



# Northern Ghana Beverage Industry **Assessment**

An assessment of the potential of the Food Industry across the five Northern regions

## **AUTHORS**

### **BEVERAGE INDUSTRY IN NORTHERN GHANA**

#### **About Africa Skills Hub (ASH)**

ABOUT AFRICA SKILLS HUB (ASH) Africa Skills Hub (ASH) is a youth international non-governmental organization (INGO) based in Accra, Ghana and working throughout the African continent to build skilled African youth as agents of change through our social enterprise paradigm and grassroots community development approaches. ASH is a youth focused incubator which offers a range of capacity building, empowerment and advocacy programs including entrepreneurship, women empowerment, and hands-on skills development to contribute to sustainable development.

Our Mission is to build skilled African youth as agents of change.

Our Vision is to be a leading center in the creation of possibilities for Africa's sustainable development.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## Summary

Beverages are food-grade liquids mainly processed from animal or plant sources. They may be in the form of stimulants such as tea and coffee, as refreshers like soft drinks, juices, and water, or as nutritional drinks such as milk. Beverage processing could be by simple non microbial processes as defined by Tamang and Kailasapathy 2010 Kubo and others 2014, Tafere 2015.

In spite of the fact that the beverage industry in Ghana is dominated by imported drinks, the Beverage Industry in Northern Ghana is also very diverse in composition and nutritional value and are specific to their culture .

The beverage industry in the Northern of Ghana uses raw materials including cereal grains, legumes, flowers and juices from plants, fruits, and milk. The beverages vary according to raw materials, origin, and processing techniques employed, and are usually unique to their culture.



## **BACKGROUND**

Like any other African country, Ghana's primary commodities are generally exported in their raw state and are then imported as processed beverages. Although import levels are high, Ghanaian beverage manufacturing capacity, as well as bottling and packaging capacity, have been boosted substantially during these past years, with major players investing in infrastructure and trying to source inputs locally.

When it comes to beverages in Ghana, we are likely to think of branded alcoholic drinks, tea, coffee, and juice. But Ghana can boast of good traditional beverages (some of which are alcoholic) prepared with so much attention paid to their medicinal and Nutritional values. On average, these beverages are mostly purchased and enjoyed by those in the rural areas since they don't have access to the branded beverages found in the urban areas and also due to the cost of these foreign/branded drinks.

According to Victoria A. et.al (2021), The current research identified 14 local drinks. About 40% of the indigenous drinks identified were consumed as snacks only. Most of the drinks are prepared by boiling. Also, three of the indigenous were found to be abandoned (Dakahili, Dori, and Kopelim), these findings were in the northern region. According to Ketema et al., Traditional drinks. [1] It is a drink native to a specific area, developed by the people of that area using ancient technology and locally available raw materials

Under the government's "One District, One Factory" industrial transformation plan, Ghana's beverage industry has been designated for expansion. Traditional drinks are still an integral part of the Ghanaian culture, but the shift to branded products is growing steadily. Despite supply chain disruptions and declining outdoor consumption during the pandemic, the industry remained relatively resilient in 2020.

## CHAPTER TWO

### **INGREDIENTS USED AND METHOD OF PREPARING LOCAL BEVERAGES**

Most of these beverages originated from areas where ingredients used for production are mostly cultivated. The Northern Region has over the years been known for producing cereals and grains, these are the main ingredients found in most beverages thus it's not surprising most women are into the production of traditional drinks. Some of the main ingredients used are millets, corn, sorghum, hibiscus leaves, fruits, animal products (milk), and other spices (ginger, cloves, etc).

The method of preparation for most of these beverages is boiling. Some are fermented or blended (especially fruits) to extract their juice. The process of preparing these drinks is relatively simple, so the cost is much cheaper than that of other foreign soft drinks, nonetheless, some of these drinks when prepared in large quantities can be stressful without the use of advanced machinery and equipment.

## **NUTRITIONAL, SOCIAL, AND ECONOMIC BENEFITS**

Africans at large are known for their knowledge and value for medicinal herbs, Ghana is not an exception. Traditional beverages produced in Northern Ghana are known to have medicinal components that are good for the body due to the various ingredients used in preparing these drinks. Sobolo is a non-alcoholic local drink prepared by using hibiscus leaves, ginger, sugar, water, and other spices depending on the taste preferred, is said to provide some health benefits such as blood regulation, reduces menstrual pains, etc. Other traditional drinks equally provide their nutritional values as well.

In as much as these local drinks are produced by households for personal consumption, the current trend in demand for these local beverages has increased production and sales of these beverages (especially "Sobolo", "Asaana", and Brukina ) and has become a growing and profitable company taken over by individuals in the region. These beverages are served during occasions such as marriage and naming ceremonies, festive seasons, parties, other local gatherings, and in recent times, international and official gatherings.

As the country seeks to empower women by providing them with hands-on skills as a way of job creation and financial independence, the local beverage industry could be a great investment area for the government, donors, and individuals as the industry is still young in terms of innovation and market. Proper management and investment into this sector can extend the market of these beverages beyond local consumers thus increasing sales and production and creating more jobs for these women. Consumption of food and beverages can contribute to the competitive marketing and promotion of tourist destinations (Boniface, 2003; Kivela & Crotts, 2006) A report by the Singapore Tourism Board (2007) revealed that food and beverage spending by tourists accounted for more than \$1 billion representing about 12% of international tourists' expenditure in 2006. The GTA (2011) also reported that in 2009, expenditure on food and beverage accounted for 13% of international tourists' expenditure, placing second after expenditure on accommodation.

## TYPES OF LOCAL BEVERAGES FOUND IN THE NORTHERN REGION

Research by Victoria A. et.al, (2001), identified 14 local drinks. About 40% of the indigenous drinks identified were consumed as snacks only. Most of the drinks are prepared by boiling. Also, three of the indigenous were found to be abandoned (Dakahili, Dori, and Kopelim). The table below shows the list of traditional drinks available in the Northern Region.

Name of drink? (english name of drink)	Common Name. (Name given to the drink)	Physical characteristics (shape, texture, colour, taste, liquid, paste)	Usage	If other use specify	Main Ingredients (Ingredients used for preparing drink)	Method of cooking or processing
Emejo, Asana	Asana	Brownish Black, liquid, sweet.	Snack		Maize, melted sugar.	Boiling
Local Tamarinda	Puhaa	Liquid	Snack			Boiling
Ice kaafa	Ice kaafa	Liquid, orange	Snack		Red millet, sugar	Boiling
Ice kenkey	Tick	Milky color, liquid, rough, sweet.	Snack			Fermentation
Diluted Ice kenkey	Light	Liquid, rough maize particles,	Snack			Other specify



		cream, sweet				
Cow milk drink	Fuula mini bihim	Milky, sweet, mashed fuula as roughage	Accompanim ent Snack		Millet caw milk, maize floor around the fuula	Boiling Infusion
Mango smoothie	Mango drink	Liquid, thick, mango.	Dessert Snack		Mango.	Other specify
Tigernuts drink	Nansga kom.	Milk color, sweet, tigernuts taste, liquid,	Snack		Tigernuts.	
Sobolo	Sobolo	Reddish color, liquid, sour taste, sweet.	Snack		The sobolo leafs	Boiling
Pineapple juice	Alaafe kom	Pineapple flavor, smooth, sweet.	Dessert Snack		Pineapple	
Millet water	Zimkom	Liquid, raw taste, sweet, darkish White	Snack		Millet	
Ice kaafa	Ice kaafa	Fanta color, liquid, sweet	Dessert Snack		Red millet porad, Ginger, mango for color	

Poha	Tamari nda		Snack		Boil raw Tamarinda , ginger	Boiling
Tamarind drink	Poha	Brown, liquid, sour, pepperish	Appetizer Dessert Snack		Tamarind, Ginger, sugar	Boiling Fermenta tion
Sobolo	Sobolo	Liquid, sweet	Snack			Boiling
tick Ice kenkey	Tick	Cream, smooth, liquid, sweet	Dessert Snack		Seaved Fante kenkey,	Other specify
Diluted Ice kenkey	Light	Liquid, watery, sweet, lite cream in color	Snack		Fate kenkey.	Other specify
Roselle juice	Sobolo	Reddish color, liquid, sour taste, sweet	Snack		Roselle leafs	Boiling
Millet and caw milk mix	Burkia	Thick liquid, particulate, sweet, milk taste	Appetizer Dessert Snack		Caw milk, cooked millet	Boiling Infusion
Ice kenkey thick	Thick	Milk color, sweet, thick liquid, rough particles	Dessert Snack			Other specify
Tamarind	Poha	Dark Brown, liquid,	Appetizer Snack		Musulo, kanaafuri, ginger	Boiling Other specify

		sweet, sour taste				
Grinded Millet water	Zimkm	Task raw, sweet, fine particles	Appetizer Snack		Millet, musulo, kanaafuri	Infusion Other specify
Milk and millet mixture	Burkia	Milky taste, sweet, thick liquid	Appetizer Dessert Snack		Cooked Millet, milk	Boiling Infusion Other specify
Roselle drink	Sobolo	Sour, reddish dark, sweet, liquid.	Appetizer Snack		Roselle leafs, musulo, kanaafuri, ginger	Boiling Infusion
Immature alcohol	Kajegu	Sweet, liquid,	Appetizer		Red millet	Boiling Fermentation
Diluted Ice Kenkey	Light	Milk color, liquid, sweet, fine particles	Appetizer Snack		Kenkey	Other specify
Millet and cow milk mix	Burkia	White liquid with millet particles, sweet,	Main dish Appetizer Dessert Snack		Millet, cow milk	Boiling Infusion
Tamarinda	Poha	Sour taste, brown, sweet	Appetizer Snack		Tamarind, kanaafuri, ginger, musulo	Boiling Infusion
Dawadawa fruit drink	Dori	Yellow, thick liquid, smooth, sweet	Main dish Appetizer Dessert Snack		Dried Dawadawa fruits	Other specify

**BELOW IS A GALLERY SHOWING SOME LOCAL BEVERAGES IN NORTHERN GHANA**



Ice kaafa



Puha



Alaafe kom



Emejo or Asana



Sobolo



Nansaya kom

## **CONSTRAINTS**

### **COMPETITIVE MARKET**

Over the years, demand for foreign beverages has been on the rise as Ghanaians continue to develop an unending taste for these beverages over locally produced ones. Competition in this sector has intensified due to urbanization, increased brand awareness, and a growing middle class.

### **EXPENSIVE OF BRANDING PRODUCTS**

Input costs are increasing which have exacted a hefty toll on the local beverage sector. Many inputs such as glass, plastic, and ethanol still have to be imported and duties, which are calculated in foreign currencies, driving production costs higher. The depreciation of the cedi has impacted particularly heavily on homebrew producers whose margins are very low.



## **CONCLUSION**

Innovation in the local beverage industry is necessary for the promotion of the beverage industry, and also enable the industry to gain recognition in both the local and international market. Local beverage production as been an ignored production sector for the past years. Entrepreneurs who venture into non-alcoholic beverage production mostly produce carbonated beverages because that is the demand on the market.

Improving the market and purchase of these locally produced beverages will mean adding value to the products in terms of production, processing, packaging, and marketing. The WELI project has been initiated to add value to the local beverage industry in Northern Ghana by organizing a number of events for women in the localities to help them improve their businesses.

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# AFRICA SKILLS HUB

Building Skilled African Youth As Agents Of Change

Website: [www.africaskillshub.com](http://www.africaskillshub.com) Location: B378/14 New Abose Okai Street, Mataheko Peace Clinic Accra, Ghana

Email: [info@africaskillshub.com](mailto:info@africaskillshub.com) Contact: +233 0307000111 / +233 (0) 54 828 8182

 @africaskillshub

Designed by Beatrice S. Anthonio