

# F I P S O U T L O O K

*Preparing Professionals for What's Next*

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Trusted by 1,121+ mining and industry professionals from leading companies across West Africa and beyond

**THIS EDITION:** The AI Readiness Imperative – Why Every Professional Needs a Digital Edge

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## EDITOR'S BRIEF

*From the Desk of the Executive Director*

In January 2026, gold breached \$5,000 per ounce for the first time in history. Ghana's Electricity Company is forecasting 12% load growth. The Bank of Ghana's e-Cedi pilot is expanding across 3,000 merchants. AngloGold Ashanti is running automated haulage at Obuasi while LinkedIn reports a 40% surge in skills-based job postings globally. Across every sector – from mining and energy to fintech and construction – the message is the same: the professionals who thrive will be those who combine deep domain knowledge with digital literacy and AI fluency. This inaugural edition of FIPS Outlook arrives at a moment of extraordinary opportunity for professionals across West Africa. Gold prices are rewriting the economics of mining operations. Commodity markets are diverging – energy prices are falling while critical minerals soar. Ghana's government is restructuring mining royalties. Every one of these shifts creates demand for professionals who can read signals, adapt quickly, and lead with both expertise and agility. That is exactly what this newsletter is designed to help you do. But reading the signals is only the first step. The critical question is how to translate these trends into a concrete professional development plan. That is where FIPS Outlook moves from observation to action. In each edition, we will not only highlight the emerging roles and in-demand skills but also connect them directly to the preparedness pathways available through FIPS. Whether it's mastering AI for mining operations, understanding the new economics of renewable energy, or leading digital transformation in finance, our goal is to provide a clear roadmap from insight to impact. Welcome to FIPS Outlook.

– Dr. Festus Kunkyin-Saadaari, PhD, CLSSGB  
Executive Director, FIPS

## INDUSTRY SIGNALS

*What's moving across industries this month – and what it means for your career.*

### M I N I N G & M I N E R A L S

#### AngloGold Ashanti Deploys Underground Automation at Obuasi

AngloGold Ashanti's Obuasi mine in Ghana has completed its integration of automated haulage, digital twin monitoring, and remote-controlled drilling systems. The modernisation programme positions Obuasi as one of Africa's most technologically advanced underground gold operations, with the company targeting a 30% reduction in carbon emissions by the end of 2026.

Newmont's Ahafo operation has followed a parallel path, deploying real-time data monitoring across every stage of production from blast hole drilling through to the processing plant. The company reports that AI-driven predictive maintenance has reduced unplanned equipment downtime by 22% in the past twelve months, translating directly into higher throughput and lower unit costs. Gold Fields' Tarkwa and Damang operations are investing in drone-based survey and autonomous haul truck trials, signalling that the automation wave is no longer confined to a single flagship operation. For Ghana's mining workforce, this acceleration means that familiarity with digital systems is rapidly shifting from a differentiator to a baseline expectation. Underground supervisors are now expected to interpret sensor dashboards alongside traditional stope inspections. Processing plant metallurgists are working with machine learning models to optimise recovery parameters in real time. The mines that are recruiting most aggressively are specifically seeking professionals who combine deep domain expertise with demonstrated data literacy.

**Career Signal:** *Professionals with skills in mine automation, remote operations, and digital systems integration are becoming the most sought-after hires in Ghana's gold sector.*

### E N E R G Y & P O W E R

#### Data Centre Demand Reshapes Global Power Investment as U.S. Electricity Load Doubles

The global race to build AI data centres is triggering the largest reallocation of power sector capital in a generation. U.S. electricity demand from data centres is projected to double by 2028, driving fresh investment in nuclear power, natural gas peaking plants, and grid infrastructure. In West Africa, Ghana's Electricity Company is forecasting a 12% load growth for 2026 as industrial and commercial demand accelerates, intensifying pressure on generation and transmission capacity. The supply side is struggling to keep pace. The Volta River Authority's ageing thermal fleet requires significant investment in maintenance and capacity expansion, while transmission losses across the national grid remain above 20% in some corridors. The government's Integrated Power System Master Plan calls for 3,000 MW of new capacity by 2030, including natural gas, solar, and potentially nuclear generation. Private sector interest in distributed solar and battery storage is growing, particularly among mining operations seeking to reduce diesel dependency and meet ESG commitments. For energy professionals, this creates a dual opportunity: traditional power engineering roles in generation and transmission planning are expanding, while emerging positions in smart grid management, demand-side response, and renewable energy integration are growing rapidly. Energy economists who can model the complex interplay between industrial demand growth, generation investment, and tariff reform will find their skills in high demand across both public utilities and private developers.

**Career Signal:** *Power systems engineers, grid modernisation specialists, and energy economists who can model demand-supply scenarios under rapid load growth will find expanding career opportunities across both conventional and emerging energy markets.*

### P E T R O L E U M & G A S

#### Global Oil Glut Deepens as Brent Falls to \$67 Amid OPEC+ Output Hikes

The IEA's February 2026 Oil Market Report confirms global oil supply is set to outpace demand significantly, with world output forecast to rise by 2.4 million barrels per day. Brent crude averaged \$67/bbl in January, its highest since September 2025, but the U.S. EIA forecasts an average of \$58/bbl for the full year. Meanwhile, U.S.-Iran tensions over the Strait of Hormuz continue to inject volatility into short-term pricing. Ghana's petroleum sector faces its own inflection point. The Tema LNG terminal is processing rising import volumes to support thermal power generation, while the Sankofa gas field continues to feed the Ghana Gas Processing Plant at Atuabo. However, the ENI-operated Sankofa field is approaching plateau production, raising questions about long-term domestic gas supply security. Meanwhile, downstream margins are under severe pressure – Tema Oil Refinery is operating well below capacity as the global glut compresses the spread between crude input costs and refined product revenues. This dual dynamic creates two distinct career tracks. Upstream and midstream professionals with LNG processing, pipeline integrity, and gas plant operations experience are in rising demand as Ghana seeks to secure its energy supply. Downstream specialists, by contrast, need to pivot toward efficiency optimisation, turnaround management, and cost-reduction strategies. Process engineers, HSE managers with HAZOP certification, and petroleum economists who can model profitability under volatile pricing regimes will find growing opportunities across Ghana's energy value chain.

**Career Signal:** *Petroleum engineers and downstream professionals should monitor refining margin compression – efficiency specialists and cost optimisation roles are increasingly valued as operators navigate a lower-price environment.*

## T E C H N O L O G Y & I C T

### Skills-Based Hiring Overtakes Degree Requirements Globally

A growing number of major employers, including mining firms and technology companies, are shifting to skills-based hiring. LinkedIn's 2026 workforce report shows that job postings requiring specific certifications and demonstrable skills grew by 40% year-on-year, while degree-only requirements fell. In Africa's mining sector, data analytics, Python scripting, and GIS proficiency are now listed as preferred qualifications for roles that previously required only engineering degrees. The shift is particularly pronounced in West Africa's extractive sectors, where companies are discovering that a mining engineer with Python scripting ability and Power BI proficiency delivers measurably more value than one with only a traditional engineering degree. AngloGold Ashanti's recruitment team has publicly stated that data analytics capability is now a preferred qualification for roles from grade control geologist to production superintendent. Newmont has launched an internal digital academy specifically to upskill its existing workforce in AI tools and data visualisation. Beyond mining, the trend is reshaping hiring across fintech, energy, and construction. MTN Ghana and Vodafone Cash are recruiting product managers based on demonstrable mobile payments experience rather than MBA credentials. The Ghana Grid Company is seeking power systems analysts with programming skills over those with purely theoretical engineering backgrounds. For professionals at every career stage, the message is clear: building a portfolio of demonstrable, certified skills is now more career-decisive than accumulating academic credentials alone.

**Career Signal:** *Professional certifications and micro-credentials are becoming decisive differentiators – the gap between 'qualified' and 'certified' professionals is widening.*

## B U S I N E S S & M A N A G E M E N T

### Ghana Proposes New Sliding-Scale Mining Royalty Regime

Ghana's government has signalled its intention to end stability agreements with Newmont, AngloGold Ashanti, and Gold Fields, replacing them with a sliding-scale royalty system starting at 9% and rising to 12% when gold exceeds \$4,500/oz. With gold now above \$5,000, the Chamber of Mines warns this could place Ghana above the global effective tax rate, potentially affecting new project viability and employment. The implications extend well beyond headline royalty rates. Under the proposed regime, every mine plan, capital expenditure model, and feasibility study produced in the past five years under the old stability agreements will need to be fundamentally rebuilt. Marginal projects – particularly those in the early development stage – face the most acute risk, as the higher effective tax burden may push them below economic viability thresholds. The Chamber of Mines has warned that this could delay or cancel new projects that would otherwise have created thousands of direct and indirect jobs. For business and management professionals, this regulatory upheaval creates immediate and substantial demand. Mineral economists and financial modellers who can run scenario analyses under variable royalty regimes are being sought by every major operator. Compliance managers who understand both Ghanaian mining law and international fiscal frameworks are commanding premium salaries. Project evaluators capable of assessing whether new developments remain viable under the proposed structure are essential to every investment decision being made in Ghana's mining sector today.

**Career Signal:** *Financial analysts, compliance officers, and project economists who understand fiscal modelling under variable royalty regimes will be critical to mine planning in Ghana's next chapter.*

## R E N E W A B L E E N E R G Y & S U S T A I N A B I L I T Y

### Ghana's Minerals Commission Audit Puts ESG Compliance Under the Microscope

In November 2025, Ghana's Minerals Commission launched its largest mining sector audit in a decade in, examining ten years of production logs, environmental compliance records, and community development obligations from all major operators. The audit, running through June 2026, is expected to tighten enforcement of environmental impact assessments, mine closure planning, and ESG reporting standards. Simultaneously, mining companies globally are facing intensified pressure from investors and regulators to demonstrate credible decarbonisation pathways and responsible supply chain practices. The audit's scope is unprecedented in Ghana's mining history. Inspectors are reviewing not only environmental permits and reclamation bonds but also community development agreement compliance, local procurement obligations, and water management practices across all major operating licences. Mining companies that have underinvested in environmental compliance documentation or community engagement programmes face significant remediation costs and potential operational restrictions. The Minerals Commission has signalled that the findings will inform a comprehensive overhaul of the regulatory framework governing mine closure planning and post-mining land use. Simultaneously, international ESG reporting standards are tightening. The EU's Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive and the ISSB's global disclosure standards are creating mandatory reporting obligations that

affect any mining company with European investors or customers. For sustainability professionals, this convergence of local regulatory enforcement and international disclosure requirements creates one of the fastest-growing career niches in Ghana's extractive sector. ESG reporting specialists, environmental auditors, carbon accounting professionals, and community liaison officers are all in acute demand.

**Career Signal:** *ESG reporting specialists, environmental compliance officers, and sustainability managers with experience in mine closure planning and carbon accounting are seeing the fastest demand growth in Ghana's extractive sector.*

## F I N A N C I A L S E R V I C E S & F I N T E C H

### Central Bank Digital Currency Pilots Accelerate Across West Africa

The Bank of Ghana's e-Cedi pilot continues to expand, with merchant integration now covering over 3,000 vendors in Accra and Kumasi. Nigeria's eNaira has processed over 15 million transactions since launch, while Sierra Leone is piloting a blockchain-based land registry to improve property rights documentation. Meanwhile, mobile money transaction volumes across West Africa grew 28% year-on-year, with Ghana's Mobile Money Interoperability platform processing over GH¢120 billion in 2025. The regulatory environment is evolving rapidly to support this digital transformation. The Bank of Ghana's Payment Systems and Services Act has established a licensing framework for electronic money issuers, payment service providers, and dedicated electronic fund transfer operators. The Securities and Exchange Commission is developing guidelines for blockchain-based securities and digital asset custody. Meanwhile, Ghana's participation in the Pan-African Payment and Settlement System (PAPSS) is positioning the country as a cross-border digital payments hub for the ECOWAS region. For financial services professionals, these developments create career opportunities across multiple specialisations. Fintech product managers who can design and scale mobile-first financial products are in high demand. Regulatory technology (RegTech) specialists who understand both traditional banking compliance and emerging digital asset frameworks are commanding premium salaries. Data scientists capable of building credit scoring models from alternative data sources – mobile money transaction histories, utility payment records, social commerce activity – represent one of the most sought-after skill profiles in West Africa's financial sector.

**Career Signal:** *Fintech product managers, blockchain developers, digital payments specialists, and regulatory compliance professionals with knowledge of CBDC frameworks and mobile financial services are in growing demand across West Africa's financial sector.*

## I N F R A S T R U C T U R E & C O N S T R U C T I O N

### Ghana's Mining Corridor Infrastructure Push Creates Demand for Project Delivery Specialists

Rising gold revenues and the government's medium-term development agenda are channelling fresh capital into mining corridor infrastructure, including haul road upgrades in the Ashanti Belt, the Tarkwa–Takoradi rail modernisation feasibility study, and port expansion at Takoradi to accommodate growing mineral export volumes. At the same time, higher material costs and tight credit conditions are constraining residential construction outside Accra, creating a two-speed infrastructure market that favours industrial and mining-linked projects. The Tarkwa–Takoradi corridor is emerging as the most active infrastructure development zone. The feasibility study for rail modernisation is expected to conclude in Q3 2026, with preliminary cost estimates suggesting a \$400–600 million investment in track rehabilitation, signalling upgrades, and rolling stock procurement. Takoradi Port's Phase 2 expansion is already under construction, adding dedicated mineral handling berths capable of processing 15 million tonnes annually. Road upgrades linking the Ashanti Belt mines to processing facilities and export corridors are being funded through a combination of government capital expenditure and mining company contributions. For construction and engineering professionals, the pipeline is substantial and growing. Quantity surveyors with experience in FIDIC contract administration are essential to every major project. Civil engineers specialising in heavy industrial infrastructure – particularly rail, port, and haul road design – are being recruited across West Africa. Project managers who can coordinate multi-stakeholder infrastructure programmes involving government agencies, mining companies, and international development finance institutions are commanding salaries 25–40% above standard construction sector rates.

**Career Signal:** *Quantity surveyors, project managers with FIDIC contract experience, civil engineers specialising in heavy industrial infrastructure, and construction cost consultants who can manage budgets under volatile material pricing will find strong opportunities in mining-linked infrastructure development.*

## C R O S S - S E C T O R

### SIGNAL 1 The AI-Energy-Mining Nexus Creates a New Class of Professional

The global race to build AI data centres is reshaping energy and commodity markets simultaneously. Goldman Sachs has raised its end-2026 gold price target to \$5,400/oz, citing diversification buying amidst AI-driven transformation. U.S. electricity demand from data centres is projected to double by 2028, while Ghana's Electricity Company forecasts 12% load growth for 2026. The

convergence is creating demand for professionals who can operate at the intersection of traditionally separate industries. This nexus is producing a new category of roles that did not exist five years ago: data scientists with mining domain knowledge who can build ore-grade prediction models, energy economists who understand AI workload profiles and can forecast data centre power demand, and sustainability specialists who navigate both Minerals Commission ESG requirements and technology sector environmental standards. Accenture's 2026 workforce study found that professionals with cross-sector competencies earn 35% more than single-domain specialists at equivalent experience levels. For West African professionals, this convergence represents a strategic opportunity. The region sits at the intersection of critical mineral supply, growing energy demand, and accelerating digital transformation. FIPS's multi-disciplinary programme architecture is designed precisely to help professionals build the intersectional competencies that this AI-energy-mining nexus demands.

**Career Signal:** Professionals who understand both the resource base and the technology stack will command premium roles – cross-sector fluency is becoming the highest-value professional attribute.

### **SIGNAL 2 Supply Chain Digitalisation Links Mining, Fintech, and Infrastructure**

Blockchain-based mineral traceability systems are connecting mine sites to global markets in real time. Ghana's Minerals Commission is piloting digital production tracking, while international buyers – driven by the EU's Critical Raw Materials Act and conflict minerals regulations – are demanding blockchain-verified provenance for responsible sourcing compliance. The London Metal Exchange now requires digital chain-of-custody documentation for several critical minerals, creating a compliance imperative that extends from the pit face to the trading floor. Simultaneously, mobile money platforms are transforming the payment infrastructure around mining communities. MTN Mobile Money and Vodafone Cash are enabling instant payments to artisanal suppliers, while logistics companies are deploying AI-optimised routing for mineral transport along the Ashanti Belt corridor. The Tarkwa–Takoradi transport corridor is becoming a testing ground for integrated digital logistics – combining real-time fleet tracking, automated toll collection, and blockchain-verified load documentation.

**Career Signal:** Professionals who can bridge supply chain management, blockchain technology, and mineral sector regulations will fill a critical gap across mining, fintech, and logistics.

### **SIGNAL 3 Climate Regulation Convergence Forces Cross-Sector Compliance Rethink**

The EU Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), Ghana's Minerals Commission ESG audit, and tightening emissions disclosure requirements are creating a single compliance challenge that spans mining, energy, construction, and financial services. What was once a sector-specific regulatory burden is becoming a cross-cutting operational reality. Banks financing mining projects now require climate risk assessments aligned with the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD). Insurers are repricing coverage based on ESG performance scores. Construction firms building mine infrastructure must now demonstrate decarbonisation pathways as a condition of contract award. The Minerals Commission audit – examining ten years of production logs, environmental compliance records, and community development obligations – is expected to produce recommendations that will reshape regulatory enforcement across Ghana's entire extractive sector. Meanwhile, the EU's Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive and the ISSB's global disclosure standards are creating mandatory reporting obligations for any mining company with European investors or customers. No single sector can solve this compliance convergence independently. The organisations that respond most effectively will be those that build cross-functional ESG teams drawing expertise from environmental science, financial analysis, legal compliance, and community engagement.

**Career Signal:** ESG professionals who understand regulatory frameworks across multiple industries – not just their own sector – will be the most valuable compliance hires of the next three years.

### **SIGNAL 4 West Africa's Youth Bulge Meets the Skills-Based Economy**

With 12.7% youth unemployment and a median age under 21, West Africa's workforce demographics are colliding with a global shift toward skills-based hiring. LinkedIn reports a 40% surge in skills-based job postings globally, while major employers including AngloGold Ashanti and Newmont are increasingly prioritising demonstrated competencies over traditional degree qualifications. Ghana's Commission for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (CTVET) system is expanding technical and vocational pathways, and the government's YouStart programme has allocated GH¢1 billion to youth entrepreneurship and skills development. However, the opportunity is unevenly distributed. Digital skills training is concentrated in Accra and Kumasi, while the mining communities of Tarkwa, Obuasi, and Prestea – where many of the actual jobs exist – remain underserved. The gap between where skills training is available and where skills are needed is one of the most significant structural barriers to workforce development in Ghana's extractive sector. Closing this gap requires institutions that can deliver industry-relevant, professionally accredited training in resource communities, not just capital cities.

**Career Signal:** Professionals and institutions that can deliver industry-relevant skills training in resource communities – not just capital cities – will drive the next wave of workforce development across West Africa.

**SIGNAL 5 Remote Work and Digital Collaboration Reshape Professional Geography**

Post-pandemic remote work norms are enabling professionals based in West Africa to compete for global roles in data analysis, financial modelling, cybersecurity, and project management. International mining consultancies that previously required on-site presence are now offering hybrid arrangements, and the World Economic Forum projects that 60% of the fastest-growing roles globally will be deliverable remotely by 2028. For Ghanaian professionals with strong digital skills and English fluency, the addressable job market has expanded dramatically. At the same time, mining and energy companies are adopting remote operations centres that allow engineers in Accra to monitor and control equipment at sites in Tarkwa, Obuasi, and Atuabo. AngloGold Ashanti’s integrated operations centre in Obuasi already enables remote oversight of automated haulage and processing systems. This geographic decoupling is creating new career models where location matters less than demonstrated competency and digital fluency. The implication for professional development is clear: building a strong digital portfolio, mastering remote collaboration tools, and demonstrating competency through certifications and project outcomes are no longer optional – they are the currency of a borderless professional market.

**Career Signal:** The professionals who combine deep technical skills with remote collaboration tools and strong digital portfolios can access opportunities far beyond their physical location.

**COMMODITY WATCH**

Average monthly performance of key commodities tracked by FIPS Outlook.

COMMODITY	AVG. PRICE	MoM CHANGE	TREND
Gold (XAU)	\$5,064/oz	+12.0%	▲
Coal	\$108/ton	-3.2%	▼
Lithium	\$10,200/ton	+1.5%	▲
Iron Ore	\$98/ton	-5.1%	▼
Copper	\$5.93/lb	+26.6%	▲
Nickel	\$15,400/ton	+2.8%	▲
Uranium	\$100/lb	+18.5%	▲
Oil (Brent Crude)	\$67/bbl	-14.0%	▼
Natural Gas (Henry Hub)	\$7.72/MMBtu	+81.0%	▲

**Market Note:** Gold is the standout performer this month, surging past \$5,000/oz for the first time as central banks diversify reserves and investors hedge geopolitical risk. Goldman Sachs has raised its year-end target to \$5,400/oz. For Ghana, this translates directly into higher export revenues – but also a trigger for the new sliding-scale royalty regime.

Sources: London Metal Exchange, World Gold Council, U.S. EIA, Trading Economics. Prices reflect monthly averages.

**BY THE NUMBERS**

Key data points shaping this month’s professional landscape.

<p><b>\$5,064</b> Gold price per ounce (Jan 2026 avg) <i>World Gold Council</i></p>	<p><b>12%</b> Ghana electricity load growth forecast for 2026 <i>ECG / GridCo</i></p>	<p><b>\$67/bbl</b> Brent crude average price (Jan 2026) <i>U.S. EIA</i></p>	<p><b>40%</b> YoY growth in skills-based job postings globally <i>LinkedIn Workforce Report</i></p>
<p><b>9–12%</b> Ghana’s proposed sliding-scale mining royalty range <i>Chamber of Mines</i></p>	<p><b>87%</b> Organisations citing AI as top cyber risk <i>WEF Cybersecurity Outlook</i></p>	<p><b>28%</b> YoY growth in West Africa mobile money volumes <i>GSMA Mobile Economy</i></p>	<p><b>GH¢120B</b> Mobile money transactions processed in Ghana (2025) <i>Bank of Ghana</i></p>

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## THE DEEP DIVE | FEATURED ANALYSIS

### ANALYSIS 1

#### Gold Surges Past \$5,000 – What It Means for Ghana’s Economy and Workforce

In January 2026, the gold spot price broke through \$5,000 per ounce for the first time in recorded history, settling at an average of \$5,064 for the month. The surge represents a 65% year-on-year gain, driven by central bank reserve diversification, institutional safe-haven demand, and the accelerating energy transition. Goldman Sachs has raised its end-2026 gold price target from \$4,900 to \$5,400 per ounce. For Ghana – Africa’s largest gold producer with a projected output of 5.1 million ounces in 2026 – the implications are transformative. Higher revenues strengthen the national balance sheet but also trigger the proposed 9–12% sliding-scale royalty regime that will fundamentally reshape mine economics. Every mine plan, capital expenditure model, and feasibility study from the past five years needs rebuilding under the proposed fiscal framework. The professionals who benefit most from this supercycle span well beyond geology: data analysts optimising ore recovery, fiscal modellers rebuilding feasibility studies, compliance officers navigating new royalty structures, and ESG specialists meeting intensified Minerals Commission audit requirements all stand to gain. Infrastructure engineers designing haul road upgrades and port expansions for increased production volumes will also see rising demand.

**The gold price creates the opportunity across multiple sectors. Your skills – whether in mining, finance, compliance, or infrastructure – determine whether you capture it.**

### ANALYSIS 2

#### The AI Infrastructure Boom: How Data Centre Demand Is Reshaping Energy, Technology, and Security Careers

The global race to build AI data centres is triggering the largest reallocation of power sector capital in a generation. U.S. electricity demand from data centres is projected to double by 2028, while Ghana’s Electricity Company forecasts 12% load growth for 2026. This convergence of AI and energy is creating entirely new professional categories: power systems engineers who understand AI workload profiles, energy economists who can model data centre demand curves, and grid modernisation specialists who can design infrastructure for intermittent but high-intensity loads. But the rapid digitisation carries risk. The World Economic Forum reports that 87% of organisations now identify AI-related vulnerabilities as their fastest-growing cyber threat. Ghana’s Cyber Security Authority has flagged acute national shortages in AI security, cloud security, and incident response. As mines deploy automated haulage, power grids adopt smart metering, and financial platforms process billions in mobile money, the attack surface is expanding faster than most organisations can defend. Professionals who combine operational technology knowledge with cybersecurity certifications (CompTIA Security+, ISA/IEC 62443) will command premium salaries across every digitising industry.

**AI is not just transforming how we work – it is transforming how much energy we consume and how vulnerable our systems become. The professionals who understand all three dimensions will define the next decade.**

### ANALYSIS 3

#### West Africa’s Fintech Acceleration: Digital Payments, Mobile Money, and the Skills Gap

West Africa is experiencing a financial technology revolution that is outpacing workforce development. The Bank of Ghana’s e-Cedi pilot now covers over 3,000 merchants in Accra and Kumasi. Nigeria’s eNaira has processed over 15 million transactions. Mobile money volumes across the region grew 28% year-on-year, with Ghana’s Mobile Money Interoperability platform processing over GH¢120 billion in 2025. Sierra Leone is piloting a blockchain-based land registry. These are not experiments – they are production systems processing real money at scale, and they require a professional workforce that largely does not yet exist. The skills gap is acute. Fintech product managers who understand both technology architecture and regulatory compliance are in short supply. Blockchain developers with experience in central bank digital currency frameworks are virtually non-existent in West Africa. Anti-money laundering specialists who can build automated monitoring systems for mobile money platforms are being recruited at premium salaries from East African markets. Meanwhile, the infrastructure demands are growing: payment processing requires reliable power, secure data centres, and robust telecommunications – creating a secondary wave of demand for infrastructure engineers and cybersecurity professionals.

**Financial inclusion is no longer a policy aspiration – it is a technology deployment challenge. The professionals who bridge fintech expertise with infrastructure reality will drive West Africa’s next economic leap.**

PROGRAMME DEEP DIVES

Sector-specific insights connecting global trends to your professional domain.

<b>MINING &amp; MINERALS</b>	<b>ENERGY &amp; POWER</b>
<p><b>AI-Powered Ore Grade Control: The Skill That Separates Modern Mines from Legacy Operations</b></p> <p>Machine learning models deployed at AngloGold Ashanti’s Obuasi mine are now predicting ore grades with 92% accuracy, reducing dilution losses by an estimated 15–20% and improving gold recovery rates. Newmont’s Ahafo operation has integrated real-time sensor data with geological models to create dynamic grade-control systems that adjust blast patterns on the fly. For mining professionals, geostatistics, data science fundamentals, and the ability to interpret machine learning outputs are becoming as essential as understanding stope design or ventilation planning. FIPS’s Mining Engineering &amp; Technologies stream addresses exactly this convergence.</p>	<p><b>Grid Modernisation and the New Energy Workforce: Why Power Systems Engineering Is Booming</b></p> <p>Ghana’s Electricity Company is forecasting 12% load growth for 2026, driven by industrial demand, data centre expansion, and urban electrification. The Volta River Authority is investing in smart grid infrastructure and advanced metering to manage peak demand more effectively. Globally, the AI data centre boom is doubling electricity demand projections through 2028. Power systems engineers, grid modernisation specialists, and energy economists who can model demand-supply scenarios under rapid load growth will find expanding opportunities across conventional and renewable energy markets.</p>
<b>PETROLEUM &amp; GAS</b>	<b>TECHNOLOGY &amp; ICT</b>
<p><b>Ghana’s Gas Economy at an Inflection Point: LNG, Refining Margins, and the Skills They Demand</b></p> <p>Natural gas prices have surged 81% month-on-month at the Henry Hub benchmark, driven by strong LNG export demand. Ghana’s Tema LNG terminal is processing rising import volumes while the Sankofa gas field feeds the Ghana Gas Processing Plant at Atuabo. The global oil glut is compressing downstream refining margins, forcing operators to rethink cost structures. This dual dynamic creates two distinct career tracks: upstream professionals with LNG processing and pipeline integrity experience are in rising demand, while downstream specialists need to pivot toward efficiency optimisation and cost-reduction strategies.</p>	<p><b>Cybersecurity for Industrial Control Systems: The Fastest-Growing Digital Vulnerability</b></p> <p>As mines, power grids, and financial platforms connect critical systems to centralised digital platforms, they are creating attack surfaces most organisations are not equipped to defend. The World Economic Forum reports that 87% of organisations identified AI-related vulnerabilities as their fastest-growing cyber risk. Ghana’s Cyber Security Authority has flagged acute national shortages in AI security, cloud security, and incident response. Professionals who combine operations knowledge with cybersecurity certifications (CompTIA Security+, ICS-CERT, or ISA/IEC 62443) will command premium salaries across every digitising industry.</p>
<b>BUSINESS &amp; MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>RENEWABLE ENERGY &amp; SUSTAINABILITY</b>
<p><b>Royalty Reform and the New Mine Economics: Why Every Operator Needs Fiscal Modelling Capability</b></p> <p>Ghana’s proposed sliding-scale royalty regime – starting at 9% and rising to 12% when gold exceeds \$4,500/oz – will fundamentally alter the financial architecture of every mining operation. With gold above \$5,000, operators face effective royalty rates double what stability agreements provided. Every mine plan, capital expenditure model, and feasibility study from the past five years needs rebuilding. This creates immediate demand for mineral economists, financial modellers, compliance managers, and project evaluators who can assess viability under the proposed structure.</p>	<p><b>ESG Compliance Under the Microscope: How Ghana’s Mining Audit Is Reshaping Sustainability Careers</b></p> <p>Ghana’s Minerals Commission launched its largest mining sector audit in a decade in November 2025, examining ten years of production logs, environmental compliance records, and community development obligations. The audit is expected to tighten enforcement of environmental impact assessments, mine closure planning, and ESG reporting. Simultaneously, investors and regulators demand credible decarbonisation pathways. ESG reporting specialists, environmental compliance officers, and sustainability managers with carbon accounting experience are seeing the fastest demand growth across Ghana’s extractive and energy sectors.</p>
<b>FINANCIAL SERVICES &amp; FINTECH</b>	<b>INFRASTRUCTURE &amp; CONSTRUCTION</b>
<p><b>Digital Currency and Mobile Money: The Fintech Skills Powering West Africa’s Financial Transformation</b></p> <p>The Bank of Ghana’s e-Cedi pilot now covers over 3,000 merchants in Accra and Kumasi. Nigeria’s eNaira has processed over 15 million transactions. Mobile money volumes across West Africa grew 28% year-on-year, with Ghana’s platform processing over GH¢120 billion in 2025. This rapid digitisation creates demand for fintech product managers, blockchain developers, digital payments specialists, and regulatory compliance professionals who understand CBDC frameworks, anti-money laundering protocols, and mobile financial services integration.</p>	<p><b>Mining Corridor Infrastructure: How Rising Gold Revenues Are Reshaping Project Delivery Demand</b></p> <p>Rising gold revenues are channelling fresh capital into mining corridor infrastructure: haul road upgrades in the Ashanti Belt, the Tarkwa–Takoradi rail modernisation feasibility study, and port expansion at Takoradi for growing mineral exports. Higher material costs constrain residential construction outside Accra, creating a two-speed market favouring industrial projects. Quantity surveyors, project managers with FIDIC contract experience, civil engineers in heavy industrial infrastructure, and construction cost consultants managing volatile material pricing will find strong opportunities.</p>

## CAREER ACCELERATOR

Actionable guidance you can apply this month.

### Your 30-Day AI Readiness Sprint

You don't need a computer science degree to become AI-literate. Here is a practical four-step framework any mining or business professional can complete in 30 days to build a competitive digital edge.

<b>STEP 1</b>	<b>Learn the Language:</b> Spend Week 1 learning core AI terminology – machine learning, neural networks, large language models. Free resources: Google's AI Essentials course (6 hours) or Microsoft's AI Fundamentals.
<b>STEP 2</b>	<b>Apply to Your Domain:</b> In Week 2, identify three tasks in your current role where AI could save time. Start with document drafting, data summarisation, or report generation using tools like ChatGPT or Claude.
<b>STEP 3</b>	<b>Build a Skill Stack:</b> Week 3 – pick one technical skill to develop: Python basics (Codecademy), Power BI dashboards, or GIS mapping. Choose based on what your employer values most.
<b>STEP 4</b>	<b>Demonstrate &amp; Document:</b> Week 4 – complete a small project that shows your new capability. Write a one-page summary of what you built and what it saved. Share it with your supervisor or add it to your LinkedIn profile.

The best time to start your AI readiness journey was last year. The second best time is this month. Four weeks from now, you'll either have a demonstrable new capability or another month of watching others get ahead.

## FIPS SKILLS FORECAST

Where we see professional demand heading in the next 6–12 months.

### ▲ RISING

- AI/ML for Mining Operations – Obuasi and Ahafo are deploying predictive models; demand for data-literate engineers is outpacing supply across West Africa
- ESG & Environmental Compliance – Ghana's U.S. EIA audit (Nov 2025–June 2026) is driving urgent demand for compliance specialists and environmental officers
- Cybersecurity for OT/ICS – As mines digitise, industrial control system security has moved from 'nice to have' to 'mission-critical'

### — STEADY

- Rock Mechanics & Project Manager – Infrastructure – Underground expansion at Obuasi and Tarkwa sustains strong demand for specialists
- Project Management (PMP/PRINCE2) – Remains a baseline expectation for supervisory and management roles across sectors

### ▼ DECLINING

- Manual Survey/Drafting – GPS, LiDAR, and drone-based survey has reduced demand for traditional methods. Pivot: learn drone piloting or GIS software
- Standalone IT Support (desktop-only) – Cloud migration and managed services are replacing on-site IT generalists. Pivot: upskill into cloud infrastructure or network security

Forecast basis: FIPS training demand data, industry signals, employer consultations, global workforce reports.

## LABOUR MARKET WATCH – GHANA

A monthly snapshot of Ghana’s employment trends and hiring patterns.

### SECTORS HIRING

- Gold Mining – Record gold prices driving aggressive recruitment for underground specialists, automation engineers, and compliance officers
- Energy & Natural Gas – Tema LNG expansion and Henry Hub price surge creating demand for process engineers and HSE professionals
- Technology Services – Data centres, fintech, and AI consulting firms in Accra expanding headcount for developers and analysts

### SECTORS CONTRACTING

- Downstream Oil Refining – Global oil glut compressing refining margins;
- Mobile Financial Services –MTN Mobile Money operating below capacity
- Small-Scale Construction – Higher material costs and tight credit constraining residential development outside Accra

### KEY INDICATORS

- Youth Unemployment (15–35):** 12.7% – slight decline
- Graduate Employment Rate:** 67% within 12 months of graduation
- Mining Sector Workforce:** ~45,000 direct employees – growing
- Avg. Salary Growth:** 8.3% YoY – mining leads all sectors

Sources: GSS, U.S. EIA, Bank of Ghana, FIPS employer consultations.

## CAREER RADAR

Emerging roles and in-demand skills this month.

### EMERGING ROLES TO WATCH

- Automation Engineer (Mining/Energy)
- Data Analyst – Mining Operations
- ESG & Sustainability Manager
- ICS/OT Cybersecurity Specialist
- Drone Survey Operator
- AI/ML Solutions Architect
- Digital Payments / Fintech Product Manager

### SKILLS IN DEMAND THIS MONTH

- Python for Data Analysis
- Power BI & Dashboard Reporting
- GIS & Remote Sensing
- Fiscal Modelling & Financial Analysis
- ISO 45001 / HSE Management Systems
- Cloud Infrastructure (AWS/Azure)
- Mobile Money / Digital Payments Integration

## SPOTLIGHT: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR IN FOCUS

### Why did you create FIPS Outlook?

“After training over 1,121 professionals since 2021, I noticed a pattern: the best-performing graduates were not just technically skilled – they were well-informed about industry trends and proactive about their career development. FIPS Outlook was born from that observation. We wanted to create a resource that connects what’s happening in the industry to what professionals should be doing about it.”

### What makes this newsletter different from other industry publications?

“We don’t just report news – we translate it into career action. Every signal, every data point, every trend we cover comes with a ‘so what’ for your professional development. And because we train professionals from AngloGold Ashanti, Newmont, Gold Fields, and dozens of other companies, we have direct insight into what employers actually need.”

### What is your advice for professionals reading this first edition?

“Don’t just read it – act on it. Pick one signal from this edition that relates to your role. Identify the skill gap it implies. Then take one concrete step this month to close that gap. That is exactly how career acceleration works.”

– **Dr. Festus Kunkyin-Saadaari, PhD, CLSSGB**

*Executive Director, Festari Institute of Professional Studies*

## JOB BOARD

*Selected opportunities from across the industry. For the full updated list, join our Telegram channel.*

**Senior Drill & Blast Engineer** – Cardinal Namdini Mining Ltd

Bolgatanga, Ghana | Full-time | Apply: [jobsearchgh.com/jobs/27181](https://jobsearchgh.com/jobs/27181)

**Manager: Geology** – AngloGold Ashanti

Tarkwa, Ghana | Full-time | Apply: [careers.anglogoldashanti.com](https://careers.anglogoldashanti.com)

**Engineer, Data & Exploration** – MTN Ghana

Accra, Ghana | Full-time | Apply: [mtn.com.gh/careers](https://mtn.com.gh/careers)

**Geotechnical & Hydro Engineer III** – Newmont Corporation

Ahafo, Ghana | Full-time | Apply: [jobs.newmont.com](https://jobs.newmont.com)

**Specialist, Data Privacy & Protection** – MTN MobileMoney Ltd

Accra, Ghana | Full-time | Apply: [mtn.com.gh/careers](https://mtn.com.gh/careers)

► **Full job listings & daily updates:** <https://t.me/ffestarigroup>

*Employers: To feature a role in FIPS Outlook, contact [outlook@fips.ac](mailto:outlook@fips.ac)*

## PREPAREDNESS PATHWAY

*How FIPS is helping professionals stay ahead*

This edition’s theme – The AI Readiness Imperative – connects directly to every programme stream FIPS offers. Whether you are in mining operations, business management, or technology, the ability to work with data, understand AI tools, and communicate insights is now a baseline professional competency. FIPS programmes are designed for working professionals who cannot afford to press pause on their careers.

**FIPS programme streams aligned with this month’s signals:**

- Mining Engineering & Technologies – Rock Mechanics, Mine Automation, Digital Mine Management

- Business & Management – Project Economics, Fiscal Modelling, Compliance & Governance
- Technology & ICT – Python for Data Analysis, AI Essentials, Cybersecurity Fundamentals
- Health, Safety & Environment – ISO 45001, Environmental Impact Assessment, ESG Reporting
- Executive & Leadership Certificates – Strategic Leadership, Change Management, Decision Science

*All programmes are delivered through flexible evening and weekend schedules – you never have to choose between career growth and your current role.*

## OPPORTUNITIES BOARD

*External opportunities for professional growth – curated by the FIPS Outlook editorial team.*

### GRANTS, SCHOLARSHIPS & FUNDING

**GETFund Foreign Postgraduate Scholarship 2026/27** – Full funding for Ghanaian citizens pursuing Master's studies abroad in priority disciplines (engineering, public health, IT, energy, governance). The foreign scholarship deadline is projected at July 16, 2026. UNICAF Scholarship Visit: [scholarships.getfund.gov.gh](https://scholarships.getfund.gov.gh)

**World Bank EGPS (Extractives Global Programmatic Support)** – Grant funding for resource-dependent developing countries to strengthen transparency, governance, institutional capacity, and regulatory frameworks in the extractives sector. World Bank Rolling engagement through country-level proposals. Visit: [egps.worldbank.org](https://egps.worldbank.org)

### CONFERENCES, SUMMITS & INDUSTRY EVENTS

**WAMPEX West Africa 2026** – Accra | 3–5 June 2026 | West Africa's largest and longest-running mining and power exhibition, bringing together senior mining professionals, government representatives, and suppliers. WAMPEX Visit: [www.wampexwestafrica.com](https://www.wampexwestafrica.com)

**3i Africa Summit 2026** – Accra | 6–8 May 2026 | Themed "Shaping Africa's Integrated Fintech Future," organised by the Bank of Ghana and Development Bank Ghana in partnership with Elevandi (Monetary Authority of Singapore). News Ghana Digital payments, regulatory innovation, and investment. Visit: [3iafrica.com](https://3iafrica.com)

### CALLS FOR PAPERS, TENDERS & RFPs

**IMPC 2026 – XXXII International Mineral Processing Congress** – Cape Town, South Africa, 18–22 October 2026, hosted by SAIMM. Impc2026 Abstract submissions are open At-minerals across all areas of mineral and metallurgical processing (comminution, flotation, hydrometallurgy, geometallurgy, AI/modelling, sustainability). Visit: [www.impc2026.com](https://www.impc2026.com)

**Ghana Minerals Commission** – Local Content Procurement Opportunities – The Commission has developed a new Local Content and Procurement Policy Framework prioritising Ghanaian participation Minerals Commission, with a published Local Procurement List of 50+ goods and services that mining companies must source locally. Ghanaian firms in mine support services, engineering, catering, haulage, and HSE are encouraged to register. Visit: [www.mincom.gov.gh/local-content](https://www.mincom.gov.gh/local-content)

*Know of a grant, event, or opportunity that should be featured? Email [outlook@fips.ac](mailto:outlook@fips.ac) with the subject line "Opportunity Submission."*

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**THE CLOSING THOUGHT**

*“The question is no longer whether AI will transform your industry. It already has. The question is whether you will be among the professionals who lead that transformation – or among those who are displaced by it. The difference is not talent. It is preparation.”*

*Start your AI Readiness Sprint today. Your career in 2027 depends on what you learn in 2026.*

Know a colleague who'd benefit from this? Forward this edition or share: [www.fips.ac/outlook](http://www.fips.ac/outlook)

**SHARE ON LINKEDIN**

*“Gold just hit \$5,000. AI is reshaping mine operations. And Ghana is rewriting its royalty rules. If you work in mining, energy, or business in West Africa, the next 12 months will define the next decade of your career. Are you ready?”*

– FIPS Outlook, February 2026

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# F I P S O U T L O O K

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## Have a Story or Idea?

FIPS Outlook welcomes contributions from alumni, industry professionals, and academic partners:

- Career stories from FIPS graduates (how certification changed your trajectory)
- Industry trend ideas or topics you'd like us to cover
- Employer perspectives on skills, hiring, and professional development

## Guest Contributor Programme

We invite short articles (500–800 words) from alumni and industry professionals on career lessons, technical insights, or sector trends. Selected contributions are featured with full attribution.

*Submit ideas and articles to: [outlook@fips.ac](mailto:outlook@fips.ac)*

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**Diploma in Mining Engineering Technology** | Starts 13 April 2026 | GHC 105 | [www.admission.fips.ac](http://www.admission.fips.ac)  
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**Professional Certificate in Python Programming – Cohort 2 (Online)** | 4 May – 26 June 2026 | GHC 300 / \$28  
**Excel & Power BI Mastery – Cohort 2 (Online)** | 4 May – 26 June 2026 | GHC 300 / \$28  
**Mine Health, Safety & Environmental Management** | 23 Mar – 3 Apr 2026 | From GHC 1,500  
**Mining Projects Management & Contracts** | 6 – 17 Apr 2026 | From GHC 1,500  
**Artisanal & Small-Scale Mining Management** | 20 Apr – 1 May 2026 | From GHC 1,500

### ADMISSIONS OPEN – 2025/2026 ACADEMIC YEAR

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 Closing Date: 3rd April 2026 | Apply: [www.admission.fips.ac](http://www.admission.fips.ac) | Pick a Form at GHC 105

### FREE WEBINARS & EVENTS

**Webinar: AI in Mining – From Hype to Production** | 6 Mar 2026 | 7 PM GMT | Free  
**Workshop: Python for Data Analysis (Intro)** | 20 Mar 2026 | 6:30 PM GMT | Free  
**FIPS Open Day – Tarkwa Campus** | 5 Apr 2026 | 10 AM | Free

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