



NETHERLANDS-GHANA BUSINESS FAIR -2017

Abstract

This report gives an overview of the Netherlands-Ghana Business Fair organized in May 2017 at The Hague-Netherlands. It outlines the main activities which took place during the business fair. It also explains that the youth buddy program was part of the activities organized under the business fair. It discusses that the Business fair enabled many Netherlands-Ghana Businesses to network and build business relations. It concludes that the business fair was successful and it should be promoted to get more funding partners who will support to finance the event and it needs to be promoted to continue in subsequent years.

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1.0 Introduction

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 since 300 years ago. 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 seek to connect the Dutch and Ghanaian businesses together. The Business fair showcases diverse sectors of business in order to facilitate and exchange ideas thereby strengthening business relations. The Fair targets companies in Ghana and the Netherlands in the following sectors: Agro Business, ICT/Mobile Solutions, Housing/Real Estate, Water/Wash and Renewable Energy.

1.1 Mission Statement

The mission for organising the business fair was to create opportunity for Ghana- Netherlands Businesses to exhibit their products and share experiences through speed dating.

1.2 Aim

The fair seeks to enhance possibilities of Netherlands-Ghana business partnerships, promote social capital or funding opportunities, broaden operational marketability, advancement of technology and create jobs.

1.3 Theme

The event was organised under the theme, "Growing together the way to go".

2.0 Event Preparation

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

- Mr. Vincent Gambah
- Ms. Angele Nascimento
- Mr. Bert Spenkelink
- Mrs. Bernice Yanson
- Ms. Abena Bemah
- Ms. Lainy Abdalla

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

A website (by name www.ngbizfair.com) was also designed to promote the activities of the business fair.

Business Fair Location

The event was held at the New World Campus Spaarneplein 2 in The Hague, Netherlands by the Netherlands Ghana Business Fair Consortium comprising

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:

- Ghana Embassy in the Netherlands
- The Embassy of the Kingdom of The Netherlands in Ghana- Accra
- Ghana Netherlands Business & Culture Council (GNBCC)
- Association of Ghana Industries (AGI)
- Ghana Investment Promotion Council (GIPC) and Vibe Consult

4.0 Participating companies

4.1 Netherlands Companies

Participating companies from the Netherlands were:

- Atlas (solar solution)
- GB4ALL
- Dijkstaal B.V.
- Divine fufu (wholesalers)
- Yuvam (building materials / prefabric housing)
- Fam 24 (consultancy firm – accounting)
- Maxim Nyansa (IT solution)
- SUS - Smart Urban Solutions
- Certkit university (subsidiary of get certificate opleiding)
- Ithem (international food company)
- Water network (water processing)
- Divine African fashion shop (retailer)
- Dolores hart
- African sky
- World supply (wholesales – commodities)
- Butterfly Housing

4.2 Ghana Business Companies

The participating companies from Ghana were:

- JL property (housing)

- Spark designs company limited
- Cockpit crew limited
- Danpee enterprise
- Ghana broadcasting corporation
- Vibes consult
- 1steye micro finance
- Ilaha company limited
- Moh – aariz engineering ltd
- Kumasi business incubator (Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology)
- Zaalcoal limited
- Wella agro chemicals
- Lifestyle reform clinic
- Wisde world limited

5.0 Outcome of The Business Fair

The Netherlands Business Fair 2017 was a three day collaborative event organised from the 10th May to 12th May 2017.

Business Fair -Day 1

On the first day, the fair began with registration of participants and a welcome note by the Master of Ceremony Ms. Angele Nascimento. Thereafter Mr. Vincent Gambrah, director of AfroEuro made the opening speech and then a presentation by Hon. Minister Mrs. Doris Brese, Deputy Head of Mission, Ghana Embassy in The Hague to address “Doing Business in Ghana”. Furthermore, there was an address by Mrs. van Haaren, Director of West Holland in The Hague to address “Doing Business in the Municipality of The Hague”. Furthermore, 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.

More so, there was a speech by Onipamu Osei Kuffour (Asantehene of the Netherlands) on the Role of the Chiefs in Business, Land Acquisition. Again, Dr. James Orleans Lindsay of JL Properties gave a speech on changing the mind-set on investment opportunities in Africa. This was followed by an official opening by Mr Vincent Gambrah. In his speech, Mr. Gambrah mentioned that the Netherlands Ghana Business Fair is a diaspora initiative by Ghanaian Diaspora in the Netherlands towards their development of country of origin and host country. He encouraged the participants at the business fair to take advantage of the event to network and build business connections to enhance their productive growth in entrepreneurship. Also there was a round table discussion by RVO on Assistance, Regulations and Subsidies for Doing Business.

In addition, there were a series of workshops given to participants.

Session one Workshop focused on Agribusiness on Innovation Agribusiness, the challenges and opportunities in Urban Farming by Mr. Bert Spenkelink of Aid Trade. Also under this session, there

was a workshop on housing and real estate specifically on Green Buildings for All by Mr. Hans Oltaar of GB4All.

The 2nd Session of the workshop focused on Renewable Energy on Opportunities for Biogas as Social enterprises in Ghana and off-grid solar; the solution for rural entrepreneurship by Mr. Mustafa Zeiki Ozen of Atlas Energy Solutions. Under this session, there was a presentation on E- Commerce / ICT: Opportunities within the ICT sector in Ghana by Mrs. Benedictor Ababio- Nkansah, Director of Maxim Nyansa, assisted by Mr. Baafi Owusu Sekyere of IMAGS on Information Security and Mr Nii Mai Dsane of GhanaCompares on comparison website.

Business Fair – Day 2

On day two of the Business Fair, there was registration, matchmaking sessions on business connections. There was a workshop on Renewable Energy on Technologies and Energy Lighting for Developing Nations by Mr. Jean Seraphin. There was also company visits to Delphi Development Centre (focused on Agrobusiness innovations) and GB4All focusing on Housing/ Construction and Company Construction.

Business Fair- Day 3

On day three, there was registration of business fair participants, followed by a Matchmaking and business connections session. There was an information session by Mrs. Gladys Offei (Senior Trade and Information Officer) and Ms. Josephine Ecklu (Policy Officer) from the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands Ghana Accra on the Support of the Dutch Embassy can offer you as an Entrepreneur, both from the Netherlands and from Ghana.

There were also company visits to Yuvam on Building Materials and Dijkstaal on Steel Construction and Company TBA on Bell Pepper Green House. On each of the three days participants were served with coffee, tea, lunch and snacks.

The program ended with a Reception and Networking of all participants. There was musical performance by Kelvi and Ernestina Austin performance. Afterwards, Ms. Abena Bemah and Mrs Bernice Yanson gave a thanksgiving speech to thank all participants, sponsors and supporting companies and institutions who dedicated their time to support the business fair and made it a great success. She said the business fair was a very good initiative and it should be promoted in the years to come to make it bigger, and better. She also encouraged the governments and the private sector to support and contribute towards the event to ensure developmental growth for both Ghana and the Netherlands. She ended her speech by thanking all participants to keep up the business network connections they obtained since it's an opportunity for growth and development.

6.0 The Youth Buddy Program

The youth buddy program was organized as part of the Netherlands Ghana business fair activities. The Youth Buddy Program started 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 were 5 training sessions for the youth coordinated by Ms. Angele Nascimento to build their capacities on how to develop their own businesses and manage it. They

were also invited to get involved in the Netherlands Ghana Business fair to network and find a business buddy.

After a series of trainings, the 4 candidates from the business fair were invited to Pitch their ideas and the winner was to be awarded a sum of 300euros for contribution to their business ideas.

The final pitch event was organized on Friday, 24th November 2017 at the Dryve (innovation centre), Enthovenplein 25, Den Haag (Dryve).

About 40 participants attended the program and 4 of the youth presented their business ideas. The 4 candidates who pitched their ideas were:

- Mr. Dennis Tappim
- Ms. Becky Cudjoe
- Mr. Joshua Asambo
- Ms. Lainy Abdalla

The day opened at about 19hrs with a two motivational speakers by Mr. Charles Oppong (management consultant) & Mr. Godfred Afriyie.

There was a jury made up of

- Ms. Abena Bemah
- Mr. Bruno Fon
- Mr. Mustapha Ozen

The candidates were allowed to pitch and the jury along with the public analysed the analyzed the business ideas on the following criteria:

| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| IDEA | <p>Is it a BAOBAB idea?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable • Innovative • Profitable • Job creating • Adding value in the African context? • Formulated in an Objective that is inspiring and satisfying |
| STRATEGY | <p>5 S</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific; what do you want to achieve and how • Synchronized: synergies between the strategies • Sustainable: meeting clients' needs, solving problems, ahead of the competition • Sufficient: does your strategy help to reach your objective • Selective: how did you make your selection? Why did you discard other options? |
| ENTREPRENEUR JOURNEY SO FAR | What has the entrepreneur done/ achieved until today? |

**CHALLENGES
ALONG THIS
JOURNEY AND
COPING
MECHANISMS
APPLIED**

What were the challenges and how did entrepreneur tackle these?

Presentations by Contestants

Candidate 1: Mr. Dennis Tappim

Dennis' business idea was Sow a Seed. His concept is based on linking quality products from farmers with producers, manufacturers & buyers. His intention is working with an association of 80 farmers and based in Cape Coast. At the moment, his project has the following needs, certificate for operations, equipment (cooling system & land tools), Storage. Mr. Dennis' investment capital needed is €80,000 with ROI over 5 years.

Candidate 2: Ms. Becky Cudjoe

Ms Becky's business idea was on producing African fashion products through sewing, accessories & beats making. The concept is to enable African youth the possibility of finding job opportunities in this sector.

Candidate 3: Mr. Joshua Asambo

Mr. Joshua Asambo is a crop specialist currently running Kidjoa Farms, producing high quality supply of vegetables. His concept is based on being the leader of a high quality vegetable producer in local market, with a focus on the urban market. Mr. Asambo's concept has the strategy of farm franchise system and a stress-free delivery. The business idea requires an investment capital of €40, 000.

Candidate 4: Ms. Lainy Abdalla

Ms. Abdalla's business idea is based on starting an research company for small & medium-sized enterprises. The market will focus on marketing, finance & management. The concept will focus on existing enterprises and aims at ensuring accessibility & affordability as key USPs. Ms. Lainy's key need is building a network of team of cooperate member.

Winner

Based on public opinions and decision by the Jury, Mr. Dennis Tappim was declared the winner of the pitch and awarded a prize of 300 euros.

Presentation of the award was conducted by

Mr. Gambrah thanked all participants for coming and encouraged the participants to develop their business ideas to another level. Contestants were also motivated to see the pitch as step to becoming future entrepreneurs.

Afterwards, participants were served with snacks, food bites and drinks. They were also allowed to network. The business fair ended at about 22hrs.

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 consider organizing such an event on a Saturday as most people do not work on weekends.

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 Netherlands and Ghana companies and also in encouraging the 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.