

GHANA BOOK DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (GBDC)

2014 ANNUAL REPORT

(JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2014)

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1.1 ACRONYMS

CAGD	Controller and Accountant General's Department
GABDI	Ghana Association of Book Designers and Illustrators
GAW	Ghana Association of Writers
GBDC	Ghana Book Development Council
GBPA	Ghana Book Publishers Association
GES	Ghana Education Service
GETFund	Ghana Education Trust Fund
GOG	Government of Ghana
MOE	Ministry of Education

1.2 LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 2014 GoG Approved Budget and Releases

1.3 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Ghana Book Development Council is governed by a twelve-member Board with representation from relevant stakeholders such as Ghana Book Publishers Association, Ghana Library Board, Ghana Printers and Paper Converters Association and representatives of the Ministry of Education, among others.
2. The Secretariat of the Council currently has eleven permanent staff out of the established post of seventeen and two staff on secondment from Controller and Accountant General's Department (CAGD). There are also four others on national service.
3. This report highlights the major activities for the period January to December 2014 and outlines the programmes planned for the 2015.

1.3.1 Major Activities from January to December 2014

1.3.1.1 Book Fairs

4. The Council held a book fair at Keta in the Volta Region in October 2014 aimed at promoting locally produced books as well as promoting a book-buying culture in the municipality.
5. The Council also collaborated with the Ghana Book Publishers Association and other stakeholders to organize the 2014 Ghana International Book Fair. The five-day fair was held from November 4 to November 8 at the Ghana International Trade Fair Centre under the theme "A Reading Nation is a Winning Nation".

1.3.2 Reading Clinics

6. In collaboration with the Ghana Association of Writers and other stakeholders, the Council held a number of reading clinics in the Akuapem North Municipality, Sunyani and Wa

for basic school pupils and senior high school students with the aim of promoting a reading and creative writing culture among school children.

7. The Council also provided editorial input into the “GAWSOP FILLA”, a magazine which seeks to promote creative writing among senior high students.

1.3.3 Institutional Development

8. The Council undertook a number of activities aimed at developing its institutional capacity. These include the compilation of standard procedures manuals and control processes, internal training in ICT for selected staff as well as resumption of the processes for a scheme of service and a draft Bill in collaboration with the Public Services Commission and the Legislative Committee of the Ministry of Education respectively.

1.3.4 Activities Planned for 2015

9. A summary of activities outlined for 2015 are:

- Promotion of reading and creative writing through formation of reading clubs for basic schools, creative writing clubs for senior high schools and a national drawing competition for upper primary and junior high schools;
- Promotion of books through book fairs;
- Promotion of industry standards by developing standards for publishing and printing, in line with best practice;
- Promotion of excellence in the book industry by reinstating the national book industry awards;
- Institutional capacity development through the development of procedures manuals, completion of the scheme of service started this year, continuous professional

development and training of staff, performance management and continuing the process of developing a proper legal framework for the Council.

1.3.5 Major Challenges of the Council

10. The Council is very constrained in terms of human resources and finances. The current staff strength of 11 is made up of an executive director, two core staff and eight supporting staff. This has negatively affected the ability to plan and execute programmes on a timely basis. To resolve it, the Council, in collaboration with the Public Services Commission, is preparing a scheme of service after which an evaluation of the skills/capacity of staff will be done to inform the necessary steps to resolve this challenge.

11. The Council is also facilitating the process of the formulation of a draft Bill to give the Council the needed legislative backing for the generation of funds, among others, to ease the dire financial constraints facing the Council.

2 INTRODUCTION

12. This report is on activities undertaken by the Council for the period under review, that is, January to December 2014. It is presented in five parts. Part 1 is the Table of Contents and Executive Summary, Part 2 is the General Profile of the Council, while Part 3 outlines the activities undertaken during the period. Part 4 is on the challenges faced by the Council.

3 PART 2: GENERAL PROFILE OF THE COUNCIL

1. The Ghana Book Development Council (GBDC) was established by Gazette Number 65 published on 5th December 1975, to act as the national agency for the concerted planning, coordination and management of the activities of all groups and individuals concerned with book development. The Council was inaugurated on April 2, 1976 and began full operations in January 1977.

2. The vision of GBDC is to nurture and develop an indigenous and vibrant book industry that will provide a foundation for the creation of a functionally literate society.

3. The main objectives of the Council are to:

- a. stimulate and co-ordinate the publication and use of books in such a manner that they become effective tools of national development and to integrate book promotion plans into the overall national development planning;
- b. act as a National Agency for the concerted planning, co-ordination and management of activities of all groups and individuals concerned with book development;
- c. encourage indigenous authorship and ensure the provision of opportunities for local writers, publishers, translators and printers;
- d. ensure the establishment of a suitable machinery for the promotion of reading among all age groups, particularly among children;
- e. ensure the development of the infrastructure of the Book Industry in particular through the establishment, support and formation of professional associations, e.g.

- writers, illustrators and book designers, publishers, printers, booksellers and librarians;
- f. make recommendations for national book development policies;
 - g. generally, to undertake or promote such activities as will ensure the full development of books in Ghana.
4. The Council is governed by a twelve-member Board with representation from the Ministry of Education, Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration, GIMPA, Ghana Book Publishers Association, Ghana Printers and Paper Converters Association and the Government, among others.
5. The establishment warrant of the Secretariat is seventeen. The staff strength as at 31st December 2014 is eleven. An additional two on secondment from Controller and Accountant General's Department are in charge of the Accounts Department. Four national service personnel were also posted to the Council in October 2014.
6. The eleven staff is made of up an executive director, two book development officers, one typist, one administrative assistant, one records assistant, one driver, one messenger, one night security man and two cleaners.
7. During the third quarter of the year, the tenure of office of the acting Executive Director came to an end upon his attainment of the compulsory retirement age of sixty years. A new Executive Director has since been appointed and has assumed duty.

4 PART 3: ACTIVITIES DURING THE PERIOD

8. The major activities undertaken by the Council are outlined below.

4.1 Vacation Reading Clinics for Basic Schools

9. As part of activities aimed at promoting a reading culture in the country, GBDC collaborated with the Ghana Education Service (GES), Ghana Association of Writers (GAW) and BIBLIONEF International, a non-governmental organization, to organize vacation reading clinics for basic schools in the Akuapem North District in 2013. Participants were from Nsutam M/A Primary, Okrakwadwo M/A Junior High School, Amanfro Salvation Army Primary and Kobokobo RC Primary.

10. Subsequently, between February and May 2014, GBDC and the other collaborators undertook monitoring visits to these schools to assess how the reading clubs were performing. It was observed that the reading clubs were functioning. Additional reading materials were therefore presented to them by BILIONEF and the pupils were encouraged to continue reading.

4.2 Reading and Writing Clubs

11. In Collaboration with Ghana Association of Writers and Ghana Education Service, the Council organized a number of reading and writing workshops for selected senior high schools in the Brong Ahafo and Upper West regions in February and March 2014. Reading and creative writing clubs were formed in twenty senior high schools in Brong Ahafo region and fifteen senior high schools in the Upper West region.

12. Additionally, in October 2014, reading clubs were formed in two basic schools in the Volta region; EP Basic School at Anloga and RC Basic School at Abor. A total of thirty pupils

from each school participated. They were taken through reading skills such as pronunciations, observing punctuation marks such as commas and full stops and how to keep and mend books.

13. During the formation of the reading clubs at Abor and Anloga, it was observed that relatively the girls, who constituted about 70% of the participants, could read better than the boys.

14. Additionally, in a bid to promote reading and resource community libraries with reading materials, the Council donated assorted supplementary readers to the Kosi Kedem Library and ICT Centre at Logba in the Volta region.

4.3 Training of Teachers to Facilitate Reading Clubs

15. A training session was held in Sunyani for sixteen senior high school teachers drawn from various schools in the Brong Ahafo Region to facilitate the running of the reading clubs in their respective schools. The training sessions were held in July 2014.

4.4 Book Fairs

4.4.1 District Book Fairs

16. A book fair was held at Keta in the Volta region from 29th September 2014 to 4th October 2014 with outreach programmes at Anloga and Abor. The aim of this book fair was to bring together publishers and booksellers on one hand and end users of books and other instructional materials on the other hand for the purposes of making books not only available but also affordable at reduced book fair prices.

17. To effectively undertake the fair, a planning committee was formed with staff from GBDC and the Keta Municipal Education office. The committee was responsible for the venue,

security of the wares i.e. books and other teaching and learning materials, as well as the opening ceremony, among others. Announcements were made on Jubilee FM, a local radio station together with a talk show and live interview on the rationale for the book fair. Letters were also sent to local churches and six banners hung at vantage points in the municipality to publicize the fair.

4.4.2 Ghana International Book Fair

18. GBDC collaborated with the Ghana Book Publishers Association (GBPA) in planning and organizing the Ghana International Book fair which took place from 4th to 8th November 2014 at the Ghana International Trade Fair Centre, La- Accra under the theme, “A Reading Nation is a Winning Nation”.

4.5 National Children’s Drawing Competition

19. In collaboration with the Ghana Association of Book Designers and Illustrators (GABDI), the Council is organizing a national children’s drawing competition aimed at developing the creativity of pupils, particularly with respect to drawing and illustration. The competition, to be held on regional basis in the first instance, will see the best two participants from each region, participating in the national finals. The Council aims at seeking sponsorship for the best three participants at the national finals to participate in an international children’s drawing competition. An evaluation panel has been formed and the design of adverts completed. The actual competitions will start in 2015. In all, the best twenty five entries will be awarded.

4.6 Revival of the “Talents for Tomorrow” Series

20. The Council, in collaboration with the Ghana Association of Writers (GAW), Graphic Communications Group, GES and other stakeholders, is seeking to revive the “Talents for Tomorrow Series”, a lapsed creative writing and educational programme which was aimed at promoting creativity in students through drama, dancing, poetry, storytelling and writing among others.

21. As part of this initiative, senior high school students were encouraged to write pieces to be published in a magazine titled “GAWSOP FILLA”. GBDC provided editorial input to the magazine. A draft copy of the magazine has been printed. The final copy, to be distributed to senior high schools, is yet to be printed.

4.7 Institutional Development

22. On the assumption of duty of the new executive director, a decision was taken to review the Council’s processes and controls to make them effective and relevant to achieving the Council’s objectives and functions. A decision was also taken to build the capacity of staff and equip them with critical skills needed for their functions. The activities undertaken in furtherance of developing the institutional capacity of GBDC are enumerated below.

4.7.1.1 Staff Training

23. An in-house training in ICT was held in September for five staff who have little or no knowledge in ICT. The staff were taken through basic Microsoft Office programmes such as Excel, Word and PowerPoint presentations. The training has proved beneficial as the participants are now able to type their own letters and are using the skills acquired to organize their functions.

24. In December, a three-day training on e-books was held for seven staff of the Council to introduce them to the concept of digital books. The purpose is to enable the Council lead the process of getting Ghanaian publishers and authors to embrace the concept of digitizing books, as is the global trend. The training also highlighted issues associated with marketing of e-books, such as payment forms and accountability issues to enable the Council brainstorm on how to partner with relevant bodies and persons to address such challenges.

25. Additionally, the School of Publishing Studies of the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology facilitated a two-day in-house continuous professional development programme on publishing and printing for all staff of the Council from 22nd and 23rd December 2014.

4.7.1.2 Development of Scheme of Service

26. In collaboration with the Public Services Commission, the Council is continuing a process to develop a scheme of service which was started in 2013 but got stalled. This is aimed at developing a functional organogram and appropriate work schedules to each position after which an evaluation of the current human resource capacity of the Council will be made to ensure the needed skills and expertise are recruited or reassigned for an effective and efficient use of available skills. The evaluation will also inform the staff training and development programmes to be undertaken. Two residential programmes in furtherance of this were held from 21st to 22nd November and 12th to 13th December 2014.

4.7.1.3 Development of a Legislative Framework

27. As part of activities of the Legislative Committee of the Ministry, the Council resumed the process of drafting a Bill for eventual passing into an Act of Parliament. The Bill, when passed, will give the Council the necessary legal authority to perform its functions effectively.

This process, which was initially started under the guidance of the GBDC Board some years ago, stalled after the Board finished its inputs. The process therefore resumed with a redrafting and a review by a sub-committee of the Board and staff of the Council as well. The comments from the reviews have been forwarded to the Director, Finance and Administration of the Ministry, who also coordinates the Legislative Committee of the Ministry, for possible inclusion in the draft Bill, after which further consultations will be held with relevant stakeholders in the book industry. A copy of the draft Bill with the comments from the reviews is attached as appendix 1.

4.7.1.4 Development of Standard Operational Procedures/Manuals

28. As part of instituting controls and procedures to guide the Council's operations and make them compliant with relevant laws and regulations, the Council developed a Finance procedures manual. The manual seeks to make the Council's Finance function and processes compliant with The Financial Administration Act, 2003 (Act 654), Financial Administration Regulations, 2004 (LI 1802), the Public Procurement Act 2003, (Act 663) and Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and Standards.

29. Another manual, which seeks to set procedures and controls over the Administration function has been drafted and is being finalized. It will also embody the conditions of staff to ensure standardization and uniformity and certainty in application of employee benefits.

30. Additional controls and procedures manuals for the other functions and departments will be developed in 2015.

5 PART 4: CHALLENGES, PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR 2015 AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Challenges

31. The major challenges encountered by the Council during the period are enumerated below.

5.1.1 Funding

32. To effectively execute its mandate, the Council needs to be adequately resourced. The Council's programmes are currently solely funded by the Government. However, governmental support through the budgetary allocation is inadequate and unreliable in terms of timing of disbursement. The Council has had to sometimes rely on personal resources of some staff and the benevolence of some stakeholders to undertake its activities. This situation has negatively impacted on the effectiveness of the Council.

5.1.2 Staffing

33. Another major challenge of the Council is inadequate staffing. Currently, the Council has only two Book Development Officers and eight other supporting staff who are in charge of ancillary roles such as driving, security, cleaning, records etc. This has also negatively affected the quality, timing and effectiveness of programme implementation.

5.2 Strategies to Address the Challenges

34. To address the staffing issue, in collaboration with the Public Services Commission, the Council has initiated the process to strengthen its human resource with the needed skills and expertise. This process includes the completion of the Scheme of Service after which an

evaluation of the staffing requirements and the needed skills will be done to inform the way forward.

35. As an addition to the process with the Public Services Commission, the Council has compiled a training schedule to be undertaken by all staff, aimed at equipping them with relevant skills as well as updating acquired skills through continuous professional development.

36. Furthermore, the Council is also relying on National Service Personnel to fill the gap as efforts are made to find a lasting solution to the human resource constraints.

37. To ease the dire financial constraint which has almost crippled the Council and to enable the Council effectively deliver on its mandate as the body responsible for coordinating the activities of all groups and individual in the book industry, the Council decided to use its accumulated allocations from GETFund to finance the programmes and activities planned for 2015.

38. The Council is also brainstorming on ways to generate internal revenue to finance its programmes and reduce the overdependence on budgetary allocations. The Bill which is being work on, will among others, provide the Council with the necessary legal backing for income generation activities.

39. Additionally, the Council has scheduled training programmes aimed at equipping staff with report-writing and proposal-writing skills to enable staff generate effective proposals to identifiable organizations for possible collaboration and funding of programmes.

5.3 Planned Programmes and Activities for 2015

40. A summary of programmes and activities outlined for 2015 are detailed below.

5.3.1 Promotion of reading and creative writing

41. This will entail three sub activities namely:

- i. Formation of reading clubs in fifty basic schools involving twelve thousand pupils. The Council will also provide supplementary readers to the participating schools. To be able to track the effect of reading on the performance of the participants over a three year period, the Council will as well collate the baseline data on the performance of the participants, particularly in English language.
- ii. Drawing competition for basic schools. This activity is a continuation of the exercise started in 2014.
- iii. Creative writing workshops for senior high schools. This will target a total of fifty senior high schools across the country.

5.3.2 Promotion of Books

42. The Council plans to hold two district book fairs in 2015 as part of efforts to promote the distribution of books in the country.

5.3.3 Promotion of Industry standards

43. As part of promoting quality in the book industry, the Council will develop standards for the publishing and printing industry in collaboration with the relevant stakeholders. It is anticipated that seven standards will be developed for publishing and printing respectively, in line with best practice.

5.3.4 Promotion of Excellence in the Book Industry

44. In a bid to promote excellence in the book industry, the Council will revive the defunct book industry awards in 2015. In pursuit of this, a book industry award will be organized in 2015 to reward industry players who have excelled in terms of quality and best practice over the past five years.

5.3.5 Institutional Development

45. As part of efforts to enhance the capacity of the Council, the institutional development programme which was started this year will continue in 2015. This will entail the development of at least three departmental/procedures manuals, the completion of the scheme of service started with the Public Services Commission, continuous professional development and training of staff, instituting a performance management scheme, as well as continuing the process of getting an appropriate legal framework for the Council.

5.4 Conclusion and Acknowledgements

46. We wish to acknowledge the contribution of all stakeholders towards implementing the Council's mandate, particularly the various associations in the book industry.

47. Our gratitude also goes to the Honourable Minister of Education and the Honourable Deputy Ministers, the Chief Director of the Ministry of Education and the GBDC Board for their invaluable support.

48. Finally, we recognize the role of staff whose efforts in the midst of the extreme financial and logistical challenges have contributed to the activities undertaken during the period.

49. We also encourage all staff to work harder to ensure the Council makes a positive impact on the book industry in the months ahead.