National Conference On Jobs & Oil: Increasing Access To Youth & Women Employment And, Making Oil Work For Poor People In Uganda
Theme: “Skills Development For Improved Job and Income Opportunities”

EDITORIAL

Living Earth Uganda in partnership with Living Earth Foundation (UK) have been implementing 2 projects; Jobs & Oil: Improving access to youth and women employment in Western Uganda and, Making Oil work for Poor People in Uganda. The projects are being implemented in the districts of Hoima, Buliisa and Masindi with funding from European Union & DIFD and Comic Relief respectively.

The projects’ interventions are aimed at supporting communities to benefit from opportunities presented by the emerging economy as a result of oil and gas industry development, and to have alternative sources of livelihood to improve their wellbeing while ensuring environment conservation.

Intervention areas include:
- Vocational and Technical skills Development
- Local Enterprise Development
- Functional Skills (FS) Training
- Youth placements
- Stakeholder engagements
- Organizational Safety and Health (OSH) Practices
- Promotion of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
- Youth and women empowerment on their rights
- Promotion of networking platforms for the business community including entrepreneurs and farmers.

The seventh edition of Jobs and Oil newsletter presents snap shot coverage of the national conference; some words that were spoken, exhibitions by project beneficiaries, and entire event pictorial.
State Minister for Minerals Hints on Hiring Locals In The Oil And Gas Industry

While delivering his key note address as the Chief Speaker at the National Conference, Hon. Lokeris Aimat Peter, told participants that skills make an individual to be innovative and creative. He said that then in the process of doing the job, one becomes a job creator, and hence making him or her to do what they want quickly with expertise. A skilled person does not have to waste other people’s time, because he or she is confident of what they are doing! The Minister then urged Companies trading in oil exploration and refinery to hire locals who are skilled instead of expatriates who are more expensive. He reminded participants that the oil can get finished underneath, but the skills acquired would remain with the people for a life time. He then advised that every person should endeavour to attain a particular skill in life.

International Oil Companies Urged To Strengthen Skills Capacity Of The Locals

During the conference, Hon. Biraahwa Mutikale Adyeri, the Member of Parliament for Buliisa Constituency, urged international companies engaging in oil and gas explorations, and the donors to direct their support to building the capacity of the people of Hoima and Buliisa, other than directing the money to things that do not benefit locals directly. He said for example they can support skills development, because once a skill is acquired, it can never decay.

He gave praises to the Skilling Uganda programme that the Government is implementing as being timely. Hon. Biraahwa urged that the skilling programme should have come at the time Government introduced UPE in 1996. He reasoned that in real sense, one should first acquire competency, then a qualification, but not vice versa. The Hon. intimated that foundation subjects like agriculture, technical drawing, carpentry, electrical, etc. should be introduced at a tender age, so that one grows with skills.

“At Living Earth Uganda, we build synergies, and partnerships to achieve more. I am calling upon Government, the private sector and donors’ fraternity to join hands with LEU in our journey to empower people of Albertine Graben with marketable skills, so that they can compete favourably in the Oil and Gas industry.”

- Swithern Tumwine, E.D, LEU
PANEL OF EXPERTS DISCUSS SKILLS, AND THE OIL AND GAS SECTOR

“We need to prepare ourselves for the industry. Business people endeavour to register your companies, and acquire TIN from URA. Make sure you pay your taxes to URA diligently. Do proper record keeping, become competitive, and start bidding for contracts in the Oil and gas industry. Look for partnerships with big and experienced companies that have already made it, so as to gain experience and to look competitive.” - Alfred Busobozi, Operations Manager, Global Network Company

“We need to be equipped with relevant skills to compete with foreigners or foreign companies doing business here. Every Ugandan must equip themselves with a skill, if we are to be relevant, and to benefit from this much anticipated Oil and Gas industry. Government has put in place a Sector Skills Council to help demand from the public which skills are required, and hence create linkages for them.” - Juliet Engole, M+E Specialist, Reform Task Force Skilling Uganda

“Be good at what you want to be, and be good at it. Certification is important because it is a sign of excellence. What you have must be accepted to everyone. Oil and Gas is affecting all of us, but we must have something that will attract a customer to come and buy from us. Local content is about value addition. Value Addition requires technology, efficiency, and competency. Let us appreciate what the Oil and Gas sector is bringing to us.” - Tusingwire Edgar, Local Content Officer, Directorate of Petroleum, Ministry of Energy & Mineral Development

“We are changing from subject based curriculum to knowledge or competency based curriculum. We should be trained on exactly what we are going to do. For example, in Europe they say do not release a student unless he or she knows what they are going to do. To me, I think this is the best skills practice we can offer to our people, if they are to benefit from the Oil and Gas industry.” - Ssempala Patrick, Principle Education Officer, BTVET Department, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and Sports

“75% of our total labour force are in agriculture, but how many farmers are in cash economy. Only 30%! If a farmer is not doing commercial farming, I am afraid they should not expect to benefit much from the Oil and Gas sector. I urge our farmers to engage in contract farming. This is where you farm a commodity only when you have a contract already. But value addition is key in this whole initiative. We need a one stop centre where locals can acquire information about opportunities in the Oil and Gas sector. Perhaps that centre should be put here in Hoima.” - Dr. Charles Kajura, District Production & Marketing Officer, Hoima District Local Gov’t.

“As Ugandans we need to first work on our attitude towards work, and stop lamenting how foreigners are taking our jobs. Ugandan youth need to adopt the right skills and develop positive attitude towards work. It is time Government and the Development partners began directing a reasonable percentage of support to skills development. As Belgium Technical Cooperation (BTC), we are hoping that Government of Uganda will soon put in place a Skills Development Authority, because skilling venture is very expensive, therefore requires maximum support from all parties.” - Ralph Rothe, Field Manager, Support to Skilling Uganda Project.
Pictorial

Swithin Tumwine the E.D Living Earth Uganda making his presentation at the conference

Niall Mariot, the Co-founder of Living Earth Foundation, UK; speaking at National Conference in Hoima

Students of Science Club - Kitara Sec. School (Hoima), demonstrating the process of paper recycling; The school benefited from LEU’s STEM program

John Byaruhanga, a renown commercial farmer, and beneficiary of the project; explains to the Minister during the exhibition

Rt. Hon. Norman Lukumu, the Prime Minister of Bunyoro Kitara Kingdom; giving closing remarks at the National Conference in Hoima

Ralph Rothe of BTC, Harriet Kabanyoro - S.3 student of Kitara S.S, and David Katamba - session moderator; in an educative exchange during the Conference

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