

# Ghana Book News



A Newsletter of the Ghana Book Publishers Association • ISSN: 0855-2320 • VOL. 3 • ISSUE 1 • JULY 2019



Ms Akoss Ofori-Mensah (CEO of Sub-Saharan Publishers), a winner of the American Literary Classics International Award

## Interview with Ms. Akoss Ofori-Mensah

CEO, SUB-SAHARAN PUBLISHERS

*A*untie Akoss, ayekoo—well-done to you and Sub-Saharan Publishers for winning the Bologna 2019 Best Children's Publishers Award for Africa and American Literary Classics International Award! GBPA's Editorial Committee is pleased to interview you as a veteran and award-winning publisher not only in Ghana but worldwide. This interview seeks to inspire and encourage colleague publishers that hard work and perseverance pay. You have shown the way by your adherence to quality production and intrepidity—being fearless to tread new paths. You have certainly done us proud, putting Ghana on the global publishing map and contributing in no small way to educational and national development. Once again congratulations. Now shall we get inquisitive?

### Q. How long have you been publishing?

26 years

### Q. Did you start with publishing children's book?

Yes

### Q. What other genre do you publish?

Novels, academic books; university readers; school textbooks, general books

### Q. When did you first hear about the Bologna Awards and how did you prepare to enter?

I did not enter myself. Somebody must have nominated Sub-Saharan Publishers. I have no idea who did it.

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# MOE Introduces New Curriculum for Primary Schools



The Director-General, Prof Kwasi Opoku Amankwa launching the new curriculum for primary schools

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**Publishers**  
have been  
**major**  
**collaborators**  
& immense  
contributors  
to quality  
education

The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NaCCA) under the Ministry of Education (MoE) began the Pre-tertiary Curriculum Review (KG-P6) in September 2017. The Ministry of Education has eventually published the new curriculum for the primary level on April 2019, which is expected to take effect in all basic schools across the country in September 2019. The new curricula which were ready as at the launch were the following subjects from primary 1 to 6:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- Religious & Moral Education
- History
- Computing
- Physical Education

The outstanding curricula for primary schools such as Creative Arts, Our World and Our People, French and Ghanaian Language as well as that of kindergarten (KG) were introduced after a month..

Some of the publishers had raised concerns even before the introduction of the new curriculum requesting adequate period for the implementation of the new curriculum to enable them publish quality books and to sell off their huge copies of printed books in stock before the new textbooks are distributed to schools.

Based on these issues, the leadership of the Ghana Book Publishers Association had a meeting with the Minister for



Education. The meeting was between the Minister of Education Dr. Matthew Opoku Prempeh; Deputy Minister of Education in charge of Basic and Secondary Education, Dr Yaw Osei Adutwum; the Ag. Chief Director, Ministry of Education, Mrs Wilhelmina Asamoah; Director General of Ghana Education Service, Prof Kwasi Opoku Amankwa; and the Deputy Director General of Ghana Education Service, Dr Kwabena Bempah Tandoh on one part and GBPA (Council) on the other.

In the opening remarks, the GBPA President, Mr. Elliot Agyare, acknowledged the media announcement of the official handing over of the basic school curriculum from the National Council for Curriculum Assessment (NaCCA) to Ghana Education Service, which was later posted on the NaCCA website in April, 2019. He mentioned the need for publishers to meet the Ministry to agree on a common timetable for the development and production of textbooks to the basic schools.

The Minister for Education, Hon. Dr. Matthew Opoku Prempeh stated that the Ministry would from end of May to June, start the process of purchasing textbooks for basic schools – kindergarten and primary – in line with the new curriculum. The full quota of books would be purchased over a 3-year period due to budgetary constraints.

The issue on how much time the Ministry would give publishers to submit their textbooks for evaluation was discussed. Council pointed out that although the Textbook Development and Distribution Policy (TDDP) stipulated a minimum of 120 days, the new curriculum would require

more time because of the changes in its orientation. The Minister agreed to 150 days, that is, 5 months from the date the curriculum was officially uploaded on the NaCCA website.

The Minister indicated that he reserved the right to purchase books which have been approved by NaCCA within the 5-month period should the MoE get funding for such an activity. The implementation of the new curriculum according to the Minister would not be done in phases. KG to P6 will all be using the new curriculum in September 2019. The teachers have all they need to work with.

The issue of publishers with old stock of textbooks came up; unfortunately, the Ministry would not consider buying old stock as supplementary materials.

Hon. Dr Opoku Prempeh stated that the Ministry would soon be purchasing supplementary readers for schools as soon as funds are made available.

Publishers over the years have been major collaborators of the MoE and immense contributors to quality education, development of schools and academic performance and are looking forward to mutually beneficial endeavours with the Ministry of Education.

NaCCA would form an Evaluation Committee in June 2019 to assess the new books before publishing. According to NaCCA, "In line with the implementation of the new curriculum, all instructional materials submitted to NaCCA must conform to the new curriculum else they would not be assessed."





# The Ghana Library Authority Launches “The Year of Reading”

ERNEST OPPONG & GHLA YEAR OF READING COMMITTEE

The First Lady of Ghana (in green) with Deputy Minister of Education (on her left), Executive Director of GhLA (on her right) and other dignitaries at the launch

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On 19th February 2019, the Ghana Library Authority (GhLA) officially launched the ‘Year of Reading’ at the forecourt of the head office with the theme: “Reading for Progress”. The launch was done in partnership with the Ministry of Education, the Rebecca Foundation and UNICEF.

The launch was a well-attended event by a cross section of Ghanaian society. The dignitaries included: the First Lady of Ghana, Her Excellency Rebecca Akufo-Addo, Deputy Minister of Education, Hon. Dr. Yaw Osei Adutwum, Board Chairperson, Dr. Helena R. Asamoah-Hassan and board members of GhLA, CEOs, heads of institutions and GhLA institutional partners including UNICEF, Ghana Book Publishers Association, Ghana Investment Fund for Electronic Communications (GIFEC) etc. Regional librarians and staff were also present.

In his welcome address, the Ag. Executive Director of Ghana Library Authority, Mr Hayford Siaw, highlighted the history, current developments and achievements as well as planned projects of the Authority.

He said the GhLA was established in 1949 by the Gold Coast Ordinance CAP 118 and came into effect in January, 1950. The Ordinance was re-enacted as the Ghana Library Board Act, 1970 (Act 327) to establish, equip, manage and maintain public libraries in Ghana. The Ghana Library Authority currently manages a network of 61 libraries. Mr Siaw stated that the Ghana Library Authority is the oldest corporation of the Gold Coast after Cocoa Marketing Board.

Mr Siaw indicated “Today, history is being made by the Library Authority as we take the lead in consolidating various interventions to promote reading and lifelong learning in Ghana.”

He said this strategic initiative focuses on critical areas such as improvement in literacy learning outcomes and making available appropriate reading resources.

The year-long programme is being launched for Ghanaians to reconnect with library spaces and the love for reading. He mentioned activities planned for the year and added that government investment for the library services, including fixing of the broken mobile library vans would be launched, and mobile library services relaunched.

He stated that since the 1930s when the British Council introduced mobile library services in Ghana, the Authority has been operating it but with difficulty. In 2008, the Authority had ten mobile library vans from UNESCO which unfortunately have not been maintained over the years. He informed that the mobile library vans will now come with e-readers, laptops and new books.

Mr Siaw gave five main objectives for the 2019 Year of Reading with activities as follows:

- Promote literacy and life-long learning—in collaboration with UNICEF and other partners, GhLA will organize workshops for writers, publishers, librarians, educators, teachers, NGOs involved in reading promotion to improve their capacity to perform effectively. Working with the Rebecca Foundation, GhLA will expand personality reading in schools and run national reading festivals and competitions.
- New access points will be introduced for the public to engage with GhLA libraries. A new library will be commissioned at Patrice Lumumba Road, Airport Residential and fifteen new public libraries will be added to the network.
- GhLA will create enabling and more conducive environment for learning across the rest of library network.
- Book collection will be improved.
- Accessibility to reading materials will be increased.

“Reading has no end; not even after schooling”, so said the Hon Deputy Minister of Education, Dr. Yaw Adutwum when delivering his speech. He therefore implored Ghanaians to read constantly, at least one book every month.

In her keynote address, H.E. Mrs. Rebecca Akufo-Addo said the Year of Reading demonstrates the importance of reading in building the human capital required for the growth of all sectors of the economy.

After the addresses, came the official launch of the Year of Reading by H. E. Mrs. Rebecca Akufo-Addo, Dr. Yaw Osei Adutwum, Dr. Helena R. Asamoah-Hassan, Ms. Anne-Claire Dufay and other officials.

The second part of the launch focused on unveiling and commissioning projects as well as donations by partners. Among the projects that were unveiled and commissioned were the resource materials for educators to promote reading, opening of the new book acquisition and distribution unit, opening of the new book processing unit, the 30,000 books donated by Book Aid and the re-launch of the of mobile library services.

Among the individual and organization book donors were the Ghana Book Publishers Association and Madam Ajoa Yeboah-Afari, a veteran journalist and a one-time Journalist of the Year.



# GAW & GBPA HOLD STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP

REPORT BY JOSEPH GYAMFI

In the bid to promote and foster greater collaboration between the Ghana Book Publishers Association (GBPA) and the Ghana Association of Writers (GAW), a stakeholder workshop was organized on the 23rd of February 2019 to explain in detail the publishing process and challenges most publishers go through to get books on the market. In the midst of growing concerns from authors on issues relating to payment of royalties, this stakeholder forum was timely to address the feeling of mistrust between members of the two associations.

The GBPA provided the following facilitators: Dr K. M Ganu, Mr Kwabena Agyepong and Ms Akoss Ofori-Mensah for the workshop.

The workshop which took place at the PAWA House started at 10:40 a.m. with brief opening remarks from the President of GAW, Nana Gyan Kwasi Apenteng and the President of GBPA, Mr Elliot Agyare (read on his behalf by Mr Joseph Gyamfi, Assistant Executive Secretary of GBPA).

During the first session, Dr K. M. Ganu the CEO of Gavoss Education Plc Ltd, took members through the publishing process from manuscript acquisition to distribution. The in-depth presentation enlightened most authors about the rigorous processes a publisher goes through in transforming a manuscript into a final book. It was evident that most GAW members were not adequately informed about the publishing process.

Mr Kwabena Agyepong, CEO of Publishing and Logistics, gave a presentation on author/publisher contract agreement, highlighting key clauses both authors and publishers should look out for when signing contracts.

Finally, Ms Akoss Ofori-Mensah, CEO of Sub-Saharan Publishers talked about selling publishing rights and licences. Using her experiences as practical examples, she underscored the huge opportunities outside Ghana for both authors and publishers who produce good works. She encouraged GBPA and GAW members to think beyond Ghana when producing books.

The well-organized workshop was oversubscribed beyond the targeted 50 participants. The participants who attended the workshop were highly impressed and asked for more such engagements to foster greater collaborations between GAW and GBPA.

# GBPA ORGANISES EDITING AND PROOFREADING WORKSHOP



Participants at the workshop

The GBPA organized a proofreading and editing workshop for members as part of training for members.

Dr Mrs Margaret Ansre and Mrs Jessi Amable, were the co-facilitators, the workshop which took place on 21st January, 2019. The workshop took place at the CSIR, STEPRI Conference room.

For the first session Mrs Jessi Amable took participants through common rules of correct spelling, basic grammar with emphasis on punctuation, hyphenation and capitalization. The

session was highly interactive and lively. Participants were very impressed with how the facilitator handled the subject.

The focus of the second session was on practical editing on paper. Participants tried their hands on editing exercises. There were questions and suggestions.

Participants were generally impressed with the overall organization of the workshop. Majority expressed interest in attending a follow-up workshop on the same topic with the facilitators.

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## SHARJAH TAKES OVER FROM ATHENS AS WORLD BOOK CAPITAL CITY



On 23 April, World Book and Copyright Day, Sharjah (United Arab Emirates) took over from Athens (Greece) as UNESCO's World Book Capital City for 2019. The handover was marked with an opening ceremony attended by IPA's President, Vice President and Secretary General.

Hugo Setzer, the President of International Publishers Association commenting on the celebrations said: 'Together with Bodour Al Qasimi, IPA's Vice President and our host in her home city of Sharjah and our Secretary General, José Borghino, I had an intense week in the UAE, where I had the chance, among many other highly interesting activities, to witness the spectacular launch of Sharjah World Book Capital, visit the Sharjah Children's Reading Festival, IFLA's

4th Arab Regional Conference and the Abu Dhabi International Book Fair. All of this was thanks to the hospitality of the Emirates Publishers Association, who proved to be magnificent organisers and hosts.'

Mr Setzer delivered a speech ahead of the opening ceremony, in which he welcomed the World Book Capital's slogan 'Open Books, Open Minds' as more relevant than ever given the many crises around the world today.

This thought was echoed by UNESCO Director General, Audrey Azoulay, who noted in a statement issued in Paris that 'books are also the doorway to mutual respect and understanding between people across all boundaries and differences.'





Some SHS and JHS students of Sunyani at the opening ceremony

## GBPA & GBDC ORGANISE SUNYANI BOOK FAIR

### The Sunyani Book Fair organised under the theme 'Read to Learn: Learn to Read',

was held from 14th to 19th May 2019 at the Ebenezer Presby Church. Mr Samuel Opoku Agyei, PRO of the Regional Education Directorate liaised with the team from Accra to ensure a smooth event. The original venue was Sunyani Senior High School, with a spacious assembly hall which was given gratis. However due to concerns about the location being far from town which could affect turn out and sales negatively, it was changed to Ebenezer Presby Church. It was resolved that the GES Directorate would arrange for buses to be fuelled by GBPA and GBDC to shuttle students to and from the venue. In consultation with Mr Opoku Agyei, Moonlight FM, Dimpa FM, Radio BAR and Ark FM were selected for electronic media publicity.

The five-day event started from 9 a.m. and ended at 4 p.m. each day and was extended by a day. In all nine publishers—Adwinsa Publications, Calculus Publications, EPP Books Services, Winmat Publishers, Red Oak Limited, Mountype Publications, Smartline Publishers, Minerva Books and Aabok Publications participated.

At the well-attended colourful opening ceremony the Sunyani Senior High School cadets provided a guard of honour. In attendance were the Brong Ahafo Regional Education Director, Municipal Directors of Education, the Regional Librarian, heads of various senior high schools and students from upper primary and senior high schools.

The keynote speaker, Mr N. N. Baada spoke on the theme 'Read to Learn: Learn to Read.' Exhibition and sale of books began from Tuesday 14th May 2018. The planned outreach to Berekum, Duayaw Nkwanta and Bechem was cancelled due to lack of interest of the publishers who also needed to cut cost. An appeal was made and granted, to extend the fair to Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> for the benefit of the congregation of Ebenezer Presbyterian Church.

Sales were very low throughout the period, except on Saturday and Sunday. But at the end of the programme, the primary goal of increasing awareness about reading in Sunyani was well achieved. Thus, it is safe to say the purpose for organising the Sunyani Book Fair was about 75% accomplished. The prospects of organising regional book fairs as a prelude to the main international book fair in Accra is very bright and the impact can be enhanced if the GBPA consciously applies all lessons learnt from previous regional book fairs.



The Deputy Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture, Dr Ziblim Iddi inducting the new executives into office

# GHANA CULTURE FORUM ELECTS NEW LEADERSHIP

## Communiqué Issued at The Second National Delegates Conference

Ghana Culture Forum (GCF) is a membership-based civil society consultative forum. It is a network of cultural practitioners, activists and organisations united around a common vision of affirming the cultural foundations of development and enhancing the cultural sector. The Ghana Culture Forum currently has eighty-four (84) membership-based organisations from ten (10) main domains.

The Ghana Culture Forum held its 2nd National Delegates Conference on March 14, 2019 at the National Theatre of Ghana in Accra. The theme of the conference was “The Cultural Frontline: Bringing Policy and Practice together.” The Ghana Culture Forum wishes to communicate to its members and the people of Ghana as follows:

### Adoption of The GCF Constitution

The first constitution of GCF was adopted in 2016 at the First National Delegates Conference as a working document. Following operational gaps identified in the constitution, a committee was constituted to revise the document, with inputs obtained from members. The revised document was tabled for adoption at the 2nd National Delegates Conference.

After extensive deliberations, the constitution was adopted, subject to the insertions agreed by members.

### Election Of Members Of The Functional Executive Committee Of GCF

The elections were conducted by the Electoral Commission of Ghana. All seven (7) candidates who passed the vetting processes ended up as unopposed contestants. In view of this, vote casting was a simple YES or NO balloting. The following were duly elected and confirmed by the electoral officers from the Electoral Commission of Ghana (EC):

#### Chairperson

Asare Konadu Yamoah

#### Vice Chairperson

Ahuma Bosco Ocansey

#### General Secretary

Nana Otuo Owoahene Acheampong

#### Treasurer

Akorfa Edjeani Asiedu

#### Executive Members

- Adwoa Boakyewaa Amoah
- Shirley Selase Anku
- George Bosompim

### Concurrent Thematic Sessions

The conference was divided into two working groups to look at issues related to the programmes and funding of GCF. A 3-year programme which had been developed by the Programmes Committee (formed prior to the Conference) was used for the purpose of the programmes working group. The Finance and Fund-raising working group made proposals on how to develop a proper funding system for the organisation. The proposals of the working committees serve as the working blocks for the development of programmes and funding roadmaps for the newly elected executives.

### Conclusion

The 2nd National Delegates Conference was followed by the eighth edition of the Ghana Culture Day celebrations. The celebration involved a forum (dialogue) on the theme for the conference: “The Cultural Frontline: Bringing Policy and Practice together”

The tone for the forum was set by presentations from Mrs. Janet Fofie (Chairperson – Public Services Commission); Madam Janet Edna Nyame (Executive Director–National Commission on Culture) and Mr. Akunu Dake (Former Vice Chairperson, GCF and CEO of Heritage Development).

The induction of the newly-elected officers of GCF was done by Honourable Dr. Ziblim Iddi (MP), Deputy Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture.

the  
cultural  
frontline:  
bringing  
policy and  
practice  
together



# Fallen Publishing Giants

## Mr Hubert Nii-Abbe Abbey | Studio Brian Communications

The late Mr Nii-Abe Abbey of Studio Brian Communications was an illustrator, author and publisher who registered with the Ghana Book Publishers Association (GBPA) in 1995. He was a Council Member of GBPA from 2009 to 2014. He chaired the Ghana International Stakeholder Committee from 2009 to 2011. His published books included *Why Dog is Man's Best Friend*, *Opinto and the Kind Snake*, *Kofi Antubam and the Myth around Ghana's Presidential Seat*, *First Step in Drawing* and *Homowo in Ghana*.



## Professor Emeritus K. Gyekye | Sankofa Publishing Company Limited

The late Professor Emeritus Kwame Gyekye, Executive Director of Sankofa Publishing Company Limited, registered with the GBPA in February 2012. The company's first publication was in 1998 and had six published titles as at 2011. Prof. Gyekye was an academic author whose titles included: *African Cultural Values*, *The Unexamined Life* and *Social Studies for West African SHS*.

The late Prof. Gyekye contributed greatly to the success of the Association. He chaired the Ethics Committee in 2017 to develop a code of ethics for the Association.



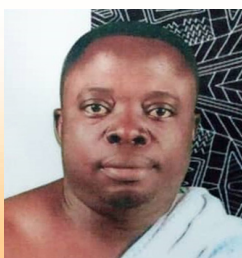
## Dr Samuel Osafo Acquah | SOSFAC Ghana Ltd

The late Dr Samuel Osafo Acquah, the owner and CEO of SOSFAC Ghana Ltd, became a GBPA Council Member from 2012 to 2014 and President for a two-year term from January 2014 to February 2016. He contributed passionately to the development of the Association and also served on a number of committees including GBPA Editorial Committee.



## Mr. Badu Nkansah | Royal Adpex (Gh) Ltd.

The late Mr. Badu Nkansah, joined the Association as CEO of Adansiman Publications which he later renamed Royal Adpex (Gh) Ltd. He was a prolific writer of textbooks and supplementary readers for over 20 years. His best sellers included Religious and Moral Education, Natural Science, Integrated Science, and Environmental Studies as well as plays and short stories for basic schools



# Ghana Library Authority organises Kidifair & World Book Day



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On 7th March, the Ghana Library Authority held a Kidifair

World Book Day is a day set aside to celebrate books and reading. The day basically seeks to give every child and young person a book of their own and encourage reading. It is also a day set aside to celebrate authors, publishers and illustrators, and to encourage children to explore the pleasures of books and reading by providing them with the opportunity to have a book of their own.

On 7th March 2019 the Ghana Library Authority held a Kidifair to mark World Book Day at their premises. Some of the publishers who exhibited their books were Literamed Publications Gh Ltd, MJP Books Ltd, Masterman Publications, Allgoodbooks Ltd, Sedesel Publications, Aki-Ola Publications, Adaex Educational Publications, Afram Publications Ghana Ltd. and Buck Press Ltd

The main aim of the Ghana Library Authority to celebrate World Book Day was to share experiences on the benefits of reading, encourage children to take reading seriously and expose children to the various services provided by the library so as to increase patronage.

In attendance were:

- Mr Hayford Siaw – The Director of the Ghana Library Authority
- Honourable Paul Boateng

– Book Aid Chair & UK's first mixed-race Cabinet Minister

- Year of Reading Ambassadors
- Mr Iain Walker – The British High Commissioner and his wife

The event was a day-long affair and saw over 800 school children aged seven to seventeen years in attendance. The two-part read-aloud sessions were strictly for fifty invited school children.

**Part A The Breakfast Read—** The British High Commissioner, Mr Iain Walker and his wife took turns to read out to the children from Ama's Choice by Nana Araba Prah and How the Monkey Tricked the Dog and Cat by J.B. Pokoo-Aikins. The children listened attentively. They were also given opportunity to read out sections from the selected books. They answered questions and interacted with the High Commissioner and his wife.

**Part B The Lunch Read-** The second session saw Lord Paul Boateng from Book Aid International reading out to the school children. The children were allowed to select books donated by Book Aid International to read out loud. There were questions, suggestions and shared thoughts, and participants were encouraged to take reading seriously.

# Sub-Saharan Wins Bologna 2019 Best Children's Publishers of the Year For Africa

By Porter Anderson



Winners of 2019 Bologna Best Children's Publishers of the Year Awards. Ms Akoss Ofori-Mensah, CEO of Sub-Saharan Publishers is second from right

In its customary first-day ceremony at the Palazzo d'Accursio this evening (April 1), the Bologna Children's Book Fair has awarded its seventh annual round of juried Best Children's Publishers of the Year awards.

This is a class of awards, started in 2013, that can have real impact on the publishers named because they hold up for attention only six publishing houses per year, one in each of six regions of the world. In an increasingly globalized industry, any traction of this kind can mean a great deal to a publisher's stance in its own market and its presence on the world stage.

Here, for example, the archives of the awards' past six years include such important houses as Poland's Dwie Siostry, Canada's Kids Can Press, the United Arab Emirates' Kalimat, Taiwan's Grimm Press, Chennai's Tara Books, and South Africa's Jacana Media.

The prize is organized by the Bologna fair in partnership with the Association of Italian Publishers (Associazione Italiana Editori, AIE), and is designed to honor "those publishers who have most distinguished themselves for their creative and publishing excellence over the last year, showing originality as well as professional and intellectual skills."

As we've pointed out in past years, courage is among the three key criteria recognized by this award: creativity, courage, and editorial choices. The reason to single out courage is that it is the common point of much recognition in today's industry awareness of literature in a politically charged environment.

Of course, courage in publishing can come in many forms. There's the courage to take financial risks on content to which a publisher makes a special commitment. These days, it can also be courageous to publish fewer rather than more titles, making a pledge to better market and support a smaller number of titles than a larger number in a saturated marketplace.

But courage, in many instances may also have to do with a willingness to hold firm in the face of local and regional social and political pressures with particular care to resist self-censorship, as the International Publishers Association has stressed.

**Here are the six winning companies by geographical region, as named this evening at the palazzo.**

## Africa

For Africa, the winner is Sub-Saharan Publishers, Ghana, founded in 1992 and specialized in children's books that deal with environmental themes.

## Asia

For Asia, the prize goes to Taiwan's Locus Publishing Company, founded in 1996. Its publications aim to capture the spirit of "future, adventure culture."

## Europe

For Europe, the winner is the Portuguese company Orfeu Negro. Founded in 2007, this publisher focuses on the arts and first ventured into the world of children's publishing in 2008, in particular with illustrated books.

## North America

For North America, the winner is Comme des géants, Canada, a young independent publisher specialized in books for infants that stood out for the quality of its narratives, literature, and graphics.

## Latin America

For Central and South America, the prize this year goes to Argentina's Limonero, a publisher that after many years of publishing educational material, in 2014 branched out successfully into illustrated books.

## Oceania

For Oceania, which includes Australasia, the prize went to the Australian Scribble Kids' Books, an eclectic publisher of children's books.

**The prize is organized by the Bologna fair in partnership with the Association of Italian Publishers**





## Global Book Alliance

### ADEA & USAID Support African Publishing Stakeholders in the Creation of a Publishing Collaborative

Dignitaries at the ADEA/APNET Forum at the 2019 Nigeria Int. Book Fair

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Shareholders agreed to the formation of a publishing collaborative

Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire) 16 May 2019 – The Books and Learning Materials (BLM) section of the Inter-Country Quality Node on Teaching and Learning (ICQN-TL) of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) recently concluded a successful forum in partnership with the African Publishers Network (APNET) which identified the elimination of piracy as well as the development of a National Book and Reading Policy as the top priorities for a Publishing Collaborative for Nigeria.

The forum under the theme, Enabling African Publishers to Provide Quality Books in African Languages through the African Publishing Collaborative Initiative, took place from 8th to 9th May 2019 on the margins of the Nigeria International Book Fair (NIBF) in Lagos at the Jelili Adebisi Omotola Hall, University of Lagos.

This key meeting is part of the long-lasting partnership between ADEA and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) supported by Global Book Alliance (GBA) – and it was jointly organized with APNET, the Nigeria Book Fair Trust and the Nigeria Publishers Association.

Stakeholders of the Nigerian publishing industry, through rigorous group discussions, agreed on the formation of a publishing collaborative and identified two strategic priorities for the collaborative as: tackling piracy and developing a national book and reading policy. Furthermore, the stakeholders ad-

opted a structure for the publishing collaborative comprising of public and private entities that are relevant to the book industry and essential in addressing the two priorities.

The Action Plan on the Publishing Collaborative drawn during a workshop organized in Abidjan in January 2018 by ADEA, book industry stakeholders and GBA revealed that there are five major issues affecting the growth of the African book industry: distribution, taxation, piracy, national book and reading policies, and skills development.

To this end, Nigeria becomes the first country in Africa to agree on how a publishing collaborative would be structured at the country level and modelled a process for identifying key national issues that, if addressed, would be transformational for the publishing industry.

“Your effort contributed substantially in driving intellectual conversations around the provision of quality books in local languages during the course of the event and to the NIBF programme at large,” said Mr. Gbadega Adedapo, President of the Nigerian Publishers Association who is also the Chairman of the Nigeria Book Fair Trust and Managing Director of Rasmed Publications Limited.

The impact of the major outcome of the forum will certainly contribute towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goal 4 of the 2030 Agenda as well as Africa's Agenda 2063 and the Continental Education



Strategy for Africa 2016 - 2025 (CESA 16-25).

Although this gathering anticipated 30 participants to attend, its popularity was evident when 56 participants registered for the first day, growing to 75 participants on the second and final day. Indeed, the forum brought together Nigerian book industry stakeholders, leading professionals and practitioners from across the book value chain, including key federal and state government officials, academics and readers. Other participants were Mr. Denja Abdullahi, President of the Association of Nigerian Authors; Mr. Chike Ofili, a renowned author; Ms. Oluronke Orimalde and Dayo Alabi leading booksellers; Mr. Ernest Oppong, Executive Secretary of APNET; Mr. Emmanuel Abimbola, Executive Secretary of Nigeria Publishers Association; and Mr. Kiarie Kamau, MD East Africa Educational Publishers Ltd from Kenya, among others.

The management team included Ms. Lily Nyariki and Mr. Aliou Sow, ADEA BLM focal points; Mr. David Waweru, a consultant, writer, publisher and trainer; Mr. Samuel Kolowale, Managing Director of the University Press and Chairperson of APNET; Mr. José Borghino, Secretary General of the International Publishers Association (IPA), and Mr. Gbadega Adedapo.

**Q. How did you feel when you found out you had won the Bologna Award?**

I felt humbled and surprised.

**Q. Which other awards have you won and for what categories?**

1999 UNESCO 1st Prize, for Children's & Youth Literature in the Service of Tolerance—*Sosu's Call*.

2002 One of the Top Twelve of Africa's 100 Best Books of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century—*Sosu's Call*.

2015 Neustadt Prize for Children's Books—*Kwajo & the Brassman's Secret*

2017 Children's Africana Book Award—*Gizo Gizo-A Tale from the Zongo Lagoon*

2018 American Literary Classics International Award—*Animal Village*

2019 Children's Africana Book Award—*Mama's Amazing Cover Cloth* and *Animal Village* (The award for these two books will be collected in Washington in April 2020).

**Q. We know that you are one Ghanaian publisher who faithfully participates in major international book fairs such as Bologna, Frankfurt, Book Expo and London, etc. How have these book fairs impacted your publishing career?**

They have helped to make the books travel to other countries in the world.

**Q. Have you encountered any challenges that almost compelled you to give up on your publishing career?**

No.

**Q. You are well-recognised in Ghana and beyond for quality books, are there any best practices that colleague publishers can learn from?**

A well-produced book is much easier to sell than a lousily produced one.

**Q. Do you believe that instituting a well-structured industry award in Ghana can encourage quality publishing?**

Yes, I do; in fact, it is long overdue.

**Q. A lot of regional meetings have been organised recently for African publishers to identify challenges confronting African publishing and how to overcome them. Two major challenges appear to be, lack of functional national book policies and lack of credible statistics for the publishing sector. Can you share with us how you believe GBPA can help Africa to change the narrative with best practices?**

GBPA should get a national book policy in place. Ghanaian publishers should diversify what they publish. Too much reliance on school textbooks is not worth all the frustrations involved.

**Q. Any final message for fellow publishers?**

They should not give up.

Madam, thank you for your time. We are privileged to call you our own and are thankful to God for your success. Sub-Saharan Publishers can only go higher. We wish you more success.

# The 17<sup>th</sup> Ghana International Book Fair (GIBF) In Focus

Ernest Oppong



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**GIBF is an annual event** organised to celebrate the rich Ghanaian culture through books

The 17th edition of the Ghana International Book Fair (GIBF) is scheduled to take place from Thursday 29th August to Sunday 1st September 2019. The four-day event under the theme “Reaching the World Markets through Effective Book Distribution Networks,” will be held at the Ghana International Trade Fair Centre

The GIBF is an annual event organised to celebrate the rich Ghanaian culture through books. The event aims at bringing together local and international book industry players, including publishers, editors, authors/writers, designers, illustrators, printers, librarians, book-sellers, students, teachers and a host of allied organisations, to share ideas and explore opportunities in the book industry. The fair also aims at holding reading programmes for schools and exposing readers to a wide array of books, thus creating literacy awareness and encouraging the general public to good reading and writing habits. Last year’s fair had a total 140 exhibitors and over 14,000 visitors participating.

The Ghana International Book Fair is industry-oriented and so the planning Committee comprises representatives from the various stakeholder organisations such as Ghana Book Publishers Association, Ghana Book Development Council, Ghana Library Authority, Copyright Office, Ghana Association of Writers, Ghana Printers and Paper Converters Association, Ghana Library Association and National Council for Tertiary Education.

The GIBF is gradually positioning itself as a book fair of choice in the West African sub-region and the organisers deploy measures to enhance its standards to make it suitable for business in the book industry. This year’s book fair will host high level international conferences, workshops, and capacity building seminars to provide networking and business opportunities for participants. Below are some of the events:

*5th International Board on Books for Young people (IBBY) Africa Regional Conference for representatives across Africa.*



- *Workshop on Metadata by the Commonwealth Book Publishers Association of UK.*
- *Workshop on Publishing Academic Work Made Easy by the National Commission for Tertiary Education*
- *Workshop on Book Industry Standards for publishers and writers.*
- *A host of workshops for editors, illustrators and printers.*
- *Well-organized reading programmes for schools*

Ten benefits to exhibitors and trade visitors who participate in the Ghana International Book Fair are:

1. **Book/service visibility:** Books are made visible to participating exhibitors and visitors at the fair.
2. **Trading of rights:** Publishers can explore the opportunity to buy or sell rights of their publications to foreign publishers.
3. **Partnership prospects:** Participating publishers can establish partnership or consortiums with other publishers to undertake co-publishing, book distribution, etc.
4. **Learning of best practices:** Publishers can learn from quality books exhibited and tap other publishing innovations to improve their publications. For instance, print quality, layout design, organisation of pages, etc.
5. **Acquisition of industry knowledge:** Professional events, seminars, discussions and workshops organized as part of the Fair could inform publishers on the book needs of a particular country or area (weaknesses) as well as strengths to inform their business decisions.
6. **Networking:** Contacts are exchanged; relationships are established for the sharing of information and other business engagements.
7. **Business meetings:** Face-to-face business meetings has proven to be the best method and the fair helps to achieve this business endeavour.
8. **Book sales:** Exhibitors have the opportunity to sell their books and/ or services to the general public.
9. **Business deals:** Publishers can secure effective business deals from printers, illustrators, designers, booksellers, book distributors, and vice versa. The Book Fair also offers the most suitable platform for writers who want to get their works published to scout for publishers.
10. **Enhance the book industry:** Through participation, policy makers and the public observe the quality of books and the size of the industry. The fair can influence advocacy and attract investment to the advantage of stakeholders.



Deputy Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture, Dr. Ziblim Iddi (Middle); Mr Richard Crabbe, Int. Publishing Consultant (on his right); Mr Akunu Dake, former Vice Chairman of Ghana Culture Forum (on his left) and other participants exiting after the opening ceremony of 16th GIBF, 2018

## GLOBAL INTERNATIONAL BOOK FAIR NEWS

### June 2019

Algiers International Book Fair	Algeria	18 – 23 June
Seoul International Book Fair	Korea	19 – 23 June

### July 2019

Paraty International Literary Festival (FLIP)	Brazil	10 – 14 July
Melbourne Rare Book Fair	Australia	12 – 14 July
Hong Kong Book Fair	China	17 – 23 July

### August 2019

Beijing International Book Fair	China	21 – 25 August
Melbourne Writers Festival	Australia	30 August – 8 Sept.
Ghana International Book Fair	Accra, Ghana	29 August – 1 Sept.
Rio de Janeiro International Book Fair	Brazil	30 August – 8 Sept.
Library of Congress National Book Fair	Washington D.C., USA	August 31

### September 2019

Moscow International Book Fair	Russia	4 – 8 September
Indonesia International Book Fair	Indonesia	4 – 8 September
South African Book Fair	Johannesburg, South Africa	6 – 8 September
Manila International Book Fair	Pasay, Philippines	September 11 – 15
Bloody Scotland (Scotland's International Crime Writing Festival)	Stirling, UK	20– 22 September
Nairobi International Book Fair	Kenya	25– 29 September
Gothenburg Book Fair	Sweden	26 – 29 September

### October 2019

Frankfurt Book Fair	Germany	16 – 20 October
Belgrade Book Fair	Serbia	20 – 27 October
Krakow International Book Fair	Poland	24 – 27 October
Helsinki Book Fair	Finland	24 – 27 October

### November 2019

Sharjah International Book Fair	UAE	30 October – 9 Nov.
Conakry International Book Fair	Guinea	6 – 9 November
Vienna International Book Fair	Austria	6 – 10 November
Riyadh International Book Fair	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	13 – 23 November
International Children and Young Adults Book Fair (FILIJ)	Mexico	9 – 19 November
Shanghai International Children's Book Fair	China	8 – 10 November
Kuwait International Book Fair	Kuwait	14 – 24 November
Guadalajara International Book Fair	Mexico	23 November – 1 Dec.

### December 2019

International Non-Fiction Book Fair	Moscow, Russia	4 – 8 December
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IPA President, Mr Hugo Setzer, delivering his address

## Africa Rising

### IPA Nairobi Seminar a Success

On 14-15 June 2019 the second edition of the IPA's African Seminar series was a huge success in Nairobi with publishing professionals and policy makers discussing how Africa can become publishing industry leader in the 21st Century.

The seminar opened with IPA President, Hugo Setzer focussing on the Ubuntu philosophy "I am what I am because of who we all are" and urging the industry to work together. This idea came back a number of times during the proceedings, notably in the freedom to publish session where Dr Tom Odihambo noted that *'the silence of the majority gives censorship the opportunity to win'*.

The audience sat entranced as legendary Kenyan author, Ngugi Wa Thiongo'o, regaled them with his vision of the future of publishing in Africa, perhaps best summarised when he said that *'Monolingualism is the carbon monoxide of cultures. Multilingualism is the oxygen of cultures'*. IPA Vice President, Bodour Al Qasimi, the driving force behind the seminar, opened the second day noting that Africa *'is one of the most widely misunderstood regions in the world. It is also one of the most under-represented regions in global literature and culture.'*

Following the important role Kenya had played in hosting the WIPO Regional Seminar, it was welcome to hear the government express its

position on Copyright: *'The Kenyan Government supports a strong copyright framework for right holders both in Kenya, and internationally. [...] If we want our local publishers to support our education policy objectives through their investments, then there is need for a stable legal framework for their businesses. It is also important to ensure that compensation to the authors is commensurate to their creative work.'*

The two days included 8 panels covering indigenous languages, copyright, freedom to publish, educational publishing, industry data and more as well as some excellent publishing ecosystem talks and an update on the Lagos Action Plan. For more detailed reports of the two days, see the coverage of our media partner, Publishing Perspectives. Much of the IPA team was in Nairobi ahead of the seminar for a number of other events including the WIPO Regional Seminar on Exception and Limitations as well as the Africa in Action event and the second edition of **Publishers**, which promotes women in publishing.

The event closed with the announcement that the 2020 IPA seminar would take place in Marrakesh (exact dates to be confirmed). 2020 will be a big year for IPA with the International Publishers Congress also taking place in Lillehammer, Norway in May.

Source: <https://www.internationalpublishers.org>



# GBPA PARTICIPATES IN THE NIGERIA INTERNATIONAL BOOK FAIR, 2019

Ernest Oppong

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## INTRODUCTION

The 18<sup>th</sup> edition of the Nigeria International Book Fair (NIBF) was organised from 6<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> May, 2019 in Lagos at the Jelili Adebisi Omotola Hall, University of Lagos. The NIBF was held under the theme: *“Optimising New Technology in Book Development and Distribution for the Promotion of Book Trade in Africa.”* Ernest Oppong participated in the NIBF with sponsorship from APNET and APNET Chairman, Mr Samuel Kolawole to represent African Publishers Network (APNET) and the Ghana Book Publishers Association (GBPA).

## MAIN EVENTS

The Nigeria International Book Fair is a six-day fair. Below are the events/ activities for each day.

### Day 1 (6<sup>th</sup> May, 2019)

APNET was given a complimentary stand by the Nigeria Book Fair Trust (NBFT) and some books of about 30 GBPA publishers and other member-publishers associations including Mali, Nigeria, Kenya, Togo, Egypt, Senegal and Uganda were exhibited. Participants who visited APNET stand were willing to buy copies of the exhibited books, unfortunately they were not for sale. The NIBF is just like the Ghana International Book Fair (GIBF) where the trading of rights is scarcely existing.

### Day 2 (7<sup>th</sup> May, 2019)

The official opening of the Nigeria International Book Fair was held on the second day. The President of the NIBF, the Chairman of the Nigeria Book Fair Trust (NBFT) and also Managing Director of Rasmed Publications Limited, Mr Gbadega Adedapo delivered opening address. He emphasised that the essence of the book fair was to promote effective reading as it had been doing since the inception of the

fair, especially among young ones in Nigeria and Africa by extension. He concluded with a promise of a better NIBF as he assumed the chairmanship position of the NBFT this year. There was a panel discussion as part of the opening ceremony to discuss the aforementioned theme of the Book Fair and the discussants involved Executive Director of Sidmach Technologies, Mike Olajide; Vice President of ZTE Technologies Nigeria, Richard Xiang Ping-nian and CEO of Spring Time Software, Chander Shekhar and Managing Director of Okada Books, Okechukwu Ofili. The panel discussion on the Book Fair theme as part of the opening ceremony was insightful and unusual for most of the international book fairs.

### Day 2 & 3 (8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> May, 2019)

The Books and Learning Materials (BLM) section of the Inter-Country Quality Node on Teaching and Learning (ICQN-TL) of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) concluded a two-day successful forum in partnership with the African Publishers Network (APNET) which identified the elimination of piracy as well as the development of a National Book and Reading Policy as the top priorities for a Publishing Collaborative for Nigeria.

The forum under the theme, *Enabling African Publishers to Provide Quality Books in African Languages through the African Publishing Collaborative Initiative*, took place from 8<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> May 2019.

This key meeting is part of the long-lasting partnership between ADEA and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) supported Global Book Alliance (GBA) – and it was jointly organized with APNET, the Nigeria Book Fair Trust and the Nigeria Publishers Association.

Various insightful presentations were made at the Forum by experienced speakers to address



Participants at the Nigeria International Book Fair, 2019

key issues and to highlight the true state of publishing in Nigeria, Africa and beyond.

“Your effort contributed substantially in driving intellectual conversations around the provision of quality books in local languages during the course of the event and to the NIBF program at large,” said Mr Adedapo in his welcome address.

APNET Chairman facilitated the topic: *“Book Development in Africa Today: Challenges & Opportunities”* which unveiled the transformational stages of book development in Africa with its challenges outlined below.

- Entangled Book Chain
- Poor Regulatory Framework and Policy Inconsistencies
- Low Barrier to Entry into Book Industry
- Piracy and copyright violations
- Lack of Publishing sector statistics
- Indigenous capacity challenges

The paper presented is available for deeper understanding. Mr David Waweru, a publishing consultant and publisher in Kenya made presentations on the topics: *Dissemination of Research Report on Publishing Collaborative by the Global Book Alliance (GBA)* and *The African Publishing Collaborative*. His presentations illuminated participants' understanding of the Publishing Collaborative.

Adequate time was given for discussions, questions, and answers. Mr José Broghino, the Secretary General of International Publishers Association (IPA) thanked APNET for the statement on Copyright Exceptions and Limitations issued to the Africa Group on IPA. On the second day of the Forum, he made a presentation on *“Managing Book Industry Evolution through Collaborative Net-*

*works”*. There were also two Working Groups on *“How would a Publishing Collaborative work?”* which generated two action plans.

Stakeholders of the Nigerian publishing industry, through rigorous group discussions, agreed on the formation of a Publishing Collaborative and identified two strategic priorities for the Collaborative: tackling Piracy and developing a National Book and Reading Policy. Furthermore, the stakeholders adopted a structure for the Publishing Collaborative comprising of public and private entities that are relevant to the book industry and essential in addressing the two priorities.

The Action Plan on the Publishing Collaborative drawn during a workshop organized in Abidjan in January 2018 by ADEA, book industry stakeholders and GBA revealed that there are five major issues affecting the growth of the African book industry: distribution, taxation, piracy, national book and reading policies, and skills development.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The ADEA/APNET Forum was very successful and the general participation of visitors increased each day and was impressive getting to the end of the Book Fair. Most of the publishers wanted more information on this year's Ghana International Book Fair. Some information was given but there was no brochure to circulate.

It is recommended that a GIBF brochure would be made available anytime a GBPA's representative is attending the Nigeria International Book Fair.





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