

# PRESS RELEASE

## AECOM is well-positioned for oil-and-gas project boom in East Africa

*27 June 2018: The oil-and-gas sector in East Africa is on the verge of a major boom, as various infrastructure projects are either kicking off, or are in the final design stages, according to AECOM Uganda Managing Director **Bridget Ssamula**.*

Global oil-and-gas companies have set up offices, and some are delivering projects in Uganda, hence the interest is rife, Ssamula comments. “The largest opportunities are in the oil-and-gas sector, where AECOM’s global skills, expertise, and project experience, coupled with our local know-how, and a demonstrated commitment to local content, are key strengths.”

There is a growing trend of delivering projects through the private-sector involvement of these oil-and-gas companies. In addition, the sector is embracing varying procurement methodologies, from Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) through to Design and Build, Engineering, Procurement, and Construction (EPC) and Engineering, Procurement, Construction Management (EPCM).

“This has opened up opportunities for various sectors that support the construction and services industries,” Ssamula notes. In addition, there is an increased focus on local content to ensure that the financial investment in the infrastructure sector trickles through to locally-registered entities, a concept familiar to South Africa through the government’s Supplier Development Programmes (SDPs).

“The experience that AECOM has garnered through its own SDP has enabled us to propose and deliver local-content project offerings, based on the understanding that leaving a legacy of skills development, job creation, and technology transfer is inherent in the way we deliver projects,” Ssamula highlights.

AECOM has been involved with the environmental and social impact assessment for Total and Tullow in the Tilenga field-development project in Western Uganda since 2013. “This is a clear demonstration of deploying a specialised AECOM team with skills specific to the oil-and-gas sector, and using that strength to deliver the project.” In addition, the target spend for local partners has grown from 26% of the project cost to 40% as a result.

This project has posed a particular environmental challenge, as it is located mostly in the wildlife conservation areas of Murchison Falls and Queen Elizabeth National Parks. The strength and experience of the local team in this regard was key. “A major outcome is that our local partner is now able to tender for similar projects in the oil-and-gas sector on its own accord,” Ssamula reveals.

While AECOM Uganda itself was registered and incorporated in 2012, the AECOM legacy companies have been in-country since the 1960s, with a project track record from airports to roads, water, commercial buildings, and hydropower. As part of AECOM’s strategy for East Africa, the Uganda office has focused on establishing the brand in the region over the last two years.

“The biggest success comes in brand recognition, and in selling the expertise that AECOM can provide, in order to assist in developing the region further in conjunction with funders, contractors, and key clients. We now have a project pipeline in-country, demonstrating both our growth and the potential based on targeted opportunities where we can compete effectively on the basis of the depth of our expertise and experience,” Ssamula elaborates.

“Having grown up in Uganda, and being responsible for promoting the number one design engineering company in the world, was a lot easier than I had anticipated. There is value and

appreciation that an entity of this size and global reach is able to recognise local talent and leadership potential. The country's working climate, due to the type of foreign direct investment, is evolving to become more responsive competitively, as are other East Africa countries, albeit at a different pace," Ssamula concludes.

### ***Ends***

### **Notes to the editor**

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