

People's Pension and Ecobank Ghana have launched a new innovative digital pension product that will allow all workers, particularly informal workers who make up about 85% of the Ghanaian workforce, to contribute towards a better retirement through the Ecobank Mobile App and the Ecobank Xpress points nationwide.

On the Ecobank Mobile App, the product is listed as a biller option under Pensions Biller. It enables both new and existing People's Pension and Ecobank customers to contribute conveniently towards their pension. For informal workers, it provides a much-needed avenue for them to save and for formal sector works, this plan can be used to augment their mandatory schemes.

For the second sign-up channel which is the Ecobank Xpress points, eligible members of the public can sign up for the pension scheme at over 6000 Xpress points nationwide. These agent points are readily available in the communities and offer the ease and convenience of signing up without travelling long distances to access the service.

Bringing pension services closer to everyone through this partnership will create a significant impact and help accelerate the financial inclusion drive and generate enormous benefits to the Ghanaian economy. This partnership is also in line with the Sustainable Development Goals 1 and 8 of ensuring No Poverty and Decent Work and Economic Growth for all.

Speaking at the launch, CEO of People's Pension, Saqib Nazir, noted that Ghana's informal sector workers, largely underserved with financial services, form part of the 400 to 500 million in West Africa and the two billion people globally who need financial services extended to them.

Whereas the risk of extending financial services to the informal sector is high, there is also a huge potential of funds to be mobilized from that sector for national development when they are financially included while creating value and security for the contributors.

Saqib Nazir noted that financially including the informal sector has been a difficult one over the years. Still, strategic partnerships like Ecobank and People's Pension present flexible and innovative pensions that should enable informal sector workers to get on board and secure a future for themselves easily.

The Managing Director of Ecobank Ghana, Dan Sackey, on the other hand, said this new partnership is testimony to Ecobank's avowed commitment to using digital technology to drive financial inclusion and create value for Ghanaians, especially the largely underserved informal sector.

He said the move has a two-edged sword of ensuring financial inclusion to secure informal sector workers' long-term welfare and unlocking and redirecting capital for long-term national development.

Director of Research, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation at the National Pensions Regulatory Authority (NPRA), Amartey Vondee, lauded the two institutions for designing such an innovative product that helps extend pension coverage in the country.