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## ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INNOVATION IN GHANA (INTERACTIVE PAPER)

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**INTERACTIVE PAPER SESSION**

**ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INNOVATION IN GHANA**

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**Principal Topics and Background**

The benefits of entrepreneurship and innovation for developing countries are potentially enormous, but this is an area which has been relatively under-researched. This paper seeks to contribute to our understanding of entrepreneurship and innovation in Africa by analysing responses from 500 entrepreneurs in Ghana to compare seven measures of innovation activity, against the characteristics of the entrepreneurs and their businesses.

**Methods/Key Propositions**

This paper uses a survey of 500 entrepreneurs employing between four and fifty full-time workers. The respondents are defined as entrepreneurs as they are risk takers, started their own businesses, and they or their families own the majority of their businesses. In each case the entrepreneur completed the written questionnaire, administered by the researcher over the period of January to June 2005.

This paper looks at the overall levels of innovation within 7 categories, (i) products or services, (ii) production processes (including storage), (iii) work practices, or workforce organisation, (iv) supply and supplier relations, (v) markets and marketing, (vi) administration and office systems, and (vii) product or services distribution. Respondents were asked to indicate whether they had introduced a novel innovation, an incremental innovation, or no innovation with regard to each of the seven categories. A novel innovation was one that was new to the entrepreneur's business and also new to the industry, whilst an incremental innovation was new to the entrepreneur's business but not new to the industry.

**Results and Implications**

The lack of research that has explored entrepreneurship and innovation in Africa means that this paper has the potential to make an important contribution to our understanding of new venture creation in developing countries. Of the many nations on the African continent, the relative stability of Ghana endorses its potential to create a vibrant, entrepreneurial economy. By increasing our knowledge of entrepreneurship and innovation it is anticipated that the findings from this study will better inform agencies to further encourage and support entrepreneurship in Ghana.

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