

GRA exceeds mid-year target by GH¢138.69m

By Chris Nunoo

THE Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA) has collected GH¢68.05 billion for the first six months of the year, exceeding its mid-year target by GH¢138.69 million.

The amount represents 0.2 per cent excess collection by the authority on its mid-year target.

This comes in the wake of the dire need for revenue collection to close fiscal deficit gaps in line with the country's programme under the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

At a media briefing on the mid-year performance of the authority in Accra yesterday, the Commissioner-General of the GRA, Julie Essiam, said the achievement represented a nominal growth of 37.6 per cent over the same period last year.

She said the GRA, as of June this year, had collected GH¢68.049 billion as against a half-year target of GH¢67.91 billion, adding that for the month of June, "the devoted staff of GRA outperformed and exceeded the revenue target by an exceptional 21.2 per cent".

Significant increase

Describing the effort as a "significant increase in a single month", Ms Essiam said all that was achieved against the headwinds of a very difficult first quarter, and commended the staff of the GRA for their commitment, resilience and overall dedication.

Breaking down the details of their performance, the GRA Commissioner-General explained that the revenue in January fell below target by 12.3 per cent.

She said February also showed a shortfall of 6.3 per cent, with the month of March following a similar trend with an increased negative deviation of 12.7 per cent.

"We started to rebound from April, and exceeded the target by 1.9 per cent, then exceeded again in May by 1.4 per cent and, subsequently a significant achievement of a positive increase of 21.2 per cent in June.

"As we can see, the outstanding performance in June supported the turnaround to help with a positive half-year performance of 0.2 per cent of the total half-year target," Ms Essiam said.

The briefing, which had in attendance other commissioners of the top management of the GRA, was to share the 2024 half-year revenue

numbers against the target of the GRA, provide some insights into the short-term strategic focus areas, and provide highlights of key focus areas for the next six months.

Ms Essiam said the leadership team discerned and agreed to a much focused 90-day plan to ensure strategic focus, and deliberate

on turning the tide of a negative first quarter.

Key among the 90-day plan, the Commissioner-General said, was the rollout of the flagship Electronic VAT Invoicing System of the GRA, which, she indicated, was successfully

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• Julie Essiam (2nd from left), Commissioner-General of the Ghana Revenue Authority, interacting with other top management members

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transitioned into the first phase registration of its top 600 taxpayers.

“We are happy to report that we exceeded our target of 600, and onboarded 614 taxpayers as of the June 30 deadline. This initiative is a very important revenue enabler, as it will potentially ensure that we are able to gather real-time data on taxpayers, in particular retailers, for the first time in GRA’s history,” Ms Essiam said, stressing that the momentum would keep the authority on track to migrate about 4,000 additional taxpayers onto the e-VAT invoicing platform.

She said the GRA had also initiated its Special Voluntary Disclosure Programme (SVDP), which ensured that resident individuals and entities that earned incomes in Ghana voluntarily disclosed any previously undisclosed financial accounts or incomes held abroad.

Touching on revenue, Ms Essiam said rigorous compliance and enforcement measures had been instituted to streamline domestic tax and customs administration to widen the tax net, including the registration of eligible taxpayers under the Upfront Payment of VAT Initiative.

She said the authority, as of June 30, 2024,

had registered 176,524 taxpayers as against a target of 144,000 taxpayers, adding that the upfront VAT initiative would ensure that businesses which imported taxable goods in commercial quantities were registered for VAT.

Training programmes

The Commissioner-General further announced that training programmes in customer experience would be conducted in August this year to transition GRA’s operations from an enforcement-centred to a collaborative partner approach.

She added that August had also been designated as a tax education month.

In that regard, she announced that her outfit had partnered with the Methodist Church Ghana to use biblical teachings to raise awareness of civic responsibilities and obligations of citizens to tax payment.

Similarly, she said, the GRA would leverage the framework across faith-based organisations with a visit to the National Chief Imam, Sheik Dr Osman Nuhu Sharubutu, as well as engaging with the Ghana Muslim Council.

Ms Essiam said the GRA was poised to build on the achievements and further enhance its operations while prioritising the welfare of its staff, and also ensuring that taxpayers operated within a transparent tax regime.