

Launch Event of Eco Champions Ghana

The Ghana Wing of the Global BK Eco Initiative was launched on 8th December, 2021 by the Accra BK Center as 'Eco Champions Ghana.' The official launch was a two-hour long ceremony, including a panel discussion and networking session, at a quaint Coffee Shop named Theia House, with over 50 people in attendance, from various sectors ranging from agriculture, micro-farming, to waste recycling, energy and oil, holistic wellbeing and health, among many others. The owner of the venue, Lana Captan, graciously gave us the space free of cost.



The invitees were from the Eco Champions Steering Committee Members' network, consisting of environmentally aware individuals from various local and international organizations on the same path of aiming to better take care of our environment and prevent further harm to it.



The Deputy Director of the Ghana Environment Protection Agency, Ebenezer Sarpong graced the occasion, committing on stage to working alongside Eco Champions Ghana and supporting the increase of our visibility and reach among his eco-conscious networks.

Nour Ghaddar, a gender-justice activist and writer with Oxfam and UN Women, and a member of the Steering Committee, provided communications support and headed a panel with Bella Merki, a devoted no-to-plastic activist, and Abdallah Smith, a celebrated champion in the agriculture and environmental space as well as the MD of Ghana Food Movement, to dialogue about the ways we are interconnected with Nature. They expanded on the oneness between us and the world around us, and on how Social Media and online tools can be maximized to increase our visibility and scope around our collective responsibility to champion eco-consciousness for our country, including how to challenge harmful social norms that disregard our role in climate change.



Soni Valecha, of Say No To Single Use Plastics and the Chairperson of the Steering Committee, has made efforts to educate the average Ghanaian about the hazards of using plastic bags, a widespread habit across Ghana. For over three years, Soni has been working to convert old garments into eco-friendly shopping bags as an alternative, giving away over 6,000 bags to date, including at the launch event. She also supported in logistics for the launch event, and provided financial support.



Georgette, also a member of the Steering Committee, procured the launch's merchandise for the Freebie Goody Bags, led registration and branding, and provided over-all logistics support for the event.



Accra BK Center Head Sister Grace gave a moving speech to introduce our initiative and its roots in the BK way, explaining what we aim to do differently, starting with a quiet meditation for a few minutes. Sister Grace co-led the branding and communications for the launch, and provided over-all guidance around our aims.

The event was well received among the invitees and interest was raised regarding future initiatives, events, and online movements. The Social Media team of the Steering Committee will share recaps from the event and engage our growing audience further. Success from the launch include fostering a positive learning and dialogue space for the audience, networking among individuals, contacts exchanged and overlapping interests laid, and the panel discussion which several members of the audience expressed appreciation for. While there are

several lessons to be learned from our first event, including choosing a time and venue that is more convenient for most, and selecting more aligned panel members, we look forward to making strides to improve our approach and increase our visibility in impactful ways. The entire program was compeered by Emmanuel Turkson, Steering Committee Member.

