

2026 ACA Annual Cashew Conference & Expo



**SUSTAINABLE CASHEW SUPPLY
THROUGH POLICY, INVESTMENT
AND PARTNERSHIP**



Ghana

La Palm Royal Beach Hotel, Accra

15 - 18 September 2026



Beyond Participation: Scaling Women-Led Cashew Enterprises through Branding, Market Access and AfCFTA Opportunities

Nunana Addo

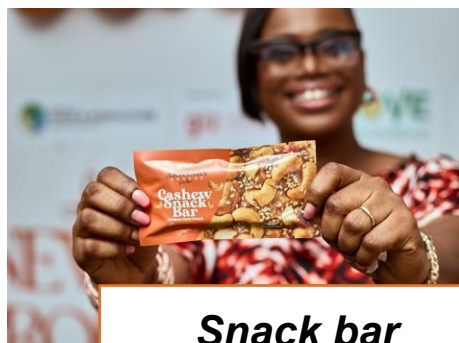
16th September 2026, 17H00 – 18H30



Women:

- Are not new entrants to the cashew sector
- Are central to the cashew economy
- Dominate value addition and product innovation segments of the VC

... BUT how do we move from promising products to competitive brands that buyers actively seek out?



Snack bar



Fonio Crunch Granola



Cocanut



Cashew Milk



Cashew Spread



Apple Brittle

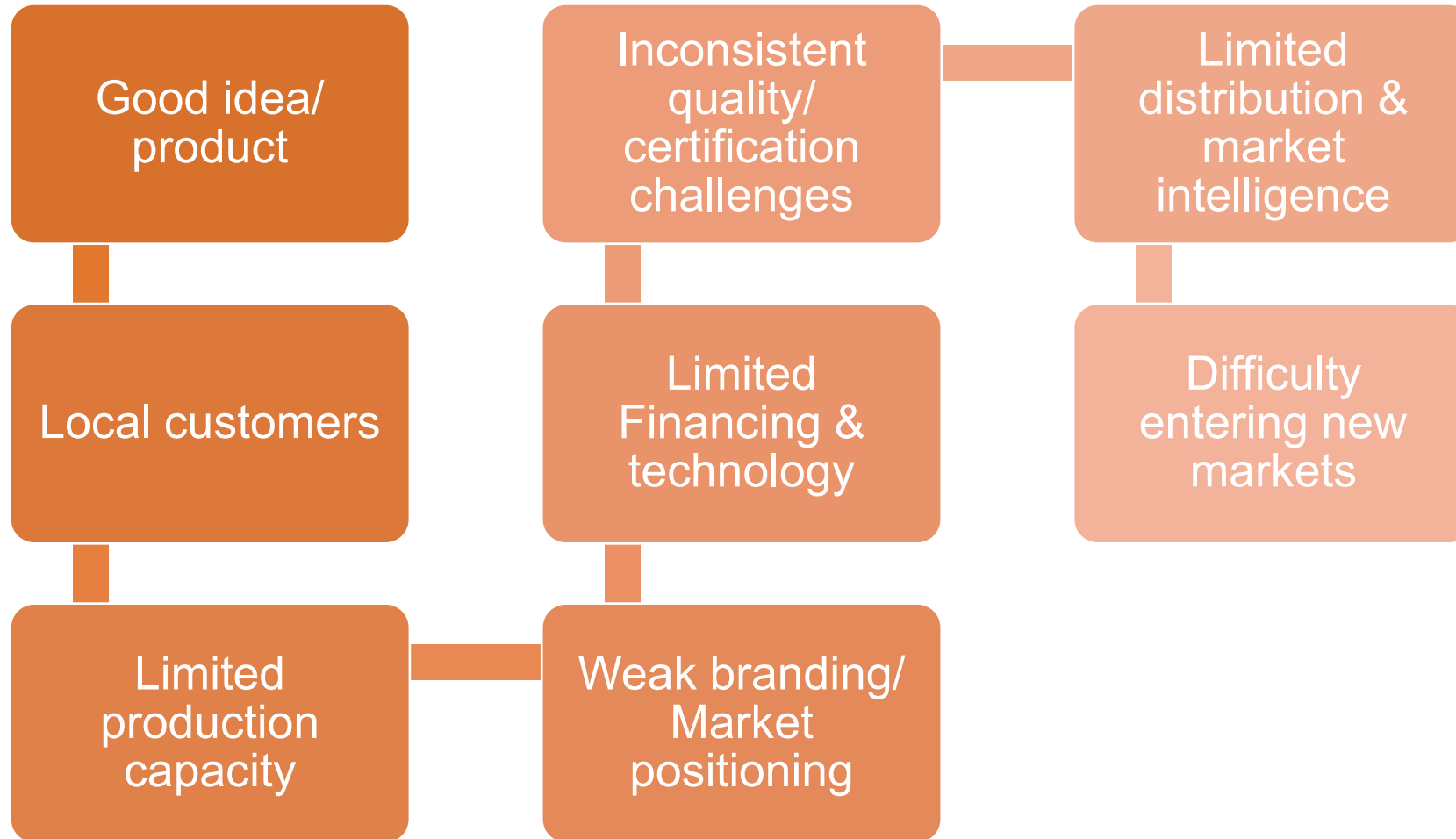


Apple Flour

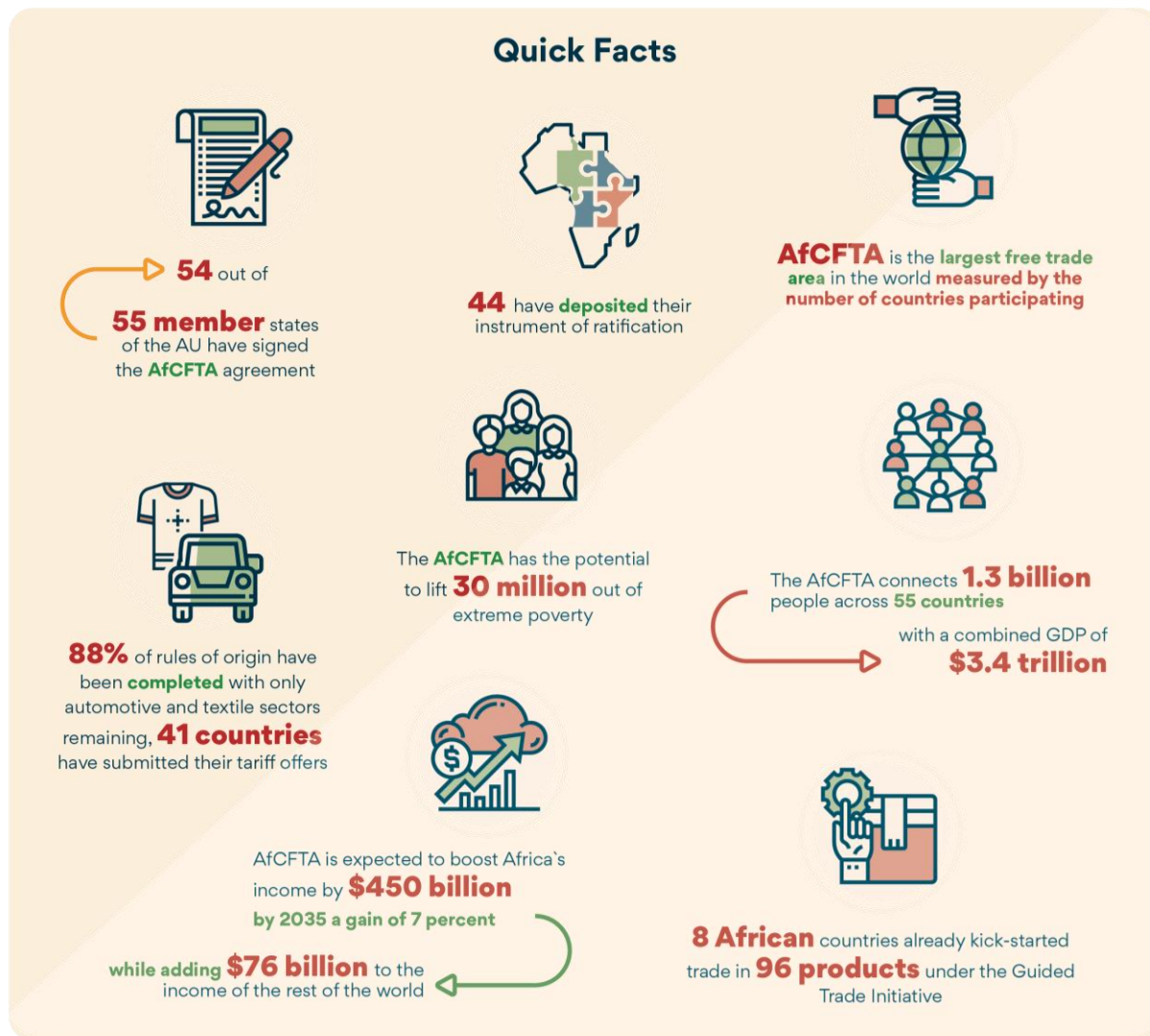


Protein Bar

Potential exists but scale remains limited...



The AfCFTA opportunity: How do we make it usable at enterprise level?



AfCFTA offers the possibility of:

- Reaching new African consumer markets
- Expanding beyond domestic demand
- Building regional value chains
- Developing higher-value cashew products
- Creating new partnerships and distribution channels
- Increasing intra-African trade

A market opening is not the same as market access.

Questions this panel seeks to address

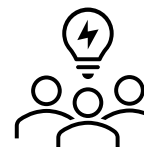
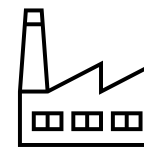


How do women-owned/led businesses move from:

- Opportunity to enterprise
- Product to brand: What makes a cashew product distinctive, trusted and worth paying for?
- Enterprise to scale
- AfCFTA opportunity to market entry
- Market access to market success: How do we ensure that women don't simply enter new markets, but actually win customers and grow profitably?

By the end of this discussion...

- **For entrepreneurs:** What can I do differently?
- **For buyers & investors:** What makes women-led cashew enterprises investable and commercially attractive?
- **For governments & trade institutions:** What barriers need to be removed?
- **For development partners:** What support actually enables growth, beyond training?
- **For the ecosystem:** How do we build more women-led cashew businesses that can compete across Africa?



Madam Maria de Fátima Silva Lopes



- A cashew apple processor and owner of Nha Guineendade, a Bissau-based food-processing enterprise specializing in locally sourced products.
- She brings practical experience in cashew value addition, product development, and local market access, offering insights into strengthening Guinea-Bissau's cashew value chain.

Madam Fatima Alimohamed



- An African brand strategist, agribusiness value-chain specialist, and enterprise development expert with over 25 years of experience across Africa.
- She is the Founder and Chief Strategist of African Brand Warrior Consulting, helping businesses, governments, and entrepreneurs transform African commodities into competitive, value-added brands.
- A former senior commercial leader at Wilmar Africa and Bidco Africa
- A strong advocate for women in business and inclusive enterprise development.

Dr Lassina Songfola Yeo



- Executive Director of CNOFECI-ZLECAf in Côte d'Ivoire.
- With a PhD in Economic and Social History, he brings extensive experience in agricultural development, public policy, and food security, particularly across the rice and cashew sectors.
- A strong advocate for women's entrepreneurship and their participation in continental trade.

Mr. Michael Kottoh



- A development and policy expert with over 20 years of experience advising governments, international institutions, businesses, and philanthropic organizations across Africa.
- He is Co-Founder and Director of Strategy at AfroChampions and Managing Partner of Konfidants, with expertise spanning trade, investment, public-private partnerships, and SME development.
- He holds an MPA from Harvard Kennedy School and is co-author of *African Sovereign Wealth Funds and New Directions in State Capitalism*.

Dr Paul Otung



- A Senior Regional Specialist for Policy and State Capability at AGRA West Africa, with over 16 years of experience in economic development, public policy, and institutional capacity building.
- His work focuses on agricultural and food systems transformation across West Africa, supporting governments on policy, investment, fiscal strategies, and regional trade.
- He holds a PhD in Economics and has held roles with the Ministry of Planning, DFID/FCDO, the Central Bank of Kenya, and ICGLR.

Mr. Eric Obeng Agyemang



- A Chartered Banker with over 15 years of experience in the banking industry.
- A Senior Relationship Manager with Absa Bank Ghana Ltd, specializing in Corporate and Commercial Banking.
- His expertise spans relationship management, credit structuring, trade finance, agribusiness financing, and business development, with a strong focus on supporting SMEs and large corporates across key sectors of the economy.

Now, let's talk!