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

Read about
**The QUALIPINE Union:
a Pineapple Cluster Agent**

... featured in, Voice from the field Pg. 33



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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,

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

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.

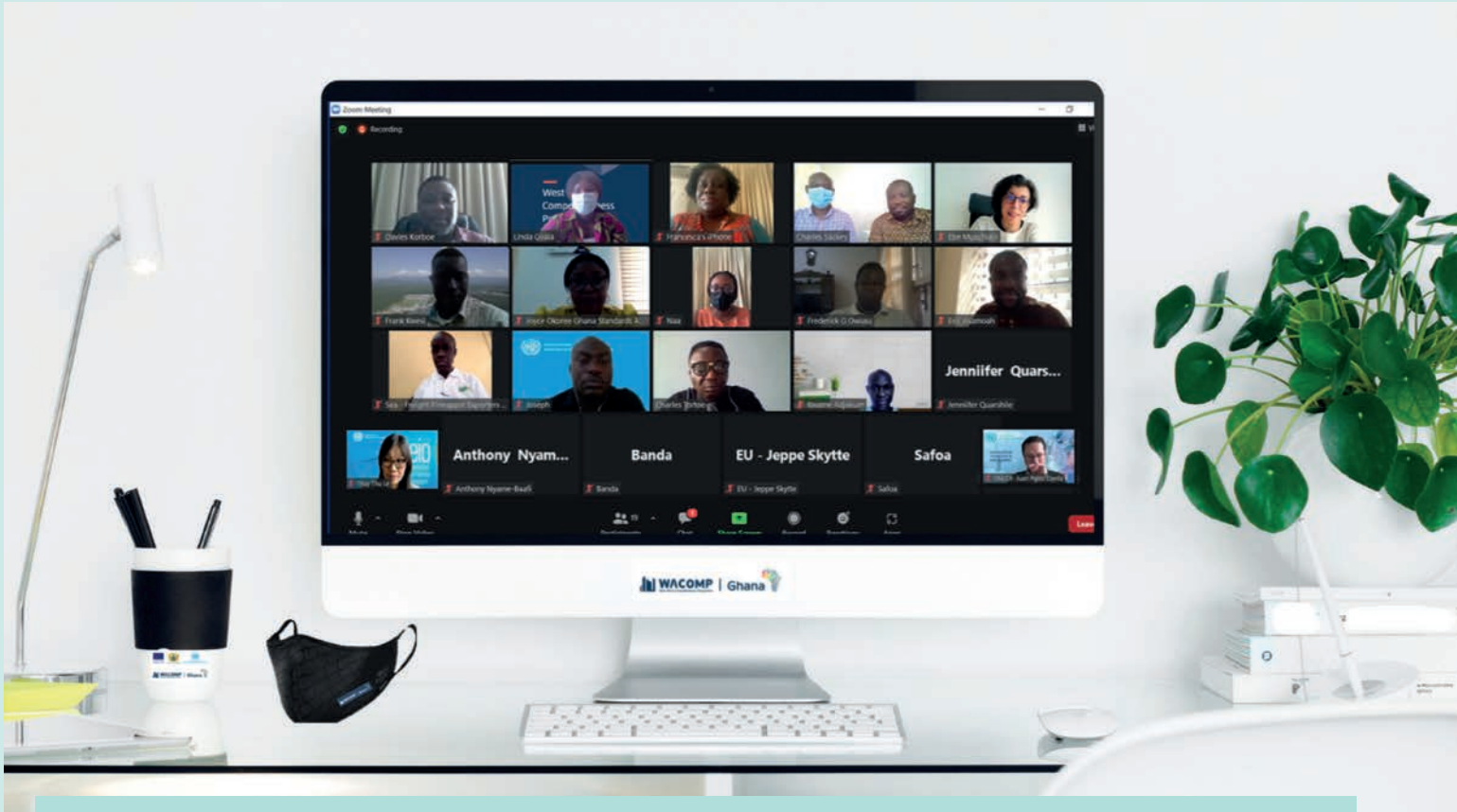
PROGRAMME'S EXPECTED RESULTS

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.



Coordinate

4th Steering Committee Meeting



Virtual meeting of members of the project's Steering Committee

The 4th meeting of the WACOMP - Ghana Steering Committee (SC) took place virtually on the 10th December 2021, to present the project's implementation during the year 2021 and provide recommendations for further implementation.

The meeting, chaired by Mr. Frank Kofifah of the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI) on behalf of the Chief Director, reviewed the main project's results and validated the action plan for the next six months.

The Steering Committee Meeting gave WACOMP - Ghana the occasion to present the results and findings of the external mid-term evaluation, conducted from September 2021 to November 2021.

The main conclusions and recommendations were presented by the external evaluators during the online meeting.

Mr. Paolo Scalia, Team Leader of the External Evaluation team, commended the project implementation results and encouraged more inter-regional linkages with other national components, implemented within the WACOMP Regional Programme.

Mr. Scalia said: "The evaluation wishes to highlight that the project could achieve very concrete results despite COVID -19 pandemic.

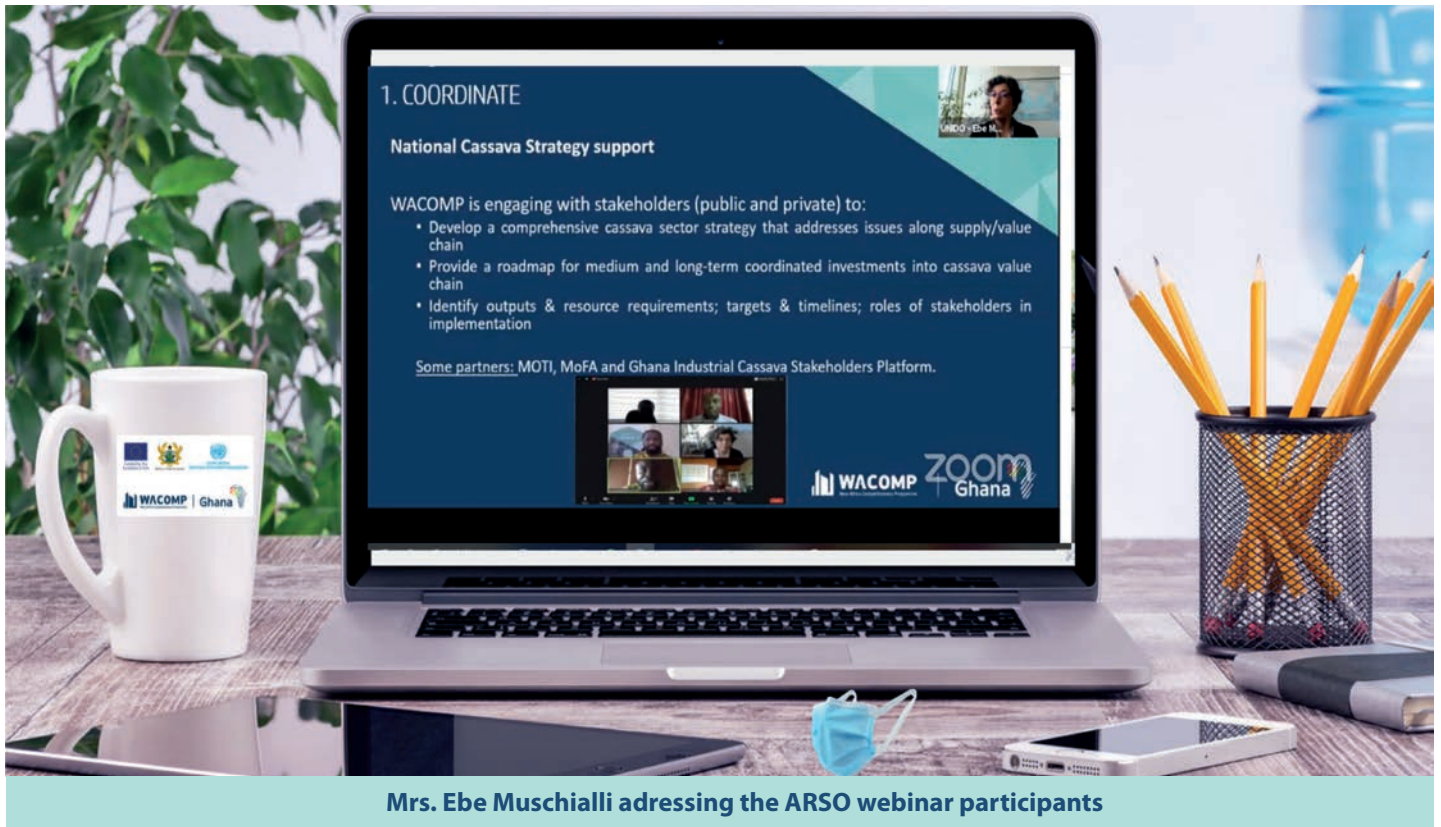
The implementation did not slow down and this is the outcome of good management by the project team, who maintained remarkable interactions with SMEs and effective communication, despite the difficult conditions."

Mr. Jeppe Skytte Hansen of the European Union Delegation to Ghana on his part agreed with the independent evaluation report findings and confirmed : "We agree with the positive appraisal of the project so far and the conclusion and the recommendations highlight the positive impact that WACOMP project has had in Ghana."

Mr. Juan Pablo Davila, Project Manager of WACOMP - Ghana, thanked all the partners for the work done and the collaboration with the UNIDO team, which made it possible to achieve the expected results.

Coordinate

Presentation of WACOMP - Ghana in ARSO Seminar to Promote the 5Cs Approach



Mrs. Ebe Muschialli addressing the ARSO webinar participants

WACOMP – Ghana was presented as a best practice during the African Organization for Standardization (ARSO) on 23rd September 2021.

The webinar focused on “Fostering the Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) trade competitiveness through standardization: Helping SMEs to be an Engine of Trade, Growth and Employment under the AfCFTA and the Role of Standardisation”.

The project team presented the UNIDO - WACOMP’s 5 Cs (Conform, Compete, Connect, Compete and Credit) for competitiveness approach and its positive impact in Ghana.

Mrs. Ebe Muschialli, UNIDO Industrial Development Expert illustrated how the project focuses on SMEs clusters as an engine of growth and how the project strengthens these clusters’ alliances so that SMEs can take advantage of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

Mrs. Muschialli focusing on how the 5Cs for competitiveness are applied in the cassava value chain as an example.

“We work with the Ministry of Trade and Industry and Ministry of Food and Agriculture in Ghana and coordinate with local processors, producers and Quality Infrastructure actors to implement quality and strengthen local linkages that will ensure competitiveness and sustainability for the value chain ” she explained.

The African Union SMEs Strategy and Master Plan 2017-2021 recognizes the strategic importance of SMEs in Africa’s sustainable development and highlights various strategies for their competitiveness and productivity.

Focus on Quality Infrastructure (Standardization) is part of this strategy.

Compete

Hand-crafted Shea Butter Training of Trainers in Northern Cluster



Hand- craft shea butter packaged in calabash

The global demand for shea is projected to be 2.9 Billion (USD) by 2025, according to the Global Market Insights Incorporated Shea butter global market analysis report.

Besides the quantity increase, there has also been a rise in demand for clean labels, natural products and organic and directly sourced from rural women in African communities.

To meet these opportunities, Ghanaian producers of handcrafted shea and other shea-based products must produce to meet quality standards to be able to sell and to export to the European market.

For these reasons, between 26th August and 10th September 2021, WACOMP-Ghana organized a Training of Trainers (ToT) for 431 women Shea processors in 4 different centres in Bolga, Tamale and Wa in the Northern, Upper East, and Upper West Regions.

The ToT focused on “How to process shea butter to meet export quality parameters with emphasis on moisture and free fatty acid content”, as the best practice for handcrafted Shea butter.

This was also the occasion to sensitize women producers on the importance of standards and Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs) for Shea butter in the Northern Cluster shea processing centres.

The essence and objective of the improved processing methods are to ensure that the beneficial bioactive ingredients, found in shea kernels, are retained in the final shea butter for exports.

By increasing the quality of the raw material, the cluster should be able to improve its market access and secure new clients willing to buy Ghanaian high-quality shea butter.

Compete



Cont'd from pg.7

The WACOMP Northern cluster focuses on the cosmetic value chain. SMEs in the cluster use shea butter and other indigenous oils as major raw material to formulate different kinds of cosmetic products.

Mr. Senyo Kpelly, Head of Shea Master Consult and WACOMP - Ghana consultant with support from Mrs. Naa Atswei Nyakpo, WACOMP – Ghana National Expert in charge of Cosmetics and Personal Care Cluster Groups trained various groups of shea butter processing women. The objective is to support them to understand shea butter quality standards for export with an emphasis on how to attain the right level of moisture levels, without burning the oil, and ensure the lowest free fatty acid content during the period at their production facilities.

Key subjects treated during the training include the following:

- Identification of good shea kernels;
- Identification of defective kernels, cracked, broken, mouldy, black, insect-infested, and germinated kernels;
- Best practises for shea kernel storage;
- Exportable shea butter standard quality;
- Appreciation of African Regional Standards Organisation (ARSO) and Ghana Standards Authority (GSA) shea quality standards;
- How to prepare shea kernels for processing;
- Best practices for paste preparation and higher oil extraction yield;
- How to reduce variation in shea butter batch quality;
- How to ensure a longer shelf life of shea butter.

The project also produced an easy to follow guideline for processing quality shea butter, to be distributed and used in the different shea processing centres.



Some of the participants being briefed in Tamale



Trainer, Mr. Senyo Kpelly taking participants through quality steps for processing shea butter



The participants drying the shea nuts for processing



Compete



Funded by the European Union

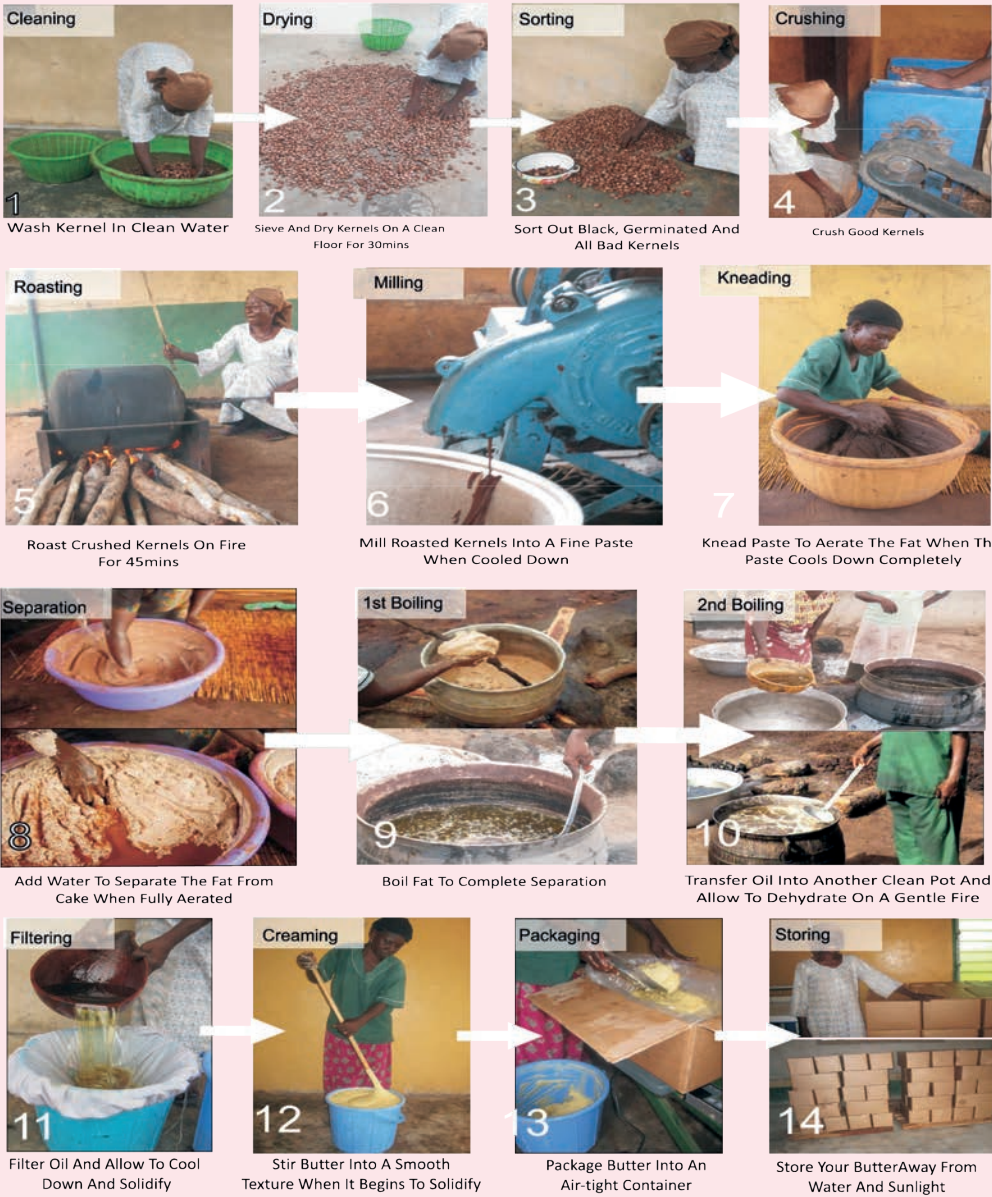


Ministry of Trade and Industry
Republic of Ghana



UNITED NATIONS
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

QUALITY HAND-CRAFTED SHEA BUTTER Best Practices For Processing



SHEA
MASTER
CONSULT

Prepared by:

Compete

More than 3,000 Women Benefit from WACOMP - Ghana Matching Scheme



Mr Habib Haruna, Chief Executive Officer of Pure Trust LBG, handing over equipment to the association

More than 3,000 members of the Pagsung Shea Butter and Shea Pickers Association selected to benefit from the WACOMP - Ghana Sub-contracting Matching Scheme to improve their competitiveness for export for shea and black soap

The project supported the upgrade of the production capacities of the Pagsung Shea Butter and Shea Pickers Association, located at Sagnarigu in the Northern Region, through tooling of its production processes and output management by upgrading its machinery, equipment and management capacities.

The one-year project, which will end in November 2022, is being implemented by Pure Trust Foundation LBG.

Mr Habib Haruna, Chief Executive Officer of Pure Trust LBG, said the project will improve the income and employment security of more than 3,000 rural women members of the Association and members of its alliances with Bole Shea Cooperative Association in the Bole District of the Savannah Region and Janshegu Shea Co-operative in the Tamale Metropolis.

In line with the project, a desktop computer with accessories was presented to the Pagsung Shea Butter and Shea Pickers Association to enhance record keeping of its operations. Their production machinery to be provided under the sub - contract is currently being fabricated by Gratis Foundation and will be installed in February 2022.

Madam Safia Alhassan, Chairperson of Pagsung Shea Butter and Shea Pickers Association, expressed gratitude for the support.

„The Association would make good use of the new equipment such as a kneader, crusher, grinding mill, and the computer which will further support and benefit over 700 other women shea butter processors and pickers in the Sagnarigu Municipality“, she revealed.

Compete

Cont'd from pg.11



Madam Memunatu Salifu, Assistant Production Supervisor, Shea Butter Processing Department, Pagsung Shea Butter and Shea Pickers Association:

“The support would enhance our work. The use of bare hands to process shea butter, which is a laborious process, would be a thing of the past. The support would ensure we process high-quality shea butter in large quantities at shorter times.”

Madam Samata Abdul Rahman, Senior Supervisor, Soap Processing Department, Pagsung Shea Butter and Shea Pickers Association:

“ We use our hands to do most of the work for processing the soap, which affects the quality and sometimes the attractiveness of the final products. The machines would make the soap more attractive to customers and improve the quality. ”

Mr Abdulai Isah Cosmos, Business Development Officer, Sagnarigu Business Resource Centre:

“ This support from UNIDO and the EU WACOMP - Ghana to women in Sagnarigu Association is laudable. It complements the efforts of the government to improve local businesses.”

Madam Safia Alhassan, Chairperson, Pagsung Shea Butter and Shea Pickers Association:

“ We are grateful to UNIDO WACOMP - Ghana and the European Union for the continuous support to the Association to help expand our operations and marketing of our products on the international market using various platforms including social media.”

Compete

109 Agric Extension Officers and Pineapple Farmers Trained on Control of Phytophthora Heart Rot (PHR) Disease



Mr. Frank Kwesi, WACOMP - Ghana Fruits Cluster and Networks Expert addressing the participants

The project has trained 109 (18 agriculture extension officers and 91 pineapple farmers) in the Nsawam and Fotobi enclave in the Eastern Region on the control of Phytophthora Heart Rot (PHR) disease and safe handling of agro chemicals for value addition, from the 13th of September to the 24th of September 2021.

Dr. Francis Collison Brentu, WACOMP - Ghana consultant with support from Mr. Frank Kwesi, WACOMP – Ghana National Expert in charge of Fruits Cluster conducted the training, which is part of the project’s support to enhancing the farmers’ competitiveness in pineapple production for processing and exports, ensuring value addition.

WACOMP – Ghana is currently working with the QUALIPINE Union of the Eastern region. Through funds from WACOMP’s Sub-Contracting Matching Scheme, the pineapple farmers are implementing interventions aimed at enhancing their competitiveness as pineapple producers.

Furthermore, to enhance the capacity of the Agriculture Extension Agents (AEAs) in the District Department of Agriculture, the training also focused on recent reports of abuse of agrochemicals which results in contamination of export pineapples and raised awareness on the Phytophthora Heart Rot (PHR) disease, that currently

constitute a serious threat to the pineapple value chain in Ghana.

Pineapple counts among the most prominent horticultural crops in Ghana and it is grown mostly in central and eastern parts of the country.

The major advantages of the crops are the capacity to grow on a wide range of soils, its tolerance to drought and the fact that pineapple is not too labour intensive in comparison with other crops.

About 2% of the Ghanaian population grow pineapple and the crop accounts for 40% of the total horticultural exports in Ghana, with an annual volume of 71,000 MT.

Pineapple farmers from each of the 12 Associations in Akuapim South, Nsawam Adoakyire and Upper Akyim districts under the Qualipine Union namely Okonasi (Akuapim South), Adontin (Akuapim South), Adesika (Nsawam Adoakyire) Aburi Amanfo (Akuapim South), Samsam Odumasi (Upper West Akim), Nana Akura (Nsawam Adoakyire), Pepawani (Akuapim South), Fotobi (Nsawam Adoakyire), Fotobi Youth (Nsawam Adoakyire), Afaben (Upper West), Adeiso (Upper West) and Boadi (Akuapim South) acquired the requisite practical knowledge and skills for the implementation of Global GAP and Fair Trade Standards in the Pineapple Value Chain.

Compete //

Formulation Training for 42 Cosmetics Entrepreneurs in Accra



Mr. Jeppe Skytte Hansen from the EU Delegation to Ghana (middle) inspecting some of the SMEs Handcrafted soaps

Demand for natural and organic cosmetics in Ghana and European markets is booming

Consumers are increasingly aware of the ingredients they put on their skin and want to know how natural cosmetics are made and by whom and whether it suits their skin types.

In Europe alone, sales of natural and organic cosmetics have grown at an average of over 7% per year over the past five years and are expected to reach 5 billion euros by 2023.

While there is undoubtedly great potential to develop a professional cosmetic industry in Ghana as the country has some talented formulators, experienced entrepreneurs, and a range of potentially interesting raw materials for essential oils, there is still much to be done to convert this potential into a viable sustainable industry.

WACOMP – Ghana within the support provided to the cosmetic value chain to enhance knowledge sharing and strengthen market access for young entrepreneurs, and to ensure that these SMEs are competitive on the local, regional and international market, organized a four-day practical cosmetic formulation training from 7th to 10th December.

During the training, producers of shea butter based creams, lotions, balms and soaps, were guided to address common mistakes that can compromise quality and make their products non-competitive.

42 participants attended the training jointly organized in partnership with the Ghana Enterprises Agency (GEA), the Food and Drugs Authority (FDA) and Ghana Standards Authority (GSA).

Participants were introduced to simple and different methods of formulation techniques and each participant had to formulate a product following clear and simple guidelines provided by the training facilitator, Mrs. Vida Obese, UNIDO WACOMP Consultant and CEO - Ayofa Essentials Limited.

At the end of the training, a small exhibition of the products developed has been organized. Mr. Jeppe Skytte Hansen of the European Union Delegation to Ghana, Mr. Eric Asamoah of the Ministry of Trade and Industry and Mr. Johnson Opoku Boateng, Director, Business Development Services of AGI visited the exhibition and engaged with cosmetics entrepreneurs.

Compete

Cosmetic Formulation Event Pictures



Compete

Launch of Cluster Coaching Training of Trainers



Graduation ceremony of WACOMP - Ghana virtual cluster coaching training

To further strengthen the project’s experts’ field presence and train more coaches that can complement WACOMP technical experts and reach out to companies and support them to enhance their competitiveness, the project launched on the 9th September 2021, a 12 weeks comprehensive cluster coaching training course.

The training targeted a first cohort of 37 coaches that graduated on the 14th of December 2021, and a second cohort that is still running includes 40 additional participants (trained from the 9th of November).

The training is delivered by UNIDO’s International Cluster and Marketing expert Mr. Vedat Kunt.

Some notable achievements from 1st cohort:

- 10 SMEs were coached during the period (5 SMEs in cosmetics, 2 SMEs in cassava and 3 SMEs in fruits) and improved their cost calculation, their marketing and packaging as a result of the coaching received;
- SMEs coached are ready to collaborate with other SMEs in the cluster and develop joint strategies;
- Coaches could improve the way they communicate with the companies and standardize their support to SMEs thanks to the tools and checklists provided.

Feedback on Cluster Coaching Training



Mrs. Evelyn Ingrid Keelson, WACOMP - Coach Graduate:

"There seems to be an over-abundance of coaches in the marketplace in recent times. However, a closer look shows that a lot of these ,coaches' offer experience in a specific area of expertise (such as marketing) and label it coaching. This is indeed a valuable very punctual support to SMEs, but it isn't coaching. UNIDO - WACOMP has taken us through a 12-week training that makes us coaches capable of providing 360 degrees support to the businesses we are supporting. WACOMP has equipped us with skills to provide clear guidance to businesses and their owners in defining desired outcomes and setting up a clear path to get there."



Mr. Gabriel Benaiah Kofi Dake , WACOMP - Coach Graduate:

"Amazingly, we managed to pull through such an action-packed program. There were days we lacked the strength to attend the virtual sessions, but where our resolve faltered, we were met with consistent encouragement to persevere. If not for Linda's inspiration; the fear of missing Vedat's lectures; Charles' energy; Ebe's instructions; the erudite team discussions; and the thought of losing an opportunity to become a certified SME coach, I doubt we would have made it. The important aspect for us now is to reflect upon is what we have gained in our SME coaching acumen, the adoption of new strategies, leveraging the value of the certificate, and exploring opportunities through expanded networks. We want to say a big thank you to UNIDO, EU, GoG and WACOMP for this laudable initiative. We pledge our readiness to contribute adequately to support WACOMP in supporting SMEs to enhance their competitiveness. This cohort will see to it that SMEs are strategically moulded and nurtured on a path of steady growth to ensure sustainability in their businesses."



Mrs. Gloria Ghartey - Tagoe, WACOMP - Coach Graduate:

"A commitment to excellence requires continuous learning. Thanks to the WACOMP COACH TRAINING COURSE, I have sharpened other important areas in business management. The nature of my job allows me to encounter a lot of entrepreneurs so I do my best to support but with the cluster coaching programme I have become more knowledgeable in using growth strategies and now I can support other SMEs and businesses to excel."



Mr. Julian Owusu Boakye, WACOMP - Coach Graduate:

"As a trained agricultural economist and a practicing management consultant, participating in this WACOMP Training has so far enlightened me on identifying the real problems affecting startups and how to effectively engage with SMEs business owners to help them overcome the problems."

Compete

Project Field Visit to the Sub – Contracting Matching Scheme (SCMS) Beneficiaries

The project team embarked on a field visit from 27th September to 1st October 2021, to monitor beneficiary companies and clusters in Asuogya (Nkoranza) Kumasi, Kintampo, Techiman North, and Wenchi in the Ashanti, Brong Ahafo and Bono - East regions

Projects Visited and Achievements:

A).Ashanti Mampong Cassava Value Chain Association (AMCVA)

AMCVA signed a contract under Call III of the Sub-Contracting Matching Scheme to support 240 cassava farmers, namely for accessing certified high yielding industrial planting material, capacity building in GAPs and land conservation practices including climate-smart agricultural practices. Through the contract, AMCVA aims at supporting 156 processors on innovative and better processing management and respect of GMPs.

The Ashanti Mampong Cassava Value Chain Association started the implementation activities in July 2021 .

The major achievements so far:

- 40 bundles of planting material (Ampong, Otuhia, Broni bankye, Sika bankye, bankye hema, esam bankye, nkabom) have been provided to each of the Association’s members;
- 2 demonstration plots and 6 demonstration farms have been established ;
- 180 members of AMCVA had been trained in GAPs.



Project team with executives of AMCVA

B). Ghana Industrial Cassava Stakeholders Platform (GICSP)

GICSP received support under Call II of the Sub-Contracting Matching Scheme to support 900 smallholder farmers, 80 farmer processors and 4 SMEs in the Kintampo, Techiman, Wenchi, Nkoranza and Akomodan (Bono East Region) to design strategies for value chain development, including improved production and post-harvest handling, value-added processing and market linkages.

The major achievements so far:

- 4 demonstration plots have been set up to showcase the different GAP techniques at different locations – Nkoranza, Techiman, Kintampo and Wenchi.

Compete

Cont'd from pg.17



Project team interacting with executives of GICSP

C). Asuogya Co-Operative Agro Processing Company Ltd ('Asuogya')

Asuogya received support under Call III of the Sub-Contracting Matching Scheme to support 127 farmers on new farming techniques, warehouse management, safety, health and sanitation.

The major achievements so far:

- 2 demonstration plots (one with a 2 acre farm at Nankuma (Nkoranza) and the other with 1 ½ acre at Kaniango (Techiman) are being used to train the farmers in new farming techniques.
- The 18 farmers per group making 72 farmers are divided into four groups based on geographical location and proximity to the demonstration farms.



Project team monitoring the Asuogya project sites

D). Plant Pests and Diseases Control Company Limited (PPEDCo)

PPEDCo received support under Call III of the Sub-Contracting Matching Scheme to support, strengthen and provide technical farm assistance on agronomic practices and plant protection techniques for efficient control of bacterial black spot (BBS) and fruit flies and link farmers to identified fruit processing companies.

Major achievements so far:

- 3 gangs were established with 50 members (30 in Kintampo, 10 in Techiman and 10 in Wenchi);
- 15 farmers have been trained in pruning techniques, spraying and mechanised weeding ranging between 4 acres and 34 acres;

- Support training on the following topics:
 - Pruning Techniques (30 gang members);
 - Spraying Techniques for 30 gang members;
 - Mechanical weed control for 8 gang members;
 - Training for farmers have been scheduled for February 2022.
- Spraying machines made available by the Association to its members;
- 200 farmers supported, covering 120 acres from 6 different farmer associations;

The current average yield for the farmers is 1.4 ton/acre and it is expected to increase to a minimum of 5 ton/acre thanks to the support provided.

Conform

GMP Training of Trainers for Cassava Value Chains



Processing cassava flour for Gari

Unexpected contamination of products could cause ill health or even death of consumers. Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs) are therefore designed to minimize these risks and to improve quality, avoid contamination and increase efficiency in quality processing and production.

WACOMP – Ghana organized a two-day non-residential training programme on GMPs, Food Safety and Food and Drugs Authority (FDA) product registration processes.

Participants were 18 Women in Agriculture Development (WIAD) officers in Abura Asebu Kwamanakese District of the Central Region and the training took place from 6th to 8th December 2021.

This hands-on training for WIAD’s officers comes as a follow up to an earlier training conducted for 13 extension officers, WIAD and Business Advisory officers on the 8th of September 2021, to build capacity on GMPs to support the cassava entrepreneurs and farmers in the region.

The total 31 officers trained by the project from September 2021 to December 2021 are part of on going support for improving quality and hygiene at the cassava processing centres.

They are now commissioned to train others in their operating areas and districts to implement GMPs.

Conform //

Equipment Handed Over to Ghanaian Laboratories to Strengthen Testing Capacity



Food and Drugs Authority (FDA) Cosmetic's Laboratory team

National laboratories' testing capacity is an essential component of the National Quality Infrastructure System, as most traded products require proof that they comply with specifications and safety regulations before they can access national and international markets.

Buyers and customers require objective evidence that specifications are met to be reassured and proceed with the purchase.

These requirements do not only relate to products but are also applied in the case of services and organizational management systems.

In this framework, WACOMP - Ghana provided and installed laboratory equipment and intrants at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) Food and Technology Laboratory in Kumasi, the University of Development Studies (UDS) Food Technology Laboratory in Tamale, the Ghana Standards Authority (GSA) Cosmetics Laboratory and the Food and Drugs Authority (FDA) Cosmetics Laboratory in Accra.

The provision of equipment, intrants, reagents and glass wares will contribute to the continuous improvement in the delivery of high-quality testing services to members of the food and cosmetic cluster.

Conform



Feedback from the Supported Laboratory Staff



Mr. William Appaw, Laboratory Manager, Mycotoxin & Food Analysis Lab, and UNIDO WACOMP Lab, KNUST Kumasi:

"The training in measurement of uncertainty, ISO17025:2017 in addition to the equipment received from UNIDO WACOMP empowers us to be able to provide a better analytical support to SMEs in the value chain, with a focus on accuracy and reproducibility of test results."



Mr. Emmanuel Baako, Laboratory Manager, UDS Cosmetic Laboratory, Tamale:

"Thank you WACOMP - Ghana, the EU, and UNIDO for the supply of new equipment, an enhanced exposure to laboratory standards and the related hands-on training on how to use the supplied equipment. The UNIDO WACOMP - Ghana's partnership with UDS Cosmetic lab will strengthen our capacity to support SME's in Northern Ghana to comply with cosmetic regulations and access both local and foreign markets."



Mr. Redeemer Kofi Agbolegbe, Senior Technician/Food Analyst, KNUST-Food Science and Technology Laboratory:

"I want to thank UNIDO WACOMP - Ghana for the training provided on measurement uncertainty, as well as for the equipment received and the technical support for developing the Laboratory Quality Manual. You have played an extremely important role and you have helped us improve on the quality of our Laboratory reports and results."

Conform

Hands-on Training to Beneficiary Laboratories on the Use of Equipment Received



Mr. Ruben Cortez, Technician at FULLTECH conducting training at the GSA and FDA Cosmetics Labs

WACOMP – Ghana organized special hands-on training for the Ghana Standards Authority (GSA), Food and Drugs Authority (FDA) cosmetics laboratories and also for the food technologies laboratories at the University of Development Studies (UDS) and Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST).

The laboratory technicians have been trained and supported by the technicians from FULLTECH Limited, as part of the project activities for strengthening the Quality Infrastructure System in Ghana.

The support provided by WACOMP - Ghana to the testing laboratories allows the country to demonstrate that its national laboratories operate respecting an internationally recognized management system, that enables them to take full control of their processes ensuring that they are technically competent and can generate valid results.

This is because in the global market systems, the countries having sound Quality Infrastructure Systems are well placed to enter either bilateral or multilateral agreements with their trading partners, as this facilitates the market penetration of national Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).



Mr. Eureka Kafui Tamakloe, Quality Control Officer, FDA Cosmetics Laboratory:

"I was part of UNIDO WACOMP - Ghana's training on UV/VIS spectrometer and High-Performance Liquid Chromatography (HPLC). Not only this will help to improve the analysis we currently do but also, by the use of these determinations, we will be able to trace corticosteroids, hydroquinone, chloroxylenol, active synthetic pyrethrin to ensure that cosmetics products produced in Ghana are safe and can be used on the skin. Thanks to UNIDO and the EU for the training and coaching provided. We are forever grateful."



Conform

Standards Developed for Cassava and Cosmetics

STANDARDS DEVELOPED



CASSAVA & DERIVATIVES 	COSMETICS & PERSONAL CARE 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GS 584 - Industrial Chemicals - Specification for Cassava Starch • GS 315:2003: - Chemistry - Specification for Ethanol 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GS 289: Specification for Alata Samina (Black soap) • GS 1324: Black Soap - Code of Practice for the Alata Samina (Black soap) Manufacturing Industry • GS 1323: Soaps and Detergents - Specification for Alata Samina. Shower or Bath Gel (African Black Shower or Bath Gel) • GS 1321: Cosmetics - Specification for Body Balm • GS ISO 22715: Cosmetics - Packaging and Labelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GS 1325: Specification for Shea-based hair conditioners • GS 1326: Specification for Shea-based hair shampoo • GS 258: Cosmetics - Specification for Skin creams and Skin lotions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Specification for Shea butter body lotion 2. Specification for Shea butter cream 3. Specification for Shea Baby cream 4. Specification for body moisturizer lotion • GS 1320: Cosmetics - Specification for Hair and Body oils

List of standards developed for the value chains

Standards and their use in technical regulations, production methods and services play a vital role in sustainable development and trade facilitation. They strongly contribute to the promotion of safety, quality, and compatibility.

Implementation of standards and subsequent certification can facilitate progress through measurement and innovation, lead to increased profit, more efficient processes, reduced cost and a more credible image.

The project, in collaboration with the Ghana Standards Authority (GSA), developed 16 standards (2 for cassava and 14 for cosmetics & personal care products) to support the competitiveness and quality of the cassava and cosmetics value chains.

This result shall ensure that quality is built-in at each stage of the production process, from raw material acquisition, production, marketing as well as delivering of the product, by ensuring compliance to food safety and international market requirements.

The application of the newly developed standards will also contribute to better access to regional and international markets, including the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) while taking into account social and environmental concerns.

10 WACOMP National Quality Experts Become IRCA Certified



The experts holding their IRCA certificates

In a world of fast-changing regulations, rapidly advancing technology and dynamic markets, WACOMP Ghana continuously builds up the competency of experts in system audits and management system implementation. On the 20th of September 2021, the project launched an IRCA certified lead auditor training for its quality resource pool experts.

The activity is extremely strategic for Ghana, UNIDO, and the European Union as it ensures that the number of certified auditors increases in the country, which should in turn make businesses more competitive.

The Quality Management System Auditor / Lead Auditor training, ISO 9001:2015 was designed in line with the IRCA /CQI Standards and it is certified by IRCA (International Register of Certificated Auditors), the world's largest international certification body for auditors of management systems and is a division of the Chartered Quality Institute (CQI).

The provided knowledge and skills are required to perform 1st, 2nd and 3rd party audits of quality management systems (QMS) against ISO 9001, in accordance with ISO 19011 and ISO/IEC 17021-1.

Practical case studies were customised to make the subject relevant to the sector of operations of each expert's special area of operations within the fruits, cosmetics and cassava value chains.

Ten (10) Ghanaian quality experts were selected and funded to participate in the 5-day virtual IRCA Lead auditor training.

Successful candidates (Mr. Johnson Opoku - Boateng, Mr. Akoi Amoah - Larbi, Mr. Clement Eleseshie Nyadroh, Mr. Dennis Adomako Amankwah, Mrs. Akosua Konadu Cann, Mrs. Francisca Frimpong, Mr. Anthony Ebo Prah, Ms. Cynthia Agyeiwaa Ameyaw, Mrs. Naa Atswei Nyakpo) were awarded IRCA Lead Auditor certificates.

Mr. Jeppe Skytte Hansen of the European Union Delegation to Ghana advised the qualified experts to support the EU's project to achieve its project goals in Ghana and the rest of the ECOWAS countries.

"Do your best for the success and sustenance of Quality Infrastructure Systems to achieve EU goals of WACOMP project and for the advantage of the AfCFTA. We congratulate the 10 experts for passing the IRCA Lead Auditor examination", he encouraged the certified experts.

Conform

Cont'd from pg.26

Course content :

- General introduction;
- Quality management principles, vocabulary and ISO 9001 requirements;
- Stage 1 audit (including document review);
- Audit planning;
- Process auditing and audit skills;
- Writing NC reports and audit reporting;
- Audit follow up.



(CQI IRCA Training Organization Approval No.0118 5621; Course ID 17932)
Q80.21E/Jun 2021

Feedback from the Trained IRCA Experts



Mr. Clement Eleseshie Nyadroh, Head of Compliance and Certifications at Gold Coast Refinery Limited:

"Thanks to UNIDO, EU and WACOMP Ghana for supporting me to participate in the Quality Resource Pool and IRCA 9001:2015 Lead Auditor Course. The practical exercises were useful in offering hands- on experience. I have gained an enormous amount of knowledge in the Quality Management System, to reduce operational bottlenecks and drive a continuous improvement culture in my organization. I am appreciative of this opportunity."



Mr. Dennis Adomako Amankwah, Hygiene and Sanitation Officer at Olam Cocoa processing Company Limited (Ghana):

"I am a proud beneficiary of UNIDO WACOMP Ghana IRCA 9001:2015 Lead Auditor course based on CQI IRCA requirements. I used to be in the quality control department and was recently reassigned to the office of the hygiene and sanitation office. Assuming this new role, I would have struggled a lot without the knowledge acquired being part of the National Quality Ressource Pool training organized by UNIDO in 2021, namely for ISO 22 000:2018, 9001: 2015 and ISO 22 716. These helped me to put in place various GMPs, which allowed the company I work for to pass various audits. I was able to fit into the role with ease. My boss is currently amazed by how I was able to fit into the role so well within the shortest possible time. I am eternally grateful to UNIDO and the EU for WACOMP training."



My WACOMP Experience



Akwasi Okyere, CEO of Magic Tree Enterprise, shares his story



Mr. Akwasi Okyere, CEO of Magic Tree Enterprise

Please tell us about yourself and when you set up the Magic Tree Enterprise producers of Aseda Herbal?

I started my career as an officer in the Ghana Navy. Because of the political turmoil of the 1980s, I was forced into exile. I ended up in the United States where I took a degree in computer science.

After the fall of the programming industry in early 2000, I went into insurance sales and financial advisement. I came back to Ghana in 2010 when the idea of turning my knowledge in herbs into business occurred to me. So somewhere around 2014, I set up Magic Tree Enterprise – I'm still researching into how to make a superlative soap.

Why the name Magic tree and why did you name your product Aseda?

I named my organization Magic Tree because, as a herbalist, I know the power of plants to heal. Sometimes a very simple plant may be the answer to a very complicated condition, that blows one's mind away. My product is called «Aseda» which means gratitude in Twi, because I believe we must be grateful to God.

You were part of the E-Marketing to E-Commerce training, how has it helped you and the business?

I was part of the e-marketing and e-commerce class and this open my eyes to the global reach of the internet as a marketing tool and a commerce platform. This simple step has also led to a modest increase in sales.

What will you suggest to make the E-Commerce training more engaging if any?

The training itself is superb. If there is anything that I can suggest that will improve the outcome of the course and make it more beneficial, it will be to do the coaching session, then have the SMEs set up our online stores and get some experience working with what we've learned and after some time come back to the class to review what we have learned so far.

By mixing theory, practice and exchange with other companies, we can grow a lot!

Connect

SEMPS for Cosmetics and Personal Care Products Finalized



Cosmetics SEMP validation meeting

On the 12th November 2021, WACOMP – Ghana Cosmetics Value Chain Strategic Committee completed a final validation of the Sector Export Marketing Plans (SEMP) for the Cosmetics Industry in Ghana.

The SEMP is considered to be a strategic tool to maximize the value chain export potential and to define a public-private roadmap to be followed, to support SMEs to take advantage of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and the European Union and other international markets.

The SEMP for cosmetics and personal care has been developed to achieve sustainable export growth for the Ghanaian cosmetics sector in international markets with growth potential. This plan covers 3 years: mid-2021 – mid-2024.

The plan expects to improve the quality, conformity, and quantity of cosmetics products including enhancing the marketability and competitiveness of products from Ghana.

It has been validated by the cosmetics Value Chain Strategic Committee members in partnership with the Ghana Export Promotion Authority (GEPA), Association of Ghana Industries (AGI), Ghana Investment Promotion Centre (GIPC) and key stakeholders in the cosmetics industry and is in line with the National Export Development Strategy.

The SEMP addresses strategic issues and outlines the corresponding operational actions to be taken by the Ghana Export Promotion Authority (GEPA), Association of Ghana Industries (AGI) and relevant cosmetics associations and clusters.

It also specifies key targets and defines specific steps to ensure a better marketing strategy for the cosmetic value chain to define a sectorial branding and promote Ghanaian cosmetic products in the international market.

Connect

SEMPS for Cassava Value Chain Finalized



Cassava SEMP validation meeting

The Cassava Value Chain Strategic Committee also completed a final validation of the Sector Export Marketing Plan (SEMP) for the cassava industry in Ghana on the 16th November 2021.

The cassava SEMP was developed in line with Ghana’s National Export Development Strategy (NEDS) (2020-2029), which highlights cassava as one of the strategic products for industrial transformation.

The cassava SEMP will serve as a sustainable export growth strategy, including both an export development and an export promotional strategy for the cassava sector.

The ultimate goal of the SEMP is to contribute to the increase of the Ghanaian exports of cassava products in the region and the international market.

For that matter, the most suitable export markets for Ghana are identified in the document. In parallel, on the supply side, challenges and opportunities are identified and prioritized to define an action plan tailored to the Ghanaian cassava sector. This plan covers a period of 3 years: 2022-2024.

The plan was developed in close coordination with the cassava Value Chain Strategic Committee members in partnership with the Ghana Export Promotion Authority (GEPA), Association of Ghana Industries (AGI), Ghana Investment Promotion Centre (GIPC) and other key stakeholders in the cassava.

This will maximize export potential and improve the quality, conformity, marketability and quantity of cassava derivatives to ensure sustainable export growth for cassava derivatives.

Interview



Getting to know about WACOMP Cassava Value Chain GAPs Expert:

Interview with **Mrs. Rebecca Asantewaa Twih**, MoFA WIAD Officer, Bono East Region
E-mail: rebeccaasantewaa@gmail.com

Mrs Rebecca Asantewaa Twih holds both a Bachelor's degree in Agricultural Engineering and a Masters degree in Environmental Resource Management from the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST).

Rebecca has worked with the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MOFA) since 2010. During her early years in the Kintampo Municipal, she was assigned as District Officer for the Root and Tuber Improvement and Marketing Programme (RTIMP). Through this programme, she had the opportunity to work with several experts and establish cassava planting material multiplication fields and Farmer Field Fora (FFF) for practical experiential training in Good Agronomic Practices for cassava producers and processors. Between 2013 and 2017 she also worked as the Techiman North district officer for ProVACCA, a Climate Change Adaptation Project under the RTIMP, where she facilitated the establishment of several FFF demonstration fields.

Given her hard work, dedication and passion to transfer knowledge, Rebecca has over the years developed into a seasoned trainer and has trained both agricultural extension and agricultural value chain actors in areas such as Cassava GAPs, Integrated Soil Fertility Management, Food fortification with legumes and other Bio-fortified high nutritional crops, Off-farm Livelihood, etc.

She is currently the Bono East Regional Officer in charge of Women In Agriculture Development (WIAD) and has been supporting women groups and women-led SMEs which are into various cassava and other agricultural commodity value chain activities.

1. What training and activities have you conducted for the WACOMP Cassava Value chain?

I have conducted cassava GAP training for five (5) different cassava production and processing groups in the WACOMP Kintampo-Techiman and Atebubu-Amantin clusters.

The groups include the Asante Mampong Cassava Value Chain Actors Association, Christaa Agric ventures, also at Mampong, Nyamebikyere cassava Processors at Ayigbe, Namkumah group at Nkoranza and Kaniago group in Techiman.

2. What additional support have you provided to the WACOMP Cassava Clusters?

I have been working closely with the members of the Kintampo-Techiman Cluster by linking the processors to farmers that can supply them with quality raw materials all year round.

I have also trained some of them on product value addition and additionally, I recently supported the organization of GMPs and Food Safety Management for selected WIAD and Extension Officers in the Bono East Region.

3. How many women beneficiaries have you trained under WACOMP?

A total of 55 women benefitted from the cassava GAPs training while 7 women benefitted from the GMPs training for the WIAD and Extension Officers.

4. What would you recommend for better positioning cassava farmers and food processors in the international market?

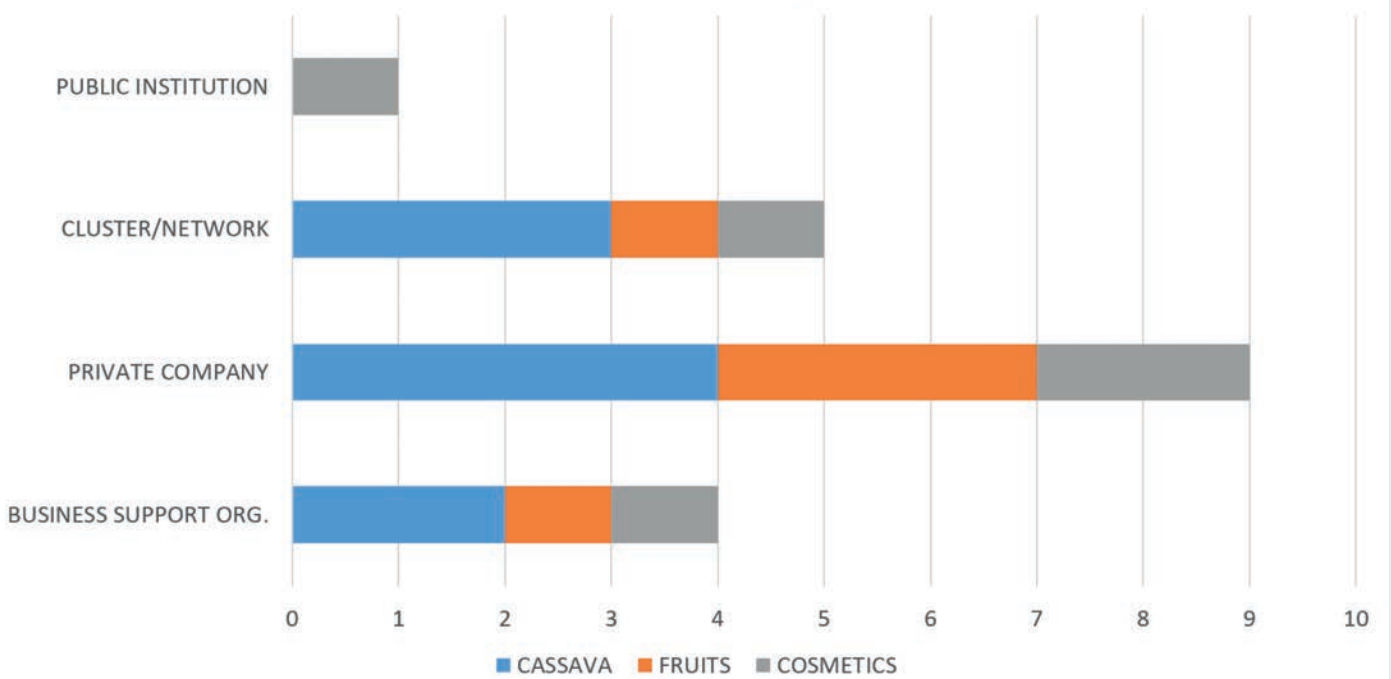
I would recommend training on agricultural innovation and risk management for the farmers and food processors.

It will also be good for WACOMP to support them to acquire FDA registration and be ready to take advantage of international opportunities that might arise.

Credit

Launch of the 4th SCMS and Signature of New Contracts with Local Partners

Total Number of Contracts Signed (Calls I - IV)



Breakdown of bids received by WACOMP - Ghana

The 4th invitation to bid for the Sub-Contracting Matching Scheme (SCMS) was launched on 6th August 2021 through a webinar. On this day, interested bidders were guided through the process and selection criteria for submitting a proposal.

The deadline for receiving applications was set on 22nd September 2021 and received bids were opened on 24th September by the National Implementation Unit (NIU).

A total of twenty-two (22) bids were received and the NIU assessed all of them, according to the evaluation criteria presented to the potential bidders.

On 22nd October, four (4) bids were finally approved by the Evaluation Sub-Committee constituted by representatives of the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI), the EU Delegation in Accra and UNIDO.

A summary of the bids received for the 4th call and the currently

signed contracts are presented here below:

	BSO	PRIVATE	CLUSTER	TOTAL
cassava	1	5	1	7
fruits	2	4	0	6
cosmetics	3	3	3	9
	6	12	4	22

Credit

Awareness Creation on Financial Schemes Available to SMEs

To raise awareness and strengthen the link between financial institutions and SMEs clusters and to promote efficient use of the government credits and guarantee schemes, WACOMP Ghana organized two webinars on the 7th of October, 2021 and 24th November 2021.

Fidelity Bank, ABSA Bank, Bank of Africa, Access Bank, Universal Merchant Bank and Consolidated Bank of Ghana partnered with the project to pitch their financial products targeting Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs) and Micro Small and Medium Scale Enterprise (MSMEs).

In total more than 200 SMEs registered for the two webinars, showing great interest in the topic for Ghanaian SMEs.

Key Takeaways of the Online Exchange:

- Access Bank Ghana offers an instant business loan with no tangible collateral at 2.17% per month interest rate targeting trade and manufacturing-related businesses but you must have operated an account for at least 6 months;
- The bank also has SMEs Smart Plan and insurance cover for SMEs.

Credit

Cont'd from pg.33

Key Takeaways of the Online Exchange:



- ABSA Bank Ghana does not need you to bring collateral to access a loan as a start up;
- The focus is on the operations of your bank account as a business and the performance of your credit;
- The interest rate on an unsecured loan from the bank is 28%;
- For women entrepreneurs, the rate is 20%;
- Zero Transaction Costs, Free transaction on digital channels;
- Free local transfers;
- Access to enterprise business solution services.



- Bank of Africa Ghana has a network of banks in West Africa and can provide letters of Credit to allow SMEs in Ghana to operate everywhere within ECOWAS;
- The Ghana Reference Rate by Margin for the interest rate on SME loans based on a case by case basis is between 7% and 10% margin. The rate and margin are subject to change.



- Fidelity Bank Ghana has a special strategic package for youth-led businesses;
- They have also launched the Young Entrepreneurs Initiative to support young entrepreneurs. You can receive loans from GHC 4000 to GHC 1M and they will support your business to grow. Speak to Mrs. Freda Omari Boateng on +233 50 132 8244.



- Consolidated Bank Ghana provides smart advanced loan solutions for SMEs;
- You can receive up to a maximum loan amount of GHS200,000 & GHS 400,000 for SMART and ADVANCED respectively for repeated borrowing;
- The bank also allows a monthly loan repayment schedule with a 26% per annum interest rate. For cash flow lending, no financial statements are



- Universal Merchant Bank has a 24% interest rate for loans, offers SMEs clinics, provides digitized payment collection services to make banking safe and easy;
- The bank also has ACH Plus a direct debit platform that allows you to initiate debit instructions of payments due you from all local banks in Ghana from the comfort of your offices.



Voice

From the field

Mr. Edward Ntow Adjei
Chairman of Fotobi Qualipine Producers Union

Qualipine Producers Union is a group of 12 pineapple cooperatives located at Nsawam Adoagyiri, Akuapim South and Upper West Akim Municipalities in the Eastern Region of Ghana.

Voice from the field

Cont'd from pg.35

It was formed to assist members to meet pineapple quality standards for both domestic and international markets. It also delivers training on general Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) to its members.

The Union provides group members with a networking platform to improve their pineapple production practices and promote and sell their produce.

Through the organization of workshops and seminars, it provides group marketing opportunities for members with reliable processors and traders through contracts agreements at the beginning of the planting season.

The association was formed and registered in the year 2017, and has currently a total membership of 266 (242 Males and 24 Females).

Community Impact:

Qualipine is one of the entities with whom WACOMP signed a contract under the Sub-Contracting Matching Scheme (SCMS) to support pineapple farmers in the enclave and structure their farms as a profitable and efficient business.

The Union provides on the field support to young farmers and new farmers deciding to start a farm to make sure they meet quality standards required for industry processing and exports.

The WACOMP – Ghana project has been a great support to the Qualipine Union and their farming enclave.

Through the SCMS contract we have achieved the following objectives:

1. Establishment of a vibrant administrative office for the Union;
2. Set up 12 demonstration plots with each farmer planting a minimum of 6000 smooth cayenne varieties. These farms are to serve as training grounds for all 12 cooperative members of the Qualipine Union;
3. Trained the Union's members in Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs);
4. Mechanized land preparation through the acquisition of a tractor that will reduce the time needed for the land preparation and ensure better yields.

Besides the SCMS activities, WACOMP - Ghana also supported the Union through various technical training to strengthen farmers' capacities to produce according to international best practices, namely:

- Introduction to GlobalGAP;
- Post-harvest handling and industry processing ;
- Farm and Financial Record Keeping;
- Pineapple Disease Control and Safe Handling of agro-chemicals.

Since the cooperation with WACOMP - Ghana, in 2019, the UNION attained its largest yields reaching 980MT of pineapples that year.

Thanks to the enhanced qualipine of the raw material produced at the cluster level, most factories in the Eastern region source now their raw materials from Qualipine and some of the companies that are part of the Union have been supplying to the national major exporters and processors, such as HPW, Bomart, Blue Skies and Nano foods.

We believe that, through WACOMP and ECOWAS, pineapple farmers and processors can be connected to a regional platform for networking with industry key players and further increase market opportunities and trade collaborations.



Executives of Fotobi Qualipine Union (From left): Hayford Djan (Executive member), Douglas Gameli (Executive member), Edward Ntow Adjei (Chairman), George Dekpor (Treasurer), Abigail Amponsah Addy (member), Wilberforce Fiakuma (Financial Secretary)

AT A GLANCE

Donor: European Union	Implementing Agency United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)
Duration: 48 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 chains 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.

National components of WACOMP

UNIDO is the Lead Implementing Agency
UNIDO in collaboration with other Lead Agencies

Ghana Competitive News



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



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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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The West Africa Competitiveness Programme aims to support a number of selected value chains at national and regional level to promote structural transformation and better access to regional and international markets, while taking into account social and environmental concerns. The WACOMP consists of one regional component and sixteen national components (15 ECOWAS Member States and Mauritania)

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