



Florence Annobil at her old workshop in Ateiku, Wassa East District of Ghana, in June 2018 (Photo Credit: WAGES)

A WOMAN'S JOURNEY TOWARDS ACHIEVING HER DREAMS

A Case Study on Florence Annobil
By Christopher Obeng Gordon – September 2018

Florence Annobil is well on her way to achieving her dream of sewing clothes for Golden Star Resources Limited, a mining company in the Wassa East District. With little to no prior knowledge on financial management and limited capacity to generate savings, achieving this dream seemed unlikely. Due to her perseverance and the support of the WAGES project, her dream now seems attainable. She saved up enough money and moved into a bigger shop in June 2018, prioritized customer relations, and increased her customer base.

Her dream:

Florence Annobil is a 31-year-old seamstress and a mother of two in Ateiku, in the Wassa East District, located in the Western Region of Ghana. She dreamt for many years of sewing clothes for Golden Star Resources Limited (GSR), a mining company in the district, but she had no idea how to make that happen. As a seamstress, she faced many challenges in her work, including limited knowledge of accounting and financial management, hindering her ability to generate savings from her business. She was also unaware of basic customer service standards, making it difficult to grow her customer base.

The intervention and the change:

Florence was fortunate to have participated in the entrepreneurship training organized by World University Service Canada (WUSC). This training was part of the local economic development component of its West African Governance and Economic Sustainability in extractive areas (WAGES) project. The training sought to equip women and youth entrepreneurs with basic entrepreneurial skills and how to tap into opportunities arising from the mining companies in the District. Though she is yet to receive any contract from mining companies, she is hopeful that with the right training and assistance, she will be able to achieve that in the near future. She sees the WAGES project as a step in the right direction, that will enable her and other women in her community with similar dreams, to achieve them.

“After attending the entrepreneurship training, my earnings increased from GHC 250 to GHC 350 a month. I never paid myself a salary and I used up all my earnings without keeping record of transactions. Now, I pay myself GHC 200 and I save the remaining GHC 150. These savings have helped me build my own shop which I moved into in June 2018.” – Florence Annobil

Florence says her relationship with her customers improved significantly. She used to get angry when they were unsatisfied with her work. Now, she accepts their criticisms and tries her best to work according to their specific needs. Her improved attitude, better communication and more dedication to her customers, enabled her to increase her customer base from 18 before the WAGES intervention, to 33 after.

What's next:

Mining companies must conduct business with formally registered entities who notably pay value added taxes. In order for Florence Annobil to obtain a contract from GSR, she needs to have a registered business with an operating permit and other necessary documentation. In addition, given the size of a typical order of mining uniforms, local tailors and dressmakers need to belong to an association in order to produce at sufficient scale. WAGES and GSR are working with the Business Advisory Center (BAC) to help register the Ghana National Tailors and Dressmakers Association (GNTDA), of which Florence is a member. The BAC is a branch of the District government, responsible for the development of local Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises and providing Business Development Services. Recently, the BAC and the WAGES project collaborated to deliver a technical skills training on sewing workers suits, in which Florence participated. Florence is optimistic that with her upgraded skills, and once the Association is registered, members will be able to secure contracts from mining companies in the District, including GSR.



Florence Annobil standing outside her new shop in Ateiku in June 2018 (Photo Credit: WAGES)

The WAGES project aims to break the vicious circle in which local communities, especially women and youth, are excluded from the benefits of mining investments. Through WAGES, **World University Service of Canada (WUSC)** and the **Center for International Studies and Cooperation (CECI)**, work in three regions of Burkina Faso, Ghana and Guinea impacted by extractive industries. The project works to empower local communities, and specifically integrate women and youth, to participate fully in local governance, economic opportunities and the sustainable development of these areas. The project collaborates with local and national governments, select mining companies, as well as small and medium-sized businesses and civil society organizations to attain those objectives. Global Affairs Canada funds the implementation of WAGES from 2016 until 2022. For more information on the project follow this link: <https://resources.wusc.ca/project/wages>