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

Read about

A Cosmetics Entrepreneur, Rita Dampson

... featured in, Voice from the field Pg. 29



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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.



COVID -19

WACOMP COVID -19 risk free farming procedures

A capacity building was organized for mango farmers on COVID-19 risk-free harvesting procedures, aimed at creating awareness among farmers on how to avoid contracting the virus and also spreading the disease while harvesting and dealing with mango refrigeration and stocking

a great example of technical assistance provided during the pandemic



<https://youtu.be/pzvAOJ2HZtM>

To make it easier to remember the process and provide easy reference guide, the project produced a video to present in a simplified manner the different steps needed to harvest the fruits in a safe way.

The video as well as the pictorial posters illustrating the different steps have been widely disseminated within the targeted clusters.

They have also been shared with the other WACOMP national components, ensuring a wide coverage of farmers engaged in mango harvesting in West Africa.

Watch Video <https://bit.ly/3w0dnDU>
See posters here: <https://bit.ly/2ELizWY>



EU Delegation field visit to meet WACOMP project beneficiaries



Left to right: Ms. Sonia Cascante-Sanz, representative of the EU Delegation in Ghana, Mr. Charles Kwame Sackey , WACOMP Chief Technical Advisor and Mrs. Ivy Appiah, CEO of Tiwajo Industry Limited

In November 2020, the European Union (EU) Delegation in Ghana and the project team embarked on a working visit to two members of the cosmetic cluster in Greater Accra.

The main purpose was to interact with Tiwajo Industry Limited and Solution Oasis Limited to find out how they are implementing their business reliance interventions amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

The two SMEs over the past one year have received technical and managerial capacity building support from WACOMP.

Mr. Georgios Tsopanakis, Ms. Sonia Cascante-Sanz and Mr. Timothy Dolan from the EU delegation in Ghana were accompanied by Mr. Charles Kwame Sackey, Chief Technical Advisor and Mrs. Naa Atswei Nyakpo, Cosmetic Cluster Expert from the WACOMP project.

Mrs. Ivy Appiah, is one of the graduates of the WACOMP - Ghana E-Marketing course launched in August 2020 and also featured on the UNTV during the celebration of the UN MSME 2020 celebration

Watch interview with Ivy by the UN TV here <https://bit.ly/3bjCZn2>



Coordinate

Cont'd from pg.6



She showed the team around the factory and explained how Tiwajo has implemented its resilience strategy with the support of WACOMP.

Business Highlights:

Tiwajo Industry Limited has been in the production of natural cosmetics from cocoa and Shea butter for the past 13 years under the brand name "Paridox" Cosmetics. Tiwajo was established in 2007 by Mr. Jones and Mrs. Ivy Appiah. Currently, Tiwajo employs 12 permanent and 4 temporary staff (9 females and 7 males).

The range of products produced with different natural extract for both local and export markets include Black soap shower gel, Black soap bar, Black soap shampoo, Shea butter cream, Shea butter bar, Shea butter lotion, Natural oils etc.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and market demand, Tiwajo ventured into the production of alcohol-based hand sanitisers and alcohol wipes.

The company's products can be found in all major malls and shopping centres in Ghana and the company sales have witnessed a tremendous increase over the past few years.



The delegation examining range of products from Tiwajo



Left to right: Mrs. Naa Atswei Nyakpo , WACOMP-Ghana Cosmetics Cluster Expert , Mrs. Francesca Brenda Opoku , CEO of Solution Oasis , Mr. Charles Kwame Sackey, Chief Technical Advisor of WACOMP-Ghana , Mr. Timothy Dolan and Ms. Sonia Cascante-Sanz from the EU Delegation in Ghana

Coordinate

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At Solution Oasis Limited, producers of Beauty Secrets' factory at Haatso, the EU delegation met with the CEO, Mrs. Francesca Brenda Opoku , the Chairperson of the Cosmetic and personal care Value Chain Strategic Committee to discuss her resilience strategy and mitigation on the impact of the pandemic



Business Highlights:

Solution Oasis Limited is a private limited liability Ghanaian manufacturing company established in 2002 by its President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Mrs. Francesca Brenda Opoku. It is a social enterprise that manufactures premium natural skincare products using ethically sourced African Shea butter, oils and herbs under the Beauty Secrets Brand for the local and international markets.

Solution Oasis works with rural cooperatives to convert Ghana and Africa's pure and raw ingredients to produce the best African Black Soap, Shea and cocoa butter based products for the national and international market.

It is one of the first major indigenous, eco cosmetics companies in the Sub Saharan Africa. The company's strength lies in the utilization of exotic local butters, oils and herbs, to produce premium natural value added products.

Ethical sourcing is at the heart of the company's business, ensuring that raw materials are produced in an environmentally friendly and sustainable way.

Export Products

- Beauty Secrets Shea Body Butter.
- Beauty Secrets 100% Natural Shea Butter.
- Beauty Secrets All natural African Black Soap enriched with Shea Butter.
- Beauty Secrets Cocoa Butter Skin Moisturizer.
- Beauty Secrets Handcrafted Shea Butter Soap with Baobab, Henna, Moringa, and Neem.
- Beauty Secrets Hair and Body Oils.
- Beauty Secrets Miracle Hair-Growth.



The delegation inspecting the Solution Oasis factory and products

WACOMP- Ghana 3rd steering committee meeting



Members of the Steering Committee of WACOMP-Ghana

The Steering Committee (SC) members of the project held a virtual meeting on the 10th of March 2021 to review the implementation of the programme during the year 2020.

Implemented planned activities for the various project components were presented by Charles Kwame Sackey, Chief Technical Advisor, with support from the chairpersons of the three Strategic Value Chain Committees of the project, and the project focal persons from the Ghana Standards Authority (GSA), Food and Drugs Authority (FDA), Ghana Export Promotion Authority (GEPA), Association of Ghana Industries and the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI).

The Chairman of the SC, Mr. Patrick Yaw Nimo, Chief Director of the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI) commenting on the results achieved by the project noted that the 15 standards being developed and in particular those for starch, ethanol for industrial use and industrial starch, are going to bring an invaluable support to the cassava processing sector in Ghana.

Mr. Georgios Tsopanakis, Programme Officer at the European Union Delegation in Ghana expressed appreciation to the project's technical team as well as to the commitment and involvement of the national partners and agencies.

He highlighted the EU satisfaction regarding the project so far and hoped the beneficiaries are happy with the project results.

"The project is an example of what an intervention can do to the three different value chains in order to improve Ghanaian products and livelihood of people around. It is through the private and public partnership initiatives that challenges on the ground are solved in a more sustainable way," he added.

He also suggested that the recordings of the online training organized during the pandemic should be made available to ensure a wider use to the benefit of the broader business community.

Mr. Juan Pablo Davila, Project Manager of WACOMP - Ghana, acknowledged that despite the difficulties and the shift in the way of interacting with counterparts and project beneficiaries brought by COVID-19, the implementation has been good.

He also acknowledged that the project team successfully shifted to digital training and digital assessments as new business models, ensuring no disruption in the project implementation.

Dr. Christian Namalgiebzamga, WACOMP - ECOWAS representative observed that WACOMP - Ghana is an example for all the other national components and commended the project for the sharing of ideas and suggestions with the other countries.

Conform

Good Agricultural & Manufacturing Practices for Cassava



A group of cassava farmers loading cassava harvest from the farm into a tricycle

The importance of cassava as an industrial crop is currently gaining prominence through emerging markets. Thanks to the widespread presence of cassava in the country, Ghana can potentially take full advantage of this economic development.

However, factors such as low productivity of farms and poor implementation of Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) contribute to preventing the cassava industry in Ghana from improving the livelihoods of many Ghanaians, who depend on the crop either directly or indirectly.

Like any other crop, optimum productivity of cassava requires timely and skill-based execution of Good Agricultural Practices (GAPS). Most of the studies conducted by WACOMP on the cassava value chain since its inception identified several gaps in the knowledge and capacity of cassava producers and processors.

The most important challenges identified include:

- Limited availability and accessibility to clean and healthy planting material;
- The incidence of pests and diseases;

- Declining soil fertility;
- Non-adoption of good production practices by farmers and limited value addition.

These poor practices were found to be linked to weak capacity in planting material selection and preparation, land preparation and also to environmental factors, including climate change.

These challenges tend to ultimately affect the competitiveness of the cassava value chain in terms of quality of raw material, efficiency and productivity of cassava processors.

To reduce the impact of these challenges on the value chain and its competitiveness, WACOMP developed an eight module training manual to be used as a guide for farmers.

The objective of the guide is to support primary producers to increase their productivity and to improve Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) for enhanced quality and volume of cassava available for processing and value addition. Download a copy here <https://bit.ly/3tDKBap>.



65 cassava farmers trained in GAP



Participants working on ridge preparation for planting cassava

Smallholder farmers make up the majority of cassava production and account for the production of 90% of Ghana's cassava

However, cassava production and processing in Ghana remains very basic with smallholder farmers accounting for the majority of production and processing.

The project organized an intensive one week training for 65 WACOMP – Ghana cassava cluster farmers in the Volta Region from the 8th to 14th of March 2021 focused on developing their farming skills in line with Ghana - Good Agricultural Practices (GAP): GS 949-1:2011.

The training was also aimed at integrating and mainstreaming of Good Agricultural Practices and enhancing the dissemination of technologies among the value chain actors in the Volta cluster.

Mr. George Prah, trainer and GAPs expert, in collaboration with Edmass Foods and Vankharis Limited, trained 41 male and 24 female farmers and exposed them to the Good Agricultural Practices for Ghana (Ghana GAP) (GS 949-1:2011).

He also provided them guidance on the implementation of the requirements of the Ghana - GAPs to improve productivity and efficiency of cassava processors.

The training content also covered good agronomic practices from “cradle to grave”, the adoption and use of GAPs or technologies to help build resilience and reduce disaster risk on smallholder farmers as well as train them on how to respect the COVID-19 related practices.



Participants selecting healthy planting materials



Participants during the training session

Conform

65 Cassava farmers GAP training event in photos



Conform

Support to Cosmetics SMEs on Product Information File (PIF) preparation



Mrs. Michelle Ayog-Nying Dassah, CEO of Laam Shea (right) interacting with Mr. Frederick Gyamera Owusu, WACOMP-Ghana National Quality Infrastructure Expert (left) and Mrs. Naa Atswei Nyakpo (middle) WACOMP-Ghana Cosmetics Cluster Expert

Most cosmetics companies in Ghana have difficulties in meeting the European Union (EU) and United Kingdom (UK) markets standards for cosmetic products due to the lack of knowledge of export procedures, with a special emphasis on the preparation of the Product Information File (PIF), a critical requirement for export to these markets.

As part of interventions to address these challenges, the project engaged an International Expert for PIF development, Mrs. Carmen Esteban Sanchidrián to work with Mrs. Naa Atswei Nyakpo, Cluster and Networks Expert and Mr. Fredrick Gyamera Owusu, National Quality Infrastructure Expert to assist interested cluster members producing Shea butter based and black soap cosmetics to prepare the required documentation.

Five companies have so far been assisted to prepare the PIF documents to enable them to export to the European market.

These companies are Solution Oasis, Laam Shea, R & R Luxury, Bubune Skincare and NGUVU Skin and Hair Care.

The product information file is a specific technical document containing all the most important information about the finished product, namely ingredients from which the product is made, packaging in which the product is sold, manufacturing process and product labeling which shows the product characteristics, its safety and efficacy.

Each product placed on the EU and UK markets needs to have a product information file prepared. To support targeted SMEs, WACOMP prepared a checklist for self-assessment.

Companies were engaged one-on-one via zoom meetings by the experts to explain the checklist requirements and guide them through their self assessment.

Conform

Cont'd from pg.13

Subsequent meetings were also held to further guide and advice participating SMEs on how to collect supplier information and engage with Ghana Standards Authority (GSA) and Food and Drugs Authority (FDA).

To touch base with participating companies, WACOMP experts visited the Laam Shea factory at Kumasi in April to visually inspect prepared documents and assess their Good Manufacturing Practices , a PIF pre-requirement.

Hands-on assistance and clarification on specific documentation requirements were therefore provided as needed.

Mrs. Michelle Ayog-Nying Dassah, Laam Shea's CEO, was grateful for the visit and showed more commitment to complete the rather daunting task of completing the needed detailed documentation.



KNUST- Food and Biochemistry Laboratory efforts towards accreditation



**Mr. Frederick Gyamera Owusu (right)
inspecting the Kumasi laboratory**

A series of online training on 'ISO /IEC 17025' has taken place in April for the staff of the Food and Biochemistry Laboratory of the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST).

The objective of the series of training is to prepare them for Laboratory Documentation General requirements and strengthen the laboratory management system to become a competent testing laboratory.

Mr. Frederick Gyamera Owusu, WACOMP – Ghana National Quality Infrastructure Expert noted that the regular visits to the laboratory will ensure the necessary corrections are made to the draft document and that the needed resources required are in place.

"The documentation phase is crucial for any laboratory. While developing the manuals, the staff becomes familiar with all the steps/ phases to be monitored to achieve the accreditation," he stressed.

Conform

Uncertainty measurement training virtual graduation



Virtual Graduation of Uncertainty Analysts for GSA , FDA , KNUST and UDS laboratories

As part of WACOMP’s support to building capacity and contributing to the National Quality Infrastructure (NQI), the project organized a training course in Measurement and Uncertainty in Laboratory Analysis for selected analysts.

The training is an integral part of the process needed for laboratories to get ready for accreditation.

Mr. Mauro Sbaraglia, UNIDO International Laboratory Analysis Expert was the main resource person for the training.

On the 17th of February 2021, a virtual graduation ceremony was held for 43 analysts who successfully participated in the virtual training and passed the final exams.

The analysts that participated in the training were from the Ghana Standards Authority (GSA), Food and Drugs Authority (FDA), Food Technology Laboratory of the University of Development Studies (UDS) and the Food and Biochemistry Laboratory of the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST).

Mr. Juan Pablo Davila, the Project Manager of WACOMP – Ghana commended the analysts for putting in their maximum efforts to complete the specialized training despite the fact that this was delivered fully online.

He also indicated that the laboratories’ commitment is a crucial step for ensuring a sustainable Quality Infrastructure in Ghana.

Compete //

50 cosmetic entrepreneurs trained on labeling & standards compliance in Tamale



Shea based entrepreneurs participating in the training

The distinct label of a product is one of its most identifiable features in the market, especially in a competitive market. The product information that must be communicated by a label is governed by the relevant safety and export laws.

50 Small and Medium-scale Enterprises (SMEs) engaged in shea-based cosmetic processing in the northern cluster received capacity-building training on labeling and standard compliance in the Tamale Metropolis on the 20th of January, 2021 as part of activities earmarked under the WACOMP - Ghana Sub -Contracting Matching Scheme (SCMS) with the Global Shea Alliance.

The training was organized in collaboration with the Food and Drugs Authority (FDA) and Ghana Standard Authority (GSA) and aimed at increasing the quality of the shea-based cosmetics products that are marketed for local and international consumption.

Mr. Charles Kwame Sackey, WACOMP-Ghana Chief Technical Advisor highlighted in his opening remarks that the sub-contracting matching scheme supported Global Shea Alliance to raise awareness of the cosmetic producers about the registration process and related requirements by the Ghana Standards Authority (GSA), Food and Drugs Authority (FDA) which are essential steps if SMEs want to grow their domestic market share and export their products to the international market.

“This will strengthen the export competitiveness of local producers through enhanced value-addition, low carbon emission, sustainable production and processing, and an increased access to regional and international markets,” he emphasized.

Mr. Sackey also reminded the SMEs of the opportunity the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) offers and why they must always meet the required quality standards.

Mr. Prince Nunoo, Project Manager of Global Shea Alliance reassured the participants that the alliance will continue to support shea-based SMEs to be sustainable and reiterated that the collaboration between WACOMP-Ghana and Global Shea Alliance will continue to help upscale businesses in Ghana.

Mr. Martin Kusi, the Northern Regional Director of the FDA commended the organizers for the initiative, stating that poor labeling and packaging represents one of the biggest challenges for shea-processing SMEs in the region, as it affects the marketability of their products.

“Most of the local entrepreneurs are seen producing poor labels without batch numbers, manufacturing dates, location address and other relevant details.

He also indicated that wrong labeling with incorrect or incomplete data typically sidetracks otherwise good products.

Mr. Charles Kuranchie, Chief Quality Assurance officer at the GSA, stressed that it is an offense for SMEs to put their products on the market without pre-approval by the FDA and GSA.

He added that there are severe legal repercussions for breaching this directive.

Compete

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Feedback on training on labeling and compliance



Mr. Jonas Baba, Founder of Jotim Cosmetics

"The training by WACOMP-Ghana through the Global Shea Alliance has taught me how to label my products properly and the training on branding and marketing made me to know how to create a niche market.

Also, the Food and Drugs Authority session helped us to identify certain cosmetics symbols used on cosmetics products that we did not know why they are used and what they mean.

The labeling compliance training has been helpful to me and my business."



Dr. Nazia Ibrahim, CEO of Ansobie Agribusiness

"The labeling and standards compliance training showed me the practical ways to be compliant in packaging my products and to be competitive on the domestic market and eventually to take advantage of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), the European and North Africa markets opportunities.

The most important aspect for me is the education provided by the FDA on how to properly package and label primary and secondary products.

The training will also help me to raise awareness among the women groups I work with, to ensure that they also adequately label and package their products "

Compete

Global Shea Alliance packaging training in Accra



Shea - based entrepreneurs at the training in Accra

The packaging of a manufactured product is indeed crucial to promote towards the end-user

On 24th February 2021 the Global Shea Alliance organized a training to the benefit of 44 shea-based entrepreneurs in cosmetics packaging.

Mr. Aaron Adu, the Managing Director of Global Shea Alliance said the training aims at providing cosmetic manufacturers in Ghana the ability to understand the various aspects connected to packaging designs.

Participants were taken through packaging functions for shea-based producers and distinction between labeling requirements and rules governing packaging with a special focus on legal packaging requirements for the European Union (EU), United

States of America (USA) and West Africa.

Madam Jemima Brenya, the founder and CEO of SC Natural Products, confirmed that she has learnt a lot during the training and realized that there is the need to know the legal requirements of target countries to export.

“There is the need for cosmetics manufacturers to get the appropriate packaging materials to preserve, protect and attract buyers to the products on different marketing outlets the world over,” she affirmed.

Compete

2021 remote cluster coaching



Virtual launch of 2021 remote coaching for SMEs

Following the huge success of last year’s remote coaching for 16 companies, the cluster distant coaching sessions have been reconducted for 2021

The launching took place virtually on 12th February and 17 SMEs belonging to the three WACOMP target value chains have attended the session and signed on to the support.

The remote coaching is led by UNIDO’s International Cluster and Marketing expert Mr. Vedat Kunt with local support from WACOMP national cluster and network experts: Mrs. Naa Atswei Nyakpo, Mr. Joseph Yeboah, Mr. Frank Kwesi and Mr. Kwame Adjekum.

Some notable achievements from last year :

- SMEs developed new products and create new sales channels;
- SMEs revised their labels and introduced new packaging and promotion packages;
- SMEs Applied for FDA registration and one company has received its registration certificate;
- Some companies were for the first time able to sell products

- in the UK and others able to penetrate the USA market;
- And one Company is preparing for ISO 9001 certification.

The focus of the distant coaching sessions covers the following topics:

- Business strategy, mission, values, vision, targets, how to grow;
- Compliance to standards, traceability;
- Sales history, comments on sales, products and channels;
- Cost calculation and product pricing;
- Promotions, both digital and conventional;
- New product, sales channel, business model development;
- Supply of raw material and packaging;
- Joint activities and Social responsibility.

Watch video feedback on the 2020 remote coaching sessions here <https://bit.ly/3bolvGf>



The digitalization of Ghana's cosmetics clusters



Mr. Seth Twum-Akwaboah, CEO of AGI (seated middle) flanked by some of the Cosmetics Association executives and members of AGI and WACOMP

WACOMP, in collaboration with the Association of Ghana Industries (AGI), launched on 7th April the “[Ghana Cosmetic Cluster](#)”, a digital platform to promote and market locally produced cosmetics products from Ghana.

The platform has been designed based on the best international examples of cosmetic clusters digital platforms. It will serve as the country's cosmetic industry digital promotional display and will support AGI in showcasing Ghanaian cosmetic cluster products and ensure SMEs greater visibility in the national and international markets.

This initiative aims at facilitating networking and market interactions: business-to-business (B2B), business-to-customer (B2C) and customer-to-customer (C2C) interaction, thereby contributing to boosting the cosmetics and personal care industry and positioning Ghana as a quality market hub for cosmetic products.

Mr. Charles Kwame Sackey, Chief Technical Advisor of WACOMP – Ghana, commenting on the launch, said it is inspiring to see this collaborative effort between AGI and the project finally launched to enhance global market access to natural cosmetics and

personal care products as well as promote the competitiveness of the cosmetics sector in Ghana.

“Ghana’s natural cosmetics products with support from WACOMP have greatly improved in terms of quality and packaging hence deserves all the support to take advantage of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) opportunities and the international market,” he noted

Mr. Seth Twum –Akwaboah, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of AGI, expressed gratitude to the WACOMP - Ghana for its consistent support to the Association's activities over the years and to the European Union for their dedication of funds to support the growth of Ghanaian industries.

Mr. Sandy Osei – Agyeman, the Chairman of the cosmetics sector of AGI and the CEO of Slid Industries Ltd, commended the Ghana cosmetics cluster team for making it much easier to boost the competitiveness of the sector and the products of its members.

Learn more about Ghana Cosmetics Cluster here <https://ghanacosmeticscluster.com/>



Connect

E-Commerce Bonus Master Classes: SEO and Online Selling Platform

Avoid digital invisibility



Bonus master class virtual launch for SMEs

With many online Ghanaian businesses facing challenges with identifying the right market place to sell and not being confident with market places logistics, WACOMP delivered two Bonus Master Classes to last year’s E-marketing graduates to strengthen their competitiveness and avoid digital invisibility

On 16th and 24th February 2021, the UNIDO International E-Commerce Expert, Mrs. Sarah Carroll took selected group SMEs through “Search Engine Optimization (SEO)” and “Grow your business with online market places” training sessions.

Participants were taken through practical steps and live demonstrations to do SEO, manage online market platforms, marketplace tools, hints and tips on setting up, optimising e-marketplace listings and how to take advantage of the local and global market places opportunities to reach millions of customers.

Mrs. Carroll revealed that according to the *Emarketer*, E-Market places account for over 50% of all worldwide B2C E-Commerce sales. It is therefore important to plan a marketing strategy and think of how it will influence your profit margin.

Key takeaways:

- SEO is better than Pay per Click (PPC) for generating Sales.
- Avoid Digital Invisibility.
- Millions of customers are online.
- You don’t have to beat Google, just beat your competitors.



My WACOMP Experience'

Michelle Dassah, CEO of Laam Shea shares her E-Commerce coaching story

Please tell us about yourself?

My name is Michelle Ayog-Nying Dassah, the founder and lead formulator for Laam Shea Products. We are based in the Ashanti Region, Kumasi to be precise.

I was inspired to start Laam Shea Products in 2015 after a mixture of Shea and neem oil cleared off the skin rashes of one of my twin sons who had extremely sensitive skin.

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

The E-Marketing training empowered me to take a definitive decision on the best digital and e-commerce plan for Laam Shea.

At the end of the course I was certain on the channels that worked for my brand as well as strategies that will enable me improve my digital presence.

Tell us more about your E-Marketing coaching after graduation. What are the experiences so far?

My sessions with Sarah were so practical, educative and created an even stronger bond with my products.

Apart from the extremely technical aspect which the developer handled, I understood why those changes needed to be done to make the Laam Shea website more visible and global.

I have learnt to rewrite product descriptions that connect with clients while incorporating essential keywords that will make such products more attractive.

Being able to interpret the website's analytics and use this information to define Laam Shea online activities has actually started to pay off.



Mrs. Michelle Ayog-Nying Dassah at a WACOMP - Ghana event

Has the training improved sales?

The website was active for more than six months before my sessions with Sarah with a single sale. I now feel very confident promoting the website.

It is worth saying that since March, I have already received four online orders through the website. This is a drastic improvement for my company!

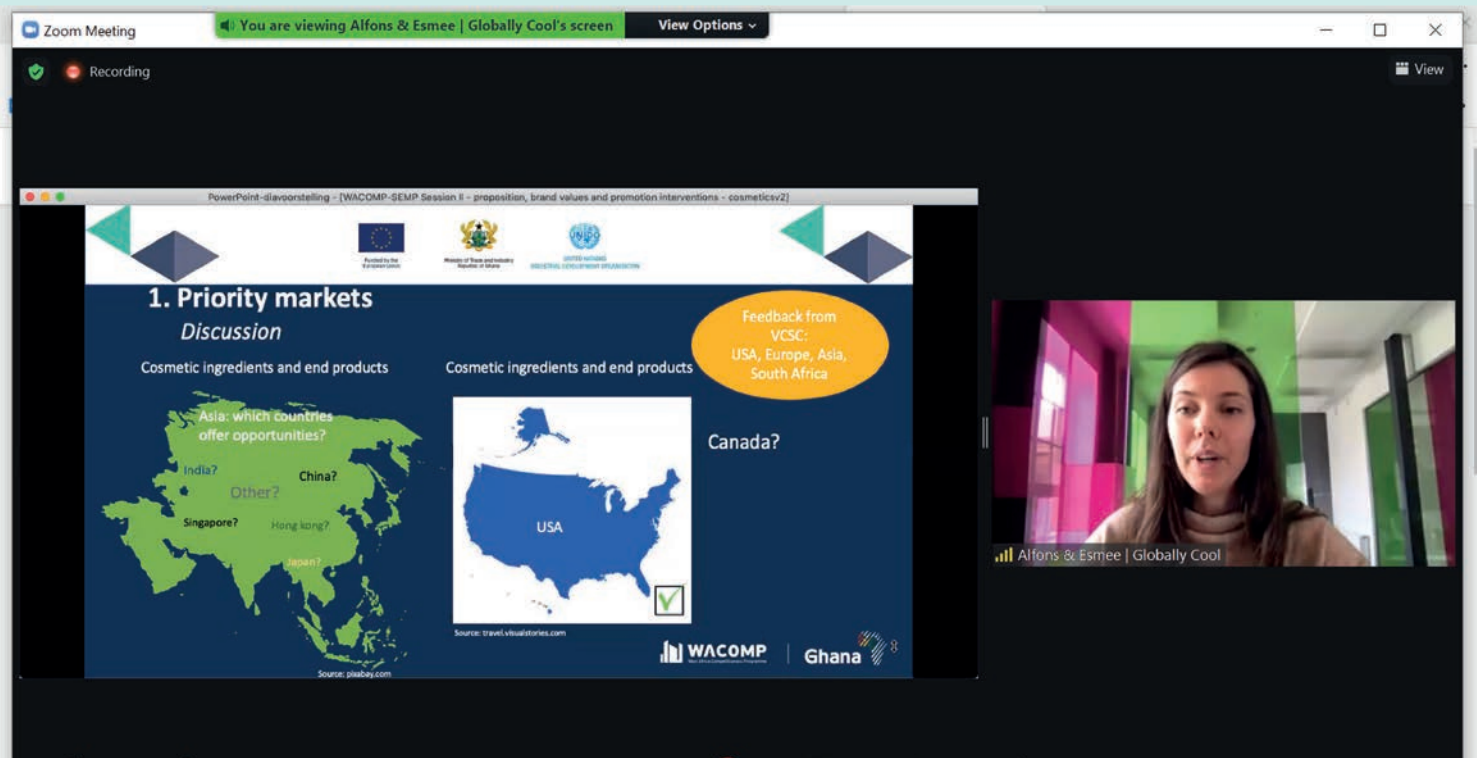
I am upbeat about the sales opportunities once all recommendations are fully implemented.

What will you suggest to make the E-Marketing training more engaging?

I have benefited extremely from the practical sessions with Sarah and can only wish that opportunity is offered to more businesses, as the impact in terms of strengthening our digital presence is tremendous!

Connect

SEMP for cosmetics



Virtual launch of Sector Export Marketing Plan for Cosmetics

WACOMP - Ghana supports the development of Sector Export Marketing Plan (SEMP) for the Cosmetic Value Chain

For the cosmetics and personal care sector, a series of relevant stakeholder consultations have started to develop a collective and strategic plan to promote the whole Ghanaian cosmetic sector.

The SEMP will address strategic issues and outline 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.

The SEMP will specify key targets and define specific steps to ensure a better marketing strategy for the cosmetic value chain to strengthen the quality image of the sector and promote its products on the international market.

Overall, the SEMP is expected to provide guidance on measures to undertake to improve the quality, conformity, and targeted markets for Ghanaian cosmetics products in the medium to the long term.

The first strategic virtual meeting was held on the 27th January 2021 and a follow-up meeting with the Cosmetics Value Chain Strategic Committee to discuss the SEMP was held on the 25th of March 2021.

In partnership with Globally Cool, the leading actors of the cosmetic value chain and GEPA are currently working to define the strategic unique selling points of the sector to be able to identify the best suitable marketing tools to be developed and channels to prioritize.

Interview

Getting to know more about NBSSI



Interview with **Mrs. Kosi Yankey -Ayeh**, Ghana Enterprises Agency/NBSSI
Chief Executive Officer

E-mail: info@nbssi.gov.gh

Mrs. Kosi Yankey-Ayeh is the Chief Executive Officer of the Ghana Enterprises Agency (formerly National Board for Small Scale Industries).

Kosi spent majority of her working career at Deutsche Bank, Citigroup, Merrill Lynch and UBS focusing on access to finance and agribusiness in Africa.

Kosi's experiences range from working as a Banker at Deutsche Bank, Citigroup, Merrill Lynch and UBS. She began her career as an Investment Banker at Deutsche Bank, Wall Street, in New York and also assisted in establishing the first multimillion dollar microfinance fund set up by an investment bank.

Over the years, Kosi has founded and led the strategic development and growth of various projects for international and local partners.

Mrs. Yankey-Ayeh graduated from Harvard University, USA, with a Master's in Public Administration and Public Policy from the John F. Kennedy School of Government. At Harvard she received the 2016 excellence award for academic distinction and distinguished contribution to the Edward S. Mason Program and the School.

Her leadership at NBSSI has helped to shape enterprise development in Ghana, giving NBSSI now the Ghana Enterprises Agency (GEA) a firm footing in MSME development and promotion.

Her rich experience in microfinance and finance has helped to scale up activities of the Board (especially those targeting the rural areas to promote better access to business development services, appropriate technology and financial services.

1. What Support did NBSSI provide to SMEs/MSMEs especially during COVID? How many Women beneficiaries?

Under the Coronavirus Alleviation Programme Business Support Scheme (CAPBUSS), we have supported over 290,000 Beneficiaries out of which 68.33% of the beneficiaries were women.

In addition, the facility helped to strengthen Business Associations by providing equipment such as laptops and printers for data capturing.

Through the Mastercard Foundation Young Africa Works, which targets 39,000 youngsters, we have currently supported 43,360 young persons out of which over 34,688 are women, i.e. more than 80%. A total of 3,825 new businesses have been established and 41,037 jobs sustained and created.

Also, in collaboration with Mastercard Foundation, we are implementing the COVID-19 Recovery and Resilience (Nkosuo) Programme which has loans and grants components. So far, a total number of beneficiaries stands at 16,189 out of which 59% are women - owned enterprises.

Under the World Bank-sponsored Ghana Economic Transformation (GET) Project, the World Bank and the Government of Ghana will support high growth SMEs with two forms of Grants (COVID-19 Response Grants & Regular Grants) to cushion them against the impact of the COVID-19. The support will be complemented by Technical Assistance (capacity building, professional services, etc).

Also we have the "COVID-19 SME Innovation and Digitalization Project, a project to support and enable SMEs to digitalize, particularly now during the COVID-19 era, thereby ensuring business continuity and improving the efficiency of their operations.

"There is a need for businesses to digitalize their operation to lead economic recovery effort by providing access to knowledge, technologies, and expertise in the field of digitalization and process innovation.

We are optimistic that at the end of this training, these SMEs will increase their process efficiency and competitiveness even as Ghana commences African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)".

Credit

Cont'd from pg.24

2. What are some of the activities that NBSSI is currently implementing for cosmetics, fruits, and cassava VCs?

NBSSI's interventions are dependent on the economic activities and resource potentials within the specific regions.

In the Eastern, Volta and Some parts of Greater Accra Regions for instance, interventions benefit gari processes and other cassava derivatives.

In the Central and some part of Eastern Regions, interventions benefit fruit processing companies whilst in Greater Accra and Ashanti Region, many of the companies that benefits from the interventions are in cosmetics.

We also support entrepreneurs to formalize their business through certification with GSA, and license from FDA as well as registration with Registrar General Department (RGD).

A recent collaboration with WACOMP-Ghana to promote financial literacy and support small businesses master the financial aspect of their businesses generated much impact as expected. Many more MSMEs and SMEs are ready to enrol after the first batch of graduates.

3. How do you evaluate NBSSI collaboration with WACOMP ?

We believe WACOMP will help MSMEs in Ghana by strengthening their management and capacity to reach higher value levels.

We hope to collaborate with the project in promoting the acquisition of new technology and innovation.

Also, a possible area of cooperation is the strengthening of the support to MSMEs to improve their capacities through market linkages at the local, regional and international levels and strengthening the MSMEs' capacity to fulfill buyer and market access requirements.

Also through our collaboration, relevant business support institutions will be strengthened and resourced to support the value chains.



Online financial training

PUBLIC NOTICE

Call for Applications:
E-Finance Training Course

Apply Here
bit.ly/efinancetraining

Deadline for Applications
21 February, 2021

Building Competitiveness for exports
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WACOMP | Ghana
www.wacomphana.org

Self-managing the financial aspect of a small business is challenging for most Small and Medium-scale Enterprises (SMEs).

The project, in collaboration with the Ghana Enterprise Agency (GEA) formerly National Board for Small Scale Industries (NBSSI), launched on the 4th of March 2021 the "Finance mastering as the first step to increasing your competitiveness" online training.

30 SMEs / MSMEs successfully registered to join the first batch of finance trainees and had the opportunity to express their expectations.

The 6 weeks' course is targeted at assisting SMEs / MSMEs in handling their finances as a major step in increasing their competitiveness by better calculating their production costs, integrating them into the price definition, and defining and revising annual budgets.

Executive Director of NBSSI/GEA, Mrs. Kosi Yankey-Ayeh said the agency appreciates the continuous support of WACOMP, in contributing to enhance the competitiveness of Ghanaian Businesses.

Cont'd from pg.25



Virtual launch of E-Finance training

“This training is very important and crucial in these critical times from the changing phase of COVID-19 pandemic right through to the AfCFTA ,” she emphasized.

The trainer, Mr. Kwame Adjekum, WACOMP - Ghana National Procurement Officer explained that it is essential to understand product costs and financial aspect of an entire business in order to succeed as a company.

“Absence of competency in managing the cost with strategic focus and forecasting can contribute to business failure of SMEs and sustain business competitiveness and profits,” he continued.

In a poll conducted during one of the training sessions, 82% of the SMEs indicated that they do not budget in their business while 88% agree their inability to budget is affecting their business and 76% noted that preparing a budget that they can

monitor would ensure better financial management and allow them to avoid unnecessary expenditures.

Sharing why she signed on to the programme, Madam Sharon Yomle Ayertey, a representative from a cassava processing company, mentioned that she wanted to know the unit cost of raw materials used for her production and she was optimistic the sessions will help prepare her to be able to manage her business costs appropriately.

“I hope to be able to manage an effective price system after the cost ,” she added.

Madam Francisca Frimpong of Two - F Industries also expressed her willingness to gain knowledge in terms of pricing and taxation.

Credit

3rd call for the Sub-Contracting Matching Scheme (SCMS)

Fri, 15th January, 2021 @ 11 GMT

Funded by the European Union
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UNITED NATIONS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

WEBINAR

Sensitisation on WACOMP Sub Contracting Matching Scheme

Register Here
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On the 15th of January 2021, WACOMP launched the 3rd call for the Sub-Contracting Matching Scheme with a sensitization webinar.

The third call for proposals is part of the Axis 5- Credit and offers to partners, institutions, associations and clusters within the target value chain the opportunity to bid for a co-contribution up to a maximum of 40,000 Euros.

Bidders are expected to co-finance 20% of the total amount of the subcontract's, that should focus on one of the project intervention areas.

Mr. Mikael Opoku, the representative from the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI), praised the continuous support of the

partnership between MoTI, the European Union and UNIDO through WACOMP.

He mentioned the importance of the project in increasing quality and strengthening competitiveness of the three targeted value chains as a way to take advantage of the trade opportunities offered by the AfCFTA.

Mr. Georgios Tsopanakis, the EU representative, congratulated interested bidders in advance and encouraged them to take advantage of the opportunity provided by the sub-contracting matching scheme to develop good ideas that are innovative and relevant for the targeted value chains of the project.

Credit

Cont'd from pg.27



From top left : Mr. Charles Kwame Sackey , WACOMP -Ghana Chief Technical Advisor, Mr. Juan Pablo Davila, WACOMP-Ghana Project Manager , Mr. Kwame Adjekum, WACOMP National Procurement Officer with Mr. Georgios Tsopanakis, EU representative launching the 3rd Call for Sub-Contract Matching Scheme

Mr. Juan Pablo Davila, WACOMP - Ghana Project Manager highlighted how important it is for potential bidders to pay extra attention to eligibility details and emphasized that the proposals must be aligned to the project objectives and must benefit not only the institution or association but have an impact at the territorial level.

“Identify solutions that will transform the value chains and submit proposals that will leverage your institutions and clearly show what you can do to improve the objective of the project and your sector,” he declared.

Invitation of bids was formally opened from 18th January to 26th February 2021. Interested members were directed to visit the WACOMP website to access and download the presentation and bid documents to be used in the preparation of their bids.:<https://bit.ly/3y8R8gI>

Evaluation Process:

The evaluation process commenced on 2nd February with the opening of the bids. The opening was conducted remotely by UNIDO, the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MOTI) and the European Union (EU). 23 bids were received.





Voice

From the field

Madam Rita Dampson
CEO of Ritadamps Ventures

Ritadamps Ventures started from my house. I was previously engaged in the production of "tie and dye ", Kente weaving and soap making in small quantities until an American convinced me to train other women. I accepted the challenge and started working with her to train the women she mobilized.

Voice from the field

Cont'd from pg.28

In 2011, I started gathering women to process shea nuts into handcrafted butter and in 2013, I decided to set up a processing centre at Gupanayili and then later a black soap centre in Tamale where my current office is. A decision I have never regretted.

I named my company Ritadamps as a tribute to my father's name, Dampson. I did not want to forget him so I decided to attach his name to my name.

I was introduced to black soap processing by a sister-friend who had realized the huge market opportunities for this product. She did not know how to produce black soap herself, but she knew someone who was into black soap and motivated me to

get in touch with this person to train us.

That is how I got into soap making! Just by chance and by seeing the high potential of this product on the market.

Since then, many things have happened and I am now recognized at the local level as a key player for the community.

My company is impacting the community positively by creating employment and reducing poverty. I was even recognised by Technoserve, through their Engine programme.

I participated in their 2014 programme and became the 3rd awardee. Then in 2017, they awarded me for creating jobs in my community and beyond.

I have trained over 1000 women in shea and black soap processing and export my product to Saudi Arabia and Egypt.

I also have some clients in Ghana and Europe who order handcraft shea butter and black soap. I was working with 299 female workers processing shea butter and black soap in Tamale and Gupanayili but because of the pandemic, 25 workers working with me here in Tamale had to leave because I can only maintain six on a contract basis.

WACOMP – Ghana cluster has helped the cosmetic and personal care products sector by exposing us to key measures to enhance our competitiveness. The various training organized by WACOMP in quality standards, product packaging and branding have made us more professional and increased our knowledge.

The cosmetics cluster in Tamale brought all those into cosmetics together, we got to know ourselves and we started trading among ourselves.

We get to also share ideas that help the growth and sustenance of the cluster.

It is my expectation that the support from the project to the regional cosmetics and personal care value chain will make our products meet the international standards, and make us able to sell around the globe.



Madam Rita Dampson working at her processing centre

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.

WACOMP COUNTRY INTERVENTION

Benin Amount: €5m Lead Ministry: Ministry of Finance Implementing Partner: GIZ Selected Value Chains: soya, ICT	Burkina Faso Amount: €7.5m Lead Ministry: Ministry Of Trade, Industry & Handicraft Implementing Partner: Chamber of Commerce Selected Value Chains: honey, cotton, renewable energy	Cape Verde Amount: €5m Lead Ministry: Competitiveness Unit (Office of Prime Minister) Implementing Partner: UNDP Selected Value Chains: ICT; renewable energy; culture, tourism & leisure	Cote D'Ivoire Amount: €9m Lead Ministry: Ministry of Regional Integration Implementing Partner: Chamber of Commerce Selected Value Chains: tropical fruits; cassava; cashew; textile & garment; rubber & plastics; ICT
The Gambia Amount: €4m Implementing Partner: UNIDO; United Purpose Selected Value Chain: Onion	Ghana Amount: €9m Implementing Partner: UNIDO Selected Value Chain: Tropical/ Fruits; Cassava & Derivatives; Cosmetics and Personal Care products	Guinea Amount: €5m Implementing Partner: UNIDO Selected Value Chain: Pineapple	Guinea Bissau Amount: €4m Implementing Partner: UNIDO Selected Value Chain: Mango
Liberia Amount: €5m Implementing Partner: GIZ Selected Value Chain: Fisheries; Skin, Hide & Leather	Mauritania Amount: €4m Implementing Partner: GIZ Selected Value Chain: Poultry; Skin, Hide & Leather; Gum Arabic	Mali Amount: €5.5m Implementing Partner: UNIDO Selected Value Chain: Tropical Fruits; Cereals	Niger Amount: €5m Implementing Partner: GIZ Selected Value Chain: Skin, Hide & Leather
Nigeria Amount: €10m Implementing Partner: GIZ Selected Value Chain: Ginger; Tomato/Pepper; Textiles & Garments; Skin, Hide & Leather	Senegal Amount: €9m Implementing Partner: ITC Selected Value Chain: Mango; Onion; ICT	Sierra Leone Amount: €5m Implementing Partner: UNIDO Selected Value Chain: Cassava & Derivatives; Cocoa; Palm Oil	Togo Amount: €5m Implementing Partner: GIZ Selected Value Chain: Pineapple

Ghana Competitive News



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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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