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# WACOMP Programme Highlights

April 2022 - Issue #9

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## Regional Component

**ICT and Textile businesses seek out synergies in Ghana**



44 participants of 22 small businesses in the tech and textile sectors took part in a business training and networking workshop on 28 January 2022, in Accra, Ghana. Similar to a workshop held in Lagos, Nigeria last year and linked to the West Africa Connect virtual trade-fair held in November 2021, business owners learned about existing cross-industry opportunities. The workshop also highlighted the benefits of digitizing business operations and equipped business owners with problem-solving skills to strengthen market competitiveness.

As part of the workshop, businesses attended, a B2B networking session, a panel discussion, a design thinking workshop and a fireside chat. The panel session engaged industry experts in fintech, delivery tech, interior design, and fashion education to highlight potential synergies in the tech and textile industries. The panellists also shared experiences in the

business environment and responded to questions raised by workshop attendees.

Paystack, Oze, Ghana Fintech and Payments Association, Interior Designers and Decorators Ghana, BlueCrest University among other organisations attended the workshop.

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## The Federation of West Africa Chambers of Commerce holds 9th General Assembly



The 9th Ordinary General Assembly of the Federation of West Africa Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FEWACCI) took place on 21 to 23 February 2022 in Niamey, Niger.

Chief among members discussions was the AfCFTA implementation, the harmonization of business laws in the ECOWAS region and the cross-

border agri-food value chain for women-owned businesses. Members also discussed the Good Governance in companies and organizations initiative, the benefits of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) to the Private Sector, Digital Transformation 2.0 as well as the FEWACCI Youth Start-up Initiative.

For each discussion members pursued recommendations to improve the business environment. Members also considered recommendations for updating the Legal Instruments of FEWACCI to enable the organization to consolidate its regional mandate. The Legal analysis was supported by ITC and the ECOWAS Commission.

Afreximbank, ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development (EBID), Africa Business Council AfBC, and the Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE) also attended the assembly. A key part of FEWACCI's mandate is to pursue greater involvement of the private sector in policy making decisions to improve the business climate and private investment opportunities.

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## **West African TPO Network holds series of meetings to outline working parameters**



To begin shaping its working mechanisms, the ECOWAS Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) Network held a series of technical meetings in February and March 2022. Initial meetings held included:

- The technical committee of Financial Affairs and Resource Mobilization
- The technical committee of Trade Policy and Strategies
- The technical committee of Trade Promotion Events
- The technical committee of Communication and Marketing

On 22 February 2022, the Gambian Investment and Export Promotion Agency (GIEPA) chaired the Technical Committee in charge of Financial Affairs and Resource Mobilization. The session sought to define and identify priority actions and activities as well as develop the committee's annual work plan for 2022-2023.

Thereafter, the Trade Policy and Strategies and the Trade Promotion Events technical committees met on the 1st and 3rd March 2022 respectively. The strategy committee identified opportunities at the national and sub-regional level brought about by newly implemented policies. To increase the region's participation in continental and international events is the main objective of the trade promotion events committee. The communication and marketing meeting discussed

improving the TPO network's promotion, increasing media coverage for its activities as well as updating the network's website.

The TPO network works alongside the ECOWAS Commission aims to drive inclusive trade and development in the region. Achieving the goals identified by the technical committee is a primary objective for the network's members.



Once the technical committee meetings concluded, members of the ECOWAS Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) Network gathered in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire for the network's 4th consultative meeting on 29 to 30 March 2022. Network attendees met to examine the proposed workplan for 2022 to 2023 and decide on its trade related technical assistance (TRTA) programme.

Other key items on the agenda included discussions on resource mobilization to jump start the network's activities. Network members agreed to hold the second General Assembly on 19 to 20 May 2022,

following the World Trade Promotion Network Conference set to take place on 17 to 18 May 2022 in Accra, Ghana.

During the consultative meeting, Miyoba Lubemba, ITC Senior Programme Officer thanked the European Union and the ECOWAS Commission for placing its trust in ITC to support the establishment and operationalization of the regional network. Acting Director for Trade at the ECOWAS Commission, Kolawole Sofola, emphasized the importance of trade to further regional integration and employment creation efforts.

Members also agreed to pursue strategic engagements with the African Development Bank (AfDB), the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the African Export-Import Bank.

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## National Components

**Sierra Leone Chamber for Agribusiness Development improves advocacy strategy approaches**



14 representatives from the Sierra Leone Chamber for Agribusiness Development (SLeCAD) attended a training on advocacy and strategy on 19 to 20 January 2022. The training provided strategic approaches to improve the advocacy and advisory services of SLECAD representatives.

Some key focus areas for advocacy activities identified by representatives included access to market and finance. Trainees were encouraged to seek out the support needs of member trade support institutions and provide a platform to highlight areas of concern experienced in the private sector to improve the value of support members receive.

The WACOMP Sierra Leone programme has structured this training in a sustainable format with the aim to replicate this support for other cooperatives in agribusiness.





Over 30 participants from eight cooperatives in Sierra Leone attended a pilot training on advocacy skills on 26-27 January 2022. The session was organised alongside previously trained SLECAD staff. The two-day training gave cooperatives the opportunity to learn the existing challenges and opportunities for agri-businesses seeking to improve competitiveness in the palm oil, cassava, and cocoa sectors.

Participants improved procedures to access markets by dealing with evolving market access terms and applying sustainability standards. The workshop also gave SLECAD the opportunity to put its advocacy strategy into practice after comprehensive work with ITC experts. SLECAD also gained the tools and practical expertise to effectively replicate these type of advocacy trainings on their own.

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## **Market studies explore the export potential of Guinea's Baronne de Rothschild pineapple**



To improve the volume of export in Guinea's pineapple sector, two market studies were carried out to explore the potential of the specialty "Baronne de Rothschild" pineapple. The market studies included market study conclusions from previous a study in 2020 and provided a mix marketing strategy based on the 2020 conclusions and following an audit of the Moroccan and French premium pineapple markets. The strategy design considers characteristics of the Baronne de Rothschild as well as the stipulations of the audited export markets.

In addition, an analytical survey on consumer behaviour for both the French and Moroccan markets indicating key factors such as product specifications, pricing, distribution and communication was also undertaken. Premium pineapples in France are primarily marketed by specialised retailers. Areas of consideration for this market include quality, compliance to pesticide standards product presentation and traceability. In Morocco 54.8% of respondents were willing to buy the Baronne de Rothschild pineapple even if priced higher than other pineapples.

The studies also look at consumer trends in the fresh pineapple market and are available to read [here](#) (webpage resources section).

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## 10 commercial cooperative societies established in Niayes



After a knowledge and capacity building campaign for onion and mango growers in Niayes, farmers learned the benefits of grouping together to form cooperative societies. As such, the WACOMP Senegal programme supported producer groups in Niayes to band together and form multi-sectoral cooperative societies aimed at engaging in business activities, during November and December 2021.

An official delegation including representatives of the Ministry of Trade and

Small and Medium Enterprises, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Equipment, the Regulation and Markets Agency took part in a general assembly comprised of the ten commercial cooperative societies.

The cooperatives were established throughout Niayes as follows: two in Saint-Louis, two in Louga, five in Thiès and one in Dakar. The societies are large and absorbed existing producer associations to further scale up these groups, once this is achieved the societies will evolve into unions and thereafter, federations.

The ongoing support program is training cooperatives on marketing, management, good governance, and access to finance.



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**Cooperatives learn essentials to finance growth**



40 participants from commercial cooperative societies as well as representatives of the Government of Senegal, commercial banks, microfinance institutions, agricultural business support institutions and the European Union in Senegal attended a workshop on cooperative financing mechanisms on 7 December 2021.

During the session, participants reviewed the financial study of cooperative societies and thereafter shared views on the study's proposed financial practices for cooperatives in the mango and onion value chains. The session gave cooperatives an opportunity to identify their finance needs to achieve growth.

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**Francophone Africa Investors Summit 2022  
brings start-ups and investors together**



14 start-ups from several countries namely, Benin, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Niger, Senegal and Cameroon attended the Francophone Africa Investors Summit (FAIS) held in Dakar on 3 to 4 March 2022. With 20 investors attending the event, entrepreneurs had the opportunity to learn, network, pitch as well as seek out potential collaboration and investment opportunities.

The event took place in two stages, the first provided entrepreneurs to learn and engage with businesses from the Francophone Africa ecosystem including Partech Ventures, Haské Ventures and the Delegation for Rapid Entrepreneurship of Youth and Women. Thereafter, over 200 participants, 14 start-up businesses watched 17 panellists engage in discussion on several topics including COVID-19, fundraising in Africa: the participation of women, the need to include fragile economies and the 2021 PARTECH report.

The two-day session concluded with a network session facilitated by the

WACOMP Senegal programme where start-ups and investors continued to seek out opportunities to engage.

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## Senegal's industry actors gather for ICT event



To facilitate dialogue amongst ICT representatives in Senegal, the Organization of Information and Communication Technology Professionals in Senegal (OPTIC) and the Senegalese Association of Computer Science Researchers (ASCII) organized the Scientific days in Computer Science in collaboration with WACOMP Senegal.

The event provided a platform for academic researchers, professionals from the ICT industry and development actors to identify challenges, share ideas and propose solutions. Event participants identified key advances made in computing and its respective applications.

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To learn more about the West Africa Competitiveness Programme visit:

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