generating facility.



The delegation in a group picture with VRA Officials.

AKOSOMBO, AKUSE LABOUR EXECUTIVES PLEDGE SUPPORT FOR ‘NEW VRA’ AGENDA

Michael Danso, GS/CCU, Akuse

The Leadership of the Volta River Authority (VRA)’s Local Division of the Public Services Workers Union (PSWU) of the Trades Union Congress, have pledged their support for Management’s new policy direction for the Authority.



Staff of VRA with their May Day banner

Speaking to the VRA News in separate interviews on the sidelines of the 2018 Workers Day (May Day) celebration in Koforidua, Mr. David Afful and Mr. Prosper Zentey, PSWU Chairmen for the Akosombo and Akuse local branches respectively, said, “they throw their weight behind Management’s

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Management’s new policy direction of restructuring, refocusing and building the VRA into a Resilient, Sustainable & Growing Multi-Business Holding Company.”

They expressed the hope that the strategic plans outlined by Management to transform and reorganize the VRA will be cascaded down to the Staff to secure their buy-in in order to facilitate its

implementation. As has been the practice, VRA joined other organizations at the Koforidua Jackson’s Park to mark this year’s event. The theme for the event was: **“ Sustainable Development Goals and Decent Work, the Role of Social Partners”**.

The Eastern Regional Chairman of the Trade Union Congress,



Staff of VRA participating in the May Day Celebrations.



VRA Staff in a group picture.

Phyllis Agyemang, in her speech said ‘workers of Ghana will continue to support the good policies of government but will not hesitate to criticize decisions that will not benefit its Workers.

Leadership Quote

“Progress is impossible without change, and those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything”

GOERGE BERNARD SHAW

UPDATE ON KPONG GS RETROFIT

Michael Danso, GSD /CCU, Akuse



Unit 3 rotor being removed from the pit.

Ing. Nana Kum Sam-Awortwi an Officer on the Kpong Generating Station Retrofit Project has stated that retrofit works on Unit 3 of the Kpong Generating Station (KGS) is about 25% complete with refurbishment and installation works on various equipment and components ongoing.

He disclosed that, preliminary works such as the dismantling of turbine, generator, intake gate, electrical and automation systems have been completed. He projected that barring any unforeseen circumstances, work on Unit 3 is expected to be completed by March 2019”.

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Intake gate being removed from the water.

It would be recalled that already, Units 1 & 2 of the KGS have been successfully completed and handed over to the Volta River Authority (VRA) by the project contractor, Andritz Hydro of Canada for commercial operation.



Stator for Unit 3 ready to be lifted.

KPONE THERMAL POWER STATION TO RUN ON GAS

By: John Chobbah, CCU

The Volta River Authority’s Kpone Thermal Power Station (KTPS) is undergoing commissioning to enable it run on Natural Gas (N-Gas).

According to Managers of the Station, the rationale is to improve operational efficiency and most importantly, reduce the current unit cost of electricity generated from the KTPS.

Speaking to the VRA NEWS, Plant Manager for KTPS, Ing. Darlington Ahuble, reiterated that when the Station commenced commercial operations in 2016, it had no

choice than to rely on Distillate Fuel Oil (DFO), following the unavailability of natural gas. This, he said has accounted for the high unit cost of electricity generated from the Station. “With the current increase in supply of gas from Nigeria, the most prudent thing to do, is to complete the commissioning of the Station in order to begin utilising the gas, he stated.”

On his part, the Operations Manager, Ing. Samuel K. A. Yeboah, added that “currently two gas turbines are being commissioned in addition to carrying out some performance tests”. He disclosed that activities undertaken so far include; Min load Testing, Emission and Pulsation Testing, GT Part Load testing, GT Full Load Testing,



An aerial shot of the gas turbine island.

Performance Testing and Load Rejection Testing.” He said, currently the task was largely completed except for a few which could not be undertaken due to low gas pressures.

It is the expectation of the VRA NEWS that the successful commissioning of the Station would facilitate the possible conversion of the Station from a Simple Cycle into a Combined Cycle mode in the future.



Staff working on the natural gas conditioning facility.



MANAGING VRA'S STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AT RISK (PART 2)

Researched by Mr. Christian Cobbinah

Introduction

In the First Part of this article, we discussed the main risks that could impede the achievement of VRA's Strategic Objectives and asked ourselves the relevance of VRA's Operating Business Model, in the light of the fast-changing business environment.

We identified the following, as some of the emerging issues that put the achievement of VRA's strategic objectives at risk:

- Changes in technology resulting in breakdown of entry barriers for new entrants to the power sector.
- The adoption of distributed energy technologies giving power consumers an easier and "short-circuit" access to electricity.
- Falling costs of alternative power sources, which is making new business models to become the norm.
- Exposure to the inherent operational risks of the partners within the grid value chain.
- Increasing regulations, policy shifts and key stakeholders' interference.

This episode will focus on the management of these and other related risks.

Managing the Risks Associated with Achievement of VRA's **Strategic Objectives**.

The general point to note in managing the on-going developments in the power sector that have resulted in VRA losing a significant portion of its market

share (e.g. available data from GRIDCo shows that VRA's market share declined from 92% in 2012 to 65% in 2016 and currently stands at 55%), is for VRA to aim to be better than the other players within the sector, by focusing on what matters to its customers. For the power business; since electricity is a homogenous product, it is important that the power that we sell is competitive, reliable and sustainable. Accomplishing this feat requires VRA to harness its core capabilities, such as its brand, historical sector leadership, relationships with key stakeholders, experienced staff, and at the same time invest in its strengths, whilst addressing its weaknesses.

Specifically, VRA should consider the following to respond to the emerging threats and exploit the associated opportunities:

1. Human Resources and Skills Development

Further investing in staff, by upskilling to ensure that VRA has highly trained and ethical employees that will enable it to stem the tide and eventually stay ahead of the competition. This is because the right people will drive the right outcomes. Leveraging on the on-going staff rotation, and the deployment of an effective scheme of service should enable the Authority to move from the highly inflexible and specialized roles into highly flexible and standardized roles, that allows for flexible staff deployment, multi-skilling and quick role shifting, allowing for adaptive tasks accomplishment.

2. Improve on Customer Engagement

The Authority should reshape its relationships with its customers, by tapping into their motivations and sentiments, and provide them with the complete tools that meet their desires for electricity consumption and management. This is key to some of them, considering the proportion of energy costs to their total operating costs. For example, Gold Fields Limited stated in their Integrated 2016 Annual Report that energy costs accounted for 19% of the Groups operating costs for 2016, up from 18% in 2013.

We should strive to maintain some fundamental relationships with our customers, compared to others, because without this, we are at the will of others to redefine our space, whilst with strong customer relationships, we have tremendous abilities to shape our own future.

3. Consider Innovative Ways of Financing and Accessing Capital

The Authority should sustain the change in mindset from the traditional focus on financing projects and new business ventures on 100% ownership towards a variety of non-traditional financing instruments, by taking advantage of the wide range of potential local and global investors/partners, by implementing selected partnerships with risk-sharing models.

4. Leverage on Technology

The Authority should, as a matter of urgency leverage on emerging

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technologies to improve on its business processes and cut costs by reducing end to end processes and roles. We should sustain our intention to move away from the manual processes (based on paper and print) into a full virtual enterprise with customer-focused, end-to-end digitization, where each piece of data/information is available and accessible in real time

5. Sustain the diversification of VRA's Energy Portfolio

The Authority should sustain the intended diversification of its energy portfolio and venture into other areas of energy generation to improve on availability and reliability. It should use the appropriate technology to ensure achievement of the lowest life-cycle cost/kWh within the sector. This can further be used to reduce the over-exposure to risks in the Grid Value Chain. Research can be undertaken into the profitability of distributed generation; mini-grid to off-grid/standalone installations (e.g. solar or gas) for some of our customer segments, as well as the deployment of large scale solar facility (e.g. 100MW or more) for distribution by NEDCo. This could create an expanded generation capacity and portfolio of

businesses that could improve on our gross profit margins and assure of ultimate net profitability.

6. Harness the Synergies of our Investments/Non-power Business Assets

The Authority should extract the inherent synergies from its non-power assets, by ensuring that they complement each other in their operations, rather than competing against each other. The whole must be greater than the sum of its parts. The Volta Hotel, the Real Estates and Security Department, the VRA Hospital and the Volta Lake Transport Company can all be repositioned to make Akosombo a Hub of Business, Leisure/Tourism, Health Care and Transportation.

For example, the Real Estates and Security Department could remodel some of the vacant staff bungalows into Executive Guest Houses for Corporate West Africa, who could make use of the Hotel's Bar, Restaurant, the Maritime Club and other facilities, with the Hospital ensuring implementation of the Care and Nursing School, with complimentary First-Class Group Homes (i.e. residences for people requiring care or supervision) and VLTC, using PPPs to overhaul its operations and acquire modern cargo and passenger vessels.

7. Proactively Influence Regulatory and Policy Shifts

The Authority should influence emerging regulations and energy sector policy shifts by enacting a policy to guide its engagement with Regulators and Policy Makers (e.g. the Sector Ministry, Energy Commission, Parliament, the Cabinet, PURC, etc.). A Team must be made responsible for understanding emerging policies and regulations, then table and engage Key Stakeholders to consider VRA's input, before such policies are passed or the regulations promulgated.

Conclusion

In the face of business disruptions, such as the transformation in Ghana's Power Sector, it is important to focus on the strategic fundamentals necessary to harness core capabilities, invest in strengths and address existing vulnerabilities to stay ahead of the competition and maintain sector leadership. Let's remember that it is easier to use what we have, to get what we want.

References:

1. *Strategy+Business: The fear of disruption can be more damaging than the actual disruption. By Paul Leinwand and Cesare R. Mainardi. September 27, 2017 Edition*
2. *Gold Fields Limited Integrated 2016 Annual Report.*

DANGME KAKE-PEM KPE REWARDS RETIRED MEMBERS

Michael Danso, Corporate Communications Unit, Akuse

The Dangme Kake-Pem Kpe (Dangme United Association) has eulogized four of its retired members with sendoff packages at the association's annual retirees' send-off and party held in Tema.

The group is a merger of Dangme and Krobo staff employed by the Volta River Authority (VRA) and the Ghana Grid Company (GRIDCo) resident in Accra, Tema,

Akuse and Akosombo.

Mr. Nathan Boye Kudjordjie of the Human Resource Department, Akosombo received a double-door refrigerator, 12 yards of wax prints and a cash amount of GH¢500 as his reward for being the longest serving member for 26 years.

Another member, Mr. Samuel Nartey Mensah of Real Estate and Security Department (RE&SD),



Chairperson, Albert Lamy

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A recipient receiving his award.

was also honoured with a table-top refrigerator, 12 yards of wax prints and a cash prize of GH¢500 for his 17 years of loyalty to the group. Messers Benjamin Meenoi

Addoquaye, and Stephen Nartey of RE&SD and Procurement Department, took home 12 yards of wax prints and GH¢500 each, for serving seven and six years respectively.

The event interspersed with danceable Ga, Krobo and Dangme music renditions, served as an avenue to socialize, share unity, love and camaraderie among members and their relations. Chairman of the Association, Mr. Albert Laryoh commended the retirees for demonstrating loyalty and commitment to the overall



Group members in a photograph.

success of the association. He used the opportunity to admonish staff in active service to work with integrity “so that when it is time to retire we will go home with pride and joy.”

PARENTS ADVISED TO BE CRITICAL ELEMENTS FOR HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS- PROF DUKU OSEI

Nathaniel Ekue Mensah, General Services Department/Akosombo

The Deputy Rector of the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA), Prof. Philip Duku Osei has called for strong collaboration between parents and the educational sector to ensure holistic human development.

Addressing the 7th graduation ceremony of the Akosombo International School (AIS) at Akosombo, on the theme: **“Effective Parenting Today for Holistic Development: The Home and School in Perspective”**, Prof. Duku Osei stated that the school is at the centre of knowledge reproduction and technology while the household or home is the place for nurturing children

and leaders in an environment of warmth and affection. He reiterated that “Holistic Human Development is therefore a reference to a development policy and management approach which ensures the contribution of all agencies including the state, the school, civic association and the family”, he stated

The Guest of Honour and a Member of the VRA Board, Rev. Dr. Joyce Rosalind Aryee, said, “the narrative of education is no longer how many A’s or distinction a person gets, but rather the narrative of education is that one becomes a well-rounded person with social skills such as communication and interpersonal skills.”

She stated that even though integrity is not part of the social skills one needs, any education that is devoid of integrity of the one educated, is no education at all.

“We used to think that because you got good grades



Prof. Duku Osei addressing the gathering

that is it. I know people who got first class but made horrible citizens because they made no attempt to get the other skills,” she said.

She advised the graduands to be engaged in their communities beyond their universities, saying what they do for others would eventually come back to them.

In her address, Director, General Services, Ms. Shirley Seidu, disclosed that research studies have shown that a significant feature of maximizing student success is the participation and supportive engagement of parents as partners in their children’s education.



A cross-section of the graduands

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The Headmaster in a group picture with some of the dignitaries.

She commended Staff of the AIS for their dedication and devotion to duty as well as the Parent Teacher Association for their consistent and constructive support for the school over the years. She congratulated the class of 2018 for choosing to be part of an institution which has made it a duty to instill in them extraordinary abilities, accomplishments and admirable qualities which have prepared them to embrace the future.

The Headmaster, Secondary Division, Mr. Julius Kog-Der said one of the biggest challenges the school is faced with is the lack of adequate infrastructure to accommodate the growing number of applicants seeking admission into the school.

Speaking on behalf of his colleagues, the School Prefect and the overall best student, Master Vincent Ayensu Jr. was grateful to staff of the AIS as well as their parents for the love and care shown them over the years and promised to continue upholding the vital lessons taught them.

A group of students who excelled in their academic work as well as in leadership over the

past year were awarded with prizes from Lancaster University College, Ghana, Webster University College, Ghana and Star Life Assurance. Present at the event were; Ag. DCE (E&O), Ing. Emmanuel Osafo, Director, Technical Services, Mr. Ebenezer Koramoa and staff of the Akosombo International School.



A cross-section of parents and guests at the graduation.

IT PAYS TO LISTEN



HILLARY ANDOH, NSP,GSD, ACCRA

At the end of the day, each one of us will conclude our own stories. Whether or not it will have a happy ending, depends on the content of each chapter. Growing up, there was nothing I lacked. I had everything at my disposal. My parents were one of the wealthiest in the country,

with my dad being a renowned dermatologist and my mum, the Attorney General. I was one of the luckiest children on the face of earth. Being the oldest of four children, I was charged with the herculean task of being a role model, but I felt slightly incapacitated to take up that responsibility as my younger

siblings were a complete nuisance. Besides, I had my own issues to address. I was not about to add mischief to my plate and therefore left the burden of caring for them to our nanny who received a fat check each month for being a guardian.

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HUMAN RESOURCE DEPARTMENT INTERACTS WITH STAFF AT HR FAIR

Hillary Andoh & Abena Serwaa Oppong, NSP-Attachee, GSD, Accra

The Organisational Development & Change Management (OD&CM) Section of the Human Resource Department (HRD) of the Volta River Authority, has engaged Staff at the 2018 HR Fair in Accra.

Organised on the theme: ‘People, Purpose and Performance: Lighting the NEW VRA’, the Fair, offered an interactive platform for the HRD to provide insights on HRD’s policies and Corporate Objectives as well as afford Staff an opportunity to seek clarity on issues of personal concern.

Led by the Areas HR Manager, Mrs. Gwendoline Sam-Appiah, the Team discussed several topics including; Promotions and the 2018



Mr. Steven Ofori making his presentation.

Corporate Budget and Performance.

Issues on promotion

Speaking on the issue on promotions, Manager, Corporate Industrial Relations and Staff Compensation (CIR&SC), Mr. Torgbor Anang, stated, ‘with the current reward system, the term ‘Promotion’ was no longer in use, and that the method of progression had changed.’ He said, promotions are now considered ‘New Appointments’. He explained that with this system, if there was a vacancy in the establishment, it was resourced internally. He cited for instance that, if a Principal’s position became vacant, an Officer could apply; making the Officer’s position

also vacant, thereby causing a rippling effect.

2018 Corporate Budget and Performance

Addressing the issue on the ‘2018 Corporate Budget and Performance’, the Manager, Budget, Mrs. Ama Ocansey Arthur explained, “budget is the monetary aspect of the Corporate Strategy which should be aligned to the Financial Recovery Plan.” She said, the 2018 Budget was prepared under the guidance of a strategy that will allow the Authority to improve its performance and retain its position as a strong player in the Power Market.

She indicated that over the last five years, the Authority’s market share had reduced from 98% to 49% in 2018. This, according to her, was attributable to the emergence of Independent Power Producers into the Power Market. She said if the Authority could maintain its current market position for the next three years, it could regain its position as the market leader.

She added that if the Authority carried out its business effectively and efficiently as planned in 2019 and 2020, it would make profit and end the streak of financial losses the Authority has experienced over the years.

Staff Concerns

After the presentations, the Team paved way for the employees to express their views on business matters. The views expressed by staff focused mainly on the need for HRD to be proactive in providing adequate information on all issues relating to



An HR official addressing the audience.

training and employee benefits. The HR Team provided responses to the queries presented by the staff.

Mrs. Sam-Appiah on her part entreated staff to push to be trained to gain additional skills and knowledge to undertake responsibilities.

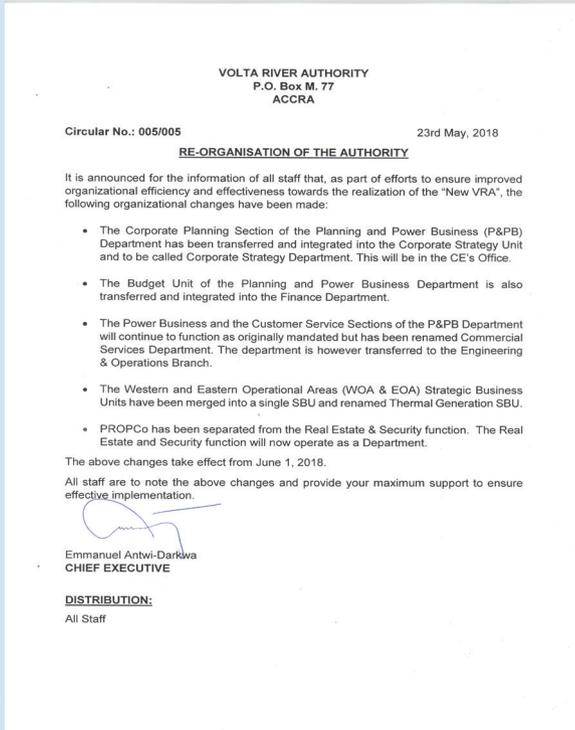
Concluding, the Team explained that the agenda for the ‘NEW VRA’ is to build, nurture and develop a VRA staff who would operate with a commercial and private sector mindset. She said this was critical if VRA wants to become relevant in the competitive market and regain its position as the market leader.

In attendance were Manager, Organizational Development and Change Management (OD&CM), Miss Joyce Asiedu, Manager, Protection and Control, Kpong Generating Station, Mr. Kwaku Sarpong among others.



A section of the Staff at the Fair.

RE-ORGANISATION OF THE AUTHORITY



Ing. Alfred Sackeyfio
(Director, Corporate Strategy)



Dr. Isaac Doku
(Director, Commercial Service)



James Jabari Napour
(Ag. Director Real Estate & Security and Director, Audit)



Ing. Opong-Mensah
(Director, Thermal Generation)

KPONE COMMUNITY SHS RECEIVES LABORATORY EQUIPMENT FROM VRA

John Chobbah & Isaac Ofori, GSD, Tema

The Volta River Authority has donated science laboratory equipment valued at Twenty-five Thousand, One Hundred and Five Ghana Cedis (GH¢ 25,105.00) to the Kpone Community Senior High School.

The donation, though a Corporate Social Responsibility, also forms part of Management's strategy of extending its environmental footprint and adding value to the lives of the residents in the impacted communities.

Presenting the items, Director, General Services, Ms. Shirley Seidu, expressed the hope that the equipment would facilitate the teaching and learning of science in the

school. She urged the students to study hard to become responsible citizens.

Receiving the items, Headmaster of the school, Mr. Wiafe Akenten, thanked VRA for their commendable support and assured that proper care of the items will be taken. He proposed

the naming of the Schools Physics Science laboratory after VRA, considering the Authority's tremendous support to the school. He recounted how, VRA has invested immensely in community development projects in the areas of education, social and economic empowerment.

Items donated included chest freezer, round bottom flask, retort stand and clamp, acids, liquid detergent, disposable gloves, periodic table, pipette, burette, etc.

Present at the event was Manager CSR, Mr. Sam Fletcher, Plant Manager TTPC, Ing. Edward Obeng Kenzo and Information Publicity Officers, Mr. Lawrence Quartey and John Chobbah.



Ms. Shirley Seidu making the presentation.

WILLIAM BOBIE APPOINTED MANAGING DIRECTOR FOR PROPCo



Mr. William Bobie
(Managing Director, PROPCO)

Mr. William Bobie, immediate past Director, Real Estate & Security Department of the VRA has been appointed the Managing Director for PROPCo.

PROPCo, is a fully owned subsidiary of VRA, mandated to hold, manage and develop VRA's non-core real estate assets into profitable ventures.

PROPCo was separated from the

Real Estate & Security Department on June 1, 2018 and has commenced

formal operations from its temporary offices at 135 Mankralo Close, East Cantonments.

Read more on the separation in the Q3 Edition of the Newsletter.

EDRMS TAKES OFF FULLY

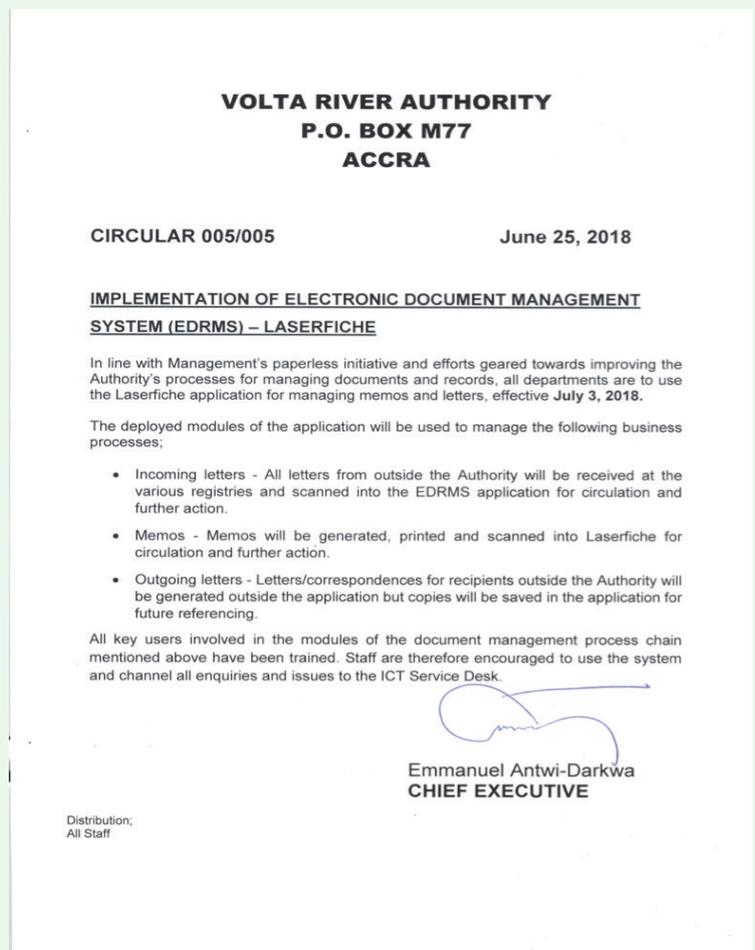
Management's quest to ensure a paperless environment and improve the processes for managing documents and records has received a further shot in the arm.

This follows a directive requesting departments to begin full implementation of the Electronic Document Management System (EDRMS) - Laserfiche, effective July 3, 2018.

The implementation of the EDRMS forms part of Management's strategy to optimize and leverage the Authority's IT infrastructure in a bid to reduce the Authority's operational cost and improve business efficiency.

The VRA NEWS is aware Management has ensured staff involved in the modules of the document management process chain have received adequate training to facilitate implementation of the programme.

On this note, we want to reiterate Management's call that all staff should be encouraged to use the system to ensure we derive the required benefits; particularly as Management makes effort to restructure, and refocus the VRA into a Resilient, Sustainable & Growing Multi-Business Holding Company.





HOME OWNERSHIP IS A STRONG ANCHOR FOR YOUR LIFE

...SPEAK TO **SHLS** NOW!

Key Facts

2 Bedroom Properties - Average Rents

Tema (Estate)	GHS 700 -1000/Mth
Tema	GHS 450-650/Mth
Dansoman	GHS 800-1200/Mth
Kasoa	GHS 500-600/Mth
Nsawam	GHS 400-600/Mth
Dome	GHS 650-1000/Mth
Adenta	GHS 800 - 1000/Mth

3 Bedroom Properties - Average Rents

Tema(Estate)	GHS 1500-2000/Mth
West Legon	GHS 800-1600/Mth
Kasoa	GHS 800-1000/Mth
Nsawam	GHS 700-900/Mth
Dome	GHS 1200-1500/Mth
Adenta / Oyarifa	GHS 700-1500/Mth
Baastona (Spintex)	GHS900-1800/Mth

Mortgage Interest Rates (Gh¢)

HFC Bank	26.2 %
Stanbic Bank	26 %
Ghana Home Loans	29 %
Fidelity Bank	32.9 %
Stand Chart	28 %

Inflation Rate – 10.6 % as at February, 2018
(source: Bank of Ghana)

Contact:
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STAFF HOUSING LOAN SCHEME SERIES

WATCH OUT FOR THE LOAN MANAGEMENT SYSTEM!!!!



SENSITIZATION PROGRAMME ON THE AUTOMATED SYSTEM

The Staff Housing Loan Secretariat in collaboration with M.I.S made presentations to all key stakeholders to sensitize and educate them on the adoption and usage of the automated system.

The programme covered all staff in VRA locations. Akosombo, Akuse, Aboadze, Tema ,Accra and NEDCo.

USER ACCEPTANCE TESTING

The system was tested against the requirements agreed upon. Users of the system performed these tests in Accra M.I.S Conference Room. Representatives from various locations run the test. During this phase procedures and outcomes were tested. Defects were uncovered, some were rectified and closed while others were not resolved and are still open. During the UAT, the real users tested the system against the real work scenarios. The issues that came up were documented to help get a better understanding of what was needed to be done before we go live. These tests evaluated the automated system compliance with the requirements of the Housing Loan Scheme.

Eventually, the application will be put on the V.R.A Portal after we go Live. In the meantime, the following URL can be used to access the application.

housingloan.vra.com.

LAND AND HOUSES FOR SALE IN ACCRA AND TEMA AT A GLANCE

HOUSES / APARTMENTS FOR SALE	TYPE	PRICE	LAND FOR SALE / LOCATION	PRICE	LAND SIZE
TEMA DEVELOPMENT COMPANY	2BR	\$90,000.00	OYARIFA	GHC80,000.00	70 X 100
	3BR	\$180,000.00			
CLIFTON HOMES APT (EAST LEGON)	3BR	\$300,000.00	ADENTA	GHC38,000.00	70 X 100
DEVTRACO	3BR	\$160,000.00	APOLONIA	GHC35,000.00	70 X 100
LAKESIDE ESTATES (NEW LEGON)	2BR	GHC450,000.00	NORTH LEGON	GHC700,000.00	70 X 100
	3BR	GHC500,000.00			
APOLONIA ESTATES	2BR	\$86,599.00	EAST LEGON (Serviced Plot)	\$120,000.00	100 X 80

<i>HOUSES / APARTMENTS FOR SALE</i>	<i>TYPE</i>	<i>PRICE</i>	<i>LAND FOR SALE / LOCATION</i>	<i>PRICE</i>	<i>LAND SIZE</i>
<i>DANPIAH ENTERPRISE</i>	<i>3BR</i>	<i>\$70,000.00</i>	<i>ABOKOBI</i>	<i>GHC30,000.00</i>	<i>70 X 100</i>
<i>GHS HOUSING</i>	<i>2BR</i>	<i>\$50,000.00</i>			
	<i>3BR</i>	<i>\$70,000.00</i>			
<i>SSNIT HOUSING</i>	<i>2BR</i>	<i>\$150,000.00</i>			
<i>DANCITY PROPERTIES ADENTA</i>	<i>3BR</i>	<i>GHC350,000.00</i>			
<i>OYARIFA</i>	<i>2BR</i>	<i>GHC250,000.00</i>			
<i>APOLONIA ESTATES</i>	<i>3BR</i>	<i>GHC250,000.00</i>			

IT PAYS TO LISTEN - cont'd

I went about my life as I deemed fit and the nanny obviously could not scold me or report me to my parents because I had once mentioned that it was not in her place to poke her nose where it did not belong. I had serious problems to deal with, one of which was studying and understanding what I read. I could not spend close to an hour behind my books. I would lose attention and my mind would begin to wander. It was so stressful, especially because I constantly failed all my exams and bore the disgrace of my lecturers publicly lambasting me.

I had to find a solution and fast. My roommate, Alvin, who on several occasions was topping the class introduced me to some medication that was supposed to keep me studying for hours while completely focused. The drug worked like magic. Before I could say jack, my grades were rising and lecturers were patting me at the back. My parents would not stop singing my praises. But, my mum was worried as she did not understand the sudden change. The group I had associated

with, were the worst kind of people. They were involved in all kinds of substance abuse and my mother had advised me time without number to desist from ungodly company. All advice she gave fell on deaf ears. My mind was made up. Each person had their own flaws and I was not about to let some minor flaws mess up my grades.

Soon, situations worsened. I could not go a day without taking the drugs. I would become extremely aggressive and easily agitated. On one such particular day, I badly beat up my younger brother Jonas leaving him severely bruised. My dad almost strangled me to death upon seeing Jonas in that condition. Without hesitation, he asked that I be sent to a rehabilitation center. I obliged ungrudgingly because apparently I was losing my mind. My mum would not stop shedding tears; her oldest son had brought her so much heartache. My heart melted when I saw tears roll down my mother's face. I was ashamed. I had always promised myself never to be the reason my mother would cry. I had broken

that promise.

I spent two months in the facility facing withdrawal and depression. I was put on medication and gradually I responded to treatment. After the first month, I noticed a great improvement. I could study hours on end without the help of any kind of drugs and I had become a staunch member of the Christian Association, sharing my story and encouraging others to turn to God in times when they felt lonely, resentful or that all hope was lost.

After two unending months of being away from home, I came out clean. I was no longer friends with those who led me astray. I studied alone and meditated on the good Book whenever I was not studying. Steadily, I faced all exams that came my way including the finals which I passed and graduated with honours. I had made my parents proud. Standing here today, pursuing a Master's degree at the Harvard University, I cannot help but tell others that it most definitely pays to listen.

VRA PARTICIPATES IN 2018 WEST AFRICA MINING AND POWER CONFERENCE

Isaac Ofori, NSP, GSD / Tema



Mr. Chobbah attending to visitors at the stand

The Volta River Authority participated in the 13th edition of the West African Mining and Power Conference and Exhibition (WAMPOC/WAMPEX) held at the Accra International Conference Center.

The conference and exhibition was held in collaboration with the Ghana Chamber of Mines, on the theme, **“A responsible and sustainable mining industry; A partner for national development”**. The event created a platform for over 150

the various generation portfolios, significant information about the power chain and some potential renewable sites in the country.

In addition, the Chief Executive’s interview with Israel Laryea on the ‘New VRA’ was shown as part of the scheduled activities to mark the “Energy Day”.

delegates whose primary focus centered on the latest regulations, policies, challenges and opportunities in the two sectors.

The VRA mounted an exhibition booth which showcased



A cross-section of delegates listening to the Chief's Message

FIRE EXPERTS INSPECT KPONG GENERATING STATION

Michael Danso, General Services Department, Akuse

A team of experts specialized in Fire and Safety Management from the Ghana National Fire Service

Headquarters, Accra, have undertaken a Fire Safety Risk Assessment of the Kpong Generating Station (KGS).

Affram, stated that “per the law, property developers must ensure fire safety measures are included in their architectural drawings and acquire fire safety certificates after construction.” According to him, that means the Ghana Fire Service needs to acquaint themselves with the services, size of premises, number of employees and the availability of fire protection provisions at the facility.



The fire delegation at KGS premises.

The inspection according to the inspectors is to facilitate the Authority’s acquisition of a Fire Safety Certificate for the KGS.

Speaking during the inspection, the Principal Fire Officer, VRA Akuse Fire Protection Unit, Mr. Maxwell

Contd. on pg.17

Contd. from pg.16



The fire team taking a tour of KGS

Divisional Officer Grade II of the GNFS, Evans Osei Owusu, who led the inspection, expressed satisfaction with the

firefighting equipment at the Plant, but was concerned about the housekeeping activities; taking into consideration the ongoing retrofit project. On his part,

Head of Safety, at the KGS, Mr. Oscar Agyemang, stated that “internal fire inspections are done periodically at the

Plant to maintain high safety standards.”



The team inspecting the KGS facilities.

VRA TAKES OVER MANAGEMENT OF FIVE (5) MINI GRIDS

Michael Danso / Nathaniel Mensah, GSD, Akuse/Akosombo

The Volta River Authority has officially taken over the management of 5 mini grid systems constructed by the Ministry of Energy.

The mini-grids were constructed to provide electricity for island communities on the Volta Lake. Speaking at the handing over ceremony, Ing. Andrew Tonto Barfour, Director and Project Coordinator of Ghana Energy Development and Access Project, stated that ‘the systems are being

handed over to the VRA to ensure their long term sustainability; in terms of its operations and maintenance.’

Chief Director of the Ministry of Energy, Mr. Lawrence Apaalse, in an address stated that “government has adopted renewable energy-based mini grid systems for the electrification of island and landscape communities to facilitate government’s agenda of universal energy access by 2030.”

In his acceptance speech, Director, Hydro Generation, Ing. Charles des Bordes, expressed VRA’s gratitude to the Ministry for mandating them to take over the



A section of the community at the event.



Ing. Charles des Bordes addressing the audience.

management of the project. He said, ‘the decision is a vote of confidence in VRA’s capabilities in running the mini grids considering the experience it has gained through the management of the Authority’s 2.5MW solar plant in Navrongo.’

He assured of the Authority’s

Contd. on pg.18

Contd. from pg.17



An official of the Ministry handing over the Solar PV and Wind Mini Grid certificate to Ing. des Bordes.

preparedness to ensure that the facilities perform at their optimum levels in order to derive the required benefits. Chief of Old Nkomi, Nana Wayo Dagodzo, on behalf of the communities expressed gratitude to the

Government of Ghana, the World Bank and other relevant stakeholders for providing the facility.

ENERGY COMMISSION COMMENDS KPONE THERMAL POWER STATION

John Chobbah, GSD / Tema.

Mr. Eric Ofori-Nyarko, Director, Social, Environmental Impact and Technical Assessment of the Energy Commission has commended Managers of Volta River Authority's Kpone Thermal Power Station (KTPS) for their safe practices.

Mr. Ofori-Nyarko gave the commendation at a mini-stakeholders meeting organized to monitor and discuss the Station's emergency preparedness plan. The meeting also afforded the

team the opportunity to acquaint themselves with the Authority's safety activities. According to the members of the Commission, their field monitoring of the Authority's activities showed it carries out its operations according to best practices, a situation

Mr. Ofori-Nyarko noted had exceeded his expectation.

Speaking on behalf of Management, Plant Manager of KTPS, Ing. Darlington Ahuble, thanked the inspection team and assured them of the Station's desire to continue working hard to meet the Commission's safety standards. He praised his team for their good work and entreated them to always stay



Team from Energy Commission in a group picture with VRA Staff.



KTPS officials in a meeting with representatives from the Energy Commission.

prepared for such impromptu inspections.

Present at the meeting were Ag. Director, Social, Environmental Impact and Technical Assessment, Mr. Lester Vanlare; Technical Manager, KTPP, Ing. George J. Amegashie, Maintenance Manager, Ing. Samuel Yeboah; Principal Environment Officer, Seyram Dzefi and Information/Publicity Officer, John Chobbah.



OUR IMPACTED COMMUNITIES - THE UNPLEASANT TRUTH

Lawrence Quartey

The Volta River Authority's actions and inactions in the past in terms of community engagements have created a certain mind-set for the impacted communities, especially persons living in the resettlement areas.

The way we have engaged our impacted communities coupled with unguided promises and fragmented communication had, to some extent, encouraged



Settlers moving into a resettlement house during the Akosombo Dam Project

settlers to demand more even for the least trivial things they could do for themselves.

Gradually, the Authority is realizing that it can no longer continue to meet some of the demands that keep coming from the resettlement and impacted communities. The communities' feeling of uncertainty about their fate and disempowerment are to some degree a product of how we have managed our relationship with them in the past.

The communities now feel entitled carrying the notion that VRA is a big organisation with an open purse they can access any day, any time. This, they had done through petitioning the Chief Executive of the VRA or staging a protest and using the local media to advance their cause.

Confirming this culture of dependency, a settler at Torgorme during a meeting in Accra retorted: "VRA is our mother and we know whenever we come to you, you will help us..." Even in areas where

VRA had paid full compensation for acquired lands, settlers do not hesitate to run to VRA for support and or to take responsibility for community development issues as and when they think or feel so. The rather worrying part of the matter is

when some individuals or group from the communities, attempt to threaten the Authority to fulfil outrageous demands.

The situation has become unbearable and is posing serious threat to VRA's social licence in some acquisition areas where resettlement issues have become volatile. If issues of sustainability were adequately considered in

problem. If after close to 60 years of handling resettlement, settlers are still trooping to the VRA to demand broken windows to be fixed then it reveals to us the seriousness of the situation in terms of ownership of projects delivered to the communities.

A case in question is the West Kpong Resettlement Community in the Lower Manya District. The community Town Management Committee and Council Elders wrote to VRA asking it to convert nine toilet facilities (KVIPs) it (VRA) provided for the community 15 years ago, into modern Water Closets facilities. Another intriguing request they made was for the Authority to come and dislodge the KVIPs septic tanks because they were all full. Interestingly, to justify their demands, the town management committee said it was not in a position to pay for the dislodgement because it had no money and do not have any means of mobilizing funds for development projects in the community. This smacks of lack of sense of ownership and

deficiency in community responsibility.

One of them reminded the VRA saying: "But you (VRA) promised us that anytime we needed anything we should channelled it through writing." To them that has been the relationship over the years so they did not see anything wrong asking VRA to

take up the dislodgement of their lavatory septic tanks.

To be continued in the next edition.



dealing with the resettlement, perhaps the story would have been different. This is the crust of the

EFUA GARBRAH-SARFO BIDS FAREWELL TO VRA

Hillary A. Andoh/GSD-CCU/ACCRA



Mrs. Efua Garbrah-Sarfo in a group picture with some Management and Staff.

Mrs. Efua Garbrah-Sarfo, immediate past Director of the Human Resources Department (HRD) of the Volta River Authority (VRA), has bid farewell to the Authority after thirty-five years of service.

In a succinct but poignant valedictory message, Mrs. Garbrah-Sarfo, expressed appreciation to all for their support while she carried out her responsibilities in the various capacities she served.

A citation presented to her by the Deputy Chief Executive (Services), Mr. Kofi Ellis, on behalf of the Authority and read by Principal Human Resource Officer, Mrs. Gwendoline Jane Sam-Appiah, in part, described Mrs. Garbrah-Sarfo as an “unwavering, uncompromising and principled woman who worked for the Authority

with zeal, dedication and commitment.”

Mr. Ellis acknowledged that one remarkable thing about Efua was that “she would go all length to deliver on what was expected of her”; a value which he said was critical to the

growth of the Authority. He entreated staff still in service to emulate that value; especially as Management takes steps to restructure, refocus and transform the VRA into a Resilient, Sustainable and Growing Multi-Business Holding Company.

Mrs. Garbrah-Sarfo joined VRA in 1982 as a teacher at the Akosombo International School. She made a mark wherever she went with her proficiency and prowess in the French language. After several years at the school,

she joined the HRD, as a Senior Manager, responsible for Corporate Industrial Relations and Staff Compensation. In September 2015, she took up a fresh responsibility at the VRA Academy; as Chief Learning Officer. After a rather short but memorable stay, she was assigned to the General Services Department as Director. She rejoined the HRD as Director, a position she held until her retirement on May 15, 2018.

Many who were present at the event shared their fondest memories of Efua Garbrah-Sarfo and how she had impacted on their lives.

Dignitaries who graced the occasion were her husband and former Chief Executive of the VRA, Mr. Owura Sarfo; newly appointed Managing Director of PROPCO, Mr. William Bobie; Director, Legal Services, Mrs. Ellen Bannerman-Quist; Adviser on VRA Academy, Mrs. Bevelyn Asamoah; Manager, Internal Audit, Mr. Kojo Asamoah-Aning; and Manager, Corporate Communications, Mrs. Gertrude Koomson among others.



Mrs. Efua Garbrah-Sarfo with her husband and former C.E Mr. Sarfo



Doctor's Corner

SUGAR: WHY IT IS SWEET POISON (part 1)

Sugar is the name commonly given to the sweet-tasting, soluble carbohydrates, many of which are used in food. There are various types of sugar derived from different sources. Simple sugars are called monosaccharides and include glucose (also known as dextrose), fructose, and galactose. The "table sugar" or "granulated sugar" usually used as food is sucrose, and made of two monosaccharides; glucose and fructose. The average person consumes about 24 kilograms (53 lb) of sugar each year (33.1 kg in developed countries), equivalent to over 260 calories per person per day. There is increasing evidence that excessive intake of carbohydrates may have a role in the epidemic of obesity and insulin resistance. Low-carbohydrate diets on the other hand have been found effective at inducing weight loss, often with improvement in levels of fats in the blood. One of the mechanisms by which these are thought to happen revolves around the fructose content of carbohydrate-containing foods.

Fructose is found in many plant sources like honey, fruits, flowers, and root vegetables, and is one of the three basic forms of sugar that our body can use as fuel (the other two are glucose and galactose). It is also found in high-fructose corn syrup (HFCS) which is derived from corn starch. It is broken down to form corn syrup, which is essentially 100% glucose. To make HFCS, enzymes are added to corn syrup in order to convert some of the glucose to fructose. It

has high relative sweetness, being the sweetest of all naturally occurring carbohydrates. HFCS is mainly used in processed foods, cereals, baked goods, and some beverages, as well as in soft drinks. By its nature fructose intake does not lead to an increase in glucose and insulin levels in the blood because of its low glycaemic index (0.2 compared to that of glucose which carries the highest glycaemic index of 1.0). It was therefore considered for use in weight management. However, a marked increase in



fructose intake in the USA during the early 70s also saw widespread increases in weight. Whereas our ancestors had problems to find sugar (fruits at seasons and honey), agricultural and industrial developments have made sugar cheap and abundant.

This article will attempt to shed some light on how sugar endangers our health and the role fructose plays in all that. Studies suggest that it is the fructose content in added sugars, which may account for why sugary soft drinks are so strongly linked with many health effects.

Fructose differs from glucose in a number of ways:

- Fructose absorption in the intestine occurs by a mechanism different

from that of glucose and its absorption is slower.

- Fructose is also transported into cells via a different transporter than glucose. Consuming glucose with fructose at the same time accelerates the absorption of fructose.

- Unlike glucose, fructose does not stimulate a substantial insulin release.

- When metabolized in the liver, it can provide glycerol, the backbone of triglycerides (fat), and increase fat formation.

- Some people may have an inability to completely absorb fructose when they consume large quantities. They suffer fructose malabsorption marked by bloating, flatulence, and diarrhea.

- In contrast to glucose, fructose is not essential for biochemical reactions. Thus, we can manage without it.

The body has the capacity to convert glucose that is taken in the diet to fructose; and studies have shown that the harmful effects of glucose are largely due to the conversion of glucose to fructose.

The following are some of the ways research suggests sugar may be harming us:

Metabolic syndrome: Intake of fructose can induce all the features of the metabolic syndrome. Metabolic syndrome is a cluster of conditions — increased blood pressure, high blood sugar, excess body fat around the waist, and abnormal cholesterol or triglyceride levels — that occur together, increasing one's risk of heart disease, stroke and diabetes.

To be continued in the next edition.

ENSURING GREEN BANKS THROUGH LOCAL INVENTION: (The Climate Smart Stoves)

Volta Lake, the main source of hydroelectric power is a strategic water resource and asset for Ghana and neighboring countries in West Africa. Protection of this asset is a major concern to the Volta River Authority (VRA). In addition to protecting the Lake, VRA is entrusted with the protection of the Volta Lake environment.

Since 1994, VRA through its agency, the Environmental & Sustainable Development Department (E&SDD) has used diverse means to ensure proper protection of the Volta Lake. *Some of these strategic interventions include:*

- Organization of environmental education programmes in riparian communities and schools.
- Establishment of forest cover along the banks of the Volta Lake and some of its tributaries (Reforestation).
- Provision of alternative livelihood ventures (examples)
- Banning of human activities that are inimical to the environment of the Volta Gorge environment such as; felling of trees, sand winning, draw-down farming, cattle grazing, and charcoal making.

Introduction of the Climate Smart Stoves (CSS)

In 2016, the VRA in collaboration with the Fisheries Commission, Asuogyaman Zonal Office; introduced the fuel efficient and energy saving cook stoves Climate Smart Stoves to 20 riparian communities of the Volta Lake, as an additional intervention to reduce the consumption of firewood as a fuel in the Volta Lake Basin, through hands-on training of

community members in the construction of CSS

Benefits associated with the use of CSS:

- Reducing forest degradation through reduced consumption of firewood as wood fuel in the Volta Lake basin.
- Reducing emission of biogenic greenhouse gases (GHGs) and mitigating climate change impacts, which can be used as part of the Authority's efforts to offset



Community member using CSS at Odomitor in the Biakoye District

greenhouse gases emissions from its power plants.

- Reducing householders' cash outlays for fuelwood.
- Diminishing the time community members must spend to collect fuel wood, reducing air pollution, and relieving local pressure on wood resources.
- Reducing exposure to excessive smoke and heat.

Features of the Climate Smart Stove

- The CSS is built from clay with small quantity of sand (0.5% of total volume) and water.
- The stove has an elevated chimney of diameter 100 mm fitted behind and

is primarily designed to remove the smoke from the cooking area.

- It has a long inner firepot of (L x H) 920 x 310 mm for front loading of wood fuel.
- The stove can accommodate two (2) cooking pots (Size 3 and Size 1½) weighing 1.711 kg and 1.132 kg respectively instantaneously.
- The top frame or structure of the combustion chamber Six (6) pieces of iron rods of dimension 12 x 600 mm (D x L) were used to reinforce the.
- The gap between the pots base to the floor of the firepot is 300 mm.
- The walls of the combustion chamber are 220 mm thick without lining and has an overall dimension (L x W x H) of 950 x 720 x 330 mm.

Performance of the CSS

After a scientific assessment in terms of fuel efficiency and carbon savings, in comparison with the traditional 'tripod cook stoves'; the CSS has been identified as being more

efficient in the use of fuelwood; with fuel savings of 51.45% and a fuel processing rate of 76.6%. In terms of carbon dioxide savings, the CSS is superior with 664kg Co2 savings per year per stove. Additionally, the CSS also meets the Energizing Development (EnDEV) requirement of 40% fuel saving and therefore qualifies to be promoted for both domestic and institutional usage.

Future Prospects of CSS

It is the intention of VRA to replicate the CSS in all the forty (40) riparian communities which are implementing its reforestation programme.

THE MORNING HOAX

Mavis B. Osei - Intern CCU, Accra

On a very cloudy morning on Thursday, June 21, 2018, I got to work around 6:30am to complete a research work my supervisor had assigned me the day before.

I was engulfed so much in what I was doing that I became oblivious of my surrounding. As I read, I heard an unusual alarm sound within the building but my concentration on the document left me nonchalant. After a while, I noticed the sound was getting louder, there, I got concerned and decided to find out what was happening. To my surprise, everyone on my floor had started moving out of their offices heading towards the staircase.

One interesting observation was that, everybody was heading down using the staircase. So I asked myself, “ why exit the building using the staircase while the elevators are relaxed?”. Without an answer, and also lost on what was going on, I took my purse together with my phone and followed them without any idea of where we were heading towards. On heading downstairs, others were gathered at

the assembly point of the building, whilst we joined. Subsequently, others joined. I was informed by a staff that the sound was an emergency alarm. It was then I started looking for my other colleagues who were not around because i feared something might have happened to them, I sighed with relief when I realized they were all around.

On the lawn, people had gathered in groups discussing what had happened. Whiles at it, a tall, light skinned gentleman came to address us that it was a fault that triggered the alarm and it has been resolved. It was after he left that my colleague worker told me he was the safety officer.

We then left to our various offices, everything had returned to normalcy as work continued.

After three hours, the alarm started sounding again. As usual, people started moving out. But this time around, the numbers on the staircase had reduced drastically because they thought it was another false alarm. After a short while, the alarm stopped so we decided to wait a

while to see if it will sound again before we returned to our offices with everyone complaining about the incident. Some were really tired because they had to come down from the eleventh floor.

Even though we did well by responding to the sound because it showed how attentive we were to the emergency alarm, we were reluctant in getting down. That could have caused a stampede if we had started rushing once they realized it was an actual emergency.

Based on my observation I realized it took 15 to 20 minutes for everyone to exit the building which should not be so. According to some of the staff, they thought it was a drill because it usually happens when they are testing how staff will respond to the alarm should there be a fire outbreak making them delay.

I therefore believe that all staff should be sensitized on the need to exit the building in time in order to avoid massive stampede should reality strike.

ING. ALEXANDER DUNCAN REYNOLDS RECEIVES KTPS SAFETY PERSONALITY AWARD

Jackson Arhinful Arthur, NSP, CCU Section, GSD/Tema



Ing. Alexander Duncan Reynolds

Ing. Alexander Duncan Reynolds, Mechanical Maintenance Team Leader at the Kpone Thermal Power Station (KTPS) has been named recipient of the newly instituted KTPS ‘Safety Personality Award’ for the first quarter of the year 2018.

For his award, Ing. Alexander Reynolds, was presented with a citation

signed by the Plant Manager. Also, a framed portrait picture of the winner would be displayed at all vantage points at the Station.

According to the Plant Manager, KTPS, Ing. Darlington A. Ahuble, the objective for the award is to motivate staff to report hazards to prevent the occurrence of accidents and incidents, with the view to effect corrective actions.



Renewable Energy

Come Partner us to make a Huge Difference!

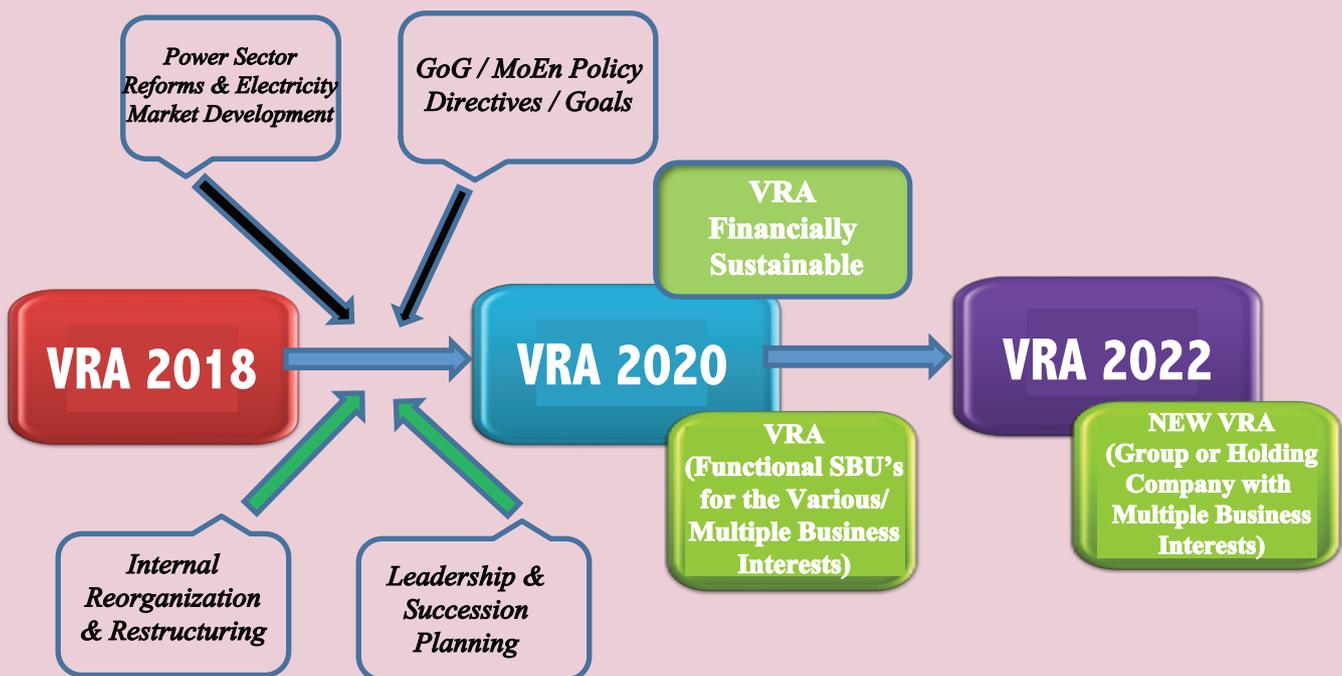
Our Mission:

The Volta River Authority exists to power economies and raise the living standards of the people of Ghana and West Africa. We supply electricity and related services in a reliable, safe and environmentally friendly manner to add economic, financial and social values to our customers and meet stakeholders' expectations.

OUR VALUES

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

ROAD MAP TO THE NEW VRA



IN THE NEXT ISSUE:

- ◆ **CE'S Staff Durbar**
- ◆ **Update on Propco's Separation**
- ◆ **Ensuring Green Banks Through Local Invention**

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

For further information/enquiries, contact
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PLC 724252/413/309/453. Also visit [w www.vra.com](http://www.vra.com)