

**REPORT OF THE 14<sup>TH</sup> GHANA INTERNATIONAL BOOK FAIR,  
2016**

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## 1.0. INTRODUCTION

The 14<sup>th</sup> Ghana International Book Fair took place at the National Theatre, Accra from Thursday, 18<sup>th</sup> August to Sunday, 21<sup>st</sup> August, 2016, after it was rescheduled from the initially agreed dates of 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> November, 2016 due to the closeness of the general elections. The theme for this year's fair was **“Growing the Knowledge-based Economy through Reading.”** The fair opened from 9am to 6pm daily, with events such as Workshops, Seminars and Illustrator's Tent. Buyers and Sellers Meeting which formed part of planned events for the 14<sup>th</sup> GIBF was eventually cancelled due to lack of interest from the local participants.

## 1.1. PARTICIPATION

This year's book fair involved 71 Exhibitors: 66 local exhibitors and 5 foreign exhibitors.

**Table 1.1.1: Participants**

Local	66
Foreign	5

**Table 1.1. 2: Areas of specialisation**

Publishers	48
Printers	4
IT Service providers	1
Learning Institutions	2
Stakeholders Institutions	7
Illustrators	1
Book Sellers	6
Associations	2
Media	1

**Table 1.1.3: Foreign participation**

<i>Country of origin</i>	<i>Number of participants</i>
Nigeria	1
India	3

South Africa	1(Trade Visitor)
UAE	1 (Trade Visitor)

## 2.0. ORGANISING COMMITTEE

Organizing Committee made up of representatives from all the stakeholder institutions in the book industry successfully supervised the planning and organization of this year's book fair. The Organizing Committee constituted twelve (12) members with Mr. Elliot Agyare (GBPA President) serving as the Chairperson. Event and Media consultants (Ms. Charlene Amankwah and Mr. Daniel Lartey) were engaged to help the Committee in running the 14<sup>th</sup> GIBF:

### Committee Members

- Mr. Elliot Agyare - Chairman
- Mr. James Appiah Berko - Member
- Mr. Stephen Brobbey - Member
- Nana. Manukure Kissiedu - Member
- Mrs. Lydia Nyantakyi-Baah - Member
- Ms. Sheila Narki Esson - Member
- Mrs. Anne Yayra Sakyi - Member
- Mr. Samuel Owusu-Dartey - Member
- Mr. Guy Amarteifio - Member
- Mr. Addokwei Moffatt - Member
- Ms. Charlene Amankwah - Event Coordinator
- Mr. Daniel Lartey - Media and Publicity Officer

The following GIBF/GBPA Secretariat staff with the support of two volunteers worked to implement the decisions of the stakeholder committee:

- Mr. Fauna Frimpong Executive Secretary
- Mr. Joseph Baffour Gyamfi Assistant Executive Secretary
- Mr. Ernest Oppong Assistant Executive Secretary
- Nana Yaw Ocran Accounts Officer
- Miss. Josephine Gbogbo Morthy Office Secretary
- Mr. Terry Johnson Volunteer
- Mr. Jonathan Ankrah Volunteer

The organisation of the book fair was structured under the following:

- Protocol
- Administration and Secretarial Duties

- Publicity
- Logistics and Space Allocation
- Events and Workshops
- Finance and Sponsorship

### **3.0. PROTOCOL**

The GBPA Secretariat staff with the support of some committee members worked to ensure visa acquisition, hotel reservation and all other added services required to give international exhibitors a trouble-free trip. This role was performed creditably well, hence receiving commendations from the few international exhibitors who attended the 14<sup>th</sup> GIBF.

### **4.0. ADMINISTRATION AND SECRETARIAL DUTIES**

The Secretariat was responsible for sending out and receiving all 14<sup>th</sup> GIBF correspondence. In all, invitation letters were sent to over 200 schools in the Accra Metropolis, 500 prospective local and foreign exhibitors, 15 media houses and 200 dignitaries and stakeholders.

### **5.0. PUBLICITY**

The publicity team carefully designed products and services which were to sell within the three months period despite limited funds. A promotional mix was started on 10<sup>th</sup> July, 2016. It ensured that adverts were in the Daily Graphic. It also introduced billboard advertisement with over fifteen billboards scattered across the city, Accra and one in Tema.

Fliers numbering 64000 copies and posters were also used effectively. Radio jingles, television morning show appearances, radio announcements and radio mentions together with sticker paste were executed. Letters were also sent to schools for participation. Social media was effectively engaged to draw participants. Finally, the promo mix was crowned with a promotional float within the metropolis. It must be noted that the Secretariat and the media and publicity team had earlier organized a forum to brief industry players on the need to join the year's fair.

First social media, we cannot do without Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, twitter and WhatsApp. So the campaign began in May 2016. We had over 12000 people on Facebook liking the page from an initial likes of 4000. 215 followers on Instagram, over a 1000 on LinkedIn and thousands more via WhatsApp.

For television and radio we bought slots for the morning or breakfast shows, which is the most effective time to catch the attention of people. For the television networks we got slots on Metro TV, TV3, GTV, EGH and ZTV. We also featured on the crawler of FAMILY TV and had some tv video adverts run on their network, for radio we featured on the morning shows of 3FM, and ONUA FM. We also had the fair announced on PEACE FM. On OKAY FM, we did presenter mention. Meanwhile, TV3 ONLINE and STARRFM ONLINE did online stories to herald the fair. The book fair jingle was playing on air for three weeks before the main event on SWEET MELODIES FM. On STARR FM it played for 10 days. We chose effective times for the jingle to play. That was not all, moving through anywhere town being it as far as Oyarifa, Madina, Adenta, Labadi, 37, Spintex, Tema communities, Dansoman and so many other places. You will notice the posters on walls, bus stops, trees, walk ways and notice boards. Billboards along busy roads made it impossible to ignore or not to be seen by the everyday people. The

idea was simple; if someone did not see it on social media, on television or heard about the event on radio, then the streets will do the magic. We can say we had done it all, did a great job. What is there to miss, but at Digital links International, we believe that to achieve greatness or success we have to go the extra mile.

Fliers were sent to the various churches including PEREZ CHAPEL , LIGHTHOUSE CHAPEL INTERNATIONAL, ICGC, ROYAL HOUSE CHAPEL among others. The float climaxed the promotional mix on the August 16. The truck moved through Madina to Ashaley Botwe at exactly 9am. The tour started at 37 at 11 am through Airport.

There was a stopover at the Accra mall where the ladies danced to attract attention. Skaters also shared fliers.

The truck took to Spintex, Sakumono, Nunga, Teshie, Osu, Ring Road, Circle then to Accra, back to Circle again, and then to Tip toe lane, Kokomlemle and finally 37.

There were frequent stops at vantage points such as Spintex, Teshie, Osu, Circle and Accra and did the same as we did at Accra mall.

We thought it will be a good idea to document the event. So we threw it to the board which they agreed. The professional work of Anthill multimedia was employed to document the event together with the float.

We had interviews with visitors and exhibitors. Some said the publicity was better, others heard about the book fair for the first time, and some were happy with the people visiting the fair.

## **6.0. SPACE ALLOCATION AND LOGISTICS**

A sub-committee made up of Mr. Stephen Brobbey, Nana Kissiedu, Ms. Charlene Amakwah and the GIBF Secretariat were tasked with the responsibility of co-ordinating the allocation of exhibition stalls, ensuring that the venue was good enough for the holding of the fair and also to make available the necessary logistics for all the programmes as part of the fair. The Sub-committee discharged its responsibilities creditably well except for minor challenges that came up during the fair. Among some of the challenges included but not limited to the following:

- Delays on the part of Smativents in finishing the construction of the exhibition booths by 6am on 19<sup>th</sup> August, 2016 as agreed. This could partly be attributed to disturbances caused by the security officer in charge temporarily halting construction of the booths that evening because he claims they were blocking the main entrance to the lobby. An oral complaint has since been lodged by the Secretariat but the management of National Theatre is asking that an official complaint should be lodged to enable them address same.
- Last minute payment by some of the exhibitors which delayed the printing of their fascia.
- Exhibitors insisting that their location should be changed to a more visible location which was difficult for the responsible committee.
- Poor public address (PA) system for the official opening of the fair.

The issue of exhibitors not able to find their stands was minimised at the 14<sup>th</sup> GIBF due to the mounting of a large sized floor plan at the main entrance of the National Theatre.

## **7.0. EVENTS AND WORKSHOPS**

### **7.1. Workshop on Book Industry Standards**

As part of measures to set basic standards for the Ghanaian Book Industry, the Ghana Book Development Council in collaboration with GIBF organised a workshop on Standards for the Book Industry on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> August 2016 from 10:30 am to 1:15pm. The workshop which was held at the VIP Lounge, National Theatre, Accra was to expose industry players to a draft basic standards GBDC has put together. The workshop was oversubscribed with more than 60 participants from all sectors of the industry attending. The resource persons were Mr. Kwabena Agyepong and Mr. Woeli Dekutsey. Mrs. Mary L. Quaye facilitated the workshop.

The Moderator, Mrs. Agnes Vandyck welcomed participants after the opening prayer at 10:20am. She underscored the importance of the workshop and called on participants to take the workshop serious.

Mr. Elliot Agyare, President of the Ghana Book Publishers Association, apologised for the late start of the workshop. He stressed the importance of the workshop to all in the Book Industry, especially Writers, Publishers, Editors and Printers. He raised concerns about the quality and even format of books which he said really needed to comply with agreed standards. He therefore, advised those from the industry present to take the workshop seriously.

Mr. Woeli Dekutsey took the participants through “What to consider when writing, publishing or printing a book” and Mr. Kwabena Agyepong during his turn took those present through the processes of print production.

After the presentations, participants asked questions and gave recommendations. The participants were very appreciative of the workshop and thanked organisers for the workshop. They further expressed concern about the inadequate time allocated to such an important workshop and requested a repeat of the workshop to help industry players.

The Executive Secretary of GBPA assured the participants of a repeat of the workshop in September 2016.

The workshop closed at 1:15pm. Participants were refreshed.

### **7.2. Workshop on Design and Illustration**

Workshop on Design and Illustration organised as part of the 14<sup>th</sup> GIBF was held in the VIP Lounge, National Theatre, Accra on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> August, 2016 at 1:30pm instead of 1:00pm. The workshop attracted fifty-nine (59) participants from 30 organisations. It was originally meant for up and coming designers/illustrators but experienced designers and illustrators were also admitted. The focus of the workshop was to get the right illustrations for all kinds of books.

The workshop was facilitated by two lecturers from the Department of Publishing Studies, KNUST namely: Mr. Reuben Glover and Mr. Isaac K. Appiah, who are lecturers of the Department and renowned illustrators in the country. The facilitators made a critique of an illustrated book and used it to enlighten the participants on good and bad illustrations. They also pointed out things designers and illustrators are to avoid in the creation of illustrations especially misrepresenting adults as youth. They

also recommended that for a short story the illustrator has to read the story before creating the illustrations with the help of illustration briefs. This is to help get the illustrations right. Also, editors are to make sure that the drawn illustrations suitably explain the text. After the presentations, questions from participants were duly answered by the facilitators. The programme came to an end at 3:10pm. Participants were refreshed with water and drinks.

### **7.3. Copyright and the Book Chain Workshop**

A workshop on Copyright and the Book Chain was held on Friday, 19<sup>th</sup> August, 2016 from 9:00am to 11:30 am at the VIP Lounge of the National Theatre, Accra. Though the total number of participants expected was 50, the workshop was oversubscribed with 60 participants attending.

The resource persons were Ms. Sheila Narki Esson, Documentation & Research Officer at the Copyright Office; Chief Okereke, the President of the Nigerian Publishers Association; and Ms. Mary Neequaye, an official from CopyGhana.

Ms Esson shed light on the subject of Copyright and Related Rights, while Chief Okereke explained how the book chain works in Nigeria. Ms. Neequaye also gave an insight into the work of CopyGhana, who were sponsors of the workshop. Participants were given the opportunity to ask questions after the various presentations. The workshop came to a close at 11:30 am. Participants were refreshed.

### **7.4. Official Opening Ceremony**

The official opening ceremony took place on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> August, 2016 at 1:00 pm at the forecourt of the National Theatre, Accra. It was chaired by Mrs. Matilda Amissah-Arthur, Wife of the Vice-President of the Republic of Ghana. The Special Guest of Honour was Prof. Naana Jane Opoku Agyemang, the Honourable Minister of Education and the Guest Speaker was Mr. Kofi Benti, the Vice President of IMANI Ghana.

The President of the Ghana Book Publishers Association and Chairman of the 14<sup>th</sup> GIBF stakeholders Committee, Mr. Elliot Agyare, welcomed all present at the official opening and briefly spoke about the aim of the fair which was to bring all industry players and government officials together to look at how best to prosecute the theme for the fair.

Touching on the theme, the Guest Speaker, Mr. Kofi Benti, challenged writers and publishers to carry out proper investigations into the needs of readers before coming out with any published material. He further stated that the needs of readers kept on changing, so publishers must package their works to meet such growing demands and needs. He concluded by advocating for the formation of a book industry chamber that could fight for the national interest locally and even on the global market.

The Honourable Minister of Education, Prof. Naana Jane Opoku-Agyemang, expressed concern over the high spate of errors that continuously occur in newspapers, write-ups and books. According to her, the rate of errors in newspapers for instance was becoming rampant and worrying, and needed to be addressed by employing the services of people with the appropriate editing skills.



Explaining the role of writers and publishers in any write-up, Prof. Opoku-Agyemang stated that publishers ought to bear in mind their readers' needs before putting out the final work, and stated that the needs of readers must be taken seriously.

“Readers should not only be seen as final consumers of any write-up, but their needs should be considered adequately. It is the duty of writers to fill the knowledge gap through their writing; readers should not be taken for granted.” She noted.

There were series of solidarity messages from all the stakeholder institutions in the book industry chain. Mrs. Amisah-Arthur added her voice to the call on writers and publishers to endeavour to fill the knowledge gap through their publications. She lauded the organizers of this year's event and challenged participant to make the best out of the entire programme.

The Opening ceremony was generally successful with the exception of a few complaints from exhibitors on the wrong timing of the program and technical hitches with the PA system that made it impossible for speeches to be heard clearly.

### **7.5. Illustrators' Tent**

As part of efforts to stimulate creativity, the 14<sup>th</sup> GIBF had the illustrators' tent as one of its programmes to attract children to the fair. The main aim of the event was to give children within the ages of 8 years to 13 years the opportunity to create stories out of their illustrations while they interact with some of the best illustrators in the country.

The Illustrators' Tent took place on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> August, 2016 and Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> August, 2016. The facilitators were Mr. Ato De-graft Johnson, a retired lecturer and illustrator from KNUST and Mr. El Carna Mpesum, a renowned illustrator in Ghana.

In all about fifty children took part in the event and they were highly excited to have participated.

### **7.6 Wonderland Park**

As a side attraction for the 14<sup>th</sup> Ghana International Book fair, a wonderland park was set up in front of the National Theatre from Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> August to Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> August for kids who attended the fair. Notable amongst the fun packed activities that featured at the wonderland park included the bouncy castles, toy cars, face painting and many more. In all about 150 to 200 kids patronized the event.

Notwithstanding the enormous fun children had at the wonderland park, some parents complained about GH ¢ 5.00 the operators charged per child. Most of them thought it was expensive, and once it was publicized as side attraction of the 14<sup>th</sup> GIBF they expected it to be free.

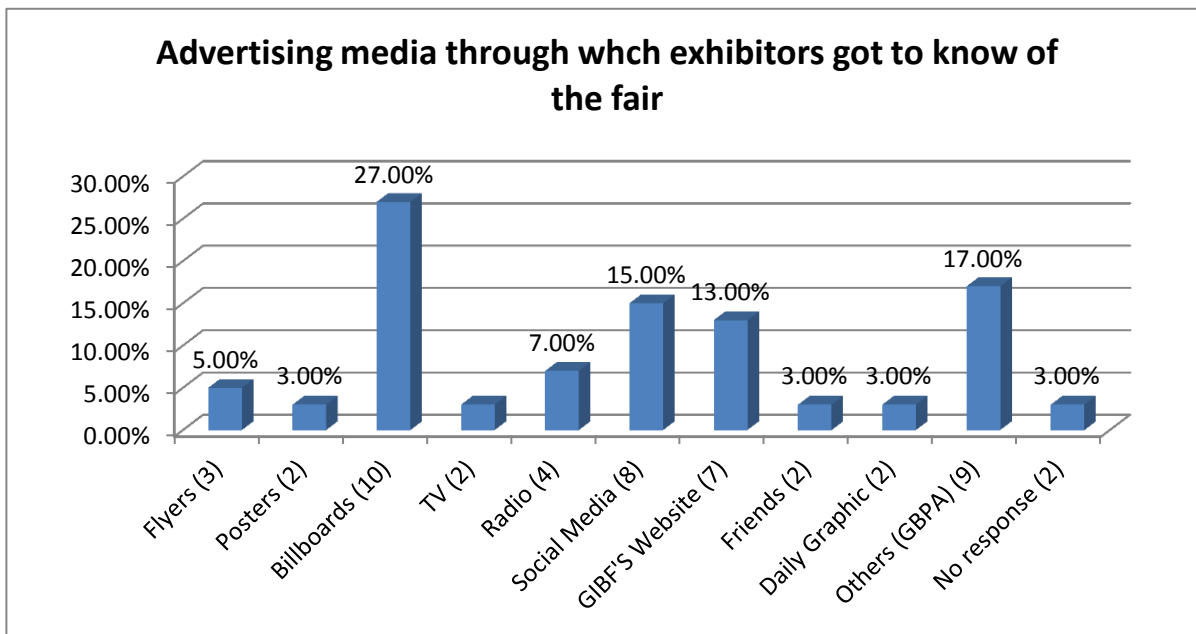
It would be great to feature the wonderland park as part of subsequent book fairs to attract children but we must have thorough discussion with the management of the wonderland park as to how beneficial it would be to all parties without complaints.

### 7.7. Buyers and Sellers Meeting

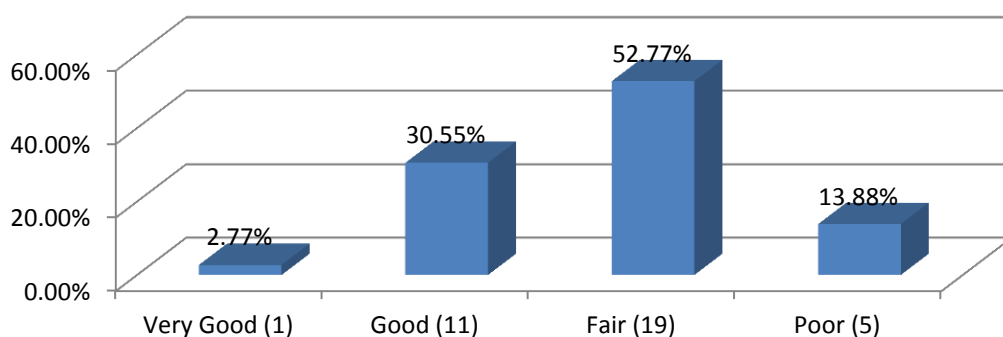
Buyers and Sellers Meeting scheduled for Saturday, 20<sup>th</sup> August, 2016 was cancelled due to the lack of interest on the part of local participants.

### 8.0 ANALYSIS OF EXHIBITORS' ASSESSMENT

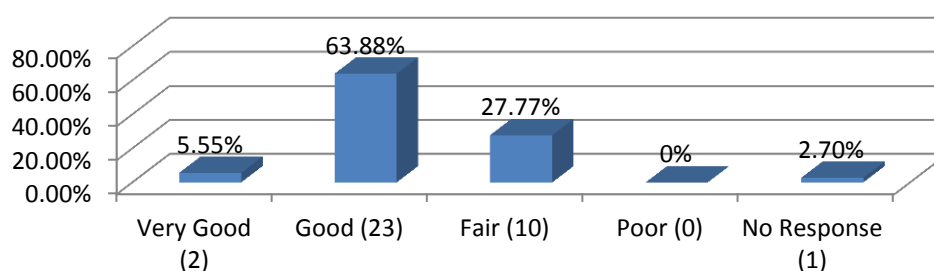
In all 68 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to exhibitors and 36 out of this questionnaire representing 52.94% were returned. Below is the analysis of the questionnaire:



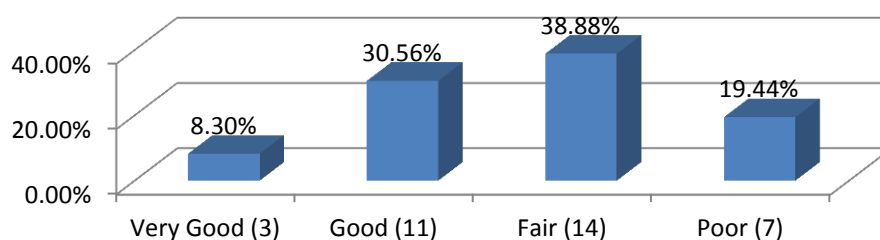
**Rating of attendance for this book fair**



**Rating the organisation of the fair**



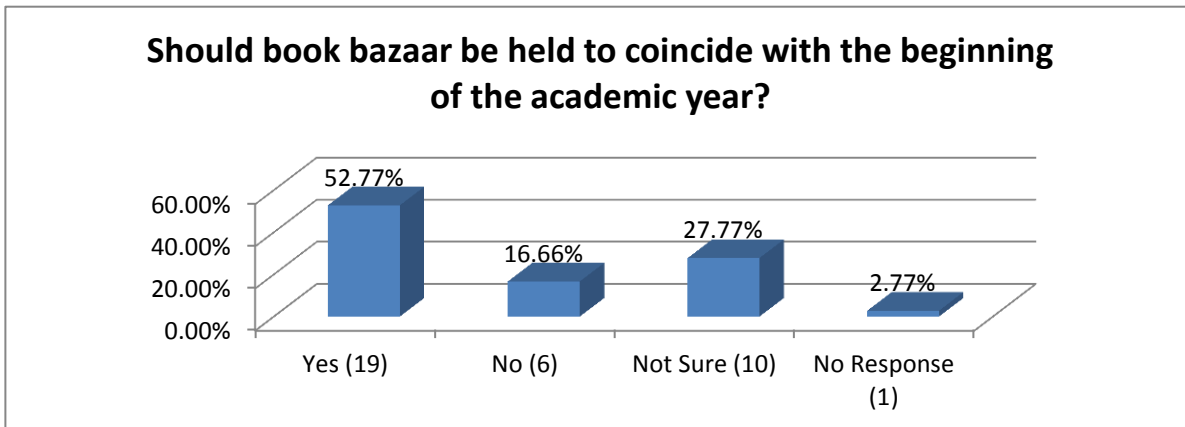
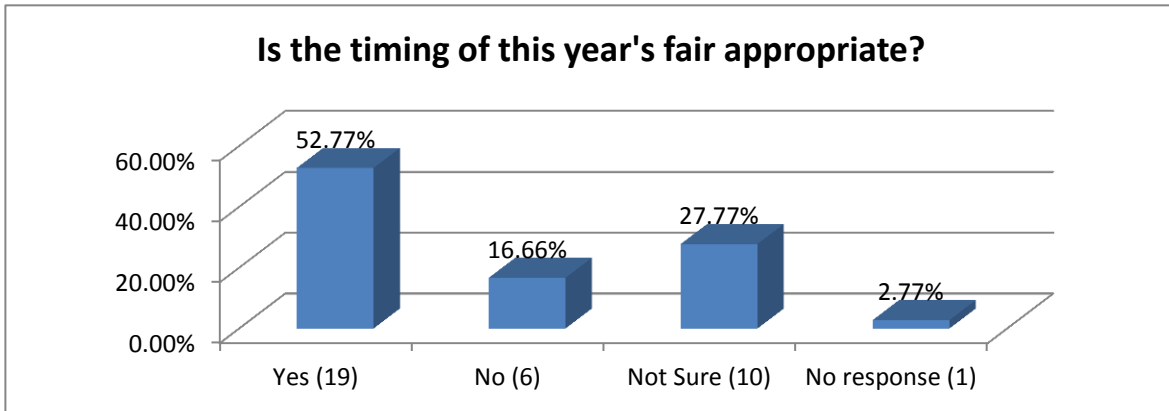
**Rate the publicity of the 14th GIBF**



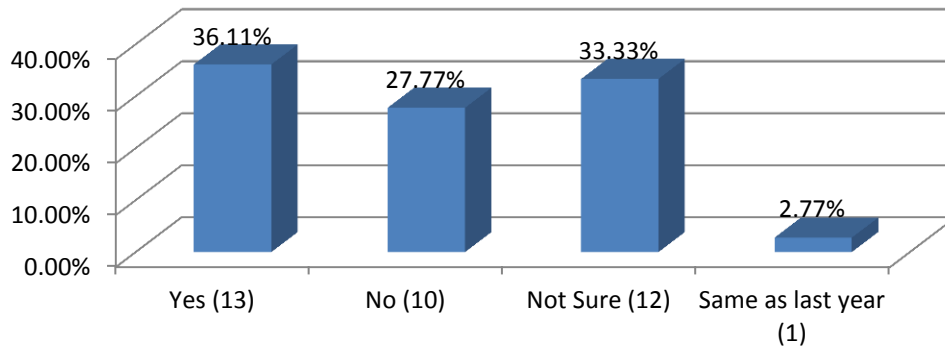
### 8.1 Proposed cost effective advertising media for subsequent fairs

- Electronic media – Adverts on Facebook, Google, Yahoo and posts on social media platforms – Facebook, What’sApp, Twitter, etc.
- Media Partnership
- Mobile network notification pop-ups
- Direct marketing of the fair to schools
- Widespread distribution of flyers in Accra and beyond.
- Acquire e-mail addresses of schools and send them mails

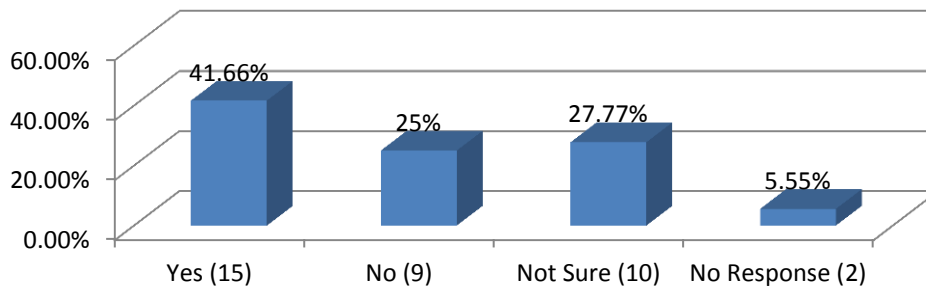
- Banners
- Circular letters to churches



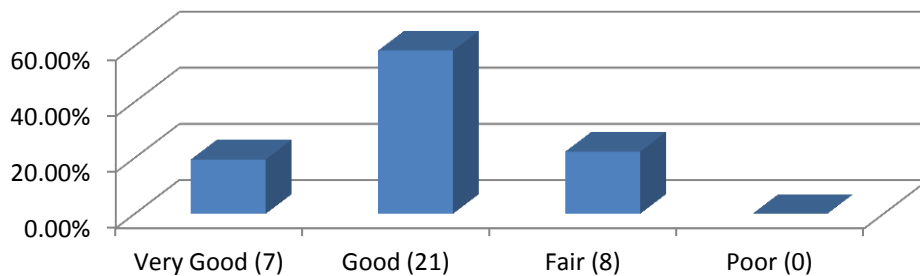
### Is this year's exhibition booths an improvement of last year's?



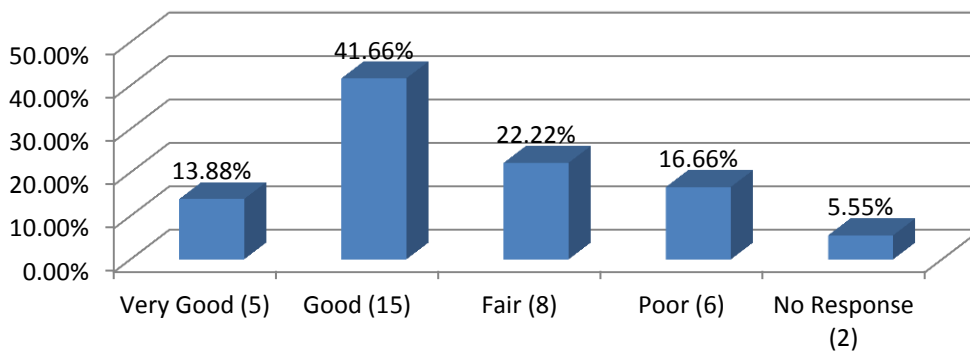
### Should book fair be held in November while book bazaar be held in August?



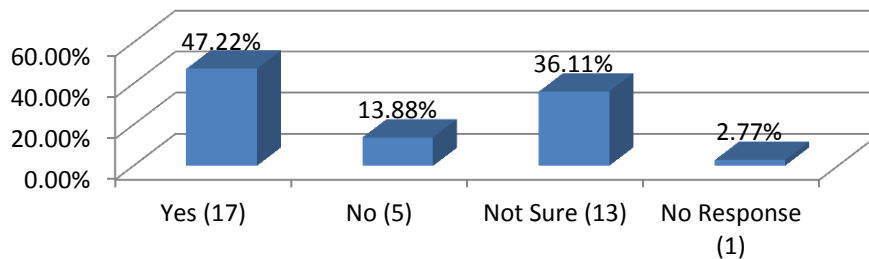
### Rate the venue of the book fair



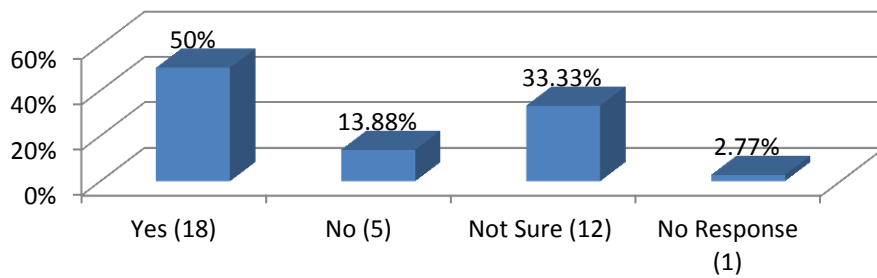
### Rate the washrooms of the fair



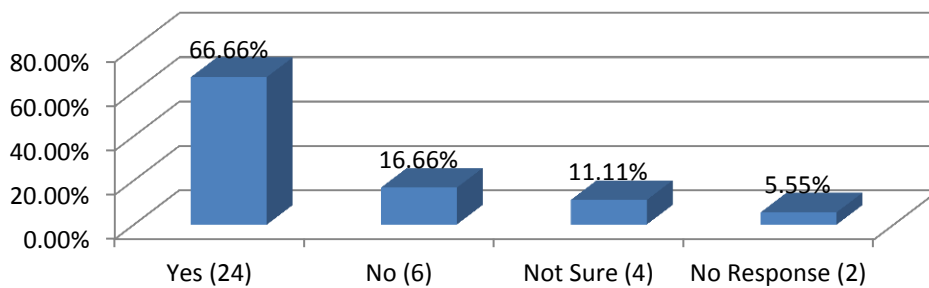
### Was preparation for this year's book fair better than last year's?



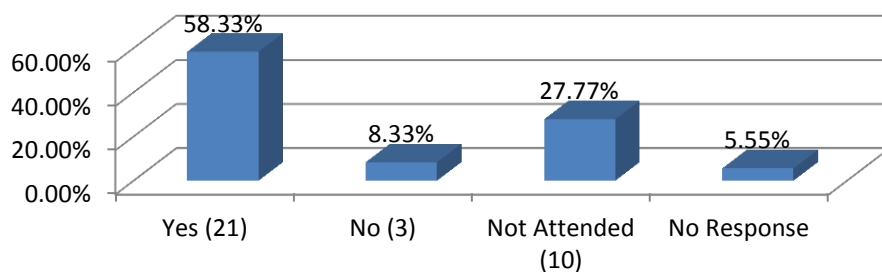
### Is this year's fair an improvement of last year's fair?



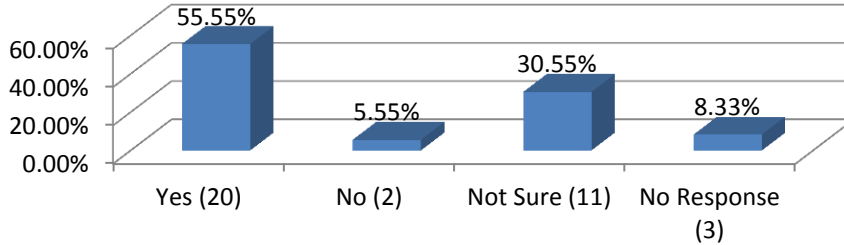
### Have you gained new knowledge from the fair?



### Were the workshops and seminars insightful and useful?



### Would you want a repeat of any of the workshops or seminar?



### 8.2 Workshops or seminars to be repeated

Workshop on Book Industry Standards - √√√√√ √√√√√ (9 exhibitors representing 25%)

Workshop on Design and Illustration - √√√√√ √√√√√ √ (11 exhibitors representing 30.55%)

Copyright and the Book Chain Seminar - √√√√√ √√√√√ √√ (12 exhibitors representing 33.33%)

### 8.3 The weaknesses of the 14<sup>th</sup> GIBF

Inadequate publicity - √√√√√ √√√√√ √√√

Low Attendance (patronage) - √√√√√ √√√

Poor sanitation - √√

Managers did not fulfil their promise of Saturday overnight event - √

Unfinished booths by 6am - √

No book shelves - √

Clashing of other events - √

Public address system for the opening ceremony - √√

Electric power for some of the booth sockets were off - √

Food here is expensive - √

Few/ No food vendors around - √√

The place is not opened early - √√

Opening Ceremony was too long - √√

No directional signs - √

Expected dignitaries to visit all stalls not only stalls on the ground floor - √√

Timing - √

Music was often too loud - √

Few days for book exhibition - √√

Room temperature was poor - √√



#### **8.4 The Strengths of the fair**

- The venue and its location - √√√√√√ √√√√√√ √√√√√√ √
- Good lighting - √
- Better publicity - √√√√√√ √√√
- Timing of the fair - √√√√√√ √
- Good organisation - √√√
- Organise the fair before schools vacate - √
- Participation of high level government officials - √
- Participation of industry players - √√
- Networking - √
- Unity among exhibitors - √
- Media - √
- Invited dignitaries of the Opening Ceremony did well - √√
- Good and effective book fair committee - √

#### **8.5 Exhibitors' Recommendations to improve participation in the fair**

- Extensive publicity - √√√√√√ √√√√√√ √√√√√√
- Convince heads of schools and invite schools - √√√
- Collaborate with schools and media - √
- Availability of the media houses - √
- Proper sanitation - √
- Choosing a venue without conflicting programmes - √
- Better advertising strategies - √
- School to school advertisement & invitation - √√√√√√
- More spacious venue - √
- Parents should come with their wards' book lists - √
- Awards for exhibitors - √
- Lower costs and direct marketing - √
- parents should be educated on reading so that their children can copy - √
- Authorities linked to education should assist book fairs - √

#### **8.6 Exhibitors' Expectations of next year book fair**

- Better publicized fair - √√√√√√ √√√√√√
- Wider participation (patronage / sales) - √√√√√√ √√√√√√ √√√
- More spacious venue - √√√
- Better organization - √√
- Live media coverage not only during the opening - √
- All exhibitors should be downstairs if the venue is used again - √

The venue should be maintained - ✓  
More booksellers and online booksellers - ✓  
Expect book fair to be done in every region - ✓  
Much better logistics - ✓  
More participation from African and Asian countries - ✓  
There should be 'item 13' for exhibitors - ✓  
More food vendors - ✓  
Better wash rooms - ✓✓  
Get some celebrities to endorse the fair - ✓  
Extend the book fair days - ✓✓✓✓✓  
Refreshment and souvenirs for exhibitors - ✓✓✓✓  
Low / moderate charge for stand - \$800 is too much - ✓  
Good room temperature - ✓✓  
Opening Ceremony should be held in the morning - ✓✓

## **9. CONCLUSION**

The 14<sup>th</sup> GIBF was fairly successful compared to the last three (3) book fairs held. The strengths and weaknesses of the fair have been noted; complaints and suggestions given by the exhibitors in the assessment report will be addressed in subsequent fairs.

In conclusion, the 14<sup>th</sup> GIBF met the expectations of some exhibitors, while others were somewhat disappointed. There were some successes and some shortcomings which when evaluated well and acted upon gives the next fair good prospects. There is room for improvement in subsequent fairs.

### **a. Recommendations by GIBF Secretariat**

Based on the report above, the GBPA/GIBF Secretariat humbly suggest the following recommendations for consideration to ensure successful future GIBFs.

#### **i. Organisation of the Fair**

- Dates, venue, theme and programme for the next fair should be decided upon ahead of time so as to improve participation.
- Organising the fair during vacation should be reconsidered because it takes away a lot of shine from the event. Organising the fair during vacation would require extensive publicity to drive people to the fair.
- Setting up a GIBF desk and assigning a permanent staff to see to the implementation of an all year round work plan which would be necessary towards effective organisation of the fair.

- Acquiring a vehicle which could be fully branded with GIBF, to aid in running errands. The branded car could help in given visibility to the event as well as help in cutting cost in engaging too many volunteers to help in running errands.
- The GIBF could be looked at as the flagship event for all stakeholder institutions to hold their major programs. For example AGMs, Awards Ceremony, Industry Get-togethers, Inaugural Addresses, Workshops and Seminars could be organised as part of the fair to attract top industry players.
- Registration forms for the next fair could be printed and distributed to all exhibitors before the close of every fair.
- The planning of next fair should start immediately the current fair ends to give the committee enough and ample time to solicit for sponsorship.
- The whole arrangement of engaging event's organiser and media and publicity coordinator for the GIBF should be relooked at to get the maximum benefit from it. There were several instances the Secretariat had to perform the roles these professionals were engaged to perform to avoid major setbacks.
- A flagship educational programme i.e debate for senior/junior high schools could be organised in every district and the finals be held as part of the Ghana International Book Fair as way of attracting people to the fair. Corporate organisations like MTN, Vodafone, Airtel, Tigo foundations and a host of other institutions/organisations could be contacted to fund this important education event.

#### **ii. Publicity Campaign**

- Organisers should consider playing more Jingles about the fair on radio stations instead of focussing on print media adverts and appearances on TV morning shows which are very expensive but has little patronage from our target audience.
- Billboards which were the most effective medium of publicity for this year's fair should be up three to four months before the start of the fair to yield maximum impact.
- Organisers should consider settling on a consistent venue which could be associated with the GIBF anytime it is mentioned.
- Flyers, stickers and posters should be sent to almost all schools in Ghana and not selected schools in Accra.
- The intensity of social media campaign should be sustained right from when it starts to the end of the fair. The social media campaign for the 14<sup>th</sup> GIBF peaked a month or two before the event and dropped a few days to the event when it was needed most.
- The Ghana International Book Fair website should be given to dedicated and reliable web designers to manage. Getting the current handlers to update the site regularly was a major challenge during this year's fair.

### **iii. Sponsorships and Funding**

- All stakeholders should be encouraged to make financial contributions towards the organisation of the fair.
- A comprehensive budget should be prepared and strictly adhered to for every book fair.
- Sponsorship letters must go out early. This means that the *theme*, *venue* and the *date* should be ready as soon as the current fair ends.
- Sponsorship proposal could be sent to corporate entities to sponsor specific programs and events of the Book Fair. Likewise, proposal on cost of renting venue could be sent to corporate entities for support.
- Participation fees as an exhibitor or trade visitor for subsequent fairs should be reviewed upwards a bit for an improved organisation. Participation fee in the GIBF has remained the same for four (4) years and ought to be reviewed to reflect current economic conditions.

**Prepared by GBPA Secretariat  
Executive Secretary, GBPA**

**Approved By Elliot Agyare (Mr)  
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