



**2021**

Annual Sustainability Report

**building blocks**  
for a sustainable future

An aerial photograph of a two-lane road with white dashed lines, cutting through a dense forest of green trees. The road is the central vertical element, flanked by thick foliage. The lighting is bright, suggesting a sunny day.

“

**Great things in business  
are never done by one  
person. They're done  
by a team of people.**

A wise old man

”

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# Introduction

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The concept of sustainability as a means for harmonious achievement of positive economic, societal, and environmental goals is aimed at creating an equitable and more prosperous world for the current and future generations. This transformative idea has long been embedded into the vision of Access Bank, helping us to channel our human, financial and social resources to the advancement of society.

Our commitment to best practices in sustainability is evident in our policies and processes, and more importantly in the value, we are delivering to our stakeholders as well as the social impacts of our programmes on society in general. Our approach to sustainability is hinged on driving innovation to enable us to become more competitive and deliver cutting-edge solutions. We are also focused on protecting human and ecological health, mitigating risks, and providing a conducive environment for our employees to grow and succeed.

This approach has brought us national and international recognitions like the Sustainable Bank of the Year in Africa award, which we received from the International Investor Awards, and Outstanding Business Sustainability Achievement, gotten from the Karlsruhe Sustainable Finance Awards in 2021.

Finance is an essential tool for sustainable development. Through our various financial intermediation activities, we provide financial resources and facilitate financial transactions that are helping to address a wide range of developmental needs in our society. We recognise the importance of taxes as an important source of government revenue and a tool for inclusive economic growth. Access Bank is one of the most tax-compliant organisations in Nigeria and other jurisdictions where we operate.

Our corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities are aimed at filling various socioeconomic gaps and demonstrating our environmental stewardship. The focus areas of our corporate sustainability and responsibility, which is our form of CSR, are health, education, arts, sports, environment and social welfare. Across these areas, we have positively impacted over one thousand communities in all the countries where we operate.

In our 2021 Sustainability Report, we have included community investment activities from other countries of our operations, apart from Nigeria. With this, we are gradually and more broadly integrating our sustainability activities across these other locations. We are proud to say we are scaling up our social impact as we engage more with our esteemed partners like Aspire Coronation Trust (ACT) Foundation and other not-for-profit organisations. We have supported more schools, hospitals, orphanages, the physically challenged, and people in underserved communities, providing them with health supplies, educational materials, and information on hygiene and well-being.

Continuous engagement with our diverse stakeholders through various channels gives us an avenue to understand their needs and how we can serve them better. We have also continued to be members of various national and international organisations on sustainability.

This gives us direct access to global conversations on sustainable development, links us with multilateral development and financial institutions, and helps us align our business model to a rapidly-evolving world.

In the wake of climate change and its devastating effects, we are committed to reducing our carbon footprint and financing low-carbon development. In 2021, we commenced a greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction project to properly account for and effectively reduce our emissions. Our strategic goal regarding climate change is to ultimately reduce high-emitting projects in our loan portfolios and seek new opportunities in green or sustainable financing.

*Creating long-term value for our stakeholders is why we are in business, and through this commitment, we want to continue being a force to reckon with locally and internationally. We will remain unrelenting in our efforts to deliver on our promise and elevate societies economically and socially.*

## ABOUT THIS REPORT

This Access Bank Plc. 2021 Sustainability Report is the latest public disclosure of the bank's commitments towards preserving the environment and supporting long-term socioeconomic development. This is the 14th edition of our annual non-financial reports detailing our sustainability strategy and journey, and how we are integrating environmental, social, and economic considerations into our core business strategy.

The report focuses on topics that are significant to the bank's operations and of importance to our stakeholders. Our constant engagements with our internal and external stakeholders such as shareholders, board members, employees, investors, customers, partners, and suppliers help us to gain more insight into their needs and prioritise action on issues that are pertinent to them. Some of the critical sustainability issues we focus on include access to finance, social justice, environmental preservation, diversity, and partnerships.

The report is prepared in accordance with the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Standards and Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB). It also integrates

the reporting requirements of other sustainability standards like the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) principles, the Equator Principles, and the United Nations Environment Programme Finance Initiative (UNEP-FI)'s Principles for Responsible Banking.



***Themed, “Building Blocks for a Sustainable Future,” this report comprehensively provides our sustainability progress in 2021, while transparently communicating to our stakeholders and the general public our investments in low-carbon development and the strategy and programmes we are implementing to deliver superior social and economic returns.***

# Group Chairman's Statement

**Dr. (Mrs.) Ajoritsedere Awosika,**  
MFR, Group Chairman

2021 marked the fourteenth year of Access Bank's remarkable sustainability journey. From when we initiated the Nigeria Sustainable Finance Week in 2011 – an initiative that catalysed the development of the Nigerian Sustainable Banking Principles (NSBP) – Access Bank has spearheaded and been part of various leading-edge sustainability initiatives in Nigeria, Africa, and globally. Our award cabinets have continued to expand as the growing scale of our positive socioeconomic impact and climate action gain more recognition.

We have attained significant milestones because of our consistent commitment to innovating sustainable financial services and best-in-class operations. These have enhanced the lives of our customers and helped them achieve their objectives. I like to use this opportunity to commend the Board of Directors of Access Bank, the Management, and employees for staying true to our sustainability strategy and the bank's vision on being the world's most respected African bank.

Despite a challenging post-COVID-19 world with acute supply chain problems, rising geopolitical and institutional fragility, apart from Nigeria's susceptibility to external shocks and the country's domestic security and economic challenges, Access Bank recorded a stellar business performance in 2021. The bank grew its gross earnings by 27% to N972 billion, compared to N765 billion recorded in the previous year.

Another significant achievement during the reporting year was Access Bank's accession to full membership of the International Capital Markets Association (ICMA),

a trade association for financial institutions that are active in the international capital markets. The bank also became Chair of the Nigerian Business Disability Network (NBDN), the employer-led platform set up to foster disability-inclusion practices and policies in the workplace.

For the sixth consecutive year, Access Bank won the Outstanding Business Sustainability Achievement award at the Karlsruhe Sustainable Finance Awards 2021. At the World Finance Awards, we were declared Nigeria's Most Sustainable Bank. More accolades came at the Global SME Finance Awards where Access Bank won gold (or the second-best bank) in the Best Financier for Women Entrepreneurs category of the awards. As the Chairman of the Board of Directors, it is an honour to be part of this journey with our valued customers, ever-committed and innovative workforce, and every stakeholder whose time and efforts are invested in the success story of Access Bank.

As we continued in 2021 to increase the scope of our interventions in the focus areas of our corporate



sustainability, Access Bank collaborated with Hygeia HMO, Nigeria's leading health insurer, to provide quality and affordable health coverage. The partnership entailed simplifying the subscription process for the HealthXtra insurance plan. As a result, over 1,200 hospitals can be accessible by customers based on their locations. The plan enables customers to avoid paying out of pocket for basic ailments like malaria, typhoid, upper respiratory tract infections, among others.

To increase access to finance, we successfully launched the Diamond Business Advantage (DBA) Trader Account for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), a current account designed to drive growth of MSMEs. Benefits of the account include training and business name registration at a discounted fee and with less documentation. During the first year, the account recorded an 841% portfolio growth.

Our agency banking network also grew by 90% in 2021 as we intensified our financial inclusion efforts. The network caters to over 500,000 unbanked Nigerians. Our authorised agents – or Access CLOSA representatives – use Point-of-Sale (POS) terminals and mobile phones to provide people in various communities access to financial services.

We also continued our interventions in the fast-evolving African Fintech space. Having created the Africa Fintech Foundry to nurture and accelerate the growth of Fintech startups in Africa, we organised the first FinTech hackathon for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), tagged Naija SDGs Hackathon. The competition was organised in collaboration with the Financial Centre for Sustainability (FC4S) Lagos, the Nigerian Climate Innovation Centre (NCIC), and AfricaHacks with the support of the Office of the Vice President of Nigeria. It brought together young and innovative technology enthusiasts and entrepreneurs across the country to create Fintech-driven solutions

to various development challenges in Nigeria, while driving the achievement of the SDGs.

Climate variability and extreme weather events pose major operational "risks" for us and our customers. The rapid pace of technological advancement is also a risk factor we are facing. Nevertheless, we consider these risks as opportunities to strengthen our environmental, social, and governance (ESG) standards, thereby enhancing our capability to deliver sustainable banking operations. We will also optimise opportunities to deliver more value to our stakeholders.

Franklin D. Roosevelt, the 32nd President of the United States, said "Happiness lies in the joy of achievement and the thrill of creative effort." With the continuous support and partnership of our customers, staff, shareholders, and other stakeholders, we will remain motivated and do more to ensure the long-term success of our business and all our people.

**We look forward to a new year full of new possibilities, charting novel causes and creating sustainable wealth for all.**



# Chairman of the Board Committee on Sustainability's Statement

**Mr Paul Usoro,**  
SAN – Chairman

Access Bank's strong commitments to good corporate governance, social progress and environmental responsibility are critical components of our business success. These commitments underpin our sustainability strategy, which drives our efforts to provide innovative and top-class services and operations for our stakeholders to enable them to achieve brighter futures. As Chairman of the Board Committee on Sustainability, I can gladly report that we have continued to improve our governance system to ensure effective oversight and sound decision-making processes to enable us to meet our goals.

Access Bank is not just a bank. We have been widely recognised as an organisation that cares about people, the environment, and the ecosystem in which we are all interconnected. In 2021, we improved our environmental, social, and governance (ESG) scorecard as we continued pursuing greener operations, strengthened our social responsibilities, and considerably increased our financial successes.

Our commitment to protecting vulnerable people in the communities where we operate, and the society at large, led to Access Bank being chosen in 2021 to chair the Nigerian Business Disability Network (NBDN). The network of employers seeks to promote the rights of people with disabilities (PWDs), increase their job

readiness, eliminate employers' biases towards them, reduce discrimination against them in the workplace, and support them with cash and other assistance they need. At Access Bank, we're doing everything we can as an organisation to help people with disabilities in Nigeria to live better lives.

Access Bank demonstrated our leadership in green finance when we launched the first Climate Bonds-certified corporate green bond in Africa in 2019, raising N15 billion (US\$41 million). Net proceeds from the green bond listed on the Nigerian Exchange Limited and the FMDQ OTC Securities Exchange, were used for the financing and refinancing of climate-smart green projects. This innovative financial product was

developed in line with our sustainability strategy to raise funds for long-term social, environmental, and economic objectives. The bank is preparing to issue a US\$50 million green bond in 2022, our second green bond in three years.

Aside from the climate bond, we have also established subsidised green loans to help fund projects that will drive decarbonisation. (More details on these alternative financial products are contained in our Second Annual Green Bond Impact Report.) As part of our efforts to decarbonise our operations in line with the Paris Agreement's target of reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and reaching net zero by 2050, we launched our GHG emissions reduction project in 2021.

We also intensified our efforts towards enhancing the diffusion of technology talents in Africa to find innovative solutions to the continent's challenges, optimise the Fourth Industrial Revolution on the continent, and help solve the global tech talent shortage. For instance, to help drive the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Nigeria, we organised the first FinTech hackathon for SDGs last year, called Naija SDGs Hackathon. The competition was a showcase of many amazing tech talents brimming with innovative ideas.

I would like to commend my colleagues on the Board Committee on Sustainability for their insights and invaluable contributions throughout the year. We are grateful to the Management and staff who worked hard in executing the bank's sustainability vision and initiatives during the year, and continue to be dedicated to maintaining the sustainability leadership of Access Bank in the African financial services sector.



# Members of the Board Committee on Human Resources and Sustainability

The Committee advises the Board on its oversight responsibilities concerning the Bank's human resource policies, plans, processes, and procedures. It also oversees the effectiveness of the Bank's sustainability strategies, policies, and practices.

The key decisions of the Committee in the reporting period included the recommendation of top management appointments and review and recommendation of human resource policies to the Board for consideration and approval, the HR Integration report as well as quarterly reports on human resources and sustainability. The Committee also received quarterly reports from the Heads of HR and Sustainability Unit, while ensuring that Management is committed to transparent dealings and the highest ethical standards.

## Mr. Paul Usoro, SAN – Chairman



Mr. Usoro is a Senior Advocate of Nigeria, a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators, and the Founder and Senior Partner of the law firm, Paul Usoro & Co. He has over 30 years of law practice experience and is acknowledged as a highly experienced litigator and communication law expert.

He was elected President of the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) in August 2018 for a two-year term and is currently a Non-Executive Director at PZ Cussons Nigeria Plc. The former NBA President is also a member of the National Judicial Council and Body of Benchers. He represented Access Bank as a Non-Executive Director on the board of the defunct Intercontinental Bank Plc.

Mr. Usoro holds a Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Ife (1981) and was called to the Nigerian Bar in 1982. He joined the Board of Access Bank in January 2014 and currently chairs the Board Human Resources and Sustainability Committee and Board Technical Committee on Retail Expansion. He is also the Vice-Chairman of the Board Risk Management Committee.

## Mr. Adeniyi Adekoya

### Member



Mr. Adekoya is a highly experienced maritime and oil and gas industry expert, with significant experience in investment banking. He was a one-time General Manager of Peacegate Holdings Ltd, where he was responsible for setting up and developing the company's marine operations.

He was also a consultant to Maine Nigeria Ltd, where he developed the framework for a private placement

to raise US\$500 million in start-up capital and led the company's participation in bid rounds for oil blocks in the Republic of Equatorial Guinea.

In addition, Mr. Adekoya worked with Mobil Oil Producing Nigeria Unlimited as a Budget Officer in the Exploration Department. He obtained financial services industry experience while working at AIM Fund and Trimark Investment Service, both in Ontario, Canada.

Mr. Adekoya holds a bachelor's degree in Business Administration from the University of Lagos. He joined the Board of Access Bank in March 2017 and currently chairs the Board Audit Committee and Board Digital and Information Technology Committee. He is also the Vice-Chairman of the Board Governance, Nomination and Remuneration Committee. He sits on the boards of Synerpet Ltd, Weston Integrated Services Ltd, and Prime Atlantic Ltd.

## Mr. Iboroma Akpana

### Member



Mr. Akpana is the Managing Partner of Solola & Akpana, one of the leading commercial and oil and gas law firms in Nigeria. He is a consummate corporate and commercial lawyer with a career spanning over two decades. Mr. Akpana has a proven record of academic excellence. He graduated as a top student in Law from the University of Jos and obtained a master's degree from Harvard Law School. He is a Notary of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Based on his work, Mr. Akpana was recognised in the Chambers Global 2006, 2007, 2008, and 2009 editions as a 'Leading Individual' in Nigeria in the publication's Corporate and Commercial section.

Similarly, the International Financial Law Review 1000 ranked him as a 'Leading Lawyer' in Nigeria in its 2006, 2007, 2008, and 2009 editions, while the Legal 500 Europe, Middle East, and Africa profiled Mr. Akpana as a 'Recommended Individual.'

He is a member of the International Bar Association, American Bar Association, New York State Bar Association, Nigerian Bar Association, and the Law Society of England and Wales. He joined the Board of Access Bank in March 2017 and currently chairs the Board Governance, Nomination, and Remuneration Committee. He is also the Vice-Chairman of the Board Audit Committee and Board Credit and Finance Committee. He sits on the boards of AMNI International Petroleum Development Company Limited and Contracting Plus Limited.

## Dr. Okey Nwuke

### FCA – Member



Dr. Nwuke has over 28 years of experience in finance and corporate governance, working with top corporates and leading commercial banks in Nigeria.

He is a Fellow of both the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria and the Chartered Institute of Taxation of Nigeria. He is also an honorary member of the Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria and a member of Business Recovery and Insolvency Practitioners. He has garnered considerable expertise in credit analysis and bank financial management through professional training as a Chartered Accountant, other relevant training programmes as well as on-the-job training.

He was an Executive Director at Access Bank from 2004 to 2013 and served as the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Bank's subsidiaries in Rwanda and Burundi. Dr. Nwuke was a pioneer Non-Executive Director of Stanbic IBTC Pension Managers Limited, representing Access Bank.

Dr. Nwuke's key competencies include finance, strategy development and execution, organisational restructuring and transformation, leadership and change management. He joined the Board of Coscharis Group in August 2014 and is currently responsible for the strategic drive to position the company for sustainability. He currently chairs the Shareholders'

Audit Committee of NASCON Plc. and sits on the boards of Access Pension Fund Custodian Limited, First Ally Asset Management Limited, Claritus Limited, and Simply Gifts and Interiors Limited.

He holds a B.Sc. degree in Accountancy from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, and an MBA (Distinction) in International Banking and Finance from the Birmingham Business School, United Kingdom. He obtained his Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA) from Walden University, Minnesota, USA, with a research focus on leadership transition challenges in family businesses.

He has been exposed to several leadership and professional development programmes at renowned institutions, including Harvard Business School, Boston (AMP 175), Wharton Business School, Pennsylvania (both in the U.S.A), INSEAD, and IMD. Dr. Nwuke joined the Board of Access Bank in November 2019 and currently chairs the Board Credit and Finance Committee. He is also the Vice-Chairman of the Board Technical Committee on Retail Expansion.



## Mrs. Ifeyinwa Osime

### Member



Mrs. Osime is a versatile and result-oriented professional with over 30 years of experience in the insurance industry and commercial legal practice, both at the management and board levels. She has deep knowledge and experience in the management of administrative, legal, and company secretarial functions in financial and other related institutions.

She had championed and established a special needs programme that is actively involved in the

management and care of children and young people with special needs. She is currently engaged in legal practice with Macpherson Legal Practitioners, a Lagos-based law firm. Mrs. Osime is an Independent Non-Executive Director at WAPIC Life Assurance Company Limited and a Non-Executive Director at Smartbase Services and AIP Global Limited. Mrs. Osime is a former Chairperson of PHB Healthcare Limited, a former Director of Bank PHB Plc (now Keystone Bank Limited), and a former Director of Insurance PHB Limited (now KBL Insurance).

She was the Company Secretary/Legal Adviser of African Development Insurance Company Limited (now NSIA Insurance) between 1989 and 1997. Mrs. Osime holds a master's degree in Law from the University of London (1989) with a specialisation in Corporate and Commercial Law and an LLB degree from the University of Benin (1986). She joined the Board of Access Bank in November 2019 and is the Vice-Chairman of the Board Digital and Information Technology Committee.

## Mr. Hassan M.T. Usman

### FCA – Member



Mr. Usman is the Founder/Chief Executive Officer of New Frontier Development Limited, an investment company focused on financial advisory, hospitality, real estate, and proprietary investments in start-ups and challenged companies in the SME space. He is also the Founder/Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Al-Qalam (Pen) Foundation, a not-for-profit organisation that provides educational opportunities to disadvantaged children. Prior to this, he was the Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer of Aso Savings and Loans Plc. and Executive Director at

Abuja Investment and Property Development Company Limited.

He was at various times the Deputy Director and Head of the Petrochemicals and Gas Unit, Transport Sector Reform Team, as well as the Deputy Director of Telecoms Reform, Team Lead, and Head of NITEL Privatisation at the Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE). Mr. Usman also worked with the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Arthur Andersen and Citibank Nigeria. Mr. Usman sits on the Boards of Abuja Leasing Company Limited, Kairos Capital Limited, and Sentinel Energy and Gas Limited.

He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics from the University of Sussex and a Master of Philosophy in Development Economics from the University of Cambridge. He is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of England and Wales. Mr. Usman is also an Eisenhower Fellow and Archbishop Desmond Tutu Fellow of the African Leadership Institute.

Over the years, he has served as a member of the Board of Directors of the Nigeria Sovereign Investment Authority, Nigeria Mortgage Refinance Company, and Council of the Nigeria Stock Exchange. Mr. Usman joined the Board of Access Bank in August 2020.

## Mr. Herbert Wigwe

FCA – Member



Mr. Wigwe started his professional career with Coopers & Lybrand Associates, an international firm of Chartered Accountants. He spent over 10 years at Guaranty Trust Bank Plc., where he managed several portfolios, including financial institutions, large corporates, and multinationals.

He left Guaranty Trust Bank as an Executive Director to co-lead the transformation of Access Bank Plc. in March 2002, as its Deputy Managing Director. He was appointed Group Managing Director/CEO effective January 1, 2014.

Mr. Wigwe is an alumnus of the Harvard Business School Executive Management Programme. He holds a master's degree in Banking and International Finance from the University College of North Wales, a master's degree in Financial Economics from the University of London, and a B.Sc. degree in Accounting from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. He is also a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN). Mr. Wigwe is the Chairman of The Access Bank (UK) Ltd.

He is a Non-Executive Director at Nigerian Mortgage Refinance Company Plc., FMDQ OTC Securities Exchange, Shared Agents Network Expansion Facilities Ltd. and Agri-Business/SME Enterprises Investment Scheme. He also sits on the boards of CACOVID-19 LTD/GTE, the HIV Trust Fund of Nigeria and the Nigerian Business Coalition Against Aids.





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# CEO's Statement

**Mr. Herbert Wigwe,**

Group Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer

I am deeply grateful to all our stakeholders with whom we faced the health, social, and economic impact of COVID-19, and won. Together, we survived the unprecedented public health challenges that the pandemic posed, and the existential threat millions of businesses faced. In 2021, we continued with the partnerships that the pandemic had bequeathed us in the previous year, enabling companies and countries to expand the circle of empathy by increasing social protection and vaccine coverage and other essential health services.

While the virus continued to spread in many countries and pandemic-related restrictions caused supply chain disruptions, last year brought an end to Nigeria's deepest recession since the 1980s. The economy grew by 3.4%, being the fastest annual pace in eight years, compared to the 1.92% contraction recorded in 2020. The growth rate was a welcome change and it was expected to lift some Nigerians out of extreme poverty.

At Access Bank, we recorded a strong performance underlined by the effectiveness of our business strategy and growing customer loyalty. We increased our client base to 32 million consumers in 2021, from 19.2 million in the previous year. This was supported by two major factors. First, our retail banking business grew significantly. We continued our pan-African expansion strategy as we acquired banks in Zambia, South Africa, Mozambique, and Botswana in the year ended December 31, 2021. These acquisitions, which have increased our presence in 12 African countries, are helping us to provide better services and improve the

lives of more people, while achieving the bank's vision of being the world's most respected African bank.

Second, we expanded our digital financial services offering to supplement the quality and reach of our traditional banking platforms. Because of these efforts, we recorded a 51.1% jump in net profit to N160.2 billion in the reporting year, as the bank's total assets reached N11.7 trillion, which is more than double its total assets in 2018.

We do not take our stakeholders faith in us for granted. On the contrary, our commitment to delivering long-term value to our stakeholders is buoyed by our motivation to constantly provide world-class operations and innovative products and services.

At Access Bank, mainstreaming sustainability in our business operations and practices is essential to our business strategy. In fact, sustainability is such a transformative idea that has shaped the way we understand our purpose as an institution.

We have become more socially aware, environmentally responsible, culturally dynamic, and financially stronger. Over the years, we have helped in fostering a community of sustainability practitioners striving to achieve a more prosperous future for all.

As we develop strategies to increase our footprint and customer base in Nigeria and across Africa, we must also ensure that their futures are protected from the threat of the looming climate crisis. We understand that our past and future successes are linked to the success of our stakeholders, including our customers, employees, and the communities where we operate. Hence, how we treat them and the natural environment is fundamental to our future prosperity. This philosophy is how we derived the theme of our 2021 Sustainability Report, "Building Blocks for a Sustainable Future."

To strengthen our partnership with customers and appreciate them for their loyalty, we created the Access Rewards Programme, a loyalty programme through which customers earn redeemable points via eligible transactions like airtime purchases and bills payments done on the Access More app. Over N36 million has been redeemed on the platform, and we are looking to do more for our customers. Also, as a way of giving back, we have supported more than 4,000 women-owned enterprises, thereby empowering the businesses to create jobs and wealth for their owners and employees. Development studies have since established that empowering women is a surefire way of achieving faster social and economic progress.

Besides the women-owned businesses that we supported, we also provided funding to 226,380 small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in 2021. We have expanded our loan offerings, including innovative financing solutions like green loans to help finance the much-needed transition to a low-carbon economy.

We are overwhelmed with gratitude for the many awards and recognitions we received last year. Suffice to mention just a few here. The CSR-in-Action's Corporate Sustainable Investor Report (CSIR) ranked Access Bank

as the Financial Sector Leader in Sustainability. The Development Bank of Nigeria (DBN) also conferred on Access Bank a Platinum Service Ambassador award for the support and innovative solutions we provided to SMEs affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. In recognition of the bank's innovative financing solutions and our strides in sustainability, Access Bank was bestowed several honours, including the Best Bank Nigeria, Best Private Bank Nigeria, and Pan-African Sustainability Award during the 2021 EMEA Finance African Banking Awards.

**We credit all our triumphs to our hardworking and dedicated staff, as well as the invaluable guidance and support of our Board. We will not relent in continuing to work with our stakeholders and partners to maximise opportunities in the coming year and beyond.**



# Head of Sustainability's Statement

**Omobolanle Victor-Laniyan,**  
Head of Sustainability

On behalf of my colleagues in the Sustainability Unit at Access Bank, we are delighted to present to our esteemed stakeholders this latest report on our commitment to implementing sustainable practices in all aspects of our operations, and contributions to building a world where more people have access to social good. The report reinforces our capabilities in tackling some of the key environmental and socio-economic challenges in Nigeria and across Africa.

Over the years, the bank has maintained its leadership in the sphere of corporate sustainability, going beyond our strong financial performance to providing excellent customer service, continuously improving the welfare of our employees, and helping to achieve long-term economic prosperity, while ensuring environmental protection. This encapsulates the ethos of our sustainability strategy, which recognises the urgent need to address today's mounting social and environmental challenges.

This means that all our sustainability programmes and initiatives are designed to advance progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Agreement whose goal is to limit global warming. Our unit is charged with the responsibility of promoting and communicating the impacts of our programmes. We continue to work smart to achieve our mandate and communicate the imperative of sustainability to our growing multidisciplinary team.

The team consists of top talents and innovative people committed to delivering excellent customer service, best risk management practices, and societal progress.

We believe in the truism that a team with a defined purpose drives collaboration and better results, shows significant commitment, and is flexible to meet any challenge. We embrace creativity as a means of designing innovative solutions to address the challenges of our customers, foster customer loyalty and trust, and engender corporate growth. We continue to improve the work environment for better employee engagement and knowledge-sharing.

Consistent with our corporate purpose, mission, and organisational values, our programmes have empowered and supported different groups of people in our communities, including women, children, youths, people with disabilities

(PWD), among others. Last year, we expanded our initiative on teaching financial literacy to children as a means of helping them understand personal financial management, the importance of savings and investing, and other financial skills. Over the years, we taught financial literacy and empowered over 10,000 children from different backgrounds.

We believe that the key to a new generation of more prosperous citizens is education and preparing them to properly manage resources and improve their good decision-making abilities. We incorporate fun activities into the lessons to sustain their attention and improve learning outcomes.

For young adults, we are providing them with financial assistance in the form of grants to support their various entrepreneurship. In 2021, we provided start-up capital and mentorship to National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) members, aimed at helping them expand their start-up businesses. We received more entries during last year's application process, compared to 2020, indicating the positive impact of the initiative.

We also achieved more scale in our support for women. Our loans to women-owned enterprises (WOEs) reached N12 billion in 2021, benefitting over 4,000 WOEs. Meanwhile, the value of different types of loans given to women as a whole reached N25 billion and the number of beneficiaries were over 800,000 as of 2021. The categories of support range from fixed asset purchase to purchase of raw materials and operational capital.

Our "Women-In-Tech" initiative is a virtual training programme designed to provide technology skills to women. Our aim is to develop a strong network of female-led start-ups and female technology experts, giving more women seats at the male-dominated table of developers and tech start-ups. Our Female Digital School, which we started in 2021, is aimed at educating and preparing the next

generation of technology professionals for the job market, providing them with skills, jobs, internships, mentoring and financial assistance for those in need. Over the next 3-5 years, the academy will educate over 500 women to become technology experts. The school was formed through a collaboration of Access Bank-funded Africa Fintech Foundry (AFF) and the 'W' Initiative to foster diversity in the African tech industry.

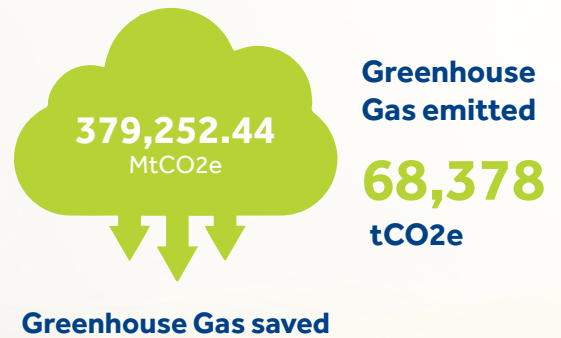
Access Bank's commitment to delivering the most outstanding products, services, and experiences has been variously acknowledged. We received many awards in 2021, in recognition of the impacts of our sustainability programmes.

I am grateful to all my colleagues in the Sustainability Unit and in other units for their collaboration and support as we bolster our efforts in integrating sustainability into the bank's culture and across all our operations. You will find more information on the following pages, painting a clearer picture and helping you truly understand what sustainability means to us and the fact that it will remain a vital element of Access Bank's operations in the future.



# ESG Data Page

## Annual Renewable Energy Generation



## Waste



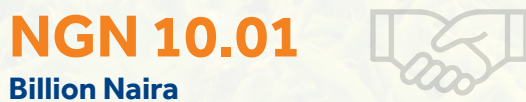
## Employees



## Total Business Travel



## Community Investment



## Time Volunteering





**Tax paid**

**NGN 22.837**

Billion Naira

## 2021 Key Achievements



Every year, we continued to improve our sustainability efforts and our ultimate goal of impacting lives now and in the future.

As a result, the following are outstanding achievements for us as a bank in 2021.

- **Organised the first Naija SDGs Hackathon.**
- **Commenced GHG emissions reduction project.**
- **Produced the Second Annual Green Bond Impact Report.**
- **Became Chair of the Nigerian Business Disability Network (NBDN).**
- **Became a full member of the International Capital Markets Association (ICMA).**
- **Gross earnings rose 27% to N971.9 billion.**
- **Net profit jumped 51.1% to N160.2 billion.**
- **Total assets reached N11.7 trillion.**
- **Acquired banks in four African countries.**
- **Customer base rose 66.7% to 32 million.**

# Sustainability at Access

## Our Approach to Sustainability

Access Bank's multi-award-winning sustainability approach is derived from our bank's mission to set standards for sustainable business practices that unleash the talents of our employees, deliver superior value to our customers, and provide innovative solutions for the markets and communities we serve. It is also consistent with internationally-recognised principles of sustainability and frameworks for achieving a prosperous future for all.

The rising socioeconomic impact of climate change and the growing inequalities caused by rapid technological change call for urgent efforts to accelerate climate action and expand access to economic opportunity. At Access Bank, sustainability is a concept for achieving economic productivity and prosperity, while promoting social equity and protecting the environment.

We believe that promoting climate solutions, supporting, and improving our customers' livelihoods and well-being, and driving innovation and economic growth are crucial to our competitiveness as a business. Sustainability, after all, provides opportunities for us to serve our customers well and deliver more value to all our stakeholders. Indeed, it has created new markets for Access Bank as a lender, investor, and corporate citizen.

*We have built  
our reputation on  
being there for our  
stakeholders, including  
our clients, customers,  
and communities.*





# Our Sustainability Purpose

‘Impacting lives positively now and in the future’ is our sustainability purpose statement. This speaks to why we are in business. Our aim is to serve, not just to maximise shareholder value. We want to deliver higher quality lives for our stakeholders, including customers, employees, communities, and shareholders. And this is a long-term commitment we have made.

## The four pillars of our sustainability approach are as follows:

### 1 Running a responsible and profitable business

This is the foundation of our sustainability approach. We strive to innovate and deliver best-in-class financial products/services in response to customers’ needs and to drive inclusive economic growth. Our business model is also designed to give the bank a competitive advantage, maintain our market share, and boost growth. In essence, we make sustainability profitable at Access Bank.

### 2 Helping to shape a more environmentally-safe future

We provide products and services that are financing low-carbon development, enabling our customers to reduce their carbon footprint, while helping them experience new levels of flexibility and convenience. Our digital financial services offering drive digital financial Inclusion and reducing emissions simultaneously. This is in addition to our commitment to reducing the bank’s GHG emissions.

### 3 Making a positive contribution to society

Access Bank plays a positive role in communities where we operate and in the wider society. We contribute to developing local economies by creating jobs, supporting skills development, expanding healthcare coverage, sourcing from local suppliers, and paying taxes and royalties. We support community projects that are based on the needs of local people.

### 4 Aligning with international frameworks

We are a strong advocate of the SDGs, which call for actions towards achieving a healthier planet and a more socially equitable world. Access Bank is playing its part in helping governments and society to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

We respect human rights as set out in the UN’s Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Labour Organisation’s core conventions. We are a founding member of the Global Principles for Responsible Banking and support several external voluntary codes that promote responsible business practices. We fully support the Paris Agreement’s goal to keep the rise in global average temperatures this century to well below two degrees Celsius (°C) above pre-industrial levels and further pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C.

# Our Corporate Philosophy

## Our Vision

To Be the World's Most Sustainable and Respected African Bank.

## Our Mission

Setting standards for sustainable business practices that unleash the talents of our employees, deliver superior value to our customers, and provide innovative solutions for the markets and communities we serve.



## Our Core Values

### Excellence

- Surpassing ordinary standards to be the best in all that we do.
- Setting the standard for what it means to be exceptional.
- Our approach is not that of excellence at all costs: it is excellence on all fronts so that we deliver outcomes that are economically, environmentally, and socially responsible.

### Innovation

- Pioneering new ways of doing things, new products and services, and new approaches to customers.
- Being first, testing the waters, and pushing boundaries.
- Anticipating and responding quickly to market needs with the right technology, products, and services to achieve customer objectives.

### Leadership

- Leading by example, leading with guts.
- Being first, being the best and sometimes being the only one.
- Challenging the status quo.

### Passion for Customers

- Doing more than just delivering excellent customer service.
- Helping people to clearly understand how our products and services work.
- Treating customers fairly. Building long-term relationships based on trust, fairness, and transparency.

### Professionalism

- Putting our best foot forward in everything we do, especially in high-pressure situations.
- Consistently bringing the best of our knowledge and expertise to the table in all our interactions with our stakeholders.
- Setting the highest standards in our work ethics, behaviours, activities, and in the way we treat our customers and, just as importantly, one another.

### Empowered Employees

- Based on shared values and vision.
- Developing our people to become world-class professionals.
- Encouraging a sense of ownership at individual levels, whilst fostering team spirit and commitment to a shared vision.

# Access Bank's Winning Formula

**As we expand our African footprint, we are spreading our sustainable banking practices, thereby increasing our contribution to sustainable development on the continent.**

We are also innovating new and effective ways to integrate, measure and report our environmental, social, and governance (ESG) systems, setting the pace for more concrete actions by other organisations to address climate change and advance the social good.

When we say we are committed to sustainability, it is not just rhetoric. We have a strategy that delineates our products, services, and initiatives as well as measurable short, medium, and long-term goals. This has set us apart and created for us a sustainable advantage in the Nigerian financial services industry. Consequently, Access Bank is widely recognised for our efforts towards protecting the environment and treating our customers, employees, and communities with the utmost consideration.

The bank's activities and impacts are transparent and publicly disclosed as represented in this latest report and through other media. As a global enterprise leading the way to a more sustainable future, Access Bank is focused on providing innovative financial services that drive inclusive economic growth in our countries of operation, resulting in a higher quality of life for the citizens.

Our solid business fundamentals are not only built on a strong corporate governance, effective risk management, and sound ethical practices, but they are also supported by our core values of excellence, leadership, passion for customers, empowered employees, professionalism, and innovation. We do not compromise on these values. They are keys to our success and will continue guiding us to our future prosperity.

Also because of these values, we respect human rights, our labour practices are progressive, we have zero tolerance for corruption, our responsiveness to consumer issues is second to none, we maintain good community relations, we are driving low-carbon development, among many other sustainable practices.

## Our customers

We cannot succeed without our customers. In fact, we are in business because of them. Hence, building a relationship with our customers based on trust and value creation is what keeps us strong, together with superior products, services, and ideas. We offer a wide range of solutions to our customers across the income spectrum, from the most basic to the most sophisticated financial products and services.

We also understand excellent service is the key to stronger relationships with our customers. Therefore, we spare no expense in improving our customer service. We invest significant time listening and understanding our customers' needs, resolving their problems all in our efforts to give them the best service experience and the satisfaction they deserve.

### Our people

Our employees are our most valuable assets. We have an obligation to our employees to provide a working environment that is conducive, safe, secure, inspiring, and ultimately rewarding. We have a work culture that is predicated on mutual respect and teamwork. We also respect and reward individual efforts and achievements. We support personal and professional development among our employees and encourage them to maintain a healthy balance between work as well as personal and family life.

### Our shareholders

Access Bank is part and parcel of a greater socioeconomic ecosystem, and we recognise that we are dependent on the robust relationships with all our shareholders. We recognise our responsibility to build trust and confidence with the shareholders and lenders who choose to invest in us. In return, we commit to sustaining our profitability and continuing to create long-term value for them.

### Our communities

We maintain the highest consideration for the communities that provide us with an environment to operate our business. We have an obligation to help our communities improve their well-being, create wealth, foster cohesion, and reduce their vulnerabilities to climate change by ensuring we operate with minimal carbon footprint.

### Our suppliers

Enhancing our service delivery capabilities is contingent on maintaining a strong and healthy relationship with our vendors. Some of the goals we aim to achieve with our vendors include cost savings, reduced cycle times for service delivery, improved service levels, and enhanced productivity. Pursuing these goals aligns with our broader sustainability goals, as our suppliers are required to embrace sustainability practices in their day-to-day operations.

### Our environment

At the core of Access Bank's sustainability strategy is our commitment to reducing the environmental footprint in all our operations. We have implemented techniques and initiatives that have incrementally cut our carbon emissions. We have achieved significant energy efficiency in our buildings. We have also instituted employee commuting initiatives to cut GHG emissions from daily travel. We designed innovative ways to manage water in all our facilities and dispose of waste more efficiently.



# Our Materiality Process

Our materiality assessment is an approach for determining important issues for our business and our stakeholders. These issues have a material impact on our society and on our ability to create long-term value as a bank. A better appreciation of issues, especially from our stakeholders' viewpoints, determine how we govern our business, the areas of our corporate social responsibility investments, and how we strengthen our relationships with the stakeholders.

We have developed frameworks for continuous engagement with our valued stakeholders. These engagements and the feedback we get from them help us monitor and measure our progress on the material topics.

## The following were the topics identified as material in 2021

Economic Presence | Women Empowerment | Emissions | Customer Data Privacy | Community Investments | Training & Education | Employee Welfare | Anti-corruption | Human Rights | Market Presence | Financial Inclusion | Employee Volunteering | Procurement Practices | Diversity & Equal Opportunity | Occupational Safety & Health | Supplier Assessment/Responsible Sourcing | Energy | Water & Resource Efficiency

## Materiality Matrix



# Access Bank and the SDGs

The United Nations has been tireless in advocating and mobilising action on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). With nine years left for the world to eradicate poverty, achieve zero hunger, attain gender equality, and reduce inequalities, among other goals, by 2030, there is still much to be done amid an annual funding gap of more than \$4 trillion for developing countries.

Achieving the SDGs requires working with various stakeholders, and we are grateful for the support of all our partners over the last six years since the goals were adopted in 2015. The whole gamut of Access Bank's operations contributes to achieving progress in the SDGs. From leading the way in financial inclusion to financing education and healthcare, investing in innovation and infrastructure, and supporting communities, we are contributing to all the SDGs to varying degrees. **The following shows our SDG initiatives in 2021.**

GOAL	ACCESS BANK'S CONTRIBUTION
No Poverty	Rural Women Empowerment Programme, Life B3TA Project,
Zero Hunger	Agribusiness Livelihood Programme, Support for OVC
Good Health & Well-being	High Impact Tuberculosis Programme, Female Genital Mutilation Programme, Cancer Intervention Programme, Malaria Intervention Programme, Obstetric Fistula Programme, ACT Foundation, COVID-19 Support, Support to Women's Wing Mille II Central Prisons, Donation of Medical Equipment to Ghana Police Hospital, Donation of Personal Protective Equipment to the Traders Advocacy Group Ghana (TAGG), Fist Against Fistula, Breast and Cervical Cancer Screening, Supporting Kawangware Rescue Center, Hearts plus Minds, Angel Hands, Blood Donation Camp, Support for a pediatric hospital in Kanonbe, Medical Insurance for Gasabo Community.
Quality Education	Global Money Week; Cyberbullying Programme; STEAM Initiative; Sustainable Skills Training, Entrepreneurship, Sensitisation, and Empowerment; ACT Foundation, Culture of Reading in Children (Ghana); Back to School Campaign.
Gender Equality	Access Women Network, The W Initiative, International Women's day, The W Conference (Ghana), Girl Child Empowerment Programme, Women Connect Campaign, 16 days of Activism, Support for Vulnerable Women.
Clean Water & Sanitation	Hand-Washing Stations for Schools.
Affordable & Sustainable Energy	Solar Skills Empowerment, Solar for Schools Empowerment Programme.

<p><b>Decent Work &amp; Economic Growth</b></p>	<p>Child Labour Programme, Access Digital Programme, Capacity Building for Youths on Film and Photography, In-Shot Film Festival, Access SME Programme; Capacity Building for Youths on Graphic Design and Digital Marketing; ACT Foundation; All4One Community Project.</p>
<p><b>Industry, Innovation, &amp; Infrastructure</b></p>	<p>Africa Fintech Foundry.</p>
<p><b>Reduced Inequalities</b></p>	<p>Capacity Building for PLWDs on Film and Photography; PLWDs Business Support Programme.</p>
<p><b>Sustainable Cities &amp; Communities</b></p>	<p>Renovation of Kotu Police Station; Sponsorship of the Cultural Weekend by Gallery 1957.</p>
<p><b>Responsible Consumption &amp; Production</b></p>	<p>Early Shutdown policy; No Paper Initiative; Use of LED lights; Use of water-efficient taps and flush systems, Recycling Initiative.</p>
<p><b>Climate Action</b></p>	<p>Climate Leadership Fellowship; ACT Foundation; Sponsorship of the 4th Ghana Green Building Summit, Tree Planting Initiative (Kenya); Green Bond.</p>
<p><b>Life Below Water</b></p>	<p>Recycling Initiative.</p>
<p><b>Life on Land</b></p>	<p>Act4Wildlife Campaign; Biodiversity Programme.</p>
<p><b>Peace, Justice, &amp; Strong Institutions</b></p>	<p>Renovation of Kotu Police Station.</p>
<p><b>Partnership for the Goals</b></p>	<p>We have forged partnerships with the public and private sector and international organisations united by a shared commitment to lead efforts in sustainable development across multi-sector or industry platforms.</p> <p><b>These organisations include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• United Nations Environment Programme Finance Initiative – Co-Chair Africa; member, Global Steering Committee.</li> <li>• Board Member, United Nations Global Compact Nigerian Local Network.</li> <li>• Board Member, Nigerian Business Council on Sustainable Development (NBCSD) Chair/Interim Secretariat, Steering Committee, Nigerian Sustainable Banking Principles.</li> <li>• Member, United Nations Principles for Responsible Investment (UNPRI).</li> <li>• Member, Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF).</li> <li>• Co-Chair, Nigeria Business Coalition Against AIDS.</li> <li>• Partner, Convention on Business Integrity (CBI).</li> <li>• Member, Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Gold Community.</li> <li>• Member, GBC Health.</li> <li>• Co-chair, Corporate Alliance on Malaria in Africa (CAMA).</li> <li>• Leadership Group Member, United Nations Women Empowerment Principles. Board Advisory Committee, Private Sector Health Alliance of Nigeria.</li> <li>• Board Member, Nigerian Business Council on Sustainable Development.</li> <li>• Member, Private Sector Delegation to the Global Fund Board.</li> <li>• Member, WeConnect National Advisory Board, Nigeria.</li> <li>• Member, Coalition against COVID, CaCOVID.</li> <li>• Chair, Nigerian Business Disability Network.</li> </ul>



# leading the charge

for a greener and  
healthier environment



Sustainable Waste Management | Energy and Water Efficiency  
Green Social Entrepreneurship | Paper-to-Pencil Initiative

[accessbankplc.com/sustainability](https://accessbankplc.com/sustainability)



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Youtube.com/accessbankplc | LinkedIn/accessbankplc  
Instagram/myaccessbank



more than banking

# The Access Brand

## About this Report

Access Bank Plc. was incorporated as a private limited liability company on February 8, 1989, while its business operations commenced on May 11, 1989. On March 24, 1998, the bank converted to a public limited liability company, and its shares were listed on the Nigerian Stock Exchange ('NSE') (now Nigerian Exchange Limited), on November 18, 1998. The bank migrated to the NSE's Premium Board on April 16, 2018.

Following shareholders' approval obtained on March 5, 2019, the bank merged with the defunct Diamond Bank Plc. on March 19, 2019, making the combined entity the largest bank in Nigeria by customer base and

total assets and the largest bank in Africa.

The bank's business activities include providing money market products and services, retail banking, granting loans and advances, equipment leasing, corporate finance, and foreign exchange operations. Shareholders approved the bank's transition to a non-operating financial holding company during the Court-Ordered Meeting held on December 16, 2021. On March 28, 2022, the bank completed its transformation to a holding company known as Access Holdings Plc., enabling it to offer other financial services aside from core banking operations.



# Our Banking Divisions

**Our banking divisions are designed to meet the diverse financial needs of our customers, ranging from individuals to businesses, government institutions, and nonprofits. They focus on delivering innovative and custom-made business and personal financial solutions for our unique customers.**

## 1. Commercial Banking Division

This Division plays a cardinal role in our core business strategy. It provides financial solutions to private and public sector institutions, building and sustaining relationships with them and offering value-adding initiatives that enhance their abilities to achieve their corporate objectives and fulfil their institutional mandates. Through our customer-centric approach, we have developed an expert knowledge of the needs of these sectors.

Nevertheless, we still develop bespoke financial solutions for individual organisations and industries. Private sector customers catered for by this Division consist of mid-size to large, locally quoted companies with business turnovers of between N5 billion and N50 billion. Our public sector clients are Federal and State government ministries, parastatals, and agencies. We tailor their products and services to enable them to enhance their efficiency and optimise public service delivery.

The Division leverages innovation to drive customer loyalty, significantly contributing to the growth of the bank's customer base through customer acquisition drives and deposit mobilisation, among

other strategies. We aspire to become the leading commercial banking business in Nigeria and other African countries.

## 2. Corporate and Investment Banking

This Division focuses on delivering a comprehensive suite of innovative and custom-made business solutions to corporate clientele across Africa. Our operation includes providing clients with strategic advice and services to enable them to improve their performance and achieve their corporate objectives, including revenue growth and cost optimisation.

Many of our clients are multinational businesses operating in various industries, including oil and gas, telecommunications, food and beverages, cement and metal fabrication, transportation, and financial institutions.

**The CIBD is made up of the following four business groups:**

- Corporate Banking,
- Global Transaction Banking,
- Project & Structured Finance,
- Treasury & Global Markets.



### 3. Business Banking Division

This Division is one of the Strategic Business Units (SBUs) of Access Bank, exclusively providing tailored-made products to clients with annual turnover of up to N5 billion. We provide our clients with innovative products and superior customer service to support their growth objectives and address other business challenges.

In the aftermath of the business disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, we experienced an uptick in demand from business owners for a wide range of our products and services to enable their recovery and expansion. We adequately and effectively responded with financial aid and strategic advisory, thereby achieving rapid customer acquisition and asset growth.

In 2021, we held over 27 capacity building and networking programmes for our clients, with over 74% of these programmes taking place on virtual platforms.

#### Positioning for the future

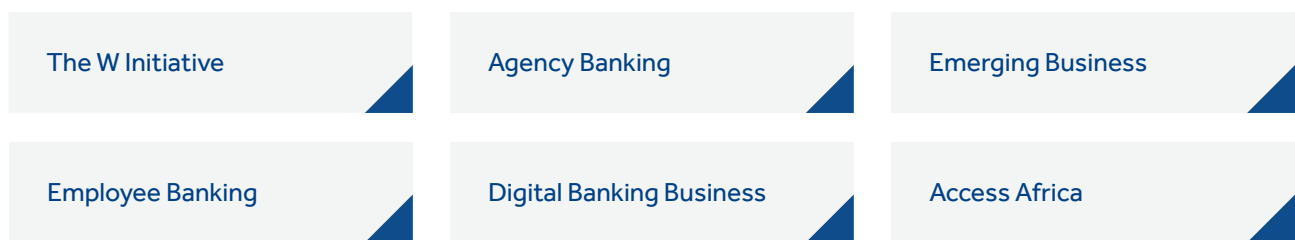
The face of banking is changing faster than imagined, and we are aware of the constant disruption to our business due to varying factors, including stiffer competition, most notably Fintechs. We are committed to sustainable business practices in reshaping the dynamics of the markets we play in as we identify new opportunities in these markets and other uncontested market spaces. Using market share trust and analytics, we will further improve our clients' efficiency and quality of service.

## 4. Retail Banking Division

This Division interfaces directly with our retail customers, including individuals and small businesses. It is an integral part of the bank given how critical individuals are to our business. While solutions provided by this Division constitute the basics of financial services; our approach to delivering them provides superior value to the customers.

The individual and business need our services meet help in building a strong relationship with new customers, while further strengthening our relationships with existing clients. Our retail customers fall under some of our existing products and services.

Some of the categories include:



# Approach to Tax

**Paying taxes is more than just a way to demonstrate our commitment to society and strengthen the social contract between our business and the governments across the jurisdictions where Access Bank operates. We recognise that taxes are also an essential source of government revenue and tool for driving economic growth. Accordingly, we regularly comply with all legal requirements by the tax jurisdictions where we operate.**

Our tax compliance is in line with Access Bank's reporting standards and policies. We aim to have a stable and sustainable tax charge in our financial statements. We will achieve this by preventing additional liabilities and penalties, while maintaining a positive relationship with our tax regulators. With this in mind, standard operating procedures (SOPs) across all possible tax types have been developed to guide compliance.

At Access Bank, our internal audit unit conducts regular audits with the Chief Financial Officer overseeing the bank's tax strategy. We also have external consultants who review our tax compliance and adherence to relevant tax laws. In addition, the issuance of a Tax Clearance Certificate by regulatory authorities at the end of every financial year serves as evidence of the adequacy and transparency of our tax disclosures.

We organise regular training for all tax stakeholders to reiterate the need for relevant and effective tax

management. We encourage and create awareness of tax risk management throughout the bank to ensure adequate identification of tax risk. Our products and services are reviewed regularly to ensure that taxes are accurately captured.

We adopt a moderate risk appetite to tax risk. We identify any potential tax risk originating from internal or external factors by capturing all available and relevant information on the risk. Our response to managing risk depends on the ease and cost of mitigating the risk, its potential impact on the business, and alternative mitigation processes. We respond to threats using a combination of the following risk response strategies: Avoidance, Sharing, and Reduction. When the risk response strategy is identified, continuous monitoring occurs to ensure that the desired mitigation strategy for the risk is implemented successfully and reported for future reference.

# Statement of Value Add

## Other National Disclosures

Value Added Statement	Group December 2021	Group December 2020
<b>In thousands of Naira %</b>		
Gross earnings	971,885,338	764,717,441
Interest expense	(53,965,387)	(52,735,999)
Foreign	(178,923,407)	(128,464,214)
<b>Local</b>	<b>738,996,544</b>	<b>583,517,228</b>
Net impairment (loss) on financial assets	(82,922,978)	(61,527,162)
Net impairment loss on non-financial assets	(290,000)	(1,365,958)
<b>Bought-in-materials and services</b>		
Foreign	(14,999,163)	(5,925,977)
Local	(257,876,627)	(231,686,137)
<b>Value added</b>	<b>382,907,775</b>	<b>283,011,993</b>

Distribution of Value Added (To Employees:)	Group December 2021		Group December 2020	
<b>In thousands of Naira %</b>				
Employees costs	96,707,512	25%	73,173,177	26%
<b>To government</b>				
Government as taxes	16,484,985	4%	19,912,433	7%
<b>To providers of finance</b>				
Interest on borrowings	67,353,792	18%	45,066,452	16%
Dividend to shareholders	30,213,442	8%	23,104,397	8%
<b>Retained in business:</b>				
For replacement of property and equipment and intangible assets	42,145,950	11%	37,528,528	13%
For replacement of equipment on lease	-	0%	-	0%
Retained profit (including Statutory and regulatory risk reserves)	130,002,095	34%	84,227,008	30%
	<b>382,907,775</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>283,011,993</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Other National Disclosures

Value Added Statement	Group December 2021	Group December 2020
<b>In thousands of Naira %</b>		
Gross earnings	734,282,702	634,863,770
Interest expense Foreign Local	(53,965,387)	(52,735,999)
Net impairment (loss) on financial assets	(133,875,715)	(100,242,201)
<b>Net impairment loss on other financial assets</b>	<b>547,303,317</b>	<b>480,328,052</b>
Bought-in-materials and services		
Foreign	(53,510,935)	(39,650,580)
Local	(290,000)	-
	(18,996,809)	(6,340,427)
	(212,690,482)	(212,301,421)
<b>Value added</b>	<b>261,815,092</b>	<b>222,035,624</b>

Distribution of Value Added (To Employees:)	Group December 2021		Group December 2020	
<b>In thousands of Naira %</b>				
Employees costs	58,579,953	22%	54,590,721	25%
<b>To government</b> Government as taxes	(4,843,487)	-2%	10,156,549	5%
<b>To providers of finance</b>				
Interest on borrowings	64,050,575	24%	43,867,876	20%
Dividend to shareholders	30,213,442	12%	23,104,397	10%
<b>Retained in business:</b>				
For replacement of property and equipment and intangible assets	32,701,565	12%	32,059,429	14%
For replacement of equipment on lease	-	0%	-	0%
Retained profit (including Statutory and regulatory risk reserves)	81,113,047	31%	58,256,650	26%
	<b>261,815,092</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>222,035,624</b>	<b>100%</b>



# Our Presence (Geographical Layout)



Country	Branches	Employees
Nigeria	578	5181
Ghana	52	667
Kenya	29	113
Zambia	27	165
Congo	13	97
Mozambique	11	325
Botswana	8	386

Rwanda	7	85
Gambia	7	41
Sierra Leone	6	53
South Africa	4	182
United Kingdom	1	145
Cameroon	1	38
Guinea	1	37

China	Rep. Office
India	Rep. Office
Lebanon	Rep. Office
U.A.E	Rep. Office
India	Rep. Office

# Ethics, Integrity, and Corporate Governance

Ethical conduct and professionalism are fundamental attributes that underlie the corporate culture at Access Bank. Our corporate culture and values espouse ethical practices, which our Code of Conduct mutually reinforces. We have defined organisational principles that govern our stakeholders – including the Board, Management and employees, and our vendors and suppliers. These principles are non-discrimination, equal opportunities, work-life balance, occupational risk prevention, respect for people, compliance with sustainability policies, and environmental protection.

Our corporate governance structure is designed to superintend the creation of optimal and long-term shared value for our stakeholders. At Access Bank, environmental, social, and corporate governance (ESG) performance is at the top of our corporate plan. This stems from our complete understanding that our positive social and environmental impact will establish us as good corporate citizens in the communities we serve. Sound corporate governance practice, which includes excellent risk management processes, is the bedrock of our sustainable business practices. In addition, our corporate behaviour – a key element of our corporate governance practice – is underpinned by our core values of innovation, excellence, leadership, passion for customers, professionalism, and empowered employees.

Access Bank's highest decision-making body is its Board of Directors, which makes the ultimate decisions concerning the Group, excluding matters designated

for its general Shareholders' meeting. The Board focuses on strategy, policies, corporate culture, and organisational structure. It also approves and monitors the risk framework and appetite of the Group.

Access Bank's governance framework is guided by the Central Bank of Nigeria's Code of Corporate Governance for Banks and Discount Houses in Nigeria (the CBN Code), the Securities Exchange Commission Code of Corporate Governance for Public Companies (the SEC Code), the Financial Reporting Council's Nigerian Code of Corporate Governance and the Post Listing Rules of the Nigerian Exchange Limited. These, as well as the Board Charter and the bank's Memorandum and Articles of Association, collectively provide the foundation for our sound corporate governance. These frameworks govern Access Bank and its subsidiaries. It enables the Board to perform its oversight functions while ensuring the bank's regulatory compliance. Our subsidiaries also comply with their host countries' statutory and regulatory requirements.

The Board's composition subscribes to global best practices on the need for Non-Executive Directors to exceed Executive Directors. The Non-Executive Directors are appointed to the Board to bring independent, specialist knowledge, and impartiality to strategy development and execution monitoring. The Board is committed to improving gender diversity in its composition in line with its diversity policy. As of December 31, 2021, 25% of the Executive Management team were women, while the Board had

35% female membership, well above Nigeria's national average of 12%.

In the discharge of its oversight function, the Board continuously engages Management in the planning and execution of strategy. Management's report on the implementation of our defined strategic objectives is a regular feature of the Board's meeting agenda. This often allows the Board to evaluate and critique Management's strategy execution.

The Bank's performance on corporate governance is continuously being monitored and reported. We conduct quarterly and annual reviews of our compliance with the CBN Code and the SEC Code and render reports to the regulators.

The Board has also established a system of independent annual evaluation of its performance and that of its committees and individual directors. In addition to financial performance, Access Bank's environmental and social risk management framework and performance, as conducted by the bank's Environmental and Social Risk Management and Sustainability teams, are also periodically assessed and audited. These audit functions are conducted at least once yearly by the bank's Internal Audit Group across all the strategic business units concerned with and affected by environmental and social risk policies. Also, the bank is committed to an external assurance of its environmental and social performance initiatives as contained in our Sustainability Reports, Internal Statements, and Policy Frameworks. Such external validation, usually conducted by an independent consultant, involves an audit and evaluation of our sustainability-related processes.

## Anti-Corruption

At Access Bank, we have an Anti-Bribery and Corruption (ABC) Policy, which includes the rules of conduct that employees must follow. Employees are availed of the ABC Policy at the beginning of each year to re-familiarise them with the document's contents and re-commit to the policy by signing an attestation. In 2021, we organised quarterly ABC training for our employees. At the end of the fourth quarter, 5,047 professional staff and 4,432 support staff were trained on ways to recognise and report bribery and corruption incidents. A total of 66 vendors also attended the training held during the year. In addition, we continue to carry out ABC risk assessments to identify vulnerable areas of our business and provide adequate mitigation.

## Whistleblowing

Our whistleblowing system is designed to boost our stakeholders' confidence in reporting any misconduct or irregularity, including any action that may violate laws or regulations regarding labour practices, anti-corruption, human rights, and environmental issues. Stakeholders can also report any activity that could potentially cause harm to our business or reputation or negatively affect the health, security, or safety of other employees or customers. The whistleblowing system is outsourced to the KPMG ethics lines (please see the Whistleblowing Channels section of this report). There is also an avenue to lodge whistleblower reports on the bank's website.

# Our Response to Climate Change

The United Nations said human-induced climate change is the biggest threat to humanity, threatening progress in development, and developing countries are paying the heaviest price. Extreme weather events are becoming more frequent, and their intensity has increased.

Efforts necessary to reverse global warming, which is causing extreme weather events, are also gaining pace, with the aim that the Paris Agreement's target to limit warming to 1.5°C by mid-century would be attained. The imperative of achieving a resilient planet and a more socially-inclusive world is the reason Access Bank is participating in the race to carbon neutrality.

Internally, we are responding by adopting sustainable practices in our operations to reduce our greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. We institutionalised this in 2021 by introducing a new GHG emissions reduction project aimed at decarbonising our operations and achieving net zero. Our previous efforts have included a combination of emissions reduction strategies like deploying fully-solar-powered branches and recycling our wastepaper, electronics, and plastics. We want to scale up these efforts bank-wide.



We have embarked on a green building certification for our head office and key branches using the IFC-EDGE green building certification standard. EDGE is designed for certifying resource-efficient and zero carbon buildings. We also plan to offset our residual scopes 1, 2 and 3 emissions by purchasing internationally recognised carbon credits.

We are also downsizing high-carbon projects in our loan portfolios and financing low-carbon development in the various markets where we operate, while deepening the green finance market in the process. Last year, we conducted an analysis of our loan books to check their alignment with various climate scenarios using the Paris Agreement Capital Transition Assessment (PACTA) developed by 2° Investing Initiative (2DII). The result showed our portfolios are aligned with the Sustainable Development Scenario (SDS), meaning we are on track to meeting the objectives of the Paris Agreement.

Our Green Portfolio Strategy has been designed as a means for achieving a diversified green asset portfolio, enabling us to capture market opportunities

in renewable energy, energy efficiency, sustainable transportation, waste management, green buildings, etc. The transition away from GHG-intensive projects will initially have a negative impact on our headline earnings. However, this negative impact will be offset by our focus on capturing the attendant new business opportunities in green development.

We demonstrated our leadership in green finance following the launch of the first Climate Bonds-certified corporate green bond in Africa in 2019, raising N15 billion (US\$41 million). Proceeds from the green bond were used to finance climate-resilient projects in line with our sustainability strategy.



*The Lagos Great Wall climate adaptation project and Photovoltaic Cells Installation for renewable energy are two notable projects funded by the green bond. Other green finance product papers are being developed internally (like Switch 2 Solar, Waste 2 Wealth), seeking to finance and promote the low-carbon economy.*

04

# Our Shared Value

## (Stakeholder Engagement)

	Why We Engage	Why we are Engaged	Mode of Engagement	Material Issues Raised	Our Responses
Employees	Measurement of employees' sentiments on various initiatives of the bank.	To understand the work culture and what is required of respective job functions.	Periodic satisfaction pulse surveys.	Poor relationships between employees and supervisors.	The bank organised focused group forums to address employee concerns.
	Fostering collaboration amongst peers and between employees and supervisors.	To give more information and insights on how to make the work environment more conducive.	Engagement sessions with Group Heads and Executive Directors.	Need for training programmes for supervisors.	Training was organised for supervisors.
	Increasing employees' understanding of the bank's ethos.	To make the business practices more effective.	Health webinars.	Recognition.	The reintroduction of Access Games involving a walk challenge and quizzes on the bank's corporate philosophy created an avenue for employees across all cadres, functions, and locations to interact, learn about the bank, and bond while having fun.
	Improvement of connections between the Group Office and subsidiaries.	To air and resolve challenges and difficulties in performing tasks.	Team building & Team bonding sessions.	Need for cultural alignment between Nigeria and the subsidiaries.	Quarterly awards and recognition of top-performing employees across various groups.
			Podcasts with the Group Managing Director.	Decrease in engagement	Executive Director's engagement with top performers in the bank.
Customers	Improving financial literacy.	Complaints	Email, SMS	Delayed service delivery and issue resolution.	Investigation of complaints and resolution.
	Resolution of complaints.		In-app messages, push notifications		
	Celebration of events.	Service interruption	Social media	Inability to access services, loans, or applications.	Customer engagement to determine specific issues.
	Customer appreciation.		Contact centre/phone calls		
	Fraud sensitization.	Relationship management	Focus group sessions	Improved efficiency of the Ombudsman process to increase resolution rate.	
	Surveys and interviews.		Breakfast sessions		
	Forums/webinars				
		Guest frontline initiatives	Extension of agency banking services to new locations.		

	Why We Engage	Why we are Engaged	Mode of Engagement	Material Issues Raised	Our Responses
Shareholders and Investors	To ensure transparency in our disclosure to the investor community.	To provide a coherent and adequate response to investor/analyst inquiries.  To provide corporate access to the bank's management team.	Annual and quarterly financial reports.	Strategy.	Strategy: The strategic actions that the bank has taken over the past 12 months is evidence of our strong focus on retail banking, financial inclusion, Africa expansion and the sustainable impact to be derived from it.
	To deliver consistent and timely information on the bank's performance and strategy.		Investor relations page on the bank's website.	Capital.	The future of Access Bank is transitioning into a holding company (HoldCo) structure consisting of four subsidiaries to enable it tap into the market opportunities available in the regulated banking and consumer lending market, the electronic payments industry, and the retail insurance market.
	To position the bank as an innovative company that is in touch with both domestic and international investors.		Quarterly Results announcement	Operational efficiency.	Capital: The Group has a disciplined capital management plan to maximize shareholder value by optimizing the capital structure in alignment with its strategic plan. This is done with an optimization approach to strengthening the balance sheet while providing flexibility to take advantage of attractive opportunities even in a downturn.
	To ensure the image of the bank is maintained at a consistently high standard in the investing community.		Biannual investor and analyst conference call.	Risk management.	The Group has maintained strong capital levels by accumulating capital over time, despite recent investments for organic and inorganic growth.
	To build confidence in Executive Management's capabilities to deliver and sustain the bank's strategic imperatives.		Deal and non- deal roadshows.	Opportunities in Retail Banking.	Operational efficiency: Operational efficiency remains imperative for the bank, given the size of the bank and its future growth aspirations. Access Bank Group has consistently delivered sustainable growth and Sustainability: Our overall ESG strategy is to preserve the environment in which we operate as well as positively impact society through responsible investing. This is evidenced by the ethical approach by which we conduct our business, and how we treat our customers, employees and communities.
	To ensure the image of the bank is maintained at a consistently high standard in the investing community.		Investor conferences.	Sustainability.	At Access Bank, we constantly seek to meet the demands of a dynamic and fast-changing world by keeping our fingers on the pulse of sustainability innovation, improving performances in our core business, environmental footprint, and the social well-being of communities.
	To build confidence in Executive Management's capabilities to deliver and sustain the bank's strategic imperatives.		Investor and strategy days.		
	To ensure the image of the bank is maintained at a consistently high standard in the investing community.		Annual factsheet.		
	To ensure the image of the bank is maintained at a consistently high standard in the investing community.				
	To ensure the image of the bank is maintained at a consistently high standard in the investing community.				
Customers	To create partnerships to drive our CSR and sustainability agenda.	To partner on initiatives that address key social and environmental issues.	Charitable donations and sponsorships.	Malaria and HIV prevalence in communities.	Advocacy and education programmes were held to educate people in communities on malaria, and HIV prevention, as well as leading efforts for the establishment of the HIV Trust Fund of Nigeria (HTFN).
	To create awareness of our CSR and sustainability commitment and initiatives.	To collaborate on initiatives in ways that foster economic, environmental, and social good.	Community engagement through employee volunteering.	Empowerment of non-governmental (NGOs) and civil society organizations (CSOs).	Capacity-building programmes were held to empower NGOs and CSOs with the right skills.
	To garner feedback and obtain input from communities, non-governmental agencies/ organizations, environmental experts, CSR and sustainability experts.	To advance the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals as well as the Paris Climate Agreement through CSR and sustainability initiatives.	Community investment and development initiatives.  Strategic Partnership with Non-governmental organizations and multi-lateral agencies.	COVID-19 pandemic prevalence in communities.  Empowerment of women and girls in communities.	Advocacy and education programmes were held to empower women and girls in communities as well as promote entrepreneurial development through the provision of grants.

	Why We Engage	Why we are Engaged	Mode of Engagement	Material Issues Raised	Our Responses
Regulatory Bodies	<p>To maintain open, honest, robust, and transparent relationships and to ensure compliance with all legal and regulatory requirements.</p> <p>To retain our various operating licenses and minimise our operational risk.</p>	<p>To ensure regulatory compliance.</p> <p>To promote the soundness and stability of the domestic banking and financial system, thereby contributing to its financial stability.</p>	<p>Regulatory consultations.</p> <p>Various industry and regulatory forums.</p> <p>Meetings between regulators and Board members.</p> <p>Regulatory audit exercises.</p> <p>Training on newly released regulatory Acts, Codes, and Circulars.</p>	<p>Ensuring compliance with regulatory guidelines.</p> <p>Ensuring the adoption of regulatory best practices.</p>	
Media	<p>To communicate the bank's key messages, events and actions to various stakeholder groups using strategic media platforms.</p> <p>To promote awareness about the bank's products and services, especially among customers and the investing public, increasing the credibility of the bank as a stable and potentially lucrative investment target.</p> <p>Building credibility and brand awareness for the bank over the long-term as well as improving business outcomes by generating new leads using targeted media outlets to increase visibility to prospects.</p>	<p>To get general information on the bank's projects, products, and services and create stories around them. To get constant updates on the different phases of the bank's business continuity plans and commitment to driving the achievement of the Sustainability Development Goals.</p> <p>To get updates on the bank's expansion into new markets and countries. To get information on the bank's financial results for analysis and deployment to various stakeholders, enabling them to make informed decisions.</p>	<p>Press conferences, media parleys, coverage of the bank's events and product launches, interviews, questionnaires, research, coordination of conferences, and speaking engagements for key executives.</p>	<p>Questions were raised about the security of the bank's digital platforms following fake news on false claims by an apprehended fraudster.</p>	<p>Constantly engaging with our customers and other stakeholders through our media partners, helping them understand that the bank is constantly adapting global standards to guarantee customers' security and emphasising the use of self-service solutions to curb loss.</p> <p>Additionally, we will continue to ensure that there are no service disruptions to ensure customers enjoy a great experience and have access to the bank's world-class services.</p>
Suppliers	<p>To ensure services and products are in line with international best practices.</p> <p>Benchmarking sustainable business practices as indicated by our regulatory body.</p>	<p>Making sure that only third-party vendors that have completed all selection procedures are selected for service or product delivery.</p> <p>To ensure that due diligence is conducted on all critical vendors.</p> <p>To ensure pricings are regulated.</p>	<p>Meetings with suppliers.</p>	<p>Pricing</p> <p>Delivery period</p> <p>Health, safety and security measures put in place.</p> <p>Service Level Agreements.</p> <p>Business continuity process.</p>	<p>Responses were tailored to the requirements of the bank and regulatory bodies.</p>



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Because we are closer than ever.

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and designing relevant solutions  
for your banking needs.

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# Our Performance Metrics

## Our Customers

Ensuring the safety of our customers' funds and other valuables entrusted to our care is at the heart of our operations at Access Bank. Our continued existence as a valuable financial services partner is contingent on the satisfaction and continued loyalty of every customer who engages with us.

With this understanding, we tailor our services to customers' unique requirements and prioritize customer satisfaction. Through journey mapping, surveys, service evaluations, and customer engagement, we connect with customers' actions, mindsets, and emotions, thereby providing us with insights to enable us to redesign suboptimal processes, turn poor service delivery into exceptional experiences, and ultimately meet customer requirements.

### Customers' Safety and Data Privacy

Customers' physical and data safety is a top priority for us at Access Bank. Our buildings are designed to facilitate easy access for all customers, including physically-challenged customers. The elderly, sickly, or pregnant persons who come into our premises are promptly attended to. Necessary safety measures embedded in our safety policy, are considered during the design of all the bank's buildings and facilities. For example, we have first aid boxes on all floors and have signed on to a hospital ambulance service in some

locations to provide us quick access to medical help during any emergency.

On data privacy and security, we continuously improve our security and validation channels to protect customers' information. As online financial transactions become increasingly trendy, customers' security remains a core part of our business, ensuring they can safely and securely send and receive money. Our Access More was enhanced in 2021 to block accounts immediately any fraud is suspected. We take cyber security matters very seriously; hence we protect our customers' deposits through the following measures:

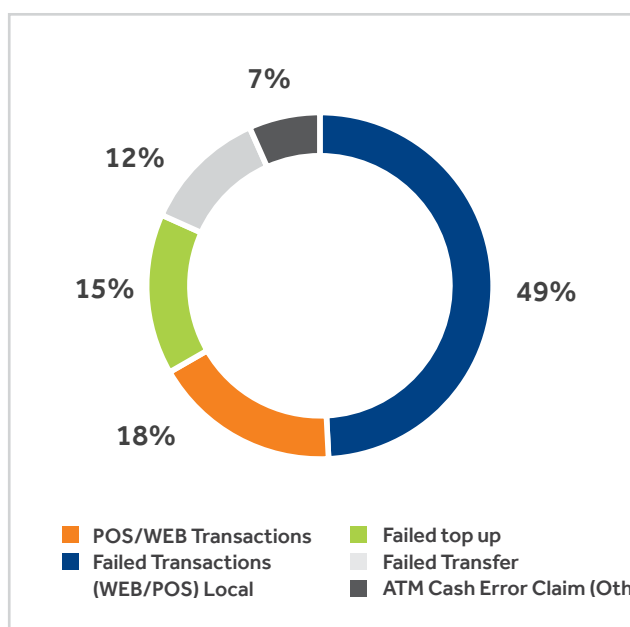
1. **Authentication/authorization of customers before access is granted to carry out any activity on customers' accounts.**
2. **Various channels are available to block accounts in the event of fraud/fraud attempt/exposure.**
3. **Fraud escalation is available 24/7 via various channels.**
4. **Audit/periodic review of activities on old and new accounts.**
5. **Prompt delivery of customer alerts regarding activities on accounts.**
6. **Provision of unrestricted access to authorized persons to relevant account(s).**
7. **Regular policy review on privacy and breach of customer information.**
8. **Restricted access to dormant accounts.**
9. **Provision of deposit insurance.**

## Issue Resolution

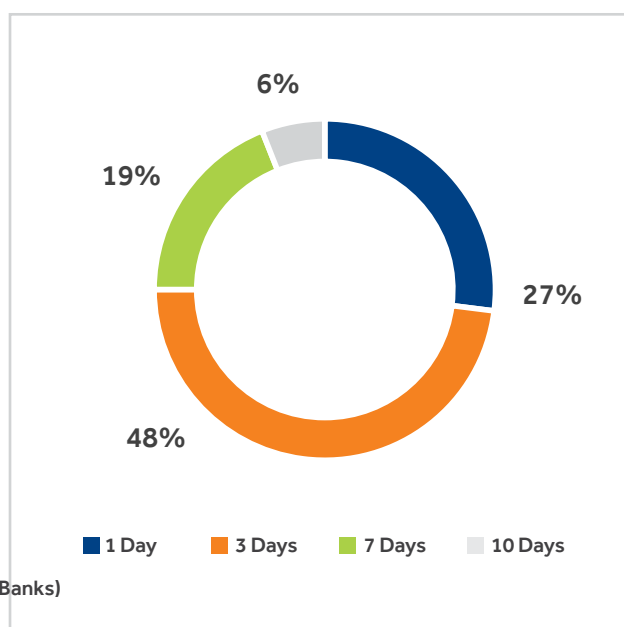
We understand that no business is immune from complaints. As a matter of fact, we see issues that arise as opportunities for us to strengthen our relationships with our esteemed customers, improving their trust and confidence in us.

Customers who reached out to the contact center in 2021 to report issues were duly apologized to as we proceeded to promptly address those issues, assuring the customers of the service standards the bank is obligated to meet based on the service-level agreement. However, those with exceptional cases were treated immediately with escalations to Contact Center Ombudsman.

### Top 5 Complaints Received in 2021



### Average Issues Resolution Time



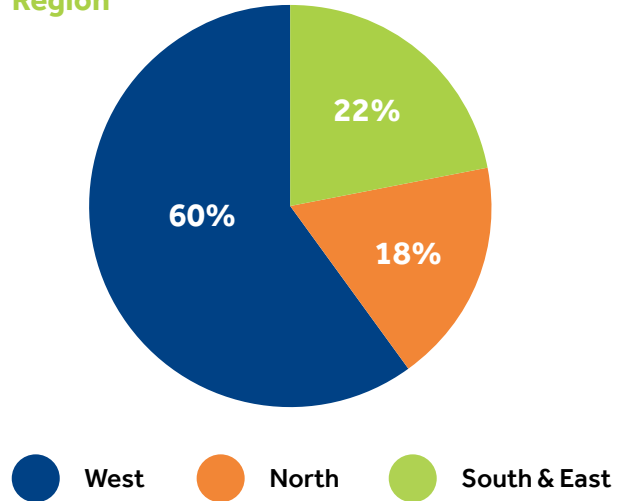
## Level of Improvements After Issues Were Addressed

S/N	Metric	FY2021
1.	Transaction Failure Rate for Online Banking	36% ▲
2.	Satisfaction with ATMs	68% ▲
3.	Availability/Functionality of Mobile App	75% ▲
4.	Ease of Use of Mobile App	82%
5.	Availability/Functionality of USSD	73% ▲
6.	Security of Mobile App	81% ▲
7.	Speed of Issue Resolution on Mobile App	68%

# Our Employees

Our employees are fundamental to our success. They bring their passion, skills, ingenuity, and time to bear. Indeed, their commitment to the Access brand has given us the distinctive and unique edge we enjoy among our peers. It has also helped us expand the services we offer, and the market share we control. As of year-end 2021, Access Bank had a workforce of 21,087, comprising both professional, support and non-clerical staff. In 2021, we had 519 people join the workforce (72% men and 18% women), and they received wages well above the minimum in the jurisdictions where they work.

Region



	Professional Staff = 4,782	Support Staff = 10,105	Non-clerical staff = 6,200	Total = 21,087
Gender	Male	55%	44%	
	Female	45%	56%	

We invest in employees' professional training and development, offer competitive compensation packages, and provide various opportunities for career growth. These have helped us attract and retain the best talents. All employees are entitled to parental leave. Through the Employee Volunteering Scheme,

which is discussed extensively under the Community Investment section, our employees are able to make time for causes that are important to them outside their professional careers. Hence, they contribute to the socio-economic development of the society, gaining fulfillment as positive role models.

## 2021 Sustainability Awareness Week

The Access Bank Sustainability Awareness Week (SAW) is a yearly week-long event dedicated to increasing awareness about the importance of sustainability both within and outside the corporate environment. The exercise seeks to ensure that everyone is informed of their individual and corporate contributions (and how

they can make those contributions) toward sustainable development. This is the bank's way of promoting and amplifying the sustainability conversation internally among members of staff, and externally among partners and vendors.

The 2021 edition of SAW held from November 29 – December 3, 2021. The year's event was themed, 'Building Blocks for a Sustainable Future,' and featured educative and entertaining events and activities

designed to increase sustainability awareness among employees and educate the public on best practices. Multiple panel sessions discussed ways to accelerate the impact of sustainability interventions. The discussions focused on policy and action, reporting and communications, financing and investment, and innovation.

As part of the activities to commemorate SAW 2021, Access Bank also organized a sustainability exhibition, Take the Stairs challenge, Sustainability Hour, Employee Volunteering Awareness Day, Sustainability Champions training, and workshops on sustainable procurement, waste recycling, up-cycling, amongst others.

### Occupational Health and Safety

The general well-being of our employees is important to Access Bank. The Health, Safety, Security, and Environment (HSSE) department of the bank guides our approach and response to all health and safety matters concerning our employees and other stakeholders. This department assesses the health and safety impacts of our products, services, and operations. In 2021, our Health and Safety training focused on fire and general safety guidelines. There were several fire drills during the year. All security personnel also received training on human rights and specific procedures related to their roles. The bank continued its practice of strict adherence to COVID-19 protocols as established by the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC). COVID tests were carried out periodically across the bank to ensure every staff member's safety, and staff were advised to be vaccinated.

We encouraged good personal hygiene among our employees and supported their well-being. We enrolled employees under a health insurance scheme

that covers both the physical and mental health of staff. We also organized a health fair where staff were granted access to dental checks, cancer awareness and screenings, amongst other health checks.

### Training and Development

Our employees undergo continuous training and development programmes, depending on which they are interested in to enhance their career growth. We invest in building employees' professional skills to aid their career growth and job satisfaction. We invested over N1.140 billion in employee training and development in 2021. The total number of hours of training was 454,026.35 (female employees – 190,691.12 hours; male employees – 263,335.35 hours), with the average hours of training per employee as 95 hours.

By employee category, officers (80% of employees) achieved training hours of 278,761.97 hours; middle managers (10% of employees) achieved training hours of 146,276.92 hours; managers (4% of employees) achieved 26,494.33 hours, and top managers (2% of employees) achieved 2,493.25 hours. The training covered the following topics: Leadership; Soft Skills; Risk Management; Digital and Analytics Skills; Health, Safety, and Environment; Sustainability; and other functional programmes. The various training programmes were available to third-party employees but not to third-party organisations.

All employees received regular performance reviews and career reviews in 2021. These reviews are carried out twice a year. Our exchange programme across our subsidiaries also helps our employees to learn about different aspects of the organisation and have the opportunity to develop skills and knowledge across diverse cultures.

# Community Investments

## Access Bank Corporate Social Activities

As a socially responsible brand, Access Bank is committed to delivering a higher quality of life for local communities. Our CSR focus areas are Health, Education, Arts, Sports, Environment and Social Welfare. We partner with different organisations to create positive impact, addressing social challenges, and expanding opportunities for the communities. Some of our impact-driven projects include:

### Health



#### 1. High Impact Tuberculosis Programme, Nigeria

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), tuberculosis (TB) is one of the top 10 causes of death worldwide. In 2017, 25% of new cases were in Africa. It is estimated that 407,000 people in Nigeria have TB each year.

Access Bank partnered with Nirvana Initiative, an organisation focused on addressing matters relating to sickle cell disorder and other health-related issues, to develop a TB intervention programme. The programme was implemented in Anambra and Kaduna states. Some of the key activities included community outreach using information, education, and communication (IEC) materials to increase knowledge of TB prevention and management. Media platforms used included radio and social media. TB screening and counselling exercises were also conducted to identify persons with TB and link them to healthcare facilities.

About 714 IEC materials on TB prevention and management were distributed across the communities. 1,507 residents were reached via social media and radio.

Also, 365 people were beneficiaries of the screening and counselling sessions.

#### 2. Hand-Washing Stations for Schools, Nigeria

Handwashing is one of the important hygiene practices that can prevent us from getting sick and spreading germs. According to a survey conducted by Global Hygiene Council (GHC), 42% of children do not follow proper handwashing procedures in schools. They do not use soap when they wash their hands.

To provide handwashing devices for schools, Access Bank partnered with Xploits Consulting, an environmental and social management organisation, to carry out the project. Handwashing stations were deployed across schools in Northern Nigeria to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic and promote good hygiene practices amongst students in Niger State (Chanchaga and Suleja Local Government Areas) and Kano State (Kumbotso and Kano North LGAs).

Two handwash stations were set in across each of the 20 schools in Niger and Kano that were selected for the project. About 720 students were educated on good hygiene practices across the schools. A total of over 14,400 students and teachers were beneficiaries of this initiative.

### 3. Cancer Intervention Programme, Nigeria

Access Bank partnered with HACEY Health Initiative, a development organisation focused on improving health and productivity, to implement a cancer intervention programme, aimed at increasing awareness of information on life-saving cancer prevention and treatment, and ways to reduce cancer mortality. The programme was implemented across Kaduna, Ebonyi, and Oyo states. It involved a Twitter chat with health professionals on cancer, a community awareness walk, and an awareness campaign in schools.

Through the online awareness campaign on cancer prevention, 2,567 people were reached. Through the Twitter chat, about 587 people were reached with vital information on how to prevent cancer and treatment therapies. Also, six communities (two in each of the three states) and 450 people were reached with cancer awareness information, education, and prevention tips. The community awareness walk was held with about 416 participants.

### 4. Malaria Programmatic Intervention, Nigeria

The Corporate Alliance on Malaria in Africa (CAMA) is a GBCHealth-led initiative aimed at driving partnerships for malaria control and elimination. Access Bank is a member and co-Chair of CAMA, leading and supporting innovative malaria prevention, control, and treatment activities, as well as deploying programmes that serve the needs of malaria-affected people and communities in Africa. Access Bank partnered with CAMA to deliver programmatic malaria intervention.

The programme was implemented in Ebonyi, Kano, and Lagos states. Key activities involved the distribution of information, education, and communication (IEC) materials to increase the knowledge of community members on malaria and COVID-19 prevention. Long-

lasting insecticide-treated nets were also distributed to community members, including pregnant women and mothers of children under five years.

Three thousand long-lasting insecticide-treated nests were distributed across six communities in the three states. Also, 3,170 IEC materials on malaria prevention, control, and management were distributed.

### 5. Obstetric Fistula Intervention Programme, Nigeria

Maternal mortality remains the major cause of death among women of childbearing age worldwide. Like many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), the development of obstetric fistula is directly linked to one of the major causes of maternal mortality.

Access Bank, in partnership with HACEY Health Initiative, developed and implemented the End Obstetric Fistula programme. The programme involved community health education and engagement on the risk factors associated with obstetrics fistula, its effect, and prevention strategies. Capacity-building workshop and seminar were organised for maternal healthcare providers and community leaders on obstetric fistula, its prevention, and management during pregnancy.

Through this programme, 1,556 women were reached with information on obstetric fistula, its risk factors, effects, and prevention strategies. One hundred maternal healthcare providers and community leaders were also trained on how to respond to the condition. Additionally, 50 health practitioners were engaged to promote a reduction in the occurrence and improve the management of the condition.

### 6. COVID-19 Support, Gambia.

Access Bank Gambia continued to conduct regular COVID-19 testing for our staff and customers.

Members of staff were also encouraged to take the COVID-19 vaccine, and about 60% employees were vaccinated as of year-end 2021. In addition, the bank supported the Gambia Ministry of Health through the Bankers Association with a sum of US\$5,000.00.

## 7. Donation of Medical equipment to Ghana Police Hospital, Ghana

In response to Ghana Police Hospital (Accra)'s request for medical equipment support to aid its operations and treatment of COVID-19 patients, Access Bank donated syringe drivers and other medical equipment to the hospital as a new wave of the virus infection was spreading.

The goal of the project was to continually support and equip hospitals and other medical facilities in the fight against COVID-19. The donation aided in the treatment of over 3,000 patients. The hospital serves Korle Klottey constituency, a community in Accra with a population of over 200,000 people, including the police force and their families.

## 8. Fist Against Fistula, Ghana

As part of Access Bank's CSR initiatives for the year, 46 women benefitted from free fistula repair surgeries. This surgery was one component of a holistic restoration process of patients. The other components were economic empowerment and reintegration into society. Since 2019, the project has benefitted over 170 women. It was executed in partnership with the Ministry of Gender, Women & Social Protection, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Kaysen's Group, and Mercy Women's Hospital.

## 9. Breast and Cervical Cancer Screening, Ghana

Access Bank partnered with Britannia Medical Centre and Run For a Cure to educate on, and conduct, breast cancer screening for customers and staff across the Tema cluster of branches, namely Tema Main, Spintex Road, and Lashibi branches. This activity benefitted over 200 female staff and customers of the bank.

Access Bank, in partnership with "W", observed Breast Cancer Awareness month with breast and cervical cancer screening at the head office.



## 10. Donation of Personal Protective Equipment to the Traders Advocacy Group Ghana (TAGG)

To support economic recovery and the reopening of businesses following strict COVID-19 lockdowns in Ghana, Access Bank partnered with TAGG in 2021 to educate and sensitize traders in a major market in Greater Accra on COVID-19 prevention and safety protocols. Items such as face masks and other personal protective equipment (PPEs) were donated to the market groups.

Over 6,000 members of TAGG were sensitized on COVID-19 prevention and treatment, and also received the different items distributed.





## 11. Blood Donation camp, Rwanda

Access Bank Rwanda, in partnership with Rwanda Biomedical Centre (RBC), organised a three-day blood donation campaign. At the RBC headquarter, 147 people donated blood. This initiative was organised to celebrate International Women's Day and was one of the activities in a month dedicated to programmes aimed at promoting women's development. This event took place in March 2021.

## Education



### 1. Global Money Week, Nigeria

Global Money Week (GMW) is an annual global awareness-raising campaign on the importance of ensuring that young people, from an early age, are financially literate, and are gradually acquiring the knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours necessary to make sound financial decisions and achieve financial wellbeing.

Access Bank partnered with 9ajjaKids to commemorate the 2021 GMW. The event involved the distribution of financial literacy books to schools, inter-school financial literacy quizzes, access to financial literacy games and digital literacy worksheets, and digital webinars for parents and children.

Various schools in different states received financial literacy books as shown in the table below.

Number of Books	Number of Schools	State
570	11	Rivers
40	1	Osun
170	4	Ogun
60	1	Nasarawa
90	2	FCT
510	10	Lagos
40	1	Kwara
80	1	Bayelsa
240	4	Akwa Ibom
120	2	Kwara
80	1	Kogi

### 2. Cyberbullying Programme, Nigeria

Cyberbullying is bullying with the use of digital technologies. It can take place on social media, messaging platforms, gaming platforms, and mobile phones. It entails repeated behaviours aimed at scaring, angering, or shaming those targeted.

Access Bank, in collaboration with Xploit Consulting, developed a cyberbullying prevention programme for schools in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), specifically Bwari, Kuje, and Gwagwalada.

The goal of this project was to reduce the prevalence of cyberbullying activities among young people. The project increased the awareness of stakeholders on the existence and the damaging effects of cyberbullying by 50%. Five secondary schools were impacted with knowledge of cyberbullying and its effect on young people (Capville Group of Schools,

Bwari; Total Child Model School, Bwari; Christ Anglican School, Gwagwalada; Kenford Academy, Gwagwalada; and Capital Science Academy, Kuje). A total of 143 teachers across the schools were trained on cyberbullying prevention and mitigation strategies.

### 3. Child Labour Programme, Nigeria

In Nigeria, many children's health, education, and childhoods are stolen by child labour. Access Bank, in partnership with Xploit Consulting, developed and implemented the child labour prevention programme for children in Abuja. The programme involved capacity building for private and public school teachers on psychosocial care and support of vulnerable children. Community sensitization meetings were held in three area councils in the FCT, while 30 out-of-school children were enrolled into public primary schools in the area councils and given school supplies. This programme enlightened participants on the damaging health and psychological effects of child labour.

### 4. Access Digital Programme, Nigeria

Access Bank, in partnership with Xploit Consulting, created the Access Digital programme to address the digital skills gaps amongst youths in Nigeria. The goal of the programme was to provide young people with basic and intermediate digital skills to enable them to gain employment. Two hundred young women and men in Kogi and Nasarawa states, as well as the FCT, were taught basic and intermediate digital skills in 2021 under the programme.

### 5. STEAM Initiative, Nigeria

Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics (STEAM) play a vital role in the sustained growth and stability of Nigeria's economy. Training in STEAM provides children with necessary skills like critical analysis, problem-solving, and creativity, which

can prepare them to be more competitive in the future.

Access Bank partnered with 9ijaKids Initiatives to deliver a STEAM programme for children. The programme involved a masterclass to introduce the STEAM concept to children. There was also a STEAM competition amongst children and 200 activity books were distributed to four schools in Lagos.

1,050 children participated in the competition and master class online. 10 children were rewarded with prizes from the STEAM competition.

### 6. Climate Leadership Fellowship, Nigeria

Glow Initiative, a non-governmental organisation focused on enabling communities to become economically viable, partnered with Access Bank, to develop the Climate Leadership Fellowship. The goal of the fellowship was to provide expert training on climate action to young people, with the aim of mainstreaming climate action and increasing awareness of climate change. Out of 219 applications received, 55 fellows were selected. The fellows represented 20 states of Nigeria. Fifty fellows received toolkits and participated in the Adopt A School programme. 30 students completed the Adopt A School and Teach Climate Change Programme. Thirty secondary schools worked as partners with the team.

## Arts



### 1. Capacity building for youth on Film and Photography, Nigeria

Access Bank, in partnership with International Film and Broadcast Academy (IFBA) – a Lagos-based film school focused on film and television production – developed this youth-focused capacity building programme on

film/television production and photography. Twenty youths in Bariga, Lagos were taught cinematography, scriptwriting, directing, and photojournalism. The five-day training was organised with the support of the Directors Guild of Nigeria.

## 2. Capacity building for Persons Living with Disabilities in Film and Photography, Nigeria

Access Bank also partnered with IFBA to develop a capacity building programme aimed at training persons with disabilities (PWDs) in film/television production and photography. The five-day programme, which took place at the American Corner in Lagos, trained 32 PWD youths in photography, acting and film production. Short advocacy videos were also produced to promote the rights of PWDs.

## 3. In-Short Film Festival, Nigeria

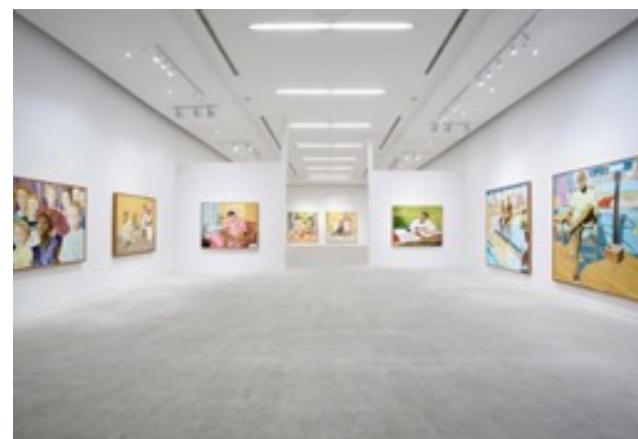
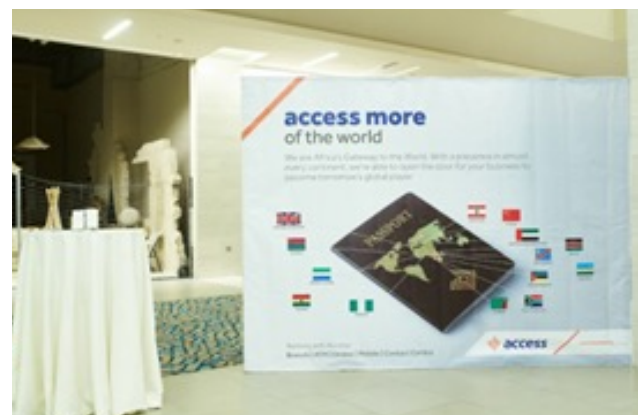
Access Bank partnered with IFBA to support In-Short Film Festival – an independent festival aimed at promoting emerging and student filmmakers in Nigeria and across Africa. The programme involved a training on mobile video journalism, an animation class for creatives, and short film screening. More than 232 young people participated in the programme, with 60 short films screened. There was also an award ceremony designed to celebrate and reward excellence among emerging filmmakers on the continent and beyond. Awards were given to 22 young creatives in various categories.

## 4. Sponsorship of the Cultural Weekend by Gallery 1957, Ghana

Access Bank, in collaboration with Gallery 1957 – an international art gallery focused on promoting contemporary African art across Africa and beyond – held an exhibition to promote the works of African artists. The exhibition, dubbed the “Cultural Weekend,”

was attended by more than 700 African and European art curators and collectors.

The goal of this programme was to deepen the bank’s commitment to supporting the creative industries across Ghana and beyond, and also strategically position Access Bank as the bank of choice for individuals and organisations in the industries. The exhibition also created an avenue for the bank to interact with art-loving customers and business prospects.



## Social Welfare



### 1. Sustainable Skills Training, Entrepreneurship, Sensitization, and Empowerment, Nigeria

Access Bank partnered with Xploit Consulting to design and implement a skills acquisition programme to empower men, women, and young girls in Abuja, Niger State, and Kano State. The aim was to enable them to be gainfully employed or start their own small businesses and improve their living conditions. About 400 people participated in the programme and were trained in various activities like bead making, gele tying (a native headgear), computer and phone repairs, and liquid soap production.

### 2. Solar Skills Empowerment Programme, Nigeria

Access Bank and Glow Initiative designed and implemented the Solar Skills Empowerment programme to equip young people with renewable energy technology skills. The one-week capacity-building programme, which held in Ebenebe village, Anambra State, focused on solar photovoltaic (PV) system design, solar energy marketing and sales, solar PV entrepreneurship, solar PV maintenance, solar PV repairs and installation, a mentorship programme, and internship opportunities in the solar energy market. A total of 60 young people (men and women) from the Ebenebe community participated in the training.

### 3. Solar for Schools Empowerment Programme, Nigeria

This program was initiated to empower schools and equip students with the skills to repair and install solar PV systems. The programme, which was implemented in Awka North LGA of Anambra State in 2021, had

100 students and teachers as participants. It was implemented under Access Bank's partnership with the Glow Initiative to empower students with renewable energy technology skills.

### 4. Agribusiness Livelihood Programme, Nigeria

This project was designed and implemented to help alleviate poverty and strengthen food security in communities across Northern Nigeria. In 2021, Benue and Plateau states each had 100 men and women who received training in snail and fish farming. The programme was expected to bring about a 30% reduction in the dependency rate amongst the youth, women, and girls. Another 200 individuals got psychosocial counselling and were provided with basic materials on how to start small businesses. The agribusiness programme was implemented under Access Bank's partnership with Xploit Consulting.

### 5. Access SME Programme, Nigeria

Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are considered the engines of growth in most economies, especially developing countries. SMEs account for the majority of businesses worldwide and are important contributors to job creation and global economic development.

Access Bank partnered with Estrategico to implement the Upskilling Local Entrepreneurs programme. The programme's objective was to provide financial management and business marketing training to local entrepreneurs across communities in the south-south region of Nigeria. 250 SMEs in six communities in the region recorded increased profitability following their participation in the programme.

Local entrepreneurs in 10 communities in the region said they gained more knowledge in financial management and business marketing.

## 6. Girl Child Empowerment Programme, Nigeria

Access Bank and HACEY Health Initiative worked together to implement the Girl Child Empowerment programme aimed at promoting girls' rights to education, health, and economic empowerment in Nigeria.

The programme involved a girl-child essay competition, a safe space (leadership and health) workshop, mentoring sessions for young girls with women in high-level management positions across different career fields, and media engagements in Lagos, Oyo, Kaduna, and Ebonyi states, and Abuja. One thousand young girls in each state were empowered with information, technical skills and resources to amplify their voices and advance their rights.

Five thousand girls were trained as leaders and health champions. Five hundred girls participated in one-on-one mentoring sessions, and 100 girls across secondary schools in Lagos engaged in the creative art projects, telling stories around gender inequality and particularly gender-based violence to challenge the deleterious social norms. The top three finalists in the girl-child essay competition were rewarded.

## 7. PWDs Business Support Programme, Nigeria

Persons with disabilities (PWDs) often face difficulties when looking for meaningful employment due to lack of support structures and given societal biases against them. Hence, they resort to establishing their own businesses, which do not usually earn them enough income, compared to many people without disabilities.

Access Bank partnered with Project Enable Africa – a community development initiative – to provide

business support services and mentorship to selected businesses led by PWDs in Lagos. The programme involved business training, mentoring, coaching, pitching competition, and entrepreneurial and potential funding networks. Forty PWD entrepreneurs participated in the programme with three PWD-led businesses receiving seed capital following the pitching competition.

## 8. Rural Women Empowerment Programme, Nigeria

The goal of this programme was to help create better economic opportunities for rural women by teaching them renewable energy technology and business skills. The training programmes included solar energy business training (Solar Business Value Chains), solar PV design training, training on inverter installation, among other sessions.

About 50 women participated in the programme and were equipped with the capacity to start their solar energy businesses with distribution support from Sylgeo Technical Nigeria, a solar energy solutions company. Access Bank organised the programme in partnership with the Glow Initiative.

## 9. Capacity Building for Youth on Graphics Design and Digital Marketing, Nigeria

In partnership with IFBA, Access Bank developed and implemented this programme in Asaba, Delta State, in 2021.

Seventy-six youths acquired digital marketing skills and graphics design competency to improve the branding and marketability of their businesses and those of their clients, thereby helping to increase their incomes and living standards.

## 10. ACT Foundation Grant Programme, Nigeria

Access Bank has a longstanding partnership with Aspire Coronation Trust (ACT) Foundation – a grant-making not-for-profit organisation based in Lagos. The Foundation is addressing challenges and vulnerabilities across four focus areas, which are environment, health, entrepreneurship, and leadership. These areas of intervention align with Access Bank’s sustainability strategy, a key reason for our partnership.

To accelerate impact in the focus areas, 27 non-governmental organisations (NGOs) received grants in 2021 through Access Bank’s partnership with ACT Foundation. The number of beneficiaries impacted and communities reached are highlighting in the following table

Focus Area	Number Of Organisations	Beneficiaries Reached (As Verified Through Reporting)	State(S) Reached	Communities Reached
Health	9	15,663	33 states	84 communities
Entrepreneurship	10	9,152	19 states	53 communities
Leadership	4	246,908	31 states	55 communities
Environment	4	4,675	7 states	38 communities
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>276,398</b>		<b>230 communities</b>

## 11. Support to Women’s Wing – Mille II Central Prisons, Gambia

As a way of giving back to the community, Access Bank supported the Gambia Central Prison’s Women’s Wing with sanitary materials. The bank’s Public Sector Group initiated this intervention. The prison officials appreciated the initiative.



## 12. Renovation of Kotu Police Station, Gambia

The Kotu Police Station was facing a lot of constraints, which were affecting the performance of the service men. Access Bank intervened as part of our CSR by renovating the building. The areas that needed urgent attention were the roof, the ceiling, and the exterior and interior painting. The Bank carried out the project of repairing them and transforming the facility. This improved the morale of the policemen.

## 13. Live B3ta Project, Ghana

The “LIVE B3TA” innovative savings account is part of the unique solutions offered by Access Bank’s flagship women empowerment programme, the “W” Initiative. It is supported by Savings at the Frontier (SatF) – a joint programme by Mastercard Foundation and Oxford Policy Management Ltd (OPM) – aimed at improving the financial inclusion of low-income individuals and communities in sub-Saharan Africa.

LIVE B3TA is targeted at women's groups in rural and peri-urban areas with limited access to financial services. It is an insurance-embedded group savings account integrated with mobile money and makes it easier for customers to do their banking anywhere and at any time. For ease of reference, customers can also use their phone numbers as account numbers. Over 560 women's groups have opened the account and are enjoying the accompanying benefits.



#### 14. Choose to Challenge, Ghana

Access Bank and ScaleUp Africa, a Pan-African enterprise development agency, hosted a Pan-African Women's Conference on April 21, 2021, themed, Choose to Challenge. The virtual conference was part of a strategic partnership to boost the economic contribution and resources available to women in business and professional careers.

Pan-African Women's Conference brought together leaders in finance, business growth strategy, and organisational development from across the continent and Europe, including Elsie Addo-Awadzie, 2nd Deputy Governor, Bank of Ghana (BoG). Over 1500 women-owned SMEs participated.

The programme was also part of activities organised to mark the sixth anniversary of the bank's flagship 'W' Initiative. The bank's goal was to highlight the importance of creating an enabling environment that helps women thrive.

**Pan-African Women's Conference**  
Theme **Choose To Challenge**

21st April 2021 | 11:00 AM GMT

**Keynote Speaker**  
Elsie Addo Awadzi  
2nd Deputy Governor, Bank of Ghana

**Panelists**  
Matilda Asante-Akiedu  
Group Head Retail Banking, Access Bank Ghana Plc.  
Fatima Alimshamed  
CEO, Africa Brand Warrior  
Yofi Grant  
CEO, Ghana Investment Promotion Centre  
Franklin Owusu-karikari  
Director of Business Support, NEIP

**Guest Speakers**  
Ghamside Olatunji  
MD, Access Bank Ghana Plc.  
Irene Ochom  
CEO, Africa Women Innovation & Entrepreneurship Forum  
Chifulya Mutale  
CEO, PremierCredit  
Justina Mutale  
Founder & President, Justina Mutale Foundation

**Moderator**  
Kakul Selormey Hanson  
Media Personality

Sheila Komen Kelino  
Country Director, African Fertilizer & Agribusiness Partnership  
Ayona Aguste-Trimmell  
Group Head, Women Banking Access Bank Plc.  
Amma Gyampo  
Co-Founder Scale-Up Africa

Click here to register <https://cutt.ly/BcVSdXX>

More info, contact: 020 202 2299  
TOLL FREE: 0800 004600  
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access more than banking

#### 15. Initiative For Young Women And Girls With Disability (IYWGD), Sierra Leone

The World Health Organisation (WHO)'s data shows nearly one in three women worldwide has been subjected to physical or sexual violence at least once in her lifetime, indicating that levels of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) have remained largely unchanged over the last decade.

To address this situation and call for the prevention and elimination of VAWG, Access Bank Sierra Leone joined the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, an international campaign that takes place each year, starting on November 25, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, until December 10, Human Rights Day.

Access Bank Sierra Leone funded IYWGD to conduct inclusive sensitisation on VAWG in Bo and its environs. The goals of the project included promoting a better understanding of gender-based violence and sexual harassment of persons with disability; thereby drawing attention of the citizenry to the importance of promoting the rights, dignity and welfare of women and girls with disability (WGD).

The bank's Sustainability Champions in Bo provided 50 WGD with 20 bags of rice (25kg), bathing and laundry soaps, sanitary kits, 24 gallons of palm oil, among other items.

### **16. Educate Africa Institute, Sierra Leone, Back To School Campaign**

In line with the flagship programme of Sierra Leone's President Julius Maada Bio, Free Quality Education, Access Bank Sierra Leone joined the campaign to support children in deprived communities to go to school.

The goals of the bank's programme included providing some basic needs for school pupils such as textbooks, school uniforms, notebooks, and school bags to enable them to go back to school; and engaging with leaders in different economic sectors and institutions and having them support an agenda for development.

Access Bank partnered with Educate Africa Institute to support 200 pupils in the organisation's Back-to-School campaign on November 15, 2021.

### **17. Women Connect Campaign, Rwanda**

To commemorate International Women's Day (IWD) 2021, Access Bank Rwanda, in partnership with International Trade Centre (ITC)'s SheTrades Initiative Rwanda and the Affirmative Finance Action for Women in Africa (AFAWA) programme of the African Initiative of the African Development Bank (AfDB), organised a

series of activities, including awarding three women-owned businesses with a total sum of RWF6,000,000. Webinars were also organised, with 114 women in attendance.

### **18. Supporting Kawangware Rescue Centre, Kenya**

This was a social welfare employee volunteering initiative spearheaded by Central Operations Department of Access Bank Kenya. The department supported a local children's home, Kawangware Rescue Centre, in Nairobi on November 27, 2021.

The initiative made a difference in the community the bank serves and enhanced the Access brand, showcasing us as a socially responsible bank. The bank gave provisions to support the daily needs of the children's home.

### **19. Hearts Plus Minds, Kenya**

This was an employee volunteering initiative of the Conduct and Compliance Department of Access Bank Kenya, which the department dubbed, "Hearts Plus Minds", and executed on November 13, 2021.

This initiative entailed paying a visit to Little Sisters for the Elderly Retirement Home (Nyumba ya Wazee) in Nairobi, where members of the department donated assorted food and other items, and also spent time helping out with different tasks at the home. The goal of this initiative was to give back to the community and provide positive social value.

### **20. Angel Hands, Kenya**

The Finance, EBS, and Human Resource departments of Access Bank Kenya did a social welfare employee volunteering initiative, which they tagged, "Angel Hands," on November 12, 2021. For their initiative, the departments donated various provisions as well as



financial support to Makimei Children's Home in Gitaru, Nairobi. The home takes care of abandoned children below the age of 19.

The goal of the initiative was to provide some basic needs for the children. The department also aimed to continue with the initiative, making the provisions for the children every two months. By improving the lives of the children, the bank hopes to have a greater impact on their lives and afford them a much brighter future.

## Environment



### 1. ACT4Wildlife Campaign, Nigeria

This campaign was developed to promote better wildlife management by increasing positive attitudes and practices towards wildlife conservation. This awareness campaign reached 1000 people. Fifty young environmental enthusiasts also participated in a walkathon, through which about 500 passers-by were reached with information on wildlife conservation.

As part of the initiative of Access Bank and the Glow Initiative, 20 students of environmental-related courses were taken on a tour of Unity Park, Enugu. Apart from the wildlife educational tour, an eco-poet competition was carried out and three winners emerged. An environmental policy brief was developed and presented to the Ministry of Environment and Mineral Resources. The policy brief, titled: Forest Conservation: A Veritable Tool for Ensuring the Sustainability of Wildlife in Enugu" was presented to the Enugu State Commissioner of Environment and Mineral Resources.

### 2. Biodiversity Programme, Nigeria

Access Bank partnered with the Glow Initiative on this biodiversity and environmental protection initiative, which involved a youth clean-up exercise,

tree planting, and provision of solar-powered water treatment plant.

Five hundred units of *Murraya koenigii* tree were planted across the community. One hundred community youth participated in the clean-up exercise to promote good sanitation and hygiene. Also, one solar-powered water treatment plant was deployed to provide access to clean water for 500 families. Through the community sensitisation programme, 500 people were reached with information on environmental protection.

The project aimed to mitigate environmental degradation and its associated adverse impacts by stimulating community-based action.

### 3. Sponsorship of the Fourth Ghana Green Building Summit, Ghana

As a co-sponsor of the Fourth Ghana Green Building Summit, Access Bank leveraged the platform to expose the global audience to the bank's sustainability leadership and sustainable banking practices. The summit created awareness of the bank's green finance offerings, which include green bonds and green loans.

The summit provided a platform for sharing Access Bank's sustainability achievements with over 800 participants across Africa, Europe, and America. Participants included business leaders and professionals across various sectors, including renewable energy, water, interior design, and finance.



#### 4. Tree planting initiative at Tanveer Alam Mosque, Kenya

One of the popular employee volunteering focus areas at Access Bank is the environment. Therefore, in response to a request by Tanveer Alam mosque's (Nairobi) Imam for assistance in landscaping and tree planting within the mosque's compound, Access Bank Kenya's Corporate Communication and Operational Risk departments undertook a tree planting initiative, which was dubbed, "Hifadhi Mazingira," on November 19, 2021.

The project aimed to help provide more tree cover at the Tanveer Alam mosque. The initiative contributed to minimizing the effects of air pollution in the city and significantly improved Access Bank's brand recognition.

#### 5. Green Bond, Kenya

Access Bank Kenya became the first member of the Kenya Bankers Association (KBA) to issue a green bond.

#### 6. Sustainability Awareness Week, Kenya

In commemoration of the 2021 Sustainability Awareness Week, we encouraged staff at our Head Office to use the stairs (climbing from the Lower Ground Floor to the 11th floor). We awarded the first three staff who completed the challenge for each of the five days.

### 2021 Employee Volunteering Initiatives



Employee volunteering allows Groups within Access Bank to invest in the people and local communities where the bank operates. Employees are guided and advised on different ways they can positively impact the communities we serve, either by donating their time, skills, or resources during work hours to tackle

social issues in the local communities.

Through our Employee Volunteering Scheme (EVS), employees contribute ideas, skills, and resources to help address social, environmental, and economic issues. The notable EVS initiatives in 2021 are discussed next:

#### 1. Corporate Communications Group, Nigeria

Blood transfusions help save lives. In Nigeria, the National Blood Service Commission (NBSC) has the mandate of providing cost-effective, safe, and quality blood and blood products for transfusion to all who may require it. Voluntary donations in Nigeria comprise about 5% of the available blood, while the remaining 95% is provided commercially.

To increase blood donation rate and improve blood services across the country, the Corporate Communications team at Access Bank embarked on a blood supply programme, tagged "Save A Life Initiative." The team partnered with the Haima Health Initiatives, a social enterprise focused on voluntary blood donation in collaboration with the Lagos State Blood Transfusion Service.

The initiative aimed at raising awareness on the importance of blood donation, and educating people to remove the wrong stereotypes associated with blood donation. The campaigns focused on Lagos State and Abuja. The online and offline campaign reached 1,954,010 people. Employees on the team committed 1,728 hours to the initiative and donated 213 pints of blood, helping to improve blood supply.

#### 2. Commercial Banking Group, Nigeria

Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa, with over half the population under the age of 19. Yet, children's rights and those of young adults are not fully realised.

Nigeria has the world's highest number of out-of-school (OOS) children, per the World Bank. The country has more than 11 million OOS children between the ages of 6 and 15, representing one in 12 OOS children globally. While public education is supposed to be free, pupils are often asked to provide materials necessary for the functioning of the school (e.g., toilet paper, brooms, and sanitation products). It is against this background that the Commercial Banking Division of Access Bank embarked on its Every Child Matters project.

The project involved the provision of basic children's requirements, including healthcare and basic amenities for special needs children across Lagos, Port Harcourt, and Abuja. In Lagos, the Division partnered with Slum2School, a non-governmental organisation focused on child education and development, to provide scholarships for 50 children. The children were enrolled at the Adekunle Primary School and provided with learning materials, school uniforms, mentorship, and skills acquisition training in the Makoko community of Yaba.

The eye and leg surgeries of two special needs children at the Compassion Centre, Transamadi, Port Harcourt, were funded by the Division. Additionally, the Division empowered Zamarr Institute Learning Ability Centre, Abuja, with learning materials, including a 1.5 horsepower air conditioning unit, photocopying machine, grass mower, and UPS to make their educational environment more conducive for learning.

Employees within the Division committed over 1,050 hours towards the various initiatives, impacting over 200 lives across the beneficiary communities. Overall, the project has reduced the number of OOS and street children in the country, and it helps in advancing the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 4, which calls for action on achieving quality education for all.

### 3. Treasury, Projects, and Structured Finance (PSF) Group Partnership, Nigeria

Natural talent is often dismissed and stifled without giving it the necessary nurture or investment. The talents of Nigerian youth are the most unexploited, yet productive resources, in the nation. Nevertheless, we believe the time to energise and utilise the potential of the younger generation is upon us.

Access Bank's Treasury and PSF Departments partnered with the Let It Shine Academy (LISA), Nigeria, to provide a platform to encourage and celebrate each child's creativity, passion, and artistry. The project aimed to train children who would otherwise have little or no access to formal or informal education. A comprehensive curriculum was developed comprising different activities such as creative arts, performing arts, crafts, literature, creative writing, and financial literacy, amongst others.

Providing a platform for teaching these skills and enabling their expression is essential to a well-rounded education for children. Sessions were organised at Children's Centre, Idi-Araba; Street Welfare Initiative facility, Yaba; Lekki Outreach Centre, Lekki; Boys Correctional Centre, Oregun; and Hearts of Gold Hospice, Surulere, all in Lagos. The team renovated the main hall of the Special Correctional Centre for Boys, Oregun, replaced worn-out furniture, provided teaching/learning materials in the hall, and gave financial support through donations to LISA. Employees within the team committed over 624 hours to the project, impacting over 293 children.

Overall, the initiative promoted the creative development and social welfare of less privileged Nigerian children in Lagos, enabling them to discover, develop, and refine their hidden talents.

#### 4. Retail Banking- Project L.E.A.D, Nigeria

Education remains an inaccessible right for millions of children around the world. Available statistics indicate that more than 72 million children of primary education age are not in school. At the same time, 759 million adults are illiterate and do not have the awareness that is required to improve living conditions. In most developing countries, many children do not have access to basic education because of inequalities that originate from sex, health, and cultural circumstances. These children often find themselves within the margins of an educational system that can barely offer them access to learning and intellectual and social development.

Ironically, one in every five of the world's out-of-school children is a Nigerian, even as primary education is officially free and compulsory. Specifically, about 10.5 million of the country's children aged between 5-14 years are not in school, 61% ranging of age group 6-11 regularly attend primary school, and only 35.6% of children aged 36-59 months receive early childhood education.

Moved by the plight of children who are out of school in Nigeria, the Personal Banking Group has, over the past three years, partnered with Project REVAMP Africa to develop the Project L.E.A.D (Leadership Enterprise Academic and Development). Through this partnership, the Group in 2021 adopted 37 schools across six geo-political zones (South-West, South-East, South-South, North-East, North-West, and North-Central). It empowered about 30,517 students to know values and morality, time management, goal setting, and financial literacy.

Eventually, 92% of students believed the programme developed their openness to learning and improved their reading attitude. Similarly, 98% of the classroom teachers reported inspired change in behaviour among the students resulting from the programme. Indeed,

before Project Lead, 60% of the students performed below average. Reports showed that 55% students are now performing above average after the programme. Specifically, a student from the Government College, Victoria Island, testified to his academic position moving from 23rd in class to third. The Group employee in 2021 committed over 88,480 hours towards the projects.

#### 5. Digital & Centralised Operations - Adopt A School Project, Nigeria

To achieve a positive impact and improve educational outcomes, the Digital and Centralised Operations Group adopted the Olorunfunmi Senior Grammar School, a government-owned school in Lagos, to revamp the infrastructure of the school. The classrooms were dilapidated, and the general school environment was not conducive for learning.

Hence, the Group embarked on complete rehabilitation of three classroom blocks to enhance the learning environment. The rehabilitation led to about 86% increase in learning outcomes for the children. Also, the delinquency rate amongst the children in the Idimu- Ejigbo area of Lagos where the school is located dropped.

Additionally, the Group employees conducted financial literacy training for the children, and also taught the children and teachers personal and public hygiene. Our employees in the Group committed over 86 hours towards the project, impacting over 150 students in the school.

#### 6. Corporate Counsel & Company Secretariat - Adoption of Healthcare Facility, Nigeria

So many challenges have plagued the Nigerian healthcare system. Health facilities (health centres, personnel, and medical equipment) are inadequate,

especially in rural and semi-urban areas. To help improve the health infrastructure for the achievement of better health outcomes, the Corporate Counsel and Company Secretariat adopted the Onikan Health Centre Lagos Island for intervention. Specifically, the maternity ward at the health centre was renovated and refurbished. The Group provided new tiling, furniture, and painting. Birthing kits were also provided for the ward.

The renovation reduced child and maternal mortality rates at the hospital in 2021. Our employees in the Group committed over 1,000 hours to the project, which has impacted over 4,500 lives.

### 7. Employee Volunteering Programme, Ghana - Instilling the Habits of Reading in Children

In fulfilment of Access Bank's EVS for 2021, themed "Instilling the Habits of Reading in Children," staff of Access Bank contributed a total of about GHS 150,000 to provide reading materials for 12 deprived schools in six regions across the country. The amount also catered for the refurbishment of Library/ICT rooms to give a facelift to the schools and ensure a congenial learning environment for the children.

The goal of the project was to instil the habit of reading in children and support SDG 4, which calls for action to provide quality education for all children. So far, over 2,000 children have benefitted from this initiative

The staff of the bank also commemorated our week-long Sustainability Awareness Week (SAW) together with global partners from November 15-19, 2021. Activities included carpooling, employee volunteering, a recycling campaign, healthy eating and exercise, and a webinar on sustainability. Staff also participated in a bank-wide "We Care Challenge" on October 16, walking a distance of 10km.



### 8. Market-Facing Group, Sierra Leone – Back-to-School Campaign

The market-facing employees of Access Bank Sierra Leone (RBG, IBG, CBG, Treasury, and Payment and Collection), which teamed up for their EVS 2021 activity, decided to partner with Educate Africa Institute's Back-to-School campaign, aimed at supporting school pupils from deprived communities who find it difficult to go to school due to lack of school materials.

Two hundred pupils benefited from school items such as textbooks, school uniforms, notebooks, school bags, which were distributed to them, enabling them to

go back to school. The project, whose target was met, was implemented between November 17-19, 2021. Employees in the Group committed nine hours towards this project.

### 9. Enterprise Resource and Operations and IT Groups, Sierra Leone – Support for Vulnerable Women

For their EVS 2021 activity, the employees of Access Bank Sierra Leone's Enterprise Resource and Operations and IT Groups (FINCON, Human Resources, Corporate Communications, Conduct and Compliance, Credit Risk Management, E-Business, Internal Audit, IT, DOMOPS and Information Security) decided to partner with IYWGD to support 50 disabled (blind) women and girls with learning aid. The aid helped the women and girls to learn skills and stay in school. The Groups also distributed sanitary pads to promote menstrual hygiene.

In addition, the Groups embarked on 16 Days of Activism on violence against women and girls, an international campaign that takes place each year calling for the prevention and elimination of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). They also campaigned for the rights, dignity and welfare of women and girls with disability (WGD).

### 10. Operations and IT Group, Rwanda – Support for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC)

The Operations and IT Group, in December 2021, visited Inshuti z'abakene, a home for sick orphans and vulnerable children being raised by Catholic Sisters. The team raised funds and provided 11 goats and one cow to support the wellbeing of the children. This project benefited 37 individuals

### 11. Strategic Business Units (SBUs), Rwanda

The SBUs Group, in December 2021, visited a paediatric hospital in Kanombe and provided the babies in the neonatal unit with daily essentials like pampers, food, and milk, and paid the babies' outstanding hospital bills. 40 babies were beneficiaries of this project.

### 12. Enterprise Risk Group (ERG), Rwanda – Medical Insurance for Gasabo Community

The ERG raised funds to pay for the medical insurance of vulnerable members of the Gasabo District. 333 individuals were beneficiaries of this project.

## Women



### 1. Women in the Workplace, Access Women Network

The Access Women Network (AWN) was established to help female employees develop, advance, and stay at the bank. There has been a favourable trend in female representation in the bank since the signing of the Female Network Charter in 2010. Women made up 53% of the bank's staff in 2021, while 35% of the Board members were women. This is a clear sign that Access Bank is outperforming the industry average, which is less than 30%. According to the Nigerian Sustainable Banking Principles, the banking sector should work towards 40% female representation at top management and board levels.

The AWN encourages female representation/inclusion across all cadres of the bank. The network provides a support structure to all female employees, especially in achieving gender equality through policies such as the Human Rights Policy (which prohibits harassment), paternity leave, six months of maternity leave, as well as mentoring and leadership programmes.

## 2. Women in the Marketplace: The 'W' Initiative

Access Bank's unflinching commitment to women's empowerment is rooted in the understanding that gender equality is not only beneficial to women; but it would also positively shape the nation as a whole. It means both genders can have equal opportunities in access to financial independence, education, and personal development.

This conviction is what led to the introduction of our innovative women empowerment proposition, the 'W' Initiative, designed to inspire, connect, and empower women in Africa. For nearly a decade, the 'W' Initiative has connected millions of women to access a range of financial and lifestyle offerings, enabling them to build their businesses and careers, and provide for their family needs. The initiative is contributing to the growth of women's economic power in Nigeria, Ghana, Rwanda, Zambia, Gambia, Sierra Leone, Congo, Mozambique and, most recently, Kenya, South Africa, and Botswana. It is a one-stop centre for all Access Bank's women empowerment offerings.

During the year, over 15 million female customers had access to the innovative bundle of offerings of the 'W' Initiative. Under the gender-focused initiative, we expanded our debt-financing of women-owned enterprises (WOEs), reaching over N12 billion in loans and benefiting more than 4,000 WOEs. The total value of different types of loans given to women reached N25 billion and the number of beneficiaries were over 800,000 as of 2021.

The activities of the 'W' Community were spread across Africa through the web and social media platforms. Women around the world now have access to educational and informative articles on capacity building and networking events that have impacted the

total wellbeing of women in the 'W' Community.

Some of the flagship programmes, activities, and initiatives under the 'W' Initiative in 2021 were as follows:

- **International Women's Day Fireside chat**

In commemoration of women's month in March as well as the International Women's Day, which was on March 8, 2021, we organised a virtual fireside chat on March 11. This was an interactive virtual conference for female professionals, which featured seasoned panellists and keynote speakers from industries such as FMCG, finance, telecoms, manufacturing, etc., encouraging women to challenge the persistent biases against them. Over 1,200 participants attended the session from 35 countries across five continents.

- **Womenpreneur Pitch-a-ton Africa**

This programme was designed to provide female business owners access to grants and world-class business training opportunities. It has grown over the years and attained scale in 2021. We recorded 37,828 applications from nine African countries. The programme itself involved a business capacity building competition for 100 female entrepreneurs who participated in a Mini-MBA from the International Finance Corporation (IFC). The competition produced five grant winners, winning a total of N9.25 million. Consolation prizes such as free website creation and exclusive business publicity were given to other deserving finalists.

## 3. LSETF/W Initiative Grassroots Engagement

This initiative was developed in partnership between the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF), whose mandate is to create an enabling environment

for job and wealth creation in the state, and Access Bank. The aim was to sensitize women and raise awareness of the LSETF/W Initiative loan scheme. The campaign was held in four LGAs in Lagos, with a total of 425 women in attendance

#### 4. 'W' Health Campaign

'W' Initiative launched a women's health awareness campaign, focusing on breast and cervical cancer prevention. The aim was to educate Nigerian women on the twin public health problems. Free breast and cervical screenings and consultations were conducted for over 1,000 women across five LGA in Lagos, in partnership with Optimal Cancer Care Foundation.

A special screening session was conducted for the staff of Lagos Waste Management Authority (LAWMA), while discounted screening was made available to women every Friday in October.

#### 5. Cancer Walk

Further to the 'W' Health Campaign, 'W' Initiative embarked on a cancer walk in Abuja in partnership with Medicaid and Access Women's Network (AWN). A total of 10,456 women participated physically and virtually.

#### 6. Free Diabetes screening

This exercise increased public awareness on diabetes as a public health problem. It focused on identifying the symptoms, risk factors and management techniques, thereby driving intentional lifestyle changes.

We implemented the screenings with the support of the Chronic Care diabetes management centre team of experts, nurses, consultants, and dieticians. The exercise was held across six Access Bank locations and was open to staff and customers (both male

and female).

#### 7. Free eye screening

We partnered with a leading eye clinic to promote eye health at four locations in Lagos State. Six hundred women were beneficiaries of the screening sessions.

#### 8. 'W' Skills Acquisition Programme

The 'W' Initiative collaborated with some alumni of the Womenpreneur Pitch-a-ton programme and past beneficiaries of the 'W' Initiative's offerings to equip women with knowledge and skills in the circular economy. Specifically, the programme involved training sessions for women on recycling and juice-making, and how they could start their own businesses. Seventy women were trained within the first week.

#### 9. Women in the Community End Female Genital Mutilation Programme, Nigeria

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is the ritual of cutting or removing some or all of the external female genitalia. FGM violates human rights and poses a risk to the lives and health of women and girls. Nigeria accounts for 10% of global cases, with Osun State having the highest prevalence of circumcised women in the country (77%), closely followed by Ebonyi (74%) and Ekiti (72%) states.

In a bid to eradicate this harmful practice, Access Bank partnered with HACEY Health Initiative to raise awareness on the need to end FGM. The programme was held across Osun, Ebonyi, Ekiti and Oyo states.

About 1,240 individuals and families benefitted from the information and education on ending FGM in their communities. 1,068 students were beneficiaries of the campaign in schools across the states. The campaign in religious centres benefitted 240 people.



## 10. International Women's Day, Nigeria

Access Bank partnered Hacey Health Initiative to celebrate and empower women to realise the theme of the 2021 International Women's Day (IWD), which was "Women in leadership: Achieving an equal future in a COVID-19 world." The partnership led to the launch of a community health campaign focused on improving women's health and well-being. A total of 1,373 people benefitted from the campaign.

Furthermore, a webinar on vocational skills development for women was organised. The programme was implemented in Ogun, Ebonyi, Oyo, and Kwara states. Around 150 women were trained across the four states in vocational skills.

### Environmental Stewardship



A crucial part of our sustainability strategy is environmental sustainability both in our core and non-core business activities. This means that Access Bank, in recognition of our carbon footprint, is responsibly taking action to reduce the environmental impact of our operations. The bank's environmental management strategy is approved by the Board and is integrated into our business decisions. We ensure our activities are screened for any potentially negative impact on the environment and planet. We work in partnership with stakeholders to collectively reduce our carbon footprint. As part of our commitment to protecting the environment, we support various advocacies for environmental conservation.

We complied with environmental protection laws and standards across every jurisdiction where we operate in 2021. We curbed our greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions

by reducing our diesel consumption and supplementing our power supply with solar energy. We maintained and consolidated our efforts towards reducing water consumption, paper use and waste taken to landfill sites. The bank also included environmental impact assessments and audits of prospective projects in terms of their carbon intensity.

Environmental management and conservation are vital. We understand that we cannot do it alone. Hence, we collaborate with stakeholders on innovative initiatives that protect our biodiversity and enhance the lives of the communities where we operate. Additionally, we have adopted a three-pronged approach to environmental sustainability. We see ourselves as custodians of the environment, starting from our workplace, marketplace and all the way to the communities. Some of our initiatives across these areas are as follows:

#### A. Workplace Initiatives

*Our workplace environmental sustainability, tagged Go Green, is focused on reducing our carbon emissions across our operations. We encourage our employees to imbibe sustainable lifestyles both at work and in their personal lives. Some of our Go Green initiatives are as follows:*

##### 1. Alternative Energy

We seize the opportunity to harness energy from environmentally-friendly sources. Currently, 150 of our offsite locations/branches in Nigeria are powered by solar energy. We have 400 solar-powered ATMs nationwide. We use LED bulbs, motion-activated lights, and water-efficient taps in all our facilities. In addition, we have adopted standards that demand regular reporting, monitoring, and evaluation of electricity consumption across our branches.

## 2. Resource Efficiency

We have automated all our processes to improve efficiency and limit our consumption of finite resources. This is demonstrated through our 'No Paper Initiative', which demands the elimination of paper from some of our activities. Other resource efficiency activities include paper-saving tips; an automated payment system; and a system that significantly reduces the number of documents printed for board meetings.

## 2. Waste Management

We pioneered sustainable waste management in the Nigerian banking industry by recycling paper, plastic, glass, and aluminium cans. We currently recycle across 75 locations nationwide. In addition, we pioneered the Paper-to-Pencil initiative, under which we recycle and convert our old, branded paper materials to pencils. In 2021, the bank recycled a total of 4,065.22kg of cans, paper, and glass.

## 4. Water Efficiency

Water is a valuable resource, and we must treat it as such. It is also a finite resource. This requires us to be responsible custodians of clean water. Staff members are continuously engaged about the importance of conservatively using water for sanitary purposes. We took practical steps like installing water-efficient flush systems and sensor taps. Moreover, we comply with national and subnational regulations for disposing wastewater.

## B. Marketplace Initiatives

*Our marketplace environmental sustainability initiatives are designed to provide alternative solutions to the needs of customers, thereby reducing our carbon footprint and that of the customers in the process. Some of our green marketplace initiatives are as follows:*

### 1. Green Bonds

The issuance of the sovereign green bonds by the Federal Government of Nigeria created the opportunity and market for further issuance of green bonds in Nigeria and Africa. Subsequent to this, FMDQ OTC Securities Exchange, in partnership with Climate Bonds Initiative (CBI), and Financial Sector Deepening Africa (FSD Africa) launched a three-year Nigerian Green Bond Market Development Programme in 2018 aimed at supporting the development of guidelines and listing requirements for green bonds in Nigeria. This paved way for the development of the Nigerian non-sovereign green bond market and provided the impetus for Access Bank to pioneer corporate green bonds on the continent, launching the first CBI-certified corporate green bond in Africa in 2019, and raising N15 billion (US\$41 million). In 2021, we published our second edition of the Corporate Green Bonds Impact Report.

### 3. FINTRAK Credit 360

We have developed a customised credit portal – FINTRAK Credit 360 – to screen, review, and identify potential environmental and social (E&S) risks in the projects we finance.

## C. Community Initiatives

*Our community environmental sustainability initiatives are focused on empowering the people and businesses in the local communities where we operate, helping them build their climate resilience. We support various projects, organisations, and events focused on making positive impacts, while reducing their carbon footprint. Some of the environmental community initiatives include:*

### 1. Green Social Entrepreneurship Programme

Access Bank's partnership with SME Funds, a social enterprise based in Lagos, since 2018, has continued to grow stronger. In 2021, the partnership led to the provision of 238 entrepreneurs with clean cookstoves, a cost-effective technology for converting waste-based biomass to fuel, thereby driving sustainable change in low-income households that use firewood, which is harmful to health and the environment. The entrepreneurs were provided access to start-up capital to kick-start their clean cookstove businesses.

Since its inception, the programme has reported returns of over N15.7 million through the production and distribution of over 7,500 litres of bio-gel. Additionally, 598 households and about 2,100 beneficiaries have had access to low-cost cooking fuel and stoves, displacing 287 MtCO<sub>2</sub>.

### 2. Solar Skills Empowerment Programme

Access Bank partnered with Glow Initiative to train



young Nigerians in Anambra State to learn solar energy technology skills. This initiative aimed to produce solar panel designers, installation engineers, assembly assistants, and repair/maintenance professionals. Through this initiative, 576 young men and women were trained in solar PV design, marketing and sales, repair and installation, and solar PV entrepreneurship.

# Our Partnerships and Memberships

At Access Bank, we believe that to maximise our resources and effectively leverage our strengths, we have to collaborate within our industry and across industries with organisations who share our vision of making the world more equitable and prosperous.

Our partnerships offer us the opportunity to join several other leading organisations to facilitate change on a large scale and at the highest levels. Through these partnerships, Access Bank's role of driving sustainable change has been recognised. And together, we are creating a world of peace and prosperity, while taking action to mitigate climate change. Our memberships and partnerships are listed below.

## Sustainability Standards and Certification Initiative

In July 2018, Access Bank became the first African commercial bank to be nominated to undergo the SSCI certification process. In September 2020, the bank was certified under the programme, achieving the highest level of certification in the rigorous sustainability standards, and also becoming the first African commercial bank to be SSCI-certified. The certification requires the implementation of tasks

across eight modules that cut across the entire spheres of the institution and its activities. Implementation is documented and monitored on the Sustainability Standards Implementation and Management System (S-SIMS) online platform.

Apart from co-creating the standards, since its certification, Access Bank has continued to support financial institutions implementing SSCI by sharing its experience with the community. The bank participated in several SSCI Council Meetings. Based on the foregoing and its broad sustainability commitment, Access Bank was pre-qualified to participate in the EOSD Financing 4.0 Initiative. This initiative creates a platform for financial institutions, investors, savers, project developers/owners, and project sponsors to come together and connect towards the financing of technologically driven and innovative projects.



### United Nations Environmental Programme Finance Initiative (UNEP FI)

In 2021, Access Bank remained an active member of UNEP FI, participating in several initiatives and serving on two Working Groups, namely Reporting; Target-setting: Financial Inclusion (Access Bank serves as the sub-group Lead); and Gender Diversity and Biodiversity. Access Bank continues to contribute to the conversations on the next steps for the principles regarding reporting and target-setting.

We remain committed to the Principles of Responsible Banking, reporting and publicly communicating our progress.

### Alignment with the Principles for Responsible Banking (PRB)

The PRB, developed by UNEP FI, provides a framework for deepening sustainable finance. They reinforce our commitment to the Paris Climate Agreement and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The PRB informs our sustainability strategy, targets, governance mechanisms, and commitment to transparency. To communicate the progress achieved with respect to the PRB, we have adopted the UNEP FI-PRB self-assessment reporting template shown below. Assurance of our alignment with the principles is not currently available; however, our 2021 Sustainability Report is subject to limited assurance.

Reporting and Self-Assessment Requirements	High-level Summary of Bank's Response	Reference(s)/ Link(s) to Bank's Full Response/ Relevant Information
<p><b>Principle 1: Alignment</b></p> <p>We will align our business strategy to be consistent with and contribute to individuals' needs and society's goals, as expressed in the Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Climate Agreement, and relevant national and regional frameworks.</p>		
<p>1..1 Describe (high-level) your bank's business model, including the main customer segments served, types of products and services provided, the main sectors and types of activities, and where relevant the technologies financed across the main geographies in which your bank has operations or provides products and services.</p>	<p>Access Bank is a leading financial institution headquartered in Nigeria. We are the largest bank in Nigeria by total assets as well as largest in Africa by customer base with over 40 million unique customers across the network as of 31 December 2021.</p> <p>We are in all major commercial centres and cities across Nigeria. We operate seven subsidiaries within West Africa, East Africa, and the United Kingdom. The Bank also has representative offices in the People's Republic of China, Lebanon, United Arab Emirates, and India.</p> <p>The Bank is licensed to provide international banking services and is renowned for its comprehensive range of financial product offerings. The key business segments of the Bank are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate and Investment Banking</li> <li>• Commercial Banking</li> <li>• Business Banking</li> <li>• Personal Banking.</li> </ul> <p><b>The key customer segments include:</b></p> <p>Telecommunications, Beverages, Manufacturing, Construction, Oil &amp; Gas, Parastatals, High Networth Individuals, Middle Income Professionals, and financial inclusion customers. We are in business to help our growing customer base build a sustainable future by offering bespoke products and solutions delivered by a skilled workforce across the Group.</p>	<p>See note <sup>1</sup></p>
<p>1.2 Describe how your bank has aligned and/or is planning to align its strategy to be consistent with and contribute to society's goals, as expressed in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Paris Climate Agreement and relevant national and regional frameworks.</p>	<p>In 2019, Access Bank formalised its sustainability statement of purpose, "impacting lives positively now and in the future" and reflected this in its brand strategy 'More Than Banking' – more inclusion, more access to finance, more access to green products/services, more access to quality education, more access to quality healthcare and more access to safe water, amongst others.</p> <p>For more than a decade, we have aligned our strategy with society's goals, such as the SDGs, the Nigerian Sustainable Banking Principles (NSBPs), and the Paris Climate Agreement, amongst others, as we strive to act responsibly for all our stakeholders. This strategy is fully integrated with our business operations and practices, allowing us to maximize opportunities in technology, innovation, and employee engagement. It also helps us predict and mitigate risks in our operations and business performance.</p> <p>Our sustainability strategy is anchored on international principles, frameworks, and standards (UNGC Principles, Equator Principles, UNEP FI PRBs, UNPRIs, UN WEPs, amongst others) that support the design of best-in-class local policies that enable effective mainstreaming of sustainability in the Bank for strategic growth and long-term success. Access Bank's policies and frameworks help the Bank, its people, and processes to address critical issues such as supply chain management, human rights, environmental management, ethics, compliance, corruption, data security and privacy, diversity, and equality, amongst others.</p> <p>Inherent in the Bank's five-year strategy (2018 - 2022) is the sustainability transformation agenda, which rests on key levers to achieve an enlarged, efficient, and digitally-led tier-one financial institution.</p> <p>It is evident, among other areas, in the automation of all Bank processes; a deliberate strategy for increased agency banking to reach unbanked/underserved segments; and an enhanced and restructured Sustainability Champions Network (SCN).</p>	<p>See note <sup>1</sup></p>

## Principle 2: Impact and Target Setting

We will continuously increase our positive impacts while reducing the negative impacts and managing the risks to people and environment resulting from our activities, products, and services. To this end, we will set and publish targets where we can have the most significant impacts.

### 2.1 Impact Analysis

Show that your bank has identified the areas in which it has its most significant (potential) positive and negative impact through an impact analysis that fulfills the following elements:

- Scope:** The bank's core business areas, products/ services across the main geographies that the bank operates in, have been as described under 1.1. have been considered in the scope of the analysis.
- Scale of Exposure:** In identifying its areas of the most significant impact, the bank has considered where it is a core business/its major activities lie in terms of industries, technologies and geographies.
- c) Context & Relevance:** Your bank has taken into account the most relevant challenges and priorities related to sustainable development in the countries/regions in which it operates.
- d. Scale and intensity/salience of impact:**

In identifying its areas of most significant impact, the bank has considered the scale and intensity/ salience of the (potential) social, economic and environmental effects resulting from the bank's activities and provision of products and services. Your bank should have this analysis, the bank has:

- Identified and disclosed its areas of most significant (potential) positive and negative impact.
- Identified strategic business opportunities concerning the increase of positive effects/ reduction of negative impacts engaged with relevant stakeholders to help inform your analysis under elements c) and d).
- Show that building on this analysis, the bank has identified and disclosed its areas of most significant (potential) positive and negative impact.
- Identified strategic business opportunities concerning the increase of positive effects/ reduction of negative impacts

The Bank's impact analysis exercise is ongoing. The outcome of this process will show our most significant areas of influence and guide our target-setting decisions. The scope of analysis in Nigeria, which currently represents the bulk of our operations in retail, business, commercial, as well as corporate and investment banking through a range of products and services. This will be followed by subsidiaries in Africa subsequently. We are leveraging the tool provided by the UNEP FI (PRB) Portfolio Impact Assessment tool) to assist us with a broader understanding of our key impact areas.

We will integrate the outcome of the impact analysis into the strategy of the business along with the existing material topics.

In line with our Group strategy and Sustainability Policy, we analyse the significant positive and negative impacts of our business, including assessing the material issues for our stakeholders.

As part of this, we considered our business model and the scale of our products and services, as well as our impact on the Sustainable Development Goals. One of our most significant impacts is through our lending and financing activities as a bank.

We recognise that our operating environments are notably susceptible to climate change. Therefore, we are consciously making necessary efforts to understand our climate-related risks and opportunities across the Group. We aim to drive sustainable and inclusive growth aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Climate Agreement's goals by offering products and services relevant to society's needs.

Based on these considerations, our priority focus areas include environmental and social impact of our lending activities, including climate change and inclusion (economic, social, and otherwise).

See note <sup>2</sup>

### 2.2 Target Setting

Show that the bank has set and published a minimum of two Specific, Measurable (can be qualitative or quantitative), Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound (SMART) targets, which address at least two of the identified "areas of most significant impact," resulting from the bank's activities and provision of products and services.

Show that these targets are linked to negative impacts of the set targets on other dimensions of the SDG/ climate change/society's goals and that it has set out relevant actions to mitigate those as far as feasible to maximize the net positive impact of the set targets.

We are engaging internally on the targets because of the outcomes of the impact analysis exercise which will help us identify our areas of most significant impact and set targets and metrics accordingly.

The structure of our sustainability governance ensures and reinforces ownership and commitment to the metrics and targets from those that are closest to the relevant business activities/ areas of impact to provide a realistic and strategic approach.

See note <sup>2</sup>

<p><b>2.3.Plans for Target Implementation and Monitoring</b></p> <p>Show that your bank has defined actions and milestones to meet the set targets.</p> <p>Show that your bank has put in place the means to measure and monitor progress against the set targets. Definitions of key performance indicators, any changes in these definitions, and any rebasing of baselines should be transparent</p>	<p>After completing the impact analysis and target definition, a detailed action plan will be created.</p>	
<p><b>2.4 Progress on Implementing Targets</b></p> <p><b>For each target separately:</b>                  Show that your bank has implemented the actions it had previously defined to meet the set target. Or explain why actions could not be implemented/ needed to be changed and how your bank is adapting its plan to meet its set target.</p> <p>Report on your bank’s progress over the last 12 months (up to 18 months in your first reporting after becoming a signatory) towards achieving each of the set targets and the impact your progress resulted in. (where feasible and appropriate, banks should include quantitative disclosures)</p>	<p>In 2021, Access Bank participated in the PRB target-setting working groups to ensure we align with best practices and draw lessons from peer learning.</p>	

**Principle 3: Clients and Customers**

We will work responsibly with our clients and our customers to encourage sustainable practices and enable economic activities that create shared prosperity for current and future generations.

<p><b>3.1 Provide an overview of the policies and practices your bank has in place or is planning to put in place to promote responsibly its relationships with its customers. This should include high-level information on any programs and actions implemented (or planned), their scale and, where possible, the results thereof.</b></p>	<p>Access Bank has various policies and practices to promote responsible relationships with our customers. The Bank has several policy documents available on the website, thus making them applicable to all our primary stakeholders and business partners, particularly our staff, customers, and third-party partners.</p> <p>Additionally, our employees are well-positioned to assess issues related to ethics and conduct in relation to new and existing borrowing client relationships. Our ESRM and Sustainability Policies outline Access Bank’s overall approach and parameters for the provision of responsible financing.</p> <p>The policies inform the Bank’s approach to the management of environmental and social concerns, as well as the risks inherent in Access Bank’s business processes and operations.</p> <p>Access Bank ensures that adequate resources, both financial and human, are made available within the bank to partner with our clients/consultants /NGOs and other stakeholders to develop and implement sustainable finance and E&amp;S solutions.</p> <p>The issuance of the Bank’s first Climate Bonds Initiative (CBI) certified corporate green bond in Africa in 2019 is evidence of the Bank’s unwavering commitment to sustainability. The first impact report of the Green Bond was published in 2020.</p>	<p>See note <sup>3&amp;4</sup></p>
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<sup>3</sup>Investor Relations Section - <https://www.accessbankplc.com/pages/Investor-Relations.aspx>

<sup>4</sup>Annual Report 2021 - <https://www.accessbankplc.com/AccessBankGroup/media/Investors/Annual-Reports/2021-Annual-Report-Full.pdf>



<p>3.2 Describe how your bank has worked with or is planning to work with its clients and customers to encourage sustainable practices and enable sustainable economic activities. This should include information on actions planned/implemented, products and services developed, and, where possible, the impacts achieved.</p>	<p>Access Bank has also attracted increased international and domestic investment partnerships with Development Financial Institutions for ESG-targeted lending. Our subsidiaries have also benefited from these partnerships.</p> <p>With the increasing awareness around financed fossil fuel emissions and the potential impact of climate change within our portfolio; we have made strides towards understanding these likely exposures, their implications and any mitigating measures which the Bank can incorporate.</p> <p>Recognising these challenges has also led the Bank to become a core participating member of internationally recognised climate groups, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UNEP FI's Taskforce on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) as a member of the Working Group since 2019.</li> <li>• Partnership for Carbon Accounting Financials (PCAF) as a member of the Steering Group in June 2020.</li> <li>• Also, the Bank leverages its platform to drive responsible business practices and collaborative interventions such as the Coalition Against COVID-19 (CACOVID) in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic in Nigeria.</li> </ul>	<p>See note <sup>5,6</sup></p>
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#### Principle 4: Stakeholders

We will proactively and responsibly consult, engage, and partner with relevant stakeholders to achieve society's goals.

<p>4.1 Describe which stakeholders (or groups/types of stakeholders) your bank has consulted, engaged, collaborated or partnered with to implement these Principles and improving your bank's impacts.</p> <p>This should include a high-level overview of how your bank has identified relevant stakeholders and what issues were addressed/results achieved.</p>	<p>A key focus of our Sustainability Strategy is continuous and consistent engagement with employees, customers, suppliers, shareholders, investors, regulators, communities, civil society organisations, private sector organizations and government, to ensure that our approach aligns with stakeholders' expectations.</p> <p>Additionally, we are actively involved in several multi-stakeholder initiatives, partnering with relevant stakeholders for the Bank's priorities in line with the PRBs. These include our membership of the UNGC Local Network Board, UN Women Empowerment Principles Leadership Group, amongst others.</p>	<p>See note <sup>7</sup></p>
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<sup>5</sup>Annual Report 2021 - <https://www.accessbankplc.com/AccessBankGroup/media/Investors/Annual-Reports/2021-Annual-Report-Full.pdf>

<sup>6</sup>Access Bank Green Bond Impact Report 2021 - <https://www.accessbankplc.com/AccessBankGroup/media/Documents/Sustainable%20Reports/GREEN-BOND-ANNUAL-IMPACT-REPORT.pdf>

<sup>7</sup>Stakeholder Engagement – 2021 Sustainability Report



## Principle 5: Governance & Culture

We will implement our commitment to these Principles through effective governance and a culture of responsible banking

<p>5.1 Describe the relevant governance structures, policies, and procedures your the bank has in place/is planning to put in place to manage significant positive and negative (potential) impacts and support effective implementation of the Principles.</p>	<p>Access Bank’s highest decision-making body is its Board of Directors, which makes the ultimate decisions concerning the Group, and exercises oversight of executive management’s efforts.</p> <p>The Board Human Resources and Sustainability Committee currently provides oversight over the Bank’s sustainability strategy and activities being carried out by the Sustainability Team for employees, communities, customers, and other stakeholders.</p> <p><b>The Board’s Enterprise Risk Management</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The committee (ERMC) oversees the activities of the ESRM Team regarding borrowing customers, DFIs, investors, etc.</li> <li>• The relevant teams report directly to executive management, who bear the responsibility of ensuring the Bank remains committed to ethical and sustainable practices in line with the Bank’s values and commitments (such as the PRBs).</li> <li>• Various other groups and committees drive the efforts toward attaining the Bank’s sustainability strategy. These include Green Bonds Committee, Green Products Committee, Enterprise Resource Groups, amongst others.</li> </ul>	<p>See note <sup>8</sup></p>
<p>5.2 Describe the initiatives and measures your bank has implemented or is planning to implement to foster a culture of responsible banking among its employees. This should include a high-level overview of capacity building, inclusion in remuneration structures and performance management and leadership communication, amongst others.</p>	<p>Capacity Building: Leveraging local/international partnerships, sustainability capacity building sessions are conducted for stakeholders, both internal and external. The sustainability-focused training includes inductions for new and experienced hires, sustainability champions network, E&amp;S risk management, Sustainable waste management, Impact Assessment, etc.</p> <p>Culture and Structure: Sustainability is embedded in the Bank’s DNA, incorporating environmental, social, and governance considerations into business decision-making processes. This starts at the top with Board oversight and cascades down to every employee as sustainability is embedded in the KPIs of all staff.</p> <p>PRB working groups – Access Bank served on various PRB working groups, including Reporting and Target-Setting (Financial Inclusion (as co-Chair)</p>	<p>See note <sup>9</sup></p>
<p>5.3 Governance Structure for Implementation of the Principles. Show that your bank has a governance structure in place for the implementation of the PRB, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>target-setting and actions to achieve targets set</li> <li>remedial action in the event of targets or milestones not being achieved or unexpected negative impacts being detected.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Board Human Resources and Sustainability Committee approved the Group’s decision to become a founding signatory to PRBs in 2019.</li> <li>• This Committee provides oversight for PRB implementation.</li> <li>• Progress reports on PRB implementation are submitted to and reviewed by the Committee quarterly.</li> </ul>	<p>See note <sup>9</sup></p>

<sup>8</sup> Ethics, Integrity and Corporate Governance – 2021 Sustainability Report

<sup>9</sup> Annual Report 2021 - <https://www.accessbankplc.com/AccessBankGroup/media/Investors/Annual-Reports/2021-Annual-Report-Full.pdf>

## Principle 6: Transparency & Accountability

We will periodically review our individual and collective implementation of these Principles and be transparent about and accountable for our positive and negative impacts and our contribution to society's goals.

### 6.1 Progress in Implementing the Principles for Responsible Banking

Show that your bank has progressed in implementing the six Principles over the last 12 months (up to 18 months in your first reporting after becoming a signatory) in addition to the setting and implementation of targets in a minimum of two areas (see 2.1-2.4).

Show that your bank has considered existing and emerging international/regional good practices relevant to the implementation of the six Principles for Responsible Banking. Based on this, it has defined priorities and ambitions to align with good technique.

Show that your bank has implemented/is working on implementing changes in existing practices to reflect and be in line with existing and emerging international/regional good practices and has made progress on its implementation of these Principles.

Our progress in implementing the principles is detailed in the sections above and will be reported annually, going forward. Our Reporting suite, including the 2021 Annual Report, gives a comprehensive overview of targets, measures, and impact, which cover a wide range of purpose and sustainability topics, including our strategic focus areas.

Set out below are specific examples of where we have considered existing and emerging international best practices in our activities:

- Access Bank disclosures to the UNGC, UNEP FI, UNPRI, EP, NSBP, amongst others.
- As part of our ongoing commitment to tackling climate change, we have joined the Partnership for Carbon Accounting (PCAF) and TCFD.

See note <sup>10, 11 & 12</sup>

<sup>10</sup>Annual Report 2021 - <https://www.accessbankplc.com/AccessBankGroup/media/Investors/Annual-Reports/2021-Annual-Report-Full.pdf>

<sup>11</sup>Investor Relations" section - <https://www.accessbankplc.com/pages/Investor-Relations.aspx>

<sup>12</sup>Progress on the Principles - 2021 Sustainability Report



“

**In the 21st century, I think the heroes will be the people who will improve the quality of life, fight poverty and introduce more sustainability.**

Bertrand Piccard

”

## Access Bank's Application of International Frameworks

# United Nations Principles for Responsible Investment (UNPRI)

At the core of Access Bank's subscription to the UNPRI is the desire to incorporate environmental, social, and good governance (ESG) considerations in all our investment decisions.

In 2021, we demonstrated this commitment through the ESG criteria included in our investment and financing activities.



# Global Reporting Initiative (GRI)

In 2021, Access Bank continued as a member of the GRI GOLD Community, reaffirming our commitment to shaping the future of sustainability and reporting, whilst empowering decision-making towards a more sustainable economy and future.

We continued to uphold the GRI mandate by publishing our comprehensive sustainability report based on the GRI Standards. Our status as an organisational stakeholder to GRI was maintained in 2021.



**Our status as an organisational stakeholder to GRI was maintained in 2021.**

# Equator Principles (EP)

Access Bank reviews all prospective project finance transactions for environmental and social risks in line with the Equator Principles (EP) as well as the IFC Performance Standards.

Our application of EP has ensured greater consistency in integrating environmental and social risk management within our project finance. We also submitted a report to the Equator Principles in 2021 in furtherance of our commitment to sustainable project finance.



# WEConnect International

WEConnect International is a global non-profit organisation committed to sustainable development through women's economic empowerment. It is a coalition of corporate members from over 70 countries.

WEConnect makes an impact by encouraging, increasing, and promoting opportunities for women-owned businesses. Through Access Bank's strategic partnership with WEConnect, we continuously leverage its network, partnerships, and collaborations with reputable international organisations to promote women's entrepreneurship across Africa.



## World Economic Forum (WEF)

The World Economic Forum (WEF) is an international organization for public-private cooperation. The forum engages the foremost political, business, and other leaders of society to shape global, regional and industry agendas.

Access Bank, as a member of the World Economic Forum, contributes to the goals of the forum, thereby leveraging the platform for the world's leading companies and global leaders to shape a better future. In 2021, Access Bank contributed to WEF's projects and initiatives – online and offline – to address industry, regional, and systemic issues.



## Nigerian Sustainable Banking Principles (NSBP) Steering Committee

The NSBP Steering Committee coordinates industry collaboration towards the successful implementation of sustainable banking principles in Nigeria. Access Bank's role as the Chair and Interim Secretariat of the NSBP Steering Committee and Sustainability Champions Committee continued throughout 2021.

We showed our support for new and existing sustainability champions across the banking industry, organizing educative seminars and training that addressed major challenges in the sustainability field. This further helped in driving sustainability across the financial services sector in Nigeria.



# Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF)

NCF is dedicated to nature conservation and sustainable development.

The organisation leads in promoting sustainable development through environmental conservation and natural resource management. Access Bank remained a member of the foundation in 2021. We continued our investments in biodiversity conservation through NCF.



# Nigeria Business Coalition Against AIDS (NiBUCAA)

Access Bank remains a co-Chair of NiBUCAA, providing support for organisational programmes, and hosting and facilitating stakeholder engagements.

Through the course of the year, Access Bank supported NiBUCAA in commemorating notable days, such as World AIDS Day, bringing together key stakeholders to advocate for equal treatment and opportunity as well as inclusion on matters of health and other services for citizens. The Bank continues to work with NiBUCAA, supporting key initiatives, showing support to people living with the virus, advocating zero discrimination against People Living with HIV (PLHIV), and pushing for multi-faceted efforts to eradicate HIV/AIDS.



# GBCHealth

In 2021, Access Bank supported the efforts of GBCHealth in addressing global health issues. We actively participated in providing platforms to build knowledge and multi-stakeholder collaboration.

We also took part in creating tools to support companies' ability to improve health and wellness in the workplace, in communities, and at the national, regional, and global levels.





# Corporate Alliance on Malaria in Africa (CAMA)

Access Bank serves as a co-Chair of CAMA, leading and supporting strategic efforts of the alliance to eradicate malaria in Nigeria.



We participated in the half-year members' meeting and hosted the end-of-year members' meeting to review the activities of the year and strategize on the targets for 2022.

**GBCHealth**

# Progress on the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC)

In 2009, Access Bank committed to the UNGC by becoming a signatory to the global platform of the UN.

The UNGC helps to ensure that its 17,000 signatories uphold their basic responsibilities to people and the planet, and they can leverage the platform to achieve their long-term success.



**United Nations**  
Global Compact

# Access Bank and Labour Practices & Human Rights

Since becoming a signatory to the UNGC, Access Bank has conducted its business following the UN body's principles.

Our sustainability team collaborates with various representatives of other strategic business units to examine the implementation of these principles across all units, especially our strategic business units liaising with vendors/suppliers. This enables our sustainability culture to influence and engender sustainable practices in our supply chain, thereby reducing the risk of our suppliers and vendors being involved in environmentally unsustainable and socially irresponsible practices.

Inclusivity is also incorporated in our recruitment policy, and with this, we have been able to foster creativity and resourcefulness among our employees and, at the same time, ensure that everyone's right to be hired, irrespective of gender, age, race, and religion, country of origin, disability, and sexual orientation, is upheld.

# Access Bank and the Environment

We have made efforts to combat climate change by curbing our greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Our efforts include reducing our diesel consumption and supplementing our power supply with solar power across various business locations. We have also consolidated efforts to reduce our water consumption, our paper use, and our waste taken to landfill sites.

We have kept our business travels to a minimum by embracing the use of available technology to hold meetings that would otherwise require participants' physical presence. The bank has several initiatives that ensure that our clients and suppliers contribute to a low-carbon economy. To guarantee compliance by our clients and suppliers, we have included environmental impact assessments and audits of prospective projects in a bid to reduce our carbon footprint.

# Access Bank and Anti-Corruption

Our Anti-Bribery & Corruption (ABC) Policy includes the rules of conduct that every employee of Access Bank must follow.

Quarterly training sessions are facilitated, and various communication is sent to employees to emphasise our commitment to the global fight against corruption. In 2018, we invested in an anti-corruption tool developed by a third party. The tool aids us in assessing anti-corruption risk and showing areas that should be improved. To aid continuous improvement of the ABC program, we have also invested in an anti-bribery and corruption risk management process which includes the training of business units on ABC and assessment of ABC risks.

# Access Bank and the UNGC Local Network

To further reiterate our commitment to environmental stewardship and responsibility, Access Bank continued to serve on the new Board of the UNGC Local Network as a Board Member.

The Bank contributed to the efforts of the Local Network to evaluate its existing programmes and address general concerns about the new mandate from the Global Compact as it relates to Nigeria.

## Progress on the United Nations Women's Empowerment Principles (UN-WEPs)

As a corporate entity, Access Bank has consistently prioritised respect for women and continuously empowered them with all they need to succeed in every area. Women are a huge part of our market, and women's empowerment is integral to global sustainability. We strongly believe in the power of women in building an inclusive economy.

Over the years, we have empowered women across our communities and contributed to creating a prosperous economy with a significant investment in empowering women in our workplace, marketplace, and communities.



S/NO	Principles	Initiatives by Access Bank
1.	<b>Establish high-level corporate leadership for gender equality.</b>	<p>Access Bank maintains a high-level corporate leadership on gender equality matters. Leading by example, our Group Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer, Herbert Wigwe, serves as the Bank's lead champion on women empowerment initiatives. Meanwhile, Bolaji Agbaje, Head, Group Human Resources, and Omobolanle Victor-Laniyan, Head of Sustainability, continue to actively represent the Bank on the international Leadership Group of the UN Women's Empowerment Principles. As a Bank, we also take to heart leadership in collaborative partnerships with other financial sector players committed to women empowerment. In addition, we serve on the Banker's Committee's Sub-committee on Women Economic Empowerment in Nigeria.</p>
2.	<b>Treat all women and men fairly at work – respect and support human rights and non-discrimination.</b>	<p>Our programmes and benefits packages are equally available to both men and women. The Bank makes equal remuneration to both men and women who work at the same level. We also promote continued support, employment, and non-discrimination of women during cases of pregnancy and after childbirth. This includes, amongst others, the provisions we make for maternity leave and more flexible post-childbirth work options. This has put our Bank's post-parental leave retention rates at about 100%.</p> <p>At Access Bank, we do not discriminate against either men or women; as a Bank, we are opposed to gender-based harassment. Our whistle-blowing line remains open to complaints and grievances around gender-based discrimination (whether against men or women). This whistle-blowing mechanism also significantly helps to deter gender-based abuse in our workplaces.</p>
3.	<b>Ensure the health, safety, and well-being of all female and male workers</b>	<p>Our Bank has a strong commitment to health and safety. We remain committed to promoting the well-being of all our staff, including female and male employees. Our internal health and safety programmes and health maintenance schemes help to ensure that our employees are always in good physical and mental condition.</p> <p>Since 2013 and throughout 2021, the Access Recreation Centre (ARC), unrivalled in the industry, has provided our workers with an avenue for boosting their work-life balance. The ARC, which consists of a gymnasium, meal rooms, and various relaxation spots, helps to boost wellness and healthy living among Access Bank's employees.</p>
4.	<b>Promote education, training, and professional development for women.</b>	<p>Access Bank has an undying commitment to our workers' development, training, and capacity building. We have professional development packages at the disposal of all our workers without discrimination. In addition, the Access Women Network and the "W" Initiative were launched to act as a catalyst in the personal and professional development of our women employees through mentoring and grooming.</p> <p>We recognise that women have an essential role in financing the future of a more robust and bigger African economy. We are committed to helping our women be a part of this future.</p>

5.	<p><b>Implement enterprise development, supply chain, and marketing practices that empower women.</b></p>	<p>Owing to our zero-tolerance for discrimination in professional development, the proportion of the Bank's female workers in top management and on the Bank's board has been rising in the past few years. 35% of our Board members are females, having increased from 12% in 2012; and about 53% of our employees are females, from 39% in 2012.</p> <p>Access Bank also promotes initiatives to empower women through our supply chain activities and marketing practices. For example, in 2014, and as a part of the "W" Initiative, we began deliberate support of the growth of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) owned by women.</p> <p>We remain committed to encouraging the financial inclusion of female entrepreneurs through the provision of value-adding and empowering initiatives and financial products targeted at women in business.</p>
6.	<p><b>Promote equality through community initiatives and advocacy.</b></p>	<p>Access Bank's commitment to women's empowerment is also evident in our community investment initiatives. In 2014, we partnered with WeConnect International, a global non-profit working towards the worldwide empowerment of women, to organise a Global Certification Capacity Development Workshop for upcoming women entrepreneurs in communities around us. In addition, Access Bank makes every effort to prevent the discrimination and exclusion of girls and women in communities where we donate our time and resources through charitable causes and employee volunteering.</p>
7.	<p><b>Measure and publicly report on progress to achieving gender equality.</b></p>	<p>Access Bank regularly reports to our stakeholders and public members on all our sustainable development initiatives, including our communication of progress towards achieving gender equality and women's economic empowerment through our periodic reports. We do this primarily through our annual Sustainability reports, such as this one. Ongoing launch of new initiatives is also usually reported through other channels such as our Bank's quarterly Customer Digests.</p>

# Progress on Equator Principles

Access Bank became a signatory to the Equator Principles (EP) in 2009. The bank reviews all prospective project finance transactions for environmental and social risks in line with the principles as well as the IFC Performance Standards. Our application of the Equator Principles has ensured greater consistency in environmental and social risk management within our project finance business.

In line with the bank's adoption of the EP and being a member of the Equator Principles Financial Institution, projects are regularly reported in our Equator Principles report. Our 2021 Equator Principles report is as follows:

Total Number Of Projects: 1	Projects Financed		
Category	A	B	C
Total		1	
<b>Sector</b>			
Mining			
Infrastructure			
Oil & Gas			
Power			
Others		1	
Sub Total		1	
<b>Region</b>			
America			
Europe, Middle East & Africa		1	
Asia Pacific			
Sub Total		1	
<b>Country Designation</b>			
Designated Country			
Non-Designated Country		1	
Sub Total		1	
<b>Independent Review</b>			
Yes			
No		1	
Sub Total		1	

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Material Topics	International And National Standards					
	GRI	SDG	UNGC	NSBP	NSE	UN-WEPS
Economic Presence	█	█				
Community Investments	█	█			█	█
Employee Welfare	█	█	█		█	█
Market Presence	█					
Procurement Practices	█	█	█			
Women Empowerment	█	█		█		
Training and Education	█	█		█		█
Anti-Corruption	█	█	█			
Financial Inclusion		█		█	█	
Diversity and Equal Opportunity	█	█				█
Customer Data Privacy	█					
Emissions	█	█	█	█	█	
Human Rights	█	█	█	█	█	█
Employee Volunteering		█				



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# Awards and Recognition

Award	Organisation	Description
Best CSR Bank, Nigeria	Finance Derivative Awards	In appreciation of the bank's strong dedication to integrating sustainability into its core business strategy, resulting in innovative products and services, positive social impact, and strong financial performance.
Sustainable Bank of the Year, Africa	International Investor Awards	In recognition of the bank's unwavering commitment to sustainable practices and superior initiatives towards creating a sustainable and prosperous future.
Most Sustainable Bank, Nigeria	World Finance Awards	In recognition of the bank's unwavering commitment to embedding sustainability, thereby providing innovative financial solutions and creating stakeholder value.
Best CSR Bank, Nigeria	Global Brands Magazine Awards	In appreciation of the bank's strong dedication to integrating sustainability into its core business strategy, resulting in innovative solutions, positive social and economic impact, and sound decision-making.
Sustainable Bank of the Year, Africa	PAN Finance Awards	This award was presented to the bank for its unwavering commitment to embedding sustainability into its core business strategy and DNA, helping to address issues across its business, marketplace. and communities, thereby attracting ESG investors and improving its public image.
Outstanding Leadership in Sustainability Transparency, Africa	Global Finance Sustainable Finance Award	This award was presented in appreciation of the bank's leadership in sustainability and transparency across the continent.

<b>Outstanding Leadership in Green Loans, Africa</b>	Global Finance Sustainable Finance Award	This award recognises the bank as a leader in financing green initiatives and promoting SME growth.
<b>Most Sustainable Green Bank, Nigeria</b>	World Economic Magazine Awards	Conferred in appreciation of the bank's strong dedication to integrating sustainability into its core business strategy, resulting in innovative solutions and sound decision-making.
<b>Most Outstanding Female-Friendly Bank of the Year</b>	Women in Marketing & Communications Conference/Awards (WIMCA)	This award was presented to the bank in recognition of its commitment to empowering women through its products, services, policies, and practices.
<b>Best Bank Nigeria; Best Private Bank Nigeria; and Pan-African Sustainability Award</b>	EMEA Finance African Banking Awards	In recognition of the bank's excellence in incorporating economic, social, and environmental aspects in its corporate strategy and business processes.
<b>Outstanding Business Sustainability Achievement</b>	Karlsruhe Sustainable Finance Awards	In recognition of Access Bank's success in incorporating economic, social, and environmental considerations in its corporate strategy and business processes, leading to positive social and economic impact.
<b>Sustainability Team of the Year (Financial Services)</b>	Brandcom Awards	In recognition of the bank's sustainability initiatives.
<b>Best Brand In Sustainability</b>	Brandcom Awards	In recognition of the bank's unwavering commitment to embedding sustainability into its core business strategy and DNA, helping to address issues across its business, marketplace, and communities.
<b>Best Bank in Empowerment of Youth Through Job Creation in the Creative Sector Across Africa</b>	In-Short Awards	In recognition of the bank's leadership in creating products and services that target and economically empower the youth.
<b>Excellence in Corporate Communications (Team) (Private Sector)</b>	LaPRIGA Awards	In recognition of the bank's commitment to transparency, accountability, and probity.
<b>Ranked Financial Sector Leader in Sustainability</b>	CSR-in-Action's Corporate Sustainable Investor Report	In recognition of the bank as a leader in sustainability across the financial sector.

# Appendix

## GRI Index

Access Bank has reported the information cited in this GRI content index from January 1 to December 31, 2021, concerning the GRI Standards.

S/N	GRI Index	GRI Index	Page
<b>1</b>	<b>The organisation and its reporting practices</b>		
	Organisational details	GRI 102-1	
	Entities included in the organisation's sustainability reporting	GRI 102-2	
	Reporting period, frequency, and contact point	GRI 102-3	
	Restatements of information	GRI 102-4	
	External assurance	GRI 102-5	
<b>2</b>	<b>Activities and workers</b>		
	Activities, value chain, and other business relationships	GRI 102-6	
	Employees	GRI 102-7	
	Workers who are not employees	GRI 102-8	
<b>3</b>	<b>Governance</b>		
	Governances Structure and composition	GRI 102-9	
	Nomination & selection of the highest governance body	GRI 102-10	
	Chair of the highest governance body	GRI 102-11	
	Role of the highest governance body in overseeing the management of impacts	GRI 102-12	
	Delegation of responsibility for managing impacts	GRI 102-13	
	Role of the highest governance body in sustainability reporting	GRI 102-14	
	Conflicts of Interest	GRI 102-15	
	Communication of Critical Concerns	GRI 102-16	
	The collective knowledge of the highest governance body	GRI 102-17	
	Evaluation of the performance of the highest governance body	GRI 102-18	
	Remuneration Policies	GRI 102-19	
	The process of determining remuneration	GRI 102-20	
	Annual total compensation ratio	GRI 102-21	
<b>4</b>	<b>Strategy, policies, and practices</b>		
	Statement on sustainable development strategy	GRI 102-22	
	Policy commitments	GRI 102-23	
	Embedding policy commitments	GRI 102-24	
	Processes to remediate negative impacts	GRI 102-25	
	Mechanisms for seeking advice and raising concerns	GRI 102-26	
	Compliance with laws and regulations	GRI 102-27	
	Membership associations	GRI 102-28	
<b>5</b>	<b>Stakeholders Engagement</b>		
	Approach to stakeholder's engagement	GRI 102-29	
	Collective bargaining agreements	GRI 102-30	

<b>6</b>	<b>Economic Performance Indicators</b>		
<b>a</b>	<b>Economic Performance</b>		
	Direct economic value generated and distributed	GRI 201-1	
	Financial implications and other risks and opportunities due to climate change	GRI 201-2	
	Defined benefit plan obligations and other retirement plans	GRI 201-3	
	Financial assistance received from government	GRI 201-4	
<b>b</b>	<b>Market Presence</b>		
	Ratios of standard entry-level wage by gender compared to local minimum wage	GRI 202-1	
	The proportion of senior management hired from the local community	GRI 202-2	
<b>c</b>	<b>Indirect Economic Impacts</b>		
	Infrastructure investments and service supported	GRI 203-1	
	Significant indirect economic impacts	GRI 203-2	
<b>d</b>	<b>Procurement Practices</b>		
	The proportion of spending on local suppliers	GRI 204-1	
<b>e</b>	<b>Anti-Corruption</b>		
	Operations assessed for risks related to corruption	GRI 205-1	
	Communication and training about anti-corruption policies and procedures	GRI 205-2	
	Confirmed incidents of corruption and actions taken	GRI 205-3	
<b>f</b>	<b>Anti-competitive Behaviour</b>		
	Legal actions for anti-competitive behaviour, anti-trust, and monopoly practices	GRI 206-1	
<b>g</b>	<b>Tax</b>		
	Approach to Tax	GRI 207-1	
	Tax governance, control, and risk management	GRI 207-2	
	Stakeholder engagement and management of concerns related to tax	GRI 207-3	
	Country-by-country reporting	GRI 207-4	
<b>7</b>	<b>Environmental Performance Indicators</b>		
<b>a</b>	<b>Materials</b>		
	Materials used by weight or volume	GRI 301-1	
	Recycled input materials used	GRI 301-2	
	Reclaimed products and their packaging materials	GRI 301-3	
<b>b</b>	<b>Energy</b>		
	Energy consumption within the organisation	GRI 302-1	
	Energy consumption outside of the organisation	GRI 302-2	
	Energy intensity	GRI 302-3	
	Reduction of energy consumption	GRI 302-4	
	Reductions in energy requirements of products and services	GRI 302-5	
<b>c</b>	<b>Water and Effluents</b>		
	Interactions with water as a shared resource	GRI 303-1	
	Management of water discharge-related impacts	GRI 303-2	
	Water withdrawal	GRI 303-3	
	Water discharge	GRI 303-4	
	Water consumption	GRI 303-5	
<b>d</b>	<b>Biodiversity</b>		
	Operational sites owned, leased, managed in, or adjacent to, protected areas and areas of high biodiversity value outside protected areas	GRI 304-1	
	Significant impacts of activities, products, and services on biodiversity	GRI 304-2	
	Habitats protected or restored	GRI 304-3	

	IUCN Red List species and national conservation list species with habitats in areas affected by operations	GRI 304-4	
<b>e</b>	<b>Emissions</b>		
	Direct GHG emissions	GRI 305-1	
	Energy indirect GHG emissions	GRI 305-2	
	Other indirect GHG emissions	GRI 305-3	
	GHG emissions intensity	GRI 305-4	
	Reduction of GHG emissions	GRI 305-5	
	Emissions of Ozone-depleting substances(ODS)	GRI 305-6	
	Nitrogen oxides (NOX), sulfur oxides (SOX), and other significant air emissions	GRI 305-7	
<b>e</b>	<b>Waste</b>		
	Waste generation and significant waste-related impacts	GRI 306-1	
	Management of significant waste-related impacts	GRI 306-2	
	Waste generated	GRI 306-3	
	Waste diverted from disposal	GRI 306-4	
	Waste directed to a disposal	GRI 306-5	
<b>f</b>	<b>Environmental Compliance</b>		
	Non-compliance with environmental laws and regulations	GRI 307-1	
<b>e</b>	<b>Suppliers Environmental Assessment</b>		
	New suppliers that were screened using environmental criteria	GRI 308-1	
	Negative environmental impacts in the supply chain and actions taken	GRI 308-2	
<b>8</b>	<b>Social Performance Indicators</b>		
<b>a</b>	<b>Employment</b>		
	New employee hires and employee turnover	GRI 401-1	
	The benefits provided to a full-time employee that is not provided to temporary or part-time employees	GRI 401-2	
	Parental leave	GRI 401-3	
<b>b</b>	<b>Labour/Management Relations</b>		
	Minimum notice periods regarding operational changes	GRI 402-1	
<b>c</b>	<b>Occupational Health and Safety</b>		
	Occupational Health and safety management system	GRI 403-1	
	Hazard identification, risk assessment, and incident investigation	GRI 403-2	
	Occupational health services	GRI 403-3	
	Worker participation, consultation, and communication on occupational health and safety	GRI 403-4	
	Worker training on occupational health and safety	GRI 403-5	
	Promotion of worker health	GRI 403-6	
	Prevention and mitigation of occupational health and safety impacts directly linked to business relationships	GRI 403-7	
	Workers are under the cover of an occupational health and safety management system	GRI 403-8	
	Work-related injuries	GRI 403-9	
	Work-related ill-health	GRI 403-10	
<b>d</b>	<b>Training and Education</b>		
	Average hours of training per year per employee	GRI 404-1	
	Programmes for upgrading employee skills and transition assistance programmes	GRI 404-2	
	The correct Percentage of employees receiving regular performance and career development reviews.	GRI 404-3	


<b>e</b>	<b>Diversity and Equal Opportunity</b>		
	Diversity of governance bodies and employees	GRI 405-1	
	The ratio of basic salary and remuneration of women to men	GRI 405-2	
<b>f</b>	<b>Non-discrimination</b>		
	Incidents of discrimination and corrective actions taken	GRI 406-1	
<b>g</b>	<b>Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining</b>		
	Operations and suppliers in which the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining may be at risk	GRI 407-1	
<b>h</b>	<b>Child Labour</b>		
	Operations and suppliers are at significant risk for incidents of child labor	GRI 408-1	
<b>i</b>	<b>Forced or Compulsory Labour</b>		
	Operations and suppliers are at significant risk for incidents of forced or compulsory labor	GRI 409-1	
<b>j</b>	<b>Security Practices</b>		
	Security personnel trained in human rights policies or procedures	GRI 410-1	
<b>k</b>	<b>Rights of Indigenous Peoples</b>		
	Incidents of violations involving the rights of indigenous people	GRI 411-1	
<b>l</b>	<b>Human rights Assessment</b>		
	Operations that have been subject to human rights reviews or impact assessments	GRI 412-1	
	Employee training on human rights policies and procedures	GRI 412-2	
	Significant investment agreements and contracts that include human rights clauses or that underwent human rights screening	GRI 412-3	
<b>m</b>	<b>Local Communities</b>		
	Operation with local community engagement, impact assessments, and development programmes	GRI 413-1	
	Operations with significant actual and potential negative impacts on local communities	GRI 413-2	
<b>n</b>	<b>Supplier Social Assessment</b>		
	New suppliers that get screened using social criteria	GRI 414-1	
	Negative social impacts in the supply chain and actions taken	GRI 414-2	
<b>o</b>	<b>Public Policy</b>		
	Political contributions	GRI 415-1	
<b>p</b>	<b>Customer Health and Safety</b>		
	Assessment of the health and safety impacts of product and service categories	GRI 416-1	
	Incidents of non-compliance concerning the health and safety impacts of products and services	GRI 416-2	
<b>q</b>	<b>Marketing and Labelling</b>		
	Requirements for product and service information and labeling	GRI 417-1	
	Incidents of non-compliance concerning product and service information and labeling	GRI 417-2	
	Incidents of non-compliance concerning marketing communications	GRI 417-3	
<b>r</b>	<b>Customer Privacy</b>		
	Substantiated complaints concerning breaches of customer privacy and losses of customer data	GRI 418-1	
<b>s</b>	<b>Socioeconomic Compliance</b>		
	Non-compliance with laws and regulations in the social and economic area	GRI 419-1	


# Whistleblowing Channels


The Bank has provided both internal and external whistleblowing channels.


## Internal Whistleblowing Procedure

The internal whistleblowing channels are as follows:

- 

Formal letter to the Group Managing Director, Access Bank Plc or the Head, Internal Audit, Access Bank Plc.
- 

Call or text messaging to dedicated phone numbers; 01-2712065 or IP 4160
- 

Dedicated e-mail address – [whistleblower@accessbankplc.com](mailto:whistleblower@accessbankplc.com)
- 

Via Access Bank's website - <https://www.accessbankplc.com/Pages/CustomerSupport/Whistle-Blower.aspx>

The Internal Whistleblowing Hotline is available during working hours on workdays only. However, the e-mail channel is always available, and the information provided by the whistle-blower shall be kept confidential.

Where the concerns reach a member of staff other than the Group Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer, Chief Conduct and Compliance Officer, or Chief Audit Executive, the recipient of such report shall be required to:

- Immediately pass the concern to the Chief Audit Executive and Head, Internal Audit Investigation, Access Bank Plc., for prompt investigation.
- If the concerns affect the Head, Internal Audit Investigation, or Chief Conduct and Compliance Officer, the Group Managing Director handles the issue. When a Director or Board member

is involved, such concerns are addressed by the Chairman of the Board Audit or Board Risk Management Committee.

The concern(s) are presented in the following format:

- Background of the circumstances (with relevant dates).
- Reason(s) the whistle-blower is particularly concerned about the situation.

Where there is no merit in a complaint by a whistle-blower, but the person making such claim acted in good faith, the Chief Audit Executive shall ensure that the person suffers no reprisal. However, when a person makes a report in bad faith, based on false or misleading information, an account of the finding is kept without disciplinary action against the whistle-blower without prejudice to the fundamental right of the internal whistle-blower to seek redress in a court of law.



## External Whistleblowing Procedure

The external reporting channel makes use of the KPMG Ethics Lines and facilities. The KPMG's Ethics Lines and facilities are telephone lines, fax lines, and an e-mail address. The telephone lines are open between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on workdays, while the fax number and e-mail address are always available except during maintenance periods.

Whether the whistle-blower discloses their identity, KPMG will not indicate the whistle-blower's identity to Access Bank except KPMG has written consent from the whistle-blower to provide their identity to Access Bank. Telephone calls generally are recorded, and the information is transcribed into a call sheet memo by KPMG for transmission to designated representatives of the Bank. Access Bank, its officers, staff, representatives, or agents shall not be entitled to have access to such tape recordings, fax messages, or e-mail messages received from whistle-blowers.

These measures are necessary to maintain the confidentiality and anonymity of the whistle-blowers. Access Bank will only have access to the call sheet memos.

The KPMG's Ethics lines and e-mail:



E-mail: [kpmgethicsline@ng.kpmg.com](mailto:kpmgethicsline@ng.kpmg.com)



Toll-free numbers for calls from MTN numbers only: 0703-000-0026; 0703-000-0027



Toll-free numbers for calls from Airtel numbers only: 0708 060 1222; 0808-822-8888



The toll-free number for calls from 9MOBILE numbers only: 0809 993 6366

# SASB Index

**Table 1; Sustainability Disclosure And Accounting Metrics**

TOPIC	Accounting Metric	Category	Unit Of Measure	Code	Response
Data Security	(1) Number of data breaches, (2) percentage involving personally identifiable information (PII), (3) number of account holders affected	Quantitative	Number, Percentage (%)	FN-CB-230a.1	Information Not Provided
	Description of approach to identifying and addressing data security risks	Discussion and Analysis	n/a	FN-CB-230a.2	Information Not Provided
Financial Inclusion & Capacity Building	(1) Number and (2) amount of loans outstanding qualified to programmes designed to promote small business and community development	Quantitative	Number, Reporting currency	FN-CB-240a.1	Number of Loans: 226,380 Amount: NGN 363 billion
	(1) Number and (2) amount of past due and nonaccrual loans qualified to programmes designed to promote small business and community development	Quantitative	Number, Reporting currency	FN-CB-240a.2	Past due loans: Count: 1,626; Value NGN 1,522,877,638. Nonaccrual loans: Count: 1,636; Value NGN 721,737,073.2
	Number of no-cost retail checking accounts provided to previously unbanked or underbanked customers	Quantitative	Number	FN-CB-240a.3	1,294, 428
	Number of participants in financial literacy initiatives for unbanked, underbanked, or underserved customers	Quantitative	Number	FN-CB-240a.4	NIL

Incorporation Of Environmental, Social, And Governance Factors In Credit Analysis	Commercial and industrial credit exposure, by industry	Quantitative	Reporting currency	FN-CB-410a.1	Information Not Provided
	Description of approach to incorporation of environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors in credit analysis	Discussion and Analysis	n/a	FN-CB-410a.2	<p>Access Bank is committed to incorporating E&amp;S risk considerations into our decision making and aims to be aligned with international best practices in this regard. We assess and review potential E&amp;S risks associated with all transactions in all financing activities to which the Bank's ESRM Policy is applied.</p> <p>Understanding our clients' approach to E&amp;S risk management as it relates to their activities is critical to effective ESRM. Although we accept limitations in our ability to influence client behaviour, we nonetheless engage with our clients on these issues and endeavour to work with clients whose business practices are in alignment with our E&amp;S standards.</p> <p>The Bank's approach is to favour good industry practice and to minimise impact on the environment and communities in addition to compliance with applicable laws and regulations. Access Bank's ESRM Procedures are made up of five distinct phases for the management of E&amp;S risks that emerge in our Credit/ Investment cycle. Each phase represents a critical step of Access Bank's integrated ESRM approach in the products and services we offer.</p> <p>These phases are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• E&amp;S Screening;</li> <li>• E&amp;S Risk Assessment;</li> <li>• Decision and Documentation;</li> <li>• Monitoring; and</li> <li>• Reporting</li> </ul> <p>The E&amp;S business partners in conjunction with the core ESRM Team are to ensure that necessary E&amp;S due diligence is conducted on obligors operating in environmentally/socially sensitive industry/sectors (Oil and Gas, Power and Cement by example) as well as Project Finance facilities.</p>
Business Ethics	Total amount of monetary losses as a result of legal proceedings associated with fraud, insider trading, anti-trust, anti-competitive behaviour, market manipulation, malpractice, or other related financial industry laws or regulations	Quantitative	Reporting currency	FN-CB-510a.1	Information Not Provided
	Description of whistleblower policies and procedures	Discussion and Analysis	n/a	FN-CB-510a.2	<p>Our whistleblowing system is designed to boost our stakeholders' confidence in reporting any misconduct or irregularity, including any action that may violate laws or regulations regarding labour practices, anti-corruption, human rights, and environmental issues. Stakeholders can also report any activity that could potentially cause harm to our business or reputation or negatively affect the health, security or safety of other employees or our customers. The whistleblowing system is outsourced to the KPMG ethics line. There is also an avenue to lodge whistleblower reports on the Bank's website.</p>

Systemic Risk Management	Global Systemically Important Bank (G-SIB) score, by category	Quantitative	Basis points (bps)	FN-CB-550a.1	Information Not Provided
	Description of approach to incorporation of results of mandatory and voluntary stress tests into capital adequacy planning, long-term corporate strategy, and other business activities.	Discussion and Analysis	n/a	FN-CB-550a.2	<p>Stress testing is fundamental in assessing appropriate levels of capital to ensure the Bank can absorb stress events to protect its depositors and other stakeholders in line with Board-approved risk appetite. The expected macroeconomic and business scenarios are used as a baseline when performing financial forecasting. Stress scenarios are overlaid on the financial forecasts in order to assess the impact on business strategy, which may require adjustments to the Bank's business strategy in order to remain within the risk appetite.</p> <p>Actual market stresses, which have been experienced throughout the financial system in recent years, have been used to inform the Bank's capital planning process and enhance the stress scenarios employed. The Bank takes into account the results of all such stress testing when assessing its internal and regulatory capital requirements including the setting of capital buffers.</p> <p>The Bank has an approved scenario planning document which forms the basis of the assumptions used in conducting stress tests. We engage in Scenario Planning &amp; Stress Testing to simulate the impact on the Bank's Capital and strategy. The stress and scenario tests shall focus on the effect of various adverse conditions on Access Bank's earnings and capital requirement and how this can impact the Bank's forecasted figures and business strategy. The various stress scenarios are listed below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ Stress 1: Business Downturn</li> <li>§ Stress 2: Existing Business Growth but Lower Margins</li> <li>§ Stress 3: Existing Asset Growth but Higher Operational Cost</li> <li>§ Stress 4: Deterioration in Asset Quality</li> <li>§ Stress 5: Depreciation of the Naira</li> <li>§ Stress 6: Macroeconomic Downturn</li> </ul>

**Table 2; Activity Metrics**

TOPIC	Accounting Metric	Category	Unit Of Measure	Code	Response
	(1) Number and (2) Value of checking and savings accounts by segment: (a) personal and (b) small business	Quantitative	Number, Reporting currency	FN-CB-000.A	<p>Current Accounts, Personal accounts: Number: Value (Information Not Provided)</p> <p>Small Business Accounts, Number: Over 487,000; Value: 221 billion NGN.</p> <p>Savings Accounts</p> <p>Personal accounts: Number: Value (Information Not Provided)</p> <p>Small Business Accounts, Number: ; Value (Information Not Provided)</p>
	(1) Number and (2) Value of loans by segment: (a) personal, (b) small business, and (c) corporate	Quantitative	Number, Reporting currency	FN-CB-000.B	<p>Personal Loans, Number: Value (Information Not Provided)</p> <p>Small Business, Number: 85,657; Value (Information Not Provided)</p> <p>Corporate, Number: Value (Information Not Provided)</p>

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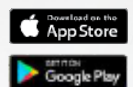
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# Assurance Report

## Independent Limited Assurance Statement to the Board and Management of Access Bank

CSR-in-Action Consulting ('CSR-in-Action', 'we', 'our') was commissioned by Access Bank ('the Bank'), a wholly owned subsidiary of Access Holdings Plc, to conduct an independent third-party assurance in relation to the reported information in its 2021 Sustainability Report: Building Blocks for a Sustainable Future, for the financial year ended 31 December 2021. The assurance engagement was performed in accordance with AccountAbility's AA1000AS v3 (2020) Standard ('AA1000AS'), updated from the AA1000AS (2008) version used in previous assurance statements, which has been discontinued.

### Scope of work

We provided the independent limited assurance to meet the AA1000AS Type II, Moderate Level requirements. The scope of the assurance is strictly limited to the contents of the 2021 Report. During our engagement, we assessed relevant data and activities, as well as assertions made in the Report in relation to actual performance within the reporting time frame: 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2021. The basis for this assurance engagement, as agreed with Access Bank Plc, was delimited to the following:

#### A. AA1000 Assurance Standard (AA1000AS v3)

The process used in arriving at this Assurance Statement is based on AA1000 Assurance Standard (AA1000AS v3) principles of Inclusivity, Materiality, Responsiveness, and Impact.

#### B. Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Standards Application

This is based on the Bank's assertion that the Report is scripted with reference to the GRI Standards Sustainability Reporting framework.

#### C. Organisational Content

The review of the content of the Report in relation to the Bank's organisational targets and ambitions and systems of quality control, including documented policy and procedures relating to compliance with ethical requirements, professional standards, and applicable legal and regulatory requirements.

CSR-in-Action planned and conducted the assurance engagement in a participatory manner to allow for the receipt of sufficient and appropriate assurance evidence for its conclusion. Subject to the limitations and exclusions of this Report, our review included:

- statements, information and performance data contained within the Bank's 2021 Sustainability Report;
- the Bank's management approach to material issues; and
- alignment of the reported data and information to the requirement of the GRI Standards.

## Our work

For the independent assurance, the scope of our work necessitated the engagement of our multi-disciplinary team of sustainability and assurance consultants. We concentrated our review efforts on the issues of high material relevance to the Bank and its stakeholders. Furthermore, to arrive at our conclusions, we investigated the systems, structures and processes through information contained in the Report, interviews with head office staff and a review of supporting documents. We, therefore:

- examined relevant activities undertaken at the Bank over the reporting period 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2021;
- examined the Bank's stated approach to stakeholder engagement, although we had no direct engagement with stakeholders but for staff at the head office;
- examined information provided to us by the Bank on its reporting and management processes relating to the Principles;
- interviewed key managerial staff, including the heads and/or representatives of the Sustainability, Health Safety Security and Environment, Environmental and Social Risk Management, Conduct and Compliance, Internal Audit, Customer Experience, Human Resources, and General Resource Management and Procurement departments;
- examined the following supporting documents: sustainability strategy, stakeholder surveys, reports to management, HSSE policy, whistleblowing policy, environmental and social risk management policy, employee satisfaction survey,

procurement policy, HR policy, evidence of anti-corruption and bribery training for employees and vendors, whistleblowing compliance assessment report, anti-corruption and bribery policy, policy on treating customers fairly, internal audit reports, staff handbook and whistleblowing investigation reports;

- examined the processes for gathering and consolidating the specified performance data; and,
- conducted an independent assessment of the Bank's reporting against the GRI Standards.

During the assurance process, we did not come across limitations to the scope of the agreed assurance engagement. No external stakeholders were interviewed as part of this assurance engagement. Our work was planned to obtain all the information and explanations that were needed to provide a basis for our assurance conclusions.

## Inherent limitations

Inherent limitations exist in all assurance engagements due to the selective enquiry of the information being examined. We conducted our work to express a limited assurance opinion and conclusion. Our assurance relies on the premise that the data and information provided to us by the Bank have been provided in good faith and is dependent on the accuracy of data collection and monitoring arrangements of the company.

Our assessment is restricted to reviewing only the plausibility of internal records, as well as interviews with management staff responsible for the provision of material data, such that the risk of our conclusion being in error is reduced, but not zero.

### Respective responsibilities

The preparation and presentation of the selected information in the Sustainability Report is the sole responsibility of the management of the Bank.

Our primary responsibility was to conduct an audit of the Report and independently express conclusions on the subject matter as defined within the scope of work above and in accordance with our terms of engagement.

### CSR-in-Action's Independence and Competence

CSR-in-Action Consulting is a global sustainability consultancy firm – with presence in Africa and North America – certified to assure sustainability processes using AA1000 Assurance Standard (AA1000AS v3). For the seventh year, we are providing assurance services to Access Bank, and have assured reports for other leading organisations.

CSR-in-Action is certified by the Global Reporting Initiative as the only training partner in Nigeria and is a Gold Community Member. Our Chief Executive sits on the Board of the GRI, becoming the first from out of West Africa. The CSR-in-Action Group is widely recognised as having high levels of proficiency in sustainability consulting – environment, social and economic – impact assessment, reporting and stakeholder engagement; skills resident within the members of the assurance team.

### Our Observations

Our observations and recommendations are provided in a separate report to the Bank's management team; only select observations are provided below. These observations do not affect our conclusions. Our key observations based on the AA1000 AccountAbility Principles are that:

#### Inclusivity

The Bank's business operations and processes demonstrate active engagement with a wide range of stakeholders. Evidence from our engagement with the Bank reveals that the processes for engagement are being handled by each individual department, which have identified and are responding to the significant sustainability concerns of its customers, employees, shareholders and investors, customers, host communities, regulatory bodies, media, and suppliers, which in turn has afforded the Bank valuable insights relevant to the development of its strategies.

#### Materiality

Access Bank has developed its materiality process to reflect on topics that are relevant to the Bank and its stakeholders. Topics like economic presence, women empowerment, occupational health and safety, community investments, customer data privacy, human rights and market presence, ranked highest on its materiality matrix, in keeping with sector players in its sustainability context, and the Report provides sufficient information on how these topics have been prioritised and addressed.



## Responsiveness

Access Bank has included appropriate explanations on how it has responded to its stakeholder needs and concerns. Available evidence shows that the issues raised during stakeholder engagements are being addressed by the different functions assigned to manage the different stakeholder groups.

## Impact

We observed and assessed that Access Bank has well-defined procedures to routinely monitor and measure their sustainability impact, and that the Bank has skilled subject-matter experts who are driving the sustainability agenda effectively and efficiently. The Bank has disclosed these impacts in its 2021 Sustainability Report and in our professional opinion, the Bank adheres to the Principle of Impact.

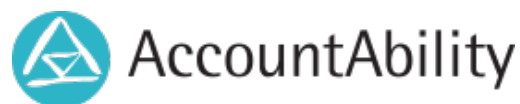
## Our Recommendations

Financial institutions are complex and highly regulated entities. The intricacy of operations would mean that the Bank must make concerted efforts to ensure compliance at all levels. It is on this basis that we recommend that the Bank carries out tailored engagement processes for each unit to address their unique challenges, while maintaining its unified approach for engaging internal and external stakeholders for identifying material issues.

## Our Conclusion

Based on our procedures, the work we have undertaken, and the evidence obtained, we can reasonably conclude that the Report has been written in the spirit of the AA1000 AccountAbility Principles of Inclusivity, Materiality, Responsiveness, and Impact as set out in the AA1000 Assurance Standard (AA1000AS v3).

**December 2022**



**Bekeme Masade-Olowola FICRS, FSPIN, MNIMN**

**Chief Executive**

**CSR-in-Action Consulting**

# CONTACT US FOR MORE



[WWW.ACCESSBANKPLC.COM](http://WWW.ACCESSBANKPLC.COM)



[SUSTAINABILITY@ACCESSBANKPLC.COM](mailto:SUSTAINABILITY@ACCESSBANKPLC.COM)



**ACCESS BANK PLC.  
14/15 PRINCE ALABA ABIODUN ONIRU ROAD,  
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