FOOD AND DRUGS AUTHORITY
*Your Well-being, Our Priority.*

# Pioneering Progress: Achievements in Food and Medical Products Regulation (2017-2024)

Exploring the groundbreaking achievements that have defined food and medical product quality and safety in Ghana.


FOOD AND DRUGS AUTHORITY
FDA
GHANA
Your Well-being, Our Priority.

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## Foreword by the Board Chairman

It is with immense pride and a profound sense of accomplishment that I present this report, which captures the remarkable journey of the Food and Drugs Authority under the leadership of the Governing Board between 2017 and 2024. These transformative years have been marked by innovation, resilience, and a steadfast commitment to regulatory excellence. Together, we have navigated a dynamic and rapidly evolving landscape, steering the Authority toward new horizons of growth and impact.

Throughout this period, the Board has remained unwavering in its dedication to upholding the highest standards of accountability and transparency. By empowering Management and staff, the Authority has implemented strategic initiatives that align seamlessly with its mission and the evolving demands of the regulatory environment.

From expanding our operational footprint across the regions to embracing cutting-edge technologies, our collective efforts have set a strong oundation for future progress.

The journey has not been without challenges, but each obstacle has provided an opportunity to refine our strategies and emerge stronger. These experiences have reinforced the importance of adaptability and vision, which are reflected in the milestones we have achieved.

The report is a testament to the tireless dedication, hard work, and foresight of everyone involved. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to my fellow Board members for their invaluable contributions and unwavering support. I am particularly grateful to the members of the Board Committees, whose specialized insights and dedication have been instrumental in driving our achievements. To the Management and staff of the Authority, your commitment and resilience have been the bedrock of our success.

As our tenure comes to a close, we look to the future with optimism and confidence. We are confident that the strong foundation we have built over the past eight years will propel the FDA under the next Board to even greater heights.

As you browse through this report, I hope you will reflect on our shared achievements and milestones. I have no doubt the groundwork has been laid for a brighter future for the Food and Drugs Authority as well those we serve, the people of Ghana.

**Dr. Sammy Ohene**
**Board Chairman**

## Gallery of the Governing Board

**Dr Sammy Ohene**
Chairman

**Dr Delese Darko**
Chief Executive

**Dr Joyce Dontwi**
Member

**Prof Alex Dodoo**
Member

**Dr Daniel Danquah**
Member

**Nana Kwadwo Obiri I**
Member

**Dr. Alhassan Emil**
Member

**Mrs Martha Osei**
Member

**Prof. Charles Tortoe**
Member

**Mrs. Anna Pearl Akiwumi-Siriboe**
Member

**Prof. Alex Asase**
Member

## Gallery of the Governing Board

## Gallery of the Executive Committee


Food and Drugs Authority,
Head Office - Greater Accra and Tema Heights

# 1.0

## Introduction

The Food and Drugs Authority (FDA) has, over the past eight years, conscientiously executed its mandate to protect public health and safety, building on previous achievements. Under the strategic direction of its Governing Board, the Authority made significant progress in ensuring that the quality and safety of food and medical products (allopathic, herbal, homeopathic, veterinary medicines, biological products, vaccines, tobacco products, substances of abuse, medical devices, cosmetics, and household chemical substances) placed on the market and exported meet the requirements of relevant local and international standards.

This document highlights some of the FDA's key achievements under the leadership of its Governing Board during the period 2017 - 2024. It also outlines challenges faced by the Authority and proposes recommendations to address them.

The purpose of this high-level summary is to document progress and acknowledge the achievements made by successive Boards of the FDA since its inception in 1997. It may also serve as a guidepost for future action and direction.

# 2.0

## Expanding Staffing and Operational Reach

In the past 8 years, the FDA significantly increased its staff strength from 587 in 2016 to 1,186 in December 2024, representing a 202.04% growth. This expanded workforce has facilitated the Authority's presence in 12 out of 16 regions. In addition, the FDA has included two district offices and is present at the Tema and Takoradi Ports, Kotoka International, and in 16 of 32 border posts. Before 2017, the Authority operated in nine (9) regions and lacked district-level presence.

Specifically, the FDA has operationalized two new Regional Offices:

1. Sefwi Wiawso in the Western North Region
2. Nalerigu in the North East Region

Additionally:

a. The Authority is taking steps to create offices in the remaining 4 regions where it does not have a presence. To this end, office spaces have been identified in Bono East, Ahafo, and Savannah Regions, with procurement processes underway to operationalize them in 2025. The search for office space is ongoing for a Regional Office in Nkwanta (Oti Region).

b. The FDA is also rolling out district offices in collaboration with traditional leaders and District Assemblies to identify accommodation for these offices based on the service availability map. So far, two district offices have been operationalized in Assin Fosu Central and Awutu Senya East Districts (Central Region). Plans are underway to operationalize an office in Assin Fosu North District, while the search for a district office in Kade (Eastern Region) is ongoing.

As part of its operational expansion, the FDA has completed a six-storey office complex—FDA Heights— in Tema, along with a newly constructed road in front of that building and that of the Head Office in Accra.

The number of assets of the Authority has also significantly increased over this period. Details are provided in Table 1 below. With these improvements, the FDA has brought its services closer to clients, enhancing operational efficiency and service delivery.

**Table 1: New Assets Acquired**

| Item | Quantity (Units) | | Proportion of assets to date |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 2016 | 2024 | |
| Desktop | 140 | 317 | 98% |
| Laptop | 13 | 255 | 80% |
| Printers - Coloured | 2 | 18 | 91% |
| Printers - Black & White | 50 | 80 | 98% |
| UPS | 120 | 476 | 96% |
| Scanners | 1 | 25 | 75% |
| Vehicles | 68 | 56 | 99% |
| Air Conditioners | 118 | 427 | 96% |
| Dispensers | 10 | 50 | 95% |
| Projectors | 6 | 10 | 98% |
| Binding Machines | 2 | 13 | 94% |
| Refrigerators | 56 | 18 | 99% |
| Television | 10 | 24 | 98% |
| Microwave | 8 | 9 | 99% |
| Lab Equipment | 211 | 114 | 99% |
| Camera | 2 | 4 | 98% |
| Photocopiers | 2 | 5 | 98% |
| Safe | 8 | 6 | 99% |
| Servers | 7 | 13 | 98% |
| Swivel Chairs | 343 | 262 | 99% |
| Desks | 200 | 161 | 99% |

Centre for Laboratory Service and Research

# 3.0

## Strengthening International Impact

The FDA enhanced its operational and financial performance to strengthen its relevance and impact on the regulatory landscape in Africa and globally. These efforts have led to substantial achievements in regulatory systems and laboratory testing.

### 3.1 Advancing Regulatory Systems

a. Since 2017, the FDA's operational and technical processes have been certified to ISO 9001:2015, ensuring consistent and continuous improvement in quality service delivery nationwide.In 2020, the FDA achieved World Health Organization (WHO) Global Benchmarking Tool (GBT) Maturity Level 3 for medicines and vaccines (non-producing). This designation confirms that Ghana has a stable, well established, and integrated regulatory system that ensures the prompt availability of quality, safe, and efficacious medicines and vaccines to meet national health needs.

### 3.2 Enhancing Laboratory Capabilities

a. The FDA's Centre for Laboratory Service and Research (CLSR) boasts of the highest scope of ISO 17025:2017-accredited testing scopes under a single roof in Africa, increasing from 26 tests in 2016 to 63 in 2024 - a 142% growth.

b. In 2022, the CLSR's Drug Laboratory became the first in West and Central Africa to achieve WHO Prequalified Quality Control Laboratory (QCL) status. This designation ensures global recognition of test results and positioning FDA to lot release vaccine when produced in Ghana, enabling the FDA to participate in international tenders and support local manufacturers in accessing the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

### 3.3 Building Regional Capacity

The FDA consistently demonstrated its capacity to support regional regulatory development:

a. Since 2014, the FDA has been an AUDA-NEPAD-designated Regional Centre of Regulatory Excellence (RCORE) for medicines, vigilance, and clinical trials. In 2023, it was also designated as RCORE for vaccine regulatory oversight

b. Over 225 participants from more than 24 African countries - including The Gambia, Senegal, Gabon, Guinea, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Tanzania, Uganda, Guinea, Rwanda, Mozambique, Burkina Faso, South Africa, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Eswatini, Republic of Congo and Botswana - have been trained by the FDA, underscoring its role as a preferred agency for capacity building among researchers and regulators across Africa.

# 4.0

## Outreach and Stakeholder Engagement

The Communications and Public Education Department (CPED) of the FDA stands as a pivotal force in advancing public health and consumer safety in Ghana. As the authoritative voice of the FDA, the department is dedicated to empowering citizens with accurate, timely, and actionable information on the regulation of food, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, medical devices, and other regulated products.

With an unwavering commitment to transparency and public engagement, CPED bridges the gap between the Authority and the public, ensuring that all stakeholders are informed, educated and empowered to make safe and healthy choices. By employing a blend of innovative strategies and cutting-edge tools, the department amplifies its reach, creating a lasting impact on the nation's health and well-being.

Key to its mandate, CPED leads dynamic nationwide public sensitization campaigns, develops targeted educational materials for diverse audiences, fosters robust media partnerships, and champions stakeholder through strategic initiatives. Leveraging both traditional and digital media, the department ensures that its messages resonate widely, driving a culture of safety and responsibility.

Among its flagship initiatives is FDA Pulse, a groundbreaking platform that epitomizes the department's mission to educate and inform. FDA Pulse delivers timely updates on regulatory developments, consumer protection guidelines, and emerging trends in public health. This initiative underscores CPED's dedication to safeguarding the nation's health, promoting accountability, and nurturing an informed populace.

Through its exceptional efforts, the Communications and Public Education Department exemplifies leadership in public health advocacy, positioning the FDA as a trusted guardian of consumer safety and a beacon of excellence in regulatory communication.

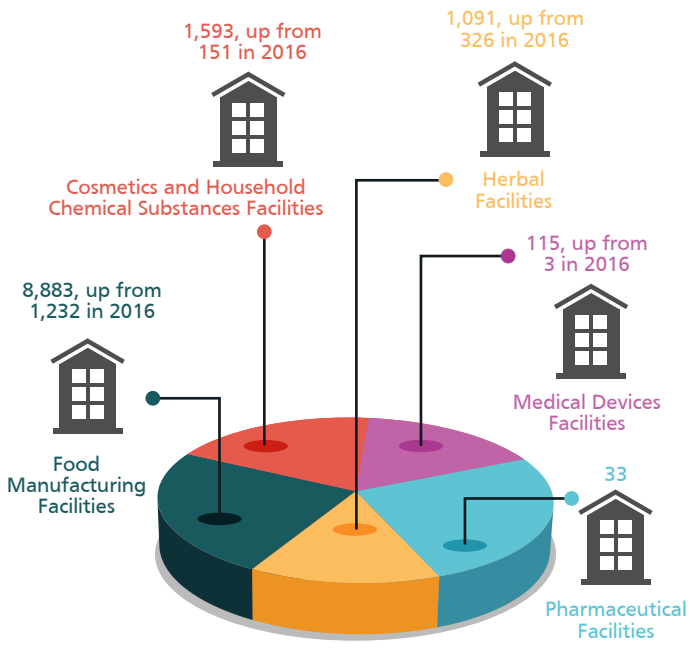
Community engagement at Markets and Hospitals

# 5.0

## Technical Operations

### 5.1 Driving Growth in Manufacturing and Food Service Sectors

Through its robust regulatory support, the Authority has been instrumental in driving the expansion of manufacturing and food service sectors across the country. As a result, by the end of 2024, a total of 14, 855 new manufacturing facilities have been licensed, marking a substantial increase from 2,343 in 2016. The breakdown of this growth is as follows:




In addition to growth in manufacturing, the FDA has also supported food service sector expansion. A total of 2,695 new Food Service Establishments (restaurants and eateries) have been licensed nationwide by the FDA, compared to 466 in 2016.

The growth has been distributed across various regions, reflecting the broad-reaching impact of the FDA's regulatory efforts in promoting food safety. Table 2 shows the regional distribution of new facilities across regulated products, with 2016 data in brackets.

**Table 2: Regional Distribution - New Facilities**

| Region | New Manufacturing Facilities | | | | | New Food Service Establishments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Food | Pharma | Herbal | Cosmetics & Household Chemicals | Medical Devices | |
| Greater Accra | 4,035 | 11 | 393 | 923 | 52 | 1,037 |
| Eastern | 724 (605) | 2 (1) | 127 (189) | 141 (41) | 3 (3) | 277 (76) |
| Central | 605 (327) | 3 | 81 (109) | 87 (92) | 6 | 127 (114) |
| Western | 426 | - | - | 89 | 23 | 65 |
| Western North | 59 | 1 | 19 | 7 | 2 | 72 |
| Ashanti | 940 | 14 | 312 | 464 | 2 | 321 |
| Bono/Bono East/Ahafo | 375 (158) | - | 87 (22) | 73 (12) | 6 | 233 (90) |
| Volta/Oti | 750 (126) | 2 | 22 (34) | 13 (4) | 11 | 213 (51) |
| Northern/Savannah | 560 | - | 42 | 170 | 6 | 160 |
| North East | 82 | - | 2 | - | - | 10 |
| Upper East | 179 (84) | - | 2 (4) | 51 (5) | 6 | 91 (69) |
| Upper West | 186 (58) | - | 7 (2) | 41 (1) | 1 | 89 (66) |
| **Total** | **8,921 (1,358)** | **33 (1)** | **1,094 (320)** | **2,018 (155)** | **94 (3)** | **2695 (466)** |

## 5.2. Expansion of New Products in the Market

Between 2017 and 2024, a total of 78,463 new products have been introduced to the market, representing a remarkable increase of 214% from 24,956 in 2016. This growth reflects the successful implementation of a pragmatic regulatory approach by FDA Ghana, which has facilitated the introduction of a diverse range of safe, innovative, and high-quality products. The breakdown of these new products is reflected in Table 3 below, with 2016 data in brackets.

**Table 3: Regional Distribution - New Products on the Market**

| Region | Food | Pharma | Herbal | Cosmetics & Household Chemicals | Medical Devices |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Greater Accra | 35,439 (12,836) | 7,038 (1,709) | 4,842 | 21,581 (6,812) | 4,784(1,012) |
| Eastern | 886 (67) | 8 | 241 (189) | 348 (41) | 1 (4) |
| Central | 749 (46) | 2 | 240 (158) | 189 (233) | 6 (6) |
| Western | 525 (46) | 12 | 103 | 122 | 23 |
| Western North | 65 | 1 | 39 | 17 | - |
| Ashanti | 1,508 (218) | 136 | 364 | 362 | 46 |
| Bono/Bono East/Ahafo | 392 (113) | 4 | 168 (34) | 129 (14) | 9 |
| Volta/Oti | 605 (81) | 7 | 155 (73) | 187 (4) | 12 (2) |
| Northern/Savannah | 570 (96) | - | 45 (12) | 223 (15) | 1 |
| North East | 10 | - | - | - | - |
| Upper East | 184 (82) | 34 | 8 (2) | 21 (5) | 3 |
| Upper West | 141 (58) | - | 7 (2) | 74 (4) | 1 |
| **Total** | **37,290 (13,643)** | **7,242 (1,709)** | **5,486 (1,452)** | **23,253 (7,128)** | **4,886 (1,024)** |

The Industrial Support Services Directorate has been pivotal in these achievements; providing the needed technical support including capacity strengthening across the manufacturing and the food service sectors to enhance product safety and quality.

Key achievements of the FDA in these areas include the following:

1. Thirty-three (33) state of the art pharmaceutical manufacturing facilities have been licensed since 2017, compared to one (1) in 2016. This was achieved through the implementation of FDA's Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) Roadmap for Pharmaceutical Industries. These new pharmaceutical facilities include manufacturers of sterile products such as vaccines and infusions.

2. Implementation of the Progressive Licensing Scheme (PLS) for micro, small and medium scale enterprises (MSMEs) in the food, cosmetics, and household chemical substances sectors have accelerated market access for quality and safe products:

   a. The average number of licensed facilities per annum for MSMEs increased from sixteen (16) in 2019 (before the scheme commenced) to three hundred and thirty (330) facilities between 2020 and 2023.

   b. The average number of products registered per annum for MSMEs increased from forty-three (43) products in 2019 (before scheme commenced) to one thousand two hundred (1,200) between 2020 and 2023. (c)Seventy (70) percent of household chemical substances on the market are locally manufactured and sell at lower prices compared to their imported counterparts; this is due to the support provided to the sector through the PLS.

3. Contribution to increased job creation by licensing two thousand, nine hundred and seventy-two (2,972) food, cosmetics, and household chemical substances manufacturing facilities.

4. Five thousand eight hundred (5,800) food, cosmetics and household chemical substances have been placed on the market leading to 20% increase in locally manufactured products on the Ghanaian market.

5. The licensing of the 2,972 cottage and small-scale facilities increased women-led agribusiness since 85% of these facilities are owned by women.

6. Active product quality monitoring using mini labs and TruScan Raman Spectrometer across the country for screening for substandard and falsified (SF) medicines, has resulted in the withdrawal of thirty-five substandard medicines from the market from 2017 to 2024.

7. The Ghana FDA is the first regulatory agency in the world to give approval for the use of the R21 Malaria vaccine.

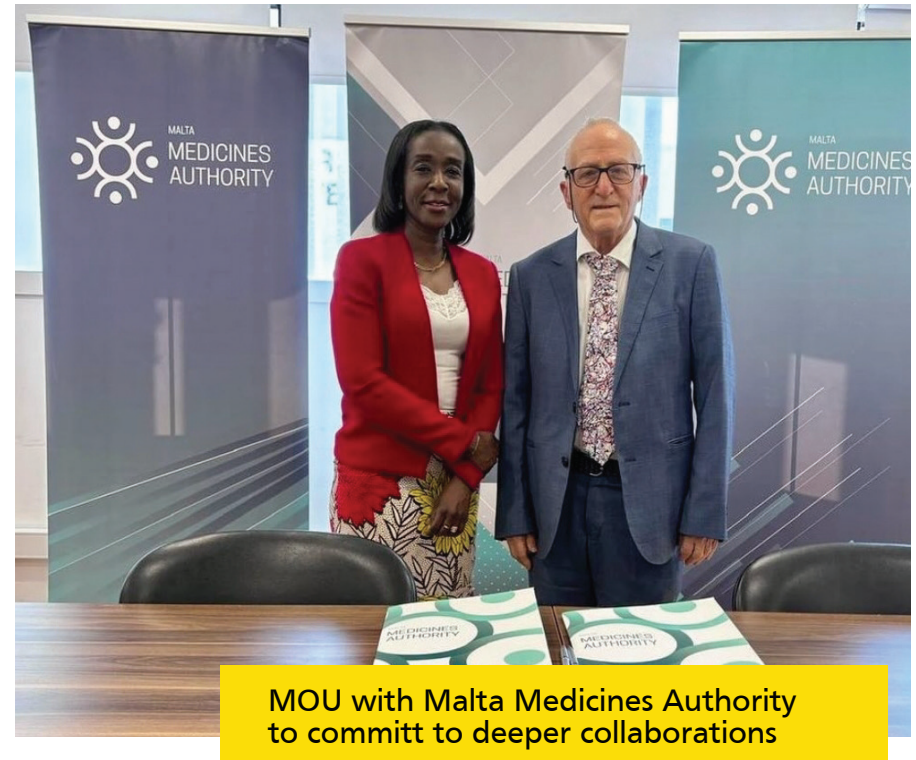

FDA host a delegation from the National Control Laboratory of Congo

Donation of equipments for testing and analysis from CRS

Meeting with the Executives of CIPLA Pharmaceuticals


Donation of some equipment and a Nissan Pick-Up vehicle to support the PLS

Workshop for Staff to maintain high-quality testing standards for vaccines and other biological products



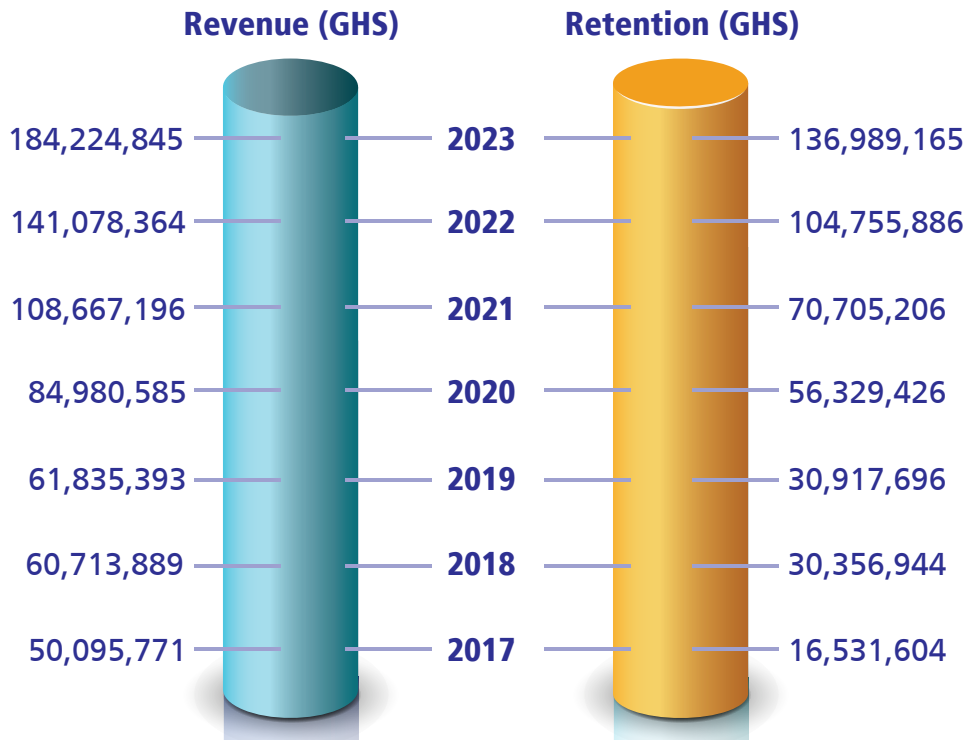

MOU with Malta Medicines Authority to committ to deeper collaborations

# 6.0

## IGF Revenue Mobilization

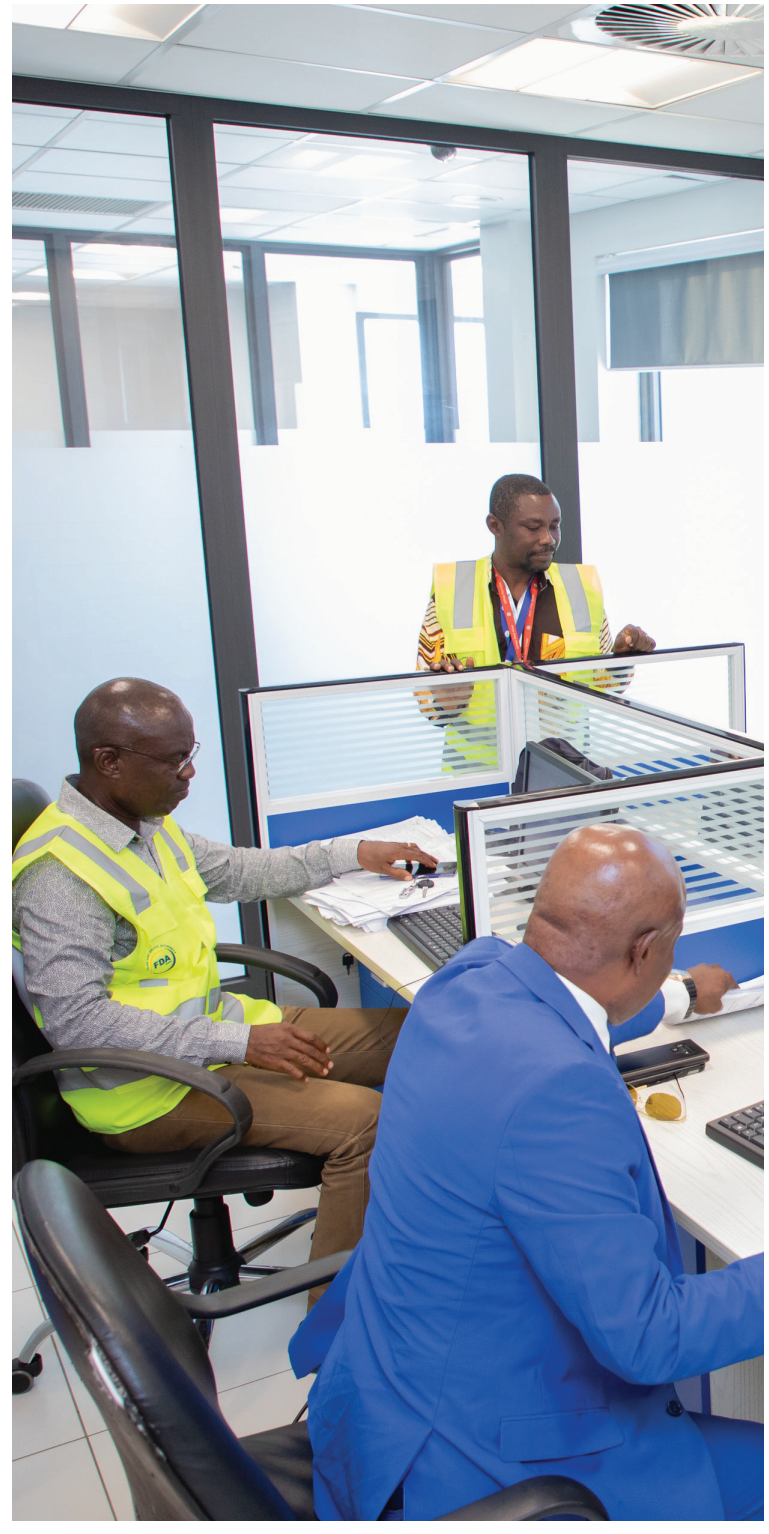
The implementation of a Freight on Board based regulatory fees structure in 2020 for imported products has contributed significantly to internally generated funds (IGF) required to protect public health and safety. IGF retention for operational activities has increased from 33% in 2017 to 50% in 2018 and then 70% by 2022 as shown in Table 4 below:

**Table 4: IGF Revenue and Corresponding Retention from 2017 – 2023**




Note: Retention 2017 (33%), 2018-2019 (50%) and 2020-2023 (70%)

This increase in IGF has enabled the Governing Board and Management to upgrade existing laboratory facilities and offices, acquire new equipment, open new offices, purchase vehicles and introduce new allowances to enhance the relatively low remuneration package for staff. Allowances such as Motivation, Accommodation, and Clothing have greatly improved staff morale and productivity.



# 7.0

## New Interventions, Regulations, and Policies

During the period 2017 to 2024, the Food and Drugs Authority introduced key interventions, regulations, and policies to enhance efficiency and protect public
health and safety:

1. National Food Safety Policy: Launched to foster collaboration amongst the agencies along the food value chain within the food control system, while eliminating overlaps and improving service delivery to Ghanaians. In line with implementation of the Policy, the National Intersectoral Food Safety Coordinating Committee and its Technical Working Group were constituted, and the National Food Safety Strategic Action Plan for implementation of the Policy unveiled to together with the National Food Safety Emergency Response Plan. Over forty (40) guidelines that address the strategic objectives of the NFS Strategic Action Plan have been developed to date. Furthermore, three (3) Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) between stakeholder agencies with overlapping roles in regulation of certain areas of the food chain have been drafted.

2. Executive Instruments:
   a. Banned codeine-based cough syrups in 2018 through targeted importation, manufacture, and registration restrictions.
   b. Imposed stricter controls on tramadol under similar regulations

3. Pictorial Health Warnings (PHW): This was introduced on tobacco packaging in November 2018 to discourage smoking.

4. COVID-19 Guidelines: Emergency use authorization expedited approval for COVID-19 products, reducing processing times, for example: 2–5 days registration of medicines and Personal Protective Equipment.

5. Street Vended Food Licensing: Ensures quality and safety of street foods.

6. "Buy Ghana, Love Ghana" Initiative: Some supermarkets now stock about 40%local products in select categories, promoting Made-in-Ghana goods.

7. Client Service Centres: Improved nationwide service delivery.

8. Rebranding Efforts: A new logo and tagline, "Your Well-being, Our Priority", enhanced public confidence.

9. Adverts Regulation: Introduced the tagline "This advert is FDA approved", with stringent regulatory sanctions applied to discourage unapproved adverts.

10. Organizational Structure Improvements: The was a need for a new organogram to enhance regulatory operations. In doing so, the Authority aimed at the supporting the execution the FDA'S mandate through the generation of a structure that aids performance and result measurement, quick execution of projects and agile response to external drivers; and Scheme of Service to spell out the career progression of employees.

11. Business Development Department: The first of its kind in the regulatory space, this Department was Introduced for the first time to strengthen partnerships, increase resource mobilization, and expand international collaboration.

12. "No Registration, No Importation" Policy: Reduced unregistered product imports by 79% since 2021.

Buy Ghana, Love Ghana Initiative

# 8.0

## Digitalization: Transforming FDA's Operations

Digitalization plays a pivotal role in enhancing the efficiency, transparency, and accessibility of the FDA's operations, ensuring improved service delivery and public health outcomes. Over the past eight years significant investments have been made in this area resulting in the following:

1. Streamlined Administrative and Operational Activities: The integration of the Government of Ghana's Smart Workplace System has revolutionized internal processes, boosting efficiency and delivering a superior client experience.

2. Integrated Regulatory Information System (iRIMS): Now in the User Acceptance Test (UAT) stage, this system will transform service delivery by enabling clients to seamlessly access FDA services online.

3. Med Safety App: This innovative platform has strengthened pharmacovigilance by enabling healthcare professionals and patients to report adverse effects of medical products, including vaccines, with ease. The app enhances data collection, collation, and sharing with local and international partners.

Digitalization continues to drive the FDA's commitment to protecting public health and safety through cutting-edge solutions.

# 9.0

## International Partnerships and Collaborations

The Authority has signed a €1.3 million grant contract for the construction of an ISO Class 5 with class 6 background . This state-of-the-art facility will enhance the CLSR's ability to test RNA-based vaccines, strengthening the capacity for the regulation of locally manufactured vaccines.

Through partner support, several key initiatives have been implemented to bolster the capacity for regulating locally manufactured vaccines: Table 5 below shows training programs completed with partner support, enhancing regulatory capacity.

**Table 5: Partner Support Training**

| Training / Institution | Date and Status | Participants |
|---|---|---|
| Animal Housekeeping/Care course, Germany Paul Ehrlich Institute | 23rd to 29th Nov. 2022 Completed | 2 participants from the Centre for Plant Medicines Research were trained. |
| Hands-on GMP Inspections course Biotech Training Facility, Leiden Netherlands | 19th - 30th June 2023 Completed | 8 Officers from FDA completed 3- weeks the training |
| Hands-on Dossier Evaluation course (Quality Module) - Phareg Consult, Tomreik Hotel East Legon Ghana | 10th to 28th July 2023 Completed | 20 FDA officers completed a 3- Week training |
| Hands-on Dossier Assessors course (Non-Clinical Module) – Phareg Consult, Tomreik Hotel East Legon, Ghana | 7th to 18th August 2023 Completed | 20 FDA officers completed a 2-weeks training |
| Hands-on Dossier Evaluation course (Clinical Module) - Phareg Consult, Tomreik Hotel East Legon Ghana | 4th-15th September & 25th - 28th September 2023 Completed | 20 FDA officers completed a 3-week training |
| QC Training in Ireland | 30th Sep. to 18th Oct. 2024 21st Oct. to 8th Nov. 2024 Completed | 8 FDA staff have been selected |

Institutional Support Training FDA and GIZ

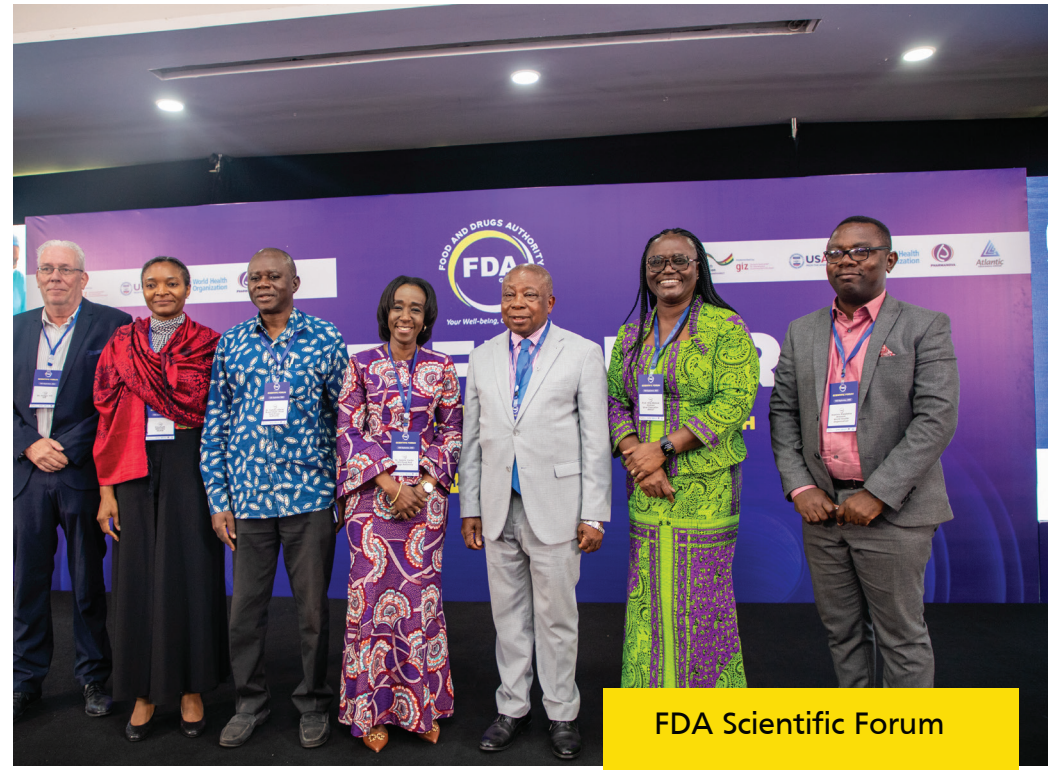
**Other initiatives include the following:**

1. FDA-GSA Harmonization Scheme: This initiative which was launched in 2022 simplifies product registration and certification for MSMEs. It streamlines operations, reduces redundancies, and improves service delivery. Key achievements include joint registration processes, aligned systems for information sharing, and collaborative inspections. Integrated with the Progressive Licensing Scheme (PLS), it supports small food processors in meeting regulatory standards. Companies like Benyima Farms Limited and GLAQUA Ltd have already completed certification under this scheme. Ongoing efforts focus on raising awareness, stakeholder training, and improving implementation.

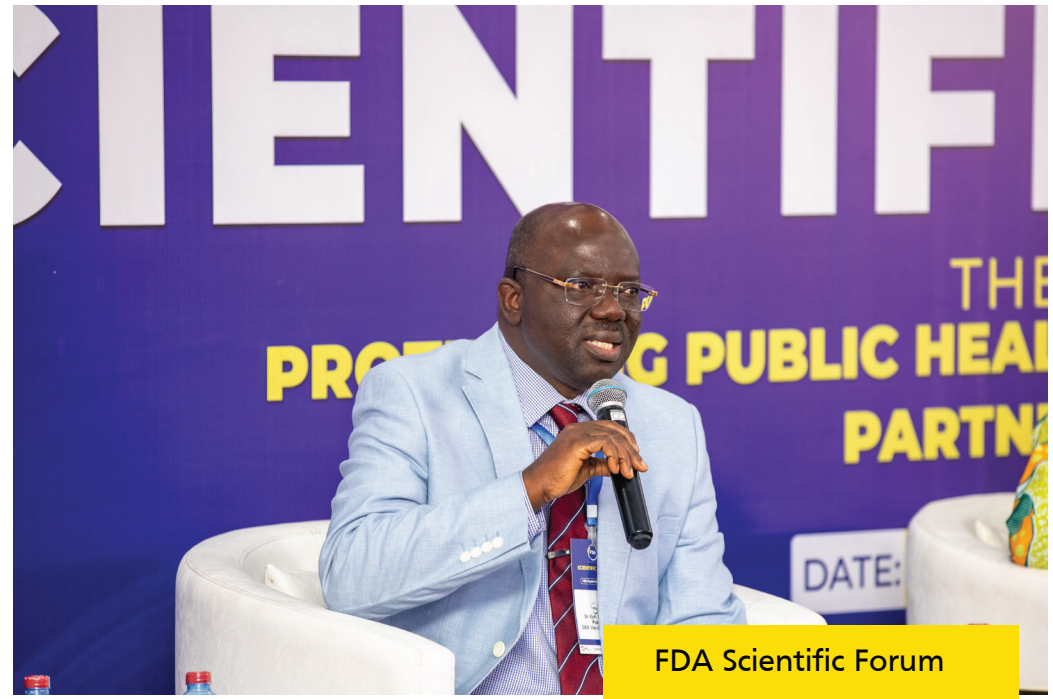
2. Annual Stakeholders Meeting (ASM): To enhance transparency and accountability, the Authority hosted its inaugural ASM to update stakeholders on regulatory activities and achievements for 2022. Subsequent ASMs have been held annually to solicit feedback from stakeholders on how to improve service delivery.

3. Scientific Forum: Actively preparing for this event, the FDA is receiving poster submissions to showcase innovative research and initiatives aligned with its mandate.

4. ProPerSeals Platform: Implemented to facilitate continent-wide verification of product registration statuses, enhancing supply chain security across the free trade area.




FDA Scientific Forum



FDA Scientific Forum

# 10.0

## Awards

The Authority has won several awards including the

1. Overall Specified Entity of the Year (Ultimate Award, symbolized by the Asesekwa stool) for 2021, 2022 and 2023, the Most Efficient Other Specified Entity (OSE) of the Year, Best Other Specified Entity – Dynamic Effect (Innovation) of the Year, and Other Specified Entity of the Year 2023 at the 2023 Public Enterprise League Table Awards jointly organized by the Ministry of Public Enterprises, Ministry of Finance and State Interest and Governance Authority.

2. Recognition of its Distinguished Humanitarian Services to the People of Ghana during the COVID-19 period at the National Honours and Awards 2023 (Presidential Honours)

3. Order of the Volta – Companion (Member of the National COVID-19 Taskforce) at the National Honours and Awards 2023 (Presidential Honours)

4. Most Effective Public Sector Organization at the Osabarima Royal Awards

5. Industry Leadership Award at the Ghana - West Africa Healthcare Excellence Awards 2022

6. Corporate Communications Team of the Year (Government Regulations) at the 4th National Communications Award

7. Gold Label Seal of Good Standing in the Delivery of Customer Service and Consumer Relations Excellence Award and Customer Service Focused, Public Sector Institution for the year 2022 - 2023 at the Ghana Customer Service Excellence

8. National Government Agency of the Year at the National Business Honours

9. The Most Financially Sustainable Regulator and Best Inter-Trading Specified Entity at the 1st Public Enterprise League Table Awards

10. Industry Leadership Award at the Ghana International Products Awards

11. Excellence in Government Regulatory and Standards, Outstanding Public Leadership and Part of 100 Most Influential Business Leadership Personalities in Ghana at the 2nd National Governance & Business Leadership Awards 2022.

12. Quality Public Sector Leadership Award at the 5th Global Business Quality Awards 2021.

13. Distinguished Service Award at the Ghana International Products Awards

14. The Change Maker Award (Mrs. Delese Darko) at the Millennium Youth Impact Awards



# 11.0

## Challenges

Despite the FDA's significant achievements over the past eight years, several challenges persist:

1. **Non-Compliant Products on the Market:** Key factors include unmanned or unapproved border posts, clearing of "consolidated consignments" at ports of entry, and personal luggage or courier packages at KIA. To mitigate these issues, the FDA uses intelligence driven swoops, targeting100% inspection of consolidated consignments, and risk profiling of importers. Plans to inspect personal luggage at Terminal 3 at KIA are underway, with over 48,207 units of non-compliant products brought into compliance by Q3 2024.

2. **Safety Alerts on FDA-Approved Exports:** The absence of an end-to-end digital export system on ICUMS allows some exporters to bypass FDA approval. Engagements with Customs and Ghana Link for the development of export processes are ongoing but progress is slow.

3. **Inadequate Vehicles for Inspections:** Insufficient vehicles have caused long waiting times for inspections, resulting in an estimated 4,089 inspections being missed by Q3 2024. Additionally, over 15,000 facilities remain uninspected. The FDA is addressing this challenge with risk-based inspection scheduling and by using ride-hailing apps.

4. **Aging Laboratory Equipment:** The FDA's laboratory equipment, some 8 to 20 years old, incurs high maintenance costs and frequent downtime. Donor support has helped acquire some new equipment, particularly for vaccine testing, but more upgrades are needed.

5. **Uncompetitive Staff Remuneration and Conditions:** Staff remuneration, service conditions, and pensions do not align with the value of FDA's contributions to public health, leaving staff vulnerable to compromise. Over the past five years, more than 45 highly trained staff have resigned. Approval for new conditions of service is pending with the Fair Wages and Salaries Commission and Ministry of Finance.

6. **Inadequate Funding for Operational Activities:** Internally generated funds (IGF) are capped at 30%, which affects service delivery and hinders the implementation of operational expansion plans, as the government bears 30% of the service delivery cost.

# 12.0

## Recommendations to the in-coming Board

In light of the challenges outlined above, the incoming Board is encouraged to:

1. **Continue the Dialogue on Autonomy:** Advance discussions on the autonomy of the Authority and implement an action plan to ensure its realization.

2. **Negotiate for Increased Retention of IGF:** Advocate for a higher retention of the Authority's internally generated funds to enhance operations and address the challenges highlighted, especially in terms of funding for inspections and operational expansion.

3. **Strengthen Border and Port Inspections:** Prioritize the establishment of approved border posts and enhance inspection systems at key entry points such as Tema Port and KIA. The Board should also support efforts to improve border security and compliance through the necessary legislative and operational approvals.

4. **Enhance Export Control Systems:** Fast-track the development and implementation of an end-to-end digital system for exports on ICUMS to prevent bypassing of FDA approvals. Strengthen collaboration with Customs and Ghana Link to ensure efficient export processes and compliance.

5. **Address Vehicle Shortages for Inspections:** Prioritize the acquisition of more vehicles to address the inspection backlog and ensure timely service delivery. The Board should also support innovative solutions such as leveraging ride-hailing apps to reduce the strain on transport resources.

6. **Invest in Laboratory Equipment:** Support efforts to modernize the FDA's laboratory by investing in new equipment to replace outdated assets. Continued donor engagement should be pursued to ensure the laboratory meets global standards for vaccine and product testing.

7. **Enhance Staff Remuneration and Conditions:** Expedite the approval of the revised conditions of service with the Fair Wages and Salaries Commission and the Ministry of Finance. Advocate for competitive remuneration and pension schemes to retain skilled and experienced staff and prevent further attrition.

8. **Improve Operational Funding:** Negotiate for a higher cap on Internally Generated Funds (IGF) to support the FDA's operational activities and reduce dependency on government funding. This would help enhance service delivery, particularly in critical areas like inspections, laboratory testing, and staff compensation.

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## Conclusion

Over the past eight years, the FDA has made significant strides in advancing public health and safety through strategic interventions, partnerships, and innovations. While challenges remain, particularly in the areas of funding, staffing, and operational capacity, the Authority has shown resilience and commitment to fulfilling its mandate.

To continue building on this momentum, it is crucial for the Authority to focus on enhancing operational autonomy, securing additional resources, and addressing the pressing issues related to inspections, export controls, and staff welfare. By prioritizing these recommendations, the FDA will not only improve its service delivery but also reinforce its pivotal role in protecting the health and safety of the Ghanaian public.

The future of the FDA lies in its ability to adapt, innovate, and collaborate effectively with local and international stakeholders and partners. With strong leadership and strategic interventions, the FDA can overcome its challenges and continue to set the standard for regulatory excellence in Ghana and beyond.