



SNAPSHOT

The Atuabo FreePort offers compelling business opportunities in Ghana

USAID encourages supplier/buyer communications in the Oil & Gas Industry



Photo: Participants interacting and networking at the SCD Atuabo Freeport supplier awareness event

Negative perceptions about doing direct business with international organizations prevented SMEs from prospects of concluding real transactions. With this Atuabo Free Port supplier event, those perceptions are slowly dissipating. Opportunities for SMEs in construction and operational stages of Atuabo may be realized in early 2016 and into 2017.

Opportunity, some say, is preparedness coupled with perfect timing. On October 5, 2015, a Supplier Awareness event hosted by the Ghana Supply Chain Development (SCD) Program and Atuabo FreePort allowed representation from 74 Ghanaian SMEs to understand future collaborative industry opportunities in/around the western region.

A final investment decision as to be made in November 2015 by the Atuabo consortium will determine prospects ahead for many Takoradi-based enterprises. This October 5th Supplier Awareness event enabled firms to understand construction and operational concerns surrounding what may become the single largest oil/gas related infrastructure investment in the western region, and whole of the country. Local procurement and contracting opportunities will prove monumental toward the growth of the local private sector moving forward, and firms learned of both progress and opportunities with the procurement cycle of Atuabo moving into 2016 and 2017.

To complement details shared on the Atuabo FreePort, SCD highlighted program accomplishments as well as intentions and plans to continue capacity building measures which have benefited local SMEs since 2013. Over 500 individuals stemming from over 120 companies have taken part in industry related trainings focused on areas including EHS, QMS, Effective Procurement, Welding, Legal & Compliance Issues, and IT-related accounting systems. Additionally, many SCD-affiliated companies are taking efforts to certify in accordance to international best practices, ie TRACEcertification.

The Supplier Forum was well received, and shows the advancement of networking and relations between multinational buyers and respective SMEs looking to extend business communications and contracts in the oil/gas sector. Ghanaian SMEs have begun registration to Atuabo's vendor portal, an integral step toward establishing relations with the entity.

With prospects of new partnerships in mind, SCD will continue to host similar events to strengthen relationships and bring SMEs into direct contact with additional multinationals operating in the oil, gas and related sectors. With more linkages made in business, more contracts are likely to emerge as results of these events.