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

Learn more about
**How Churchwin
Trading Scaled Up
On Amazon**

... featured in, 'Voice from the field' P. 32

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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.



Coordinate

Call for Applications



West Africa Connect 2022

A unique opportunity for mango, cassava and ICT companies to find business partners

Through the [West Africa Connect 2022](#), the WACOMP seeks to increase regional integration amongst the 15 ECOWAS countries as well as Mauritania by capitalizing on growth opportunities and strengthening product competitiveness in selected value chains (Mango, Cassava, Information and Communication Technology).



The call for applications to identify mango and cassava SMEs that will be supported to ensure their participation in the second West Africa Connect event was launched in April.

English: <https://wacomp.projects.ecowas.int/wacomp-mango-and-cassava-smes-call-for-applications/>

French: <https://wacomp.projects.ecowas.int/wacomp-pme-de-mangue-et-de-manioc-appel-a-candidatures-2/?lang=fr>

The meeting will take place in Accra on the 20-21 September. It will be an excellent event to facilitate regional integration and business connections. Stay tuned!

Compete

79 Coaches Complete Cluster Coaching Programme



Virtual Graduation ceremony for UNIDO Cluster coaches on 24th February 2022

For Small and Medium-scale Enterprises (SMEs) in Ghana, the challenge to export is enormous as they have to compete with big brands already established in the European market

[WACOMP - Ghana](#) in contributing to strengthening the competitiveness of small businesses and to enhance the field presence of business coaches that can reach out to companies, launched on the 9th September 2021, a 12 weeks comprehensive cluster coaching training course.

The first cohort of 37 coaches graduated on the 14th of December 2021, and a second cohort of 42 coaches graduated on the 24th of February 2022.

Compete

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17 SMEs were coached during the period (11 SMEs in cosmetics, 2 SMEs in cassava and 4 SMEs in fruits) significantly improved their financial management, marketing, branding, and packaging which enabled the SMEs to gain access to new markets.

Sharing her success story, Deborah Achiaa Baffoe-Bonnie, CEO of Cedar Woman Limited, and a beneficiary of the coaching said:



"I have a detailed document of my marketing plan and sales projection thanks to WACOMP coaching.

The time spent with my coaches was worth it."

Another Entrepreneur, Christiana Akua Adjei, CEO of Christiana Agricultural Ventures said:



"WACOMP coaching empowered me significantly – now I confidently undertake my budgeting and pricing.

I feel more confident to be able to meet customer demands for our cassava derivative products."



Feedback on Cluster Coaching Training



Barbara Aessie Kportufe, Founder and C.E.O of Afrocabello, WACOMP - Coach Graduate:

"The UNIDO cluster coaching program was exceptionally engaging, and practical. A mentorship of discipleship in its entirety. As an entrepreneur and a budding SME business coach, I solemnly believe in the African proverb "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." That's why there are trained coaches. As part of the training, we have been equipped with the necessary knowledge needed to quake a business from survival mode to high performance and thus looking at the long term."



Yvonne Quashie, Head, Customer Experience, UBA Ghana, WACOMP - Coach Graduate:

"I have learned so much and already implementing some of these skills. Everything was well coordinated and the practical experience brought the training to life.

I have also met amazing people and together we seem to have impacted positively on SME we coached and their businesses. Thank you WACOMP and UNIDO for the opportunity."



Feedback on Cluster Coaching Training



Letitia Varney, Senior Portfolio Analyst, Innohub, WACOMP - Coach Graduate:

"The course was very interactive from the get-go and the UNIDO team has been professional, open, and supportive. Pairing coaches with existing businesses helped in applying practical lessons from the course to a real-life situation. I look forward to supporting more SMEs. I believe I will remain in contact with the wonderful individuals that were on my team."



Madhusudhan Reddy Sangala, Director, CIRIUS Ghana Limited, WACOMP - Coach Graduate:

"The sessions were very helpful as they helped me understand every aspect of an SME. The Thinkifik platform is very interactive and easy to understand. Online slides were very helpful and easy to implement in real-time. The entire program was well coordinated. Thank you WACOMP and UNIDO for this opportunity."



Bernard Tweneboah, Factory Inspector (Occupational Health and Safety Regulator) Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations, WACOMP - Coach Graduate:

„My experience with the UNIDO cluster coaching was insightful and helpful. I am equipped and empowered with the necessary skills and knowledge to coach SMEs on their key needs (Records keeping, Supply chain and Quality management, Marketing, Branding, Innovation and Promotion of their products as well as Cost-Profit-Price calculations). These areas are crucial for competitiveness in the domestic and export markets.„

Compete //

35 Entrepreneurs Trained on Handcraft Soap Formulation



Group photo of the participants of the handcraft soap making formulation workshop

Support to Ghana's young entrepreneurs in the natural cosmetics sector to enhance knowledge sharing and strengthen market access for cosmetics

[WACOMP – Ghana](#), organized a cosmetics formulation training for entrepreneurs active in the cosmetic and personal care products value chain to support the SMEs to be more competitive in the domestic and international market.

The training was held from 1 - 4 March 2022 aimed at providing them with the technical knowledge to formulate natural cosmetics products for the domestic market and to

understand the manufacturing standards needed to access the international market.

The 4 – days session focused on using standards for Shea butter-based creams, handcrafted soap bars, lip bars, and black soap cosmetics for local and international markets.

The 35 SMEs that participated received certificates for passing the practical exams.

Compete

Cont'd from pg.9

The trained SMEs receive constant technical backstopping and remote coaching on how to maintain their newly acquired competencies and ensure their competitiveness.

All trained SMEs have a common WhatsApp platform which facilitates communication among the SMEs (inter-cluster interaction) and the resource person.

Last year, WACOMP-Ghana trained 110 cosmetics SMEs on handcraft cosmetics formulation (35 cosmetics SMEs in the northern cluster in Tamale, 25 SMEs in the middle cluster zone in Kumasi, and 50 SMEs in Accra).

In the forthcoming period, UNIDO plans to hold a Master Class in cosmetics formulation training to further consolidate the acquired knowledge and ensure continuous improvement and exchange with the participating companies.

Madam Christabel Ofori, producer of Flocare beauty products, a 100% natural skin and hair care products mostly targeting mothers and newborn babies.

She had been reading theories on producing safe skin formulations for handcrafted soaps for her personal use but was having challenges with how to do it in the standardized format until the training.

Christabel said:



“Before this training with UNIDO, I had some theoretical knowledge about home processing of handcrafted soap, but the training helped me to put it into practice.

We learned about the right and safe techniques, soap designs, and commercializing our soaps for the global market.”



Dr. Vida Obese (2nd left) showing participants hand cutting of soap bars in a practical session

Practical Sessions in Pictures





Handcraft Soaps Designed by Participants



Interview

Getting To Know about Cosmetics Value Chain Soap Formulation Expert



Interview with **Mrs. Dr. Vida Obese**, Master Cosmetics Formulator
E-mail: nadwos@hotmail.com

Dr Vida Obese is a Master Cosmetic Formulator and CEO of Ayofa Essentials Limited, a Cosmetologist and Business Consultant as well as a Public Health Specialist/ Specialist Physician.

Since 2016 , she has been practicing as a Specialist Physician at the Neurology Unit, Internal Medicine Directorate at Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital (KATH) in Kumasi.

In 2017, she made a decision to to go into cosmetics formulation and has trained many entrepreneurs in cosmetics.

1. What training and activities have you conducted for WACOMP as a trainer?

I have so far organized cosmetic formulation training for 110 SMEs in Kumasi and Accra

2. What additional support have you provided for the cosmetic formulation trainees?

After the onsite trainings, I follow up with the participants and put in place post-training support and coaching for the SMEs. I have followed up with some of my students at their production units and have offered hands-on training on-site.

We have a dedicated WhatsApp group where students interact daily with me and post their work for corrections.

This exchange and practice also offers me the chance to share new knowledge or ways that can make them smarter in their cosmetic production and sales

3. How is the formulation training building capacity and enhancing the competitiveness of beneficiaries especially those who benefitted from your training?

SMEs and trainees have reported starting and maintaining new lines of production after training, some have been able to train their workers on what they learnt.

Others report now being able to scale up production and being export-ready. Some of my trainees are now exporting to the USA and Europe in confidence.

4. How would you rate the progress of your trainees? What feedback do you get?

I have thoroughly enjoyed training SMEs in the cosmetic clusters and they have demonstrated tenacity.

Our network of companies has been able to develop first class soaps and cosmetics showing that handmade cosmetics can be attractive and lucrative.

Cont'd from pg.12

5. What are your observations about the current state (in terms of technical knowledge and quality culture) of Ghanaian hand crafted cosmetics and which are the gaps you have identified?

Handcrafted soapmaking and cosmetics is an industry that continues to grow, evolve and doesn't show any signs of slowing down.

Ghanaian consumers show a preference for products with attractive packaging.

While local manufacturers try to use a wide range of media to market their brands, they still must overcome the local perception that locally made products are inferior to foreign ones.

Keeping this in mind, it has become necessary that cosmetic brands and producers become knowledgeable about these threads and how to build quality brands for well thought out groups of customers.

Also, in Ghana and in other countries, we tend to train people in the formulation and leave the person to himself/herself to figure out how they can move from soapmaker or cosmetic producer to moneymaker.

Most training end without post-training support which is not the best.

Post-training offers an opportunity to enforce what was thought and correct mistakes the student or business is making in production.

6. What would you recommend to further position cosmetic SMEs in the international markets?

SMEs attending my trainings always express their commitment to use what they have learnt to expand and create more product portfolios.

They are very interested in having an online or physical platform where the public would have the opportunity to see and purchase all their amazing hand-made creations.

This would indeed be an area that could have a direct impact on bridging the gap between producers and buyers.

Furthermore, I would propose to organize a masterclass to build upon the knowledge and practice gained, where more advanced soapmaking and formulations can be taught to the interested SMEs.

Last but not least, I would also advise that more SMEs have opportunities to attend international fairs and workshops to make them more visible internationally and enhance their competitiveness.

This should be coupled with further training in branding and marketing and on how to calculate their costs and masterbatch their recipes to make them more competitive.

7. What is your general impression of the WACOMP cosmetics value chain activities?

The aim of WACOMP-Ghana to develop value chains, improve SMEs competitiveness, strengthen the supporting intermediate organisations and create better linkages among the selected value chain actors are highly laudable.

The project has provided a safe network for like-minded cosmetic businesses to connect and share knowledge and ideas and has exposed them to credible supplies of quality raw materials.

We have started witnessing excellent results, so keep it up!

Compete

Cluster Management Organization Strengthening Programme



Group photo of the participants of the handcraft soap making formulation workshop

To contribute to innovation and ensure Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development (SDG 9), the project launched a Cluster Management Organizations (CMO) strengthening Programme

On Friday, 18th March 2022, [WACOMP - Ghana](#) launched Cluster Management Organizations (CMOs) programme to support cluster institutions to develop and improve the quality and marketability of cluster products from Ghana. The course is expected to end in July 2022.

The CMOs strengthening programme aims at enhancing the capacity and efficiencies of cluster institutions on the ground, to help them deliver better services to clusters and cluster member companies.

Participants were selected for the peculiar role these institutions play on the ground and they will be provided

with effective tools to be able to better support SMEs within the cluster.

The programme will be delivered in three main phases, as follows:

- **Phase 1:** Awareness raising and refresher on Clusters and Cluster Management Organisations Roles (March 2nd half)
- **Phase 2:** Self-assessment and identification of needs and areas to be strengthened (April 1st half)
- **Phase 3:** Dedicated training modules delivered online (beginning of May-end of July)

Connect

Support for Ghanaian Farmers to Showcase Exotic Fruits in Berlin



Pineapple farmers harvesting sugar loaf at the farm

[WACOMP - Ghana](#) and the [Ghana Export Promotion Authority \(GEPA\)](#) supported the promotion of Ghanaian exotic fruits under the theme “Discover the superior taste of Ghana’s green gold” at the Fruit Logistica 2022 fair from April 5 to April 7 in Berlin, Germany.

One of GEPA’s focus during Fruit Logistica 2022 was to promote the Ghanaian Sugarloaf, a much sweeter pineapple variety than MD2.

Within this framework, seven GlobalG.A.P. certified members of the Sea-freight Pineapple Exporters of Ghana (SPEG) participated in the trade fair.

Ghanaian producers already export Sugarloaf pineapples to France and it is anticipated that with the implementation of the action plans and strategy of the Sector Exporting Marketing Plans (SEMPS), co-created by WACOMP, GEPA and key stakeholders in the pineapple sector sugarloaf variety will also be introduced to other European markets.

Europe is the main destination of 90% of Ghanaian pineapples and among the top five European markets are Belgium, France, the UK, Switzerland, and Germany.

The Ghana Export Promotion Authority (GEPA) is the national focal point agency under the Ministry of Trade and Industry with the mandate to develop and promote non-traditional exports in Ghana.

The goal of GEPA is to ensure that Ghana’s non-traditional export trade contributes to accelerated economic growth through the strategic marketing of Made-in-Ghana products in the competitive global economy.

GEPA provides relevant trade information to buyers interested in sourcing quality products from the country.

WACOMP, GEPA and SPEG provide relevant trade information to buyers interested in sourcing quality pineapple fruits from the country.

The Sea-freight Pineapple Exporters of Ghana (SPEG) is specialized in the export of high-quality pineapples.

Its mission is to bring together operations in the pineapple and the larger fruit industry and promote good agricultural practices and provide effective and economic logistics services

Connect

Cont'd from pg.15

Pictures on Fruit Logistica 2022 Fair in Berlin



Collective Branding for SPEG and Sugar Loaf Pineapple

WACOMP - Ghana, in collaboration with the Ghana Export Promotion Authority and the Sea-Freight Pineapple Exporters of Ghana (SPEG), supported the collective brand development for the promotion of Sugar Loaf on the international market.

The marketing strategy created a unique and distinguishing image of Ghanaian pineapples from their competitors.

The collective branding was used and promoted for the first time at the Fruit Logistica fair, held in Berlin, Germany from the 5th - 7th April 2022.

Sugarloaf pineapples are cylindrical in shape, slightly tapering at the crown with a thin and tough waxy rind that remains green even when ripe. However, it is less known on the international market, perhaps because it is grown and exported from West Africa and these countries have not yet fully exploited its commercial potential in the international markets.

It can be identified by its bottled shape. However, it is less known on the international market, perhaps because it is grown and exported from West Africa and these countries have not yet fully exploited its commercial potential in the international markets.

Pineapple exports started in Ghana in the early 1980's with the Smooth Cayenne variety until mid-2000, when the MD2 variety developed in Costa Rica was introduced. The market demand changed suddenly and Ghana responded quickly with Government support to switch to production of the MD2 variety.

The industry saw a growth in exports in mid-2000s but has since been declining due to the high cost of its production. Sugarloaf, on the other hand, remained a variety for local consumption and air freighted fruits for a niche market in France because no effort was made to promote it.

WACOMP - Ghana is currently supporting GEPA and SPEG in the effort to promote the less known variety, Sugarloaf in the international market s and to introduce it to other countries in Europe, Middle East and North Africa.

The pineapple variety with its very high potential due to environmental friendliness, great taste and lower cost of production compared to the MD2 pineapple variety, will bring huge potential for foreign exchange earnings for the economy, job creation and poverty reduction.



Connect

Cont'd from pg.17



Qualities of Sugarloaf Pineapple

- It is resistant to common diseases and pests of pineapple, hence produced with little or no pesticides.
- It produces less greenhouse gas production due to its low demand for inorganic fertilizers. Sugarloaf uses less than 30% of the fertilizers required by other commercial pineapple varieties.
- It is easy to produce by small farmers, thus, improving rural income and protecting the environment.

Current Production

Sugarloaf pineapples are grown in the Eastern, Greater Accra, Volta and Central Regions of Ghana, all in the southern sector of the country, within 100km from the Sea and Air ports.

Current annual production by SPEG members and their outgrowers is 900acres at an average yield of 20tons per acre.

This will yield 18,000 tons annually out of which 90% is consumed locally leaving 10%, approximately 1,800 tons or 35tons per week for exports, with potential to scale up if market is available.

Current Export Market

France remains the main market for Sugarloaf where Ghana compete with Benin.

Five identified exporters actively export to France and Switzerland. Sugarloaf pineapple constitutes 90% of air freight pineapple and currently accounts for 50% of all fresh pineapple exports.



SUGARLOAF

PRODUCTS: SUGARLOAF YELLOW AND GREEN.

PRODUCT DESCRIPTION: Sugarloaf pineapple is cylindrical in shape and tapering at the crown end. It is available on maturity green or yellow on buyers' preference. In both cases it is exceedingly sweet with fruity aroma and almost non-acidic.

WHY CHOOSE SUGARLOAF It has great taste, its cylindrical shape makes it easy to handle and very attractive on shelf. It is resistant to common diseases and pests of pineapple, hence produced with little or no pesticides. Less greenhouse production due to its low demand for inorganic fertilizers. Sugarloaf uses less than 30% of fertilizers required by other commercial pineapple varieties. Easy to produce by small farmers, improving rural income and protecting the environment. Provides digestive and immune support as well as anti-inflammatory benefits due to its high contents of vitamins and other minerals.

PRESENTATION/PACKAGING: YELLOW SUGARLOAF AND GREEN SUGARLOAF

SHIPMENT: by AIR and SEA **AVAILABILITY:** Sugarloaf Pineapples are available all year round.

Connect

Promotion of Cosmetics, Fruits and Cassava Products at Ghana International Trade Fair 2022



Exhibition arena of WACOMP SMEs at the 26th Ghana International Trade Fair

One of the objectives of WACOMP – Ghana is to facilitate the creation of export linkages between Ghanaian SMEs and other businesses across the sub-region and improve the market access for manufacturers and producers of cassava, cosmetics and fruit products.

Within this framework, the project supported 35 SMEs to promote their products to buyers at the 26th International Trade Fair from the 14th to 18th of April at the La Palm Royal Beach Hotel in Accra.

The fair was organized by the Ghana Trade Fair Company Limited under the auspices of the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI) under the theme: “Building A Sustainable Entrepreneurial Nation: Helping SMEs Rebound.”

The project-supported SMEs used the opportunity to present and showcase their available domestic products to participating foreign and local exhibitors and visitors alike.



“ Fundamentally, our participation in the 26th Ghana International Trade Fair through WACOMP’s support allowed me to make direct and measurable contacts, and allowed me to introduce my various fruits products to prospective buyers on a one-on-one basis”, says, Josephine Oduro Boateng, CEO of Jodacy Plus, producers of ‘Jozy Snacks’.

Connect



Cont'd from pg.19



“ I sold all my 100% natural cassava flour and instant cassava fufu and plantain flour packs we brought to the fair and many of my products during the fair.

UNIDO and the EU through WACOMP allowed us to let consumers know about LiliPat Group of companies and the healthy food we have on the market”

– Lilly Pearl Asiedu, Co-Founder of [Lilipat Group of Industries.](#)



“ Cyndbeth Cosmetics was part of the WACOMP Northern cosmetics cluster SMEs.

We came from Tamale to showcase our naturally produced hair care and skin care products made with herbs and essential oils.

We had a lot of sales interactions with buyers and offered potential customers to try our products during the fair. We are grateful to UNIDO and EU for WACOMP’s support to SMEs in Ghana.”

– Mrs Cynthia Kampoe, Co-Founder, [Cyndbeth Cosmetics Company.](#)



“ It was a great opportunity offered by WACOMP and partners for our business to exhibit our products.

You hardly get to meet both suppliers and buyers of related products on the same platform.

We pray for more of these opportunities.”

– Mr Roberk K. Duwor, Founder [SistaSister Company](#)

Pictures on 26th Ghana International Tradefair



Interview

Getting To Know About Trade Fairs & Market Hub



1. Can you please explain what is the market hub and why it is important for [GEPA](#)?

The Market Hub is GEPA's official website and trade information portal. It has two main functions: the Exporters portal and Importers or Buyers portal.

The Hub provides Ghanaian exporters and business persons information on markets and their dynamics, regulations, how to export, developments and trends as far as export business is concerned and many more important information.

On the other hand, the buyers portal gives foreign businesses and buyers interested in Ghanaian products and services vital information about importing from Ghana, available products and trade leads.

In GEPA we believe that access to information is key to the success of every export business.

Therefore, the establishment of the Hub has inured to the benefit of Ghanaian exporters as it has provided them ready access to the relevant and up-to-date trade information to make their export business decisions.

2. Can you share any success stories from exporting SMEs having taken advantage of the use of the hub?

Most of GEPA's clients are SMEs who often find it difficult to access market information and other relevant trade information.

At the very beginning, there were some concerns about the user-friendliness of the Hub, but these concerns have been addressed and clients are now satisfied with the use of the

facility. Since the Hub was improved with the assistance of the UNIDO WACOMP Project, there have been several testimonies from clients indicating how useful the Hub has been to them.

SMEs are particularly interested in import data, market trends, comparative analysis of the key markets, guidelines on export business as well as the tips on trade fair participation.

Most of them also make use of the export readiness checker to assess whether they are ready to enter the export market, etc.

3. UNIDO and GEPA have collaborated on a number of international trade fairs. How many SMEs have benefitted so far?

Under the WACOMP Project which is being funded by the European Union, GEPA and UNIDO were to collaborate in assisting Ghanaian companies to participate in the Fruit Logistica Fair held in Berlin annually.

Due to the COVID 19 pandemic, it was not possible for Ghana to participate in the 2021 edition. Fortunately, this was possible this year.

This year's fair was held from 5th to 7th April 2022 at Messe Berlin. WACOMP strongly and actively supported GEPA and the Federation of Associations of Ghanaian Exporters (FAGE) to prepare for the meeting and to organize BtoB meetings at the fair site.

Indeed, UNIDO's support in promoting Ghana's presence at the fair and arrangement of business meetings went a long way to impact positively on the outcome of our participation.

Connect

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From the indications we have received from the participants that attended the Fair, a lot of orders have been received for the supply of various products.

These are being assessed and the companies will be assisted to execute the orders.

4. What lessons or take aways did GEPA learn from fruitlogistica?

Participation in this year's FL has provided opportunity for the Ghanaian exhibitors and the associations to assess who are our competitors and the demand trends.

Indeed, we were pleasantly surprised about the high demand for coconut by potential buyers at this year's event. Our participation in the 2020 edition also featured coconut.

However, the attention given to Ghana's coconut offer was something quite special this year. This gives GEPA the comfort that we have made a good decision to revitalize the coconut industry in Ghana.

Since 2017, GEPA has been assisting farmers through the coconut federation with improved hybrid seedlings for planting in Regions such as Central, Western, Volta, Oti, Ashanti and Eastern. So far, we have provided over 600,000 seedlings and are poised to continue the support this year and beyond.

Another potential area we identified at the fair was growing demand for dried fruits. We featured Bomarts Limited, one of the growing companies in the processed fruits sector and

they expressed satisfaction at the level of interest in their products.

In view of the successes achieved by Ghana at FL 2022, we plan to procure a more central location at the Hall, so that the Ghana Pavilion will attract even greater attention in the 2023 edition.

5. Were GEPA's expectations met?

Based on the positive feedback we received from patrons and visitors to the Ghana Pavilion and the satisfaction expressed by the participating exhibitors that we supported to attend the fair, I can confidently say GEPA's expectation has been met.

I believe the Associations we supported will return the same verdict.

6. What would you recommend for interested exporting SMEs to do in preparation for future international trade fairs?

Prepare well to take advantage of the opportunities offered by the Fruit Logistica Fair.

That will be my advice to export-ready companies in the fruit and vegetables sector who may be interested to participate in the Fruit Logistica.

Of course, they have to come to GEPA through any of the Horticultural Associations we are working with for a better coordination.

Conform //

Mango Farmers in Shai OsuDoku District to Control Bacteria Black Spot Disease



Group photo of the participants

With support from WACOMP –Ghana, 48 mango farmers and 20 Agric Extension officers in the Shai – Osudoku and Somanya districts have been trained on Plant Disease Control and safe handling of Agrochemicals from the 8th to 11th March 2022.

The mango sub-sector in Ghana is confronted with many challenges which include the incidence of pests and diseases and poor handling of agrochemicals. Bacterial Black Spot (BBS) was first observed in Ghana in 2012 and has reached an epidemic level in most areas where mango is cultivated.

Bacterial Black Spots can cause 80-100% yield loss if not controlled and is currently the number one problem of mango producers in Ghana.

Some farmers are of the opinion that BBS cannot be controlled, because they have tried different agronomic practices and agrochemicals but to no avail.

Therefore, the awareness and practical capacity training

provided renewed recommendations to build farmers' knowledge and confidence that they can control BBS in spite of its high incidence on a number of mango farms.

Mr. Charles Kwame Sackey, WACOMP Chief Technical Advisor, highlighted it is a priority for WACOMP –Ghana to ensure that farmers intending to export their mangoes were well informed and cautioned to purchase planting materials from certified sources or trained nursery operators since the BBS bacterium can be on implantation used for the grafting and could affect the mango fruits.

Mr Sackey further commented:

"We collaborated with the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA) to include their technical staff and farmers so that those we train can support others in their Associations to effectively control the disease, by using Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach."



Conform //

Graduation Ceremony for IRCA Certified ISO 22000 Lead Auditors



Successful experts holding their certificates with UNIDO Representative to Ghana and Liberia, Mr. Charles Kwame Sackey, Mrs. Safoa OSEI (Chief technical advisor for GQSP) and other members of the UNIDO project team

To contribute, promote and accelerate inclusive and sustainable industrial development (ISID) and ensure that the targeted project value chains actors in Ghana meet the requirements of the national and internationally recognized best practice, WACOMP – Ghana supported nine quality experts who successfully passed the IRCA Certified ISO 22000 Lead Auditors exams.

A brief graduation ceremony was held for the successful candidates on the 17th of March 2022 at the Labone office of the project.

In his opening remarks, Mr. Charles Kwame Sackey, Chief Technical Advisor of WACOMP – Ghana, stated that the support is part of WACOMP’s mandate to train a pool of national experts and build their competencies on topics and practices such as quality management, product quality, manufacturing, and food safety in Ghana.

Mr. Sackey said:



“WACOMP Ghana continuously builds up the competency of experts in system audits and management system implementation since it is strategic for Ghana, the European Union and UNIDO. This will ensure that the number of certified auditors increases in the country, which should, in turn, make Ghanaian businesses more competitive.”

*„WACOMP - Ghana will continue to build the capacity of local experts to strengthen their confidence, skills, and knowledge in their support to SMEs and to contribute to the development and promotion of a ‘culture of quality. We believe this increased number of certified auditors in the country will also be beneficial to support **1D1F (1 District 1 Factory)** to be more competitive.”*

Conform

Cont'd from pg.24

Mr. Fakhruddin Azizi, UNIDO Representative to Ghana and Liberia, congratulated the graduates and encouraged them to apply their skills and support the country in its industrialization drive.

ISO 22000 is a Food safety management system that provides requirements for any organization in the food industry to help to improve overall performance in food safety.

Last year, WACOMP supported 10 experts to be IRCA ISO 9001:2015 lead auditor certified and also launched a resource pool quality training for 41 quality experts to increase the pool of national experts and enhance experts' knowledge on ISO 22 000, ISO 9001, and ISO 22 716.



Feedback on IRCA Certified ISO 22000 Training



Augustina Larbi, QA Manager, GS Specialty Chemicals, WACOMP - IRCA Certified Graduate:

" The IRCA certified ISO 22000 lead auditor course sponsored by UNIDO, the EU and WACOMP Ghana has improved my theoretical and practical knowledge and skills in performing first, second and third-party audits of FSMS. It has also given me a better understanding of the ISO 22000 standard. Being an IRCA certified lead auditor will add value to my career and I can now boldly transfer the knowledge received to SMEs that are ready to move their businesses forward."



Frances Tettey - Enyo, Senior Scientific Officer, Ghana Standards Authority, WACOMP - IRCA Certified Graduate:

"I have gained in-depth knowledge and requirements of ISO 22000. This will enable me to work seamlessly with SMEs who want to implement ISO 22000 in Ghana and West Africa and to work with all the companies that Ghana Standards Authority works with to be successful standard implementors."



Conform

WACOMP Develops Traceability Software :“COSMOSTRACE”



Traceability Diagram

As part of ensuring traceability within SMEs supported by WACOMP - Ghana, a tailor-made traceability software; “COSMOSTRACE” has been developed and tested with a sample cosmetics company for their daily use.

The project has so far supervised 15 selected companies from the Northern, Middle, and Southern clusters to have their traceability procedures installed and coached to ensure that they use it and integrate the use of the software into their daily work.

What is traceability?

A traceability system is a technical tool intended to help companies comply with set objectives and it is used, when necessary, to determine the history and/or location of a product and all of its components.

It is the process of identifying the origin of a product and reconstructing its movements from production to distribution or the ability to trace the history, application, or location of an entity or activity or similar entities or activities utilizing recorded identifications.

Traceability is a legal obligation for companies (within the European Union) and often a requirement of the customers and buyers.

Some benefits:

- Enables tracking of a product throughout a production and distribution chain, from raw materials supplier to end-consumer.
- Enables controllers (internal and external) to identify the operations carried out and to assign responsibilities at each stage.

Conform

Final Qualification of Equipment in GSA and FDA



Mr. Michele Priolo, UNIDO International Expert at one of the laboratories

As part of the final requirement for handing over equipment to institutions supported by the project, Mr. Michele Priolo, UNIDO International Expert was in Ghana from the 1st to the 4th of March 2022, to conduct an equipment qualification (Commissioning) exercise at the Food and Drugs Authority (FDA) Cosmetics Laboratory and Ghana Standards Authority (GSA) Cosmetics Laboratory.

This is to support the laboratories to adhere to the industry's compliance requirements for performance qualification, use, and maintenance of equipment supplied by UNIDO.

Equipment qualification is the final series of inspections and tests to ensure that critical requirements necessary for related product quality are satisfied and that documents and procedures necessary to properly operate and maintain the system are in place.

Conform

ISO 17025 Training Course for Laboratory Managers



Two UNIDO projects, WACOMP – Ghana funded by the European Union and Global Quality and Standard Programme (GQSP), funded by the Swiss Secretariat for Economic Affairs – SECO) jointly launched on 7th March 2022, an 11 weeks virtual training course on EN-ISO/IEC 17025-2017.

Target beneficiaries are 32 lab analysts and technicians from Ghana Standards Authority, Food and Drugs Authority, Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi, COCOBOD, Ghana Atomic Energy Commission and the University of Cape Coast.

The objective of the training is to support accredited and non - accredited laboratories to improve their testing and calibration services in Ghana.

This virtual workshop by the UNIDO projects will focus mainly on the general, structural, resource, process and management system requirements for accreditation according to the standard, the application procedure of accreditation, method validation, traceability and the role of quality infrastructure and accredited laboratories, and the higher-level importance of accreditation concerning the sustainable development goals (SDG).

The Trainers :

ABENA SAFOA OSEI is a Management Systems and Food Safety Expert. She has over 20 years' experience in Standardization, quality auditing, design and implementation of quality management systems. An IRCA trained auditor for ISO 9001, 17025, 22000 and other management systems standards Has successfully trained and guided a number of laboratories to be accredited to ISO/IEC 17025 as well as ISO 15189. She holds an M.Phil in Microbiology and has immense experience in the design and implementation HACCP and other Food Safety modules. She is now serves as the Chief Technical Advisor and Coordinator for the Global Quality and Standards Programme in Ghana, implemented by UNIDO with funds from SECO.

FREDERICK GYAMERA OWUSU is a Specialist in Quality Assurance and Food Safety Management and holds a Master of Science degree in Food Science and Technology. IRCA Lead auditor: ISO 9001 QMS and Internal auditor ISO 14000 and ISO 22000 & HACCP food safety system practitioner. Former Chief Standards Officer and Head of Systems Certification Department of Ghana Standards Authority. Immediate past UNIDO International expert in-charge of Enterprise Certification and Quality, West Africa Quality Programme -Abuja and currently UNIDO WACOMP Ghana, National Quality Infrastructure expert responsible for Quality and Conformity assessment issues..

Credit

Financial Management Training for 108 Members of Cluster Groups



Participants listening to Mr. Kwame Adjekum, WACOMP National Procurement Officer (Standing middle)

As part of assisting enterprises in cluster groups to overcome barriers to business growth by increasing their collective efficiency, helping them to access new markets and access to finance, WACOMP – Ghana organized a series of training in group dynamics and financial management for pineapple cluster groups in the Eastern Region (from 28th to 30th March 2022) and for cosmetics cluster groups in Upper East Region and Northern Region (from the 5th April to 8th April 2022).

108 entrepreneurs (50 participants in Tamale, 30 participants in Bolgatanga and 28 participants in Fotobi) covering the three regions benefitted from the training.

Keeping accurate financial records has more often than not been a challenge for SMEs and this has an immediate impact on the proper management of their businesses, as they are unable to make financial decisions that promote the businesses and prevent financial institutions to provide adequately needed assistance.

The situation further affects cohesion as a group as this breeds mistrust and strengthening of the groups.

Practical cases of basic skills of group dynamics and accounting record-keeping were used during the training to help SMEs understand the different concepts being taught.

These involved audited financial statements of businesses of the same nature and bank statements.

The facilitator, Mr. Kwame Adjekum, WACOMP National Procurement Officer, illustrated to the participants the 3 core financial statements – income statement (profit and loss statement), balance sheet and cash flow statement.

The SMEs were then taken through the components of the income statement, i.e., sales/revenue, cost of production, gross profit, administrative expenses and net profit.

Participants were given practical exercises within the training to develop profit and loss statements for their respective cooperatives for March 2022.

Credit

Cont'd from pg.29

Engagement with financial institutions:

A number of financial institutions were invited to discuss with the participants and engage them in their direct credit requests.

The training in Bolgatanga allowed participants to meet with Access Bank. The training in Tamale had Bonzali Rural Bank and Access Bank make presentations and engage the participants.

The financial institutions addressed questions from the participants and engaged with SMEs directly with their credit requests on a one-on-one basis.



"I was one of those who thought I could raise my own capital to work but along the line, I realized I had no structures to easily access capital from financial institutions. This training has come to me at the best of times. I got to know about record keeping, budgeting, how to calculate profits and a whole lot." - Mr. Jonas Baba, Jotim Cosmetics








"I learnt how to access funds from the banks by knowing how to keep my books. This would help boost my packaging business" - Madam Sadia Ambala

Financial Management Training in Pictures



Credit

5th Call of the Sub-Contracting Matching Scheme

	Intervention: Purchase dryer to process more mangoes, reduce waste and capacity building to manage pests and diseases. Amount: GHS 147,571.00 [EUR 21,480.49]
	Intervention: Improve sustainable production and processing of HQCF and normal flour, establish sustainable and integrated cassava seed system. Amount: GHS 212,800.00 [EUR 30,975.25]
	Intervention: Train and coach farmers on Best Management Practices (BMP) production protocols to improve yield of MD2 and sugarloaf using demonstration farms. Amount: GHS 110,820.00 [EUR 16,131.00]
	Intervention: establish demo farm to train out-grower in production of organic pineapples and also establish nursery to provide planting material for the out-growers. Amount: GHS 151,660.00 [EUR 22,075.69]
	Intervention: capacity building in GAPs to improve output to make flour for VVU bakery; upscale bakery in GMP and convert cassava waste for mushroom cultivation Amount: GHS 183,600.00 [EUR 26,724.89]

The five bid proposals approved by Evaluation Sub-Committee for contracting

The fifth invitation to bid under the credit axes of the Sub-Contracting Matching Scheme started with a webinar on 17th January 2022.

The project team explained the process to interested bidders and provided information on mandatory criteria and what reasons accounted for unsuccessful bids in previous calls.

The effective bidding window was opened between 18th January and 28th February 2022. In line with the requirements of the Matching Scheme, the bids were opened on 2nd March 2022 by the NIU and in the presence of EU and MoTI.

19 bids were received and taken through the full evaluation process, both preliminary evaluation by the NIU and secondary evaluation by the Evaluation Sub-Committee for the bids that met the preliminary requirement.

After the preliminary evaluation, four (4) bids did not meet the mandatory qualification criteria and did not qualify for full evaluation.

After the preliminary evaluation, four (4) bids did not meet the mandatory qualification criteria and did not qualify for full evaluation.

The remaining fifteen (15) bids were admitted to full evaluation of technical and commercial proposals by the Evaluation Sub-Committee (ESC). Five bid proposals were approved for contracting.

Details of the bids received are presented in the table below:

VCS	BSO	PRIVATE	CLUSTER	CONSULTANT	TOTAL
Cassava	0	7	0	1	8
Fruits	0	4	3	1	8
Cosmetics	0	0	2	0	2
Total	0	11	5	2	18+1*

*One extra bid received sought to support SMEs across the three (3) value chains.



Voice

From the field

Mr. Churchill Kumadey
CEO of Churchwin Trading Company Limited

„People say the North is poor, we are poor people, we have no potential, we have nothing here.“

But when we cast our eyes, all we see are opportunities, we are a blessed people, with all these shea trees. We told ourselves that we are going to explore the opportunities of the shea trees so that we can change the narrative and the way people look at the Northern part of the Country.

Compete

Churchwin Trading Started when my friend Godwin and I decided to explore the opportunities we have here in the North..

We named the company "Churchwin" Trading as it is a partnership between Churchill and Godwin.

Since 2014, when Churchwin Trading company started, we have never stopped looking for opportunities to sell shea butter and other oils.

We aimed to be a leading producer and supplier of shea butter in Africa and are committed to the production and supply of high-grade unrefined shea butter to clients across the globe.

We have 15 permanent staff and employ up to 50 hired hands.

The company currently has the capacity to produce and supply medium to very large tones of shea butter per month.

Support to Women

Our mission is to eradicate poverty through women's empowerment.

Churchwin Trading works with over 50 women groups consisting of over 1000 women mainly from rural areas of northern Ghana.

These women previously unemployed peasant housewives now produce shea butter for Churchwin Trading to improve their livelihood.

It is important to highlight that we have not employed complex machinery in our shea butter production, so we give these women an opportunity to live life.

Compete

Cont'd from pg.33

Community Impact:

We want to be more sustainable and more relevant in impacting the women in our production communities, who are the heart of the business.

Without our mothers, we have no business.

They do everything from picking nuts in the field, to actually processing the butter.

All we do as a business is keep them busy so they have a job and secure their livelihood.

WACOMP - Ghana Support:

With technical and handholding support from the WACOMP – Ghana project, we are on Amazon, Walmart, and using other digital platforms.

We could not do it until WACOMP came into the picture.

WACOMP told us this was possible.

They provided us with training and helped connect us with the right people for this to happen.

The largest product we have sold as a company through export are mainly Shea butter and African Black soap and all our products are now FDA certified.

We currently export all our Products to the USA, Canada, New Zealand, and the UK.

“WACOMP has been transformative. The project is giving entrepreneurs a future.”

I would like the project to support capital access for us.

We need financial support to expand and improve our business, through better machinery to process shea butter more efficiently. We have all the raw products here. With the right capital injection, our potential is limitless.

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 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



Funded by the
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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



UNITED NATIONS
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

Implementing Agency: UNIDO

The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations.

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.

For more information, visit: www.unido.org



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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