



WORLD ASSOCIATION FOR SMALL & MEDIUM ENTERPRISES

WASME

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WASME EDITORIAL

Navigating Cross-Border
Payments for SMEs: Tackling
Challenges and Seizing
Opportunities

Page 04

GUEST ARTICLE

The Raw Materials Research
and Development Council,
Nigeria

Page 10

ENTREPRENEUR OF THE MONTH

Anushka Ramdwar, Co
Founder AA Enterprises, Mauritius

Page 24

IN THIS ISSUE

03

MESSAGE FROM SECRETARY GENERAL

04

WASME EDITORIAL

Navigating Cross-Border Payments for SMEs: Tackling Challenges and Seizing Opportunities

10

GUEST ARTICLE

The Raw Materials Research and Development Council, Nigeria

15

COUNTRY FOCUS NAMIBIA

20

GLOBAL INDUSTRY SCAN

Optimal Utilisation of Technology for Enhancing Export in Minerals & Natural Resources: Best Practices from across the Globe

24

ENTREPRENEUR OF THE MONTH

Anushka Ramdawar,
Co Founder AA Enterprises,
Mauritius

26

27TH ICSME 2023

27

WASME CORNER

29

UN SCAN

34

ABOUT WASME

35

Membership Services

READERS' REVIEW



“ The editorial provides a forward-thinking perspective on SME sustainability, highlighting the need for the finance and trade sector to align with the evolving landscape. It's a must-read for anyone interested in the future of SMEs. ”

Abena Ruth
Kumasi, Ghana

“ The guest article offers a fresh and insightful take on empowering first-generation women entrepreneurs in South Asia. It enriches the reader's understanding of the challenges and opportunities in this crucial context. ”

Daniel Annor
Brisbane, Australia

“ The global industry scan on advancements in Oil & Gas Industry Technology is a timely and informative piece. It not only highlights the latest developments but also offers a well-rounded view of the technological landscape, making it essential reading for industry professionals. ”

Felix Sefa
Port Louis, Mauritius

“ The Entrepreneur of the Month feature on Ms. Anju Singh, is truly inspiring. Her journey reflects resilience and innovation, providing readers with a real-world example of successful entrepreneurship in the SME sector. ”

Kene Thwala
Johannesburg, South Africa

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FROM THE DESK OF SECRETARY GENERAL



Dr. Gyan Prakash Agarwal

Dear WASME Community,

Welcome to the November edition of the WASME newsletter!

At WASME, our dedication to fostering the growth of SMEs worldwide remains steadfast. As we stride forward on this journey, we are thrilled to present a fresh edition filled with enlightening content, delving into crucial facets of our overarching mission.

The editorial provides an analysis of the evolving trends in Cross-Border Payments for SMEs, examining both the challenges they face and the opportunities that arise.

In this edition, our attention is turned towards Namibia in the 'Country Focus' segment, where we examine the SME landscape. Our analysis encompasses a deep dive into the challenges faced, government initiatives in place, and vital resources available, presenting valuable insights and opportunities for our SME community. Within the 'Industry Scan,' we meticulously explore the integration of technology in the export of minerals and natural resources. The focus is on highlighting commendable practices adopted by certain countries in this regard.

Prof. Hussaini Doko Ibrahim, (Director, The Raw Materials Research and Development Council in Nigeria) provides valuable perspectives in a guest article. He sheds light on the pivotal role that RMRDC plays in fostering the growth of the SME sector in Nigeria, outlines the challenges faced, and articulates the expectations from the collaboration with WASME. In our 'Entrepreneur of the Month' spotlight, we showcase the remarkable journey of Ms. Anushka, (Director, AA Enterprises). She shares her experiences as a businesswoman in the beauty and fashion sector.

In the 'UN Scan' segment, we present the recent news concerning the United Nations, offering perspectives on global initiatives that influence our SME community. The WASME Updates provide information on our recent developments.

We are dedicated to providing you with valuable information and resources that empower SMEs worldwide. We believe that this newsletter serves as a source of both insight and information for you. Your active participation in the vibrant WASME community is genuinely valued. Together, we persistently work towards fostering economic development and cultivating innovation within the SME sector.

Happy reading!

WASME EDITORIAL

Navigating Cross-Border Payments for SMEs: Tackling Challenges and Seizing Opportunities



Introduction

Cross-border payments, also known as international payments, refer to financial transactions involving a payer and payee situated in different countries. These transactions encompass both wholesale and retail payments, including remittances, and necessitate the conversion of one currency into another. The cross-border payments ecosystem encompasses various categories such as Business-to-Business (B2B), Business-to-People (B2P), Platform-to-Business (P2B), and Peer-to-Peer (P2P) merchants. Legacy methods like the Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunications (SWIFT)/correspondent banking, the Rupee Drawing Arrangement (RDA), and the Money Transfer Service Scheme (MTSS) are traditionally used for processing cross-border remittances.

Delving deeper into cross-border payments reveals a spectrum of payment types catering to diverse needs, including international trade, remittances, travel, and e-commerce. These transactions are inherently more complex than domestic payments, involving various entities such as domestic banks, financial institutions, payment systems, foreign transfer protocols, and verification systems. Factors like currency exchange rates and local taxes in each country add further intricacy. In the contemporary landscape, virtual payment systems are anticipated to streamline cross-border payments, aiming for the same ease as domestic transfers. Fintech firms leverage emerging technologies to offer cost-effective solutions, bringing flexibility,

improved customer service, global reach, lower transaction fees, and shorter processing times to international payments. The utilisation of secure online payment platforms equipped with blockchains has contributed to more manageable payment processing, featuring close-to-real-time transactions and reduced costs.

Dynamics of Cross-Border Payments for SME sector

For a considerable period, international payments have functioned as the driving force behind cross-border trade and investment, playing a pivotal role in shaping today's global economy. The extensive prerequisites for this system include a widespread network of trusted entities across the globe, robust regulatory and technical infrastructure, and a substantial requirement for liquidity. Historically, banks have been deemed the natural "owners" of the cross-border market, with some specialised firms primarily active in tertiary remittance markets, as per the McKinsey Global Payments Map. The profitability in cross-border transactions has traditionally been robust, with occasional price pressures affecting margins but not compelling a drastic cost transformation comparable to that observed in domestic payments. While cross-border flows constitute only a fraction of total transaction values, global revenues from international payments reach up to \$200 billion, roughly divided between transaction fees and foreign exchange (FX) revenues. This accounts for 27 percent of global transaction revenues and exhibits an annual increase of 6 percent.

As per the World Bank, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) account for roughly 90% of businesses globally and contribute to over 50% of global employment. With the expanding international activities of small businesses, there is a notable rise in the volume of cross-border payments in the business-to-business (B2B) domain. In 2020, 43% of small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs) reported engaging in international business, marking an increase from 34% in 2019. A recent study forecasts a substantial growth of 30% in business-to-business (B2B) cross-border payments, projecting a total of \$35 trillion by 2022. Additionally, the Mercator Report observed a significant year-over-year surge in cross-border payments made by SMBs, indicating a broader potential uptick in cross-border trade payments. The SME sector stands to gain significantly from the streamlining and simplification of cross-border payments, especially since larger corporations have long had access to most of these capabilities. Solutions such as SWIFT's gpi and Mastercard's B2B Hub are introducing more adaptable and SME-friendly payment options.

A well-functioning payment system is of utmost importance, regardless of the delivery method or destination—whether it's cross-border or domestic, digital, or in-person. Key factors such as security, speed, and reliability are paramount. Financial service providers face the challenge of meeting

these needs, but the potential for revenue and growth in this evolving landscape is substantial.

Obstacles Confronting SMEs in International Payment Transactions

In April 2020, the G20 and Financial Stability Board pinpointed various challenges in the existing cross-border payment processes and initiated the development of foundational elements to tackle them. However, many of the identified issues, such as fragmented data formats, intricate compliance checks, outdated technology platforms, elevated funding costs, and lengthy transaction chains, persist without resolution two years later. The necessary reforms to modernise and enhance cross-border payment infrastructure have been postponed due to more pressing priorities. Although many countries have embraced the 'open finance' revolution, opportunities arising from it are yet to be fully harnessed by small businesses.

Ease of access to international payments is particularly crucial for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). In the era of smartphones, the benchmarks for convenience are no longer exclusively dictated by traditional brick-and-mortar correspondent players. Even within the corporate sphere, the overall end-to-end experience has become more significant compared to individual factors like price, speed, and time. E-commerce plays a pivotal role as a primary channel for smaller retailers, either directly or through platforms such as Rakuten or Amazon. In contrast to larger players, smaller retailers often lack on-the-ground infrastructure utilising local payments and instead depend on international payment channels, including credit cards.

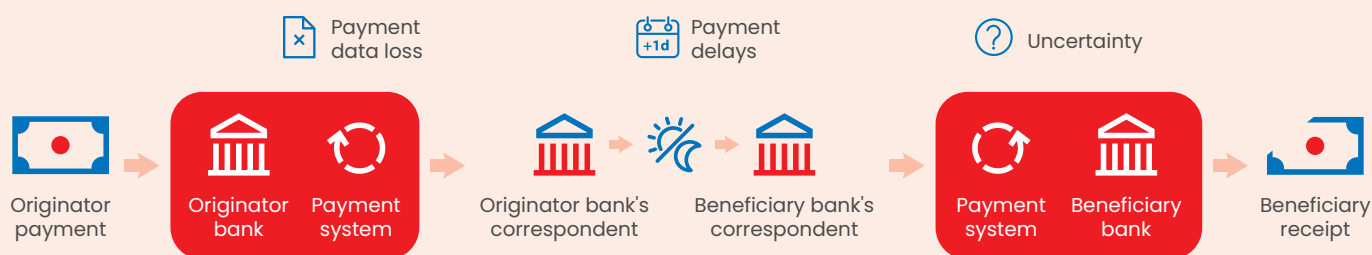
According to Mastercard's 2023 study "Making money go further, Borderless Payments Report" increasing reliance on cross-border trade is pivotal for the revenue growth of many small businesses. Approximately 35% of these businesses assert that they would face significant challenges in sustaining



themselves without the support of international income. Concerns also arise regarding the speed of transfers, with traditional methods like wiring funds significantly slowing down the international payment process due to multiple stops before reaching the final deposit destination. This multi-stop journey not only increases costs but also results in a lack of real visibility and transparency. This reliance on foreign trade poses a particular challenge for small businesses already grappling with fluctuating FX exchange rates and exorbitant money-transfer fees. The expenses associated with international payments can be up to 10 times higher than domestic costs.

The hurdles in conducting international business are a source of frustration for many small businesses, with over a third experiencing late or failed payments, leading to difficulties in procuring essential supplies and subsequent reputational damage. This issue extends beyond businesses to consumers involved in cross-border payments, with a third reporting problems resulting in delayed or failed payments, particularly prevalent in India, the US, and the UAE. Among those encountering issues, three-quarters found it challenging to support their in-country payments, and 36% experienced difficulties sending money to family or friends in their home countries.

Cross-Border payments... a complex journey



As the demand for cross-border transactions surges due to the digitization of payments, small businesses are facing heightened challenges. The conventional journey of cross-border payments is intricate, characterised by high fees, a lack of visibility, uncertainty, and unpredictability in payments, often deficient in data payloads and messaging. The existing methods for cross-border payments frequently do not meet the requirements of small businesses, particularly in terms of speed, visibility, fees, and the assurance of full value delivery. International small businesses are seeking similar advantages in cross-border payments as their larger corporate counterparts, desiring faster access to data, fewer intermediaries, transparent transaction times, and, crucially, reasonable fees. Furthermore, these businesses expect their user experience in financial transactions to be on par, if not superior,

to the seamless experiences provided by social networks and other daily apps they use.

Emerging solutions for easing cross border payment for SME sector

The demand for a unified and streamlined solution is evident. Innovative models are emerging in the realm of cross-border payments, allowing small businesses to harness APIs for real-time updates in accounting software. These models also facilitate the adoption of focused, cloud-based enterprise resource planning (ERP) tools, providing near real-time insights into business cash flow and financial positions.

Collaborating with third-party providers, banks can present a unified, integrated solution that ensures smoother, more timely execution of foreign exchange (FX) payments and seamless data

integration for transactions. This comprehensive solution empowers small businesses to concentrate on business growth rather than dealing with administrative complexities tied to international payments.

As the small business sector increasingly embraces online business models and extends its global reach, there's a growing imperative to make international supplier payments and cross-border transactions more cost-effective. The momentum in disrupting the small business cross-border payments arena is building, and banks are well-positioned to deliver international payment services tailored to this customer segment. This is where strategic partnerships between banks and fintechs become imperative. Collaboration between banks, fintechs, and payment networks can result in solutions that enhance transparency and efficiency in the ecosystem. Through shared resources, key players can enable genuine B2B payment automation, and banks should advocate for more from their networks to facilitate such collaborations. By providing small business customers with solutions that align with their cross-border requirements, banks can broaden the landscape of payment services.

The current challenge prompts the question of how financial services providers can offer effective solutions to address these issues. Increased collaboration within the financial sector is crucial. The growing push for partnerships between established payment providers and innovative fintech companies, recognizing the multifaceted nature of addressing international payment challenges, industry collaboration is identified as essential for fostering innovation that can alleviate these pain points. Traditional banking institutions have been comparatively slow to respond to international payment needs. Factors such as compliance, treasury considerations, and user experience often hinder the development of a remittance function from the ground up.

Fintech companies have seized this market gap, introducing streamlined remittance apps with seamless payment processes and enhanced customer experiences for both businesses and consumers.

To support the scaling of fintech solutions, collaboration networks are crucial. These networks involve partnerships with innovative technology companies, enabling seamless international payments during critical moments. Closer collaboration within the financial sector is necessary to surmount these barriers, presenting opportunities not only to enhance the economic prospects of individuals and small businesses but also to contribute to global economic growth.

New Approaches and Effective Strategies in Cross-Border Payments for SMEs

In Europe, the SEPA Instant Credit Transfer (SCT Inst) system offers instant payment services across more than 20 countries. It is distinctive as all transactions within the SCT Inst system are conducted in euros, representing a singular example of a cross-border payment system operating exclusively in a single currency. In a similar vein, the Nordic countries of Sweden, Denmark, and Finland plan to introduce their own accelerated cross-border payments system in mid-2021. The P27 Nordic Payments system is noteworthy for being the first multi-currency, multi-country platform that supports the Swedish krona, Danish krone, and the euro.

Creating an entirely new real-time payments system may not always be a practical solution. In Asia, some countries with existing faster payments systems are exploring the possibility of connecting them with similar systems in other countries to facilitate cross-border payments. An exemplary case is the successful collaboration between the Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS) and the Bank of Thailand (BoT), which linked their retail faster payments systems, PayNow and PromptPay, in April 2021. This marks the first global instance

of two retail faster-payments systems being interconnected, enabling instant cross-border retail payments. Customers in both countries can conduct low-value retail transactions using their linked mobile numbers and internet banking. This partnership has significantly reduced transaction times from one to two business days to just a few minutes. The involved parties have established agreements to maintain pricing in line with market standards and to benchmark forex rates against prevailing rates.

However, existing payments systems in Europe and Asia, designed to address cross-border payment challenges within specific regions or between countries, come with certain limitations:

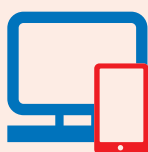
1. **Limited Reach:** These systems are not universal & are confined to a specific number of countries.
2. **Currencies:** Support is limited to a specific number of currencies.
3. **Transaction Limits:** Substantial restrictions exist on the usability of the system for business or large-value transactions due to low transaction limits.

Other payment systems, such as India's UPI, have the potential to replicate the aforementioned examples and enhance cross-border payments offerings.

The Indian Rupee is gaining international prominence as 18 countries have agreed to engage in trade transactions using the Rupee. In response to a global economic slowdown and efforts to de-dollarize the international market, India sees this as a strategic opportunity. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has granted permission to 18 countries, including Germany, Kenya, Sri Lanka, Singapore, the UK, and others, to conduct transactions in Rupees. This development is facilitated through the establishment of VOSTRO accounts in Indian banks, contributing to the success of the initiative. The move is expected to enable traders to import goods from other countries by making payments in Rupees.

The benefits for India are significant, as these countries will utilise the Rupee to invest in Indian companies and procure goods and services from India. This approach aims to reduce trade-related transaction costs, enhance overall trade,

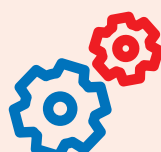
Advantages of UPI for cross-border payments



Increased
availability



Lower
transaction times



Process
simplification



Reduced costs

and position India as a key trading partner for these nations. The use of the Rupee as a settlement and invoicing currency is anticipated to decrease exchange rate risks for traders in the international market. Additionally, the initiative is poised to address India's trade deficit, potentially boosting exports as more countries express willingness to engage in trade using the Rupee. The move is expected to foster

increased trade with South Asian countries such as Nepal and Bhutan while concurrently contributing to the development of financial markets. The initiative aligns with global trends, including efforts by BRICS countries to de-dollarize the international market, particularly in response to sanctions imposed on Russia, providing China with an opportunity to emerge as an alternative to the US.

NPCI, through its subsidiary NPCI International, is actively working on broadening the adoption of UPI. The goal is to enhance UPI's global presence and promote products like RuPay. Furthermore, NPCI International is offering technological support, including licensing and consulting, to assist other nations in establishing their faster payments systems. In collaboration with Singapore's Network for Electronic Transfers (NETS), NPCI has joined forces to enable Indian travellers in Singapore to make payments through BHIM UPI by scanning QR codes at NETS terminals. This partnership introduces an additional payment option that facilitates cross-border small-value payments related to trade.

This initiative could potentially mark the initial phase of establishing a multi-country payments infrastructure, connecting various nations through faster payments and remittance systems based on UPI's structure and standards. The utilisation of UPI's

framework makes the integration of these systems notably more streamlined.


Conclusion

In the dynamic landscape of cross-border payments, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) face challenges with traditional methods, marked by high fees and delays. The collaboration between established financial institutions and fintech companies, leveraging technologies like APIs, blockchain, and real-time accounting software, is improving the efficiency of international transactions. Global initiatives, such as the SEPA Instant Credit Transfer system in Europe and multi-country platforms in Asia, highlight the shift towards a more interconnected payment landscape. For SMEs, streamlined access to international payments is crucial, and ongoing industry collaboration presents opportunities to offer faster, transparent, and cost-effective solutions, fostering their growth in the global economy.



GUEST ARTICLE

Prof. Hussaini Doko Ibrahim, born in Doko, Niger State, has excelled in academia and public service. His journey includes notable roles at Ahmadu Bello University and Raw Materials Research and Development Council (RMRDC), where he currently serves as Director-General. Ibrahim's transformative leadership at RMRDC has yielded significant achievements, including numerous patents and awards. His dedication extends to memberships in professional bodies, committees, and active contributions to strategic planning. With 122 publications and 42 patents to his name, Prof. Ibrahim is a distinguished figure in the fields of science, technology, and innovation.

A circular portrait of Professor Hussaini Doko Ibrahim, a man with a beard wearing a traditional white cap and a white shirt, smiling. The portrait is set against a dark blue background with a subtle pattern of white dots and a blue line graph. The caption is in a blue box with white text.

Professor Hussaini Doko Ibrahim, Director General, RMRDC, Nigeria

The Raw Materials Research and Development Council, Nigeria – Role in the Development of Small and Medium Enterprises in Nigeria

Small, and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) constitute the vital catalyst for socio-economic metamorphosis within an economy. Domestically, the SME sub-sector not only absorbs over 80% of employment opportunities but also plays a pivotal role in fostering primary production and value addition. This sector significantly enhances capacity utilisation, thereby improving capital per capita. Beyond these economic metrics, SMEs serve as a crucial conduit for supplying essential goods and services in rural or semi-urban areas. By doing so, they effectively address challenges associated with rural-to-urban migration, contribute to more equitable income distribution, and cultivate entrepreneurial talent. The overarching impact extends to stimulating comprehensive economic development within local communities. Empirical data underscores the indispensable role of SMEs in

country's development, showcasing their resilience and potential to fortify the economic fabric while simultaneously addressing key societal concerns such as unemployment, migration, and income inequality. In essence, the SME sector emerges as a linchpin in fostering sustainable economic growth and community development.

Nigeria's Strategic Initiatives and Commitment to SME Development

Recognizing the pivotal role of SMEs in fostering economic growth, the Nigerian government has implemented a range of policies, incentives, and measures to stimulate and sustain the SME sector. Entrusted with the mandate to catalyse, monitor, and coordinate SME development, the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN) plays a central role in this initiative. One notable strategy introduced by the Federal Government is the SME clinics, initiated in 2017 under the Vice President's Office. These clinics serve as a platform bringing together key government agencies and stakeholders to collaboratively address impediments hindering local manufacturing. The scheme aims to streamline business processes, create a One Stop Shop for SMEs, and establish Shared Facilities to enhance operational efficiency.

The SME clinics, conducted nationwide as per a pre-defined timetable, offer a forum for interactive engagement. An integral component

of this initiative is the annual MSME Awards ceremony, held on June 27 in commemoration of World MSME Day, where deserving enterprises are recognized for their contributions. The Raw Materials Research and Development Council (RMRDC) has been actively involved in the National MSME Clinics Scheme since its inception, contributing to its success through participation in various activities.

Under the leadership of President Tinubu, the current administration underscores its commitment to SME development as a key driver of economic growth and advancement. Evidently this commitment is the inauguration of the MSME Council on December 1, 2023, by Vice President Kashim Shattima. RMRDC is honoured to be a part of the MSME Council, contributing its expertise to further the objectives of this crucial initiative. As the nation focuses on harnessing the potential of SMEs, these comprehensive efforts are poised to create a conducive environment for sustained economic development and prosperity.

RMRDC's Integral Role in Nigeria's Industrial Development and SME Growth

Established in 1988, the Raw Materials Research and Development Council (RMRDC) operates as a parastatal under the Federal Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation in Nigeria. With its headquarters situated in Abuja and coordinating offices across the thirty-six states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), RMRDC plays a pivotal role in advancing industrial development and self-reliance. The council is mandated to promote and expedite industrial growth by optimising the utilisation of local raw materials as inputs for the nation's industries.



RMRDC serves as Nigeria's focal point for harnessing the vast industrial raw materials resources, thereby catalysing the establishment of new resource-based industries. This strategic initiative not only creates new employment opportunities but also significantly contributes to the nation's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The Council's comprehensive approach is underscored by six core programs that have had a lasting impact on the development of Small, and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria.

These core programs encompass the Raw Materials Information Programme, the National Raw Materials Research and Development Programme, the Technology Development Programme, the Local Raw Materials Content Development Programme, the Investment Promotion Programme, and the Raw Materials SME Development Programme. Each program plays a specific role in providing crucial information, facilitating research and technology development, promoting investment, and specifically supporting the growth of SMEs in the country. Through these

initiatives, RMRDC has been instrumental in creating an enabling environment for SMEs, fostering innovation, and promoting the utilisation of local raw materials. As a result, the Council's efforts contribute not only to the sustainability and growth of individual enterprises but also to the overall economic development and industrialization of Nigeria.

Fostering Collaborative Solutions for Nigerian MSMEs: RMRDC's Strategic Partnerships

In cultivating a robust public-private partnership to address the challenges confronting Nigerian SMEs, the Raw Materials Research and Development Council (RMRDC) emphasises the

imperative of research, data-driven insights, and collaborative planning. Recognizing the significance of the SME sub-sector, which comprises over 41 million entities, the Council underscores the need for meticulous data gathering, storage, analysis, and priority setting to augment their contributions to the nation's economic growth.

To actualize this vision, RMRDC actively engages in partnerships with various stakeholders, bridging the gap between public entities, private sector organisations, and academia to provide comprehensive support to MSMEs in Nigeria. Noteworthy collaborations include:

1. Nigerian Association of Small and Medium Enterprises (NASME): RMRDC, as a corporate member of NASME, collaborates closely, hosting events and providing financial support.
2. Nigerian Association of Small-Scale Industrialists (NASSI): RMRDC maintains a cordial relationship with NASSI, actively supporting their activities and events. An example of this support is RMRDC's key partnership during NASSI's National Industrial Business Summit in November 2022.
3. Forum of MSME Business Membership Organisation of Nigeria (MSME Forum): RMRDC played a pivotal role in the establishment of

MSME Forum, hosting its inauguration and quarterly strategic meetings. The Council has provided a furnished office for the association at its centre at the African University of Science and Technology (AUST), Galadima, Abuja.

4. Baze University, Abuja: RMRDC collaborated with Baze University and the Society for Economic Empowerment and Entrepreneurship Development to host the 1st International Conference and Exhibition for Sustainable Entrepreneurship and Leadership Development (ICE-SLED) in June 2023. The conference emphasised the need to commercialise research findings for integrated and development-oriented outcomes.

These collaborative endeavours underscore RMRDC's commitment to creating an ecosystem where SMEs thrive through strategic alliances, resource-sharing, and knowledge exchange. By fostering an environment conducive to sustainable entrepreneurship and leadership development, RMRDC contributes significantly to the advancement of SMEs and the overall economic landscape in Nigeria.

Celebrating Excellence: RMRDC's Noteworthy Accolades for MSME Development in Nigeria

1. **NASME's 18th MSMEs International Summit and Exhibition (December 9-10, 2021):**

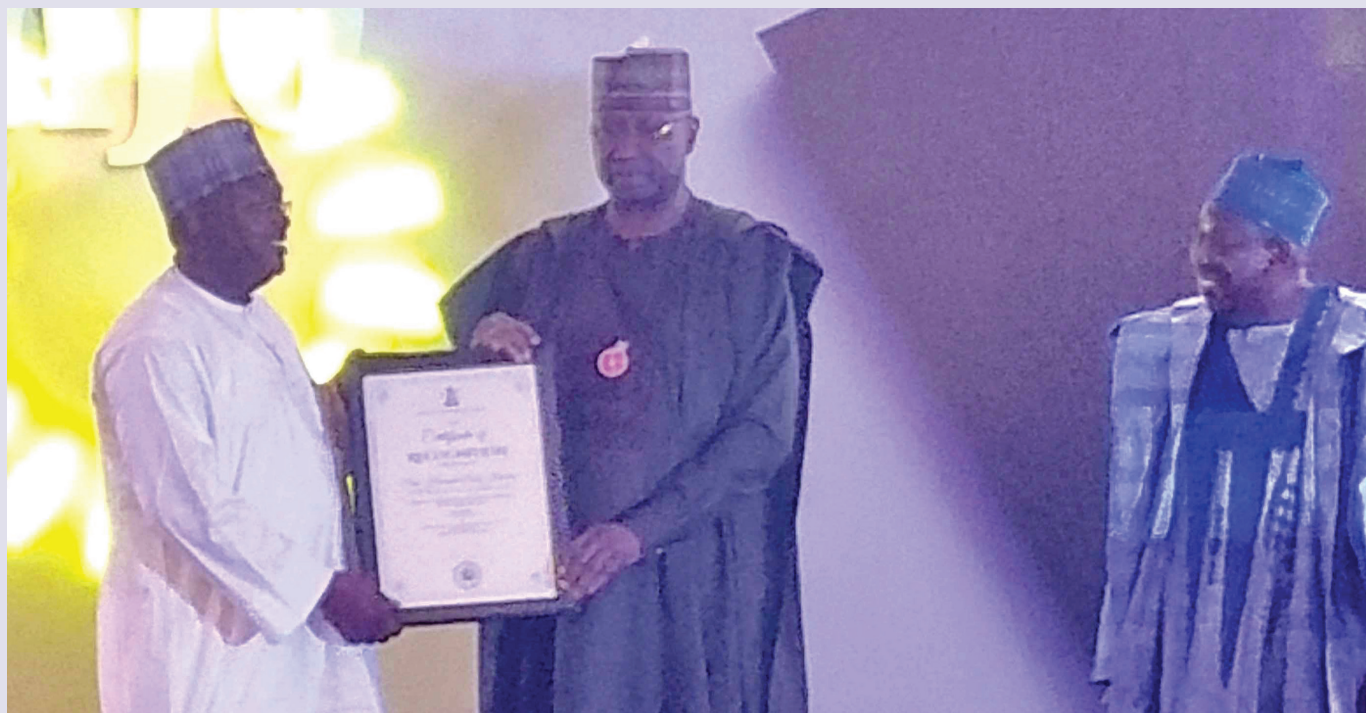


Mrs. D.A. Ashigye receiving NASME Plaque on behalf of the DG

- ◆ **Theme:** "MSMEs for African Continental Free Trade Agreement Opportunities."
- ◆ **Award:** Prof. H.D. Ibrahim, DG of RMRDC, recognized as the "Most Outstanding Contributor to MSMEs in Nigeria."
- ◆ Received by Mrs. D.A. Ashigye, Deputy Director, MSME, on behalf of the DG.

2. NASME 25th Anniversary Award Night (November 12, 2022):

- ◆ **Venue:** IBOM ICON Hotel and Golf Resort, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.
- ◆ **Recognition:** DG (RMRDC) honoured with the Award of Excellence for "Adding Value to MSME Products in Nigeria through Research and Development."



Engr. Kwaya, receiving MSME Clinics award on behalf of the DG

- ◆ Received by Dr. B.O. Olugbemi, Director, Planning and Policy Development Department, representing the DG.

3. Public Presentation of the Photo Book "Buhari Osinbajo MSME Story" (December 1, 2022):

- ◆ The photo book encapsulates the journey of MSME activities from inception.
- ◆ Graced by the representative of the Vice President and the Secretary to the Federal Government, Mr. Boss Mustapha.
- ◆ The DG/CEO RMRDC, represented by Engr. E. Kwaya, Director of the Information and Communication Department.
- ◆ **Recognition:** Award presented to the DG (RMRDC) in acknowledgment of the Council's

significant contribution to the development of MSMEs in Nigeria.

Despite its steadfast contributions to the sustainable development of SMEs in Nigeria, the Raw Materials Research and Development Council (RMRDC) encounters several challenges that impede its impactful initiatives. Key obstacles include:

1. **Inadequate Funding:** Insufficient financial resources pose a significant challenge to the Council's ambitious endeavours. The constraints in funding limit the scope and scale of programs and initiatives that RMRDC can undertake to support MSMEs comprehensively.



Dr. Olugbemi receiving award on behalf of the DG at the NASME 25th anniversary awards

2. Inadequate Publicity/Public Engagement:

The Council faces challenges in effectively communicating its resources and services to the target audience. This lack of awareness becomes evident as some business owners express surprise at the wealth of information available at the Council, such as details on raw materials availability, locations, and equipment fabricators. Improving publicity and engagement strategies is crucial for bridging this informational gap.

These challenges highlight the need for strategic interventions to overcome financial constraints and enhance the visibility of RMRDC's offerings. Adequate funding is essential for expanding and sustaining impactful programs, while improved publicity ensures that the wealth of resources and information available at the Council reaches the intended beneficiaries within the SME community. Addressing these challenges is imperative for RMRDC to maximise its potential in fostering the growth and sustainability of SMEs in Nigeria.

Charting a Promising Path Forward

In envisioning a dynamic future for the SMEs sub-sector, the Raw Materials Research and Development Council (RMRDC) is embarking on an exhilarating journey through its revitalised partnership with the World Association of Small and Medium Enterprises (WASME). This collaborative initiative, inspired by WASME, stands as a testament to RMRDC's commitment to fostering stakeholder collaboration with participants spanning both the private and public sectors.

An array of stakeholder meetings has already laid the foundation for this collaborative venture, with a noteworthy upcoming event being a study tour to India. This tour is designed to offer a comprehensive understanding of diverse facets of SME development in India. Simultaneously, it marks a significant milestone—the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between RMRDC and WASME, solidifying their commitment to mutual collaboration.

Conclusion:

Anticipation abounds regarding the potential impact of RMRDC's interactions with WASME, India. This collaboration signifies more than a partnership; it symbolises a transformative force poised to resoundingly influence Nigerian SMEs. The concerted efforts and shared insights are anticipated to become catalysts for profound economic growth and development in Nigeria. As RMRDC eagerly looks toward this promising collaboration, there is a collective optimism that it will not only meet but surpass expectations, ushering in an era of sustainable prosperity for the nation's vibrant SME landscape. WASME India contribution in the area of technology transfer, Skill Development, Prototype Designing and Development, Testing and Quality Control, Setting up Common Facility Centres(CFC) , packaging etc. shall put Nigerian MSMEs on global map.

COUNTRY FOCUS

NAMIBIA

Population

Total – 2.5 million (2021); Urban – 55%; Rural – 45% (2021)

Ethnic groups

Protestant (mostly Lutheran):49.3%, **Roman Catholic:**17.7%, **Unaffiliated Christian:**14.1%, **Independent Christian:**10.8%, **Traditional Beliefs:**6.0%, **Others:**2.1% (2002)

Youth unemployment rate (ages 15–24)

43.4% (2021)

GDP – composition, by sector of origin

Agriculture: 5–7%, Industry: 30–40%, Services: 60% (2021)

Industries

- ◆ Mining
- ◆ Agriculture
- ◆ Manufacturing
- ◆ Tourism
- ◆ Energy
- ◆ Services
- ◆ Construction (2021)

SME Classification in Namibia's Economic Context

The existing definition of the sector, outlined in the 1997 Policy and Programme on Small Business Development, has remained unchanged despite global economic shifts and alterations in the types of businesses it encompasses. This definition, formulated in 1997, lacks adaptability and does not include the concept of micro-enterprises. It solely distinguishes between SMEs engaged in manufacturing and other businesses, with no provision for adjustments based on evolving local, regional, and global dynamics.

To address these limitations, the proposed SME Policy suggests a revised definition for Namibian SMEs. This new national definition aligns with international standards and categorises SMEs based on two criteria: the number of employees and annual turnover. The comprehensive definition encompasses various business categories:

Criteria for MSMEs categories

Category	No. of full-time employees	And/or	Annual turnover (N\$)
Micro-enterprises	1 to 10	and/or	0 to 300,000
Small-enterprises	11 to 30	and/or	300,001 to 3,000,000
Medium enterprises	31 to 100	and/or	3,000,001 to 10,000,000

Distinctive features of SMEs in the Namibian Landscape

SMEs in Namibia typically exhibit diverse characteristics. Women participate in SMEs across various sectors, with varying percentages of women-owned businesses. The urban-rural distribution of SMEs is influenced by factors such as industry focus, market access, and local economic conditions, with percentages fluctuating accordingly. Special features of Namibian SMEs may include a focus on agriculture, given the country's reliance on this sector, a presence in tourism due to

natural attractions, and an emphasis on technology and innovation.

The Impact of the SME Sector on Namibia's Economy

Micro, medium, and small enterprises play a crucial role in Namibia's socio-economic landscape, contributing significantly to employment, income generation, and poverty alleviation across both rural and urban areas. These enterprises serve as key drivers of growth, innovation, and job creation in Namibia's emerging economy, especially where large businesses may fall short in meeting the demand for new investments & employment opportunities.

The inherent flexibility of SMEs positions them at the forefront of technological innovation, enabling their evolution into growth-oriented businesses that can generate essential employment. Integrating SMEs more deeply into the national economy and involving them in the value and supply chains of major industries can have a positive ripple effect on larger formal sector businesses, benefiting the entire Namibian economy.

Current estimates suggest that around 33,700 SMEs in Namibia (with approximately 15,000 being formally registered) contribute to employment and income for about 160,000 citizens, constituting roughly one-third of the nation's workforce. Their collective contribution to the Namibian GDP is approximately 12%. However, these figures are outdated, underscoring the importance of continuous quantitative research on Namibian SMEs. Previous research from 2010 indicates a higher rate of job loss in SMEs compared to larger enterprises. Still, the overall job creation by SMEs mitigates this effect, resulting in a higher net job creation compared to larger enterprises.

Namibian SMEs operate across diverse economic sectors, with a predominant focus on retail trading. Additionally, about 25% are involved in food

processing, manufacturing, craft creation, and the remaining portion is engaged in service provision.

Obstacles Confronting the SME Sector in Namibia

Namibian SMEs encounter several challenges despite the implementation of various support programs. These challenges stem from their size & include:

- 1. Access to Finance:** Traditional financial institutions find SME financing unattractive due to perceived high risks and inadequate collateral. Limited financial literacy among SMEs results in most relying on personal resources or contributions from family and friends. Approximately 97% of Namibian SMEs are considered non-bankable, with 40.9% of small enterprises and 28.6% of medium enterprises citing access to finance as a major constraint.
- 2. Access to Land:** Historical factors and skewed land distribution limit affordable business premises for SMEs, with high rental costs jeopardising start-up success. The high cost of serviced land further hinders investment.





3. **Access to Utilities:** Challenges in accessing water, especially in Namibia's semi-arid conditions, and reliance on imported electricity with increasing costs affect SMEs disproportionately due to their small size.
4. **Skills:** Lack of entrepreneurial skills, including management, accounting, and creativity, coupled with limited commitment, leads to poor business proposals and a deficiency in viable projects.
5. **Crime:** SMEs face higher losses due to theft and vandalism, with only 43% of small enterprises investing in security services compared to larger enterprises.
6. **Global Competition:** Increased competition from imports, globalisation, and shorter product life cycles make it challenging for local SMEs to compete.
7. **Access to Technology:** Insufficient investments in research and development result in SMEs depending on imported skills and technologies,

with 40% of medium enterprises using licensed technology from foreign companies.

8. **Access to Markets:** A majority of Namibian SMEs operate locally, limiting growth opportunities. Only 4% export their goods or services, emphasising the need for broader market access.
9. **Lack of Information:** Despite numerous studies, a lack of accurate, quantitative information on SMEs hampers monitoring and the design of relevant support programs.
10. **Administrative Processes:** Cumbersome administrative procedures, as indicated by the World Bank's 'Doing Business' ranking, pose challenges for SMEs, with registration requiring ten steps and more than two months.
11. **Business Development Services:** The absence of a structured and regulated market for business development services leads to costly and unregulated training and consultancy services targeting SMEs, highlighting the need for market regulation to ensure quality and value for money.



Government-Led Initiatives to Empower and Enhance the SME Sector in Namibia

1. Namibia Development Corporation (NDC):

The Namibia Development Corporation plays a role in facilitating the growth of SMEs by providing financial assistance, including loans and equity financing. The NDC aims to enhance entrepreneurship and economic sustainability by supporting viable business ideas.

2. Ministry of Industrialization, Trade, and SME Development:

The ministry responsible for SME development in Namibia plays a central role in formulating and implementing policies to promote a conducive environment for SMEs. This includes the development of strategies to address challenges faced by SMEs and enhance their competitiveness.

3. SME Financing:

The Namibian government has established financial mechanisms to provide easier access to financing for SMEs. This includes setting up funds and credit guarantee schemes to mitigate the risks associated with lending to SMEs.

4. Training and Capacity Building:

Initiatives focused on training and capacity building are crucial for the development of SMEs. The government, in collaboration with various institutions, may provide training programs, workshops, and mentorship to equip entrepreneurs with the skills needed to manage and grow their businesses.



5. Entrepreneurship Development Programs:

The government may implement entrepreneurship development programs to encourage the establishment of new businesses. These programs often include incubators, innovation hubs, and startup support initiatives.

6. Policy Support:

The Namibian government works on creating a favourable policy environment for SMEs. This involves reviewing and revising regulations to reduce bureaucratic hurdles, streamline business processes, and create an environment conducive to SME growth.

7. Access to Markets:

Facilitating access to local and international markets is essential for the growth of SMEs. The government may implement initiatives to connect SMEs with potential customers, both within Namibia and in the global market.

8. Research and Data Collection:

The government may invest in research and data collection to better understand the challenges and opportunities faced by SMEs. This information is crucial for informed policymaking and targeted interventions.

Useful resources for SMEs operating in Namibia

MSME finance providers	Details
Incubators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Namibia Business Innovation Institute (NBII), headquarters – Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST), Windhoek; ◆ Namibia Investment Centre (NIC), headquarters – Windhoek; ◆ Namibia Development Corporation (NDC), headquarters – Windhoek;
Banks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Bank of Namibia, headquarters – Windhoek; ◆ First National Bank Namibia (FNB Namibia), headquarters – Windhoek; ◆ Development Bank of Namibia (DBN), headquarters – Windhoek;
MFI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Namibia Women's Microfinance Bank (NWMB), headquarters – Windhoek; ◆ Kapana Microfinance, headquarters – Windhoek; ◆ FINCORP Namibia, headquarters – Windhoek;
PE/VC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Namibia Equity Brokers (NEB), headquarters – Windhoek;
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Namibian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (NCCI), headquarters – Windhoek; ◆ Namibia Trade Forum (NTF), headquarters – Windhoek;

**If you wish to
extend business
activities with
featured country**

Please write to us at
wasme@wasmeinfo.org



Trade
delegation



Investment



International
exhibitions & EXPOs



Business Match
Making



Technology
Transfer



Skill
Development



Startup Support



Women
Entrepreneurship



Incubation



Research &
Development



Conference/Seminar/
Trainings/ workshops



Policy Advocacy

GLOBAL INDUSTRY SECTOR

Optimal Utilisation of Technology for Enhancing Export in Minerals and Natural Resources: Best Practices from across the Globe

Introduction

The evolving methods of energy consumption and commodity production present an opportunity for global economic growth. However, resource producers must adapt to remain competitive in this transformative landscape.

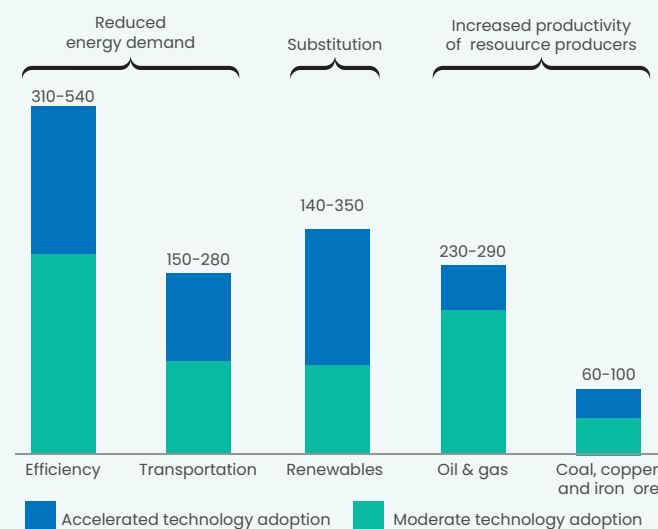
Over the past 15 years, the commodities sector experienced a tumultuous "supercycle," witnessing soaring prices followed by a dramatic decline. Now, as resource entities and exporting nations navigate the aftermath, they confront a new era marked by technological innovation. Robotics, artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things, and data analytics are reshaping how resources are consumed and produced. On the demand side, energy consumption is becoming more efficient, aided by technological advancements and a shift toward renewable energies like solar and wind. Concurrently, on the supply side, resource producers leverage technology to enhance operations, accessing previously unreachable mines and wells, improving extraction efficiency, adopting predictive maintenance, and utilising data analysis for resource management.



A recent report from the McKinsey Global Institute, titled "Beyond the supercycle: How technology is reshaping resources," emphasises these trends, highlighting their potential to unlock savings ranging from \$900 billion to \$1.6 trillion globally by 2035. This amount, equivalent to the current GDP of Canada or Indonesia, primarily stems from increased energy productivity, accounting for at least two-thirds of the total value, with the remaining one-third attributed to productivity gains by resource producers. The report suggests that demand for various commodities, particularly oil, may peak in the next two decades, with prices exhibiting significant divergence. The magnitude of this opportunity hinges not only on the pace of technological adoption but also on how resource producers and policymakers adapt to the evolving landscape.

Technology will create opportunities for energy savings and increased resource productivity.

Projected 2035 run-rate savings & productivity opportunities, \$ billion¹



¹ in 2015 US dollars.
Source: Energy Insights Global Energy perspective; McKinsey analysis; McKinsey Global Institute analysis.

Use of technology in export of minerals and natural resources

The world has witnessed profound impact of technology on the exportation of minerals & natural resources, showcasing data-backed evidence on how advanced technological solutions are revolutionising the industry. From exploration & extraction to supply chain optimisation and sustainability measures, the integration of cutting-edge technologies is reshaping traditional practices, enhancing efficiency, and promoting responsible resource management.

The export of minerals and natural resources plays a pivotal role in the global economy, contributing significantly to the GDP of numerous nations. In recent years, technological advancements have ushered in a new era of possibilities, offering solutions to age-old challenges and introducing unprecedented efficiency and sustainability in the extraction and export processes.



Exploration and Extraction Efficiency:

Advanced Geological Mapping & Remote Sensing:

- ◆ Data from the Geological Society of America reveals that advanced geological mapping technologies have increased the success rate of resource discoveries by 25%.
- ◆ Remote sensing and satellite imagery contribute to a 30% reduction in exploration costs, allowing for more targeted and cost-effective exploration.

AI and Machine Learning in Resource Prediction:

According to a report by McKinsey, companies employing AI for resource prediction witnessed a 15% improvement in accuracy, leading to optimised extraction plans & increased productivity.

Automation & Robotics in Mining Operations:

Enhanced Safety and Operational Efficiency:

- ◆ The International Council on Mining and Metals reports a 40% reduction in workplace accidents through the implementation of robotics in hazardous environments.
- ◆ Automated drilling and hauling systems contribute to a 20% increase in operational efficiency, driving up overall production rates.
- ◆ **Impact on Employment:** While there is a shift in job roles towards managing & maintaining automated systems, the World Economic Forum suggests that technological advancements in mining operations can create up to 15% more skilled jobs.

Data Analytics for Resource Management

Real-time Monitoring and Decision-making:

- ◆ Companies leveraging real-time data analytics experience a 20% improvement in resource utilisation efficiency, minimising waste and optimising production.
- ◆ A study published in the Journal of Sustainable Mining highlights a 25% reduction in unplanned downtime through predictive analytics, ensuring continuous production.



Inventory Management and Cost Reduction:

The implementation of data-driven inventory management systems results in a 15% reduction in carrying costs, as reported by the International Journal of Production Economics.

Supply Chain Optimization:

Blockchain Technology in Transparency:

- ◆ According to a World Economic Forum report, the use of blockchain in supply chains reduces fraud by 50%, providing buyers with transparent and verifiable information about the origin and ethical sourcing of resources.
- ◆ The World Trade Organization estimates a 30% reduction in paperwork and administrative costs through the adoption of blockchain technology in international trade.
- ◆ **IoT-powered Logistics Solutions:** IoT-powered logistics solutions lead to a 15% decrease in transportation costs, enhancing the competitiveness of exported resources in global markets.

Market Intelligence through Digital Platforms:

Access to Global Trends: Digital platforms provide real-time access to global market trends, enabling companies to adjust production and export strategies in response to changing demand.

Direct Interactions with Buyers: E-commerce platforms facilitate direct interactions between

buyers and sellers, reducing transaction costs and expanding market reach.

Compliance and Regulatory Technology:

Transparency in Compliance: RegTech solutions ensure compliance with international standards, with companies adopting these technologies experiencing a 25% reduction in compliance-related incidents.

Blockchain for Immutable Records: The use of blockchain creates immutable records, aiding in audits and ensuring adherence to environmental and ethical standards.

Investment in Research and Development:

- ◆ Nations and companies investing in research and development of emerging technologies consistently outperform peers, maintaining a competitive edge in the global export market.



Emerging best practices across the globe

Norway: Blockchain for Transparency and Ethical Sourcing:

Blockchain in Supply Chains: Norway has implemented blockchain to ensure transparency in the supply chain. According to the Norwegian Ministry of Trade and Industry, this has reduced instances of fraud by 35%, providing consumers with verifiable information about the ethical sourcing of minerals.

Certification Processes: Norwegian certification processes, facilitated by blockchain, verify the ethical extraction of resources. This has led to a 40% increase in consumer trust and a 30% reduction in instances of fraudulent sourcing, according to the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs.

Brazil: Digital Platforms for Market Access:

E-commerce Platforms: Brazil has strategically employed e-commerce platforms to enhance market access. The Brazilian Ministry of Mines and Energy reports a 25% reduction in transaction costs and a 20% expansion in market reach, as direct interactions between producers and buyers are facilitated.

AI-Driven Market Analytics: The incorporation of AI-driven market analytics tools in Brazil enables dynamic responses to global demand trends. This has resulted in a 30% improvement in strategic decision-making and increased competitiveness, as highlighted by the Brazilian Association of Mining Companies.

Finland: Smart Logistics & IoT Integration

IoT-Powered Logistics: Finland has excelled in optimising logistics through IoT integration. The use of sensors and real-time tracking systems has led to a 30% reduction in transportation costs and a 25% improvement in supply chain visibility, according to data from the Finnish Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment.

Smart Warehousing Solutions: Finland's adoption of smart warehousing solutions, enabled by IoT, ensures efficient inventory management. This has resulted in a 20% decrease in carrying costs and a 15% improvement in order fulfilment accuracy, as documented by the Finnish Innovation Fund.

United States: Cloud Computing and Big Data Analytics

Cloud-Based Data Storage: The United States has leveraged cloud computing for secure & scalable data storage. This transition has resulted in a 30% reduction in data management costs and a 25% improvement in accessibility for stakeholders, according to the U.S. Geological Survey.

Big Data Analytics for Market Intelligence: Big data analytics in the U.S. mining sector has enhanced market intelligence. Predictive analytics models have led to a 20% increase in accurate demand forecasts and a 15% improvement in strategic decision-making, as reported by the U.S. Department of Energy.

ENTREPRENEUR OF THE MONTH

Anushka
Ramdawar
Co Founder
AA Enterprises,
Mauritius



A Candid Conversation on Personal Growth, Global Expansion, & Navigating Business Challenges

Navigating Personal and Professional Paths: The Journey toward Entrepreneurship

My entrepreneurial journey began as a direct result of the profound inspiration I derived from my family members, who are all highly accomplished entrepreneurs. Their tremendous success and unwavering dedication served as a catalyst for me to embark on this thrilling path. The allure of becoming my own boss, liberated from the confinements of the rigid 9-to-4 job structure and its predictable monthly income, compelled me to take a leap into the world of business. For me, entrepreneurship embodies the vital element of cash flow, an indispensable necessity in today's fast-paced and demanding lifestyle. Harnessing this fundamental aspect has become the cornerstone of my endeavours.

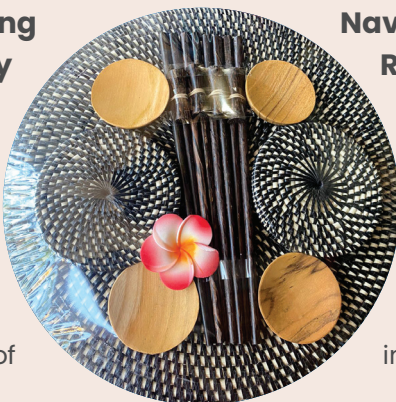
Through business endeavours, the prospect of achieving personal goals at an earlier stage in life becomes tangible, offering increased security and the ability to live up to desired lifestyle standards. This shift to entrepreneurship reflects a quest for autonomy, financial independence, and a more fulfilling life journey.

ever-evolving trends. Aiming to anticipate and shape the future, I proudly unveiled the highly anticipated 2024 collection in late November 2023, showcasing an unwavering commitment to innovation. Embracing the era of Artificial Intelligence (AI), my business strategically aligns itself with the demands and supply dynamics of the community, where AI serves as a transformative force. By harnessing the power of AI as a game-changer, we meticulously analyse market needs, ensuring our offerings are meticulously tailored to exceed expectations.

With an unwavering commitment to forward-thinking principles, my brand's foresightedness extends far beyond the realm of fashion. It acts as a catalyst for positive change within the community, creating a ripple effect of benefits. Among these, the notable advantage of job creation takes center stage, showcasing the profound impact my business has on local employment and overall economic growth. Being a dynamic force, my venture not only flourishes by keeping up with the latest trends but also actively contributes to the socioeconomic fabric, shaping a progressive future for individuals and the entire community at large.

Shaping Trends and Empowering Communities: The Evolutionary Impact of My Fashion Business

My venture has revolutionized the very fabric of the community's lifestyle through the introduction of state-of-the-art fashion bags, consistently staying at the forefront of



Navigating Global Challenges: A Resilient Entrepreneurial Journey amidst the Pandemic

The primary challenges I faced mirrored those encountered by entrepreneurs globally during the impact of the coronavirus pandemic. During the unprecedented global impact of the coronavirus pandemic, I



found myself confronted with a multitude of obstacles that echoed the struggles faced by entrepreneurs worldwide. Amidst these daunting challenges, it was our unyielding determination and unwavering resilience that propelled us to navigate through the tempestuous storm. The resilience displayed during these challenging times enabled the formulation of innovative business strategies.

I am pleased to affirm that, through continuous effort and adaptability, we have successfully navigated the hurdles and emerged on a trajectory that aligns with our business objectives.

This invigorating experience has served as a powerful testament to the intrinsic value of flexibility and strategic thinking within the entrepreneurial odyssey, unmasking the resolute truth that challenges, when met with unwavering determination, possess an innate ability to act as profound catalysts for unforeseen growth and relentless evolution. This also underscored the importance of flexibility and strategic thinking required in the entrepreneurial journey for growth and evolution.

This journey through adversity has fortified our commitment to staying on the right track and embracing the lessons learned for sustained success in the dynamic business landscape.

Expanding Horizons: Global Market Expansion Plans for the Future

In my relentless pursuit of entrepreneurial success, I remain steadfast in my dedication to expanding my market presence on a global scale. At present, my manufacturing plant, strategically nestled in the enchanting landscapes of Bali, has emerged triumphantly, skilfully producing and exporting exceptional goods to satisfied clientele across Europe and Africa. However, my sights are set even higher as I gaze towards the horizon of 2024. With unwavering determination, I aim to unlock a plethora of new and

enthraling business opportunities in prime markets, with a particular focus on captivating the prosperous United States, propelling my brand to unprecedented heights of success and recognition.

By venturing into diverse markets, I aim to enhance the reach and influence of my products, contributing to the business's long-term success and creating a broader footprint in the international business landscape.

Nurturing Entrepreneurial Dreams: Key Advice for Aspiring Beauty and Clothing Sector Business Owners

For individuals contemplating ventures in the beauty or clothing sector, I offer crucial advice rooted in my own experience. Firstly, let me stress the absolute importance of meticulously crafting a comprehensive business plan. As the cornerstone of any successful enterprise, it not only acts as a meticulous blueprint, but also enables you to make informed decisions and effortlessly compare your progress to the broader market. Equally essential in today's highly competitive business landscape is the ability to harness the phenomenal power of social media for effective marketing and seamless product outsourcing.

In this ever-evolving landscape of global business, it is crucial for our readers to recognize and capitalize on the immense potential offered by the remarkable platform that is WASME. As a beacon of opportunity and connection, WASME stands as an invaluable resource for entrepreneurs from all corners of the globe. Beyond its unparalleled networking capabilities, this game-changing platform goes above and beyond to provide unwavering support that sets the stage for unprecedented entrepreneurial triumph. The platform not only fosters networking but also provides support that significantly contributes to entrepreneurial success. It is with utmost appreciation and admiration that I extend my sincere gratitude to the entire WASME team, whose unwavering dedication makes entrepreneurial journeys attainable, interconnected, and ultimately triumphant.

27TH ICSME 2023

Empowering SMEs for Global Growth and Sustainability:
Unlocking Credit, Technology, and Market Access

9th December, 2023, Dubai, UAE



WASME – ICSME23 Dubai

9th Dec 2023

ICSME23 Dubai



Dunston Pereira



Malini Ohri



Emmanuel Atsu



Silvana Mariel Muñoz



Dr. Pavani Kadiyala



Fairouz Daoud



Dr. Mustafa Saasa



Anna Panasiuk



Farouk Khallani



Malika Beatrishe



Manu M Pillai



Shivangi Gandhi



Natalia Leanca



Lalitha Ramamoorthy



Charmaine Uychocho



Prof. Christopher Abraham



H. E. Sunjay Sudhir



S. M. Zillur Rahman



H.E. Mohammed Abu Zafar



H.E. Ahmed Alattar



Sâadia Lakehal



Rajendra Malla



Gazelle Mohsenzadeh



Surya Manthana



Amit Grover



Vikash Sharma



Fredrick Muteti



Abraham Paul



Salman Rajput



Sandi Rich Saksena

Organizing Team:



Dr. Sanjiv Layek
Executive Secretary
WASME



Arijit Bhattacharyya
Founder & CEO virtualinfocom since 1998
Founder Coinnovateventures
Chairman World Leader Summit

Business Networking Investor Roundtable
Panel Discussion Award Ceremony

Knowledge Partner
COINNOVATE
VENTURES

WLS
WORLD LEADER SUMMIT

SPJ
S P Jain School of Global Management

Technology Partner
VC Virtualinfocom
www.virtualinfocom.com

PR Partner
Heylin Spark

WASME CORNER

From global to local, unleashing potential of SMEs in Africa and other countries by nominating **WASME Permanent Representatives**

WASME is extending its extensive experience and expertise in the key areas such as technology transfer, skill development, quality control, packaging, market access, export, research and development to enhance the sustainability, competitiveness, and growth of SMEs in different countries in technical trades like aerospace, mechanical, electrical, electronics, chemical, textile, food processing, ceramic, and wooden industries etc.

With special focus on SME development in African Sub-continent along with other countries across the globe, WASME has identified and nominated Permanent Representative (PR) that will partner with WASME in implementing SME development and promotion activities. It includes:



Skill Development & EDP programmes, end to end support for business/ enterprise development by facilitating through consultancy, technology transfer, trade facilitation, incubation support, market, export development and research & development activities to SMEs.



Training of the Trainers (TOT) programme for Skill Development project in all technical trades.



Extending support to SMEs in the area of Digital Infrastructure, E-Commerce, Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, Robotics, Electric Vehicle (EV), Renewable Energy (RE), Software Development & Hardware etc.



GAP study in various fields and expert consultations for incubation including programmes on enhancing export and marketing.



Access to credit and market by preparing sample Detailed Project Report (DPR) by including cost effective & right technology.



Exposure of the global expertise and experience of WASME to SMEs, through B2B meetings, exhibitions/trade fairs, outreach programmes, buyer-seller meetings and activities with other member countries of WASME.



Advising, formulating and implementing schemes and programmes for enterprises at regional and national level.

WASME is open for collaborating with organizations in different countries and work closely to identify critical issues and problems faced by SMEs and draft an action plan to empower and nurture the growth of SMEs in respective country. Please send your interest or query at dg@wasmeinfo.org and directorpnd@wasmeinfo.org.

WASME EVENTS



AGRI PROGRESS EXPO 2024
an international exhibition on **AGRICULTURE MACHINERY & DAIRY TECHNOLOGY**

19-21 January 2024, Ludhiana Exhibition Center G.T. Road, Sahnewal, Ludhiana

WASME Pavilion at AGRI PROGRESS EXPO 2024

Agricultural Machinery & Equipment, Tractor/harvester/rotavator, Fertilizers / Bio-manure, Agriculture Seeds Manufacturers / Exporters, Agro Chemicals / Pesticides / Insecticides manufacturers, Irrigation / Fertigation / Water Management Equipment, Greenhouses / Equipment Suppliers / Agro Textiles, Precision Farming Products, Climate Control & Automation Equipment, Planting Material / Seeding, Dairy Technology & Equipment, Dairy, Poultry & Live Stock Companies, Livestock Technology, Veterinary Products, Cooling, Fermentation & Freezing System, Cold Room & Refrigeration Appliances, Digital Temperature Controller, Animal Nutrition Health Products / Equipment

AGRI PROGRESS EXPO Key Highlights	250+ Exhibitors	50,000+ Visitors	10,000+ Products & Services	Latest Manufacturing Technology	New Business Opportunities	Quality Manufacturer Suppliers	Ideal Networking Platform	3 days expo on Dairy, Agriculture & Poultry Expo	Community Meet up.
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Participation Packages		Travel and Accommodation	
Stall Size	12 sq.mt. (4m x 3m) and Multiple Thereof for 3 days	Item	Details
Amount in US\$	US \$ 300 Per Sq. mtr	Lodging in 3 / 4 Star Hotel including breakfast per day/person	US\$ 89 (Single occupancy) US\$ 99 (Double occupancy)
Standard Inclusions	Floored carpet, Fabricated stall, Side and rear wall panels, Exhibitors name on Facia, One Laminated Table, Two Chairs, One Dust Bin, Three Spot Lights, One 5 Amp Plug Socket, One Entry in Participant directory	Hotel Buffet Lunch & Dinner per\ day\ person	US \$ 50
		Air Fare	To be borne by the participants

Registration Interested participants/ exhibitors can send their registration queries at dg@wasmeinfo.org, directorpnd@wasmeinfo.org latest by December 20, 2023



Ride Asia EXPO 2024
Bicycles | E-Vehicles | Sports & Fitness | Toys

19-21 April 2024, Pragati Maidan, New Delhi

WASME Pavilion at Ride Asia EXPO 2024

The exhibition will be showcasing Bicycle, Bicycle Parts, Tricycle, Bicycle Accessories, Tyre and Tube, Air Pumps, Bicycle Safety Gears and Guards, Folding Bicycle, Cycle Rickshaw, Air Filling Station, Ride On, Battery Toys, Battery Operated Vehicles, Battery Cars, Battery Bikes, Educational Toys And Games, Wooden Toys, Model Construction, Hobbies, Wooden Toys etc.

Ride Asia EXPO Key Highlights	3 day expo on E-Vehicles, E-Bikes, Bicycles, Sports and Fitness Industry	World Renowned Exhibition Center PRAGATI MAIDAN, NEW DELHI	Efficient Networking	Face to face interaction between the Buyers & Sellers	On spot business generation	Best platform for new product launches	Visitor base from All India Level	Interaction with senior industry executives
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Participation Packages		Travel and Accommodation	
Stall Size	12 sq.mt. (4m x 3m) and Multiple Thereof for 3 days	Item	Details
Amount in US\$	US \$ US \$350 Per Sq. M	Lodging in 3 / 4 Star hotel including breakfast per day/person	US\$ 89 (Single occupancy) US\$ 99 (Double occupancy)
Standard Inclusions	Floored carpet, Fabricated stall, Side and rear wall panels, Exhibitors name on Facia, One Laminated Table, Two Chairs, One Dust Bin, Three Spot Lights, One 5 Amp Plug Socket, One Entry in Participant directory	Hotel Buffet Lunch & Dinner per\ day\ person	US \$ 50
		Air Fare	To be borne by the participants

Registration Interested participants/ exhibitors can send their registration queries at dg@wasmeinfo.org, directorpnd@wasmeinfo.org latest by February 28, 2024



MACH AUTO EXPO 2024
An Exhibition on Machine Tools & Automation Technology

23-26 February 2024, Ludhiana Exhibition Center, G.T. Road, Sahnewal, Ludhiana

WASME Pavilion at MACH AUTO EXPO 2024

The exhibition will be showcasing latest and best in class Machine Tools – Cutting, Machine Tools – Forming, Robotics & Automation, Machine Tools Accessories, Electrical & Electronics Products including Cable Trays, Electronic Enclosures, Control Panels, Electric Motors etc., Hydraulic & Pneumatics, Welding & Cutting, Industrial Supplies etc.

Mach Auto Expo Key Highlights	13 th Edition	650+ Exhibitors	50,000+ Visitors	10,000+ Products	3 lac Sq. ft. Covered Area
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Participation Packages		Travel and Accommodation	
Stall Size	12 sq.mt. (4m x 3m) and Multiple Thereof for 4 days	Item	Details
Amount in US\$	US\$ 300 Per Sq.m	Lodging in 3 / 4 Star Hotel including breakfast per day/person	US\$ 89 (Single occupancy) US\$ 99 (Double occupancy)
Standard Inclusions	Floored carpet, Fabricated stall, Side and rear wall panels, Exhibitors name on Facia, One Laminated Table, Two Chairs, One Dust Bin, Three Spot Lights, One 5 Amp Plug Socket, One Entry in Participant directory	Hotel Buffet Lunch & Dinner per\ day\ person	US \$ 50
		Air Fare	To be borne by the participants

Registration Interested participants/ exhibitors can send their registration queries at dg@wasmeinfo.org, directorpnd@wasmeinfo.org latest by December 31, 2023



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F&B products, F&B processing, and packaging technology for the finished food and commodities including Sweets & Confectionery, Dairy, Dry Fruits, Fruits & Vegetables, Indian Ethnic Food & Snacks, Meat, Poultry & Seafood, Non- Alcoholic Beverages, Pulses, Grain, Sugar & Flour, Ingredients, Fragrances & Extracts, Consumer Foods, Wine & Alcoholic Beverages, Tea & Coffee, Oil & Oil Seeds, Organic & Health Food.

Indusfood 2023 Key Highlights	80+ countries represented	26,000+ SQM exhibition Area	USD 1 Billion on spot business Generated	35,000 Pre-scheduled meetings	2,000+ Pre-screened buyers	1,000+ Brands	600+ Exhibitors
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Participation Packages		Travel and Accommodation	
Stall Size	Shell Scheme 9 SQM	Item	Details
Amount in US\$	3,000	Lodging in 3 / 4 Star hotel including breakfast per day/person	US\$ 89 (Single occupancy) US\$ 99 (Double occupancy)
Standard Inclusions	1 Table, 4 Chairs, 1 Waste-bin, Carpet, 3 Spotlights, Facia Name (Max 20 Characters), 1 KW Power Supply (Single Phase) Wall Partitions, Delegate Entry Badges – 4	Hotel Buffet Lunch & Dinner per\ day\ person	US \$ 50
		Air Fare	To be borne by the participants

Registration Interested participants/ exhibitors can send their registration queries at dg@wasmeinfo.org, directorpnd@wasmeinfo.org latest by December 10, 2023

For more details please contact at
dg@wasmeinfo.org, directorpnd@wasmeinfo.org
+91 98113 96682



UNIDO

New Alliance for Special Agro-Industrial Processing Zones commits \$3bn investment to boost African agriculture and food production

The African Development Bank Group, Afreximbank, Arise Integrated Industrial Platforms, the Islamic Development Bank Group and UNIDO have launched a new private sector-focused alliance to bridge the critical financing gap in agriculture.

At the 2023 Africa Investment Forum's Market Days, founding members of the Alliance for Special Agro-Industrial Processing Zones announced US\$3bn in new investment to transform Africa's underdeveloped rural areas into agro-industrial corridors of prosperity. The Alliance, comprising development financial institutions, the private sector and development-oriented technical partners, will also help streamline the development and delivery of Special Agro-Industrial Processing Zones projects.

The new commitments consist of US\$1.1 bn by the African Development Bank Group, US\$1bn by Afreximbank, US \$300m by the Islamic Development Bank Group (IsDB) and US\$600m from Arise Integrated Industrial Platforms (Arise IIP) and its partners.

Akinwumi A. Adesina, President of the African Development Bank Group, said, *"The Alliance will raise funds through various investment windows for project preparation, project development and construction, and financing for tenant companies."* *"By doing so, the Alliance will bridge the critical financing gap, complement existing initiatives, and*

mobilize resources towards our common goal of enhancing agricultural value addition in Africa."

According to the Alliance members, meeting this financing goal will deliver an additional 15 to 20 SAPZ projects in various countries across the continent and improve administrative, policy and investment incentives.

UNIDO brings a wealth of technical assistance knowledge, practical experience, tools and methodologies to the Alliance.

Gunther Beger, UNIDO Managing Director of the Directorate for Sustainable Development Goals, Innovation and Economic Transformation, said, *"We have a lot of experience in developing, planning and implementing industrial parks and special economic zones,"* adding, *"The Alliance presents a completely new approach to transform Africa's agro-food system. This is a much-needed partnership of financial institutions, public and private sector players."*

Special Agro-Industrial Processing Zones (SAPZs) stimulate structural transformation in agriculture by connecting rural and urban development through the zone's ecosystem. These zones integrate smallholder farmers into value chains through logistics and infrastructure, linking them to agro-industrial processors and consumer markets.

Prof. Benedict Oramah, President and Chairman of the Board of Directors of Afreximbank, welcomed the emergence of the Alliance and suggested that, to attract the private sector, the creation of continental

regulatory bodies that countries could respect should be considered.

Arise IIP CEO, Gagan Gupta, underlined the need for infrastructure around the zones that reflects the need of these communities, including housing, transportation, health and extension services. *“These zones rely on the governments for policy frameworks, supporting infrastructure, and training and vocational centres,”* he said.

Rwanda’s Minister of State for Treasury, Richard Tusabe, said, “Special Agro-Industrial Processing Zones will give us a chance to mass produce the food we need to feed our population.”

The Africa Investment Forum draws African heads of government, investors, transaction sponsors and development financial institutions.

Source: <https://www.unido.org/news/new-alliance-special-agro-industrial-processing-zones-commits-3bn-investment-boost-african-agriculture-and-food-production>

ITC

Small businesses hard hit by conflict, instability: SME Competitiveness Outlook

The flagship report of the International Trade Centre (ITC), SME Competitiveness Outlook 2023, released on 29th November, reveals that small businesses can take action to survive and grow in fragile, conflict-affected contexts.

Small businesses make up 90% of all businesses in fragile settings – and when they survive, they provide many of the jobs, goods and services needed to meet basic societal needs.

Beyond survival, when set on a growth trajectory, they are more likely to help sustain long-term stability and security of a country. This matters, as the world is becoming more fragile: 86% of the world’s poor could be living in fragile states by 2030. Fragility threatens livelihoods now and increasingly, spills across borders.

Competitiveness as a coping mechanism

Though most businesses are hard hit by fragility, the impact hits small firms, informal businesses, women and young people hardest. For example, 34% of small businesses are intensely affected by fragility, compared to 18% of large firms.

A new ITC report, Small Businesses in Fragility: From Survival to Growth, shows that businesses can prioritize three actions to survive and grow: stay connected with institutions, buyers and other businesses; improve financial management; and retain skilled staff.

It unveils the new ITC Fragility Exposure Index, which measures fragility at the firm level, based on a survey across eight countries. The index shows that 35% of small businesses that engaged with business support organizations hired employees – a positive sign of growth – in fragile settings, versus just 14% of small businesses that grew without such connections.

Strong internal financial management is another characteristic that can help lessen the impact of fragility on a business. Survey results show that companies that keep records of all business and financial transactions were twice as likely to report employee growth.

Finally, 41% of enterprises with an established hiring process expanded their labour force in fragile contexts, versus 31% of businesses that were able to do so without strong hiring practices. The employees were also more likely to have the right set of skills, which matters, as skilled workers are more efficient at adapting operations to new contexts, allowing firms to continue operating in periods of instability.

Addressing fragility: Bottom up, top down

Helping firms cope with the prevailing state of fragility is not enough. The report finds that under extreme violence, competitiveness ceases to protect

firms – and can even expose them to threats such as violence and extortion.

A two-pronged approach can help address the root causes of fragility, one in which both small businesses and governments have critical roles to play. Governments and development partners can ensure enterprises have access to the hard and soft infrastructure they need to continue operations, reduce red tape related to paperwork and processes, and promote clear and consistent rules and modes of operating.

In parallel, small businesses can learn to adapt to changing circumstances, forge deeper relationships with partners, and adopt new ways of working that make them more competitive both locally and internationally.

Only by working together can the foundations of inclusive, sustainable growth be rebuilt, and pave the way for a more stable future.

Source: <https://intracen.org/news-and-events/news/small-businesses-hard-hit-by-conflict-instability-sme-competitiveness-outlook>

UNECE

New “green” loan options for SMEs and underserved individuals in North Macedonia

New loan options with Performance-Based Payments (PBPs) will be made available to Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) and seven target groups of creditworthy but underserved individuals/households from North Macedonia. The loans are to be used for investments in renewable energy (RE) and energy efficiency (EE) solutions, such as: photovoltaics, heat pumps, inverters, solar panels, efficient heating systems, etc.

This was announced in the first week of November in Skopje at the “Green Finance Facility” Product Launch, where representatives from the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, the United Nations

agencies in the country, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and local commercial banks emphasized the needs, features and benefits of these loans.

“Considering that all countries are dealing with many challenges, such as the post-covid economic recovery, the economic and energy crisis, I believe that this project with products aimed at small and medium-sized enterprises and individuals from underserved categories is an excellent opportunity to express our strong commitment to accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals” – said Mr. Fatmir Bytyqi, the Deputy Prime Minister in Charge of Economic Affairs, Coordination of the Economic Departments, and Investments in the Government of North Macedonia.

As part of the package, the GFF through the partner financial institutions will provide ex-post, performance-based payments of up to 10% of the loan principal for SMEs and 30% of the loan principal in ex-post, performance-based payments for target groups of households i.e., individuals.

Within the households’ group, GFF loans are made available to the following seven target groups of creditworthy but underserved individuals/households: female-headed households, single parents, households with people with disabilities, Roma, employees affected by Covid-19, remittance recipients and returning migrants. Both SMEs and individuals/households will receive free technical advice on choosing the most appropriate renewable energy and energy efficiency solutions. These investments are expected to reduce energy consumption, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and contribute to cleaner air in North Macedonia.

“GFF aims to bring the benefits of green transition to SMEs and groups of society who are usually the last to join and benefit from the green transition, such as single parent households, Roma, households

with persons with disabilities, and recipients of remittances. I hope GFF loans will make investments in renewable energy and energy efficiency easier and more affordable for small businesses and homes” – said Ms. Rossana Dudziak, UN Resident Coordinator in North Macedonia.

The programme is aligned with and supports the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (SDCF) targets. It is expected to result in 70,068 MWh of annual energy savings, 80,510 tons of CO₂-eq emissions avoided, and 10.7 MW in new renewable energy capacity. Furthermore, enabling access to affordable financing for renewable energy and energy efficiency solutions will contribute to advancements towards SDGs 7 and 13.

UNECE Deputy Executive Secretary, Mr. Dmitry Mariyasyn, stated: “In our view, the focus of the project on small and medium enterprises is very important because they account for up to 60 per cent of carbon emissions globally, but often lack access to climate finance or transition finance. To ensure that countries get on a trajectory to net-zero in time, we need to have SMEs on board and have financing, tools, and technologies in place”.

UNECE is providing technical assistance to the project and is in charge of designing and implementing training to support the use of eligible renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies for small and medium enterprises and households in North Macedonia.

“The EBRD is delighted for this strong partnership with the Government of North Macedonia and the United Nations which enabled the launch of this new programme. It leverages our strong relationships with local financial institutions to expand the availability of green finance to the local SMEs” – said Ms. Aleksandra Vukosavljevic, EBRD Director, Financial Institutions, Western Balkans and Eastern Europe.

The “Green Finance Facility” has a total value of USD 46 million and will be implemented until April 2026. It is financially supported by the Joint SDG Fund and the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, with loan financing from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and local commercial banks.

“Two years ago, this project was only one of the over 150 proposals from over 100 countries worldwide, which applied for co-funding from the UN Joint SDG Fund. Amid intense competition GFF North Macedonia was selected as one of 10 programmes globally recognized for its significant impact, investment readiness, and substantial co-financing leverage” – said Mr. Armen Grigoryan, UNDP Resident Representative in North Macedonia.

“The implementation of this innovative climate solution includes government entities, UN agencies, an international financial institution, think tanks, and private sector banks. It includes everyone. This model could be an example of partnership development that can scale up and replicate to other countries” – said Ms. Rania Sharshr, IOM Director of Peace & Development Coordination.

The “Green Finance Facility” project is implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), together with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD).

Source: <https://unece.org/media/press/385019>

IFAD

Over 200,000 farmers to benefit from IFAD, ADB initiative to boost dryland farming in Indonesia

The UN’s International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Government of Indonesia signed a new initiative aimed at transforming dryland farming to make it more

climate-resilient and profitable, bolstering the livelihoods of over 200,000 farmers over the next five years. The Holistic Development and Diversification of Agriculture Project (HDDAP), co-financed by the Asian Development Bank, aims to elevate food availability, accessibility, and quality, while building resilience to climate change.

“HDDAP marks a significant step forward in transforming Indonesia’s agriculture sector by empowering small-scale farmers to adapt to climate change, increase their incomes, and produce more nutritious food for their communities,” said Hani Abdelkader Elsadani, IFAD Country Director for Indonesia. “IFAD is proud to partner with the Indonesian government and the ADB to implement this innovative project, which aligns with our commitment to sustainable agriculture and rural development.”

Indonesia is a fast-growing country with a large and diverse population. Agriculture plays a significant role in the Indonesian economy, employing a third of workforce – around 38 million people. Most farmers are smallholders working on less than one hectare of land. Poverty is more pronounced in rural areas and farming households are 3.5 times more likely to be poor – and vulnerable to climate-related shocks – than non-farming households. Poverty, regional disparities, and climate change pose huge challenges, with rising sea levels, erratic rainfall patterns, and intensifying extreme weather events threatening the livelihoods of millions of farmers and jeopardizing food security. Dryland farmers are particularly disadvantaged due to their remote location. They have no access to irrigation and are hampered by weak local institutional capacity and limited access to inputs, technology and finance.

HDDAP is designed to address Indonesia’s climate change challenge in 13 districts across North Sumatra, West Java, Central Java, East Java, Bali, East Nusa Tenggara, and South Sulawesi by promoting

climate-smart agriculture practices, improving infrastructure resilience, and strengthening the capacity of farmers and communities to adapt to changing climate conditions. It will introduce drought-resistant crop varieties that can withstand water stress and maintain productivity in drier conditions; train farmers in water conservation practices, such as efficient irrigation techniques and rainwater harvesting, to optimize water use and reduce reliance on rainfall; and promote sustainable farming practices, such as organic farming and agroforestry, to enhance soil health and reduce reliance on chemical inputs.

The project will also invest in upgrading irrigation infrastructure to ensure reliable water access for farmers, even during periods of water scarcity. It will also support building infrastructure such as flood-resistant roads and storage facilities to protect crops and livelihoods from extreme weather events. Farmers will receive training and extension services on climate-risk management strategies, to help them to make informed decisions and adapt their farming practices to the changing climate.

The project also focuses on enhancing production by making available high-quality planting materials and integrating digital technology in seed production. It aims to develop horticulture villages, consolidating small-scale farmers’ efforts, promoting economies of scale, and forming effective farmers’ organizations to produce high-value crops.

HDDAP is funded by a loan of €36.93 million from IFAD and of €78.49 million by ADB, for a total project size of €129.04 million. Since 1980, IFAD has supported 21 programmes and projects in Indonesia for an investment of US\$709.50 million, directly benefiting more than 3.9 million rural households

Source: <https://www.ifad.org/en/web/latest/-/over-200000-farmers-to-benefit-from-ifad-adb-initiative-to-boost-dryland-farming-in-indonesia>

ABOUT WASME

WASME is an International Non-Governmental Organization that has observer and consultative status with many UN agencies, such as UNIDO, UNCTAD, UNICITRAL, WIPO, ILO, ECOSOC, UNESCAP, ITC, and UNESCO. Additionally, WASME has several inter-governmental and international organization affiliations. It has been striving to stimulate, foster, promote, and coordinate international cooperation for the growth & development of MSMEs.

WASME was founded in 1980 with the goal of supporting MSMEs in member countries. We have achieved this through our strong association with local government bodies, regional authorities, international linkages, civil societies, SMEs, etc. We are continuously working to improve our innovative and sustainable framework so that we can better serve MSMEs around the world.

WASME's vision is further realized and advanced with the consistent support of its large base of member representatives in over 100 countries.



WASME's focus is on MSMEs by providing technology transfer and trade promotion through international/regional conferences/workshops/seminars. WASME also organizes programs on various

important issues for the growth of MSMEs such as IPRs, Skill Development, Certification & Accreditation, ICT, Marketing, Global Supply Chain, Technology Transfer, Entrepreneurship development, quality control, AI, Machine learning, robotics, etc.

WASME also publishes monthly "World SME News" which features developments in the MSME sector from around the world, as well as a fortnightly e-newsletter called the "SME e-Bulletin". These two organs act as a way to disseminate information among members and advocate for sustainable and regenerative MSME development and growth.

CORE ACTIVITIES



Articulating concerns and interests of MSMEs at various national and international level.



Developing relationship between MSMEs in developed and developing countries by encouraging enterprise-to-enterprise cooperation in the area of skill development, technology transfer and export;



International cooperation by networking with MSME promotion organisation at national and international level.



Enlarging collaboration with UN agencies and international organisations.



Capacity building of MSMEs through seminar, EDP and skill development programmes.



Information dissemination on technology, export, marketing, match making etc. in MSME sector.



Carrying out research and studies on national/international issues confronting MSMEs.

MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

WASME has members in different countries across the world. Member constituents represent industrial promotional organizations of various types and come from highly industrialized, developing and transition economies, as well as least developed countries. WASME has a broad membership spectrum that includes:

Categories

General Members	Associate Members	Associate Membership-Indian Chapter
<ul style="list-style-type: none">♦ Ministries/ Government Departments♦ Public Sector Undertakings/Semi Government Organization♦ Export Promotion Councils/ Trade Councils♦ Financial Institutions/ Banks/ NBFCs♦ SME Promotion Organization/Enterprise Development Organization <p>Chambers/ Industry Associations/ SME Associations</p> <p>International & Regional Federations/ Associations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">♦ Corporations, Consulting Firms♦ Partnership/ Proprietorship/ LLP etc♦ Research Institutes/ Technical Institutes/ Universities♦ Individual Consultants/ Experts/ Students♦ NGOs/ SMEs etc.	<p>Any General Member or Associate Member who is willing to be Permanent Member of WASME</p>

Benefits to Members

Collaborating with other members on issues of common interest to enable local SMEs gain access to a variety of advantages, such as:

- ♦ Making advantage of a vast network of WASME to create new alliances
- ♦ Building a global network and making your voice heard
- ♦ Globally promoting your company using WASME marketing platforms
- ♦ Possessing the chance to organise or present at WASME Global Conferences, Seminars, Exhibitions, events, and programmes
- ♦ Having your interests represented at multilateral organizations including UN organizations, national and international forums etc.
- ♦ Sharing your opinions and ideas in WASME publications
- ♦ Get access to WASME Resource Centre of Knowledge, Experts, Technology, Trade Facilitation, Financial Assistance, Market Linkage etc.
- ♦ Get tailor made services and support

For more information visit our

Website: www.wasmeinfo.org

Contact: membership@wasmeinfo.org

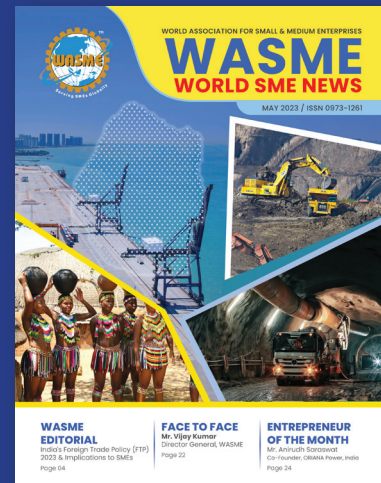
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