

Powers new path in Africa

A new electrical plant being built with the China-Africa Development Fund is helping meet Ghana's energy needs

By **ZHANG YUE**

Through a joint effort by Shenzhen Energy Group and the China-Africa Development Fund in 2007, a major power plant is providing electricity for the city of Tema in the Republic of Ghana. Located 29 kilometers from the capital, Accra, the plant is run by Sunon-Asogli Power (Ghana) Ltd, and co-founded by Shenzhen Energy and the fund.

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Only when we make good use of our talent in different areas can we successfully blend into the international market.”

Li Xiaohai
head of Sunon-Asogli Power (Ghana) Ltd



AFRICA OPERATIONS

SUNON ASOGLI POWER (GHANA) LTD

Industry: Power generation

Established: 2007

Headquarters: Bonn, Tema, Ghana

Employees: 310

Address: Kpone Main Road, Tema, Ghana

Phone: 233 54 433 6448/9

PARENT COMPANY IN CHINA

SHENZHEN ENERGY GROUP

Industry: Power generation

Founded: 1991

Headquarters: Shenzhen, Guangdong province

Overseas operations: Ghana

Employees: 4,000

Revenue: 12 billion yuan

Ranking: Top 500 China Industrial Enterprises

Address: No 2068, Shennan Middle Road, Futian district, Shenzhen

Phone: 86 755 83680288

Website: www.sec.com.cn



GAO ZIMIN



Chairman, Shenzhen Energy Group

Born: 1963

Education

- Bachelor, Hebei University (1978)
- Master, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (1986)

Career:

- Chairman, Shenzhen Energy Group (2004-present)
- Managing Director, Shenzhen

Energy Group (2000-04)

- General Manager, Shenzhen Western Electric Co Ltd (1997-2000)

LI XIAOHAI

Chairman, Sunon Asogli Power (Ghana) Ltd

Born: 1963

Education: Shanghai Mechanical University (1983)



Career:

- Chairman, Sunon Asogli Power (Ghana) Ltd (2006-present)
- Deputy General Manager, Zhuhai Shenzhen Energy Hongwan Power Co Ltd (2004-06)
- Manager of procurement department, Shenzhen Energy Environment Engineering Co Ltd (1998-2004)
- Officer in charge of import, at Shenzhen

Western Electric Co Ltd (1995-98)

- Officer in charge of import, Shenzhen Mawan Power Co Ltd (1992-95)
- Supervisor of Project Department, Shenzhen Mawan Power Co Ltd (1989-92)
- Researcher, Nanjing Institute of Gas Turbine (1983-89)

The power plant is the first built overseas by Shenzhen Energy and covers an area of 200,000 square meters. Today, it is an important source of power for Ghana.

The fund and Shenzhen Energy co-established Sunon-Asogli Power as part of China's "reaching-out" strategy of investing and expanding overseas.

Shenzhen Energy had been interested in investing in Africa since late 2006, when Ghana tribal leader Togbe Afede XIV invited Shenzhen Energy to look into the West African nation's power market.

The total capacity of the plant will be 560 mW from gas-steam power generators, built in two phases. The first phase of construction of two 100 mW gas-steam generators was completed and put into operation in 2010, mitigating Ghana's urgent power needs.

The first phase of the project generates about 15 percent of the country's total electricity and benefits more than 2 million residents.

Shenzhen Energy has recently expanded its energy-market investments in Ghana. Feasibility studies for the second phase of the power plant are in progress, with construction scheduled to start in the spring. The company is also planning a coal-fired power plant and a wind farm in Ghana.

The company currently has 91 Chinese employees and 51 local employees.

The successful experience in Ghana has encouraged the company to expand its business elsewhere in Africa. In recent years, it has participated in building power plants in Kenya and Zambia with the help of the China-Africa Business Council and the Shenzhen Trade Promotion Association.

Still, the company faces difficulties in Africa, said Li Xiaohai, head of Sunon-Asogli Power (Ghana) Ltd.

"Developing a business abroad is comparatively more risky because we have less experience and it is less predictable," Li said. "We need to be prepared for all kinds of circumstances. The culture and political environment in African countries are very different.

"It is a big sacrifice for our project managers to work in a foreign country, as they have great workloads and sometimes even face danger," he said. "Therefore, we sincerely need more support and understanding from the local government."

He said recruiting talent is crucial to expanding the company's progress in foreign markets.

"We are paying lots of attention to developing our teams in management, marketing and technology," he said.

"Only when we make good use of our talent in different areas can we successfully blend into the international market."

He said the company needs more support from the local government in terms of financing and fair trading.