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

Learn more about
EU Priorities:
H.E. Irchad Razaaly,
EU Ambassador to Ghana

... 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.





WACOMP-Ghana 6th Steering Committee Meeting



Group photo of members of the WACOMP - Ghana Steering Committee

[WACOMP – Ghana](#), held its sixth Steering Committee (SC) meeting on the 6th of December 2022 to discuss the progress of the project and provide recommendations for further action for implementation.

Representatives of the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI), Ministry of Finance, European Union, Food and Drugs Authority (FDA), Ghana Standards Authority (GSA), Ghana Export Promotion Authority (GEPA), Association of Ghana Industries (AGI), One District and One Factory (1D1F) Secretariat and other stakeholders reviewed the outcomes of the project and discussed future interventions for the last year of the project.

On regional collaboration, Madam Mercy Ashong, representing the Ministry of Finance updated the committee on the regional Steering Committee meeting with the ECOWAS, where WACOMP – Ghana was commended for its outstanding performance and was used as a benchmark for other WACOMP implementing countries.

She was proud of the WACOMP implementation efforts and thanked the team for the good work done so far.

Mr Jeppe Skytte Hansen, Programme Officer of the European Union also further commended the project implementation team and added that the EU is very satisfied with the implementation efforts.

The chairperson of the SC, Mr Patrick Yaw Nimo, Chief Director of the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI) was impressed with the sustainability plan of the project for Ghana and commended the team for making sure that all the success achieved by the project is also serving as a foundational infrastructure for Ghana's industrial promotion and success.

The One District One Factory Secretariat was given an opportunity to update the committee on their activities and implementation, highlighting also the close cooperation in place with the project.

Coordinate

WACOMP - Ghana Fruits Value Chain Sub-Committee meeting



Group photo of members of the Fruits Value Chain Sub - Committee

WACOMP - Ghana established one Value Chain Strategic Committee (VCSCs) for each of the targeted value chains.

This serves as a platform for key stakeholders from private and public sectors to exchange experience, propose solutions and develop strategic ideas aimed at enhancing the competitiveness of the selected value chains.

The fruits committee met on the 4th of November 2022 at the project office in Labone.

The meeting focused on fruit activities done for the year and upcoming activities till the end of the year, unlocking the

potential of the mango and pineapple trade industries.

The following main activities are planned for 2023:

- *Participation to fruit logistica;*
- *Achievement of GlobalGap certifications;*
- *Strengthening cluster cooperation to develop value added products;*
- *Analyse business opportunities with Kenya for pineapple processing;*
- *Scout potential buyers in the markets highlighted in the Sectorial Export Marketing Plan developed last year, in countries such as Morocco.*

Coordinate

WACOMP - Ghana Cosmetics Value Chain Committee Meeting



Group photo of members of Cosmetics Value Chain Sub - Committee

WACOMP – Ghana, Cosmetics Value Chain Sub-Committee (VCSC) held their end-of-year meeting on the 23rd of November 2022 to discuss the progress on cosmetics and personal care sector and plan for the next year.

The hybrid event was attended by Mr Charles Sackey, Chief Technical Advisor, WACOMP – Ghana, Mrs Naa Atswei Nyakpo, Cluster and Networks Expert, WACOMP – Ghana, Mrs Abena S. Boateng and Mrs Jennifer Acheampong, Strategic Anchor, Industries Offices at the Ministry of Trade and Industries (MoTI), Mr Banda Zakaria Abdallah and Mrs Joyce Owusu Kwarteng of Ghana Export Promotion

Authority (GEPA), Mr Johnson Opoku-Boateng, AGI Director, Business Development, Mrs Francesca Apeagyei, CEO of NGUVU Skincare, Mrs Michelle Dassah, CEO of Laam Shea, Mr Sylvester Minyila, CEO of Minsapp Ventures and Mr Churchill Kumadey, CEO of Curchwin Trading.

Key on the agenda was the organization of a Cosmetics Trade Fair during the coming year.

The committee agreed that the fair should be organized in May or June 2023 in collaboration with project implementing partners: GEPA, MoTI and AGI.

Coordinate

Awareness Event on Gender Mainstreaming in Industrial Development in West Africa



West Africa Competitiveness Programme (WACOMP)

Awareness Event on Gender Mainstreaming in Industrial Development in West Africa

28 November 2022

UNIDO organized an Awareness session on gender mainstreaming and the WACOMP – Ghana activities and achievements towards gender empowerment have been presented.

The events organized both in English and French on 28th, 29th November 2022 promoted gender equality in the context of industrialization and UNIDO's Technical Cooperation activities.

Women's economic empowerment is key to achieving gender equality and contributes to reduce poverty, raise incomes, minimize social inequality and achieve better development outcomes, including climate change mitigation.

Industrialization can create new, relatively higher-paying jobs, which contributes to economic growth and prosperity.

Often, however, many women struggle to participate and benefit equally from this growth due to discriminatory social norms or legal barriers.

To address these inequalities, industrial policy-making and development must be gender-responsive and inclusive of women which will be contributing to productivity, higher income levels and better products and outputs at the company level.

Participants learnt the links between gender inequalities and industrial development and how women's economic empowerment can be promoted, based on best practices and practical examples.

WACOMP - Ghana Project Manager, Ms Ebe Muschiali presented the results obtained so far by WACOMP in Ghana.

Coordinate

Cont'd from pg. 8

Speaking on the achievements towards gender and women empowerment, she revealed 11,719 women farmers and entrepreneurs have been empowered to be economically independent.

She also shared information on lessons learnt in Gender mainstreaming in cluster development, sharing concrete examples and testimonials of women having benefited from UNIDO technical assistance.



“

Not only have we helped women, mostly widowed in Tamale and its environs, to improve their livelihoods, and speak against all forms of violence, through UNIDO's support, but our young girls in the Sagnarigu district are also learning the vast potential for exports of our processed high-grade shea butter. If you are empowered economically, you have a voice to be heard by the community”

QUEEN HAJIA SAFIA ALHASSAN ANDANI
Head of the Pagsung Women Shea Butter Producers Cooperative

Coordinate



“

I'm a 52-year-old, single mother of four, living in Asueyi and working in the cassava processing industry for 20 years. Up until I went through the WACOMP training, I had never given any thought to how to open a corporate bank account and scale up my business to employ more people. My 2 children were home after completing Senior High School because of lack of funds. Now they have been enrolled in a post-secondary program at a nursing training college. WACOMP has empowered me to empower others including my children."

MADAM SUSANA FREMA

A member of the Asueyi Cooperative Techiman District



“

I have always transferred knowledge learned through WACOMP -Ghana to others. After my Masterclass training in cosmetics formulation, I have been approached by several NGOs to train more young girls in handcraft soap making, packaging and high-grade unrefined shea butter and black soap to sustain their economic empowerment and livelihoods in our rural communities.”

MRS. HAJIA RITA DAMPSON
CEO of Rita Damps Ventures and Head of Bandisuglo Shea Processing centre



“

With the support of WACOMP – Ghana, we work with 3,000 women out-growers, covering 30 communities in the Oti region. The women groups have been trained in environmental awareness and have been taught how to use graters, pressers, dryers, hummer mills and good packaging to sustain their livelihoods and empowerment.”

MRS. MABEL AKOTO KWUDZO
CEO of Okata Farms

Coordinate

EU Ambassador to Ghana Visits EU funded Projects in Tamale



H.E. Irchad Razaaly (right) interacting with Queen Safia Alhassan, Head of Production at the Pagsun shea Pickers and Processors Centre on how the shea nut is processed

H.E. Irchad Razaaly, the EU Ambassador to Ghana, visited WACOMP Projects in Tamale from the 13th to 15th of September 2022

Ambassador Razally met with shea pickers and processors supported by the European Union through the West Africa Competitiveness Programme (WACOMP) - Ghana.

They all confirmed the impact of the EU's support in their businesses and community, impacting thousands of others.

Through funding and capacity-building support to shea pickers,

processors and marketers have seen a significant increase in production, packaging as well as market extension of their products.

Thanks to WACOMP's support, some of these companies employ as many as 2,000 people, mostly women and able to sell their products globally through Amazon and to international clients such as Walmart.

Coordinate

Cont'd from pg. 13



Mrs Hajia Rita Dampson, CEO, Dampco ventures:

"I used to sell my products in poly wraps but thanks to the WACOMP's training, I now have a very good packaging for all my products and customers are really pleased with the new packaging. Also, after my Masterclass training in cosmetics formulation specially organised by UNIDO, I have been approached by several NGOs operating in the Northern region to train more young girls in handcraft soap making, packaging and high-grade unrefined shea butter and black soap. Not only have I empowered older women in my processing cluster but provided support to over 1000 young women in our communities."



Queen Hajia Safia Alhassan, Production Head, the Pagsun Shea Pickers and Processors Centre:

"Until the assistance from WACOMP, production volume and quality at the centre were very low. Nowadays production has increased from about four tonnes to over 20 tonnes every month."

Not only is EU's funding support through WACOMP benefitting other members of the communities that are not direct members of the association but it is also increasing our sales and profit margins. We allow other women groups in Tamale to use the equipment and it has scaled our production volumes from 9 to 27 bags of shea nuts and our shea butter quality has improved highly."



Mr Churchill Kumadey, CEO of Churchwin Trading:

"Prior to the support, we had no brand. We were exporting raw shea butter to people with brands, who packaged and retailed. We initiated the process to get onto the global market but got stuck until WACOMP came in with a series of networking sessions, training in e-marketing, e-commerce that really opened up the space for us to get onto the market."

WACOMP's intervention, through capacity and network building, has increased the company's monthly sales capacity from \$50 to \$15,000."



Coordinate

Cont'd from pg. 14

At the University for Development Studies (UDS), the EU WACOMP Project Coordinator, Margo Pitura and the team met with the Pro Vice Chancellor of UDS, Professor Felix K. Abagale.

As part of the sub-contracting matching scheme, WACOMP supported the UDS School of Engineering to develop an improved shea roaster for the shea industry.

The development of "Improved Roaster" has helped to improve processing efficiency, climate-smart technological transfer, and adoption of environmental sustainability of the processing systems for shea butter production clusters in Ghana.

The team also visited the CSIR-SARI laboratory on the UDS campus and interacted with the technicians.

Dr Francis Kusi the Director for CSIR-SARI expressed his profound gratitude to the EU for supporting the Laboratory as part of the process to decentralize testing and improving quality products in Ghana.

The project supported the laboratory with facilities to conduct tests on cosmetic-based products and has trained experts in ISO 17205 as well as helped the laboratory to develop an SOP for testing and analysing of cosmetic derivatives for the laboratory institute.

The EU Delegation also visited the Bandisuglo Shea Processing Centre in Gupanarigu in Kunbungu District, where women shared great testimonies confirming that their client base have increased.

Hajia Rita Dampson confirmed : "Since we went through the training for standardizing the quality of shea butter processing, we managed to export to Malaysia and our client believes the butter we supplied is the best shea butter we have ever supplied!"



Mrs Margo Pitura, EU WACOMP Coordinator (left) with Professor Felix Abagale, Pro Vice Chancellor of UDS (right) and other members of the UNIDO and EU delegation



Mrs Margo Pitura, EU WACOMP Coordinator (left) interacting with staff of the cosmetic laboratory of CSIR-SARI



Group photo of the workers of the Bandisuglo Shea Processing Centre and the UNIDO EU delegation

Compete

Improving Pineapple and Mango Businesses in the Eastern and Central Regions of Ghana



Representatives of CERATH in a group photo with WACOMP - Ghana team after their inception meeting at the office

As leading value chains in Ghana's non-traditional exports, significant efforts need to be directed at boosting the mango and pineapple while resolving the accompanying challenges.

Those are: low connectivity to international markets, minimal compliance to quality assurance practices, inefficiencies in production and processing, inadequate technical expertise on good agronomic practices, weak farmer cooperatives, quality management challenges, limited access to market information amongst others.

In this framework CERATH targets mango and pineapple farmers, cooperatives, aggregators, transporters, and AGROPAL West Africa Limited (a dried fruit processing company) with the

objective to improve their knowledge on good agronomic and climate-smart practices, handling, and post-harvest handling practices.

Besides this, CERATH will focus on boosting technological competencies and improve processing techniques of small and medium-sized fruit processing enterprises, to enhance market opportunities for the target farmer cooperatives, and small and medium-sized fruit processing enterprises.

During the inception meeting at the office of WACOMP in Labone on 2nd October, 2022, Mr Charles Kwame Sackey and Mr Paa Kofi Osei-Owusu, CERATH Project manager for West Africa, agreed on plan of action, and implementation timelines.



Compete

WACOMP Ghana Participates In African Industrialization Week



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Agroindustrial Clusters as Drivers of Economic Diversification

The WACOMP - Ghana team took part in the African Union Summit on Industrialization and Economic Diversification week celebration, held from 20th to 25th November 2022 in Niamey, Niger.

The Summit convened under the theme: "Industrializing Africa: Renewed commitment towards an Inclusive and Sustainable Industrialization and Economic Diversification" provided an opportunity to key stakeholders to reflect on Africa's industrialization by looking at how the continent can change its current status quo and bring together high-level representatives from African governments, the public and private sectors, civil society, and international organizations to discuss how to accelerate Africa's industrialization and economic diversification.

Mr Charles Kwame Sackey, WACOMP - Ghana Chief Technical Advisor, shared success stories on cluster development during the side event on : "Agro Industrial Clusters as drivers of economic diversification" organized on line on 23rd November 2022.

The side-event aimed at sharing best practices on agro industrial cluster development from different countries, and the experience of Ghana focused on the role of clusters in promoting quality upgrading, diversification and exports.

The panel of speakers included several practitioners as well as the President of the leading global cluster network TCI that brings together people and organizations working in clusters and innovation ecosystems.

WACOMP Participates in TCI Conference in Durban



Group photo of participants of TCI conference 2022 in Durban

WACOMP - Ghana and representatives from the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI) and the Association of Ghanaian Industries (AGI) presented the Ghanaian experience in cluster development during the 2022 TCI Annual conference, organized in Durban on 9th and 10th November. 180 participants from 27 countries participated in the international gathering.

Mr Michael Opoku of MoTI contributed to the panel discussion on sustainable clusters for all, by highlighting WACOMP's contribution to cluster development in contributing to inclusivity and sustainability of the cosmetics and personal care cluster of WACOMP.

He highlighted the contribution of WACOMP to the development of the cosmetic value chain starting from the contribution of women who pick shea nuts in the wild.

He highlighted that WACOMP's support has created a well-streamlined value chain, where the capacity of the main actors

has been improved and actors are now capable to supply quality products for both the domestic and export markets.

To illustrate the successful experience of WACOMP - Ghana in cluster development, Mr. Charles Sackey, WACOMP Chief Technical Advisor, presented [the Soul and Beauty by faith success story](#).

He illustrated the support provided to cluster to support the development of cosmetic products that meet market requirement.

The success story video clearly highlighted the contribution of WACOMP in enhancing the competitiveness of the cosmetic and personal care sector in Ghana.

Mr Johnson Opoku-Boateng from AGI shared insights on how the AGI - led Cosmetic Cluster was receiving support from Government and other actors to create a vision that will sustain clusters in general into the future.

Interview

Getting To Know about WACOMP Fruit Value Chain Expert



Interview with **Mr Yaw Asenso Mensah, PEDDCO, Bono East Region**

E-mail: asensomensahyaw@yahoo.com

Mr Yaw Asenso-Mensah was born on 26th June, 1957. He started his working life with the Ministry of Food and Agriculture in 1983 as a Technical Officer at the Kintampo Goat Breeding Station where he was adjudged the best worker in the Animal Production Directorate in the year 1994.

He was later transferred to the National Pig Breeding Station at Babile as an Assistant Farm Manager where he was given additional responsibility as a Leading resource person for the JICA pig production project and trained and assisted some Pig farmers in the Upper West Region to formulate innovative pig feed .

He also worked with the Kintampo Municipal Assembly as a Municipal Animal Husbandry Officer with additional responsibilities as the Municipal Mango Value Chain Officer from the year 2013 to 2017. It was during his tenure as the mango value chain officer that the devastating mango bacterial black spot disease broke out in the Bono East Region and almost collapsed the mango production industry in the Kintampo Area.

The potential yield of 7 tons per acre was reduced to an average low of 1.4 tons per acre. Efforts by the Ministry of Food and Agriculture and other development partners like GIZ to control the disease proved futile.

The idea of forming Plant Pests and Diseases Control Company Limited (PPEDCO) was hatched by Mr Yaw Asenso-Mensah after a series of interventions aimed at controlling the Mango Bacterial Blackspot Disease had failed. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Extension from the University of Cape Coast.

1. What training and activities have you conducted for the WACOMP Fruit Value chain as a trainer?

Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) in Mango Production, Quality Mango Production Standards that meets the international standards and Fruit Marketing Skills.

2. How successful was it and how has it impacted the lives of the beneficiaries?

Our collaboration with WACOMP - Ghana has been very successful. All the mango farmers we worked with have increased in yield ranging from three (3) to four (4) tons as compared to the baseline average of 1.4 tons per acre, which was their highest before the project implementation started.

We worked with 18 mango farms and increased their harvest to a minimum of 5 tons per acre of good quality fruits, which was sold for 2,200 Ghana cedis per ton as the negotiated price.

This success story was achieved in the framework of the WACOMP - Ghana Sub-Contracting Matching Scheme activities.

This allowed PPEDCO to employ 70 young men and women as pruning and spraying gangs and six Agricultural Technicians as supervisors.

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

30 women mango farmers have been trained under the project implemented activities with PPEDCO.

Compete

Cont'd from pg.19

4. How many farmer groups have you supported in collaboration with WACOMP?

Seven-mango farmer Groups in the Bono East Region have all benefitted from WACOMP.

5. How is capacity building enhancing the competitiveness of beneficiaries especially those who benefitted from the Sub contracting Matching activities?

and plant protection techniques for efficient control of Bacterial Blackspot Disease (BBS) and Fruit Flies.

The application of this acquired knowledge and skills resulted in the production of heavy yields of good quality mangoes on 18 of the project farms.

6. What are your observations about the current state (use) of Ghanaian fruit and the gaps you have identified?

I have observed that most farmers are unable to implement the technical knowledge acquired through the trainings on their acreage.

There is the need to enhance the capacity of pruning and spraying gangs to implement the technical knowledge on the field on behalf of the farmers.

7. What would you recommend for future capacity building for the fruit SMEs?

Soil Testing on the farms with the appropriate soil testing kits is highly recommended to be considered to position mango farmers in the international market, as they can easily analyse if the soil for planting has the right capacity to produce high yields.

8. What is your general impression of the WACOMP fruit value chain activities in terms of supporting SMEs to be competitive in the global market?

WACOMP has done well for the fruits value chain but further support should be extended to the vulnerable mango farmers who are yet to recover from the devastating effects of the Mango Bacterial Blackspot Disease and Fruit flies.

Women Groups Trained in Business Management in Bole

Within the provision of the Sub-Contracting Matching Scheme, PureTrust Foundation-LBG, a Non-Governmental Organisation, has organized a Training of Trainers in Business Management Skills for more than 600 women in Bole.

This is to improve and professionalize the business activities of the Shea butter processors in the Bole district of the Savannah Region.

The training focused on quality productions, marketing strategies, customer relations as well packaging with the objective to better penetrate new markets and generate further revenues to grow their businesses.

Before the training, most of the women were on the verge of abandoning their businesses while others complained they were not able to recoup their capital invested, she explained.

The programmes coordinator for Pure Trust Foundation-LBG, Alhassan Abdallah, also highlighted how COVID-19 had a negative impact on many Shea butter businesses that collapsed over the past two years.

It was therefore extremely important to intervene and train the existing women group on how to professionalize their businesses and be able to maintain and expand their position in the market.

Compete

WACOMP - Ghana Hosts Lead City University Students



Group photo of students with WACOMP - Ghana Project team

A twenty one students delegation from Lead City University in Nigeria paid a visit to the UNIDO WACOMP - Ghana office in Accra on the 22nd of November 2022.

This formed part of a study-tour by the post-graduate Agribusiness students of the University. The visit gave the students, the opportunity to gain first-hand knowledge and experience of the successes of the WACOMP - Ghana project.

In his welcome address, the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) of WACOMP - Ghana, Mr Charles Sackey, illustrated the centrality of the WACOMP project in the overall effort to build competitiveness for exports and economies in various value chains across the sub-region.

"The project is funded by the European Union (EU) and in Ghana, the main objective is to build competitiveness for exports and the Ghanaian economy in three main value chains: cassava, fruits and cosmetics", He explained.

Mr Sackey further noted that, while the focus of the project was not on the creation of an industrial policy, the activities and outcomes involved therein highly contributed to the government of Ghana's industrialization, especially by supporting the 'One District, One Factory' (1D1F) programme.

The Lead of the visiting students, Dr Ayodele Afolabi, expressed his appreciation to the WACOMP-Ghana team for the knowledge-sharing opportunity. He highlighted how the exchange provided invaluable insights into the operations of the project and, most importantly, demonstrated its impact across the various value chains and livelihoods.

As part of the tour, the students visited some beneficiaries, cluster groups and companies in the fruit value-chains, such as the Qualipine Union, grouping twelve (12) pineapple-grower associations, that supply fresh fruits to processors and the local market.

Compete

Cont'd from pg. 21

The students later paid a visit to an SME in the cosmetic value-chain, 'Solution Oasis'.

Addressing the students, the company's Chief Executive Officer, Mrs Francesca Brenda Opoku, indicated that WACOMP - Ghana had been instrumental in enabling her enterprise achieve the requisite global standardization processes and certification. This had significantly boosted the company's fortunes, in terms of accessing new markets as well as the cascading impact for her business' sustainability.

"When it comes to the documentation and the paperwork, Africans lag behind," she lamented.

"This is where WACOMP came in and through their support; issues related to labelling, product categorization and others,

have all been resolved, making our products gain global recognition and acceptance."



Group photo of the students with Mrs Francesca Brenda Opoku, CEO of Solution Oasis (in red dress) at her factory

26 SMEs in Fruit Cluster trained in Branding and Packaging

In a world that revolves around brands, it is important to determine how a business will stand out. Packaging and branding help build a concise brand personality, attract new customers, keep loyal customers and increase revenue.

One of the challenges faced by most SMEs in Ghana is how to package, brand and market their products. Hence, most SMEs are losing potential markets and revenue.

This is the reason why, WACOMP - Ghana organized a two – day training focused on branding and packaging from 28th to 29 November 2022 in Accr.

The selected participants involved in the pineapple and mango value-chains, were taken through various modules to equip them with the requisite skills and knowledge to enhance their competitiveness, such as Competitor Analysis, Product Branding Assessment and Corporate Branding.

Ms Patricia Ansong, the training facilitator, confirms that participants showed a high degree of enthusiasm to learn and quite opened about their branding and packaging challenges.

She noted, "Coming from same cluster, the entrepreneurs had similar challenges with branding and packaging and so the training session gave them the opportunity to review their brands and adopt industry standards."

As part of the project ongoing support, cluster coaches will engage more SMES to review their creatives, branding and packaging support to help consolidate the knowledge gains made.



Group photo of the entrepreneurs from the fruits cluster in Accra with the WACOMP team

Conform



Third Cohort of the UNIDO ISO 17025 Online Training is Launched



Two graduates during their graduation ceremony in August 2022

The third virtual training on EN ISO/IEC 17025 was launched on 31st October and is jointly co-organized by WACOMP – Ghana, funded by the European Union, and the Global Quality and Standards Programme (GQSP), funded by the Swiss Secretariat of Economic Affairs (SECO).

The 11 - week-long training is expected to end in January 2023.

So far, 63 laboratory analysts from the Ghana Standards Authority (GSA), Food and Drugs Authority (FDA), Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) Laboratories, COCOBOD – Quality Control Company, Ghana Atomic Energy Commission, National Nuclear Research

Institute (NNRI), Radiation Protection Institute, and the University of Cape Coast Laboratories have been part of the first and second cohorts and received their certificates on the 19th of August 2022.

This UNIDO state-of-the-art virtual training is aimed at enhancing the capacities of conformity assessment service providers in its member states to support their accreditation to ISO/IEC 17025, which plays an important role in supporting the provision of accurate and reliable results from laboratory testing, calibration, sampling and measurement services across many sectors.



Conform

Training on Quality Management, GMPs and Quality Assurance for Northern Cluster 1D1F SMEs



Group photo of participants from selected factories under the Government of Ghana's One District One Factory Initiative at the Northern Zone workshop held in Kumasi

Issues of conformity to standards, product regulation and product safety in general have become key considerations influencing the choices of today's consumer and many markets require products reaching their regions to have acquired certain certification, quality or at the minimum, be registered by national conformity bodies.

As Ghana works to transform from a raw material - based country to a sustainable, industrial nation and scale up its sustainable structural transformation, it is imperative that the cosmetics, cassava and fruit value-chain integration is strengthened.

As part of a joint effort by UNIDO, Government of Ghana, and the European Union to sustain the future of the manufacturing ecosystem, another session of quality assurance training workshops has been organised on 25th and 26th October in Kumasi and targeted 50 "One District One Factory" (1D1F) companies in the middle and northern regions of Ghana.

The training session aimed to support 1D1F enterprises, to improve and sustain quality, hygiene and good manufacturing principles to minimise the risks associated with production and to improve product quality.

Commenting on the initiative, Mr Charles Sackey, WACOMP - Ghana CTA confirmed that "One District One Factory" Secretariat and UNIDO are committed to ensure that products are consistently produced and controlled according to the prescribed quality standards.

The Chief Commercial Officer and Head of government's flagship 1D1F Initiative, Mr Kofi Addo, recounted that the Secretariat and UNIDO agreed to support the beneficiary factories and SMEs of the programme to implement the appropriate standards in food safety and quality management to enhance competitiveness and market access.

He revealed that : "The feedback from selected quality assurance officers of 1D1F companies after the first training in Accra, on the 29th and 30th August, 2022, has been very positive as standards have improved and we are glad those in the northern and middle zones too, will now get to impart knowledge to other factories."

Eighty (80) factories have so far benefitted from the partnership between the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI) and WACOMP - Ghana.

Conform

WACOMP Participates In Vienna Food Safety Forum



Photo view of conference in session

UNIDO, together with the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) and the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) organized the Vienna Food Safety Forum 2022, with the objective of sharing knowledge and experiences on data-driven innovation in food safety.

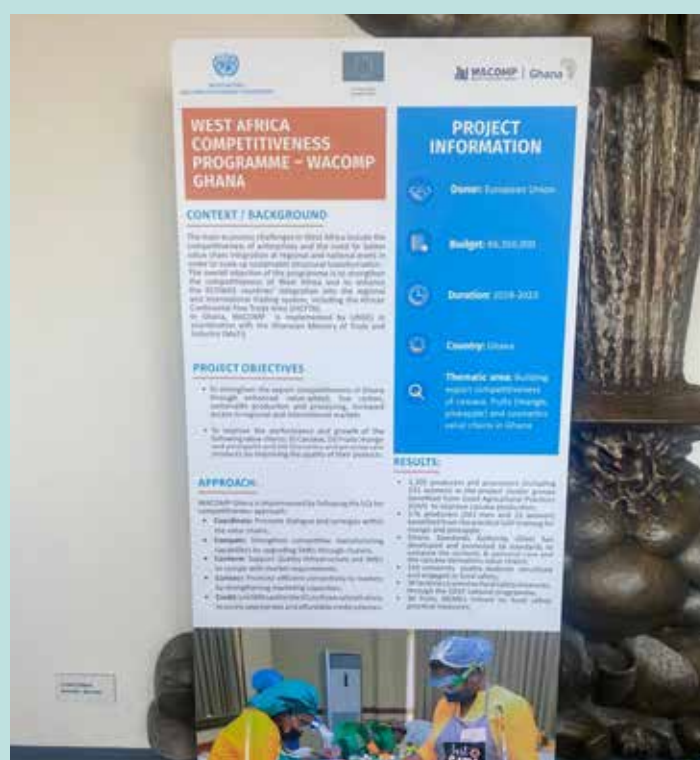
The hybrid event convened high-level representation attended by 400 participants from 65 countries and emphasized the need for collaboration and partnership among diverse public and private actors to disseminate knowledge and share experiences related to food safety innovation.

WACOMP - Ghana was showcased during the event.

UNIDO Director General, Gerd Müller acknowledged the unique challenges faced by global food systems in 2022 and called for multi-collaborative effort to 'transform global food system to sustainably feed nearly ten billion people by 2050' in his opening remarks.

The findings and lesson learned from the Forum will inform UNIDO's engagement in piloting programmes and partnerships to steer food safety compliance and innovative solutions for global

food systems transformation.



Conform

23 Fruits Cluster Members Trained in Good Manufacturing Processing



Group photo of participants of the GMP training for Accra fruit cluster

On the 30th of November 2022, WACOMP - Ghana organized a practical one-day intensive training for 23 fruits processors and entrepreneurs of WACOMP – Ghana Southern fruit cluster at the CSIR – Food Research Institute.

The risks in any production process include unexpected contamination of products, causing health or even death. Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs) are designed to minimize these risks to improve quality, avoid contamination and improve efficiency, among others.

It provides systems for ensuring that products are consistently produced and controlled according to quality standards.

Mr Frederick Gyamera Owusu, WACOMP – Ghana National Quality Infrastructure expert emphasised that: “The training will build capacity in the establishment of Quality Management systems and provide a stepwise guide to the FDA registration and Product Certification process for the cluster”.

The participants were particularly happy to have been part of the training as it did not only raise awareness on the Importance of quality standards in fruit processing but also provided them with checklists and tools to support further their respective companies .

Conform



Promoting the Culture of Quality in the Cosmetics Cluster in Ghana



Participants at the 'Culture for Quality' workshop using the UNIDO electronic quality tool

The need for all value chain stakeholders, within a given society, to understand the meaning, importance and potential benefits of improved levels of quality in their products and services, is at the heart of the concept of the 'Culture for Quality'.

This underlining objective was the focus of the workshop organized by WACOMP - Ghana on 30th November 2022 and gathering various value chain stakeholders of the cosmetic clusters.

The one-day event assembled identified influencers to obtain their insights, through the 'Culture for Quality' diagnostic tool developed by UNIDO.

These would serve as a critical input for the subsequent development of demand-driven interventions to address identified gaps within the cultural dimension of organizations within the value-chain.

Key components of the diagnostic tool are questions bordering on the seven quality management principles identified as the underlying basis for the ISO 9000 series of standards.

They included customer focus, leadership, engagement of people and process approach.

Connect

“West Africa Connect” in Accra Promote Mango, Cassava and ICT Value Chains



Participants at the exhibition area interacting with potential buyers

After a successful edition in 2021, “West Africa Connect” was back with a second regional B2B networking event that took place on September 20 and 21, 2022 in Accra, Ghana.

The objective of the event is to facilitate linkages between priority value chains actors in West Africa, therefore ensuring the sustainability of the targeted regional value chains.

This year, more than 100 mango, cassava and ICT SMEs attended the event from the region, over 20 regional and international buyers, 25 high-level speakers and many other institutions.

With the technical support of UNIDO and the ITC, approximately 150 B2B meetings have been successfully conducted during the two-day event, both on-site and virtually.

It is now expected that these interactions will lead to the establishment of new and durable business partnerships, increased commercial transactions between mango, cassava

and ICT actors, and the identification of potential investors to ensure the inclusive and sustainable development of these priority value chains.

Mr Fakhruddin Azizi, the UNIDO representative in Ghana and Liberia called on the government of Ghana to pay close attention to the mango and cassava sectors, highlighting that they present a strong potential to attract investments and drive inclusive and sustainable growth to create jobs in the ECOWAS region.

Mr Kolawole Sofola, Acting Director of Trade at the ECOWAS Commission, indicated that by connecting suppliers from the region with buyers both inside and outside the region, this event promotes access to market opportunities and linkages with global value chains.

These local firms have untapped potential and this event allows them to demonstrate the quality of their products and services which will lead to profitable business partnerships.

Connect

WACOMP Partners Access Bank and Graphic Business SMEs Fair



One of the beneficiary of WACOMP - Ghana, Yorkumi Ghana CEO, Millicent Narh at the exhibition

As part of activities under Connect axis, the project collaborated with Access Bank and Graphic Communications Group for the "Graphic Business SMEs Fair" to promote market opportunities for SMEs in Ghana.

The first-ever SME fair organised by a bank in Ghana from December 8-10, under the theme 'Enhancing SMEs' Access to markets for sustainable growth', was attended by more than 300 entrepreneurs.

The Head of SME and Support at Access Bank, Ms Eugenia Addo, highlighted the importance of enhancing SMEs on how to manage their businesses, including migrating onto digital platforms to reach a wider audience.

Connect

WACOMP Beneficiaries Participates in WTO Public Forum for SMEs in Developing Countries



Selected speakers from Ghana in a group photo with some of the delegates at the WTO Public Forum

Speakers at a session titled “From Free Trade to Fair Trade: implication for SMEs in developing countries”, held at the margins of the World Trade Organization’s (WTO) Public Forum 2022 discussed the impact that emerging mandatory corporate due diligence legislation have on SMEs in developing countries.

Jointly organized with the Permanent Mission of Ghana to the UN, the UNIDO session was conceived to enable the voices of developing countries heard in the global dialogue on sustainable trade.

A paradigm shift is currently taking place in sustainable trade within global supply chains- there is a move away from a purely voluntary approach in meeting social and environmental standards to a mandatory system, with binding human rights and environmental obligations for companies.

The joint development dialogue session sought to discuss how SMEs in developing countries could continue to benefit from unhindered market access.

Mrs Rita Brobey, Operations Manager and co-owner of Hendy Farms and a WACOMP - Ghana beneficiary, outlined the extensive challenges currently faced by smallholder farmers and SMEs in developing countries in complying with voluntary sustainability standards. She stressed that: “The investment needed to meet the required standards is quite high and the financial rewards are low.

There are no incentives given or support from leading companies; limited access to information and lack of technical expertise make it even harder for us to comply”.

Dr Afua Asare, Chief Executive Officer of the Ghana Export Promotion Authority, a strategic partner of WACOMP- Ghana echoed these concerns: “Some SMEs are genuinely under resourced and unable to comply with the new regulations due to the multiple technical barriers and high cost of the tedious processes involved and therefore risk to go out of business. Lack of knowledge of these new directives among SMEs is another threat and requires to be addressed at institutional level through capacity building”.

Credit

Training on Financial Management and Group Dynamics for Mango Cluster in the Middle Belt



Participants in a group photo after the training

One of WACOMP – Ghana's approaches to private sector development is cluster development as it has the potential to stimulate high rates of growth.

To support entrepreneurs and actors within these clusters to overcome barriers to growth by increasing their collective efficiency and helping them to access new markets, the project has been offering technical support and training in group dynamics, proper bookkeeping and a record-keeping system.

In this regard, 30 executive members of the Techiman, Kintampo and Nkoranza Mango Associations have been

trained to understand the principles of group dynamics and skills for improved financial management from Wednesday 24th August 2022 to Friday 26th August 2022.

Participants at the end of the workshop acknowledged there were expenses they overlooked, notably transport, food for labour, their expenses and also overlooked the need to consider land rented for cultivation.

The workshop helped them to learn how to manage their challenges and to also assess their profit levels.



Voice

From the field

H.E. Irchad Razaaly

Ambassador of the Delegation of the European Union to Ghana

„As Ghana’s largest development partner, Team Europe is proud to see that its contribution has an impact on the daily lives of the Ghanaian people.”

On September 1st, 2021, I arrived in Ghana. This was an exciting day for me, as Ghana had always captured my imagination. The names of Kwame Nkrumah and other great African leaders still resonate back from my student years.

Compete

From my previous job as head of West Africa in the European Union, my interest in Ghana only grew over the years.

Coming back to the continent is also an emotional endeavour for me. I was born and grew up in Madagascar where I spent my childhood and studied law.

I left to study international relations in France (at the Sorbonne) and joined the French diplomatic service.

My first overseas assignment was in South Africa. After that, I have been working in Brussels, and eventually joined the European Union again with a professional emphasis on Africa.

What will I focus on here in the coming years? Together with my team and my colleagues from the European Member States (Team Europe), we will promote:

- Regional peace, security, and democracy;
- Green Growth;
- Smart Cities.

Not only does Ghana have an impressive record of accomplishment on democracy and stability but also it is actively promoting these values in the region, especially under the leadership of President Nana Akufo-Addo as chair of ECOWAS.

I am also very content that Accra hosts the AfCFTA Secretariat, making Ghana an economic hub for the continent.

As we know from our own experience, well-managed free trade between nations in a region profits all.

We endeavour the promotion of future-proof jobs, reduction of waste, promotion of sustainable consumption, and production of innovative products and services, more friendly to the environment.

„The European Union’s support through WACOMP helps to improve the productivity of local entrepreneurs in Ghana to compete globally and providing employment for many, increasing the number of employment of especially women.

Entrepreneurs can move from raw material export to processing, climbing the ladder of the value chains to going global.

Great job! WACOMP –Ghana.”

The EU was particular about the standard of products imported and exported on the EU market and as such put in place dedicated programmes to ensure that companies meet the required standards. WACOMP is one of them.

In Tamale, I visited many processing sites and met Rita Dampson who showed me how to make soap out of shea butter! I also met Safia Alhassan working with many women groups and they are creating jobs for women.

I saw on the field and the beneficiaries confirmed quality has improved.

Compete

Cont'd from pg.31

„You see the shea economy is an ecosystem for itself which involves picking, transforming, producing, packaging, selling and Ghana and the women of Ghana are not selling on small markets but are selling worldwide and some are selling in the top markets and our ambition once again is to support, encourage and support them to amplify their efforts and the talents which are here in Ghana and we are able to do that through WACOMP.“

WACOMP – Ghana assured me on the field that there are SMEs going through Product Information Files technical support and I hope that they would be able to export to the EU market.

“You know we have a very soft skin and we don't put any anything chemically dangerous on the skin. So if you go through the process of certification, you can export to the European market since most of the WACOMP supported cosmetics businesses in the north do not add chemicals“

Our wish is to help the Ghanaian corporate industry, economy, and entrepreneurs to have the tools to go and sell to the European market the best of products.”

“It was good to hear from Churchill Kumadey of Churchwin Trading in Tamale on how he moved from raw material export to processing and climbing the

ladder of the value chain. His cosmetics are now going global. Great Job Churchwin Trading and WACOMP.”

“My visit to WACOMP project sites in the Northern region was really inspiring and very reassuring that the partnerships we have with WACOMP is making a difference not only on the quality of products that are being sold and companies but on the people, on the market that they are exploring but also on the very lives of the people. You are uplifting on the way through your processing activities.

Processing is one of the key priorities that we want to expend not only in the Shea industry in the economy but on agriculture, agribusiness, and cocoa as well also in other regions than Tamale.

We share in the vision of Ghana that the country can become a true hub in terms of transformative capacities be it in the industrial sector, agriculture sector , digitalization so on and so forth.

We are happy to help SMEs to access the European markets because in the end, we are happy to help you to enter all other markets but it will make even better sense if your quality products enter the European markets and benefits European consumers.”

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



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Implementing Agency: UNIDO

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Ministry of Trade and Industry
Republic of Ghana

In Partnership with Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI)

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

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

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