

# Press Release

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **EDUCATION, A KEY TO SOLVING AFRICA'S SKILLS SHORTAGE IN THE ENERGY SECTOR**

Educational institutions and energy companies need to inform and imbue knowledge to students and graduates on how a career in energy, particularly in engineering, can empower the continent to address the potentially ailing energy sector – and address the social imbalances burdening the continent.

Stephen Ramotsei, business development manager of MEETI (Mineral and Energy Education and Training Institute) and a member of the Steering Committee of the ENERGY INDABA 2010, states that for the continent to continue attracting the right professionals to sustain the energy sector, there should be heightened awareness amongst learners on African social challenges and how their skills can help address the uneven distribution of energy between Africa's rural, impoverished areas and its well populated, urban cities.

Ramotsei argues that students and learners will only decide to pursue a career in this sector if they are able to ascertain how their skills can help solve the energy crisis, while also gaining an understanding of the enormous opportunities on offer in this industry sector. "Training engineers should therefore involve creating a desire to solve existing social problems," he explains. "Right now Africa is facing issues of adaption and mitigation around global warming. Now more than ever we need an optimal combination of social and technical skills that are able to provide solutions so that the community, especially those in rural areas, can learn to provide for themselves."

At the MEETI itself, which provides further education in energy, enrolments by students and engineering professionals have declined, says Ramotsei, especially as companies are likely to cut back significantly on training during this economic slowdown.

But there is also a need for companies in the energy sector to develop incentives that will attract an ambitious, but Afro-centric workforce. "Not everyone who graduates from engineering enters the technical side – many end up as consultants or in an unrelated industry where factors such as remuneration versus sector demand come into play. " "Companies should therefore encourage all students – from BA, BCom to LLB - that it pays to be in energy – even if it's on the management level. One of the ways this can be achieved is by placing more financial incentives so that graduates see studying towards an energy related qualification as a natural progression, and will develop an interest in energy."

By developing a steady supply of skills for Africa's growing energy demand, the production of power will eventually help to bring an end to the division on the continent, and ultimately lead to tackling the most prevalent issues facing African countries of today.

As an influential educational professional in the energy sector, Ramotsei provides support and direction as a Steering Committee member of the ENERGY INDABA 2010, which takes place on February, 24-26 2010. Ramotsei will be chairing the conference's 'Human Capital Development' session that will take a leading focus on Energy Skills Evolution for Africa. The discussions here will revolve around ensuring sufficient skills for the continent's energy sector through education, professional self-development and technology transfer. "We see the evolution of skills in Africa as a springboard for making the public conscious of African problems. The issue of skills in energy is part of a bigger problem facing the continent," he says.

**Note to Editors:**

**ENERGY INDABA 2010: A Time of Change**

ENERGY INDABA 2010 – A Time for Innovation, Solutions and Alternatives is the event theme chosen by the Steering Programme Advisory Committee for ENERGY INDABA 2010.

The flagship African energy event is an annual event on the Africa business calendar with a specific focus on exploring solutions for a new energy future for Africa. With the recent ever increasing world-wide attention to Energy, ENERGY INDABA 2010 provides an ideal platform to encourage debate as well as creating the stage for a networking climate conducive for companies and individuals to interact.

The event forms part of the African business calendar, which will promote sustainable development initiatives across the African continent.

DATES: 24 – 26 February 2010  
WEBSITE: [www.energyafricaexpo.com](http://www.energyafricaexpo.com)  
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