

REPORT

NETHERLANDS-GHANA BUSINESS & TOURISM EXPO

29-31 AUGUST 2024
Het Koorenhuis
Prinsegracht 27, 2512 EW
The Hague



NETHERLANDS-GHANA
**BUSINESS &
TOURISM EXPO**

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Theme

Innovative Business and Tourism Partnerships

Audience

Over 200 participants, including Ghanaian expatriates, Dutch business professionals, African community members, and representatives from key institutions in Ghana and the Netherlands.

The event spotlighted Ghana-Netherlands partnerships in business and tourism, aiming to enhance cultural understanding, expand economic opportunities, and advance sustainable development.

DAY 1 BUSINESS EXHIBITIONS AND WORKSHOPS

The first day began with a formal opening, followed by expert presentations on agriculture, healthcare, and investment, setting the tone for collaboration between Dutch and Ghanaian businesses.

Opening Remarks and Keynote

Mrs. Melvina Lakhichand (MC)

Launched the event with a welcoming address, underscoring the importance of fostering cross-cultural and economic connections.



Mr. Gino Macnack (AfroEuro Board Member)

In his opening statement, Macnack highlighted AfroEuro's vision of fostering deeper ties between Ghanaian communities and Dutch institutions, aiming to "open doors for mutual understanding and collaboration."



His Excellency Francis Danti Kortia (Ghana’s Ambassador to the Netherlands)

Delivered the keynote, emphasizing the event’s theme of partnerships. He passionately described how “bridging Ghana and the Netherlands not only enhances trade but builds a resilient cultural alliance.”



Speaker Highlights

Dr. Peter Arensman – “Innovative Solutions for Sustainable Agriculture”

Dr. Arensman, a leading agricultural scientist, introduced innovative farming methods and emphasized the potential of technology in transforming agriculture. His presentation focused on the future needs of agriculture, stressing, “By 2050, food demand will increase by 70%, necessitating bold innovations that preserve environmental resources.”



Ghana Context

He examined the Ghanaian agricultural landscape, with cash crops like cocoa, cassava, and maize. Arensman explained, “In Ghana, cash crops like cocoa and cassava serve as both economic drivers and cultural staples.” He urged for the integration of Dutch technology to optimize Ghanaian agricultural outputs.

Key Insight

Arensman emphasized the “planetary boundaries framework,” highlighting how food production impacts biodiversity and water resources, with technology offering potential solutions.

Dr. Kwasi Boahene (PharmAccess) - “Digital Transformation in Healthcare Systems”

Boahene, Director of Health Systems at PharmAccess, detailed the impact of digital innovation on healthcare accessibility, focusing on PharmAccess’s groundbreaking work in Ghana and Sub-Saharan Africa.



Achievements

He introduced PharmAccess's SafeCare quality improvement system, explaining that it now supports over 7,000 clinics, reaching around 8 million patients monthly. Boahene emphasized, “Our goal is to create inclusive health markets where quality care is not a privilege but a right.”

Technological Integration

Boahene underscored the significance of their MTIBA platform, a digital health exchange serving 4.7 million people, stating, “Digitalization is transforming healthcare, bringing safe, high-quality treatment within reach of underserved communities.”

Investment Opportunity

He highlighted the potential for public-private partnerships in expanding healthcare access in Ghana, encouraging investors to participate in scalable health initiatives.

Dr. Senalor K. Yawlui (Embassy of Ghana) - “Investment Policies and Opportunities in Ghana”

Dr. Yawlui provided an in-depth look at Ghana’s investment landscape, specifically the Ghana Investment Promotion Center (GIPC). He shared insight on how Ghana’s open policies encourage foreign investment, describing the nation as “Africa’s investment gateway.”



Policies and Incentives

He explained the GIPC’s incentives, including tax exemptions on machinery imports, offering attractive conditions for foreign investors. Yawlui urged, “With stable governance and a conducive environment, Ghana provides unmatched investment opportunities across diverse sectors.”

Sector Focus

Highlighted agriculture, renewable energy, and infrastructure as primary investment areas, noting Ghana’s unique position to “combine agricultural potential with Dutch technological expertise for sustainable growth.”



Afternoon Workshops and Interactive Sessions

Mr. Vincent van Reenen (Netherlands Enterprise Agency - RVO)

Led a workshop titled “Innovation in Agriculture: Sustainable Practices,” which explored effective agricultural practices shared between the Netherlands and Ghana. Van Reenen underscored how “sustainability can drive both economic growth and environmental resilience.”



Mr. Akwasi Agyemang (CEO, Ghana Tourism Authority)

His session on Tourism Development drew parallels between Ghana and the Netherlands, focusing on initiatives like the Year of Return, which attracted over 1 million visitors to Ghana. Agyemang noted, “Tourism fosters understanding and creates memorable connections between cultures.”



DAY 2 BUSINESS PITCHES, MATCHMAKING, FUTURE FORWARD WORKSHOP, AND DINNER

The second day divided into morning and evening sessions, with the morning dedicated to pitching and matchmaking sessions and the evening focused on future development and cultural exchange.

Morning Session - Business Pitches and Collaborative Workshops:

Pitching Session

Young entrepreneurs and SMEs showcased their business ideas to investors, with mentorship sessions led by experts.

Ghana Export Promotion Authority (GEPA)

A GEPA representative outlined Ghana's export opportunities, particularly agricultural products, and noted the increasing demand for Ghanaian goods in the Netherlands.

Mr. Peter Boom (GUSHIKAMA Business Consult)

Conducted a session on building successful business partnerships, emphasizing the importance of strategy, planning, and effective communication. Boom highlighted the importance of forming strong teams, stating, "Building a business requires not just resources but resilient partnerships that can weather challenges."



Future Forward Workshop - Ghanaian Creatives Defining Contemporary Culture

Moderator

Perazim Singo guided this discussion, focusing on the role of creativity in shaping culture.

Panelists

- Salim Stokey (SDG Cafe Advisor): Discussed climate resilience, advocating for innovation in mitigating climate change while protecting cultural heritage.
- Okatakyie Yaw Afrifa (CEO, Locus Estates): Highlighted sustainable practices in construction, proposing traditional thatched roofs as climate-friendly solutions, stating, “Reintroducing traditional building techniques not only preserves culture but offers sustainable alternatives.”
- Nana Efua Boatemaa (Jolly Rovers Ltd): Spoke on the role of heritage in modern Ghanaian culture. She emphasized the Sankofa principle, stating, “We must look back to our roots to shape a sustainable future.”





Dr. James Ato Condua Orleans-Lindsay, Executive Chairman of JL Properties Limited (Ghana), highlighted the investment potential between Ghana and the Netherlands. He emphasized Ghana's shift from aid to trade, supported by initiatives like "Ghana Beyond Aid." Orleans-Lindsay showcased Ghana's attractive investment climate, citing its strategic location, stable government, and economic growth.

He outlined key sectors for investment, including agriculture, water management, and infrastructure. Despite challenges like infrastructure limitations and bureaucracy, he positioned Ghana as a prime African investment destination due to its resources and business-friendly environment. He encouraged Dutch investors to explore opportunities and emphasized ongoing collaboration for mutual benefit.



Audience Contributions

- Albert Gyasi Johnson (CEO, Renaissance Tours): Contributed by emphasizing “the importance of passing cultural values through intergenerational dialogue.”
- Anita Ramharakh (Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy): Advocated for democratic engagement, emphasizing that “effective governance amplifies the voices of young professionals, making them active participants in development.”



Evening Session - Cultural Dinner and Relations Panel

Theme

Fostering a shared cultural understanding between Ghana and the Netherlands, focusing on historical ties and future collaborations.

Speakers

Akwasi Agyemang (Ghana Tourism Authority)

Addressed the role of tourism in cultural preservation, explaining how heritage tourism bridges communities.

Dr. Emmanuel Akwasi Adu Ampong (Wageningen University)

Emphasized the power of education in fostering cultural integration, encouraging partnerships between Dutch and Ghanaian universities.

Dr. Jos Walenkamp (The Hague University)

Shared insights on how universities can drive cultural and social innovation, stating, "Education can be a powerful catalyst for cross-cultural understanding."



DAY 3
CULTURAL DURBA AND
SAWASA FESTIVAL
VENUE: VAN DE VANNEPARK
THE HAGUE

The final day celebrated Ghanaian heritage through the Sawasa Festival, bringing together generations and the Dutch community to experience Ghanaian music, dance, and storytelling.

Event Highlights

Historical Significance

A segment on Ghana's cultural legacy shared the country's history, especially emphasizing the importance of preserving Ghanaian heritage.

Cultural Showcase

The festival featured traditional Ghanaian music and dance, including the iconic Kpanlogo dance, which captivated the audience.

Community Engagement

The event created a platform for cross-generational interaction, allowing Dutch attendees to engage with Ghanaian cultural practices.

Festival Impact

Sawasa served as a hub for cultural exchange, where older generations passed down traditions and values, reinforcing a sense of identity and belonging for younger Ghanaians in the Netherlands.

Event Support and Evaluation

Partners and Sponsors:

- Key partners included the Ghana Embassy in the Netherlands, Ghana Investment Promotion Center (GIPC), RVO, PharmAccess, and The Hague University of Applied Science.
- Sponsors like Gemeente Den Haag and Unity Link helped fund the event.



Evaluation and Feedback

- Successes: The event's strong speaker lineup, interactive sessions, and cultural elements were well-received. Youth engagement was a notable success, with many expressing enthusiasm for future events.
- Challenges: Limited marketing, visa issues for some Ghanaian participants, and budget constraints. Task delegation was identified as an area for improvement, along with marketing and venue arrangements.

Recommendations

Increase partner involvement, streamline team roles, and enhance event publicity for greater impact in future editions.

Conclusion

The Netherlands-Ghana Business Fair 2024 reinforced the significance of Ghana-Netherlands partnerships in culture, business, and tourism, highlighting the potential for economic and social growth. The event served as a bridge, fostering mutual understanding and celebrating shared values across generations and nations.



PARTNERS



Embassy of Ghana
The Hague



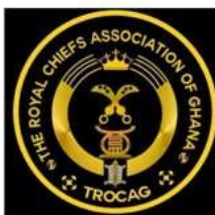
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Den Haag



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CONTACT US

Have questions or need more information about the Netherlands-Ghana Business Fair? Reach out to us today!

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