



**Sahara Communities Abroad
(SACOMA)**

**Mrs Perez Ochieng
CEO**

About SACOMA



- SACOMA's core service is the provision of Information Advice and Guidance (IAG), and support through outreach, awareness creation, workforce development and enterprise.
- Established in 2000 to support Kiswahili speaking communities from Sub-Saharan Africa living in the UK, many of whom are experiencing disadvantage, such as poverty, social isolation and discrimination.
- Remit now extended to wider BAME UK communities as well as newly arrived migrants.
- We have won several awards for the work that we do in the community



CEO Perez Ochieng receiving the BIBA (Black Women In Business) award



Receiving the Matrix Award of Excellence

Why Social Enterprise?



- **Accessibility to a wide range of clients- mainly works for the benefit of the communities**
- **Different models can be adopted- CIC's, Industrial & Provident Societies, Limited Companies, Trusts, and Co-operatives**
- **Our clients take ownership of their initiatives and are more proactive in their approach of running the social enterprises**
- **Contributes greatly to economic development in the most deprived areas as well as the broader welfare agenda**

Focus on work integration/employment



SACOMA's main focus is on developing small groups to harness social enterprise within communities to foster greater integration and independence:

- Focus is mainly on women groups
- Supports start-up through the provision of incubation service in addition to business support
- Works with groups from marginally deprived areas that have low skills
- Provides tailored support to groups
- Provides them with access to finance- Mutual Aid Fund
- Enabling start-up businesses to get access alternative finance



Funding the Work Integration

This is the main challenge faced by the organisation. We have, so far, been able to overcome this, through innovative development of our social enterprise packages. We are able to provide a variety of services with the support of grants from bodies such as and contracts from statutory bodies such as the LDA, LSC, JCP and the London Borough of Redbridge . We are also able to raise income through our trading activities through our trading arm, SACOMA Centre for Enterprise (SCofE)

SACOMA Centre for Enterprise (SCofE)

- Trading arm of the charity
- Activities based in the UK and abroad- focus is on supporting start-up businesses
- Carries out training and provides incubation support in UK, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Tanzania
- Supports small businesses with small start-up loans as well as venture capital income and access to Angel Finance.
- SACOMA's status as a SFEDI Centre of Excellence allows the delivery of accredited training to those with little access to mainstream training
- Provides a 'Business Accelerator' programme to help businesses in partner countries access International markets

Training and Incubation



Integrated Support services for clients- training in ICT



Impact of Social Enterprise on the Client Groups

- 25% increase in the number of people accessing social enterprise support
- 65% of those that access the service are women
- 20% reported increase in disposable income within the groups that adopt social enterprise models
- 'Soft skills' are enhanced- more confident, decision making is better informed, enhanced understanding of effective communication
- Move on to access further training- mainly into accredited training programmes
- Soft loans enable the small groups to continue providing essential services to their communities
- Awareness of further support available- either in terms of access to funding or to support

Challenges

- **Lack of adequate funding**
- **Poor understanding of the needs of smaller groups by larger statutory bodies**
- **Information is not filtering effectively to smaller groups regarding available support**
- **Lack of support for smaller groups in accessing mainstream funding**
- **Competition from mainstream service providers**

Help needed?

- **Improved enablers that support social enterprises**
- **Access to appropriate, high quality business support**
- **Involving young people in the social enterprise process**
- **Government understanding the potential of social enterprises, both to the communities that they work in as well as to the wider economy, with particular interest in the current economic climate**

Contact Details

Mrs Perez Ochieng
Chief Executive Officer

Sahara Communities Abroad (SACOMA)
108 Cranbrook Road
Ilford, Essex
IG1 4LZ

E-mail: perez@sacoma.org.uk

Tel: 020 8554 9444

Mobile: 07764 961 489