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| May 2021 | KonneKt World GPCIMP-Model Training for Women in the Energy Sector in Ghana |

Presented to SHELL OIL OF GHANA

by Geraldine Mensah-Dartey, CEO, KonneKt World



PROPOSAL

KonneKt World GPCIMP-Model Training for Women in the Energy Sector in Ghana

# executive summary

KonneKt World seeks a funding partnership with Shell Oil of Ghana to continue and expand training for young women pursuing careers in STEM. The Ghana Power Compact Internship and Mentoring Program (GPCIMP), sponsored initially by the Millennium Development Authority (MiDA), successfully demonstrated the effectiveness of mentoring and training in preparing women for careers in the oil and gas, mining, and other scientific and industrial sectors. The program supports women students pursuing STEM degree and diploma programs to gain job skills pertinent to the energy sector in Ghana, through intensive training, mentoring by college and university faculty, and internships.

As a sector traditionally dominated by men, the energy sector benefits from bringing more women to the table, in terms of gaining valuable employees with the right skills, and with an eye toward increasing the representation of women in the energy sector who will hold decision-making positions. The GPCIMP was funded by MiDA within the Power Compact between the Government of Ghana (GoG) and the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC). The Power Compact concludes in September 2021. The plan all along has been for the program to find further funding and become sustainable as a permanent asset to the energy sector in Ghana.

KonneKt World, a global professional training and mentoring company, has had successful experience training STEM interns under the GPCIMP model and is uniquely positioned to carry out mentorship and training activities using the existing successful model. The program’s elements are already fully in place and success has been amply demonstrated, as this Proposal will show. The numerous benefits of funding the program include:

* a steady stream of qualified, well-trained and eager young interns who will add their skills to the corporate mix;
* the reputational enhancement of supporting an internship program for women in STEM career degree programs;
* ongoing liaison with universities and technical schools whose women faculty mentor the interns; and a working relationship with the training organization, which can tailor training to the needs of the company.

The program addresses and provides solutions for some clear goals currently being pursued by both the government and by corporate world leaders in Ghana. KonneKt World with SHELL OIL OF GHANA as the sustaining partner will continue facilitating STEM training and internships for women students when the Millennium Challenge funding ceases in September. Budget details are included in this Proposal, which outlines the growing success of the program and its value for the energy sector in Ghana.

# The GPCIMP 2018-2020

From 2018-2020, the GPCIMP enabled approximately 250 women students from Ghana’s public universities and technical and vocational schools to undertake two-month internships in the power and energy sectors. These students also received mentorship from women professionals in the sector, as well as training in interviewing and “soft skills” necessary in the job market.

The Energy Policy of the Government of Ghana includes a Sustainable Energy For All Policy, which encourages women’s employment and decision-making in the energy sector. While the participation of women in management and governance in Ghana’s energy sector remains low, global best practice indicates that gender balance and inclusion is critical to strategic management and national economic development in the future. Achieving gender equity, or at any rate inclusion, at decision-making levels in the energy/power sector means placing equal value upon the perspectives, interests and experiences of both men and women.

In the past, women have faced barriers to employment in STEM fields, even as a growing number of them graduate with STEM degrees from universities and technical schools. Internships for women in STEM address this problem by enabling women to gain first-hand experience in the Energy/Power sector; the GPCIMP internship model also gives them training and mentorship. As the program has grown and received feedback, young women who may have given up on their aspirations toward employment in the sector have been empowered with knowledge and experience, so that they may contribute their skills and their voices to the sector, critical as it is to national economic development.

# MiDA TRAINING RESULTS

The Millennium Development Authority (MiDA) has conducted training of young women from between 2018-2021. The program started small with only a few participants, and rapidly grew. At present, more than 250 female STEM students have participated in the GPCIMP model program. A two-week training that took place in March of 2021 reached a record total of 102 students; some of their feedback about the program may be viewed in **Appendix A**. The training in March was facilitated by KonneKt World, a global mentoring and coaching platform with personalized programs that seek to develop its participants in their educational journeys, career development and management, emotional and psychological well-being, and building professional relationships.

The KonneKt World training in March was conducted via Zoom, due to COVID-19 restrictions. A participatory training methodology ensured each trainee was actively involved and had opportunities to share and explore their individual needs and questions, their reflection and analysis, and their strategies for positive change.

It was a great training with much emphasis on the reason why we needed to do what we were taught…challenging us, so we know what steps to take.

–KonneKt Training Participant

# evidence of value

Research has shown that female STEM (science-technology-engineering-mathematics) majors are dedicated, goal-oriented, and perform well academically (Amponsah & Mohammed, 2019; Women in STEM, 2019). However, women continue to be under-represented in STEM fields worldwide, likely due to cultural biases that historically have influenced both instruction and girls’ decisions about courses of study.

In Ghana, female STEM faculty report that despite their successes, women’s educational and professional experiences continue to be characterized by gender disparities (Boateng & Gaulee, 2019). We can only move ahead one step at a time as we address the issue of gender disparity and representation in careers and corporate governance. It is true that the more training young women in STEM fields have, the more they will feel empowered to persist in their education and career goals. Much of the feedback received by KonneKt World about our training has underscored these feelings of empowerment.

This is my best training ever…I am really grateful for this because its benefits with tremendously work in shaping my life in the future. --KonneKt Training Participant

# proof of concept

The MiDA program is designed to prepare female graduates with the real-life skills needed for the job market. Research has shown that the participation of women in corporate decision-making has a positive impact on the bottom line. Companies in the top quarter of gender diversity are 15% more likely to have higher profits than their industry peers (McKinsey Report, 2015). Power companies in particular benefit: a study that tracked the gender diversity of boards of 200 of the world's largest power utilities found that power companies with a higher percentage of women in decision-making positions have better financial performance (Ernst & Young, 2016). The GPCIMP program objective was to help support female students in STEM fields to gain practical skills relevant to jobs in the energy sector. Funded by MiDA with the intent of becoming sustainable after the first two years, the program conducted a pilot in 2018 and then ran from 2019-2020, reaching about 250 young women. The women learned about leadership, CV preparation, interpersonal communication, and networking. The feedback from the participants was enthusiastic (see Appendix A) and the expectations were exceeded, giving us evidence that this is a good way to fulfill the goal of increasing the number of women participating in the energy sector in Ghana. The success of the program thus far serves as a proof of concept that the program is feasible and ready to continue.

# The KONNEKT WORLD APPROACH

The mentorship aspect of our training program is vital, as this enables female students still completing their studies to begin to build a professional network, while receiving advice from other women who have lived similar experience. In addition, KonneKt World’s participatory training framework fosters community among the students. It has been shown that women are less likely to drop out of programs that have a preponderance of women, and this goes for majors as well as training programs (Boateng & Nyarko, 2016). The KonneKt training fosters a sense of belonging in young women STEM students who would otherwise not have that benefit.

KonneKt World brings to the table a strong training program, comprehensive knowledge of university and college programs in Ghana and a wide network of appropriate mentors for our participants. Along with this we have excellent and proven management skills and background—we model what a good management company looks like. Geraldine Mensah-Dartey, CEO of KonneKt World, is a Harvard University graduate and a chemical engineer. She has lived the women-in-STEM experience. KonneKt World already has an established evidence-based mentoring program tailor-made for organizations and their employees, and has has incorporated Digital Strategy and Innovation in their corporate training and mentorship programs for maximum value and effectiveness.

This was one of the greatest opportunities I have had…to be trained by the best in the game. I am personally so grateful for everything. --KonneKt Training Participant

# shell oil’s role

The MiDA program was intended to become sustainable after the initial years of funding. The program has achieved its goal, demonstrating the value of training and mentorship for women in STEM; that value is now distributable through the course of future training to whatever partner takes up the former role of MiDA and provides financial support and internship opportunities to the program as it continues.

The sustaining partnership is a unique opportunity for Shell Oil:

* to foster its own future alignment with the goals of the Government of Ghana to bring more women into the energy sector so that all voices may be heard;
* to ensure a steady stream of very well-trained women interns on an employment path, who are receiving mentorship from faculty and professionals in the energy sector;
* and to publicly demonstrate a corporate commitment to the presence of women in STEM employment.

Women STEM graduates will be valuable employees as well as future enterprise leaders for the energy sector. Because the training methods are proven and the model is already in place, no research and development are necessary. This is a fully operational training model, proven successful during its initial years, ready to be put in place for the needs of Shell Oil. The attached spreadsheet details the infrastructure, salary, consulting, recordkeeping, technology hardware and software, and overhead needs of the program.

# conclusion

KonneKt World is confident that, given the success we have demonstrated in applying the MiDA/GPCIMP model to the training of women student in STEM, the continuation of the program with Shell Oil as the new funding partner will be a great benefit to the company, to the energy sector of Ghana and to our society. The benefits to the funding partner include the professional benefit which consists in receiving a steady influx of well-trained women STEM graduates as interns and employees, as well as the reputational benefit which consists of being known as a forward-thinking company that is in alignment with the stated goals of the Government of Ghana for promoting the participation of women in the energy sector. The partnership will be a low-risk, high-reward solution for Shell Oil to receive well-trained women STEM graduates as interns and employees, to align closely with government objectives, and to be known as a company that supports the voices of women in the energy sector in Ghana.

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# appendix A: training participant feedback

The following charts illustrate the overwhelmingly positive feedback received from KonneKt World training participants who chose to complete an exit survey.

The speaker shared her personal experiences…thereby encouraging us to do the same. I like how practical everything was, such that we could really understand everything that was going on. --KonneKt Training Participant

# appendix B: budget

[ATTACH EXCEL SHEETS HERE]