

THE NETHERLANDS-GHANA BUSINESS FAIR -2018



AfroEuro Foundation

Rijswijkseweg 60, 2516EH , Den Haag

Office: +31-070-2055657

Mobile: +31-06-21967533

Email: info@afroeuro.org

Abstract

This report gives an overview of the Netherlands-Ghana Business Fair organized in September 2018 at The Hague- The Netherlands. It outlines the main activities during the fair and discusses the enablement of it for many Netherlands-Ghana Businesses to network and build business relations. It also concludes that the business fair was a success and should be promoted to get more funding partners in the future. To support the financial and promotional aspect of the program.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction.....	2
1.1 Mission Statement.....	2
1.2 Aim.....	2
1.3 Theme.....	2
2. Event Preparation.....	3
3. Sponsors and Supporting companies/Institutions.....	4
4. Participating Companies.....	4
4.1 Netherlands Companies.....	4
4.2 Ghana Companies.....	5
5. Outcome of the Business Fair.....	5
6. The Youth Buddy Program.....	11
7. Challenges.....	11
8. Recommendation.....	11
9. Conclusion.....	11

1.0 Introduction

Ghana is currently taking on an ambitious industrialization campaign that spans across the country headed by president Nana Akufo- Addo. The campaign, titled '*One District One Factory*' (*Ghana Beyond Aid*) seeks to focus on and utilize the natural resources of each of the 216 districts in the manufacturing of products for both international and local use. The aim of the program is, amongst other things, to allow for Ghana to create youth employment opportunities and 3 simultaneously reduce the nation's reliance on foreign imports and aid.

Currently, the Ghanaian government has invested 465 million dollars into their 'One District One Factory' program, with there being a fair amount of international investment and interest in the program as well. This can be exemplified by the Chinese government having reportedly invested 2 billion dollars into the Ghanaian 'One district One Factory' program, with players such as Germany and Mexico having expressed a large deal of interest in the program and in the Ghanaian economy as well. The apparent success of the 'One District One Factory' program is a reflection of the fact that Ghanaian businesses and sectors have become increasingly more attractive to foreign investors and partners in recent years. The business fair invites Dutch companies and businesses to join other nations who have built and improved upon the foundations of a long-lasting and profitable business relationship between with Ghana.

AfroEuro Foundation wants to transform and enhance these relations in the contemporary economic climate. As such, one of the sub aims of the Netherlands-Ghana Business Fair, is to promote The Netherlands' development agenda in relation to Ghana at various levels where it can engage the private sector to seek investment opportunities in Sub-Saharan Africa/Ghana. In creating a platform for economic opportunities, the Netherlands-Ghana Business Fair succeeds in promoting a win-win strategy that places an emphasis on business promotion, exhibitions, exchange of best practices, market creation and matchmaking, all to the benefits of the parties involved.

1.1 Mission Statement

Across Sub-Saharan Africa the slogan of "*trade not aid*" has gained support and tract at the corporate, non-profit and governmental levels of many African nations. As such, the Netherlands-Ghana Business Fair enables and encourages West African countries to move beyond foreign relationships based on aid to economic relationships founded in trade. Moreover, the fair serves as an important platform for West African businesses to interact and network amongst themselves as well; creating or building upon and strengthening existing relationships.

1.2 Aim

The aim of the Netherlands-Ghana Business Fair is to provide a program consisting of multiple activities aimed at boosting business awareness for businesses operating in the Netherlands and Ghana.

1.2 Theme

In trying to realize the vision of the Ghanaian President's policy, the AfroEuro Foundation fully supports and organizes the participation of Ghanaian businesses in 'The Netherlands-Ghana Business Fair' 2018. Therefore the theme for this year's fair is: **Accessing Global Market: One district, One factory**. For these reasons, the organizers have designated four interesting and promising sectors namely; *Agro-business, ICT/E-Commerce, Housing/Real Estate and Water/Wash/Renewable Energy* to stimulate business promotion and activity during the Netherlands-Ghana Business Fair. These sectors make up the tentative key sectors for the Netherlands-Ghana Business Fair 2018.

2.0 Event Preparation

To prepare for the Business fair, the event organizers formed a consortium made up of:

Mr. Vincent Gambah
Ms. Fiona Eudora Gomez
Mr. Bert Spenkelink
Ms. Louisa Owusu
Mr. Bruno Fon
Ms. Stephanie Foster
Mr. Joshua Asambo



Organizers Business Fair 2018

These individuals came together on several occasions to plan for the business fair.

The website www.ngbizfair.com was fully in function for registration and to promote the activities of the business fair.

Business Fair location:

The fair was held at the New World Campus Spaarneplein 2, 2515 VK in The Hague, The Netherlands.



Location New World Campus

3.0 Sponsors and supporting companies

The Netherlands-Ghana Business Fair was sponsored by:

- Gemeente Den Haag
- AfroEuro Foundation

The supporting partners for the business fair were:

- The embassy of Ghana in the Hague-The Netherlands
- The Embassy of the Kingdom of The Netherlands in Accra-Ghana
- Ghana Investment Promotion Centre (GIPC)
- JL Properties
- Crownhill Properties
- Association of Ghana Industries (AGI)
- MUSIAD Netherlands
- Wiside World
- Wiside Freight
- Ghana Real Estate Developers Association (GREDA)
- Your Business Expansion (YBE)
- Ape Consult Limited (ACL)



4.0 Participating companies

Various Dutch and Ghanaian companies participated in the business fair.

4.1 Netherlands Companies

Participating companies from the Netherlands were:

- Neo Solar Power Corp
- Rijksdienst Voor Ondernemend Nederland (RVO)
- LEVS Architecten
- Delphy Improvement centre
- Your Business Expansion (YBE)
- Rijk Zwaan Distribution
- SUS - Smart Urban Solutions
- Aid Trade
- Leisurematch Ghana
- Roselle Tea
- Ghana-Products Cabe

4.2 Ghana Business Companies

Participating companies from Ghana were:

- Crownhill Properties
- Ghana Free Zone Authority (GFZA)
- Naagamni Oil and Construction Limited
- IFFI Ghana Limited
- Gohuoballe Agric & Business Venture
- Elsdon Westcape Company
- Gyaba Afro Connection Express
- Minata Company Limited
- Ramel Business Services Limited
- City Facilities Management

5.0 Outcome of The Business Fair

The Netherlands Business Fair 2018 was a three day collaborative event organised from the 27th of September till 29th of September 2018.

Business Fair -Day 1

The first day of the event began with registration of participants/companies and a welcome note by the Master of Ceremony Ms. Louisa Owusu. Thereafter Mr. Vincent Gambrah, director of AfroEuro Foundation made the opening speech, whereby he introduced the theme for this year's business fair "**Accessing Global Market: One district, One factory**". In the meantime both Dutch and Ghanaian companies had the opportunity to set up their stands to showcase the products and services their business or institution has to offer.

Shortly after, a presentation by Nana K. Owusu-Boampong and Nana Nsuobeyebuoden Owusu Boateng Agyenim, on land acquisition in Ghana, followed. During the presentation they spoke about the importance of acquiring a land legally and having it registered at the land commission in Ghana.

Mr Michael Akontah from the Ghana Free Zone Authority (GFZA) educated the participants and companies on the opportunities for sustainable partnerships with the GFZA, the various incentives for partnering with them and the sectors(Dutch companies) the GFZA is currently working with.

RADIUS, which stands for "**ROYAL AFRICAN DIASPORA INVESTMENT & UNIVERSAL SOCIETY**" is an Intra-Africa cooperation organisation dedicated to promoting and investing in the socioeconomic development of Africa through an international organisation managed and run by Africans. The acting executive president of RADIUS, Dr Mark Nii Akwei Ankrah urged the participants to join the organisation to help use business to fight poverty in Ghana(Africa), by contributing to shaping African business and culture for the benefit of all through the expansion of trade and investment under the CPPP concept.

After the above mentioned presentations ended, a break followed, where participants and companies got the chance to network whiles enjoying delicious Ghanaian dishes.

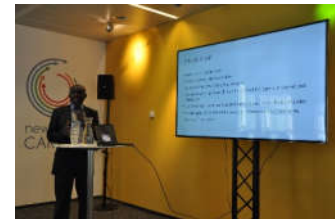
The second half of the first day was filled with a presentation by Rosalind Boschloo (RVO: Rijksdienst Voor Ondernemend Nederland), Pietro Esposti (LEVS Architecten), Bruno Fon (Youth Buddy Program) and two workshops about agribusiness by Eric Zandwijk (Delphy) and renewable energy by Mustafa Z. Ozen (Neo Solar Power Corp).

Rosalind Boschloo gave the companies insight on how the Dutch government can assist with investment for start-up businesses in Ghana. She explained the funds that Dutch companies, who are interested in doing business in Ghana, can get and the requirements to be met to get those funds.

The Youth Buddy Program was introduced to the participants at the business fair. The Youth buddy program is a network of young business professionals in The Netherlands with vision to enter into entrepreneurship. This Program will continue after the fair.

After the introduction of the buddy program, the participants of the events were divided into two groups for the workshops. One group stayed for Agribusiness, while the other went with Mr Ozen for the workshop on renewable energy. Both workshops taught the candidates about the innovations in both sectors and were given the opportunity to ask questions after.

The first day ended with a presentation by Pietro Esposti on the “*Down2Earth*” project they are running in Mali and Nigeria. These project teaches local contractors the process of building sustainable houses with “earth”. LEVS Architecten mentioned to be looking forward to start this project in Ghana as well.



Business Fair – Day 2

On the second day of the Business Fair, registration of participants and companies continued, since a lot of new faces were seen that day. The day had four presentations and ended with a company visit to Delphy Improvement Centre.

The first presentation was by Mr Mustafa Ozen on “*Business opportunities between Turkey and Ghana*”. He explained how the Turkish economy is booming and Ghanaian companies should consider investing in Turkey to get good returns on investment.

Mr Mesuna Sumaila from Naagamni Oil and Construction Limited, a Ghanaian based company elaborated on the ups and downs of owning a company in Ghana. He, himself started off as an employee at Shell and now an owner of about 32 filling station in Ghana. His key words for success are: a good mind set and determination.

Rijk Zwaan is an agribusiness that focuses on the production of sustainable seeds and services. They experiment with various seeds to get the right one to match a country(continents) needs. Rijk Zwaan has greenhouses in Tanzania and a business development specialist in Ghana. Their aim is to have numerous greenhouses and training centres across Africa, where they help farmers to plant and harvest healthy and long lasting fruits/vegetables/flowers.

The last presentation was held by Gert Breugum from SUS Urbanism. Their mission is to create sustainable and inclusive villages and settlements in the rural areas of Africa. These settlements are based on delivering food security, economic and social empowerment and inclusiveness. SUS Urbanism operates as a full-service consultancy and urban design company, delivering project management, surveys, urban design proposals and operational plans.

Delphy Improvement Centre welcomed the participants and companies to have a look at their greenhouses in Bleiswijk. This company visit was to give the Ghanaian agribusinesses an idea of how the greenhouses function and the possibilities of greenhouses in Ghana. The visit brought the second day of the event to an end.



Business Fair- Day 3

The last day of the business fair was very interactive with a panel discussion and a conversation with Mr Chris van Dam, a member of the House of Representatives(CDA) and a presentation on “Doing business in Ghana” by Deputy Head of Mission Mr Habib Idris. The presence of the Head of Consular, Mr De Souza was also felt through his active participation in the panel discussion.

Mr van Dam discussed a bit on the policies the Dutch and European government have to help African businesses enter the Western market. He gave an example of the dividend tax the Dutch government wants to get rid of to make the country more attractive for international business. After that he gave the participants the chance to ask questions concerning the Dutch government and their perspective on businesses in Africa.

The deputy head of mission of the Ghana embassy, Mr Habib Idris gave a presentation on “*Doing business in Ghana*”, whereby he explained the importance of the diaspora in doing business for the current administration. He also made known to the participants, the institutions set up to help start-up businesses and expand existing companies with the help of financial investment.

The topic for the panel discussion was the theme for this year’s business fair “**Accessing Global Market: One district, One factory**” with the following sub statements:

- The “one district, one factory” policy will not succeed with this administrative term
- All business sectors can add value to this policy
- The diaspora can contribute to the realization of the “one district, one factory” policy

The panellists introduced themselves to the audience and gave their view on the topic including the sub statements. This led to an intriguing discussion between the audience and panel. Overall, it was a very educative and interesting session.

The panellists:

Mr. Bert Spenkelink

Director/Owner Leisurematch Ghana & AidTrade

View:

The policy is a mindset to create jobs, not a physical factory. The government has to create an accessible environment for businesses. Don’t replicate the same thing in every district. Approach has to come from the private sector. The policy should not be limited to one or two years. The nation has to start small and think big. Decentralize the policy and engage local government.

Businesses should form partnerships with some sectors and collaborate to meet a certain standard to be able to export their products. Try and (semi)process the product in own country and not just export raw material. Use social media to advertise your product.

Ms. Angèle Mayimona Nascimento-The Triple Queen
Afropreneur/ consultant/ coach/ educator/ poet/trainer

View:

Ghana should be seen as a “teenager”. The government should not impose to the nation what they are supposed to do, but rather invest in its “relationship”. Stay in relation and communicate with the businesses. Ghanaians should see the policy as idea and thinks of ways to contribute, with assistance from the government.

Another channel is using a fund that is for and with Africans. The Ubuntu corporate aims to become that fund, whereby African countries provide for themselves instead of seeking foreign aid and investors.

Start somewhere. Self promotion. Have “spies” on the ground(in foreign countries). Involve the use in the executing of the policy. They contain new and future knowlegde.

Mr. Emmanuel Ankrah
YouTube / Social media consultant

View:

Global market has already been accessed with the come of technology and internet. Business is done world wide through paypal and mastercard. Nevertheless there should be more focus on direct “business to consumer” concept. Niche market.

This world run on information aid. Let us chance our mindset and look at our way of doing business from a technological angle. We lack information and feedback.

Mr. Mesuna Sumaila
CEO / Naagamni Oil & Construction Limited

View:

The “one district, one factory” policy is a good policy with a wrong approah. The goverment should engage the district, by enabling a group of businesses within that district to come up with business ideas. Out of those ideas, one or two will be choosen by the government and executed. Don’t use commerial banks for the issuing of bonds but selected banks with a special rate attached to it. BOT (Build-Operate-Transfer) and PPP(Public Private Partnership Ventures)= a way to operate with foreign businesses

In order to succeed as a business or nation, you have to make use of your talent and the people around you. Create jobs for the urban nad rural areas. Deregulate businesses. Where there is a problem, there is a solution.

The diaspora should do their homework and investigate in the bureaucracy of the country.



Audience

View:

One district, one factory will not be possible on short run, but maybe on long term. This, because the nation lacks road-, technical network and other resources. New infrastructure has to be laid to rural areas.

There has to be improvement in the way we think and do business. Presentation, innovation and research are the basis for a successful company. Ghana is used to mediocrity. Businesses have to collaborate to improve the quality of our products. No need to reinvent, but allow global knowledge.

Focus on African Europeans and not white Europeans. A diaspora coordination center has to be created, where the diaspora across the globe can link up. A center where we will not just provide capital but also ideas to help Ghana.

There are policies on EU level, like visa regimes for Africans to make trade easy, however when a Ghanaian(African) obtains another nationality, they forget about their origin and don't involve themselves in the community. Alternative ways can be found to do business in Ghana then just finding a foreign investor and bringing them to the country. Unite as a diaspora. Come together and help with the economic growth of your country(continent). Ghana is a stable country to do business and the base for every good business is a peaceful environment.

With the right mindset and integrity, we will surely get there. Big things often have small beginnings!!!

With these words the business fair 2018 came to an end. Mr Gambrah thanked the sponsors, supporters, organizers and volunteers who made this year's event possible.

After, a networking session followed with the companies and participants.

The companies from Ghana had the opportunity to have a private meeting with YBE on how to expand and attract investment from foreign investors.



6.0 The Youth Buddy Program

The youth buddy program is organised as part of the Netherlands Ghana business fair activities. The Youth Buddy Program starts as an initiative to support, mobilize, train and support young Ghanaian-Dutch entrepreneurs to start or grow their business ideas and make it a reality.

As part of the business fair, there will be 5 training sessions for the youth coordinated by Mr Bruno Fon to build their capacities on how to develop their own businesses and manage it.



7.0 Challenges

The main challenge which was encountered by the business fair participants was the limited funding used in organize the event. The event organizers' did not have much sponsors who will support in financing the business fair.

Time: Because the business fair participants were travelling from Ghana, it was necessary to begin the event preparation early to enable participants process their visas application and prepare for the fair. Most of the participants did not immediately show much interest in being part of the business part until the latter part and it was a bit delayed.

Another challenge encountered was to do with participation of the public. Although the event was successful, it would have been great if more people participated in the business fair itself. In the future, it will be important to start promotion ahead of time and include more business students in the preparation of the fair.

8.0 Recommendation

There is need look for more sponsors who will support in financing the business fair.

In addition to this, there is need to begin event preparation and organization early to reach more interested business fair participants.

9.0 Conclusion

In view of all the discussions made so far, we like to conclude that the business fair was successful. Many of the participants and companies who participated in the fair were very pleased with the outcome of the business fair.

We believe this is the beginning to establishing business networks between The Netherlands and Ghana companies and also in encouraging young people to enter to entrepreneurship.

The business fair needs to continue and all partners and stakeholders involved needs to pull resources and efforts together to enable its operations successful.

