NETHERLANDS-GHANA BUSINESS & TOURISM EXPO

18-20 September, 2025, The Hague

Partnership for Growth: Trade, Innovation, and Sustainability

Hon. John Dumelo
Deputy Minister of Food & Agriculture, Ghana

Dr. Peter Boamah Otokunor
Director Presidential Special Initiative Agriculture

H.E. Francis Kotia
Ghana Ambassador to The Netherlands

Mr. William Manful
Deputy Head of Mission/Head of Chancery, Ghana Embassy, The Hague

Mrs. Wianda Visser (MSc.)
Director, The Hague University of Applied Sciences

Dr. James Ato Condua Orleans-Lindsay
Chairman, JL Holdings Ltd. (Ghana) and Chancellor, Cape Technical University

Mr. Hilbert Bredemeijer
Wethouder of Education Youth and Sports – City of The Hague

Hon. Don Guno Maria Ceder
Member of Parliament of Christian Union

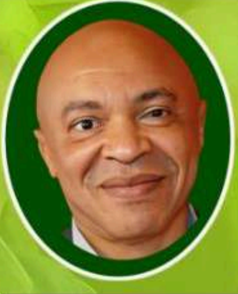
Professor Jos Walenkamp
Senior Expert/Programme Coordinator at PUM Netherlands senior experts

Mr. Mattijs Renden
Head of Business Development NABC

Mr. Gerrit-Jan 't Veen
Business mentor and fellow at We Are Changemakers, Incubator for Positive Impact Companies

Mrs. Thea Fierens
Coördinator #SDGCafe, Vice-voorzitter Raad van Toezicht St.Vluchteling

Mr. Oscar Kwame Sottie
Wageningen University, MKB



Mr. Max Koffi
Director Africa In Motion, Founder Equal Trade Alliance

Dr. Mohamoud Awil
Director of the African Diaspora Policy Centre (ADPC, The Netherlands)

Mr. Wakefield Ackuaku
Executive Director, National Commission on Culture, (NCC)

Mr. Robin Bonnerjee
Managing Director -SLE GLOBAL BV

Ms. Eunice Kisiwsa Gyan
Youth Development Consultant

Mr. Kwame Aviane
Vice President, Ghana Union Netherlands

Mr. Louis Manu
CEO, WiFlix

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

The Netherlands–Ghana Business & Tourism Expo 2025, held from 18 to 20 September 2025 in The Hague, convened policymakers, business leaders, investors, entrepreneurs, academics, youth representatives, and diaspora stakeholders from Ghana and the Netherlands. Organised by AfroEuro Foundation, in collaboration with institutional and strategic partners, the Expo served as a platform to deepen bilateral cooperation in trade, investment, agriculture, tourism, innovation, and sustainable development.

The 2025 edition was positioned as both a continuation and an evolution of previous engagements, with a clear emphasis on moving from dialogue to practical collaboration. Under the overarching theme of partnership for growth, the Expo combined policy-level discussions, business exchange, youth-driven innovation, and cultural engagement to address shared economic priorities and structural challenges affecting Ghana–Netherlands cooperation.

The three-day programme was intentionally designed to progress from strategic alignment to applied engagement.

Day One, hosted at The Hague University of Applied Sciences, focused on institutional dialogue and policy frameworks shaping bilateral investment and trade. High-level representatives from government, academia, and the private sector addressed issues such as investment security, agribusiness development, due diligence, land acquisition, and the role of technology and knowledge transfer in modernising agricultural value chains. Discussions highlighted Ghana's transition from aid-based engagement to trade- and investment-led partnerships, while also surfacing persistent barriers related to visa facilitation, regulatory processes, and investment predictability.

Day Two shifted the focus from policy to practice through the Business Exchange & Innovation Forum, featuring investor pitch sessions, youth-led entrepreneurship discussions, and sector-specific panels, particularly in agriculture and food systems. The programme underscored agriculture not as a subsistence activity but as a scalable, innovation-driven sector with strong potential for value addition, job creation, and export growth. A closed-door Investor and Entrepreneur Dinner further enabled candid dialogue among senior stakeholders, reinforcing the importance of trust, mobility, and operational efficiency in sustaining long-term bilateral investment relationships.

Day Three concluded the Expo with GHANAFEST, a cultural celebration held at Zuiderpark, The Hague. Beyond its cultural significance, GHANAFEST functioned as a strategic instrument for diaspora engagement and tourism promotion, broadening participation beyond formal business audiences and reinforcing the role of culture as an economic and diplomatic asset.

Across all three days, several consistent themes emerged. Participants emphasised the need for structured investment facilitation, clearer pathways for cross-border business mobility, and stronger alignment between policy ambition and operational realities. Youth and diaspora engagement featured prominently, with repeated calls for targeted support mechanisms that move beyond inspiration toward skills development, financial literacy, and sustained mentorship. Sustainability—particularly in agriculture, supply chains, and investment governance—was framed not as an optional consideration, but as a prerequisite for long-term partnership and competitiveness.

A key outcome of the Expo was the recognition that youth entrepreneurship required dedicated follow-up beyond the main event. This directly informed the organisation of the Young Entrepreneurs' Summit 2025, held on 6 December 2025 in The Hague. Conceived as a post-Expo continuation rather than a standalone event, the Summit translated high-level Expo discussions into focused engagement on financial literacy, access to funding, entrepreneurship skills, innovation, and leadership for young professionals within African and diaspora business ecosystems.

Together, the Expo and the Summit established a coherent engagement arc—from policy dialogue and business exchange to individual capacity building—laying the groundwork for sustained Ghana–Netherlands collaboration. While many discussions highlighted significant opportunity, they also underscored the importance of improved monitoring, clearer implementation pathways, and stronger coordination among public, private, and diaspora stakeholders.

This report documents the structure, content, and outcomes of the Netherlands–Ghana Business & Tourism Expo 2025 and its post-Expo continuation. It aims to provide partners, sponsors, institutions, and future collaborators with a consolidated account of what was achieved, what was learned, and how these engagements can inform a forward-looking 2026 collaboration pipeline.

Event Overview

Purpose, Theme, Objectives, and Partners

Purpose

The Netherlands–Ghana Business & Tourism Expo 2025 was conceived as a strategic platform to strengthen and reposition Ghana–Netherlands relations around trade, investment, innovation, and sustainable economic development. Moving beyond traditional development cooperation models, the Expo aimed to support Ghana's transition toward trade- and investment-led partnerships, while leveraging the Netherlands' role as a gateway to European markets, finance, technology, and knowledge.

At its core, the Expo sought to:

- Facilitate practical business and investment engagement between Ghanaian and Dutch stakeholders
- Create structured dialogue between public institutions, private sector actors, academia, and the diaspora
- Address systemic barriers to cross-border collaboration, including mobility, compliance, and investment readiness
- Position youth and diaspora communities as active contributors to economic transformation rather than peripheral participants

The Expo was intentionally designed to balance policy dialogue, commercial opportunity, entrepreneurship, and cultural diplomacy, recognising that sustainable partnerships require alignment across these dimensions.

Theme

The 2025 edition was anchored under a unifying theme focused on partnership for growth, with particular emphasis on trade, innovation, sustainability, and inclusive development. This thematic framing reflected both Ghana's national development priorities—such as *Ghana Beyond Aid*, agricultural modernisation, and value-chain development—and broader European policy considerations related to responsible investment, sustainable supply chains, and corporate due diligence.

Across sessions and formats, the theme translated into four recurring lenses:

- Building sustainable and equitable partnerships between Ghana and the Netherlands
- Mobilising diaspora expertise and capital as a bridge between markets
- Driving innovation in agriculture and food systems through technology, logistics, and value addition
- Embedding sustainability and responsibility into investment, production, and trade practices

Rather than treating sustainability as a standalone topic, the Expo integrated it across discussions on agriculture, finance, mobility, and entrepreneurship.

Objectives

The programme and content of the Expo were structured around a set of clearly articulated objectives, reflected consistently across the background paper, session design, and speaker contributions.

1. Strengthening Trade and Investment Relations
The Expo aimed to deepen economic cooperation by showcasing concrete investment opportunities in sectors such as agriculture, agribusiness, food processing, infrastructure, tourism, and related services. By convening investors, entrepreneurs, policymakers, and facilitators in one forum, the Expo sought to reduce information asymmetries and stimulate actionable business dialogue.

2. Empowering Youth and the Diaspora
Youth and diaspora engagement was positioned as a strategic priority rather than a symbolic inclusion. The Expo amplified youth perspectives through panels, pitch sessions, and entrepreneurship-focused discussions, while also highlighting the diaspora's role in knowledge transfer, market access, and investment facilitation.

3. Promoting Sustainable Development and Responsible Investment
Environmental sustainability, ethical supply chains, and responsible investment practices featured prominently, including discussions on Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence (CSDD), regenerative agriculture, climate-smart farming, and value-chain transparency. These discussions aligned Ghanaian growth ambitions with evolving European regulatory and market expectations.

4. Honouring Shared History and Strengthening People-to-People Ties
The Expo recognised the historical and cultural ties between Ghana and the Netherlands as a foundation for future collaboration. This objective was expressed most visibly through **GHANAFEST**, which reinforced mutual understanding, cultural exchange, and community-level engagement alongside formal economic dialogue.

Partners and Stakeholders

The Expo was **organised by AfroEuro Foundation**, a non-governmental organisation established in 2003 with a mandate to promote a positive image of the African diaspora in Europe and mobilise diaspora capacity for Africa's economic development. AfroEuro Foundation's longstanding focus on diaspora engagement, international partnerships, and capacity building shaped both the strategic intent and inclusive design of the Expo.

The 2025 edition was delivered in collaboration with a broad ecosystem of partners and stakeholders, including:

- **Diplomatic institutions**, notably the Embassy of Ghana in The Hague
- **Local government**, including the City of The Hague
- **Academic institutions**, particularly The Hague University of Applied Sciences
- **Private sector organisations**, investors, business associations, and consultancies
- **Diaspora organisations and community networks**
- **Youth entrepreneurs, innovators, and professionals**

This multi-stakeholder configuration enabled the Expo to operate simultaneously as a policy forum, business exchange, learning environment, and community platform.

Planning & Delivery Snapshot

Venues, Program Logic, and Engagement Model

Overall Design Approach

The Netherlands–Ghana Business & Tourism Expo 2025 was deliberately designed as a **three-day, multi-venue programme**, with each day serving a distinct strategic purpose while contributing to a coherent overall engagement journey. Rather than concentrating all activities into a single format or location, the organisers adopted a progressive engagement model that moved participants from high-level alignment to applied interaction and, finally, to broad-based community engagement.

This design reflected the understanding that effective international collaboration requires:

- Policy and institutional alignment
- Practical business and investment dialogue
- Inclusive participation by youth, diaspora, and communities
- Informal spaces for trust-building and relationship development

The planning process therefore aligned venue choice, session formats, and participant mix with the specific objectives of each day.

Venue Strategy

Three venues in The Hague were selected to reinforce the intent of each programme phase:

- **The Hague University of Applied Sciences (Day 1)**
  An academic environment was chosen to host the Partnership Summit, signalling neutrality, credibility, and knowledge exchange. The university setting reinforced the role of research, skills development, and innovation in supporting sustainable trade and investment.
- **The Globe, Waldorpstraat 17 (Day 2)**
  A professional, business-oriented venue provided the appropriate setting for entrepreneurship, pitching sessions, innovation discussions, and investor engagement. The location supported interactive formats and facilitated direct exchange among entrepreneurs, investors, and sector experts.
- **Zuiderpark, The Hague (Day 3 – GHANAFEST)**
  A public, open-air venue enabled broad community participation and cultural celebration. This setting allowed the Expo to extend beyond formal stakeholders, engaging families, diaspora communities, and the wider public in a shared cultural and social experience.

The venue progression—from academic to professional to public—mirrored the Expo's strategic narrative: from alignment, to action, to inclusion.

Programme Logic

The programme was structured around a clear day-by-day logic, with each phase building on the outcomes of the previous one.

Day 1: Strategic Alignment and Policy Dialogue
The opening day focused on creating a shared understanding of the opportunities and constraints shaping Ghana–Netherlands cooperation. Sessions addressed:

- Investment climate and security
- Agribusiness and value-chain development
- Due diligence, land access, and regulatory frameworks
- The role of knowledge institutions and technology

This day set the intellectual and policy foundation for subsequent business and entrepreneurship discussions.

Day 2: Applied Business Exchange and Innovation
The second day shifted attention to implementation and practice. Through pitch sessions, panel discussions, and targeted conversations, participants explored:

- Entrepreneurial journeys and lessons learned

- Youth-driven agriculture and food systems
- Innovation, logistics, and value addition
- Access to finance and funding structures

A closed-door Investor and Entrepreneur Dinner complemented the daytime programme, providing a confidential setting for candid discussions among senior stakeholders and reinforcing trust-based relationship building.

Day 3: Community Engagement and Cultural Diplomacy
The final day broadened the scope of engagement through GHANAFEST. By integrating music, food, art, and cultural expression, the Expo:

- Strengthened people-to-people ties
- Promoted Ghana as a tourism and cultural destination
- Reinforced diaspora engagement in an accessible, informal setting

This phase emphasised that economic collaboration is sustained not only by policy and capital, but also by cultural understanding and community connection.

Engagement Model

The Expo employed a multi-format engagement model to accommodate diverse participant needs and objectives. These formats included:

- Keynote addresses and official remarks
- Panel discussions and moderated dialogues
- Entrepreneurial pitch sessions
- Technical workshops and presentations
- Closed-door investment and partnership meetings
- Informal networking and cultural activities

This diversity of formats allowed participants to engage at different depths, from high-level observation to direct participation and follow-up dialogue.

Youth engagement was embedded across the programme rather than confined to a single session, ensuring that younger participants interacted directly with policymakers, investors, and experienced entrepreneurs. Similarly, diaspora participation was positioned as a cross-cutting element, linking markets, institutions, and cultural contexts.

Operational Coordination and Lessons

Delivering a multi-venue, multi-format programme required close coordination among organisers, partners, speakers, and volunteers. The experience yielded several practical lessons:

- Sequencing matters: progressive engagement improves continuity and depth
- Informal settings are essential for trust-building alongside formal sessions
- Youth participation is most effective when integrated, not isolated
- Early planning for data capture and follow-up strengthens post-event outcomes

These lessons informed both the organisation of the post-Expo Young Entrepreneurs' Summit and the recommendations for future editions.

Day 1 Highlights: Partnership Summit

Strategic Alignment, Policy Dialogue, and Investment Foundations

Purpose and Context

Day 1 of the Netherlands–Ghana Business & Tourism Expo 2025, hosted on 18 September 2025 at The Hague University of Applied Sciences, was dedicated to strategic alignment and institutional dialogue. Framed as the Netherlands–Ghana Partnership Summit, the day brought together senior representatives from government, diplomacy, academia, business, and the diaspora to examine the enabling conditions required for sustainable bilateral cooperation.

The choice of an academic venue reinforced the intent of the day: to ground discussions in evidence, policy coherence, and long-term capability building rather than short-term deal-making. The sessions set the tone for the Expo by addressing both opportunity and constraint, acknowledging Ghana's growing investment appeal while openly engaging with structural and operational challenges.

Opening and Official Remarks

The Summit opened with formal remarks from institutional leaders who collectively framed the Expo as part of a broader transition from aid-based engagement toward trade, investment, and partnership-driven development.

Senior representatives from The Hague University of Applied Sciences welcomed participants and highlighted the university's role in supporting cross-border knowledge exchange, student development, and applied research linked to international business and innovation.

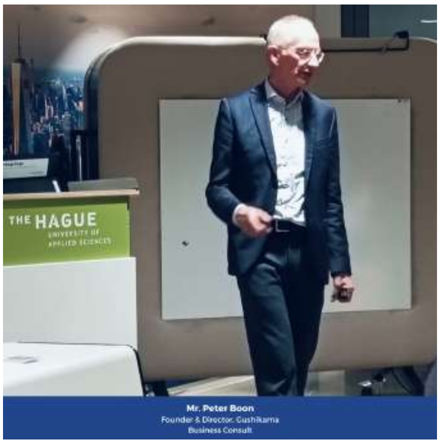
AfroEuro Foundation, as organiser, underscored the central role of the African diaspora as bridge-builders between Ghana and Europe. The opening remarks emphasised that diaspora engagement is most effective when aligned with concrete economic opportunities, institutional collaboration, and mutual accountability.

Diplomatic and political representatives, including the Embassy of Ghana in The Hague and members of the Dutch Parliament and local government, reinforced the importance of strengthening Ghana–Netherlands relations through practical cooperation in priority sectors such as agriculture, renewable energy, employment, and sustainable trade. Particular emphasis was placed on youth inclusion and the need to translate policy ambition into accessible pathways for entrepreneurs and investors.

H.E. Francis Kotia
Ghana Ambassador to the Netherlands

Hon. John Dumelo
Deputy Minister of Food & Agriculture, Ghana

Mw. Wianda Visser
Director, The Hague University of Applied Sciences



Key Themes and Discussions

Across plenary sessions, workshops, and panels, several core themes structured the Day 1 dialogue.

1. Ghana–Netherlands Investment Landscape

Presentations and discussions outlined the evolution of Ghana–Netherlands relations from development assistance toward economic diplomacy and bilateral investment. Ghana was presented as an increasingly attractive investment destination due to:

- Political stability and democratic governance
- Strategic geographic location
-

- Market access through regional and continental trade frameworks
- Ongoing reforms aimed at improving the business environment

At the same time, speakers acknowledged that investment decisions are shaped not only by opportunity but by risk perception, predictability, and clarity of process.

2. Priority Sectors for Collaboration

Day 1 discussions highlighted several sectors with strong potential for Ghana–Netherlands collaboration:

- **Agriculture and Agribusiness**: modern farming techniques, greenhouse production, seed technology, agro-processing, and value-chain development
- **Food Systems and Post-Harvest Infrastructure**: cold chain logistics, storage, and waste reduction
- **Infrastructure and Real Estate**: housing, water management, flood control, and urban development
- **Renewable Energy and Sustainability**: climate-smart investment and energy solutions

The Netherlands' expertise in agricultural innovation, water management, and logistics was consistently cited as a strategic complement to Ghana's growth ambitions and resource base.

3. Investment Readiness, Risk, and Due Diligence

A recurring focus of the Partnership Summit was **investment readiness**. Technical contributions and workshops stressed that successful cross-border investment requires rigorous preparation, including:

- Clear business planning and financial modelling
- Realistic timelines and risk registers
- Legal, fiscal, organisational, and cultural due diligence
- Early engagement with regulators, embassies, and subject-matter experts

Speakers emphasised that country entry should be treated as a structured project, not an informal expansion, and that trust is built through transparency, compliance, and sustained engagement rather than speed alone.

4. Partnerships and Funding Structures

Dedicated sessions explored how partnerships can be structured to balance commercial sustainability with development impact. Participants discussed:

- Expectations management between partners
- Auditable and compliant partnership models
- The realities of funding, including the costs and conditions attached to so-called “soft” financing
- The role of blended finance and currency risk in cross-border ventures

The discussions reinforced that free funding does not exist, and that early financial discipline is essential to long-term viability.

Role of Academia and Knowledge Institutions

The Hague University of Applied Sciences featured prominently in Day 1 discussions as a facilitator of:

- Applied research linked to Ghana–Netherlands trade and investment
- Student internships and experiential learning
- Potential academic programmes focused on cross-border business development

Participants recognised academia as a neutral space where public and private actors can collaborate on innovation, skills development, and evidence-based policymaking.

Key Takeaways from Day 1

The Partnership Summit produced several clear messages that shaped the remainder of the Expo:

- Ghana–Netherlands cooperation has moved decisively toward trade and investment, but implementation capacity remains critical

- Agriculture and food systems represent a strategic entry point for scalable, youth-inclusive growth

- Investment facilitation must address practical barriers such as visa mobility, land access, and regulatory navigation

- Diaspora actors are most effective when engaged as structured partners, not informal intermediaries

- Sustainable partnerships require time, trust, and disciplined preparation

These insights directly informed the more applied discussions on Day 2 and the design of follow-up programming, including the Young Entrepreneurs' Summit.

Workshop Day One with Mr Peter Boon

Day One opening session

Day one family photo

Day 2 Highlights: Business Exchange & Innovation Forum

Entrepreneurship, Youth-Led Innovation, and Investment Dialogue

Purpose and Positioning

Day 2 of the Netherlands–Ghana Business & Tourism Expo 2025, held on 19 September 2025 at The Globe (Waldorpstraat 17, The Hague), was designed as the applied core of the Expo. Building on the strategic and policy foundations established during the Partnership Summit, the Business Exchange & Innovation Forum focused on implementation, entrepreneurship, and direct business engagement.

The day brought together entrepreneurs, investors, innovators, policymakers, and diaspora professionals in a setting deliberately structured to encourage interaction, candid exchange, and opportunity exploration. The emphasis shifted from *what should be done* to *how it can be done*, particularly in sectors where youth participation and innovation are critical.

Morning Programme: Innovation and Pitching Sessions

The day commenced with pitching sessions featuring young organisations and emerging businesses presenting innovative products and services. These sessions provided entrepreneurs with the opportunity to articulate their value propositions, demonstrate market relevance, and receive feedback from investors, policymakers, and experienced business leaders.

The pitching format underscored several recurring realities:

- Innovation is emerging strongly from youth-led and diaspora-linked ventures
- Many early-stage businesses require further support in financial structuring, compliance, and scaling readiness
- Access to networks and mentorship is as important as access to capital

The sessions also illustrated the diversity of entrepreneurial activity connected to Ghana–Netherlands cooperation, spanning agriculture, technology, services, and creative industries.

Day Two session

Panel Discussion: Youth-Driven Agriculture and Resilient Food Systems

A central highlight of Day 2 was the panel discussion titled "Youth-Driven Agriculture: Building Sustainable Livelihoods and Resilient Food Systems." The session addressed agriculture not only as a traditional sector, but as a strategic innovation domain capable of generating employment, improving food security, and supporting sustainable growth.

The discussion explored:

- The role of young entrepreneurs in modernising agricultural practices
- Opportunities for value addition through processing, packaging, and logistics
- The importance of integrating technology, data, and sustainability into agribusiness models
- Cross-border collaboration between Ghanaian producers and Dutch expertise in agriculture and food systems

The presence of senior government representation reinforced the policy relevance of youth-led agriculture and signalled institutional support for initiatives that combine innovation with livelihood creation.

Investment Perspectives and Market Opportunities

Presentations and discussions throughout Day 2 highlighted Ghana's investment landscape and sectoral opportunities, particularly in:

- **Agriculture and agribusiness**, including greenhouse farming, seed technology, and agro-processing

- **Cold chain and logistics**, aimed at reducing post-harvest losses and improving export readiness

- **Real estate and infrastructure**, addressing housing deficits and urban development

- **Water management and flood control**, leveraging Dutch expertise in climate adaptation

Speakers acknowledged Ghana's strong fundamentals—political stability, market access, and reform momentum—while also addressing practical constraints such as infrastructure gaps, economic volatility, and regulatory complexity. This balanced perspective reinforced the need for structured preparation and realistic expectations.

Mr. Max Koffi (L), Director Africa in Motion & Founder Equal Trade Alliance; Dr. James Lindsay (M), Chairman JL Holdings Ltd & Chancellor Cape Technical University, Ghana; Mr. Robin Bonnerjee (R), Managing Director SLE Global BV.

Day Two morning session

Day Two opening session with Hon. John Dumelo, Deputy Minister of Food & Agriculture, Ghana

Closed-Door Investor & Entrepreneur Dinner

The formal programme of Day 2 was complemented by a closed-door Investor & Entrepreneur Dinner, hosted in a private setting and attended by senior Ghanaian and Dutch business leaders, investors, and policymakers. The dinner provided an informal but strategic environment for deepening relationships and exploring potential collaborations.

Key characteristics of the dinner dialogue included:

- Open discussion of investment barriers and enablers
- Emphasis on trust, long-term commitment, and mutual understanding
- Recognition of the importance of mobility, particularly for business travel
- Exploration of opportunities to channel investment toward the Global South, with Ghana as a focal point

The dinner reinforced the value of informal engagement spaces in advancing discussions that may be constrained in public forums, particularly when addressing sensitive issues related to risk, regulation, and partnership structures.

Day 2 evening session

Day Two evening session

Day Two evening session with Hon. John Dumelo, Deputy Minister of Food & Agriculture, Ghana

Cross-Cutting Messages from Day 2

Across the Business Exchange & Innovation Forum, several messages emerged consistently:

- Youth entrepreneurship is a critical driver of future Ghana–Netherlands economic relations, but requires structured support

- Agriculture presents one of the strongest opportunities for scalable, inclusive growth when linked to innovation and value chains

- Investment interest is present, but success depends on preparation, compliance, and realistic timelines

- Diaspora actors play a pivotal role in connecting markets, navigating systems, and building trust

- Informal dialogue complements formal sessions and accelerates relationship building

These insights directly informed the focus of the Young Entrepreneurs' Summit and shaped the forward-looking recommendations for the 2026 engagement pipeline.

Dr. James A.C. Orleans-Lindsay
Chairman JL Holdings Ltd & Chancellor Cape Technical University, Ghana; Mr. Robin Bonnerjee (R). Managing Director SLE Global BV.

Day 3 Highlights: GHANAFEST Cultural Celebration

Cultural Diplomacy, Community Engagement, and Tourism Promotion

Purpose and Positioning

Day 3 of the Netherlands–Ghana Business & Tourism Expo 2025, held on 20 September 2025 at Zuiderpark in The Hague, concluded the Expo with **GHANAFEST**, a large-scale cultural celebration designed to broaden participation, deepen diaspora engagement, and promote Ghana as a cultural and tourism destination.

While distinct in format from the preceding business-focused days, GHANAFEST was intentionally integrated into the overall Expo concept. It functioned as a platform for cultural diplomacy, reinforcing the understanding that sustainable economic cooperation is strengthened by shared identity, mutual understanding, and community-level connection.

Expanding the Audience Beyond Formal Stakeholders

GHANAFEST enabled the Expo to reach audiences beyond institutional and business stakeholders, including:

- Diaspora families and community groups
- Cultural practitioners and creatives
- Youth and students
- Members of the wider public interested in African culture and tourism

By moving into a public, open-air setting, the Expo extended its relevance and visibility, demonstrating inclusivity and reinforcing the role of the diaspora as both cultural ambassadors and economic actors.

Culture as an Economic and Tourism Asset

The programme featured Ghanaian music, dance, food, fashion, and artistic expression, offering attendees an immersive experience of Ghana’s cultural heritage. Beyond celebration, these elements served a strategic function by:

- Showcasing Ghana's cultural diversity and creative industries
- Reinforcing Ghana's positioning as an attractive tourism destination
- Creating informal spaces for networking and relationship building

Cultural storytelling was used as a means to connect economic opportunity with lived experience, linking tourism, hospitality, and creative enterprise to broader development narratives.

Diaspora Engagement and Community Ownership

GHANAFEST underscored the central role of the Ghanaian and African diaspora in sustaining long-term Ghana–Netherlands relations. The event:

- Created a sense of ownership and pride among diaspora communities
- Strengthened intergenerational engagement, particularly among youth
- Reinforced the diaspora's dual identity as cultural custodians and economic partners

This community-centred approach complemented the policy and business discussions of Days 1 and 2, ensuring that the Expo resonated across multiple layers of society.

Sustainability and Responsible Event Practices

Sustainability considerations were incorporated into the organisation of GHANAFEST, reflecting the Expo's broader emphasis on responsible practices. Attendees were encouraged to support waste reduction efforts, including the use of reusable items, aligning the event with municipal sustainability priorities and reinforcing environmental awareness within community celebrations.

Strategic Value of GHANAFEST

GHANAFEST demonstrated that cultural programming is not peripheral to economic engagement but can serve as a **strategic enabler** by:

- Enhancing trust and social cohesion
- Supporting tourism promotion through experiential engagement
- Providing accessible entry points for future business and cultural collaboration

By closing the Expo with a public cultural celebration, organisers reinforced the message that Ghana–Netherlands cooperation is not limited to boardrooms and policy tables but is rooted in people, culture, and shared values.

Cross-cutting Outcomes & Strategic Insights

What Emerged Across the Expo

Across the three days of the Netherlands–Ghana Business & Tourism Expo 2025, several consistent themes and insights emerged that cut across policy dialogue, business exchange, youth engagement, and cultural programming. These insights reflect not only areas of opportunity, but also structural conditions that will shape the effectiveness of future Ghana–Netherlands collaboration.

1. Trade and Investment: Opportunity Exists, Structure Determines Impact

Across both institutional and business-focused sessions, there was clear confirmation of strong interest in Ghana as a trade and investment destination, particularly from Dutch and diaspora-linked investors. Sectors such as agriculture, food systems, logistics, real estate, renewable energy, and tourism were repeatedly identified as high-potential entry points.

At the same time, discussions consistently highlighted that interest alone is insufficient. Participants emphasised that:

- Investment outcomes depend heavily on predictable processes, regulatory clarity, and enforceable agreements
- Early-stage engagement often fails due to gaps in preparation, documentation, and risk management
- Trust is built through compliance, transparency, and sustained presence rather than speed

This insight reinforces the need for structured investment facilitation mechanisms and clearer pathways from initial dialogue to implementation.

2. Agriculture as a Strategic Anchor for Inclusive Growth

Agriculture emerged as a central strategic theme across all three days, not only as a sector of economic importance but as a platform for inclusive development. The Expo consistently framed agriculture as:

- A scalable business sector rather than a subsistence activity
- A primary source of youth employment and entrepreneurship
- A domain where Ghana's production potential aligns strongly with Dutch expertise in innovation, technology, and logistics

Discussions underscored the importance of value addition, post-harvest management, and market access, particularly in reducing losses and improving export readiness. The repeated focus on agriculture across policy, business, and youth sessions suggests that it offers one of the most practical foundations for near- to medium-term collaboration.

3. Youth Engagement: From Visibility to Capability

Youth participation was visible throughout the Expo, particularly on Day 2 and in the design of the post-Expo Young Entrepreneurs' Summit. However, a consistent message across sessions was that exposure alone is not sufficient.

Participants emphasised the need to move:

- From inspiration to skills development
- From isolated pitching opportunities to structured mentorship and learning pathways
- From informal networking to practical access to finance and markets

The creation of the Young Entrepreneurs' Summit directly reflected this insight, signalling a shift toward deeper, more sustained youth engagement.

4. Diaspora as a Connector, Not an Intermediary

The role of the diaspora was framed not as an informal intermediary but as a **strategic connector** linking Ghanaian and European markets, institutions, and cultures. Across sessions, diaspora actors were recognised for their ability to:

- Navigate regulatory and cultural environments on both sides
- Facilitate trust and communication between partners
- Support investment readiness and project localisation

At the same time, discussions cautioned against over-reliance on informal arrangements, highlighting the importance of formal structures and accountability even within diaspora-led initiatives.

5. Sustainability and Responsibility as Preconditions, Not Add-ons

Sustainability considerations—environmental, social, and governance—were embedded across discussions on agriculture, investment, and trade. Rather than being treated as optional or donor-driven, sustainability was framed as:

- A requirement for access to European markets
- A risk mitigation factor for long-term investment
- A driver of competitiveness and resilience

Topics such as corporate sustainability due diligence, climate-smart agriculture, and responsible supply chains featured prominently, indicating alignment between Ghanaian growth ambitions and European regulatory expectations.

6. Culture as a Strategic Enabler

GHANAFEST demonstrated that cultural engagement plays a substantive role in economic and diplomatic relations. Culture:

- Strengthens people-to-people ties
- Enhances tourism promotion through lived experience
- Creates inclusive entry points for engagement beyond formal business settings

The integration of cultural programming into the Expo reinforced the importance of social cohesion and shared identity in sustaining long-term collaboration.

Strategic Insight Summary

Taken together, the cross-cutting outcomes point to a clear conclusion: effective Ghana–Netherlands collaboration requires alignment between ambition, capability, and **structure**. The Expo succeeded in convening diverse stakeholders and surfacing shared priorities, but its long-term impact will depend on how these insights are translated into concrete mechanisms, follow-up programmes, and accountable partnerships.

These insights directly inform the post-Expo continuation activities and the recommendations for the 2026 collaboration pipeline.

Stakeholder Quotes & Key Messages

Voices and Perspectives from the Expo

This section captures selected stakeholder perspectives that reflect the tone, priorities, and substance of discussions during the Netherlands–Ghana Business & Tourism Expo 2025. The statements below include a combination of direct quotations from formal remarks and attributed key messages derived from panels, workshops, and moderated discussions.

Diplomatic and Institutional Perspectives

H.E. Mr. Francis Danti Kotia
Ambassador of the Republic of Ghana to the Kingdom of the Netherlands

> *Direct quotation (formal remarks)*
> "Ghana is open for business, but successful partnerships require trust, transparency, and long-term commitment."

This message framed the Expo's emphasis on moving beyond expressions of interest toward structured, accountable collaboration.

Representative, City of The Hague

Attributed key message (paraphrased)

> "Cities play a critical role in enabling international business, innovation, and sustainability through practical facilitation and partnerships."

This perspective reinforced the importance of local government engagement in supporting international trade and entrepreneurship.

Organiser Perspective

Mr. Vincent Gambrah
Director, AfroEuro Foundation

Attributed key message (paraphrased)

> "The African diaspora is not just a bridge between markets, but a strategic partner in building sustainable economic ecosystems."

This message underscored AfroEuro Foundation's long-standing mandate to mobilise diaspora capacity in structured and impactful ways.

Investment and Business Perspectives

Investor and Business Leaders (Closed-Door Dinner)
Attributed key message (paraphrased)

> "Investment decisions are driven as much by predictability and process as by opportunity."

This insight captured the recurring emphasis on due diligence, regulatory clarity, and realistic timelines expressed during the Investor & Entrepreneur Dinner.

Private Sector Representative (Agribusiness Session)

Attributed key message (paraphrased)

> "Agriculture must be approached as a business system, not only as production, if it is to attract serious investment."

This message reflected the consistent framing of agriculture as a scalable, innovation-driven sector.

Youth and Entrepreneurship Perspectives

Youth Entrepreneurs and Innovators
Attributed key message (paraphrased)

> "Access to mentorship, networks, and financial literacy is as important as access to capital."

This theme emerged repeatedly during pitching sessions and youth-focused panels, highlighting the need for capability development alongside funding.

Panel Participant, Youth-Driven Agriculture Session

Attributed key message (paraphrased)

> "Young people are ready to engage in agriculture when it offers dignity, technology, and viable income."

This statement reflected a broader shift in how agriculture is perceived by younger generations.

Sustainability and Responsibility Perspectives

Workshop Facilitator (Partnerships and Funding)
Attributed key message (paraphrased)

> "There is no free funding; sustainable partnerships require discipline, compliance, and shared responsibility."

This message reinforced the Expo's emphasis on realistic expectations and long-term viability.

Summary of Key Messages

Across the Expo, stakeholders consistently emphasised that:

- Partnership must be structured, not symbolic
- Youth engagement must move from exposure to capability
- Diaspora involvement works best when formalised and accountable
- Sustainability and compliance are prerequisites for market access
- Trust and relationships are built over time, through transparency and delivery

These perspectives provide context for the post-Expo continuation activities and inform the recommendations for future collaboration.

Young Entrepreneurs' Summit 2025

From Dialogue to Individual Capability and Action

Rationale and Positioning

A central insight emerging from the Netherlands–Ghana Business & Tourism Expo 2025 was that youth entrepreneurship requires sustained, targeted engagement beyond large multi-stakeholder events. While the Expo successfully elevated youth voices, showcased innovation, and highlighted opportunity, discussions across Day 2 in particular revealed gaps related to financial literacy, business readiness, mindset development, and access to structured guidance.

In response, the Young Entrepreneurs' Summit 2025, held on 6 December 2025 in The Hague, was conceived as a direct continuation of the Expo rather than a standalone initiative. Its purpose was to translate the Expo's strategic discussions into individual-level capability building, focusing on the practical and personal dimensions of entrepreneurship.

Objectives of the Summit

The Summit was designed with a clear and focused set of objectives:

- To equip young entrepreneurs and professionals with practical knowledge and tools relevant to business development
- To strengthen understanding of financial literacy, funding pathways, and investment readiness
- To foster entrepreneurial mindset, resilience, and leadership capacity
- To deepen networks among youth, diaspora professionals, mentors, and ecosystem actors
- To provide continuity for participants who had engaged in the Expo

These objectives reflected the Expo's call for depth and follow-through, particularly in relation to youth and diaspora engagement.

Programme Design and Content

The Summit programme combined expert-led presentations, interactive discussions, and peer exchange, creating an environment that encouraged reflection as well as learning. Key thematic areas addressed during the Summit included:

- **Entrepreneurship and Innovation**
  Participants explored the realities of starting and scaling ventures, including opportunity identification, value creation, and navigating uncertainty.
- **Financial Literacy and Funding**
  Sessions focused on understanding financial fundamentals, managing risk, and assessing funding options, with emphasis on realistic expectations and responsible decision-making.
- **Mindset, Discipline, and Leadership**
  Speakers addressed the personal dimensions of entrepreneurship, highlighting the role of mindset, perseverance, and ethical leadership in long-term success.
- **Networks and Ecosystem Navigation**
  The Summit provided space for participants to connect with peers, mentors, and ecosystem actors, reinforcing the importance of relationships and social capital.

The design prioritised accessibility and relevance, ensuring that content addressed the lived experiences of young entrepreneurs operating within African and diaspora contexts.

Participant Profile and Engagement

Participants included:

- Young entrepreneurs and aspiring business owners
- Early-career professionals from Ghanaian and broader African diaspora communities
- Students and recent graduates exploring entrepreneurial pathways
- Mentors, facilitators, and ecosystem contributors

Engagement was characterised by high levels of interaction, with participants actively contributing to discussions and reflecting on how lessons could be applied within their own ventures or career trajectories.

Continuity with the Expo

The Young Entrepreneurs' Summit functioned as a **bridge between macro-level dialogue and micro-level action**. It operationalised several Expo insights, including:

- The need to complement opportunity exposure with capability development
- The importance of preparing youth for engagement with investors and institutions
- The value of sustained learning environments beyond one-off events

By focusing on the individual entrepreneur, the Summit strengthened the overall impact of the Expo and demonstrated a commitment to long-term ecosystem development.

Strategic Significance

The Summit illustrated a scalable model for future engagement:

- Large expos establish visibility, alignment, and opportunity
- Follow-up summits deepen skills, readiness, and confidence
- Together, they create a pipeline from dialogue to action

This approach informs the recommendations for the 2026 collaboration pipeline and reinforces the importance of sequencing and continuity in international economic engagement.

Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) Snapshot

Accountability, Learning, and Future Improvement

Purpose of Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) plays a critical role in ensuring that multi-stakeholder initiatives such as the Netherlands–Ghana Business & Tourism Expo deliver measurable value, enable learning, and support transparency for partners, sponsors, and public institutions. While the primary focus of the 2025 Expo was convening, dialogue, and relationship-building, the experience underscored the importance of integrating structured M&E mechanisms from the outset of future editions.

The 2025 edition therefore serves as a baseline reference point, informing the design of more systematic data capture, outcome tracking, and follow-up processes in subsequent cycles.

M&E Scope and Focus Areas

Based on the structure and objectives of the Expo and the Young Entrepreneurs' Summit, monitoring and evaluation efforts are relevant across five primary dimensions:

1. **Participation and Reach**
   Tracking attendance, stakeholder diversity, and levels of engagement across the three days of the Expo and the post-Expo Summit.

2. **Programme Quality and Relevance**
   Assessing the perceived relevance, clarity, and usefulness of sessions, panels, and workshops for different participant groups.

3. **Business and Investment Outcomes**
   Capturing early indicators of business interaction, such as meetings initiated, follow-up discussions, and expressions of interest, while recognising that deal conversion occurs over longer timeframes.

4. **Youth and Diaspora Engagement**
   Monitoring the extent to which youth and diaspora participants access learning, networks, and follow-up opportunities beyond initial exposure.

5. **Communications, Visibility, and Partner Value**
   Documenting media coverage, public engagement, and partner visibility to assess outreach effectiveness and sponsor value.

Recommendations & Next Steps

Toward a 2026 Collaboration Pipeline

The Netherlands–Ghana Business & Tourism Expo 2025 and the Young Entrepreneurs' Summit demonstrated strong interest, alignment, and goodwill among stakeholders. To convert this momentum into sustained impact, future efforts must focus on structure, continuity, and implementation discipline. The following recommendations outline a practical pathway toward a 2026 collaboration pipeline, grounded in the insights and lessons emerging from the 2025 engagements.

1. Strengthen Investment Facilitation Mechanisms

Rationale:
While investment interest in Ghana is evident, outcomes depend on predictable processes, clear guidance, and structured support for investors and entrepreneurs navigating cross-border engagement.

Recommended Actions:

- Establish a light-touch investment facilitation working group involving public institutions, private sector representatives, and diaspora actors.
- Develop clear guidance on investment readiness, due diligence expectations, and sector-specific entry pathways.
- Promote early-stage engagement between potential investors and relevant regulatory or support institutions.

2. Address Mobility and Visa Facilitation Constraints

Rationale:
Across discussions, mobility emerged as a practical constraint affecting business travel, partnership development, and trust-building.

Recommended Actions:

- Initiate dialogue with relevant diplomatic and government stakeholders to explore facilitated mobility arrangements for verified business and investment actors.
- Improve information clarity regarding visa processes, documentation requirements, and timelines for business-related travel.

3. Anchor Agriculture as a Flagship Collaboration Sector

Rationale:
Agriculture consistently emerged as a strategic anchor for inclusive growth, youth employment, and Ghana–Netherlands cooperation.

Recommended Actions:

- Prioritise agriculture and food systems as flagship sectors for future Expo editions and follow-up programmes.

- Support initiatives focused on value addition, post-harvest infrastructure, logistics, and export readiness.
- Encourage collaboration between Ghanaian producers and Dutch technology providers and knowledge institutions.

4. Deepen Youth and Entrepreneurial Capability Development

Rationale:
Exposure alone does not equip young entrepreneurs to engage effectively with investors and institutions.

Recommended Actions:

- Build on the Young Entrepreneurs' Summit by developing structured learning and mentorship pathways.
- Integrate financial literacy, compliance awareness, and leadership development into youth-focused programmes.
- Facilitate sustained peer and mentor networks that extend beyond single events.

5. Formalise the Role of the Diaspora in Economic Collaboration

Rationale:
Diaspora actors play a critical role in bridging markets, cultures, and systems, but their contribution is most effective when formalised.

Recommended Actions:

- Define clear roles for diaspora professionals as mentors, connectors, and co-investors within structured programmes.
- Encourage diaspora-led initiatives to adopt transparent governance and accountability mechanisms.
- Position diaspora engagement as a strategic asset rather than an informal intermediary function.

6. Integrate Sustainability and Responsible Investment Practices

Rationale:
Sustainability and responsible investment are increasingly prerequisites for market access and long-term competitiveness.

Recommended Actions:

- Embed sustainability considerations into future programme design, particularly in agriculture and supply chains.
- Support awareness and readiness around corporate sustainability due diligence and environmental standards.
- Promote responsible investment narratives that align economic growth with social and environmental outcomes.

7. Improve Monitoring, Evaluation, and Follow-Up

Rationale:
Long-term impact depends on the ability to track engagement, outcomes, and learning over time.

Recommended Actions:

- Integrate M&E planning at the earliest stages of future Expo and Summit design.
- Identify a concise set of priority indicators aligned with programme objectives.
- Establish mechanisms for post-event follow-up and reporting to partners and stakeholders.

8. Consolidate Toward a 2026 Programme Cycle

Rationale:
Momentum is best sustained through continuity rather than one-off events.

Recommended Actions:

- Position future editions of the Expo as part of a multi-year engagement cycle, with clear milestones and follow-up activities.
- Align large convenings with smaller, targeted interventions such as sector roundtables, training sessions, or investor briefings.
- Engage partners early to co-design the 2026 programme pipeline and clarify roles and expectations.

Forward Outlook

Collectively, these recommendations point toward a shift from episodic engagement to structured, pipeline-driven collaboration. By focusing on preparation, capability, and accountability, future editions of the Netherlands–Ghana Business & Tourism Expo can strengthen their role as catalysts for sustainable economic partnership and shared growth.

Partners & Acknowledgements

The Netherlands–Ghana Business & Tourism Expo 2025 and the Young Entrepreneurs' Summit 2025 were made possible through the collective efforts and collaboration of a broad network of institutions, partners, contributors, and community stakeholders. Their combined commitment ensured that the events delivered meaningful dialogue, practical engagement, and inclusive participation across policy, business, youth, and cultural domains.

Organising Body

The organisers extend their appreciation to AfroEuro Foundation, whose leadership and coordination were central to the conception, planning, and delivery of both the Expo and the post-Expo Summit. AfroEuro Foundation's long-standing mandate to mobilise diaspora capacity and promote sustainable economic partnerships between Africa and Europe shaped the strategic intent and inclusive design of the programme.

Institutional and Diplomatic Partners

Sincere thanks are extended to the Embassy of the Republic of Ghana in The Hague for its continued support and engagement, which provided diplomatic grounding and reinforced the bilateral significance of the Expo. Appreciation is also extended to representatives of local and national government institutions, including the City of The Hague, whose participation and facilitation contributed to the success of the programme.

Academic and Knowledge Partners

The organisers acknowledge the contribution of The Hague University of Applied Sciences, whose hosting of the Partnership Summit provided an academic environment conducive to evidence-based dialogue, knowledge exchange, and institutional collaboration. The role of academic institutions in supporting innovation, skills development, and international cooperation was a defining feature of the Expo.

Private Sector, Investors, and Experts

Gratitude is extended to the business leaders, investors, consultants, and subject-matter experts who contributed their insights through presentations, panel discussions, workshops, and closed-door dialogues. Their willingness to share experience, challenge assumptions, and engage candidly strengthened the practical relevance of the discussions.

Youth, Entrepreneurs, and Diaspora Communities

The Expo and Summit benefited significantly from the active participation of young entrepreneurs, innovators, students, and diaspora professionals. Their engagement brought energy, perspective, and forward-looking ambition to the programme, reinforcing the importance of youth and diaspora inclusion in shaping future Ghana–Netherlands collaboration.

Cultural Practitioners and Community Contributors

The successful delivery of **GHANAFEST** was made possible through the contribution of cultural practitioners, performers, vendors, volunteers, and community organisations. Their involvement ensured that cultural celebration functioned as a meaningful component of the Expo, strengthening people-to-people ties and promoting Ghana's cultural and tourism assets.

Volunteers and Support Teams

The organisers express appreciation to the volunteers, coordinators, and operational teams whose behind-the-scenes efforts ensured smooth programme delivery across multiple venues and formats. Their dedication was essential to the overall success of the events.

Closing Note

The Netherlands–Ghana Business & Tourism Expo 2025 and the Young Entrepreneurs' Summit 2025 demonstrated the value of collaborative, multi-stakeholder engagement in advancing sustainable economic partnerships. The organisers thank all contributors for their commitment and look forward to building on this collective effort through future initiatives and the evolving 2026 collaboration pipeline.

About AfroEuro Foundation

AfroEuro Foundation is a Non-Governmental Organisation (www.afroeuro.org) established in 2003. The organisation seeks to build a positive image for the African diaspora in Europe and mobilize the capacity and resources of African diaspora for development in Africa. With "Building Bridges" as its motto, AfroEuro builds and facilitates understanding and learnings between the North and the South. It subscribes to the NEPAD principles and works in collaboration with African students, professionals, governments, and advocates throughout the AfroEuro Development Partnership. As the world moves increasingly towards globalization, the partnership seeks to stimulate poorer communities towards greater participation in global economy, commerce and trade.