

NETHERLANDS-GHANA BUSINESS FAIR

(Almere & The Hague on 28th – 29th April, 2011)

Organisers and Sponsors



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1.0 Introduction

This report contains an overview of the two day Netherlands- Ghana business fair organised in April 2011 in Netherlands (Almere and The Hague). Initially the organisers of the programme planned for a business fair but as the level of registered candidates from both Ghana and Netherlands was not as it was expected it became wise that rather than cancelling the entire event we turn it into an incoming trade mission that allows business men and entrepreneurs a forum to deliberate and interact with one another while exploring business and investment opportunities in both Ghana and The Netherlands. The report discusses the activities that took place during the programme, the organisers and sponsors of the programme as well as the participating organisations represented from both Netherlands and in Ghana. Furthermore, it discusses the various workshops undertaken during fair and then proceeds to make a conclusion that the fair was such a very fruitful event.

1.2 Opening



Mr. Odoi Anim, Deputy Head of Mission- Ghana Embassy

The programme began with a welcome by the moderator of the business fair Ms. Abena Bemah. Participants present were then allowed to make a self introduction of themselves, their organisation and their major interest for participating in the fair. Thereafter, Ms. Bemah asks the Deputy Head of Mission- Ghana Embassy, Mr. Odoi Anim to give an opening speech.

His speech highlighted the importance of the Netherlands business fair. He dealt more about the need to encourage partnership relationship between Netherlands and Ghanaian businesses. He explained the doors of Ghana are widely open to all well meaning investors who have vision of trading and engaging in business venture with Ghanaian companies and industries. He further explains that the main sector for investment ranges from Agro Processing, Cash crops, Property Management, Financial Services, Information Technology/Electronics, Transport/ Construction Industry, Tourism, Apparel, Cotton and Textiles, Ceramics, Furniture and wood processing, Sea food processing, Fine and Custom jewellery, Ethnic and Beauty product, Floriculture among many others.

1.3 Objective

The objective for organising the Netherlands- Ghana Business fair is to contribute to socio-economic growth of Ghana and Netherlands. The business fair seeks to recognise existing opportunities and challenges faced by business entrepreneurs in both Netherlands and Ghana. It promotes partnership and stimulates an entrepreneurial spirit between Ghanaian-Dutch Businesses.

1.4 Organisers and Sponsors

The main organisers and sponsors of the Netherlands Ghana business fair are:

- AfroEuro Foundation
- Ghana Embassy, The Hague
- Association of Ghana Industries
- Ghana Investment Promotions Councils
- NL EvD International
- IntEnt
- OS- House

1.5 Supporters

Other organisations which supported the event in diverse ways and contributed to its success included:

- Ghana Netherlands Chamber of Commerce and Culture (Ghanecc)
- Ghana Today
- The African Bulletin
- Samen Werk
- The Royal Embassy of Netherlands, Ghana
- Association of Road Contractors, Ghana
- Business Ghana
- Ghana Web

1.6 Participating Organisations

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. PUM Netherlands | 10. Baba Alim & Company Limited |
| 2. Kisidi Consultancy | 11. Proko Ghana Limited |
| 3. Teampro | 12. King Kass Ventures |
| 4. Expat Solutions Ghana | 13. Global Multi Media |
| 5. Geo-Tech Systems Ltd | 14. Samora Meats Trading Ltd., Akosombo |
| 6. Tan (Brand Communications Consultants) | 15. Royal Dutch Glory |
| 7. BMD Network | 16. Ghana Webshopping |
| 8. Worldwide Food Export | 17. D.K. Blom Holding |
| 9. Eerlijke Kansen | 18. GB4All.com |

2.0 Profile of participating Companies / Projects

2.1 Proko Ghana Limited

Sector: Civil Engineering and Building Construction



Mr. Prosper Ledi, Managing Director, Proko Gh. Ltd.

Proko Ghana Limited is a Ghanaian multi-disciplinary construction firm that provides high quality construction works at the most affordable cost for all its clients. It has a strong team of experienced and component quantity surveyors, architects, and engineers with over 400 well trained labour force. Proko Ghana Limited has over twenty three years of experience. It has a vision to expand throughout Ghana and the beyond and it aims to compete globally with international contractors towards African infrastructural development. Their basic aim for participating in the business fair is to acquire modern knowledge, gain international exposure and meet business investors within Netherlands and beyond.

2.2 Open Source House (OS-House Ghana)

Sector: Real Estate Development



Mr. Samuel Biitir, Managing Director OS House Ghana

The vision of open source house is to improve the overall quality of life in the urban areas and create a positive ecological footprint by providing affordable, modular and sustainable housing concepts in Ghana. It also facilitates access to housing credit for both end users and developers. The business model of OS House Ghana is in the intermediary which facilitates access to affordable and sustainable housing for people in transition from lower income to lower media income class. Emphasis is placed on being able to provide affordable housing through the mobilisation of client groups and communities; promotion of local building materials, matching financial institutions to long term mortgage funding; land documentation assistance; provision of user centred building designers and drawings.

The intention of OS House is to introduce affordable mortgage products to markets, start a pilot with 100 houses and scale up throughout Ghana. OS house is looking for business investors, long term funding for mortgage institutions and expert partners that supports on technical development.

2.3 Baba Alim & Company Limited

Sector: Construction and Haulage



Alhaji Baba Alim, Managing Director, Baba Alim & Co. Ltd.

Baba Alim & Company Limited is a leading construction industry based in Northern Ghana. The company deals in road construction, building construction and other businesses. The company has a vision of expanding its coverage and services throughout Ghana and it aims to become a leader in the constructions industry within Ghana. The basic objective for participating in the business fair was to meet business investors and partners and also learn about the most advanced form of industrial technology available in the construction industry. It also seeks to explore business avenues and opportunities for investment within the Ghana and Netherlands.

2.4 Ghana Web shopping

Sector: Information technology/ Trade



Mr. Dirk Bloom, Director, Ghana Web Shopping

This company has its warehouse based in Accra Ghana. Their basic objective is to encourage customers to have easy access to products of goods and services through shopping on the internet. Ghana Web Shopping is the leading online retailer operating the online Ghana web retail in Ghana. They have high desire to meet customers' satisfaction by providing them security for their purchased products. Its aim is to offer easy and convenient service to clients and offer multiple languages and currencies allowing customers to feel confident in their shopping experience in Ghana.

2.4 King Kass Ventures (Ghana)

Sector: Civil Engineering and Construction



Alhaji Alhassan Issahaku, Chief Executive Officer, KingKass Ventures

King Kass ventures is a civil engineering company. They deal in road construction and borehole drilling. Their vision is to become a leading construction industry by 2020 and offer quality service at an affordable price. Their expectation for participating in the fair is to transact and purchase construction equipment, develop business partnership and explore new technologies in the construction industry.

2.5 Samora Meat and Trading Business (Ghana- Akosombo)



Mr. Amilcar van der Horst, Director, Samora Meat and Trading

Samora Meat and Trading offers a wide range of fresh meat products accompanied by a wide assortment of vegetables, fruits and baked products. The main target area at the moment is business to business. Lodging establishments and large firms are our prime focus. They offer raw materials domestically and locally which includes meat products, such as sausage, cuts of meat, steaks, fillets, ham and bacon. They also accompany this with a wide assortment of vegetables, fruits and baked goods. They source locally leads to raise the living standard of living through the trickle down effects employments and increased. Customized attention is given to each customer to provide their specific needs. Each product has is treated to preserve maximum freshness and ensure international standards like HACCAP, Fair trade and BRC.

2.6 Geo- Tech System Limited (Ghana)

Sector: Land Mapping and Surveying



*Mr. Emmanuel Kwame Awunyo,
Managing Director*

Geo-Tech Systems Limited is a leading company with experienced personnel's. They work with sophisticated equipments and cutting edge technologies throughout the entire phase of their projects. Geo-tech serves its customers with a wide range of multiplicity goods ranging from general office equipments surveying equipment and geological accessories in an unparallel fashion. They also provide other allied services such as institutional training, capacity building in Geo information and land management. The full Survey & Mapping was established since 1998, as a means of improving customer services in Geo-Tech's engineering field and provide consortium of services to clients in the sub-region of West Africa. This was to extend the services from survey equipment supply to full time surveying services. Geo-Tech continues to undertake projects in the field of Topographical Surveying, Roads and Highways Surveys, Earthwork Surveys, GPS and Underwater Pipeline Surveying, Geo-Technical, Transmission line Surveys and Design, Mining Surveying, Cadastral Surveying, General and Engineering Surveying and Ground Control Surveys for photogrammetric mapping. Our activities also extend across the West Coast.

2.7 Global Multi-Business Company Limited (Ghana)

Sector: Information Technology and Tourism



*Mr. George Owusu, C.E.O. Global Multi
Business Co. Ltd.*

The vision of global multi- media is to expand to all district capitals within Ghana within the next years. They deal in sale and repair of computers as well as travel and tourism. Their vision for participating in the business fair to get business partners and investors in the IT sector and to undertake travel and tour services for Netherlands Business men visiting Ghana.

2.8 Expat Solutions Ghana (ESG)

Sector: Real Estate Development

Expat solution Ghana is a multi- facet Ghanaian Dutch Business established in the Ghana. It provides estate housing to Ghanaians and expats. They also provide services on travelling and tourism.

2.9 Eerlijke Kansen

Sector: Bamboo Bicycles produced locally in Ghana and sold in the Netherlands

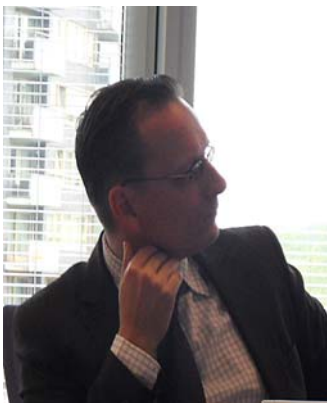


*Mr. Joep van Ginderen,
Kansenmakelaar*

Eerlijke Kansen offers the EerlijkeKansen Eco Bike frame made of bamboo. The purpose of using the bamboo is because it is strong compared to steel, and light. Bamboo also makes the frames stiff and eco friendly and useful renewable resource on the planet. During production no CO2 is being produced (like during the production of steel and aluminium) but CO2 is reduced and Oxygen is produced. The advantage of the EerlijkeKansen power tools are that it does not corrode like steel and aluminium and the frames can be almost without electrical power tools.

2.10 Worldwide Food Export (Netherlands)

Sector: Import and Export Company



*Mr. Marcel Rentrop,
Commercial Director,
Worldwide food export*

Worldwide food export is an external export services company in the food and beverages market. It provides affordable quality products and aim to connect markets, suppliers and clients worldwide. It provides a long lasting sustainable business relations and a modern working way of working in a changing world. It offers standardisation of specifications and requirements and provides faster exchange and better access to information. It provides more communication methods and ensures a reduction of sea transport cost and its complexities. The company is strategically operational in different continents and countries such as the United State of America, Europe, China, Africa, Brazil and India.

In the case of Ghana, the main products of interest are canned sardines, wine, energy drink, oatflakes, pasta, non-alcoholic sparkling drinks, canned juices (oranges and pineapple), biscuits, yogurts, UHT Milk and many more.

2.11 Royal Dutch Glory (Ghana) ***Sector: Construction Management***

The Royal Dutch Glory Company Limited is a Ghanaian based company owned by a Dutch. The company is a nationwide Ghanaian construction firm that aims to create jobs for the people of Ghana. Their basic objective is to support in the economic growth of Ghana through the provision of better living standard for the less privilege people and to help the government to put up with an affordable housing unit that suits the needs of the ordinary Ghanaian citizens, civil servants and teachers within Ghana.

2.12 BMD Network (Netherlands)

Sector: Consultancy

BMD Network is a consultancy firm that adds value to interactions between individuals and organizations. Professional and personal development in individuals, teams and organizations are our inspiration. The organisation put services such as consulting, coaching and training in the broad field of organizational development, Human Resource Management and Welfare (WMO). It offers training on office organisation, policy development, coaching and interim management.

2.13 Kasidi Consulting (Netherlands)

Sector: Consultancy



Mr. Frans Witterman

This is a consultancy firm directly in charge of Matchmaking, project Development and Implementation. The consultancy also develop Business Plan and gives Finance advise. It works on subsidies under no cure , no pay plus commitment fee. Meaning that applicants can have their business plans submitted for them but once the business plan financial funds is not approved, it does not need to pay for the consulting. Other area of focus of for Kasidi Consulting is on capacity building of entrepreneurs.

2.14 GB4All.com / Susar (Based in Nijmegen, The Netherlands)

Sector: Housing and Construction, City Planning & Agriculture

GB4All.com is a construction firm which comprises of architects in charge of housing design and construction, shops, schools and hospitals. They work within Africa by giving technical building assistance through local labour and doing other major installations such as tanks, foundation and terraces. On the international market, they provide high quality unit and integrated techniques necessary for construction purposes. The approach to work of GB4All.com is self sufficient, modular and affordable. They offer autarky, free energy and water, and modern comfort. The firm makes very good use of the natural resources by developing solar panels through the use of light energy from the sun. It also collect rain water and saves into their designed tanks and use a filtering system which makes the water drinkable and water useful for shower, washing and cooking. Again, GB4All.com also use natural gases to produce gas/ energy which can be used for cooking. They are experts and have master plan which are sustainable. Other areas of expertise include fisheries, poultry, forestry and agriculture.

2.15 National Health Insurance Scheme (Netherlands and Ghana)

Sector: Health Care for Ghanaian migrants abroad and their families in countries of origin

The National Health Insurance Scheme is an insurance product introduced by the government of Ghana to abolish the existing cash and carry system. The basic goal of the NHIS is to promote basic health care for all Ghanaians. The insurance product comes in two packages, namely:

- a. The National Health Insurance for the Diaspora: This provides Ghanaian migrants an opportunity to take care of themselves and their relatives back home. With this service, the Diaspora Ghanaian community can have access to basic health care whiles in Ghana. Also Ghanaian migrants can support by contributing in the payment of premiums for relatives back home.
- b. The National Health insurance for the disabled persons in Ghana: Disabled persons are the most vulnerable in society because of their impairments. Most disabled persons lack financial means to provide for their basic needs. With this product, Ghanaian migrants and other migrant institutions can contribute to support the vulnerable indigent in Ghana through the provision of basic health care.

The benefit under the NHIS insurance scheme is that it cost only 25 for the whole year and children with registered parents can be registered for free. Moreover the insurance product covers 95 % of diseases that afflict Ghanaians which include malaria, breast cancer, surgical operations, maternal health care, among many others. This project is being implemented in partnership with AfroEuro Foundation, the Bantama Mutual Health Insurance Scheme, Ghana Association of the Deaf and the Ghana Federation of the Disabled.

2.16 Food Security Project (Netherlands and Ghana)

Sector: Migration and Development



Mr. Vincent Gambrah, Managing Director, AfroEuro Foundation

This project is aimed at ensuring food security through soybean and maize production for the youth and women in the poorest regions within Ghana. The long term objective of the Food security project is to enable women and youth acquire agricultural training and farming inputs. It promotes an idea of self employability as a means of reducing poverty and improving the standard of living of the poorest community. The project is implemented through increasing farmers' access to credit loans and financial literacy training. Farmers' access to credit facility is enhanced through the mobilization of migrants' remittances which is seen as shareholdings in the project.

The food security project creates an integrated value chain in food security by connecting access to financial services, building capacity of agricultural farmers and workers and providing sustainable agricultural food production. The major stakeholders of this project are AfroEuro Foundation, Ghanaian Migrants in Netherlands and Oxfam Novib.

2.17 AfroEuro HiLite Magazine (Netherlands)

Sector: Communications / Online Magazine

The AfroEuro HiLite magazine creates a platform for political and economic discussions, insights and debates of issues from an African migrant perspective. It creates an awareness and links cultures through the bridging of gaps and the breaking of misconceptions and stereotypes. The HiLite magazine builds relationships and shares knowledge through instructing, educating, and empowering making the African to feel at home and giving them a voice. It aims to create leaders and pave way for their success. Five good reasons why all should advertise on the AfroEuro HiLite Magazine are:

- It enhances access to the niche of the market, enabling them to speak directly to people from African Diaspora every single minute through advertisements.
- It has a larger target audience, with much emphasis on young professionals and policy makers.
- It gives the Individual / Organisation an opportunity to control their ads through improvising and campaigns strategies.

- It is cost effective which means the client gets to pay less by gains more by reaching a larger audience within a shorter time frame.
- The online advertising is much faster than other mediums.
- AfroEuro Foundation is the main stakeholder of the AfroEuro HiLite Magazine.

3.0 Workshops

3.1 Doing Business in Ghana



Presentation by: Drs. Ing Richeal Toklu (Managing Director- Teampro)

Teampro is an International consultancy which advises African companies on doing business with Dutch and European organizations. It assists Dutch and European companies in exploring the African markets, and encourages trade and investments between African and European parties. Teampro also provides crucial information to realize business opportunities and streamline the economic cooperation. Teampro offers organization of trade missions and investment seminars, mediation in Dutch and EU subsidies, funds, and program, match making and partner search, market surveys and research, feasibility studies and business plans, and business Advisory. Teampro works within Africa. As a consultancy it encourages trade relations between African companies and their counterparts in Europe.

Moving on to discuss the general statistics of Ghana, the country has an overall population of 24.791.073 (est. 2011), with a population of 1.822 % (est. 2011). The life expectancy of Ghanaians is and an overall labour force of 10.56 million. The major cities within Ghana are Accra and Kumasi and a GDP per capita of \$1600 (est. 2010). The population below poverty line is **28.5 %** (2007).

After giving out some facts and figures in comparative terms between Ghana, Sub-saharan African and Netherlands, Drs. Toklu then proceeded to discuss some facts and opportunities linked to investment in the Netherlands and Europe. She explains that business within Netherlands have features of intensive technology, high rate of industrial market and knowledge, strict legislation, high rate of competition and low acquaintance with African businesses. She further explains that unlike the Netherlands and other European companies, businesses in the Africa and in Ghana looks for available

investment opportunities but often there is low level of industrial knowledge and may need technical assistance and capacity building. She adds that, due to the unstable political terrain within most African countries, the lack of accountability and transparency often gives African businesses a negative image which explains why they become most unacquainted with European businesses.

Again, Drs Toklu gave some few practical steps to business men and investors who have interest in doing business in Ghana. Some of the tips highlighted include being aware of the cultural differences between Netherlands and Ghana, finding a good partner through recommendation by someone you know and trust, do not base your business model on establishing “special relationships” with power - This is just a logical continuation of the previous tip. If your business is good for the country in which you work then you will succeed. If you wish to do business in Africa, respect the law and the local customs and do not get involved in politics. Of course it may be beneficial to build good relationships with influential people – as in any country – but the point is you cannot base the success of your business on this. It is also important to gain a thorough grounding in the legal and contractual aspects of doing business in Ghana.

She ends discussion by giving out reasons why investors should put Ghana on their profile list in Africa. She explains that Ghana is one of the most politically stabilized countries in the sub-region of West Africa. The country has advanced Infrastructure, favorable foreign investment laws, friendly business corporate tax, stable macro-economic performance (e.g. GDP, inflation), repatriation of profits (100 %), developed financial and banking industry, competitive workforce (human capital), low business start up cost.

3.2 IntEnt Entrepreneurship Development in Ghana



*Presentation by Richard Yeboah
(Msc)*

Mr. Richard Yeboah began his presentation by giving an overall profile of Intent. He explains that IntEnt was founded in 1996 with a total of 18 employees. He discussed that since its implementation, 350 companies have been started with about 1,000 jobs created and a total of €15 million has been invested in the project.

Thereafter, he moves on to discuss that IntEnt works through Small and Medium Scale Enterprise Development using the modular approach, it gives support and assistance to (Diaspora) entrepreneurs, and also offers support and assistance after a start-up phase. He further discusses that so far the key programme countries for project implementation are Turkey, Ethiopia, Sierra Leone, Morocco, Afghanistan, Surinam, Cape Verde, Ghana and Curacao. Again Intent is also very active in other countries such as Angola, Burundi, Liberia and Eastern Europe.

In addition, Mr Yeboah explains that the approach to work for IntEnt under European Union is to create awareness and give an entrepreneurial education while for those in developing countries Intent creates the awareness, then gives also entrepreneurial education and entrepreneurial guidance.

Lastly Mr Richard Yeboah ends his speech by encouraging the Business fair participants to fill in and submit an application form to the programmes if they are interested in any. He ends his speech with a very wise saying by Andy Warhol which quotes ***“They say that time changes things, but you actually have to change them yourself”***

After his presentation, delegates were given the opportunity to ask questions on any theme under discussion on which they needed further clarification.

3.3 Presentation by PUM Netherlands



Presentation Mr. Peter Moen, PUM Netherlands,

PUM is one of the largest agencies for the deployment of professional volunteers and it plays a major role in the private sector of most developing countries and emerging markets. The organisation was founded by the Dutch government in 1978 and it is an affiliate of the Dutch employers association VNO/NCW.

PUM Netherlands Senior Experts has over thirty years of experience in advising businesses and consults in almost every area imaginable: From logistics to welding techniques, and from the hotel & catering trade to carpentry. PUM has a network comprising some 3,200 volunteers (known as senior experts), which executes over 2,000 projects worldwide on an annual basis. These experts use the extensive knowledge and experience that they have accumulated during the course of their careers to advise entrepreneurs in some seventy nations throughout the world. The main strength of this approach is that the experts offer one-to-one advice.

PUM grants preference to local companies and it believes that ensuring a sustainable development of the private sector is the best way to fight poverty. Its policy is practical and business-like: helping small and medium-sized businesses stand on their own two feet is more effective than theorising and moralising. PUM only provides help in response to specified requests: it works directly and cost-effectively. This method has proved to be extremely successful and has created a great deal of goodwill. The idea behind PUM was quite simple: companies and institutions in developing countries can benefit from western organisational and management skills. The Netherlands has large numbers of (senior) experts who are willing to offer their services and skills free of charge. The idea was, and still is, a success.

PUM offers training and consultancy advice to companies in developing countries and interested companies only need to fill the application form and submit it at its office in Netherlands. Companies that receive approval for consultancy services do not need to pay for air ticket/ travel cost of consultants. They would only need to pay for accommodation for a maximum of three weeks and feeding for the consultants who offers free advice during the period the travel to the host company.

Much more was said about the activities of PUM and most of the participants found the operations of PUM very interesting and useful for business entrepreneurs. There was a prolonged discussion after the presentation on issues of interest to participants.

3.4 PSI Detail Information: Do's and Don'ts



*Presentation by Mr. Frans Witterman
(Kasaidi Consulting)*

The **Private Sector Investment programme (PSI)** provides 50% grant funding (subsidies) for investment projects that bring new economic development in 50 targeted countries. The goal of PSI is to promote sustainable economic development, stimulate innovative pilot investments in developing countries and contribute to poverty reduction through the creation of economic activity, employment and better income.

The basic PSI characteristics are investment project with clear commercial potential, executed by a foreign company in cooperation with a local company (in case of Ghana), hardware (machinery in a production process, for example), technical assistance (training, project management, etc.), innovative for the respective country/region and reduces the risk for the companies that make this investment.

Other requirements under PSI are that companies have a strategic interest in the project and aim at long term cooperation, investments after project period, commercially Viable + significant Positive Impact on local economy in terms of employment, income and knowledge transfer, corporate Social Responsibility (CSR): PSI projects must be trendsetters in the country/sector.

The estimated budget under PSI ranges between € 0.3 million and € 1.5 million. Partners must be able to fund 50% of the project budget themselves, as well as working capital during project implementation. Budget cannot include the purchase of land, buildings or investments already on going, nor can it include operational (recurrent) expenses. Typically 70-80% is hardware and 20-30% technical assistance.

3.5 Challenges entrepreneurs face at work and how to deal with it.

As part of the workshops, there was an open forum for fair participants to discuss some of the main problems encountered at work and how to deal with it. Some of the concerns discussed include inadequate circulation of information within the workplace, mistrust among employees, lack of delegation among some entrepreneurs, weak labour laws and unqualified personnel hired to do the job. In dealing with the problem, participants suggested the need to delegate within the workforce. It is also important to examine the capabilities of those hired to perform the task, motivate and appreciate staff contributions and performance, doing away with tribalism and practising the Chinese model. It is also important to keep the operational team well informed about the activities of the organisation. This means it may be important to have a periodic meetings and frequent management training to upgrade the skills and knowledge of the workforce.

Some Shared Photos from the Business

The pictures below are some of the highlights of events during the business fair.





4.0 Other Activities

Within the two days, delegates were served with both Dutch and Ghanaian dishes. They were served with lunch, snacks and refreshment after program. After the two days business fair, delegates from Ghana were sent round to different companies within Utrecht, Rotterdam and The Hague. Delegates often visited any company that opened its door to them and welcome them to explore opportunities available to them. Their interests were to explore the industrial market and examine business opportunities in which they can invest in. They also looked for business investors and partners with which they could collaborate with to make their business grow. Those with background in the construction industry explored how they can get construction equipments to purchase and other possible business ventures within which they can diversify and invest in. It was a wonderful exercise and a great experience as most of the delegate had the opportunity to visit sites and establish important contacts that may be useful to their network.

4.1 Accommodation

For the delegates that attended the fair from Ghana, some contacted AfroEuro Foundation to book their hotel accommodation for them. A very moderate hotel, named “Nordzee Hotel” was selected. The hotel is located in a very nice neighbourhood within The Hague, Scheveningin, and walking distance from the beach. It has internet facility and provides delegates with breakfast.

5.0 Challenges

Some of the major challenges encountered in the business fair include:

- Low participation of women entrepreneurs both from Ghana and in Netherlands
- Refusal of visa’s to other registered companies in Ghana by the Dutch Embassy led to lower participation rate.
- Since it was the first time ever such an event was being organised, there was lower response of Dutch companies in participating in the fair.
- Lower rate of partnership than expected in the business fair.

5.1 Evaluation

The business fair participants were given the chance to evaluate the programme after completion. There were diverse opinions obtained through this exercise. The overall turnover rate for the fair was a bit lower than expected as most of the Dutch companies did not turn up for the business fair. This may be attributed to the fact that the organising of the business fair started rather late and most of the companies that showed interest in the fair from Ghana were also refused visa by the Royal Dutch Embassy in Ghana. This leaves important lesson to the organising team that in future preparation towards such an important event needs to begin much earlier. What most delegates liked about the business fair was the interactive nature of the fair and it was wonderful for delegates as they were able to express themselves and share experiences with other experienced colleagues and business minded personnel that showed up for the fair. A suggestion was also made by the delegates that since it is a development programme, the government of Ghana and the Dutch government needs to invest in the programme and market it to draw more attention of the public and private investors since such an initiative leads to socio economic development.

6.0 Conclusion

In conclusion, the business fair was a very fruitful exercise as it gave all registered participants an opportunity to share their work, share their experiences and learn from others. It was a great opportunity to network and meet business experts and consultants who can advise, guide and direct business men and women who needs additional entrepreneurial guidance about their job. Although small, we believe that this is a very small and simple step to the achievement of a much greater goal towards the socio-economic development of Ghana and Africa as a whole. It is an initiative that needs the overall support and encouragement of those in both the public and private sector as it encourages entrepreneurial spirits and business partnership between Ghanaian and Dutch companies.