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**BUSAC Fund**

*Advocacy for the Private Sector*

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# BUSINESS ADVOCACY NEWS

THE OFFICIAL BUSAC FUND E-NEWSLETTER



*Helping Rice Farmers to Produce More*

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## HELPING RICE FARMERS TO PRODUCE MORE

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*Indeed, these are profitable days for rice farmers at Gomoa Okyereko as farmers earn more money to support their livelihoods.*



*Farmers drying the harvested rice*

The leadership of the Gomoa Okyereko Irrigation Cooperative Rice Farming & Marketing Society Ltd (GOICRFMS) pointed out that the rehabilitation of the Okyereko irrigation facility is helping them to earn more money to support their families.

Mrs Faustina Andoh, the women's leader of the association stated in an interview: *"Our children are being enrolled in the universities and are favorably competing with*

*children from rich backgrounds because we are now able to farm and provide for the basic needs in school. Above all we are able to provide three square meals for our husbands and children because there is always enough rice to cook for all and just like the saying goes we grow what we eat and sell the excess to the world."*

Members of the association also pointed out that the rehabilitation of the Okyereko irrigation facility and the subsequent increase in local rice production has reaffirmed their long-standing belief that rice cultivation is a lucrative venture.

Nana Ababio, a member of the association also stated: *"A lot of people assume cocoa farmers in Ghana today are the only successful farmers but rice growers in okyereko believe this assertion is wrong; rice is our cocoa and it has made most of us very successful. Through rice cultivation, most of us have been able to put up our own houses and we are happy with our families"*

Members of GOICRFMS further noted that their improved rice cultivation and income levels have also considerably reduced rural-urban migration among the youth in the area.

*“We have seen a drastic change in the number of natives who hitherto will travel to the city to seek greener pastures. The difficulty we faced in the cultivation of rice at okyereko is now a thing of the past,”* Mrs Faustina Andoh remarked.

Mrs. Andoh, explained that this was not the situation a few years back. In June 2010, the dyke constructed to prevent flooding on the plots of the Okyereko irrigation scheme was broken by floods from the Ayensu River causing serious damage to the 125 acre rice irrigation scheme at Okyereko in the Gomoa East District of the Central Region.

As a result, the farmers were unable to meet production costs, let alone pay back loans secured from banks, a situation which adversely affected their livelihoods and well-being, driving most of them through the poverty margins.

The farmers could not achieve all year round cropping and some of the youths who were being encouraged to engage in local rice production were finding life unbearable and abandoned the enterprise.

The repair works on the dyke was a huge project that the farmers could not fund by themselves, hence requiring the support of the government to minimize or stop the flooding of the rice farms to ensure that farmers have all year round cropping to boost local rice production.

Faced with this situation, the farmers applied to BUSAC Fund for a grant to advocate to the appropriate government agencies for the repair works to be carried out.

With support from DANIDA, USAID and the EU, the BUSAC Fund provided an advocacy grant to GOICRFMS, which enabled them to persuade the relevant duty bearers to repair the broken dykes on the irrigation facility. With this support, an implementation plan was drawn to ensure a successful achievement of the objectives.

Nana Entsiful Ababio, Chairman of the association said the association embarked on a number of carefully planned activities including advocacy training to enhance the capacity of the farmers to engage the target government agencies. Almost all the farmers at Okyereko have undergone training to enable them

engage in effective advocacy to generate the desired support from duty bearers without being violent.

In order to advocate with empirical evidence, a baseline research was also conducted on the scope and possibility of attaining the desired government funding and attracting the interest of stakeholders on the project.

After effectively engaging all the stakeholders which included the Ministries and agencies responsible for the repair project, the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MOFA) through the Ghana Irrigation Development Agency eventually constructed the broken dyke. MOFA has also ensured that Agricultural



*Farmers winnowing rice before polishing*

Extension Officers now assist rice farmers at Okyereko on regular basis.

Through the advocacy action, the executives and members of the association also received training in financial management, leadership skills, group dynamics and fund raising for business associations which aided them to secure a policy document for the repair of the broken irrigation facility to avoid the continued destruction of their crops.

*Story: Kweku Temeng, TV3*



## SAFEGUARDING FARMLANDS FROM REAL ESTATE DEVELOPERS

*Members of the Northern Region Cooperative Vegetable Farmers and Marketing Union (NRCVFMU) have expressed satisfaction that the business advocacy skills acquired from the BUSAC Fund is helping them to protect their farmlands.*

After the peaceful settlement of the encroachment issues, the fear and intimidation from traditional rulers and developers that once plagued vegetable farmers in the Tamale Metropolis is now a thing of the past, and members of NRCVFMU are now able to carry out their farming activities in safety.

On his part, the Chairman of the association, Mr.



*Left: One of the pillars mounted by encroachers on the farmland; Right: A vegetable farmer inspecting his farmlands*

Following the successful advocacy action of the association, traditional rulers in the Tamale Metropolis have ensured that the pillars that were used to demarcate the farmlands for sale have been removed, and the farmlands belonging to the vegetable farmers that were earmarked for sale by traditional rulers have been safely released to the farmers.

The secretary of the association, Mr. Iddrisu Mashud stated that but for the timely intervention of the advocacy action, many members of the association would have lost their farmlands to private estate developers.

*“Before the advocacy process, our vegetable farmlands had already been demarcated for sale but the advocacy made that purported sale of the lands to be abandoned,”* he revealed in an interview.

Karim Salifu confirmed that the business advocacy skills acquired from the various training programmes enabled his association to engage with the traditional authorities in a peaceful manner. *“One huge benefit of our advocacy action is the peaceful engagement of chiefs in a discussion to resolve the encroachment issues. Prior to the advocacy process, there had always been violent confrontations between our farmers and the chiefs on these land issues. But now, our farmers can go about their vegetable cultivation activities feeling secured,”* he added.

The air of security blowing around the farmlands of vegetable farmers in the Tamale Metropolis has positively impacted on the productivity and incomes of NRCVFMU members. Members of the association are now experiencing a significant increase in yield and income.

*“With the encroachment issue over our heads now,*

members are now working on their farms with renewed commitment and vigour, resulting in increased individual production and income. For instance, I used to make around GHC 1,000.00 after every harvest, but that amount has now doubled,” Mr. Mashud remarked.

Located in the Tamale Metropolis, the NRCVFMU is a union of 1,700 vegetable farmers comprising 920 males and 780 females. The association was formed with the sole aim of making its members financially independent to run their homes and other businesses. But members of the association were finding it extremely difficult to achieve this aim because they were constantly losing their farmlands to private estate developers. For many years, local chiefs were parcelling and selling parts of the farms of their members to estate developers, thus throwing the helpless vegetable farmers out of business. This situation made it very difficult for the vegetable farmers to make ends meet. To curtail this impediment, the leadership of the association sought the assistance of the BUSAC Fund to enable them advocate to traditional authorities

to halt the encroachment of their lands by private developers.

With the support of its Development Partners, DANIDA, USAID and the EU, the Business Sector Advocacy Challenge (BUSAC Fund) came to the aid of the association by providing them with a business advocacy grant. The grant enabled the association to carry out research into the nature, scope and reasons behind the encroachment of their lands, so that they can advocate with empirical evidence. As part of the advocacy activities, the association also organized stakeholder workshops and dialogue sessions, during which they had extensive deliberations with officials from the District Assembly, traditional rulers and non-governmental organizations. These discussions with key stakeholders proved useful, as it eventually led to the protection of the farmlands belonging to members of the association.

Story: Isaac Nongya, Tamale.

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## SKILLS FOR EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT

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*One of the training sessions held last year to empower local businesses*

***The BUSAC Fund recognizes that enhancing the financial management and record keeping skills of local entrepreneurs is a huge step towards building the capacities of local businesses.***

Over 160 members from 29 Private Sector Associations (PSOs) from various parts of Ghana will soon acquire new financial management and record keeping skills. These financial management training programmes are designed to equip the executives of business associations with the requisite financial management skills to enable them efficiently manage the grants being used to fund their advocacy actions.

The training workshops, which will be facilitated by BUSAC Fund-accredited Trainers with proven adult learning methodologies, will equip the leadership of business associations to manage the finances of their

own associations in a transparent manner, in order to earn the confidence and trust of their members. The Executive Members being trained will also be able to share their newly acquired financial management skills with members of their various associations who would then apply them to their individual businesses.

From March 10 to March 21, 2014, the BUSAC Fund, with support from DANIDA, USAID and the EU, is organizing nine of these Financial Management Training workshops at various centres across the country for representatives of business associations implementing advocacy actions under the fourth call of BUSAC Fund Phase II.

The training programmes are scheduled for venues in Accra, Kadjebi, Kumasi, Tamale and Wa.

*Story: Ebenezer Kpentey, the BUSAC Fund.*

## STCCI URGES ALL TO RESPECT LOCAL CONTENT LAW

*The Sekondi-Takoradi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (STCCI) has expressed its gratitude to the BUSAC Fund for supporting the chamber to successfully advocate the passage of the Petroleum Sector Local Content law.*

**T**he Chamber says it is happy that the Petroleum Sector Local Content and Participation Policy has been passed into law.

The STCCI is therefore entreating all members of the chamber and all players in the industry, to respect this law by submitting their local content plans to the committee on time so that the Petroleum Commission can also make it public in good time.

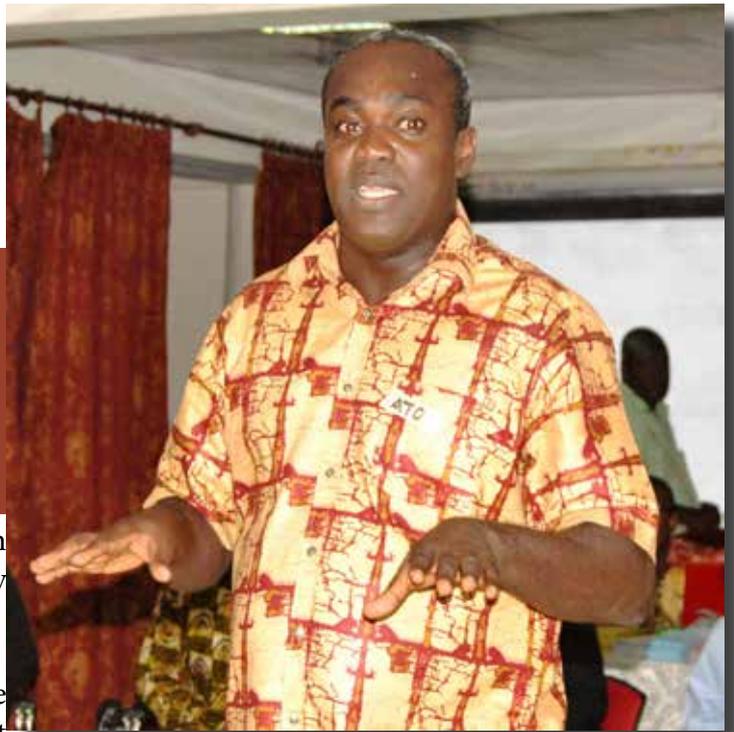
This law mandates the Petroleum Commission to establish a Local Content Committee, which among others will be responsible for ensuring that investors in the industry comply with all necessary provisions that concern their operations including provision of their Local Content Plans.

A statement issued and signed by Mr. Ato Van-Ess, Chairman of STCCI, explained that the law also empowers the Committee to monitor compliance to this provision.

*“We are very hopeful that the Petroleum Commission will, as a matter of urgency, establish this very important committee,”* it said.

*“We encourage all development partners and other key players in the industry to support the law, by bringing to the attention of all stakeholders issues that could potentially inhibit investments in the industry as a result of implementing the law,”* the statement further urged.

The statement pointed out that those in the industry should take note that it is not the responsibility of the Petroleum Commission alone, but the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Association of Ghana Industries and all stakeholders are also responsible for playing their respective roles effectively and efficiently



*Mr. Ato Van-Ess, Chairman of STCCI*

for socio-economic development of the industry and the country as a whole.

As a Chamber, it said *“We want to assure the business community that we will continue to do our part and will encourage others to do same to make sure the law works for the good of all businesses and the country at large.”*

The statement said the Chamber pledges its continuous support to the private sector in the area of capacity building -- especially for Small and Medium Enterprises (SME's) to enable them meet the required standards and benchmarks of the industry.

*“We want to thank the Business Sector Advocacy Challenge (BUSAC) Fund for the support they gave us in advocating for the speedy passage of the bill into law, as well as the European Union, DANIDA and USAID for making the funds available to the BUSAC Fund,”* the statement concluded.

The Local Content Law was passed to promote job creation and value addition to petroleum production through the use of local expertise, goods and services in the oil sector. The implementation of the new law will ensure that the oil find benefits Ghanaians, while the foreign oil companies also get fair returns on their investment.

Source: [www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/](http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/)



## GRANTEES TELL THEIR IMPACT STORIES ON GTV



*Some selected scenes from the documentaries*

From 6th February to 20th March 2014, BUSAC Fund's video documentaries on some of our grantees will be broadcast on GTV every Thursday at 8:00 pm. The documentaries which reveal the impact of our collective activities on the private as well as the public sector features six business associations who benefitted from BUSAC Fund's support. These associations include:

- Suame Magazine Industrial Development Organization (SMIDO),
- Ghana Association of Medical Herbalists (GAMH),
- Ghana Institution of Engineers (GhIE),
- Ghana Cooperative Susu Collectors Association

- (GCSCA),
- Zanlerigu Langube Development Association (ZALDA) and
- Sirigu Women's Organisation for Pottery and Art (SWOPA).

Make a date to watch these business associations tell their own remarkable impact stories on GTV.

For more information about the broadcast schedule for these documentaries, please visit the BUSAC Fund's website on [www.busac.org](http://www.busac.org).

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