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Ghana Competitive News

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A Quarterly Newsletter of the
West Africa Competitiveness
Programme (WACOMP) - Ghana

Learn more about

**Francesca Opoku :A
Social Entrepreneur
adding value for
cosmetics exports**

... featured in, 'Voice from the field' P. 21

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Facts about WACOMP

WACOMP is a partnership initiative between the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the European Union (EU)

It has a bearing on regional economic integration and highlights a commitment to the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between the EU and West Africa.

The overall objective of the project is to strengthen the competitiveness of West Africa and to enhance the ECOWAS countries' integration into the regional and international trading system, including the newly established African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

It seeks to improve the competitiveness of Ghanaian exports with a focus on three main value chains – cassava, fruits (mango and pineapple), cosmetics and personal care

products through enhanced value-addition, low carbon sustainable production and processing aimed at increased access to regional and international markets.

The project, launched in March 2019, embraces the vision of the Third Industrial Development Decade for Africa (IDDA III) and is also aligned to UNIDO's mandate of fostering Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development (ISID).

WACOMP is funded through a EURO 120 million contribution from the Regional Indicative Programme (RIP) for West Africa (2014 – 2020) under the 11th European Development Fund (EDF).



➔ WACOMP'S Overall Objectives

Specific Objective 1



Improve the performance, growth and contribution to industry, regional trade and exports of selected Value Chains

Country level

- Competitiveness at firms level is improved, especially through the Cluster's approach.
- Intermediate organisations of the selected VC's are strengthened and service delivery to SMEs is improved and expanded (quality standards, new green solutions, market access, etc..).

Regional level

- Better regional linkages among selected VCs actors are promoted and key regional intermediary organisations are supported.
- Regional quality infrastructure system is strengthened, with a view to promote environmental issue.

Specific Objective 2



Improve the climate for business at national and regional levels

Country level

- Regional policies in favour of competitiveness are mainstreamed in the country and help enable a business-friendly environment.

Regional level

- The regional policy and framework to improve competitiveness are harmonised, formulated and monitored.
- The capacity of the ECOWAS and UEMOA Commissions and Member States to successfully manage, coordinate and monitor the programme is strengthened.

WACOMP in Ghana

In Ghana, the EU is contributing a total of 6,200,000 EURO with other funding support of 150,000 EURO from UNIDO making a total of 6,350,000 EURO of donor fund.

The programme is implemented by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in coordination with the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI).

LOGIC OF INTERVENTION

OBJECTIVE

The export competitiveness of the Ghanaian economy is strengthened through enhanced value-added, low carbon, sustainable production & processing, and access to regional and international markets increases.

PROGRAMME'S EXPECTED RESULTS

SMEs and intermediate organizations of the 3 selected value chains - Fruits, Cassava and Cosmetics & Personal-Care Products - have increased capacity to produce quality products integrated into the global value chains and acceptable to the regional and international markets.



Steering Committee Meeting in Accra



Members of WACOMP 8th Steering Committee

WACOMP – Ghana, held its eighth Steering Committee (SC) meeting on the 20th of March 2024 to discuss the progress of the project implementation and provide recommendations for further action.

Representatives of the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI), Ministry of Finance, European Union, Food and Drugs Authority (FDA), Ghana Standards Authority (GSA), Ghana Export Promotion Authority (GEPA), Ghana Enterprises Agency (GEA), Association of Ghana Industries (AGI), One District and One Factory (1D1F) Secretariat, Sea -freight Pineapple Exporters of Ghana (SPEG), Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) – Food Research Institute (FRI) and other stakeholders reviewed the outcomes of the project and discussed future interventions for the last year of the project.

Mr. Patrick Yaw Nimo, Chief Director of MoTI and Chairman of the SC, expressed his congratulations to the WACOMP team for their dedication and hard work in achieving the objectives of the program and emphasized the significant impact that WACOMP has had on enhancing the competitiveness of West African countries.

„This project has been exceptionally successful thanks to the support from the Steering Committee and partners. They have entrusted the project management unit with the flexibility to

adapt to changing dynamics during the implementation period“, he said.

He also urged UNIDO to investigate how to develop a robust packaging industry that focuses on investment, data (research), and standards.

Mr. Timothy Dolan, the Team Lead of Trade and Macroeconomics for the European Union Delegation (EUD) in Ghana, emphasized that WACOMP is their flagship program in Ghana and affirmed the Delegation’s commitment to furthering the export capabilities of Ghanaian small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to the European Union market.

Mr. Stavros Papastravou, the UNIDO Officer in Charge of Ghana and Liberia, expressed his gratitude to the EUD and the MoTI for their invaluable support in guiding and facilitating the project.

“ UNIDO is ready to provide technical support in collaboration with partners and dialogue on ways to sustain the impact of the WACOMP project“, he assured.

Mrs. Ebe Muschialli, Project Manager of WACOMP, expressed her satisfaction regarding the implementation of WACOMP and assured the committee of the team’s commitment to completing the project in Ghana.



SMEs Export Information seminar benefits 106 entrepreneurs



Interactive session on SMEs export information during the workshop in Accra

WACOMP-Ghana organized, in partnership with the Ghana Export Promotion Authority, specialized capacity-building workshops on export preparation tailored to address the unique challenges of SMEs in Ghana on export in Accra (4th - 5th April 2024), Tamale (21st - 22nd April 2024) and Kumasi (24th - 25th April 2024).

Recognizing the critical role of SMEs, the export information seminars provided participating entrepreneurs with an understanding of export-oriented business strategies and best practices linking export support services and ultimately, improving export market access.

The workshops enriched the entrepreneurs with a comprehensive curriculum covering export readiness, including product labelling, branding, packaging, sustainable business models, trade contracts, international payment terms, incoterms, export insurance, and customs policies.



Participants in Kumasi in a group photo



Participants in Tamale in a group photo

Compete //

Ghanaian Cassava Clusters presented as a model to a Liberia delegation



Delegation from UNIDO Liberia at Techiman with some cassava value chain beneficiaries of UNIDO

WACOMP - Ghana facilitated a study tour from WACOMP - Liberia to Ghana.

This initiative aimed to promote cross-border collaboration in line with the 2030 Agenda, emphasizing the crucial role of South-South cooperation in driving economic growth.

Beneficiaries of the WACOMP – Liberia Cassava Transformation Project, led by the CERATH Development Organization, embarked on the tour from February 5th to 9th, 2023.

They sought to gather insights from Ghanaian counterparts engaged in the WACOMP – Ghana project, implemented by UNIDO, across various regions using a cluster development approach.

The tour featured immersive experiences at SMEs like OXY Industries Limited in Tema, renowned for innovative cassava-based product manufacturing. Visits to sites managed by Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology showcased advancements in gari processing techniques

and sustainability practices. The Liberian delegation also explored innovative ventures at Valley View University, witnessing cassava’s diverse applications in bread production and mushroom processing, piloted during WACOMP-Ghana.

Mr. Enoch Ampratwum, CEO of OXY Industries, emphasized to the Liberian delegation: “UNIDO’s support in overcoming operational challenges and expanding market reach has been extremely beneficial to us.

OXY Industries’ success is closely connected to the technical assistance provided by WACOMP-Ghana, which facilitated capacity building and market diversification opportunities, ultimately propelling growth and sustainability”.

Engagements with local enterprises like Asuogya Processing and Marketing Co. Ltd provided valuable insights into agronomic best practices and sustainable approaches. Interactions with industry leaders emphasized collaborative efforts driving innovation in Ghana’s cassava clusters.

Compete //

Webinar on Intellectual Property Rights, Trademarks and Patents



WACOMP – Ghana organized a webinar on International Property Rights attended by 107 entrepreneurs on the 9th of May 2024.

Participants were taken through the proper use of symbols, words, or designs that would contribute to differentiating their goods or services.

They have also been guided on how to register their trade mark and their inventions to protect their brand identity and prevent others from using similar marks that could confuse consumers.

 **Takeaways:**

- Patents provide inventors with exclusive rights to their inventions for a limited period, typically 20 years.
- Protecting your inventions and creativity drives technological advancements and product research.
- Both trademarks and patents are valuable assets that can increase the competitiveness and profitability of businesses.
- Securing intellectual property rights through trademarks and patents protects your innovations.
- IPR establishes a strong market presence and capitalizes on unique creations by inventors and businesses.

Compete //

Branding and E-Marketing webinar for Cosmetics SMEs



Over the years, WACOMP – Ghana has conducted a series of trainings to assist beneficiaries in gaining significant benefits from branding and e-marketing strategies and establishing a strong brand identity.

A dedicated webinar for cosmetics entrepreneurs was organized on the 18th of April 2024 to support them in continuously building trust, loyalty among consumers and building consistent overall reputation of the brand.

63 participants benefitted from the technical session.

 **Key Takeaways:**

- Be consistent with your brand promise.
- Be transparent, ethical and genuine.
- Know your audience.
- Have a Unique Value proposition.
- Allow Feedback from Customers.
- Focus on creating an enduring value.

Compete //

WACOMP - Ghana presented as a Best Practice at AUC Strategic Retreat in Durban



Participants of the 12th Industry Stakeholders Strategic Retreat

WACOMP – Ghana’s impactful results were presented at the 12th Industry Stakeholders Strategic Retreat, organized by the African Union Commission (AUC) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Secretariat showing how pivotal the project’s interventions are in enhancing competitiveness, quality improvement, and market access in Africa.

Highlights from the WACOMP - Ghana program revealed significant support to over 45,000 MSMEs, a remarkable 67% being women entrepreneurs.

These MSMEs were empowered to enhance competencies, comply with standards, and access external funding through linkages with financial institutions.

Experts from UNIDO emphasized the role of standards, quality, and cluster development in promoting MSMEs’ competitiveness, value addition, and export diversification.

In line with the AU SME Strategy and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), UNIDO’s strategy for Africa aligns with the AU 2063 Agenda to accelerate industrial development on the continent.

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Digital Marketing Webinar for 152 Entrepreneurs



Online digital marketing clinic for SMEs on 23rd February 2024

As part of the initiative for trade competitiveness of the WACOMP – Ghana beneficiaries, MSMEs completed a digital marketing online training to support their sales and brand operations on the 23rd of February 2024.

The specialized webinar gave entrepreneurs the opportunity to inquire about product-related matters and explore marketing strategies for their businesses.



"The branding and marketing technical assistance by WACOMP - Ghana has enhanced innovation while helping me to develop attractive product packaging with the right marketing strategy", says Loretta Senyo, a cosmetics processor and entrepreneur.

"The webinar helped me to ask the right questions on my marketing strategy. This will further enhance my visibility", added Faustina Mensah, another attendee from the cosmetics value chain.

Compete

3rd Ghana International Cluster Conference: Impact on Job Creation, Industrial Competitiveness and Sustainability



Group photo of participants at the 3rd Ghana International Cluster Conference held in Accra on the 12th of June 2024

The 3rd Cluster International Conference was organized in Ghana on Wednesday, 12th June 2024 in Accra by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), European Union (EU) and Ministry of Trade and Industries (MOTI) with the aim to enhance cluster inclusiveness for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs).

The conference provided a platform to discuss and share sustainable solutions and innovations targeted at boosting industrial competitiveness for Ghanaian entrepreneurs in cassava, fruits and cosmetics sectors.

In a speech delivered on behalf of Mr. Patrick Yaw Nimo Chief Director, Mr Kofi Addo, Chief Commercial Officer and head of the Government’s flagship One District One Factory (1D1F) initiative under the MoTI, praised the positive impact of the collaboration between the Government of Ghana and UNIDO on trade, industrialization, and private sector development in enhancing the growth and competitiveness of Ghanaian SMEs.

Mr. Stavros Papastavrou, UNIDO Officer in Charge of Ghana and Liberia, emphasized UNIDO’s commitment to enhancing the

competitiveness and collective efficiency of Ghanaian SMEs. UNIDO’s support spans various areas, including agribusinesses, skills development, renewable energy, Kaizen expansion, and quality improvement.

These efforts aim to enhance value addition, promote sustainable production, and facilitate access to regional and global markets.

Mr. Lassane Kabore, Director of Industry, ECOWAS Commission, highlighted the similarities between the priority value chains targeted by the regional and the Ghana national components of the WACOMP project.

He welcomed the conference as an opportunity for knowledge sharing, networking and strengthening collaboration among stakeholders in these value chains.

Mr. Lassane Kabore also disclosed ECOWAS’s plans to deploy the cluster approach as an economic policy instrument supporting women and youth in Member States to create jobs, foster innovation, drive structural change, and stimulate economic growth.

Compete

Cont'd from pg. 12

He praised the Ghanaian government and regulatory authorities for fostering an enabling environment for cluster development and expressed optimism that the conference will strengthen cooperation between private sector actors, improve the competitiveness in the targeted value chains, and serve as a model for the ECOWAS countries and also serve as a blueprint for other ECOWAS nations to emulate.

Mrs. Malgorzata Pitura, Programme Officer at Macro-Economic and Trade Section of the European Delegation to Ghana said: „WACOMP - Ghana is one of the flagship programmes of the EU, supporting SMEs to facilitate integration in regional and international markets and proves to be a strategic approach to ensure that Ghana actively participates in the opportunities offered by the African Continental Free Trade Agreement.”

Mrs. Ebe Muschiali, UNIDO Industrial Development Expert and WACOMP- Ghana Project Manager shared excitement about the progressive success of UNIDO-supported SMEs under the WACOMP:

“Many of these entrepreneurs have evolved from struggling to comply with market requirements to be part of Ghanaian delegations in international markets. Their products have improved, the value-added locally has increased and the packaging and branding have become much more attractive, all with a strong impact on the local communities in terms of job creation and women’s economic empowerment.”

Dr. Charles Kwame Sackey, Chief Technical Advisor of WACOMP - Ghana, commended the various clusters whose products have drastically improved over the past five years.

He recounted how many SMEs struggled to implement basic Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs) at the beginning and how, thanks to WACOMP’s support, most SMEs have become competitive in national and international markets.



Mrs. Ebe Muschiali, WACOMP - Ghana Project Manager



Mr. Lassane Kabore, Director of Industry, ECOWAS Commission



Mr. Stavros Papastavrou, UNIDO Officer in Charge of Ghana and Liberia



Mrs. Malgorzata Pitura, Programme Officer, Macro-Economic and Trade Section of the European Delegation to Ghana



Mr. Kofi Addo, Chief Commercial Officer & Head of One District One Factory (1D1F) at MoTI



Compete

Clusters Empowering Women and Promoting Economic Development



Pannel discussion on role of women in industrial clusters at the 3rd Cluster conference: Seated from left: Janet Gyimah – Kessie, Comfort Adjahoe-Jennings, Francesca Brenda Opoku and Sandra Snowden

At the 3rd International Ghana Cluster Conference, a panel of WACOMP-supported women entrepreneurs discussed the role of women in industrial clusters and how clusters can promote gender equality.

The panel included Mrs. Sandra Snowden, Co-founder and Director of Hendy Farms; Mrs. Francesca Opoku, CEO of Solutions Oasis Limited; Mrs. Comfort Adjahoe-Jennings, CEO of Ele Agbe Company Limited; and Mrs. Janet Gyimah-Kessie, Managing Director of Josma Agro Industries.

The session discussed the evolution of women’s roles in the agro-processing industry, collaboration among women-led clusters and industries, and access to productive resources.

WACOMP - Ghana has enhanced employment and entrepreneurship support by creating a supportive ecosystem for female entrepreneurs within clusters.

This includes providing access to networks, markets, and resources necessary for business growth. Women have also benefited from training and skill development programs tailored to their needs, as well as better and safer processing tools available at the cluster level.

Janet Gyimah-Kessie mentioned that with support from UNIDO through WACOMP, several women-led businesses, including hers, are now involved in value addition.

Mrs. Sandra Snowden, CEO of Hendy Farms, emphasized the positive impact of cluster development and effective collaboration at the local level.

She highlighted the collective efforts to improve mango quality and support male farmers to produce better fruits through Good Agricultural Practices.

A solar dryer facility was established, and women’s capacities to process fruits were strengthened, leading to additional revenues for the cluster.

Mrs. Francesca Brenda Opoku stated that the cluster approach has promoted collaboration, innovation, and skill development, and increased female and youth participation across the Shea value chain.

She encouraged businesses in the cosmetics clusters to collaborate and take advantage of regional and international market opportunities, emphasizing that collaboration in the sector can be expanded to regional and continental levels.

Mrs. Comfort Adjahoe-Jennings highlighted the importance of strong leadership and mutual support within clusters, acknowledging WACOMP’s role in making accessibility to finance easier by upgrading processes and products, thereby improving access to financial institutions.

Conform



Presentation of Global G.A.P Certificates to ACOPPS-AMOPPA and YKMFA Farmers



Global Gap certificate presented to Yilo Krobo Mango Farmers Association by WACOMP - Ghana



Global Gap certificate presented to ACOPPS and AMOPPA by WACOMP- Ghana

WACOMP - Ghana supported pineapple and mango cluster groups in the Central and Greater Accra regions to obtain GLOBAL G.A.P certifications, which are essential for exporting mangoes and accessing international markets.

The two supported cluster groups, ACOPPS & AMOPPA Organic Producers and Exporters Limited with 40 members, and Yilo Krobo Mango Farmers Association (YKMFA) with 150 members, lacked the knowledge and resources to meet the required agricultural practices for GlobalGAP certification.

WACOMP provided extensive training in pest management, soil health, and documentation to help these groups meet the certification standards effectively.

The Global Gap Option 2 Producer Certificates were delivered to ACOPPS and AMOPPA, a pineapple group in Ekumfi, and YKMFA, a southern mango cluster in the Yilo Krobo region during 3rd Cluster Conference in Accra.

Testimonials



Stephen Mintah, President of the Sea-Freight Pineapple Exporters of Ghana (SPEG), A Cluster Management Organization:

„ As the Chairman of SPEG, I recently received an order for a specific variety of pineapple. Upon conducting initial checks, it became evident that none of the regular members of SPEG could fulfil the requirements for this particular variety. In this situation, I reached out to the Qualipine Producers Union, which is one of the cluster groups that has received support from WACOMP- Ghana. Fortunately, they were able to meet the order requirements and provide the variety that was needed. This is just one of the practical success stories of cluster collaboration through UNIDO - WACOMP support.“



Vinolia Emma Zigah, founder of Vinolia Wealth Enterprise, Food Processing Company:

„Before receiving support from WACOMP, my products were processed with commercial mills, leading to cross-contamination issues. As a result, my products consistently failed the product registration tests at the Food and Drugs Authority (FDA). Thankfully, with the support of UNIDO and the European Union, I was able to obtain improved equipment from the cluster. This support increased our processing capacity and enabled us to successfully register our products. Because of this successful registration, I recently secured an order to supply 10 tons of cassava products to new clients who had sampled our products. I am immensely grateful to WACOMP-Ghana, European Union and UNIDO for their invaluable



Hamid Adams, CEO of Tondaar Ventures, A Shea Processing Company in Upper East:

„It has been an amazing journey with UNIDO – WACOMP alongside our cluster. We have received valuable training in cosmetics formulation, marketing, and branding, which has proven to be beneficial for our development. Over the past five years, our cluster has witnessed significant improvements in its products and packaging, leading to an increase in orders from customers in Ghana and neighbouring countries. Personally, as a shea processor, my ability to process high-quality shea has improved significantly.“

Testimonials



Sylvia Fafali Orou, CEO of Favich Enterprise, A Cosmetics and Shea Processing Company:

„My cosmetics manufacturing company received significant support from WACOMP, which not only bolstered our business but also contributed to my personal growth. We received valuable guidance on product registration, which we promptly completed. Additionally, through personalized emulsion training from WACOMP - Ghana, I have been able to improve my packaging and successfully introduce new cosmetics lotions. As a result, my products now enjoy greater visibility on store shelves, leading to a significant increase in orders since receiving this support.“



Catherine Asare, CEO of Viica Juice, A fruits Processing Company:

“After actively participating in the UNIDO branding training, quality control, and financial management programs, my team and I have observed significant enhancements in our packaging and quality processing procedures. This progress stands out as a direct result of the thorough training and coaching provided through the WACOMP initiative. Additionally, the meticulous record-keeping and accurate sales forecasting that I have achieved owe much to the invaluable knowledge gained from these comprehensive training programs from UNIDO and European Union WACOMP - Ghana.”



Connect

SMEs Meet the Buyer Expo in Accra



Some of the participants of the conference interacting with some of the SMEs exhibiting

A dedicated Cluster Expo was held on June 11, 2024, at Labadi Beach in Accra as part of the activities of the 3rd Cluster conference.

The expo aimed to provide a platform for beneficiaries of WACOMP to engage with potential buyers and create valuable connections, with a diverse representation from the manufacturing industry, hospitality industry, and both public and private sectors.

A total of 60 SMEs specialized in cassava, cosmetics, and fruit products showcased their brands, fostering connections with

potential suppliers of raw materials and gaining access to prominent buyers and decision-makers from various public and private sector organizations.



Mr. David Anyomi Morphine, CEO of EDMASS, a food processing company, remarked:

"I had the opportunity to interact with numerous potential buyers, many of whom were pleasantly surprised to discover that the exhibited products were proudly made in Ghana. Their impression of the international standard packaging and the high level of innovation displayed here was truly encouraging."

Ghana – EU Business Forum

The 2nd Ghana-EU Business Forum took place on July 3rd and 4th, 2024, at the Marriott Hotel in Accra, Ghana.

The forum provided a platform for robust engagement between policymakers and private sector operators from Ghana and Europe.

The focus areas included six key sectors: agribusiness, pharmaceutical/health, renewable energy, ICT/digital, automotive, and textile and garments.

The goal was to foster confidence and commitment to a stronger and sustainable partnership under the EU Global Gateway Strategy.



Connect

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WACOMP - Ghana team at the EU Pavilion

WACOMP - Ghana presented its result at the EU village pavilion alongside other EU projects in Ghana and 14 SME beneficiaries also exhibited at the forum.

Hon. KT Hammond, the Minister of Trade and Industry, along with other dignitaries led by Mrs. Malgorzata Pitura, Program Officer at Macro-Economic and Trade Section of the European Delegation to Ghana, expressed excitement about the achievement of WACOMP and its beneficiaries.

"I wish to see more of these on the market locally", he said.

Nana Oforiwaa, the CEO of Since Shea, another beneficiary of WACOMP at the forum and exhibition, declared that the event's

insightful panel sessions and networking opportunities were a truly enriching experience.



"It was great to participate in the event as it provided a platform for engaging in discussions and fostering collaborations among European and local businesses. We also sold a lot of our skincare products and I would like to express our gratitude to UNIDO WACOMP - Ghana and the European Union for the opportunity to participate in the forum and exhibition", she revealed.

Overall, the forum emphasized the importance of a robust Ghana - EU partnership, promoting economic growth, job creation, and sustainable development.

Software Solutions for Bookkeeping

On the 4th of June, WACOMP – Ghana organized a webinar focused on Software Solutions for Bookkeeping for entrepreneurs in partnership with AKA and Partners Chartered Accountants RDK Consulting Services and Deox Accounting Services.

119 entrepreneurs who registered for the webinar were taken through the key advantages of using dedicated software for bookkeeping, highlighting the automation of repetitive tasks

such as data entry, and reconciliation for reporting. They were also shown how their financial reports could be extracted using customizable dashboards and reports to gain insights into their financial performance, track key metrics, and identify trends to drive their business growth.

Notably, they were able to identify and streamline their finances and operations and also grow businesses using Tally, Xero, Odoo, QuickBooks and Factura.

Credit

WACOMP, Access Bank & Deloitte Kumasi SMEs Business Forum



View of fully packed hall with participants at the WACOMP, Access Bank and Deloitte business forum

On 28th February 2024, WACOMP beneficiaries participated in the Access Bank and Deloitte SMEs business forum in Kumasi.

The event focused on boosting the financial literacy of SMEs for sustainable business growth in the middle belt.

This initiative aligns with WACOMP's credit objective of facilitating access to finance, linking financial institutions to clusters, supporting efficient use of government credits, guaranteeing schemes and engaging financial institutions when necessary.

During the session on tax education and business enlightenment, led by Kwabena Antwi Situ, Partner Deloitte Assurance Business, the 367 participating entrepreneurs, could learn about best practices and pitfalls to be avoided in their businesses.

SMEs also gained insights into business survival, with an emphasis on different tax obligations and how to ensure

compliance and governance. Topics covered included company registration and filing annual returns.



Key Takeways:

- GROW (involving budgeting, business planning, and investment).
- Go GREEN. Incorporate sustainability, Environmental, Social and Governance measures.
- Decide to make profit (involving customer care, marketing, pricing).
- INSURE: Insurance key to sustainability in case of unexpected destruction and loss.
- STEWARDSHIP (Accountability).
- SURVIVE (comply with appropriate institutions).



Voice From the field

Mrs. Francesca Brenda Opoku
CEO of Solution Oasis

*UNIDO's support confirmed my perspective on entrepreneurship: „**Entrepreneurship is a challenging and often solitary journey to success, but it should not be something you do alone! Why should I settle for mediocrity when I know the world could be mine, and I could bring many others along with me?**“*

I am the second of five children, born to a civil servant father and a fashion entrepreneur mother. During my early childhood, my mom owned a vocational school in Tamale, in Northern Ghana, where I completed my primary education.

Compete

After that, I attended Holy Child School in Cape Coast and the University of Ghana Business School. Following my education, I entered the corporate world and gained valuable experience, including working as a brand manager at SC Johnson Wax.

I have the opportunity to work in Ghana and also to see the world and travel both locally and internationally (I know every region in Ghana plus many other countries).

I grew up loved and adored by my family as a result, I have always been confident and creative. This has contributed to my leadership skills and ability to thrive in a group.

Starting a cosmetics business:

When I was young, I had ambitions of becoming a pharmacist or a diplomat. My interest in the cosmetics industry began at university, where I aspired to own a chain of pharmacies and beauty supply stores like Boots. I discovered the benefits of shea butter at an early age. I used shea butter to manage my kinky hair and sensitive scalp, finding it especially useful during the braid-time crisis. When I decided to enter the cosmetics manufacturing industry instead of retail, shea butter became my primary focus. With creativity and determination, I successfully established a strong international brand.

„I decided to set up Solution Oasis as a socially conscious company in 2002 to prioritize social impact over profits. Beauty Secrets, the brand, was born in 2008. I named the company Solution Oasis because an Oasis is a place of water and life in a parched desert. From day one, we envisioned ourselves as providers of solutions amid many problems - a sweet oasis of solutions in the desert of problems.“

Also the name of the brand, „Beauty Secrets“ is inspired by African traditional rites of passage, where natural traditional ingredients are applied to the skin and hair before rites such as puberty and marriage.

We consciously source ethically from rural communities across the country. We have 23 permanent employees and work with hundreds of women and youth in our cooperatives in both the Northern and Southern parts of Ghana. The cooperatives we source from are made up of mostly women and we proudly care about the environment.

Thriving in UNIDO Cluster:

As much as most entrepreneurs will cite access to finances for expansion and operations as the main challenge, keeping up-to-date with the latest technological advancement can be the real challenge, as it is costly and time-consuming. Also Navigating the ever-changing landscape of digital marketing, including social media and SEO, to effectively reach the target audience and build

a positive relationship with the local community is crucial to connect with other entrepreneurs.

„UNIDO through the cluster approach supported us to strengthen synergies with other producers and helped us to leverage new promising opportunities presented by the Single African Market.“

It is our hope that the networks built with WACOMP's support can prosper in the future so that we can ensure sustainable and inclusive development of the cosmetic industry in Ghana. If players get more industry-focused, rather than individual-focused, and ensure that every single cosmetic product that leaves their premises is of high quality, the conscious individual effort will translate to a collective positive image that will give every player stronger bargaining power.

WACOMP Support:

Before WACOMP, we faced several challenges, including formulating for line extension. One of the key challenges was finding packaging solutions and ensuring quality control in our supply chain. Additionally, we needed recognized certification to penetrate the European market.

By achieving the validation of our Product Information File (PIF), we have ensured that our products meet industry standards and build consumer trust. WACOMP – Ghana has been instrumental in helping us obtain this certification, which is nowadays required to enter the European Union market.

Expanding our product line through formulation allowed us to diversify our offer and meet market demands. The training we received under WACOMP greatly contributed to improving our product diversification. In 2019, we were honored with the ‚Best Cocoa Cosmetics Product‘ award.

Furthermore, we invested as a cluster in the purchase of a blowing machine, and this has significantly boosted our production capacity and efficiency as well as the cooperation with other players to differentiate our production.

UNIDO also provided us with opportunities to participate in international trade fairs, allowing us to access the international market. As a result, we have fulfilled various orders, including a container load of Black Soap to China. While our primary export market is the United States of America, we also export to other countries such as Australia, parts of Asia, and the Caribbean. Our current focus is on the African market, where we are confident we can get our market share through the development of the African Continental Free Trade Area. Thank you UNIDO and European Union for all your support.

AT A GLANCE

Donor:
European Union

Implementing Agency
United Nations Industrial
Development Organization (UNIDO)

Duration:
71 months

Government co-ordinating agency
Ministry of Trade and Industry of
Ghana (MoTI)

Budget:
6,350,000 EUR

**EU is contributing a total of 6,200,000 EURO with other
funding support of 150,000 EURO from UNIDO**

WACOMP GHANA'S CONTRIBUTION TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)



WACOMP REGIONAL INTERVENTION

West Africa Competitiveness and Quality Infrastructure Project

The value chains identified in the EU action document for regional value chain development and upgrading include:

- Mango
- Cassava
- Textile and Garment
- Information, Communication and Technology (ICT)

Each of these value chain are identified as relevant for several ECOWAS member states and will be thoroughly reviewed during the inception phase of the project for their regional development potential.



Ghana Competitive News



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The Delegation of the European Union to Ghana is part of the European Union External Service and is one of the more than 130 Delegations throughout the world. The Delegation has the status of a diplomatic mission and officially represents the European Union in Ghana.

For more information, visit: https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/ghana_en



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INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

Implementing Agency: UNIDO

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Its mandate is to promote and accelerate sustainable industrial development in developing countries and economies in transition and work towards improving living conditions in the world's poorest countries by drawing on its combined global resources and expertise.

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Ministry of Trade and Industry
Republic of Ghana

In Partnership with Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI)

The Ministry of Trade & Industry is the supporting government agency of this programme and the lead policy advisor to the government on trade, industrial and private sector development with responsibility for the formulation and implementation of policies for the promotion, growth and development of domestic, international trade, and industry.

For more information, visit: <http://moti.gov.gh>

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