



BDI

The Voice of
German Industry

AGI
Association
of Ghana
Industries



Ghana: Partnership for Industry

Promoting Policy Advocacy
for Small and Medium-Sized
Enterprises

Partnership for Industry

Since 2009 the Federation of German Industries (BDI) maintains a partnership project with the Association of Ghana Industries (AGI) with the aim of improving the business environment in Ghana for small and medium-sized enterprises.

BDI – The Federation of German Industries

The BDI, founded in 1949, is the umbrella organisation of German industry and industry-related service providers. It is the voice of 38 industrial associations and represents the political interests of over 100,000 business enterprises with a good eight million employees with regard to both political decision-makers and the general public.

AGI – The Ghanaian Partner

The AGI was founded in 1959 to represent the interests of Ghanaian entrepreneurs engaged in the manufacturing industry. With around 1,200 members, the AGI is the most important voice of the private sector in Ghana and enjoys high standing in the fields of business, politics and society. As the voice of private enterprise, the association advocates for growth-oriented economic policies and represents the interests of the private sector in important dialogue forums.

»For the BDI and German industry, Africa is a continent of opportunities and in future our attention should be focused more sharply on its economic potential. Our partnership project with Ghana underlines that this is something to which we wish to make a contribution.«

*Matthias Wachter,
Head of the BDI Security and Raw Materials Department*

Strengthening the voice of the private sector

The declared goal of the partnership project between BDI and AGI is to strengthen the Ghanaian partner association in its ability to perform successful policy advocacy. With the backing of a strong industrial umbrella association, the aim is to enable small and medium-sized enterprises to articulate their interests effectively vis-à-vis political decision-makers. In order to professionalise the work of the AGI, seminars, expert missions and exchange programmes are conducted within the framework of the project, with experts from the BDI and international consultants working together with their Ghanaian partners on various aspects of association work.



Giving a voice to small and medium-sized enterprises in Ghana

The project is designed to focus on the following areas:

1. Policy advocacy and the build-up of dialogue structures
2. Membership management
3. Improvement of the services offered in the regional offices in Takoradi and Kumasi

Enhancing the business environment

Some noteworthy successes have been achieved since the beginning of the project. For example, the project made an important contribution to a marked reduction in the drastic rise in the energy price in the year 2010 and to the introduction of the SME Charter as a strategy for the promotion of small and medium-sized enterprises. Another achievement is the consideration now given to AGI proposals (e.g. on the issue of taxation) in the planning of the national budget. In fact, the AGI has now attained the position of being regularly consulted by the government of Ghana for advice on economic policy questions.



Kente fabrics from the Ashanti Region, Ghana

Apart from the primary goal of the project, namely to contribute to Ghana's sustained economic development by providing support to the private sector, synergies also arise for German industry. As a result of the BDI's commitment to Ghana, opportunities and potential are revealed to German industry for possible investment in the country itself. Moreover, German industry benefits from a more profound understanding of the Ghanaian market and from the creation of a new network.

Ghana: An African success story


Many of the countries with the world's fastest-growing economies are to be found in Africa. Ghana, which is currently experiencing an economic boom, is one of them. For many years Ghana's economy has been set on a positive course and will continue to expand dynamically with an expected growth rate of 8.0 % in 2013 and 8.7 % in 2014. This is particularly remarkable in view of the average for global growth, which was around 3.5 % in 2012. In Ghana the major driving forces are the oil industry, the services sector, mining (gold) and export-oriented agriculture (cocoa).

With such good growth figures and its great progress in the improvement of the business environment since 2006, Ghana is strengthening its position as a hub for the economy of West Africa. This in turn makes Ghana an attractive location for foreign enterprises seeking to enter the market of ECOWAS, the Economic Community of West African States. Against this background, the BDI views the partnership project with the AGI as a signal to the German business community that Ghana is becoming increasingly interesting for German enterprises as well.

In addition to the country's economic successes, the political development in Ghana is also stable. The elections held in December 2012, judged by international observers as being relatively free and fair, and the generally accepted endorsement of the incumbent John Dramani Mahama are viewed as providing renewed evidence that democracy is functioning in Ghana. As a result, Ghana is taking on a leading role in a politically difficult regional environment.

Imprint

 **BDI** Federation of German Industries
Security and Raw Materials
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Breite Straße 29
10178 Berlin
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 **IFG** The project will be executed, on behalf of the
BDI, by the Industrie-Förderung Gesellschaft
mbH in its own name and at its own expense.

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Photos

BDI/Ansgar Josef Cordier

Printed by

K+L DruckenPlus GmbH, Berlin

Status

January 2014