

# International Trade Seminar & Workshops

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Priority Sector (3)

## **North London Tec/business Link London North**

Dumayne House  
1 Fox Lane  
Palmers Green  
N13 4AB

Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> September  
10.00 A.M. - 5.00 P.M.

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## Background Information

London is the only Capital City in Europe with a significant African and Caribbean business presence. This sustainable comparative advantage means that the integrated support services of North London are best placed to lead an International Network which engages the rest of the world, in general, and the European Union, in particular.

Various government reports, initiatives and programmes focus on international trade as an essential activity with regards to UK competitiveness. This means more and better services that, in global terms, require knowledge, skills and participation from all communities.

New relationships, and partnership agreements with academic institutions, are essential to ensure that previous empirical research is factored into the strategic thinking of policy makers and their fund holders. These institutions can also assist with the development of support programmes and ongoing research that reflects the realities of the current economic environment and the impact of local decision makers.

The harmonisation strategy of the Synergy Project allows the 'Go Global' campaign to act as the engine for a resurgence of client-led collaboration, trust and co-operation.

This event will stimulate the adoption of international trade as a local development instrument for business education, training and skills development.

Future trends indicate the emergence of a new era of trade and development linked to cultural enterprise, building on Commonwealth cultural heritage and ties of a creative and practical nature.

## Harmonisation Strategy

Within North London, the harmonisation of intermediaries and business advice (with support from NLTEC/BLLN programmes and resources) is vital to the provision of future client-led services.

The development of a harmonious and joint-branded competitive strategy is essential to encourage international trade with businesses based in North London, in particular, and pan-London, in general.

The Synergy Project is the catalyst for this harmonisation initiative and is designed to implement the integration of all target groups into mainstream local and international activities.

## The Way Forward

This event is delivered through the Synergy Project's '**Business and Economic Development Programme**'. It will capitalise on the growing awareness of the benefits derived from cultural heritage and links as a means for increasing international trade, improving business growth and providing employment and training opportunities for local people.

The harmony of international trade and business advice can act as a provider of new and untested exports that will emerge from the African Caribbean community. It will do this by working in partnership with learning institutions and trade support organisations.

## **Development Plan**

1. Establish the North London sub region as the centre of a pan-London strategy.
  - (a) Formalising North London's central role with:
    - i. Local and regional UK Government Agencies including Association of London Government, GOL, LDA and London European Commission, London First, Greater London Enterprises, Middlesex University Business School and The Prince's Trust.  
  
National agencies include Dfid, British Council, British Trade International, FCO, SBS and Caritag, Tropical Africa Advisory Group, UK/Caribbean Chambers of Commerce, the Commonwealth Business Council, the Commonwealth Development Corporation.
    - ii. African and Caribbean-run social, cultural and economic networks, their Governments, Agencies and Chambers of Commerce.
    - iii. International social, economic institutions such as the European Union, World Bank, United Nations, Caricom, WTO and the OAU.
2. Implementation of an effective 'Go Global' communications campaign via conferences, workshops, the Internet, multi-media and traditional media.

Rudi Page

## Workshop B - International Trade as a stimulus to Business and Local Economic Development in association with Global Trade Centre

The two workshops attracted the attendance of approximately 24 people. Contributions from Isadores Diakedes and Chris Cable from Global Trade Centre focussed upon the Huge economic and social benefit to North London business if it made a commitment To provide lead support to specialist trade development between the UK,Africa and the Caribbean.

GTC laid particular emphasis on the pursuit of cultural and creative links with overseas governments and government agencies, who welcome the interest from a UK African/Caribbean led agency in their activities, and the opportunity to establish genuine micro/small business trading networks, starting in North London and the expanding from there .

Sue Monteath spoke on behalf of CARITAG, the UK Government trade development agency for the Caribbean region and outlined the importance agency for the Caribbean region and outlined the importance the agency places, with the support of British Trade International, on investigating and evaluating the potential of UK organisations such as GTC to source small business traders with cultural and ancestral links with the Caribbean, and have already become involved in early research in this field. Additionally,

CARITAG are also working in partnership with African/Caribbean organisations in the UK, for example on specialist trade mission programmes.

There were also very positive and thoughtful contributions from Peter Bishop from London Chamber of Commerce, and David Hallam representing Business Link London. In particular Peter Bishop from London Chamber of Commerce, highlighted the fact that there is currently a political/economic institutional vacuum at the high and middle ranking Public/private structures that conduct research and planning with developing countries.

The views and opinions of business were very welcome to the practitioners present. The main issues they felt were:

- a) Government trade support service organisations needed to find better ways communicating with local businesses. As yet they do not possess the same knowledge and understanding of local business trading objectives in comparison with GTC.
- b) There was clear need for a network structure that could draw together traders who pursued opportunities in Africa and the Caribbean because of cultural and heritage connections, in order that maximum advantage for the North London economy is gained.

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## Conclusions

Micro/small business trade in North London is vibrant, but would no doubt expand further still if the range of mainstream support and learning services could (a) more readily targeted at them and (b) more adapted to reflect the nature of trading activities they are involved in. Also, with trade support of organisations beginning now to fully recognise the importance of shared cultural diversity in trade.

Every effort should be made to build-up a clear structured and crafted programme of time-limited trade promotion programmes based around the advantages that this type of specialist knowledge can bring.

Andrew Boyce