



**OPPORTUNITY INTERNATIONAL SAVINGS AND LOANS
COMPANY LIMITED**

20TH ANNIVERSARY DINNER

REMARKS BY

**DR. ERNEST ADDISON
GOVERNOR, BANK OF GHANA**

**7TH JUNE 2024
LABADI BEACH HOTEL**



**Board and Management of Opportunity International Savings and Loans Limited,
CEOs of Savings and Loans Companies,
The CEO of the Ghana Association of Savings and Loans Companies,
Staff of Opportunity International Savings and Loans Limited,
Invited Guests,
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,
Good evening.**

1. It is my pleasure to be here tonight to celebrate a truly remarkable milestone, the 20th anniversary of Opportunity International Savings and Loans Limited (OISL). Two decades is a long time in any industry and for two decades, Opportunity International has been empowering the ambitions of its customers by providing them with financial solutions and training. This is in line with Bank of Ghana's policy imperative of financial inclusion, with our policy focus on providing access to basic financial services, allowing people to carry out basic banking functions. For two decades, your customers have trusted you to finance and provide them with access to several financial services. Today, we celebrate the consistent dedication and resilience that have shaped this institution into the financial powerhouse it is today. I therefore congratulate the Board, Senior Management, and staff for this great feat.
2. Ladies and Gentlemen, we all acknowledge the amazing journey that Opportunity International Savings and Loans Limited has made since it first opened its doors 20 years ago. Over these years, and while maintaining its core vision to achieve a poverty-free life for its customers, OISL has expanded from initially operating as a unit entity to currently operating across ten (10) out of the sixteen (16) regions in the country. They have served countless people, families,



and companies, and ultimately helped to promote financial inclusion and sustainable growth across the country. Indeed, the success of OISL extends beyond the size of the balance sheet to the positive impact on livelihoods of our people.

3. Distinguished guests, measuring success in business extends far beyond figures on a balance sheet. Over the past two decades, Opportunity International has equipped households and businesses with tools to improve their income generating capacities, and in turn provided some financial stability for several people. In addition, your contribution to the advancement of financial inclusion is invaluable. The commitment shown towards the integration of clients at the base of the pyramid into mainstream financial services with innovative products that give aspiring business owners the chance to obtain financing to generate employment opportunities in various communities is commendable. Particularly, your exhibitions under the Accra/Kumasi Kayayie Project and numerous financial literacy forums have been very useful to many households.
4. Ladies and Gentlemen, let us also acknowledge Opportunity International Savings and Loans Limited's accomplishments. Among them is being named "Chartered Institute of Marketing Ghana's (CIMG) Savings and Loans Company of the Year" in 2019 and 2020. Opportunity International also won the Savings and Loans Company Award of the Year for three consecutive years in 2018, 2019, and 2020, and was inducted into the Ghana Business Awards Hall of Fame in 2022 and 2023. These accomplishments are indeed worth celebrating.



5. In terms of performance, the key Financial Soundness Indicators for Opportunity International are largely satisfactory, with both Capital Adequacy Ratio (CAR) and Cash Reserve Requirement (CRR) within the regulatory limits. While Opportunity International's accomplishments over the years are laudable, it is important to note that the main goal of the savings and loans subsector is to provide avenues to bank the 'unbanked' segments of the population. So, I will entreat you to enhance the new and inventive products and services to meet this need and help deepen financial inclusion in the country.
6. In furtherance of this, the Bank of Ghana remains fully committed to its supervisory role and will ensure that all financial institutions adhere to regulatory requirements and guidelines to foster trust and confidence in the sector. The Bank of Ghana has been engaging with regulated entities regularly over governance and assurance functions, in its quest to remain vigilant to ensure stability of the financial sector. Strong risk management, Compliance with prudential rules, proper internal audit functions remain crucial to ensure that regulated financial institutions operate soundly, safely, ethically and within regulatory and legal boundaries.
7. Issues such as poor credit underwriting standards, high-risk clients, weak risk management procedures, inadequate monitoring systems, and other factors have all contributed to the increased Non-Performing Loans (NPLs) in the subsector over the last few years. I must commend the Board, Management and Staff of Opportunity International of scoring high marks and setting high standards in its Corporate Governance. We urge other Boards and Managements of the savings and loans subsector to emulate the good corporate governance practices of Opportunity Savings and Loans.



8. Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, looking ahead, the financial landscape will undoubtedly continue to evolve, and savings and loans companies should be well-positioned to adapt and navigate these changes. Technological advancement has broadly shifted banking operations to digital platforms on mobile devices. Savings and loans companies' subsector can therefore take advantage of these new platforms through collaboration with banks and telecommunication companies to broaden their scope of operations and service offerings to the benefit of our economy. They must however be aware of the issues of cybersecurity and operational risks that arise therefrom. Cyber attacks such as malware, phishing scams and ransomware attacks can disrupt operations, compromise systems and affect data integrity. We encourage Savings and Loans Companies to take advantage of the Financial Industry Command Security Operations Centre (FICSOC) set up by the Bank of Ghana to address these cyber security risks.
9. As a leader in the financial sector, paying attention to the issue of sustainability, climate-related financial risk and green finance presents a strategic opportunity. Let me therefore take this opportunity to encourage the Board, Management and Staff of OISL to pay close attention to issues of sustainability, climate-related financial risks, and green finance which has become part of the global agenda. Presently, there are existing opportunities such as green funding to support lending activities within the banking system. The Bank of Ghana has recently issued a draft Directive on Prudential Disclosures of Climate Related Financial Risks, and I urge you to review and comply with the recommendations under the directive.



10. Once again, distinguished guests, join me in congratulating Opportunity International Savings and Loans Company Limited on the milestones reached during the past 20 years of existence as a savings and loans company in Ghana. I wish the Board of Directors, management, employees, and clients continued success in the years to come.

Happy 20th Anniversary! Thank you and may God bless us all.

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