



An Overview of BoG Fraud Report

Key Trends and Insights from 2019 to 2024

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Executive Summary

The 2024 Fraud Report from the Bank of Ghana presents critical insights into the evolving landscape of financial fraud across the banking sector, Specialized Deposit-Taking Institutions (SDIs), and Payment Service Providers (PSPs). The report highlights a concerning rise in both the number of fraud cases and the associated financial risk, with a 5% increase in reported fraud incidents compared to 2023. Notably, the total value at risk escalated by 13%, reaching GH¢99 million in 2024. Although the number of fraud cases within banks and SDIs decreased, the total financial exposure, particularly from forgery and manipulation of documents, witnessed substantial growth. The PSP sector, on the other hand, continued to face high levels of fraud, marking an 18% increase in the value at risk.

This report juxtaposes the current findings with previous years' data, illustrating significant shifts in fraud typologies, such as a marked increase in identity theft and ATM/POS fraud. While fraud cases like cash suppression saw a decline, others, particularly forgery and remittance fraud, surged in both frequency and value. Staff involvement in fraud remains a persistent challenge, increasing by 33% compared to 2023, further underlining the need for enhanced internal controls, employee training, and stricter punitive measures.

Introduction



The financial services sector in Ghana has undergone significant changes in recent years, driven by digitalisation and the widespread adoption of electronic payment systems. While these advancements have improved convenience and financial inclusion, they have also introduced new vulnerabilities, increasing the sector's exposure to fraudulent activities. The rising sophistication of fraudsters, who exploit digital platforms, has made the banking industry, Specialized Deposit-Taking Institutions (SDIs), and Payment Service Providers (PSPs) prime targets for fraud.

The Bank of Ghana's 2024 annual fraud report offers a detailed overview of the evolving fraud landscape, highlighting the various types of fraud, financial losses, and emerging trends reshaping Ghana's banking ecosystem. The report emphasizes the growing complexity of fraud schemes, many of which exploit the digital innovations designed to streamline financial transactions.



This year's report draws on data from banks, SDIs, and PSPs, providing insights into the scope of fraud, financial exposure, and staff involvement in fraudulent activities. It compares current findings with previous years to reveal the sector's progress in combating fraud and the new risks emerging in a rapidly evolving digital environment.

To address these challenges, the report advocates for a collaborative approach among financial institutions, regulators, law enforcement, and customers. It calls for continuous improvements in internal controls, fraud detection systems, and customer education to protect the integrity and security of Ghana's financial sector.

FRAUD TYPOLOGIES WITHIN BANKS/SDIs/PSPs

01

ATM/POS Fraud

Fraudulent use of ATM cards or ATM personal identification numbers (PIN) to withdraw money from another person's account; or stealing directly from the ATM machine by breaking into the machine. It also involves the fraudulent use of another person's debit card number and PIN to withdraw cash from the victim's account; or make unauthorised purchases.

02

Burglary

Illegal entry into a building with the intention of stealing.

03

Cheque Fraud

Describes the unlawful use of cheques for the purpose of acquiring funds illegally.

04

Cyber-email Fraud

The act of tricking the email recipient into believing the mail was sent from the actual email account holder (sender).

05

E-Money Fraud

Refers to unauthorized withdrawal of electronic money from the wallet of financial institutions, mobile money operators and individuals.

06

Fraudulent Withdrawals

Unauthorized access to the accounts and wallets of clients.

07

Forgery and Manipulation of Documentation

refers to the creation or altering of a document with the intent to defraud someone.

08

Impersonation

The act of pretending to be another person for the purpose of fraud.

VARIOUS FORMS OF FRAUD IN THE BANKING INDUSTRY (Cont'd)

09

Lending/Credit Fraud

Refers to deception relating to the procurement or delivery of credit. Some of these situations may be where a borrower or credit officer uses the credentials of another person to procure a loan; or where a credit officer falsifies borrower's appraisal to enable him or her qualify for a loan.

10

Remittance Fraud

Relates to the act of criminals manipulating the international money transfer systems to defraud others.

11

Suppression of Cash & Deposits (Cash Theft)

The process of concealing and diverting cash deposits, cheque deposits; or cash received from a customer.

12

SIM Swap Related Fraud

Tricking a cellular service provider into switching a victim's service to a SIM card controlled by the fraudster (essentially hijacking the victim's phone number). The main aim of SIM swapping is usually to exploit two-factor authentication to gain fraudulent access to bank accounts.



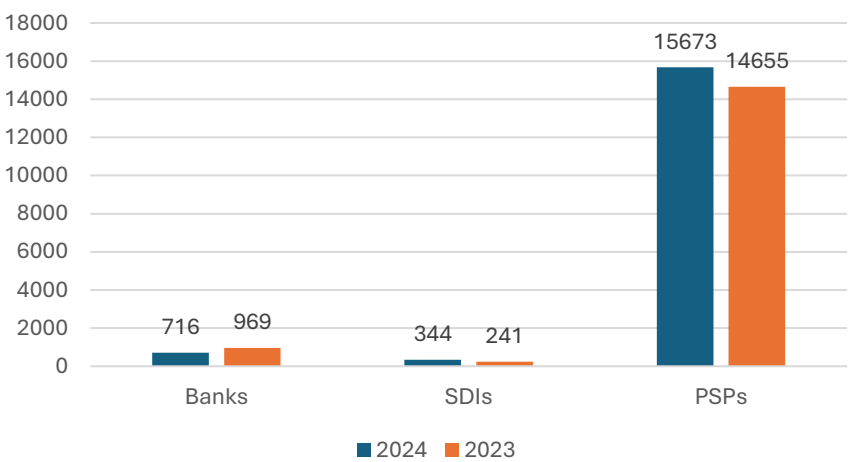
SUMMARY OF FRAUD COUNT IN BANKS, SDIs & PSPs

The 2024 Fraud Report from the Bank of Ghana reveals a 5% increase in the total count of fraud cases, which rose from 15,865 in 2023 to 16,733 in 2024. This uptick is largely driven by the Payment Service Providers (PSPs) sector which constitutes 94% of total fraud cases. PSPs saw an increase in both the number of cases and the value at risk. Specifically, PSP fraud cases increased by 7% to 15,673 cases, while the value at risk grew by 18% to GH¢19 million; reflecting continued vulnerabilities in digital and mobile money platforms.

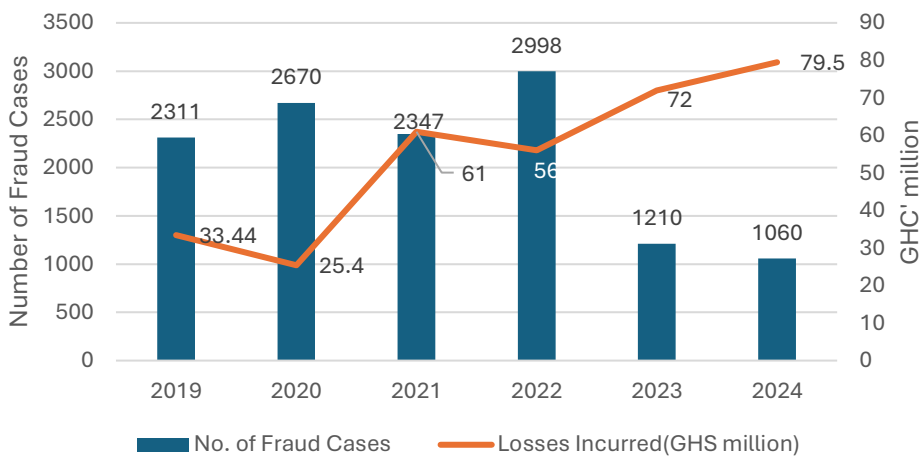
In contrast, Banks and SDIs recorded a decrease in the number of fraud cases, falling by 14% from 1,210 in 2023 to 1060 in 2024. Specifically, banks recorded 716 cases (a 26% decrease) in fraud cases while SDIs saw a 43% increase in fraud cases with cash suppression remaining the dominant issue, particularly within Rural and Community Banks. Despite this decline, the value at risk for banks and SDIs increased by 11%, reaching approximately GH¢80 million, driven primarily by fraud types such as forgery and manipulation of documents and identity theft. Notably, the value at risk for forgery rose sharply by 7 times, accounting for 67% of the total value at risk in the banking sector.

The overall increase in fraud cases and value at risk underscores the need for continued vigilance, stronger internal controls, and improved fraud prevention mechanisms, particularly within the PSP sector, which remains a major target for fraud.

Summary of Fraud Count in Banks, SDIs, and PSPs



Number of Fraud Cases and Values at Risk for Banks and SDIs

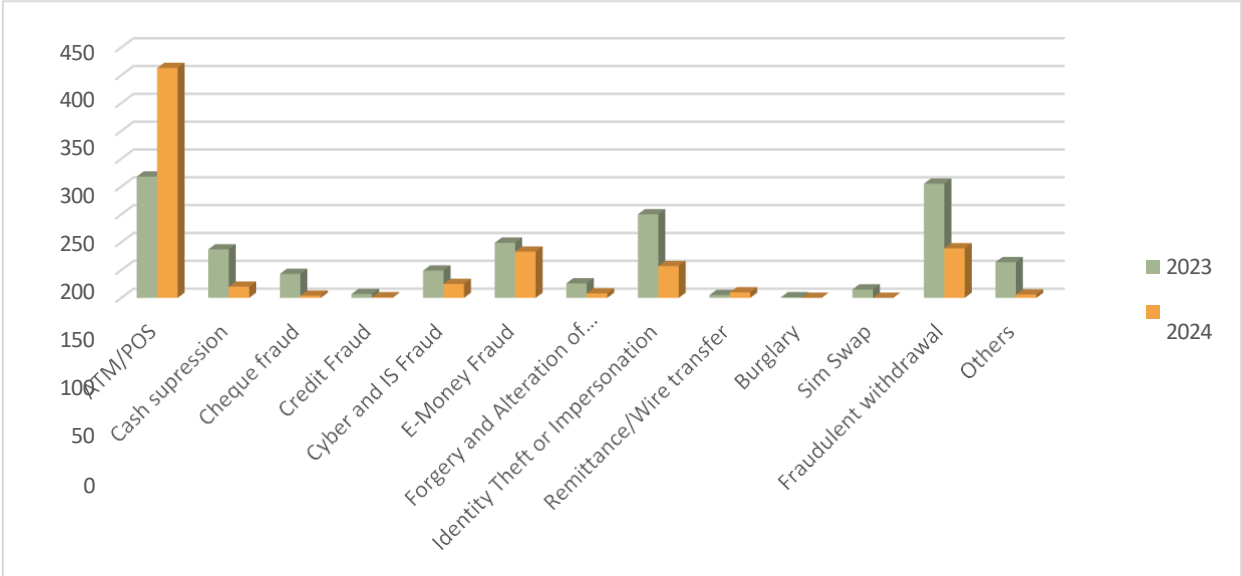


FRAUD STATISTICS ACCROS TYPOLOGIES BY BANKS

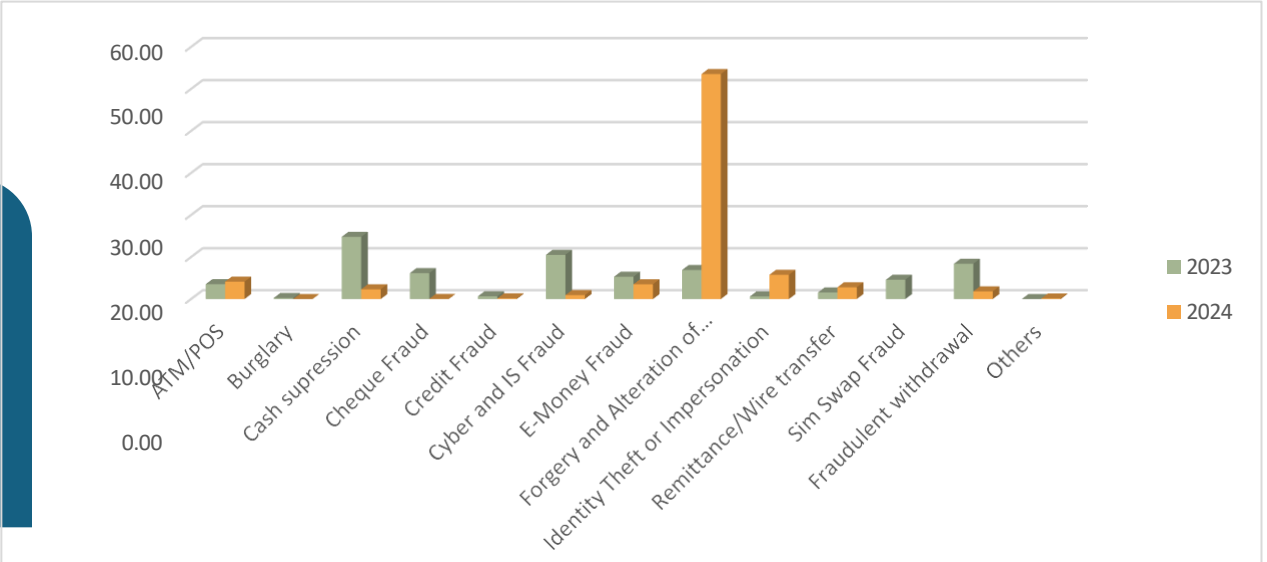
In 2024, banks reported 716 fraud cases, a 26% decrease from 969 cases in 2023. Despite the decline, ATM/POS/Card fraud nearly doubled, with 413 cases reported compared to 218 in 2023, reflecting growing vulnerabilities in digital payment systems. This increase is attributed to customers' limited understanding of digital security, prompting banks to enhance customer education and secure card-based platforms. Remittance fraud also rose, from 5 to 10 cases, highlighting emerging risks in money transfers.

Conversely, Cash Suppression fraud saw a sharp 77% decline, from 87 to 20 cases, indicating improvements in cash handling and internal controls. This trend aligns with the Bank of Ghana's increased regulatory oversight. While overall fraud cases are down, the rise in digital fraud underscores the need for a balance between innovation and security. Ongoing investments in fraud detection, staff training, and public awareness are essential to strengthening the sector's resilience against evolving threats.

Count of Fraud Cases across Typologies by Banks for 2023/2024



Fraud Values at risk for Banks for 2023/2024



| <div> <div>Table 1: Fraud Loss for the Period (2020-2024)</div> <div> <div>FRAUD STATISTICS ACROSS TYPOLOGIES</div> <div>AMONG BANKS & SDIs</div> </div> </div> | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--|---------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| FRAUD TYPES | 2020 (GH¢'000) | 2021 (GH¢'000) | 2022 (GH¢'000) | 2023 (GH¢'000) | 2024 (GH¢'000) | Year-on-ear Change (%) (2023-2024) | Direction of change (2023-2024) | Ranking 2024 | Ranking 2023 | Ranking 2022 | Ranking 2021 | Ranking 2020 |
| ATM/Card/POS Fraud | 8,191.37 | 22,850.67 | 34.32 | 3,528.83 | 4,144.92 | 17.46% | ▲ | 3 | 8 | 11 | 1 | 1 |
| Cheque Fraud | 467.47 | 372.22 | 5,041.55 | 6,157.59 | 28.05 | -99.54% | ▼ | 12 | 5 | 3 | 10 | 10 |
| Cyber/Email Fraud | 1,056.09 | 2,654.98 | 4,395.32 | 10,522.00 | 933.11 | -91.13% | ▼ | 9 | 3 | 4 | 7 | 6 |
| Burglary | 1,354.59 | 573.41 | 261.71 | 269 | 738.98 | 174.71% | ▲ | 10 | 13 | 9 | 9 | 5 |
| E-Money Fraud | 1,048.15 | 3,244.12 | 787.39 | 5,355.14 | 4,084.21 | -23.73% | ▼ | 4 | 6 | 7 | 6 | 7 |
| Forgery and manipulation of documents | 6,508.71 | 7,603.55 | 33,074.89 | 7,466.42 | 53,554.34 | 617.27% | ▲ | 1 | 4 | 1 | 4 | 2 |
| Fraudulent withdrawals | 884.69 | 622.04 | 7,085.55 | 13,057.13 | 1,823.04 | -86.04% | ▼ | 7 | 2 | 2 | 8 | 8 |
| Lending/Credit Fraud | 626.32 | 8,225.81 | 275.14 | 657 | 1,346.70 | 104.98% | ▲ | 8 | 12 | 8 | 3 | 9 |
| Impersonation | 59.55 | 10,322.25 | 1,339.18 | 674.5 | 5,769.22 | 755.33% | ▲ | 2 | 11 | 6 | 2 | 11 |
| Others | 2,766.60 | 285.76 | 24.85 | 1,961.72 | 580.07 | -70.43% | ▼ | 11 | 9 | 12 | 11 | 3 |
| Remittance | 52.1 | 113.73 | 65.6 | 1,555.00 | 2,827.38 | 81.83% | ▲ | 6 | 10 | 10 | 12 | 12 |
| Cash theft (Cash suppression) | 2,393.96 | 4,267.06 | 3,963.36 | 16,702.72 | 3,872.71 | -76.81% | ▼ | 5 | 1 | 5 | 5 | 4 |
| Sim Swap related fraud | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4,633.21 | 0 | -100.00% | ▼ | 13 | 7 | 13 | 13 | 13 |
| TOTAL | 25,409.58 | 61,135.59 | 56,348.86 | 72,540.26 | 79,702.73 | 9.87% | ▲ | | | | | |

Specialized Deposit-Taking Institutions (SDIs)

In 2024, fraud cases within SDIs surged by 43%, rising from 241 cases in 2023 to 344 cases. Despite this increase, the value at risk dropped by 48%, from GH¢8.7 million to GH¢4.5 million, suggesting that while fraud incidents were more frequent, they involved smaller amounts. Cash theft remained the most common fraud type, accounting for 71% of all SDI cases. However, the year saw a significant rise in credit-related fraud, with losses escalating from GH¢30,000 in 2023 to over GH¢1.2 million, highlighting weaknesses in credit assessment and loan recovery processes. Additionally, burglary and e-money fraud also increased, pointing to the need for stronger physical and digital security.

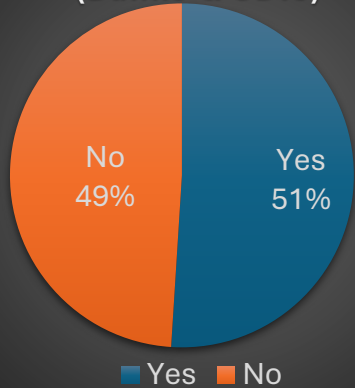
Payment Service Providers (PSPs)

For Payment Service Providers (PSPs), 2024 saw a 7% rise in fraud cases, totaling 15,673, alongside an 18% increase in the value at risk, reaching approximately GH¢19 million. This uptick coincided with a 58% rise in transaction volumes, illustrating the increased exposure of digital platforms. December was identified as the highest-risk month, driven by the seasonal surge in transactions. To mitigate these rising risks, PSPs are urged to enhance fraud monitoring systems, implement real-time alerts, and invest in customer education, particularly ahead of peak transaction periods.

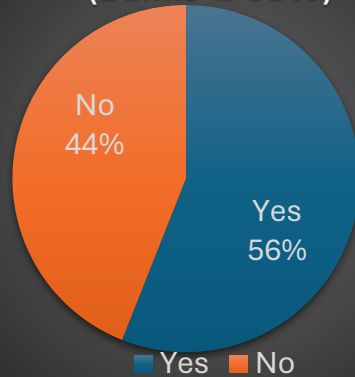
STAFF INVOLVEMENT IN FRAUD ACROSS BANKS & SDIs

Staff-related fraud remains a critical concern, with a 33% increase in the number of employees involved in fraudulent activities, from 274 cases in 2023 to 365 in 2024. Cash theft/suppression was the most common type of staff-related fraud, accounting for 75% of these cases. The increase in staff involvement suggests systemic issues within financial institutions, including inadequate recruitment practices and insufficient internal controls. Moreover, while 43% of implicated staff were dismissed, many cases remain unresolved due to slow legal processes.

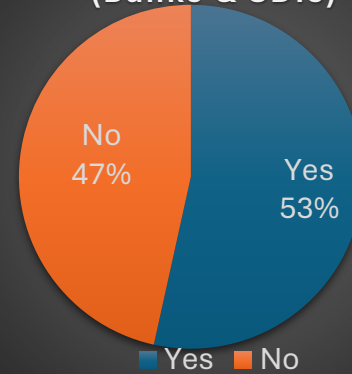
Staff Involvement – 2019
(Banks & SDIs)



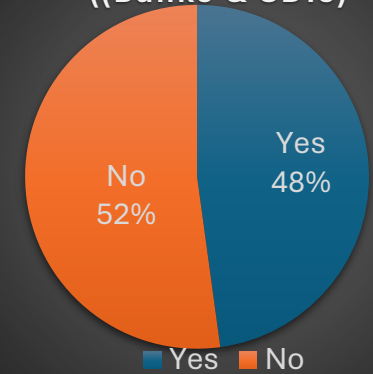
Staff Involvement – 2020
(Banks & SDIs)



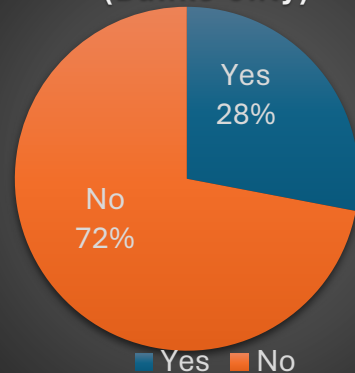
Staff Involvement – 2021
(Banks & SDIs)



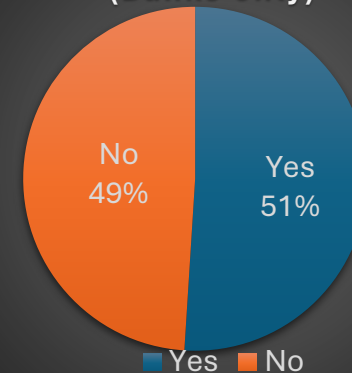
Staff Involvement – 2022
(Banks & SDIs)



Staff Involvement – 2023
(Banks only)



Staff Involvement – 2024
(Banks only)



STAFF INVOLVEMENT IN FRAUD ACROSS BANKS & SDIs (Cont'd)

Initially, the Bank of Ghana consolidated fraud data for both banks and SDIs. However, from 2023 onwards, the data has been segmented into two separate datasets: one for banks and the other for SDIs. The line graph below illustrates the total number of fraud cases and the number of cases involving staff. The thin green vertical line in the graph represents a structural break—the point at which the dataset is segmented. Table 2 below provides comprehensive information on fraud within the banking sector, including the components where staff are involved.

Total Fraud Cases & Staff Involvement

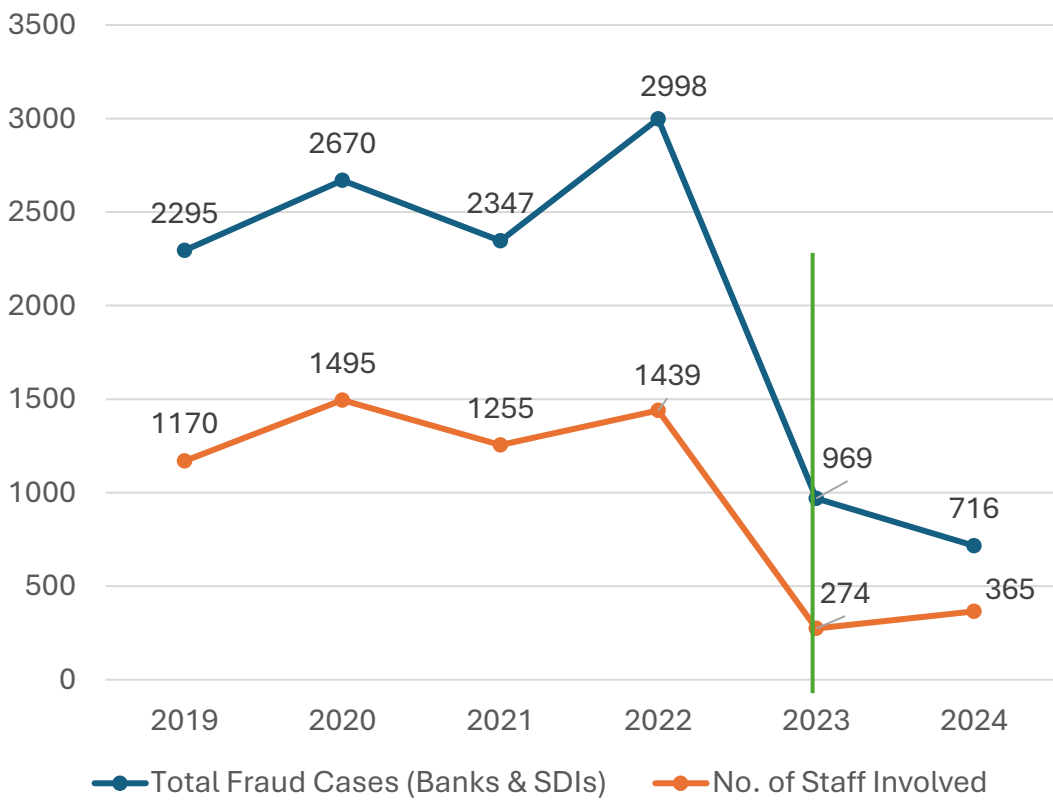


Table 2: Total Fraud Cases & Staff Involvement

| Year | Total Fraud Cases (Banks & SDIs) | Staff Involv ed | % of Staff Involve- ment | Fraud Typology | | Key Highlights |
|------|----------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|--|
| | | | | Cash Theft / Suppres sion | Other Fraud types | |
| 2019 | 2,295 | 1170 | 51% | — | — | Cash suppression and forgery were dominant. |
| 2020 | 2,670 | 1495 | 56% | — | — | Staff-related fraud remained high, mainly in rural banks. |
| 2021 | 2,347 | 1255 | 53.46% | — | — | Slight increase from 2020; rural banks recorded 46.04% of all staff-related cases. |
| 2022 | 2,998 | 1439 | 48% | 140 | 48 | Marked drop due to stricter controls and enforcement. |
| 2023 | 969 (banks only) | 274 | 28% | 211 | 63 | 77% of staff cases linked to cash suppression. |
| 2024 | 716 (banks only) | 365 | 51% | 274 | 91 | 75% of staff cases linked to cash suppression; only 43% dismissed |



BoG DIRECTIVES TO BANKS AND SDIs

In view of the above findings and trends, the BOG to direct banks and SDIs as follows:

- ❑ Banks and SDIs should foster a security-awareness culture through regular events, forums and discussions.
- ❑ Banks and SDIs should strengthen dual-control mechanisms and introduce mandatory rotations for all staff especially staff in sensitive functions to reduce staff fraud.
- ❑ Banks and SDIs should continue to collaborate effectively with law enforcement agencies and other stakeholders in the event of fraud to ensure perpetrators are apprehended and prosecuted.
- ❑ Banks and SDIs should ensure that mobile applications and internet banking platforms are accessed using multi-factor authentication and auto logins are deactivated.



2

BoG DIRECTIVES TO PSPs.

In view of the above findings and trends, the BOG directs PSPs as follows:

- ❑ PSPs should strengthen authentication processes by mandating periodic PIN changes and enforce multi-factor authentication.
- ❑ PSPs should implement public awareness campaigns to educate customers about personal security and prevailing fraud schemes.
- ❑ PSPs should provide fraud prevention training to agents and intensify monitoring of activities of agents.
- ❑ PSPs should implement customer behavior monitoring technology to help detect and prevent fraud.

Key Insights from the 2024 Bank of Ghana Fraud Report

1 Concentration of Risk in High-Value Cases

The 2024 report highlights a worrying trend: while the total number of fraud cases in the banking sector decreased, the value at risk surged significantly. This reflects a strategic shift among fraudsters, who are now orchestrating more sophisticated, high-impact frauds with fewer attempts. Notably, forgery and manipulation of documents accounted for over GH¢53.5 million in losses, with a single outlier case contributing GH¢53 million. This shift underscores the pressing need for banks to strengthen due diligence, adopt robust document verification systems, and implement advanced risk-scoring models to prevent large-scale breaches.

2 Internal Threats Remain Prevalent

Internal fraud continues to be a significant issue, with staff involvement rising by 33% in 2024. Cash suppression and theft were the primary fraud types, yet only 43% of the implicated staff were dismissed. This points to gaps in accountability and highlights the importance of improving hiring practices, conducting thorough background checks, rotating staff, and enforcing strict ethical training. A zero-tolerance policy for internal fraud must be implemented to address this persistent threat effectively.

3 Vulnerability of Digital Channels

Digital banking, while enhancing financial inclusion, remains highly vulnerable to exploitation. The sharp rise in ATM/POS/Card fraud (up 89%) signals the need for stronger cybersecurity infrastructure. Fraudsters exploit gaps in digital literacy and weak infrastructure, particularly during high-transaction periods. To mitigate risks, institutions must invest in real-time monitoring systems, biometric authentication, and AI-based fraud detection, alongside comprehensive customer education.

4 Weak Enforcement and Legal Redress

The report reveals that only 4% of the total GH¢83 million at risk was recovered, highlighting weak legal enforcement. Lengthy judicial processes discourage financial institutions from pursuing fraud cases, emboldening criminals. To address this, the sector must advocate for faster litigation processes, specialized financial crime courts, and stronger collaboration with law enforcement to ensure fraudsters are held accountable.



Implications for the Banking Sector

The 2024 data points to intensifying financial and reputational risk in Ghana's financial sector. Despite technological progress, institutions are lagging in security governance, especially regarding internal fraud, digital security, and legal deterrence. Staff involvement trends signal deep-rooted cultural and ethical issues, while the surge in impersonation and document forgery highlights flaws in verification systems

Recommendations for the Banking Industry

In addition to BoG's directives, the following are recommended



Deploy Advanced Fraud Detection

Financial institutions are encouraged to adopt AI, machine learning, and behavioural analytics for early fraud detection. These technologies help identify suspicious activities and anomalies in real time, enabling a proactive approach to combating fraud



Strengthen Internal Controls

To strengthen internal controls, institutions should implement zero-trust frameworks, ensuring that all users and systems are continuously authenticated to prevent unauthorized access. Additionally, dual control and staff rotation should be mandated for sensitive financial operations to reduce the risk of fraud and enhance accountability



Bolster Recruitment & Ethical Training

To enhance security and integrity, institutions should enforce comprehensive background checks, even for temporary staff, to minimize insider threats. Additionally, regular ethical workshops should be instituted, and a strong whistleblower culture should be cultivated to encourage reporting of unethical activities and ensure accountability



Customer & Public Awareness

To combat increasing digital fraud, institutions should run targeted cybersecurity education campaigns, focusing on mobile banking and e-transactions. Additionally, developing materials in local languages will help improve outreach and ensure that all customers, regardless of language proficiency, can understand and follow best security practices.



Enhance Regulatory Collaboration

To improve fraud management, institutions should accelerate case resolution frameworks in collaboration with law enforcement and the judiciary, ensuring quicker action on fraud cases. Additionally, sector-wide data sharing on fraud typologies and high-risk entities should be encouraged, fostering a collective effort to identify and mitigate emerging fraud risks across the financial sector.



Adopt Secure Technologies

To enhance security, institutions should implement blockchain solutions for document validation, helping to combat forgery and ensure authenticity. Additionally, multi-factor authentication and biometric verification should be strengthened across all platforms to provide an extra layer of protection against unauthorized access and fraud.

Measures Implemented by GAB to Address Industry Fraud Issues Moving Forward

Collation of Monthly Fraud Reports

The Ghana Association of Banks (GAB) has acknowledged the dynamic and evolving nature of fraud within the industry, recognizing that fraudsters continually adapt their modus operandi. To address this, GAB has tasked the Fraud & Cybersecurity Network—comprising all Heads of Fraud, Anti-Money Laundering (AML), and Cybersecurity—to submit monthly fraud reports to GAB Research. These reports will be collated and anonymized to provide members with up-to-date insights on prevailing fraud trends in the industry. This initiative aims to curb the recurrence of fraud types across banks and enable member institutions to take proactive measures. By moving away from annual fraud reports, this strategy ensures that fraud data is available on a monthly basis, allowing for more timely and informed responses.

Conduct Empirical Research on the Fraud Triangle, with Emphasis on Employee Welfare and Ethics:

GAB will conduct empirical research focused on the fraud triangle, with particular emphasis on the role of employee welfare and ethics in preventing fraud. This research will aim to provide a deeper understanding of the underlying causes of fraud within financial institutions, facilitating the development of strategies to mitigate staff-related fraud risks and improve ethical standards across the industry.

Thank You

