

Zijin Commits to Youth Development Through Community Skills Training in Akyem

NEW ABIREM, Ghana - Zijin Golden Ridge Limited (ZGRL) has reaffirmed its commitment to youth development in the Birim North District with the introduction of the Zijin Akyem Rising Initiative (ZARI), a new long-term, company-led platform for youth development and skills enhancement.

The commitment has been marked by the commencement of the Community Talent and Skills Development Programme, with thirty-one trainees participating in a Welding and Fabrication programme delivered in collaboration with the Akyem Vocational and Technical Institute (AVTI).

The Community Talent and Skills Development Programme is one of ZARI's flagship initiatives, with Welding and Fabrication serving as the first trade area. Electrical Installation is expected to follow as the second cohort, with Plumbing, Building Construction, and Masonry to be introduced as AVTI expands its capacity to deliver additional programmes.

ZARI was developed following feedback gathered through the company's annual Zijin Employment Clinic, a programme designed to bridge the gap between available jobs and community job seekers by providing career guidance, employability support, and job-readiness training.

Speaking on the initiative, General Manager Agyemang Okyere said the programme reflects the company's commitment to investing in local talent and creating pathways for young people to build meaningful careers.

"Our vision is to create opportunities that extend beyond direct employment. Through ZARI, we are helping young people strengthen their technical capabilities, improve workplace readiness, and develop the confidence to pursue careers, entrepreneurship, and long-term economic participation. This is an investment in the future of our host communities and the next generation of professionals," he said.

ZARI complements an existing suite of ZGRL-led youth development initiatives. The company's Apprenticeship Training Programme is built on an Applied Technical Pipeline Approach designed to develop a local technical workforce in mechanical, electrical, and welding and fabrication disciplines. Participants graduate with a Diploma in Mechanical and Electrical Engineering, a Certificate of Proficiency in OEM Maintenance Training from the University of Mines and Technology (UMaT), and a Zijin Certificate of Completion.

Separately, the company's Learnership Programme, which Okyere describes as "our most deliberate investment in the next generation of professionals," provides young people from host communities with workplace learning opportunities, formal mentorship, and direct exposure to mining operations, helping prepare future engineers, managers, and technical leaders.

ZARI builds on the company's established commitment to local participation and talent development. Today, 597 of ZGRL's 1,235 employees, approximately 48 percent of the workforce, come from host communities, exceeding the 35 percent target established under the company's Employment Agreement with the community.

Since assuming ownership of the Akyem Gold Mine in 2025, ZGRL has recruited 222 people from host communities, compared with 120 recruited by the mine's previous operator during the two years preceding the transition.

The trainees participating in the inaugural programme were selected from a pool of candidates who had already completed Welding and Fabrication training at AVTI. Training commenced on October 5, 2026, and consists of a 25-day programme designed to align participants' existing technical skills with ZGRL's operational standards, procedures, and safety requirements.

Each trainee receives transportation and lunch on every training day, a full set of personal protective equipment (PPE), and a monthly stipend of GHS 1,000 for the duration of the programme.

The company emphasized that the programme is entirely separate from any staffing or recruitment plan. Any future employment opportunities with ZGRL or its business partners will continue to be based on operational requirements and filled through established recruitment processes.

Training is aligned, where applicable, with National Vocational Training Institute (NVTI) Certificate I standards, and participants are assessed on practical competence, safety awareness, and workplace readiness rather than attendance alone.

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About Zijin Golden Ridge Limited

Zijin Golden Ridge Limited (ZGRL) is a gold mining company operating the Akyem Gold Mine in the Eastern Region of Ghana. The Company is a subsidiary of Zijin Gold International Company Limited, a leading global gold mining company and the consolidated overseas gold vehicle of Zijin Mining Group Co., Ltd., one of China's largest mining groups.