

Setup. For Uganda to monetise its oil and gas reserves, it has to put enabling infrastructure in place.

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KAMPALA. The drop in oil prices has caused setbacks for the North Sea and oil industry at large.

According to Mr Andrew Monaghan, the regional manager for Africa at Scottish Development International, the unfortunate effects of the oil price drop have in turn triggered an appetite for African markets.

"The way that Scotland is responding to this big challenge is by cutting costs and we have cut costs in the North Sea and more importantly looking for new markets," Mr Monaghan said on Monday in Kampala.

To that effect, a delegation of nine British companies specialising in training in the oil and gas sector are on a trade mission in Uganda to discuss plans on how to enable Ugandans acquire critical skills needed to develop international content that will support the sector's development.

"Uganda's oil and gas sector is at an exciting phase that requires significant investment and expertise from local and international players," British High Commissioner to Uganda Peter West said while explaining the significance of the delegates meeting.

Speaking at the meeting, senior international business executive at Scottish Development International Ian Ross said for Uganda to monetise its oil and gas reserves, it has to build infrastructure including a refinery and a pipeline.

The refinery will allow Uganda to process the oil whereas the pipeline will allow Uganda to sell oil on the international market.

To build this infrastructure, there is need for 200,000 people and government insists this number must reflect local content.

However, Ugandans still lack the essential skills to ensure projects are delivered safely, timely and cost ef-

Scotland wants to plug skills gap in oil sector



Discussion. Left to right: Scottish Training for Energy Partnership Limited chief executive officer James Murphy, senior international business executive at Scottish Development International Ian Ross and British High Commissioner to Uganda Peter West speak to the media at start of the Scottish oil and gas trade mission to Uganda on Monday. COURTESY PHOTO

fectively.

"We found that there are not many technically skilled people here," Mr Ross said.

He added: "The international oil companies have a duty of care not to contaminate the land and therefore when you deliver it with skills, you have to ensure that there will not be any spills that could make the oil and gas explode so when people are trained, it has to be at a high level."

The companies' focus is to partner with local companies to develop networks that support the industry in Uganda.

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JAMES MURPHY, CEO SCOTTISH TRAINING FOR ENERGY PARTNERSHIP LIMITED

The companies plan to build capacity in terms of vocational training

and supply chain management.

"We are looking at two sets of training. One is the short term training which will take people over the course of two and a half years of the project life and will need to be trained in special skills of welding, electrical instrumentation. Also part of the project life cycle, is need to emphasise that high level technical training skills such as production operation, process operators are trained to build confidence," said Mr James Murphy, chief executive officer Scottish Training for energy Partnership Limited.