

FEBRUARY 2020



NETHERLANDS-GHANA BUSINESS FAIR REPORT

PREPARED BY:

BYAustin

APPROVED BY:

Afro Euro Foundation



ABOUT



The African continent is experiencing sustainable economic growth more specifically is the nation Ghana which is well-endowed with natural resources. The Netherlands and Ghana shares a memorable diplomatic and business relations and have maintained this mutual trade value in the last 300 years. Ghana is one of the Netherlands' principal trading partners in Sub-Saharan Africa and it is well-positioned as a regional entry and exit point on trade routes. The Netherlands is one of Ghana's main export countries, particularly for cocoa. Conversely, Ghana is the third most important export destination in Sub-Saharan Africa for Dutch products. Many Dutch civil society organisations and several local authorities have links with Ghana.

In order to unlock this potential, investments and innovations are required. The organizers of the Netherland Ghana Business Fair 2017 plan to connect the Dutch and Ghanaian businesses together. We intend to showcase diverse sectors of business in order to facilitate and exchange ideas thereby strengthening our relations. Our focus is to target companies in Ghana and the Netherlands in the following sectors: Agro Business, ICT/Mobile Solutions, Housing/Real Estate, Water/Wash and Renewable Energy. It is through this combination of business development activities and opportunities that the Netherlands Ghana business fair is essential to stimulate business ventures and innovation between the two countries.

GHANA ENTREPRENEURS SPARK INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS IN THE HAGUE



The Netherlands-Ghana Business Fair kick-off event welcomed dignitaries, industry veterans and entrepreneurs to an introductory morning session on Friday the 24th of January at the prestigious New World Campus in the Hague.

For a fourth year running, Vincent Gambrah of Afro Euro and his team brought the business fair to engage and inform interested parties in the Netherlands about business and investment culture and opportunities in Ghana. This year, Mr. Gambrah hoped that the focus would be on the importance of building relationships and partnerships between parties in both countries and create an environment of knowledge sharing as well.

“We come together easily to eat, drink and even pray – now we should come together to work and invest well.” Mr. Gambrah started off this year’s fair with the strong message that social capital is of more importance than monetary investments, and that attendees should aim to make partners in knowledge.

Ghana’s Ambassador to the Netherlands, Her Excellency Ms. Sophia Horner-Sam, brought an air of hilarity and wisdom to the morning event. In her keynote speech, Her Excellency shared a story of her personal experience as a businesswoman in the agriculture industry and how she learnt what it meant to truly add value to the community around us. The audience was assured that Ghana’s “doors are open”, as they were urged to visit the country and see for themselves the opportunities that avail themselves to investors and entrepreneurs alike.

Another notable guest was Mr. Chris van Dam from the House of Representatives in the Netherlands. Mr. van Dam shared some insightful thoughts with the guests about how he, and his political party, are of the belief that the “people themselves should be the main energy” in our society, not necessarily the government. Whilst praising Ghana for being a champion in peacekeeping in West Africa, Mr. van Dam reminded Ghanaian natives and diaspora that they should be aware of their strengths as a country; Ghana is indeed wealthy in “people power” considering the sheer number that makes up the population.

The audience at the kick-off morning was varied in age, profession and origin, including people from 11 different countries such as Curaçao, Cameroon and of course, Ghana. With a range of professionals in accounting, marketing, software development, e-commerce, waste energy and investment, the networking sessions were bustling with high-energy exchanges about people's current passions and future dreams.

Finally, Emmanuel Baisie, a representative from Ga South municipality in Greater Accra Region, gave the audience a teaser of what doing business in Ghana would be like. With a short but very sweet outline of the current projects his office has undertaken, Mr. Baisie promised enterprising members of the audience that the GA Mayor's office is "ever-ready to work with [them]"

Workshops

Relevant topics, such as: 'how to become a rich farmer' were explored through a workshop given by Rutger Groot (East-West seed). De Groot emphasized on the opportunities for growing vegetables and ensuring quality seeds. Nana Owusu, a representative from Asanteman Traditional Council shared about the role of chiefs when acquiring land in Ghana. Overall, partakers were informed on the relevant opportunities and needed information when starting a business in Ghana.

Written by
Saaq Merali (BYAustin)



**“WE COME
TOGETHER EASILY TO EAT, DRINK AND EVEN PRAY – NOW WE
SHOULD COME TOGETHER TO
WORK AND INVEST WELL.”**
VINCENT GAMBRAH (DIRECTOR NETHERLANDS-GHANA BUSINESS FAIR)

GHANA ENTREPRENEURS SPARK INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS IN THE HAGUE



An afternoon on Monday the 27th of January 2020 filled with beneficial insights into investments in Ghana and building partnerships with pre-established programmes run by Dutch governmental organisations.

An intimate yet formal session hosted at the RVO; the Netherlands Enterprise Agency, this gathering saw the exchange of industry specific information between Ghanaian professionals and Dutch specialists that worked at embassies in East and West Africa. Audience members heard parties of both countries share their experience and knowledge on smart investment and the processes behind successful programmes.

With conversation led by Augustina Austin playing out like a game of ping-pong, conference members were exposed to an abundance of expert information, as the likes of Emmanuel Baisie (representative from Ga South municipality in Greater Accra Region), Mr. Sumaila Mesuna (Maagamni), Alexander Besah Hukporti of Sarsson Consulting and Margot Leegwater of Nuffic were in attendance, amongst other notable professionals and business people.

Vincent Gambrah of Afro Euro emphasised the theme and focus of this year's business fair: building partnerships; reminding the audience of the well-known proverb that says "if you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together".

In line with the theme, members learned the role that RVO plays with assisting companies, businesses and partners, not only with access to funds, but with the intricate processes of successful investments abroad, like in Ghana. Through their large, impactful partnership projects, it is evident that RVO is indeed the companion one would need in understanding how best to partner a Ghanaian company with a Dutch company, and manoeuvring through applications for subsidies, feasibility studies and other procedures.

Eline Minneboo, a Project Advisor at RVO, highlighted the importance of the sustainable development goals to the government of the Netherlands and how they play a role in designing the programs that are currently in place for foreign investment opportunities.

Her colleague, Rosalind Boschloo, gave an outline of the accelerator programme called Growing Business Together that has been running for the past two years. The audience was informed about the many opportunities that are available through already existing avenues, and how the Dutch government is in fact committed to growing the social and knowledge capital of the Ghanaian diaspora.

Overall, this was a fruitful and engaging session, leading to many well-matched connections between interested Ghanaian diaspora, experienced Ghanaian professionals and key players in the Dutch enterprise and investment industry.

An overview of funding application procedures and general information about investing through the RVO is available at www.aiddata.rvo.nl/ (website currently under construction.)

Written by Saaq Merali (BYAustin)



**“IF
YOU WANT TO GO FAST, GO ALONE. IF YOU WANT TO GO FAR, GO
TOGETHER”.**
VINCENT GAMBRAH (DIRECTOR NETHERLANDS-GHANA BUSINESS FAIR)

GHANAIAAN GOVERNMENT SEEKS TO CREATE LOCAL EMPLOYMENT THROUGH INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS



Dutch Parliament welcomed Honourable Hon. Gifty Ohene-Konadu (One District One Factory) Ghana's Ambassador to the Netherlands, Her Excellency Ms. Sophia Horner-Sam and a select group of Ghanaian entrepreneurs on Tuesday 28 January 2020 to start conversations on building partnerships between Ghana and the Netherlands in various priority sectors.

Mr. Chris van Dam (House of Representatives in the Netherlands), emphasized the importance for transparency and how that remains for the Netherlands when doing international business. Mustafa Amhaouch (Economic Affairs, House of Representatives in the Netherlands), shared some of the key instruments that are put in place to facilitate future collaborations between Ghana and the Netherlands.

Augustina Austin, chair for the meeting emphasized the importance of the role of the young Ghanaian Diaspora when instruments are put in place. Mr. Sumaila Mesuna, Chief Executive Officer of Maagamni, an Oil company based in Ghana shared how he worked his way up at an oil company founded from a Dutch-Ghanaian business partnership. His company currently employs over 500 people in Ghana.

Hon. Gifty Ohene-Konadu, shared the objective of One District One Factory Initiative which is to ignite Ghana's industrialization. She sees an opportunity to create more local employment when international partnerships are put in place.

Both parties agreed that there are plenty success stories that indicate a healthy Dutch-Ghanaian business partnership. Her Excellency Ms. Sophia Horner-Sam shared her sentiment on the growing rate of agribusiness from Ghana to the Netherlands. "As a farmer in Ghana years ago, I struggled selling my pineapples sometimes. Now I see Ghanaian pineapples in the Albert Heijn. This gives me joy".

Written by Augustina Austin (BYAustin)

COMPANY ROUND TRIP SPARKS BUSINESS DEALS FOR GHANAIAAN ENTREPRENEURS



Ten Ghanaian businessmen and women from the Ghana private and public sector joined the annual Netherlands-Ghana Business Fair for a round trip company visit from Monday the 27th till Wednesday the 29th of January to spark business deals.

The Netherlands-Ghana Business Fair company round trip is initiated by Afro Euro Foundation with the goal to combine the leading 3-day event with a trade mission. The Ghanaian delegates were taken through a front-row view at a select list of companies from the agribusiness, recycling and construction sectors. A hands-on meetup to embark on future partnerships.

The farmers from the group discovered how all aspects of horticulture come together at the World Horti Centre, an exhibition and trade centre in Honselerdijk. They learned more on how one location facilitates trade, research, education combined. At Deliflor in Maasdijk, the group explored more on flower growing and atomisation.

Waste no more

As waste management continues to be a growing topic in Ghana, the delegates sought to explore strategies for next level waste management at Renewi Recycling. This visit was unique in its kind, due to the information character of waste management. Both Dutch and Ghanaian entrepreneurs seek to establish a partnership to inform Ghanaians on innovations and efficiency.

Middle tech: a practical middle ground A current problem in Ghana is utilizing milk production. Den Hartog, a cow milking company based in Kollum touched on acquiring fresh milk for local people. The entrepreneurs seek to establish something beyond trade: future collaborations to upskill Ghanaian farmers by way of middle tech farming. A next stage way of farming, that requires a lean way of applying technology for efficient harvesting and farming in Ghana.

The entrepreneurs explored more opportunities when it comes to farming at Kootwijkerbroek Varkens, a piggery in Kootwijkerbroek. And at the Wageningen University, where they explored the fishery department. An excluded visit of JD homes to Oskam delivered a partnership for affordable housing in Ghana.

International partnerships

Afro Euro foundation aims to empower Ghanaian entrepreneurs by emphasizing the importance of building international relationships. The company round trip brought about a good ground to develop Ghanaian projects and businesses with an innovative character in mind.

The Netherlands-Ghana Business Fair 2020 sparked conversations that lead to tangible business deals expecting to change the scope of affordable housing and flower growing and atomisation. The Fair seeks to continue contributing more to the Ghana-Netherlands trade.



Opportunities & Challenges

1. Partnership with Dutch companies with a lengthy track record of contributing partnerships.
2. First-hand and short-term visa processing for Ghanaian businesspeople

Recommendations

1. The organization of the fair seeks to start promotional activities at an earlier stage.
2. The fair seeks to implement a promotional campaign to reach Dutch, Ghanaian and other international prospects.
3. Teaming up with Dutch organisation or institutions that can leverage on the Netherlands-Ghana trade.