

The Association of Ghana Industries (AGI) is to set up an oil and gas centre in Takoradi to assist in strengthening the capacity of small and medium-scale enterprises to take advantage of the new business opportunities. Mr Samuel Appenteng, Vice President of AGI, who announced this at a workshop on oil and gas value chain building in Ghana's oil and gas industry on Tuesday, said the AGI was committed to ensuring that the benefits from the industry did not only accrue to large local service providers but also for small and medium-scale enterprises. It is in this direction that the AGI had accepted a proposal to partner with Africa Oil Services (AOS), an upstream service provider, to implement various capacity building programmes for members and the Ghanaian business community, he said. The capacity development initiative will provide SMEs with the requisite training to enhance their competitiveness in the oil and gas industry. Mr. Appenteng said the objective was to bring the companies to standards that would be accepted by the international operators in the industry.

"This event among other things will seek to broaden the horizons of participants, with a view to addressing critical issues of job availability, business opportunities and technical requirements for smooth participation by local service providers in the oil and gas industry," he said.

Mr David Somorin, Executive Director Business and Corporate Development of AOS, said the companies needed to take capacity building seriously, adding that local content was achievable only when there was a conscious effort to build capacity and work on standards. He said the workshops would help to build skills and standards that best suited the growth phase of Ghana's oil industry, which was more likely to translate into dividends of oil for the society.

"Eventually, we expect these efforts to culminate in the establishment of internationally approved oilfield training and development centres in Ghana," he said. Mr Somorin said it was important that the stakeholders developed guidelines and various requirements for goods and services that the operators could procure locally.

Mrs Stella Tam-Minayo, Business Development Manager, KANFISH International Training Centre, said local content was only useful if it would enable the average person to benefit from the oil find.

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