

OFFICE OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR



2025 AGGREY-FRASER-GUGGISBERG MEMORIAL LECTURE SERIES

ADDRESS BY:

**PROFESSOR NANA ABA APPIAH AMFO
VICE - CHANCELLOR, UNIVERSITY OF GHANA**

FRIDAY, MARCH 14, 2025

GREAT HALL

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

- *Lady Chancellor*
- *Our Distinguished Lecturer, Mrs. Josephine Anan-Ankomah,*
- *Pro Vice-Chancellors,*
- *Registrar,*
- *Provosts, Deans, Directors and Heads of Department,*
- *Faculty, Staff and Members of Convocation,*
- *Past and Present Senior Officers of the University,*
- *Alumni and Students,*
- *Family and Friends of the Lecturer,*
- *Invited Guests,*
- *Corporate Executives from the Ecobank Group,*
- *The Press,*
- *Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen present in the Great Hall and our virtual audience,*

It is exciting to be back here at the Great Hall of the University of Ghana for a continuation of the 2025 Aggrey-Fraser-Guggisberg Memorial Lecture Series which started yesterday.

Over the years, the Aggrey-Fraser-Guggisberg Memorial Lecture platform has hosted many distinguished persons on various insightful topics. The lecture recognizes and celebrates the sterling

performance of individuals who have excelled in their field of endeavour through a public lecture that dovetails into a ceremony for the award of an Honorary Doctorate Degree.

This year, we are privileged to have Mrs. Josephine Anan-Ankomah, a proud alumna of this University and one of the finest brains on issues of Finance and Economics, deliver the 2025 Aggrey-Fraser-Guggisberg Memorial Lectures. She is a highly respected international banker who has played a pivotal role in shaping Africa's financial landscape.

Undoubtedly, we were treated to a very thought-provoking lecture yesterday on the topic; ***“Her Money, Her Power: Making Finance Work for Women”***. In the captivating session on the sub-topic ***“Cracking the Code: Exploring the Barriers Holding Women Back from Financial Power”***, the lecturer highlighted the root causes of financial exclusion, exposing the systemic biases that have made financial systems inaccessible, inefficient and inequitable for women.

In the lecture, it was evident that the global financial system is failing women—not incidentally, but structurally. For too long, finance has been designed as a one-size-fits-men model, ignoring

the distinct financial behaviours, needs and challenges women face.

Over the decades, I have witnessed firsthand the transformative power of empowering women financially. Access to capital, credit, and financial literacy unlocks the potential of women, enabling them to drive businesses, create jobs, and improve their homes and communities.

In African banking, however, there remains a significant gap. Women often face systemic barriers—limited access to credit, lack of collateral and biases from financial institutions. By fostering inclusive policies, providing tailored financial products, and prioritizing women's financial needs, we build an ecosystem that benefits not only women but the entire economy.

As a leading University in Africa which remains committed to addressing national and global issues, I consider this lecture well-aligned with the focus of the University and its commitment to promoting gender equality and inclusion to ensure that marginalized and underprivileged groups contribute meaningfully to national development.

I suppose yesterday's lecture may just be a warmup session; to help us all understand and appreciate the barriers to women's financial empowerment. In today's lecture which promises to be even more riveting, we will dive deeper into the conversation. After diagnosing the problem, the lecture is set to proffer bold solutions that will dismantle the barriers and revolutionize financial services so that women are not just participants but leaders within the financial sector.

Although this lecture series is focused on "*Making Finance Work for Women*", I entreat all of us, male and female, to take a keen interest in it.

I dare say that, if a woman is empowered financially, a family is empowered, a community is empowered, a nation is empowered, a continent is empowered, and the world is empowered.

Before I take my seat, permit me to share with you a brief profile of our distinguished lecturer for the 2025 Aggrey-Fraser-Guggisberg Memorial Lectures.

PROFILE OF THE LECTURER

Josephine Anan-Ankomah is a highly respected international banker with over three decades of experience in treasury management, strategy execution, investment, and commercial banking. A dynamic leader, she has played a pivotal role in shaping Africa's financial landscape.

She currently serves as Regional Executive for Central, Eastern, and Southern Africa (CESA) at Ecobank Transnational and doubles as Managing Director of Ecobank Kenya. Overseeing operations in 18 of the 35 African countries that the Ecobank Group operates in, she manages nearly 30% of the Group's balance sheet and the second-largest revenue pool. She drives strategy and business performance in one of Ecobank's most critical regions while simultaneously leading Ecobank Kenya.

Previously, Josephine was Group Executive for Commercial Banking, spearheading Ecobank's SME and Local Corporate banking strategy across 33 African markets. She is a champion for women in business, having pioneered Ellevate by Ecobank, the bank's flagship and award-winning gender finance programme that delivers tailored financial and non-financial solutions to women-led businesses.

Her leadership journey at Ecobank has included senior roles in operations, treasury, and regional expansion, such as Chief Operating Officer for the West African Monetary Zone/East & Southern Africa, Regional Treasurer overseeing a \$3 billion balance sheet, and Managing Director of Ecobank Gambia, where she positioned the bank as a market leader.

Josephine holds a BA and an MBA from the University of Ghana and is a Fellow of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants. She is deeply passionate about empowering women and founded SheBlossoms, a foundation that provides financial support, educational materials, and mentorship to young girls.

Beyond banking, Josephine is a music hobbyist who has played a key role in shaping Ghana's gospel music scene, inspiring and mentoring several talents.

At home, she is outnumbered by lawyers—married to one and raising three more! With a household full of legal minds, she jokingly admits she's perfected the art of “banking negotiations” at the dinner table.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, I shall now respectfully invite Mrs. Josephine Anan-Ankomah to present part two of the lecture titled "***Her Money, Her Power: Making Finance Work for Women***" and specifically to speak on "***Barrier to Breakthrough: Practical Solutions to Women-Centred Financing***".

Enjoy the lecture!

Prof. Nana Aba Appiah Amfo

Vice-Chancellor

14th March 2025