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ISSUE: 16-29 February 2024

Cambodia

Finance ministry official highlights support for SMEs

Ministry of Economy and Finance secretary of state Phan Phalla has outlined several steps the government has taken to support the growth of small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

While addressing a February 19 public forum on the 2024 national Budget Law (BL), which includes a number of important mechanisms aiming to strengthen SMEs, Phalla also outlined several investment incentives, provided by new sub-decrees to support the government's efforts to diversify the economy and promote the ease of doing business. *"I want to make people aware of the work we have done relating to the development of SMEs, as I am concerned there are some people operating in this sector who may not be informed about all of the support that is available,"* he said. He explained that the Kingdom's investment law has been amended to allow investors to export many products tariff-free. The idea behind the amendment is to allow SMEs to connect with larger companies. In addition, the government established the state-owned SME Bank of Cambodia in 2020, with the sole goal of supporting SMEs.

To date, the bank has provided favourable financing to 3,200 SMEs, with a total loan balance of approximately \$490 million.

Te Tang Po, chairman of the Federation of Associations for SMEs of Cambodia (FASMEC), has previously noted how the SME Bank – as well as the Credit Guarantee Corporation of Cambodia (CGCC), the Agricultural and Rural Development Bank (ARDB) and some commercial banks – has provided capital to boost the sector. Although the financing was beneficial, he believes it was up to the association members to grow their businesses. *"No matter how much support the government provides, I want those in the SME sector to keep applying themselves and working hard. While the SME Bank, CGCC and ARDB provide low-interest loans, it is crucial that we repay them so the bank can provide capital to others,"* he said.

Keo Mom, president of the Cambodia Women Entrepreneurs Association (CWEA), said the government's assistance for the SME sector, especially through low-interest loans, has made a large contribution to business owners' ability to rehabilitate and expand their operations post-pandemic, as well as other global crises. *"We have also seen strong efforts by the government to attract foreign investment. Of course, as more and more investors come, other sectors such as retails and SMEs will benefit directly and indirectly, through supplying goods and services to larger businesses,"* she added. She believes that the government's close attention to promoting the value of SMEs has created jobs, promoted supply chains and production, and expanded access to domestic and international markets.

The government has designated June 27 as the annual National Day for Small and Medium Enterprises.

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Congo

African Development Bank grants \$7 million trade finance guarantee facility to Access Bank DR Congo to support SMEs and local businesses

On 20 February 2024, the Board of Directors of the African Development Bank Group (www.AfDB.org) approved a \$7 million trade finance guarantee facility grant to Access Bank DR Congo.

The African Development Bank will now be able to provide up to a 100% guarantee to confirming banks for the non-payment risk from the confirmation of letters of credit and similar trade finance instruments issued by Access Bank DR Congo for the benefit of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and local businesses. Over the next three years, the Bank will also support the import of essential goods and various inputs in such key economic sectors as health and agriculture, as well as \$40 million in trade.

“This facility will help improve the provision of trade finance services by providing essential guarantees for the confirmation of letters of credit issued for SMEs, Access Bank DR Congo’s target client group,” said Lamin Drammeh, Head of the Trade Finance Division at the African Development Bank.

“Access Bank has always been passionate about the economic development of the communities we serve,” said Arinze K. Osuachala, CEO of Access Bank DR Congo. *“Our main goal is to understand and respond to the real needs of the Congolese people, to support the economic growth of the DRC. We are thrilled to be taking this step, because the Facility demonstrates the commitment of Access Bank DR Congo and the African Development Bank Group to advancing trade in Africa”.*

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Egypt

30 million dollars to support small and medium enterprises in Egypt

In the presence of the Egyptian Ministers of Planning, Supply, Petroleum, The Islamic Corporation for the Development of the Private Sector (ICD), a member of the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) group, signed a letter of intent with Banque Misr to provide a \$30 million financing line dedicated to finance private sector projects in Egypt and to support small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Egypt. The letter of intent was inked in the presence of high-ranking Egyptian officials, including the Ministers of Planning and Economic Development, Supply and Internal Trade, Petroleum and Mineral Resources.

The ICD's Acting CEO, Engineer Hani Salem Sonbol, and Banque Misr's Chairman Mr. Mohamed EL-Etreby, signed the letter of intent.

Commenting on the signing, Engineer Sonbol Acting CEO of ICD said, "*Banque Misr is a valuable customer for ICD. This new financing line builds upon our successful 2017 partnership with Banque Misr, where we provided line of finance of \$25 million for a period of 5 years, the current agreement aligns with our goals in Egypt by increasing access to finance for SMEs, fostering job creation, and empowering youth and women entrepreneurs in Egypt.*"

Since its inception, ICD has provided \$315 million in financing to Egypt, supporting private sector companies, financing lines to banks, and direct investments. These funds have demonstrably contributed to economic growth, job creation, and development across various sectors, including energy, food, and industry.

For his part, Mr. Mohamed EL-Etreby, Chairman of Banque Misr, confirmed that this signing is a continuation of the ongoing cooperation with the ICD in financing the private sector companies, small and medium enterprises, explaining that this cooperation is a step within the framework of Banque Misr's strategy to support and assist projects of all categories, to which the bank attaches importance by providing all financial and non-financial services to meet the needs of customers in this sector to advance it in a way that reflects positively on the national economy by improving economic indicators, increasing rates of economic development, encouraging the local product, and reducing the import bill.

Banque Misr is always keen to enter into many initiatives and protocols to expand financing for the project sector out of its belief that these projects are the engine and pillar of economic growth.

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Gambia

[Gambia launches Project on empowering SMEs for Women](#)

The Gambia government and partners recently launched a new project dubbed the 'IP+ Accelerator Program for women SMEs in the Gambia.'

The program focuses on the use of Intellectual Property (IP) in strengthening the competitiveness of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in The Gambia. The program is supporting 50 SMEs in The Gambia. Prof. Muhammadou M.O. Kah, Gambia's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Office in Geneva, in his opening remarks highlighted the importance of the project. He says the project comes at a particularly crucial time for The Gambia as it aspires to propel growth.

“In today’s competitive and dynamic global business environment, it is not enough to be just creative and innovative, rather businesses need to understand the value of their creation, how to market it, and how to build a portfolio of IP rights to protect it in a way that helps generate revenue and wealth,” Prof. Kah remarked.

He took the opportunity to thank with appreciation and gratitude the leadership of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) for the important initiative under the visionary leadership of DG Darren Tang.

The Solicitor General and Legal Secretary, Hussien Thomasi, for his part thanked WIPO and Gambia Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) for cooperating with the Ministry of Justice to support and mentor the SMEs on the use of intellectual property to boost their businesses.

He notes that Intellectual Property can be a valuable asset that will set SMEs apart from their competitors and help them thrive in the marketplace. He emphasizes that IP is a superpower that can give SMEs a competitive edge in the market and it plays a vital role in their growth and sustainability.

GCCI Board Director and Lead Consultant, David Jeng, gave an overview of the project and what is expected of the SMEs whilst underscoring the need to gain Intellectual Property Protection to grow their business globally and harness the opportunities of the AFCFTA. He ended by challenging the SMEs to use the IP and great success stories for their business whilst undergoing the program.

Ms. Loretta Asiedu, Acting Director of WIPO’s Division for Africa, made introductory remarks on behalf of her organization. “Mentees, you are now being equipped with knowledge on key processes, IP tools, and the support needed in acquiring IP rights and making effective use of IP tools for business purposes,” she said.

“The successful implementation of this project will not only advance your participation in the global IP ecosystem but also broaden your knowledge, providing you with the opportunity to capitalize on IP tools to gain competitive business advantage in local and global markets,” she added.

The keynote address was delivered by Mr. Hasan Kleib, WIPO Deputy Director General who highlighted the significance of the project and its potential impact on the SMEs in The Gambia. Mr. Kleib underscored the importance of SMEs, which form an essential component of the national economy and provide a crucial source of employment for youth. “With around 55% of The Gambia’s population under the age of 25, and more than 40% of SMEs in The Gambia being youth-owned, empowering SMEs is a strategic move towards sustainable development and innovation in The Gambia,” he stressed.

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Iraq

ILO and KfW join forces to empower small and medium-sized enterprises in Iraq

The ILO and the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development through the German Development Bank (KfW) have launched a transformative partnership aimed at empowering small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Iraq.

The new "Promotion of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) in Iraq program" is a collaborative endeavor that strives to unlock access to sustainable finance, placing a special emphasis on supporting youth and women entrepreneurs. The initiative contributes to fostering decent work opportunities and nurturing a prosperous future for the Iraqi economy.

Despite Iraq's abundant oil resources, the predominant role of the public sector, which contributes only about 30 per cent to national GDP, presents challenges to economic diversification. The nation grapples with high unemployment rates and a complex business environment. According to the World Bank's Doing Business 2020 report, Iraq ranked 172nd out of 190 countries for ease of doing business, with major challenges such as contract negotiation, cross-border trade, and particularly accessing credit (where Iraq ranks 186th out of 190 countries).

A significant impediment lies in the limited access of many Iraqis to finance, with less than 7 per cent of GDP allocated to private sector credit. The Iraqi Company for Banking Guarantees (ICBG) plays a pivotal role in mitigating credit risks but faces obstacles in expanding access to finance for smaller businesses.

The new five-year initiative, spanning from January 2024 to December 2028, secures USD 21,5 million in funding from the German Government through KfW to markedly enhance access to finance for Iraqi SMEs, which comes in line with the priorities of the government program to support the private sector in order to create decent job opportunities, especially for youth and women. It will also work to build the capabilities of the partners in this program, including the Iraqi Company for Bank Guarantees and partner banks, as well as small and medium-sized companies that will benefit from this program.

This program signifies a crucial step towards building a more inclusive and sustainable Iraqi economy. By amplifying the voices and capabilities of SMEs, we not only create jobs but also drive innovation and propel economic growth. Partnering with KfW on this initiative will help ILO to further support private sector to take its role for creating decent and sustainable job opportunities for youth and women. is a privilege for the ILO", said Maha Katta, ILO country coordinator in Iraq.

"Small and medium enterprises are at the core of a country's successful economic development- not only in Iraq but also in Germany. They create employment opportunities, foster growth, and contribute to economic perspectives. Together with ILO and the Iraqi Company for Credit Guarantees we address one of the biggest obstacles for SMEs in Iraq: access to adequate financial services," said Maximilian Rasch, Chargé d'Affaires at the German Embassy in Baghdad.

"Private sector development and particularly small and medium enterprises (SMEs) play a key role in economic growth. Yet, the limited availability of finance to SMEs in

Iraq has been identified as one of the most severe obstacles for SMEs' business to thrive. We are therefore extremely pleased to cooperate with ILO and the Iraqi Company for Credit Guarantees in providing credit guarantees to Iraqi banks so that they can expand their SME business with a special focus on supporting women and start-ups", said Anna-Christine Janke, the Director of the KfW Office in Iraq.

From his side, Mr. Adel Akab, the President of the Iraqi Industries Union, stated, *"This program is ambitious for the union, especially since it comes from the International Labour Organization and an industrial state like Germany. With the concerted efforts of all, it will play a significant role in developing these small and medium projects in Iraq."*

"The Iraqi Company for Banking Guarantees is the sole assurance institution in Iraq. However, the shortfall in financing remains a challenge for most small and medium-sized projects, leaving ample room for credit guarantee facilities in Iraq to play a significant role in addressing this challenge. We are pleased with this partnership, which will enable the company to fulfill its true role in developing small and medium projects," said Mr. Hussein Thamer, the Acting Director of the Iraqi Company for Banking Guarantees.

"This new joint program aims not only at enhancing access to finance for SMEs, in particular those involving youth and women entrepreneurs, but also serves as a testament to the role of collaboration across various stakeholders, including the UN, the government, local communities and international partners, in Iraq. It further underscores our commitment to creating inclusive opportunities and building a resilient, diversified, and sustainable economy that benefits every Iraqi", said Ghulam Isaczai, the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Iraq.

Representatives from the Ministry of Planning, the Ministry of Trade, Iraqi Private Banks League, and various representatives from different partnering entities concerned with the development of the private sector attended the launch ceremony.

The "Promotion of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) in Iraq" program envisions transforming the Iraqi SME credit system to foster decent work opportunities and sustainable economic development. With a target audience of 1,500 existing SMEs, and startups, the program aims to benefit 1,000 SMEs through credit guarantees.

Key program activities include establishing dedicated SME windows within select private financial institutions, implementing an effective credit guarantee scheme through ICBG, providing tailored technical assistance to financial institutions, ICBG, and SMEs, and delivering targeted business management and financial literacy training programs.

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Lebanon

ICTTM and Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture of Beirut and Mount Lebanon Sign MOU

The International Centre for Trade Transparency & Monitoring (ICTTM) is proud to announce a significant Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture of Beirut and Mount Lebanon (CCIA-BML). This MOU, effective today, marks a pivotal moment in ICTTM's expansion, as it is the first partnership with a Lebanese organization, highlighting the company's growing global influence.

Under this MOU, member SMEs of the Beirut Chamber will gain priority access to ICTTM's new and innovative tools, ADAMkyc and ADAMftd. These tools are being built as platforms, designed to enhance vital capabilities in key areas such as trade data analysis, market price and demand forecasts, locating active buyers and suppliers, supply chain mapping, KYC (Know Your Customer) and trade compliance. This collaboration is a testament to ICTTM's commitment to empowering organizations with advanced technological solutions, facilitating growth and access to new markets in the trade sector.

The Hon. David Wells, Board Chairman of the ICTTM, was pleased with this new partnership, stating, "We are very glad to collaborate with the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture of Beirut and Mount Lebanon. This MOU is a significant step towards our shared goal of enhancing global trade practices. We are excited to cooperate with CCIB and contribute to sustainable and transparent trade practices in Lebanon and beyond."

The Hon. Rabih Sabra, Director General of the CCIA-BML added, *"As Beirut chamber, we are pleased to sign this MOU with ICTTM and we hope that it would pave the way for a fruitful mutual collaboration and contribute to enhancing the business activity of our member SMEs and Lebanese enterprises at large"*.

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Romania

Romania's Govt. to guarantee EUR 12.5 bln of bank loans for SMEs

The Ministry of Finance continues the support measures for the business environment in Romania and proposes a normative act for the establishment of the IMM PLUS Program. The project ensures, until June 30, 2024, access to financing for companies that do not have the necessary sums for investment projects and for the continuation of the activity. The proposed budget is a maximum of 12.5 billion lei and guarantees can be granted up to a ceiling of 11.1 billion lei, for 11,500 beneficiaries. The normative act is published for consultation [HERE](#).

"We decided to continue one of the most successful programs implemented by Romania so far, in order to give SMEs the freedom to make those decisions that will ensure their positive dynamics in terms of increasing the number of employees, turnover, net profit and profit margin relative to sales. The data showed us that companies that have so far benefited from financing with the help of guarantees provided by the MF reported an average increase in revenues of 9%. Specifically, 9 out of 10 companies benefiting from state guarantees reported increases in income. This is precisely why we have allocated 12.5 billion lei for IMM Plus, to continue to support and encourage the development of SMEs and the business environment as a whole" , Minister Marcel Boloş explained.

The IMM Plus program extends the support measures established by the old IMM INVEST PLUS state aid scheme and is run through the National Credit Guarantee Fund for Small and Medium Enterprises (FNGCIMM), the Romanian Counter-Guarantee Fund (FRC) and the Credit Guarantee Fund Rural (FGCR).

The maximum values of state aid have been increased from 2,000,000 euros to 2,250,000 euros per enterprise/UAT, respectively from 250,000 euros to 280,000 euros for each enterprise operating in the primary agriculture sector and from 300,000 euros to 335,000 euros for each enterprise operating in the fishing and aquaculture sectors.

The development of the normative act is substantiated by the situation in which the state aid schemes developed under the Temporary Framework for state aid in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic (2020/C911/01) ceased to be valid on June 30, 2022, and those drawn up under the Temporary Crisis Framework for State aid measures to support the economy following Russia's aggression against Ukraine (2022/C131/01) on 31 December 2023.

The components of the IMM PLUS Program

The ROMANIA PLUS SME component facilitates access to financing for small and medium enterprises and small enterprises with medium market capitalization, including professionals, by accessing one or more loans for making investments or loans/credit lines for working capital, including for the refinancing of other investment loans or expenses intended for the purchase of shares and shares.

The AGRO PLUS component is dedicated to small and medium-sized enterprises and small mid-cap enterprises, including professionals in the fields of agriculture, fisheries, aquaculture and the food sector.

The SME PROD PLUS component aims to grant government guarantees requested to ensure liquidity and finance investments by SMEs, including start-ups, operating in productive sectors.

The CONSTRUCT PLUS component aims to grant government guarantees for improving energy efficiency, supporting investments in the field of green energy and aligning with the environmental objectives implemented by:

- SMEs and small mid-caps in the construction sector, including start-ups, as well as individual architects and architectural offices;
- Territorial Administrative Units (municipalities, cities, communes).

The RURAL PLUS component aims to provide transparent and non-discriminatory state guarantee facilities for investment loans and working capital loans/credit lines granted to farmers, small and medium-sized enterprises, as well as large enterprises in the field of agriculture, fishing, aquaculture and the food sector.

The INNOVATION PLUS component aims to grant government guarantees for innovative Romanian companies and/or promoting their products and services intended for export.

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Uzbekistan

[GITFC and Asia Alliance Bank Sign US\\$ 10 Million Agreement to Boost Private Sector in Uzbekistan](#)

ITFC and Asia Alliance Bank Sign US\$ 10 Million Line of Trade Financing Agreement to Boost Private Sector and SME Support in Uzbekistan. The International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC) and Asia Alliance Bank have inked an agreement to bolster trade financing for Uzbekistan's private sector, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Under the agreement, ITFC will provide a Line of Financing of US\$ 10 million to Asia Alliance Bank, aimed at meeting the trade finance requirements of private sector clients, with a specific emphasis on SMEs. Notably, this Line of Trade Financing facility will cater to the import and pre-export financing needs of private sector clients, including SMEs, in Uzbekistan. The funds will be extended under the Murabaha structure, ensuring adherence to Shariah principles.

Mr. Nazeem Noordali, Chief Operating Officer at ITFC, expressed his enthusiasm about the collaboration noting that Asia Alliance Bank is the first bank ITFC partnered with in Uzbekistan, saying, *"Since 2018, ITFC has allocated US\$19 million in financing to Asia Alliance Bank, reflecting our longstanding commitment to fostering economic growth and development in the country. This latest agreement further solidifies ITFC's dedication to supporting the private sector and SMEs in Uzbekistan."*

Mr. Obidjon Norkulov, First Deputy Chairman of The Management Board at Asia Alliance Bank, commented on the significance of the agreement, stating, *"The conclusion of this Agreement is aimed at maintaining and promoting the sustainable development and prosperity of small and medium-sized businesses in Uzbekistan, through the provision of financing that complies with Shariah principles. The allocated US\$ 10 million will be used to support Asia Alliance Bank's SME clients in meeting their trade finance needs."*

Since 2018, ITFC has approved Line of Trade Finance Facilities totaling US\$ 423 million in favor of 12 banks in Uzbekistan, highlighting the Corporation's substantial contributions to the country's trade finance landscape.

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Asia

Varaha Nets \$8.7 Mn To Boost Tech & Science Tech, Expand Asia Operations

This funding comes just a year after Varaha raised a seed round of \$4 Mn led by Orios Venture Partners. The raised funding will be used to improve Varaha's tech and science capabilities, expand operations in Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, and meet the growing demand for carbon credits. The cleantech startup helps farmers follow regenerative agricultural practices by creating carbon credits that increase their income and reduce operational costs.

Climatetech startup Varaha has raised \$8.7 Mn (INR 72.1 Cr) as a part of its Series A funding round led by RTP Global. The round also saw participation from existing investors Omnivore and Orios, with Japanese cooperative bank, Norinchukin Bank, AgFunder and Octave Wellbeing Economy Fund.

The startup plans to deploy the fresh proceeds to improve its tech and science capabilities, expand Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa operations and meet the growing demand for carbon credits. The funding comes over a year after Varaha raised a seed round of \$4 Mn led by Orios Venture Partners, with participation from Omnivore, RTP Global, Better Capital, and other angel investors like Kunal Shah.

Founded in 2022 by Madhur Jain, Ankita Garg and Vishal Kuchanur, Varaha generates carbon credits through its tech solutions. The startup helps farmers follow regenerative agricultural practices by creating carbon credits that increase their income and reduce operational costs.

Varaha's platform enrolls smallholder farmers, quantifies greenhouse gases (GHG), verifies carbon credits, and sells these credits to buyers. It claims to have enrolled over 700,000 acres of land in India, Bangladesh, Nepal and Kenya, working with more than 100 partners to onboard smallholder farmers. The startup also aims to increase this number by fourfold in the next 12-15 months. Varaha competes against the likes of EKI Energy and Nuture.farm.

"Today's funding is a testament to our commitment to drive impactful change. With the support of our investors, we're poised to roll up our sleeves and accelerate our efforts, empower smallholders, integrate cutting edge technology, and foster sustainable practices," Jain said.

Galina Chifina, partner, RTP Global Asia, said, *"The visionary and unique approach of Jain and his team to generating carbon credits through nature-based solutions has the potential to become a game-changer for the industry."*

According to Inc42 data until November 2023, funding for Indian climate tech startups has reached \$4 Bn since 2014, slightly surpassing the \$2.7 Bn raised by 2016.

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Europe

Microsoft's tie-up with French startup Mistral AI is getting antitrust review from EU

The European Union is looking into Microsoft's partnership with French startup Mistral AI as part of its broader review of the booming generative artificial intelligence sector to see if it raises any competition concerns.

The 27-nation bloc's executive commission said Tuesday in a brief statement that it's analyzing the agreement between the two companies announced a day earlier. Microsoft declined to comment. Mistral did not respond to a request for comment.

Microsoft said it was teaming up with Mistral through a 15 million euro (\$16 million) investment in the French company, which emerged less than a year ago. The agreement could cut the U.S. software giant's reliance on ChatGPT-maker OpenAI for supplying the next wave of chatbots and other generative AI products.

The commission, the EU's top antitrust enforcer, said it's including the deal as part of its broader review of the generative AI market. It's examining agreements between digital tech giants and generative AI developers and providers.

The EU last month started looking into Microsoft's multibillion deal with San Francisco-based OpenAI, which could lead to a formal merger investigation.

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Africa

Nigerian Blockchain Infrastructure Startup, BitPowr, to Expand to Asia after Surpassing \$200 Million in Transactions

BitPowr, a prominent provider of digital assets custody and blockchain infrastructure, has reached a significant milestone by surpassing \$200 million in total transactions processed on its platform since its inception in January 2022.

"In 2023, we processed over 15 million API calls made by our customers and handled more than 700,000 transactions across multiple blockchains worth over \$200m+," the company has indicated.

According to Toby Oyetoke, the Co-Founder of BitPowr, Asian customers have outpaced African customers in terms of their contribution to the company's achievement of the \$200 million transaction milestone. This underscores the increasing demand among financial institutions in the Asian market for convenient access to blockchain tools and infrastructure necessary for the launch and expansion of their products and services.

“Currently, we do up to \$20 million per month in terms of traction volume processed, and that is from April 2022 till now. We now generate more revenue than we spend. We are cash flow positive,” said Oyetoke.

Moving forward, BitPowr plans to broaden its presence in the Asian market, focusing particularly on Southeast Asia. While maintaining its operations in Africa, the company aims to bolster its global ledger and wallet infrastructure as part of its expansion strategy into the Asian market.

“To fuel this move, we will hire people from Asian countries who will help us market our services in the Asian countries, then hire more when we check our growth process after four months into the transition.

There is a good demand from Asia right now. We are seeing increasing representation in transaction volume which also translates to an increase in revenue for us,” said Amarachi Amaechi, the Co-Founder and COO of BitPowr.

Additionally, BitPowr announced its SOC 2 compliance and the commencement of the ISO 27001 audit process through a partnership with Thoropass. This step underscores the company’s dedication to upholding the utmost standards of security and compliance.

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► Membership

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

- ◆ Ministries/ Government Departments
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- ◆ Export Promotion Councils/ Trade Councils
- ◆ Financial Institutions/ Banks/ NBFCs
- ◆ SME Promotion Organization/ Enterprise Development Organization

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- ◆ Individual Consultants/ Experts/ Students
- ◆ NGOs/ SMEs etc.

Permanent Members

- ◆ Any General Member or Associate Member who is willing to be Permanent Member of WASME

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
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- ◆ Get access to WASME Resource Centre of Knowledge, Experts, Technology, Trade Facilitation, Financial Assistance, Market Linkage etc.
- ◆ Get tailor made services and support



For any query related to membership write to membership@wasmeinfo.org

WORLD ASSOCIATION FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES (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 fortnightly SME e-Bulletin "WORLD SME UPDATE" aims to keep its readers abreast of latest information on various developments taking place in the SME sector around the globe. If you have any news/information on the issues related to Government policies & programmers and latest developments in the SME sector i.e. technology and innovations, success stories, case studies, research and methods, planning and programs, training and developments, finance and management, and marketing that you would like to share with the world SME community, please do send them to us at editor@wasmeinfo.org

We always welcome your valuable feedback/comments on the SME e-Bulletin to further enhance our services on information dissemination. Hence, please send us your valuable guidance as well as meaningful articles as a regular contribution to SME e-Bulletin and our website in the larger interests and benefits of SMEs the world over.

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