

AFRICAN LOCAL CONTENT

New markets, Big opportunities





Approved
4 new major Oil & Gas

projects in the last 2 years,
deepening opportunities
for local content growth
and sustenance.



NIGERIAN OIL AND GAS PARK
SCHEME (NOGAPS)
EMEYAL 1

95% completion of 2

industrial parks and investments
in modular refineries for in-
country manufacturing and
value addition investment in 16
oil and gas commercial ventures,
for job creation and
industrialization.



NCDMB Board Retreat, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State



The three-day retreat, from October 30 to November 2 2025 was held at Ikot Ekpene, Akwa Ibom State. It aimed to deepen understanding of statutory responsibilities, corporate governance principles and strategies for enhanced performance.

The Minister of State for Petroleum Resources (Oil) and Chairman of the Governing Council of the Board, Senator Heineken Lokpobiri, and the Minister of State for Petroleum Resources (Gas) and Co-Chairman of the Council, Rt. Hon. Ekperikpe Ekpo, and other members of the Governing Council attended the retreat.

The Executive Secretary, NCDMB, Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe who was representing Nigeria at APPO Ministerial meeting at Brazzaville, Congo, hence Engr. Abayomi Bamidele, Director of Capacity Building at the NCDMB made a presentation on his behalf. Other Directors at the Board and select General Managers also participated.

In the course of the retreat, the Governing Council and Management of the Board paid a courtesy visit to the Governor of Akwa Ibom State, Pastor Umo Eno, at Government House, Uyo.

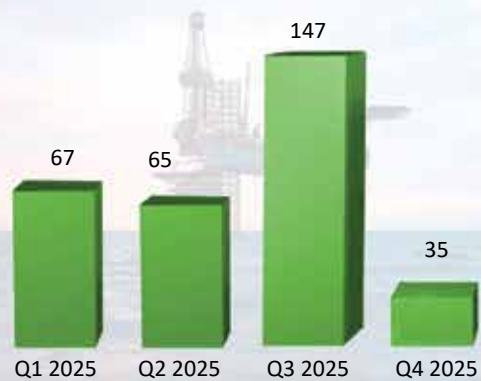


SMART FACT

NUMBER OF TECHNICAL & COMMERCIAL EVALUATION REPORTS ISSUED IN 2025



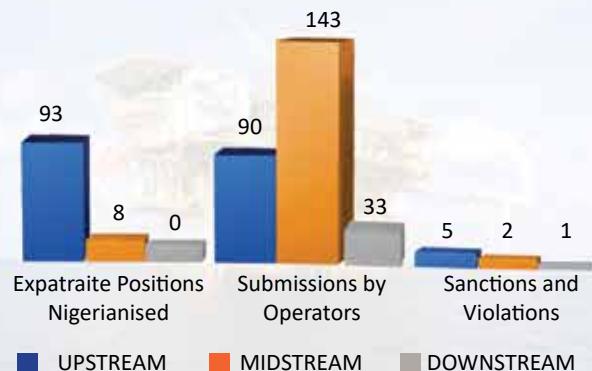
NUMBER OF NCCC ISSUED IN 2025



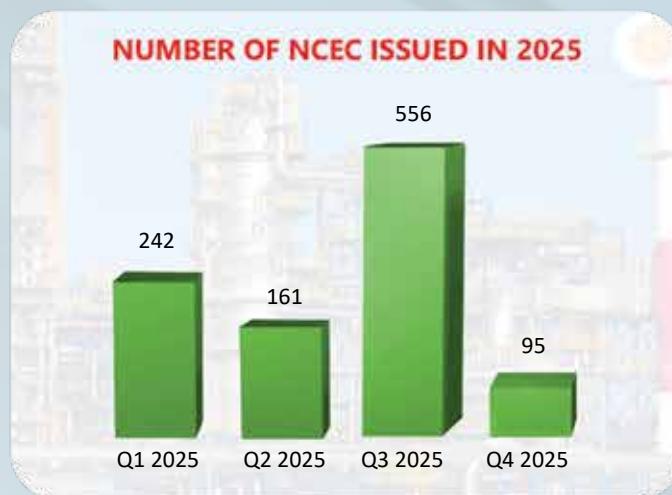
NUMBER OF NCP ISSUED IN 2025



NC PERFORMANCE IN 2025



SMART FACT



Resurgence of FIDs and props for \$1 trillion economy



Isaac Newton's third law of motion states that for every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction. This law describes recent positive developments in the Nigerian oil and gas industry, where President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's three Executive Orders (EOs) to the oil and gas industry, have been unlocking final investment decisions (FID) - new, major projects, after a prolonged period of drought and dwindling productions.

The Executive Orders (EOs) came into effect March 6, 2024, to mixed reactions and some level of misunderstanding. Pronto, they catalysed the first FID, the US\$500 million UBETA Gas Project by TotalEnergies in September 2024. Following shortly was the \$5 billion Bonga North Deepwater by Shell Nigeria Exploration and Production Company (SNEPCO), in December 2024, and lately, the \$2 billion HI Field Gas Project, also by SNEPCO and Sunlink Energies and Resources Limited in October 2025. There are strong indications that more FIDs will soon be perfected by other international and indigenous operating companies (IOCs), that are keen to take advantage of the incentives and improved fiscal terms in the Executive Orders.

The EOs, otherwise known as Presidential Directives, include the Local Content Compliance Requirements, 2024 (EO41), Presidential Directive on Reduction of Petroleum Sector Contracting Costs and Timelines, 2024 (EO42) and Presidential Directive on Oil and Gas Companies (Tax Incentives, Exemption, Remission, etc.). They mandate NCDMB and other key actors in the oil and gas industry contracting system to conclude all contracting processes within six months and eliminate middlemen from participating, while patronising existing capacities, and offering incentives for new oil and gas investments. President Tinubu followed up the EOs by holding high-level meetings with the leadership of major IOCs, assuring them of increased support, if they returned to invest in Nigeria's prolific fields.

At the NCDMB, we acted timeously, fine-tuning our contracting strategies to exclude companies lacking requisite capabilities, and fast-tracking project approval processes by trimming our touchpoints from nine to five, in addition to automating our regulatory processes and providing other statutory support to operators and service companies.

We are delighted that our efforts complement Mr. President's directives, and contribute to the grand goal of increasing crude oil and gas production, as well as the creation of work opportunities for service companies, and jobs for our people.

Readyng for new projects

To take full advantage of the new projects, we made a strategic decision to build a job-ready workforce. We painstakingly determined critical skill gaps that must be bridged in anticipation of the emerging major projects. Consequently, we will be training 10,000 young graduates in high-demand industry skills under our Field Readiness Training Programme. This programme would run for three years and mark a major shift in how we prepare and funnel our young ones into the industry. We cannot afford lack of capacity to bar Nigerian youths from participating actively in the new projects.

Preparations for the Field Readiness training continue apace with our ongoing human capacity development (HCD) programmes with the NLNG and other operators on live projects, and multifarious vocational trainings we carry out across the country, to equip our youths with self-reliant skills outside the oil and gas industry.

One of our new capacity and innovation related programmes is the Nigerian Engineering Olympiad, which we launched with Enactus Nigeria, First E&P, Renaissance African Energy, and the Nigerian Society of Engineers. It is a novel competition for engineering stu-

dents, to spur them to innovate solutions that will be commercialised in solving societal problems.

Our success story in local content implementation has made our enabling law, governance framework and operational methods the model for other nations. We are regularly invited to share our expertise, frameworks, digital tools, and a lot more with other nations. We embark on these engagements with the Petroleum Technology Association of Nigeria (PETAN) and other indigenous operators and service companies, and we facilitate partnership opportunities at the continental level.

Our efforts are in tune with the Renewed Hope Development Plan (2026-2030), an ambitious plan by the current administration to build a \$1 trillion economy, to be achieved through consolidation of reforms and policy continuity, and pursuit of objectives, such as job creation, expansion of infrastructure, human capital development, and food security.

Promoting African content, cross-border linkages

As we develop human resources for critical functional roles in the industry, we remain mindful of our statutory responsibility to create access to markets for our companies within our borders and outside the shores of Nigeria. This has become imperative as we have attained excess capabilities in a number of industry operations, hence, we can export some of the capacities and capabilities. We carry out this responsibility as we collaborate closely and directly with sister African petroleum-producing countries, as well as under the auspices of African Petroleum Producers Organisation (APPO).

Our success story in local content implementation has made our enabling law, governance framework and operational methods the model for other nations. We are regularly invited to share our expertise, frameworks, digital tools, and a lot more with other nations. We embark on these engagements with the Petroleum Technology Association of Nigeria (PETAN) and other indigenous operators and service companies, and we facilitate partnership opportunities at the continental level.

Between August and November, we were actively engaged at several international events, notably the 4th edition of APPO conference and exhibition on local content in Brazzaville, Congo, the 2025 Ghana Local Content Conference and Exhibition in Accra, the Namibia Oil and Gas Conference at Windhoek, African Oil Week at Accra and African Energy Week at Cape Town, South Africa.

At each fora, I repeatedly emphasised the need for partnerships among our companies across national boundaries for meaningful value retention and prosperity of our countries, and the fact that local content is a development strategy so critical to Africa's energy security. Happily, there is consensus on that and, collectively, we have made appreciable progress with the establishment and partnership with institutions such as Africa Energy Bank, the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and the African Local Content Organisation (ALCO) - a forum for oil and gas service providers across the continent, with the goal of fostering collaborations to deliver complex projects and share capacities and experiences.

NCI Fund continues to deliver successes

Our Nigerian Content Intervention Fund (NCI Fund) continues to record impressive progress. Overall, we have provided affordable finance to 147 oil and gas services companies, through the Bank of Industry (BoI) and NEXIM Bank managed funds. At the last count, a good number of the beneficiaries have fully liquidated their loans, while the rest continue to service theirs.

In November, a leading oil and gas industry player, TAMROSE Limited, rolled out the drums to celebrate its full repayment of \$10m asset acquisition loan. The loan enabled the firm to expand its fleet from four security patrol vessels to 15 vessels.

To boost the utilisation and stakeholders understanding of the NCI Fund, we held series of sensitization and engagement forums, for appraisal of funding and regulatory mechanisms instituted by the Board.

Maintaining our role as thought leader

In the past six months, we solidified our position as the thought leader in the oil and gas industry. In September, we held our Business Mentorship Lecture Series, and featured the former Minister of State for Petroleum Resources, Prof. Emmanuel Ibe Kachikwu, who made insightful recommendations towards improving industry operations.

We took it one notch further by introducing the weekly Nigerian Content Academy Lecture Series, to bring together key stakeholders in the oil and gas industry to review progress, reimagine implementation and shape the issues around delivering the Nigerian Content implementation mandate. We have featured industry intellectuals like the pioneer Executive Secretary of the NCDMB, Engr. Dr. Ernest Nwapa, who spoke on *Staying the Nigerian Content Course in the Midst of Delivery Challenges*, and the Chief Operating Officer of SEPLAT Energy, Mr. Sam Ezugworie, who spoke on *Managing Non-Technical Risks and Local Content Growth in Oil and Gas Operations*. We also hosted Mr. Austin Avuru, Non-Executive Director, Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited, and pioneer Managing Director of SEPLAT Energy, who dwelt on *Indigenous Operators as the Pillar for Local Content Growth*, among others.

The last six months have flown by very quickly. This is not surprising, as the Board has been busy on many fronts, delivering on its mandate. As the curtains fall on 2025, and we host the 14th Practical Nigerian Content Workshop with the theme, Securing Investments, Strengthening Local Content and Scaling Energy Production, we can feel some sense of satisfaction that we have moved the needle significantly. We advanced local content development, within and outside the country, grew our oil and gas industry, and contributed significantly towards the Government's \$1 trillion economy aspiration.

We look forward to a more impactful 2026.



FACILITY TOUR: Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary and management of NCDMB touring the facilities of West Africa Ventures at Federal Ocean Terminal (FOT), Onne, in Rivers State.

Content

Cover

Local content implementation in Nigeria is not only transforming the oil and gas industry; it is also serving as a model applicable to other sectors in which there is a quest to derive value-add and grow the economy. African nations with hydrocarbon resources have seen the successes recorded in Nigeria, and they are eager to apply the lessons in the domains.



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Big interview

Mr. Austin Avuru, Chairman of AA Holdings/Board member of NNPC Ltd, is a celebrated industry leader who was there at the concept phase of local content; he has also been a strong voice of its implementation. He x-rays 15 years of Local Content Act, and how to dive deeper to expand its impact on the economy.

Innovation

The Board's vision of upskilling and empowering Nigerians is bearing fruits via its Human Capacity Development platform, where thousands of young Nigerians are benefiting from well structured training programmes. A new phase has begun, expanding their benefits to more people.

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ents

Milestone

The story of Coleman Wires and Cables cannot be told enough. The company has been the poster child of real industrialisation as envisaged in the Local Content Act. **Mr. George Onafowokan**, Managing Director/Chief Executive, charts the path to Nigeria's industrialisation and how local content implementation can be the catalyst.



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Flying the flag

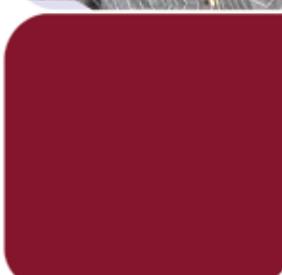
Waltersmith Petroman is a celebrated local content story. It has grown rapidly from its modular refinery days to becoming a major player in Nigeria's energy ecosystem. **Mr. Oladapo Filani**, its Chief Executive Officer says that the Local Content Act has been transformative for the oil and gas industry.

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Milestone

With one of the largest galvanising plants in sub-Saharan Africa, Dorman Long Engineering is setting its sights on the rest of the continent, riding on the back of its achievements in Nigeria. **Dr. Timi Austen-Peters**, Chairman of the company, sees local content implementation as key to its aspirations.



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Travelogue

Are you at the PNC, wondering how and where to unwind in the evening or, indeed, thinking of your next holiday destination? Bayelsa State is an aquatic splendour with many attractive places that will leave you spoilt for choice, and the seafood on offer is simply mouth-watering.

Pacesetters

A novel initiative of the Board, Chevron and Stoilic is empowering a new generation of seafarers through structured human capacity development in Nigeria's drive to develop a globally competitive maritime workforce, another win for local content.

Flying the flag

Can women function effectively in leading roles in the oil and gas industry? **Lady Gracetiti Fredson**, Executive Director, Corporate and Business Development for Forelight Energy Solutions, who exemplifies the impact of NCDMB's Women in Oil and Gas Fund, paints an exciting image for women aspiring to be leaders in the industry.

HSE

In Nigeria, the word 'mental' is synonymously linked to raving madness, and is often overlooked in the HSE matrix. However, studies are proving the direct link of mental health to productivity. Organisations with the right balance at the workplace usually see higher levels of productivity.

Policy

Sen. Heineken Lokpobiri, Minister of State for Petroleum Resources (Oil) states that the upward trend of production numbers and return of international service companies are direct results of rigorous implementation in the oil and gas industry. He predicts an even brighter future.

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SPREADING THE LOCAL CONTENT MANTRA PAN-AFRICA

The local content mantra has become widespread the world over. With several African countries seeking ways to optimise value from their oil and gas resources, they are turning to Nigeria's local content implementation, which is easily the best-case study.

content exponent, is coming to end. It is fitting that we reproduced his parting scorecard.

We devoted several reports on capacity building for youths in relevant oil and gas skills and in-demand vocational skills. We are determined to prepare trainees to benefit from the new surge of major oil and gas projects.

Mental health at the work place is also getting more attention. It is important we maintain balance between work and leisure so as to stay on top of our game. We have, therefore, raised the issue in two segments: *HSE* and *Outdoor*.

view, with many staff of the Board participating in panel discussions and presentations, sharing insights.

Understandably, this continent-wide knowledge sharing sessions are the focus of our *Cover* story. We analysed what makes local content implementation successful in Nigeria, and how this can be replicated in other markets. The continent-wide engagement has several benefits for local operating and service companies. One is that it creates new markets and opportunities for Nigerian firms, and helps to reduce the historical barriers placed on entry between, and among African countries. It portends well for the future.

The tenure of Dr. Omar Farouk Ibrahim, APPO scribe and African local

try events, if you think Bayelsa is all about the NCDMB, oil and gas, and its linkage sectors, you might want to flip to the *Travelogue* segment. You would see many options to chill at the end of each conference day. You may be considering a quiet end-of-the year holiday. Think Bayelsa, and spoil yourself in its aquatic splendour - white, clean beaches and excellent seafoods. Our *Travelogue* is your best handy guide.

As usual, this edition is packed with lots of informative content, interviews of heavy hitters in the industry, and exciting developments in the marine sector.

It's been an eventful year, one which yours truly started signing this page. We look forward to more fruitful years ahead and we wish you Merry Christmas and Happy 2026.

Happy reading!

Dr. Obinna Escobi

Nigerian Content Fund Certificate made mandatory

The Nigerian Content Fund Clearance Certificate (NCFCC) is now a new compliance requirement for oil and gas operators and contractors, the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) has said.

The certificate was introduced during a Stakeholders' Sensitisation Workshop in Lagos. It is now mandatory for contract bidding, project approvals, and certifications, ensuring adherence to Section 104 of the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development (NOGICD) Act, which mandates a one percent contribution of contract value to the Nigerian Content Development Fund (NCDF).

Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary, said the initiative strengthens compliance, transparency, and access to finance for indigenous contractors. Represented by Mr. Mubaraq Zubair, General Manager, Finance and Accounts, he noted that the upgraded NCDF portal allows real-time verification and faster approvals.

The Board also confirmed that over 130 indigenous companies have accessed funding from the US\$400 million Nigerian Content Intervention (NCI) Fund, managed in partnership with the Bank of Industry (BoI) and the Nigerian Export-Import Bank.

Mr. Gabriel Yemilade, Group Head, Oil and Gas, BoI, disclosed that the bank has disbursed \$348 million and N48 billion to 79 local firms in marine logistics, exploration, and fabrication. Akintomide James, Head, Midstream and Dealers, FCMB, added that community contractors can now access up to N100 million loans at eight percent interest under the revised financing scheme.

The workshop also featured presentations from Dr. Ayebatonye Epemu, Supervisor, Planning and Policy Development, and Mohammed Awami, Head, Specialised Business, NEXIM Bank, who both commended NCDMB's inclusive financing policies that promote women and community participation in the oil and gas value chain.



Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary and management of NCDMB, with Mr. Michael Dumbi Amaeshike, Managing Director West African Ventures, after the NCDMB undertook a facility tour of the company's facilities at Federal Ocean Terminal (FOT), Onne, in Rivers State.

Renaissance Africa, Westfield Energy lauded on human capacity development

Renaissance Africa Energy Limited, Westfield Energy Resources Limited, and Hommaston Limited have received commendations for their commitment to human capital development under the Southern Swamp Gas Project.

Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) gave the commendation at a close-out ceremony in Port Harcourt in August. Represented by Barr. Esueme Dan Kikile, General Manager, Human Capacity Development, he said the programme covered civil and structural engineering, electrical and instrumentation, onshore survey, and technical safety.

He noted that each participant earned over five international certifications, aligning with the Board's 10-Year Strategic Roadmap to strengthen local technical capacity.

The training was tied to the Southern Swamp Associated Gas Project of Renaissance Africa Energy Resources, aimed at eliminating routine flaring and supplying 100 million standard cubic feet of gas daily to the domestic market.

Representatives of Westfield Energy, Renaissance Africa, and Hommaston Limited urged the trainees to apply their skills productively and pursue professional certification.

The 12-month programme trained seven Nigerians through classroom and field-based sessions, equipping them with industry-ready technical and entrepreneurial skills.

Dangote Refinery set to deepen local content

A Joint Technical Committee (JTC) has been inaugurated by the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) and Dangote Petroleum Refinery and Petrochemical Company, to strengthen local content at the mega-refinery. The event took place in June at the Dangote Free Trade Zone, Ibeju-Lekki, Lagos State.

Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary, NCDMB and Edwin Devakumar, Group Vice President, Oil and Gas, Dangote Group, presided over the ceremony, which featured the signing of the Committee's Terms of Reference and a guided tour of the refinery. At the event, Aliko Dangote, President, Dangote Group, received the Nigerian Content Downstream Operator of the Year Award from the NCDMB. He expressed delight at the recognition and pledged continued partnership to grow local capacity.

Engr. Ogbe described the 650,000-barrels-per-day refinery as proof of the success of the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development (NOGICD) Act, 2010, emphasising its impact on jobs, skills, and industrial growth. He urged compliance with local manpower regulations and called for collaboration on NCDMB's Nigerian Oil and Gas Parks Scheme to expand manufacturing opportunities for local firms.

Edwin Devakumar reaffirmed Dangote Refinery's commitment to promoting local content, noting that the company's focus is on developing Nigerian talent while ensuring operational efficiency.

The JTC, chaired by Dr. Abdulmalik Halilu, Director of Corporate Services, NCDMB, will monitor local participation in operations and ensure full alignment with the NOGICD Act.

NCDMB Champions Nigeria First Policy, revamps ₦50bn Community Contractors Fund

The Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) in June reaffirmed its commitment to President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's "Nigeria First" policy, which is aimed at boosting local production and reducing dependence on imports in critical sectors.

This affirmation was made by Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary, NCDMB at the opening of the 2025 NOG Energy Week in Abuja. He said the policy strengthens the Board's core mandate of promoting local content in the oil and gas industry.

The NCDMB Boss said the Board will develop a "Nigeria First Procurement Policy", integrate it into internal systems, and apply it in the review of Nigerian Content Plans and Compliance Certifications. The Board will also commission two baseline studies to assess Nigerian service providers and identify locally made consumables.

Similarly, NCDMB has restructured its ₦50 billion Community Contractors Financing Scheme under the Nigerian Content Intervention Fund. Dr. Obinna Ezeobi, General Manager, Corporate Communications, said the renewed focus reflects the Executive Secretary's commitment to grassroots empowerment.

The Community Contractors Financing Scheme is offering up to ₦100 million in loans for host community contractors. In addition, the Back-to-the-Creek Initiative is promoting STEM education, digital skills, and vocational training in oil-producing communities.

Ms. Fatima Mohammed, General Manager, Nigerian Content Development Fund, announced that the revamped funding scheme could be accessed at single-digit interest rates, through Performing Financial Institutions like BOI and FCMB.

Mr. Gabriel Yemidale, Head of Oil and Gas,



Facility Visit: NCDMB Management and staff, and the management team of Renaissance Africa Energy at the project site at Government Technical College (GTC), Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

Bank of Industry, and Mr. Oluremi Agboola, Head of SME Assets, FCMB, expressed optimism about improved access and stronger collaboration.

Speakers across sessions at the conference praised the Board's leadership in implementing the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development (NOGICD) Act, 2010, and advancing indigenous participation.

Industry leaders, including Daere Akobo, Chairman, Pana Holdings, and George Onafowokan, Managing Director, Coleman Cables, praised NCDMB's 56 percent local content achievement and urged continued policy stability to sustain growth.

(NCDMB) in June, in Port Harcourt, the Rivers State capital at the close-out ceremony of the Nigerian Content-Human Capital Development (NC-HCD) programme for 23 trainees who completed a 12-month intensive capacity-building exercise.

Tarilate Teide-Bribena, Manager, Human Capital Development, NCDMB who represented the Executive Secretary, said Heritage Energy is championing full implementation of the NOGICD Act. She noted that the success of the training reflects progress under the first pillar, which is Technical Capability Development of the Board's 10-Year Strategic Roadmap.

She described the initiative, which followed the company's Gas-lifting of Compressors Project, as a strategic investment in Nigeria's future workforce and a boost to the country's industrial competitiveness.

Felix Usiwo, Nigerian Content Development Manager, HEOSL, expressed appreciation to NCDMB for its support, noting that the trainees gained skills and knowledge that will enhance their careers. He urged them to register on the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Joint Qualification System (NOGICJQS) for future opportunities.

The commendation was given by the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board



Officials of the Board led by Teddy Bai, Chief Supervisor, Corporate Communications Division, with senior officers of the Nigeria Police Force at the kick-off ceremony of the Board-sponsored training for police trainers on ICT, Artificial Intelligence and digital skills in Calabar, Cross Rivers State.

Yikodeen gets NCDMB backing at it expands safety footwear production

Yikodeen Company Limited has opened a major safety footwear plant in Lagos, boosting Nigeria's industrial base.

Atunde Shamsideen, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, traced the company's growth from a 2015 start-up to West Africa's largest footwear producer. He credited NCDMB's enforcement efforts for helping Yikodeen secure product adoption in the oil and gas sector,

African Local Content

adding that full compliance with local procurement policies could create over 35,000 jobs nationwide.

NCDMB pledged full support to ensure that safety boots produced by Yikodeen Company Limited are adopted across Nigeria's oil and gas industry. The pledge was made in June at the inauguration of the company's expanded safety footwear manufacturing plant in Ejigbo, Lagos State. The 120,000-square-foot facility can produce 5,000 pairs of boots daily to international standards.

Engr. Abayomi Bamidele, Director of Capacity Building, NCDMB, described the event as a landmark for local manufacturing. He said Yikodeen exemplifies the Board's development and monitoring mandate by producing high-quality Nigerian goods and ensuring their utilisation.

He reaffirmed the Board's commitment to promoting locally made industrial gear under the Federal Government's Nigeria First policy, which mandates public agencies to procure Nigerian-made safety footwear.

Folashade Ambrose-Medebem, Lagos Commissioner for Commerce, Cooperatives, Trade and Investment, who represented the state governor said the expansion aligns with the state's Industrial Policy (2025–2030) to double manufacturing's GDP share and strengthen local value chains.



Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary of NCDMB, with Prof. Isaac Zeb-Obipi, Vice Chancellor, University of Port Harcourt (middle), during a visit to the Centre of Excellence for Marine and Offshore Technology Development at Rivers State University, Port Harcourt.

Solomon Ewanehi, Group Managing Director, Solewant Group, said the plant crowns the company's 25-year record of industrial innovation and aligns with NCDMB's drive for homegrown expertise. He also cited the Solewant Energy Training Institute (SETI) as part of the firm's human capacity efforts.

Esueme Dan Kikile, General Manager, Human Capacity Development, NCDMB who represented the Executive Secretary, said indigenous firms now play a vital role in the sector's transformation. "Fifteen years ago, Nigerian participation was below five percent. Today, through deliberate policies and partnerships with companies like Solewant, local content has grown to 56 percent. This new coating plant shows what's possible when indigenous firms are empowered," he said.



Barr. Esueme Dan Kikile, General Manager, Capacity Building Directorate, NCDMB at the commissioning of Solewant Group's state-of-the-art pipe coating plant in Port Harcourt, Rivers state.

Solewant Group opens pipe bend multi-layer plant

A major local content milestone was achieved in July when Solewant Group opened its Pipe Bend Multi-Layer Coating Plant at the Solewant Industrial Area, Alode Eleme, Rivers State. The event highlighted the growing capacity of Nigerian firms in the oil and gas sector and reaffirmed the Board's commitment to local content development.

He reaffirmed NCDMB's 10-Year Strategic Roadmap to strengthen in-country fabrication and coating plants, and sustain competitiveness. "Solewant Group represents our mandate in action, building Nigerian capacity to deliver services once dominated by expatriates," he added.

Innocent Akuvue, representative of PETAN, commended Solewant's contribution and urged stronger collaboration with regulators.

The commissioning marks a major step to-

ward Nigeria's self-sufficiency in pipeline fabrication and coating services.

FCMB partners NCDMB, Bol to disburse ₦15bn loan to Local Contractors

First City Monument Bank (FCMB) has been selected as one of the Participating Financial Institutions (PFI) for the implementation of the Community Contractors Finance Scheme, an initiative of the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB), in partnership with the Bank of Industry Limited (Bol).

The scheme, designed to bridge the funding and skills gap hindering the capacity and growth of local contractors in the oil and gas industry, offers up to ₦100 million loans at a favourable interest eight percent per annum, enabling contractors to undertake impactful projects within their host communities.

The Community Contractors Finance Scheme is one of the five products under the Nigerian Content Intervention Fund created by NCDMB to boost local oil and gas contractors, grow the Nigerian oil and gas industry and increase the sector's contribution to the national economy. The scheme was remodelled in 2025, under the leadership of Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe as part of his broader goal to deepen the impact of local content implementation at the community level.

FCMB, as a participating financial institution for the scheme, is responsible for identifying, prequalifying, verifying contract performance and disbursing loans to qualified indigenous contractors in the communities, leveraging the Bank's industry expertise, efficient credit processes, and strong relationships with International Oil Companies and National Oil Companies. The loans, supported by innovative financing options such as invoice discounting and local purchase orders, offer flexible tenors ranging from 90 to 365 days, aligning with the diverse project needs of contractors.

Yemisi Edun, Managing Director of FCMB

highlighted the significance of the initiative, describing it as a strategic commitment to unlocking the vast potential of the oil and gas sector.

Mining growth boosted by local content reforms, inspires continental model

The July 2025 African Natural Resources and Energy Investment Summit in Abuja highlighted how the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) is reshaping mining and manufacturing. Delegates described Nigeria's approach as a continental model.

Dr Abdulmalik Halilu, Director, Corporate Services, NCDMB who represented the Executive Secretary, said the Board's barite interventions ended import dependence and built domestic capacity. "Today, barite importation for drilling is prohibited in Nigeria," he said. The Board enforces local procurement and certifies reserves across six states.

The director noted that the NCDMB also supports the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industrial Parks Scheme, and that a US\$350 million Nigerian Content Intervention Fund is being managed by the Bank of Industry.

Dele Alake, Minister of Solid Minerals, said mining investments reached \$800 million in 2024 after new licensing rules. He cited the \$100 million Nasarawa lithium plant and a planned \$600 million lithium refinery near Kaduna as evidence of the shift. Mining revenue rose from ₦6 billion in 2023 to ₦38 billion in 2024.

Jake Kabakole, Chairman, Liberia Petroleum Regulatory Authority, urged other African states to adopt Nigeria's model. Adebayo Adelabu, Minister of Power, linked local content to measurable supply chains and job creation.

Dr. Halilu said local content will drive self-reliance and industrial jobs. He urged partners to scale training and value-addition to turn raw minerals into finished products across Africa.

ESSO reaffirms commitment to local content

The new leadership of ESSO Exploration and Production Nigeria Limited, an affiliate of ExxonMobil Corporation, in August, paid a courtesy visit to the Executive Secretary of the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB), Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, at the Board's liaison office in Lagos.

Mr. Jabir Baxi, Chairman and Managing Director, ESSO Exploration and Production Nigeria, who led the delegation, reaffirmed the company's commitment to local content devel-



Dr Obinna Ezeobi, General Manager, Corporate Communication (third right) with the Staff of NCDMB and Dr Dayo Oketola (fourth right) after the NCDMB-sponsored Book Reading programme at the Nigerian Content Tower, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

opment and compliance with the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development (NOGICD) Act, 2010. He was accompanied by Femi Ogunbi, Executive Director and Chief Financial Officer; Bala Aliyu, Africa Human Resources Manager; and Mrs. Emem Abraham, Nigeria Human Resources Manager.

Baxi appreciated NCDMB's warm reception and noted that the meeting focused on new upstream opportunities and human capital growth. "We look forward to greater partnerships and stronger outcomes in Nigeria's oil and gas sector," he said.

In response, Ogbe congratulated Baxi on his appointment and reaffirmed NCDMB's readiness to strengthen collaboration with ESSO in technology transfer, capacity building, and sustainable job creation.

NCDMB, NDDC deepen partnership to deliver better service

The Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) and the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) have agreed to strengthen collaboration for improved governance, performance, and service delivery.

This came after a knowledge-sharing session in October, at the Nigerian Content Tower in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State. The meeting brought together senior management of both institutions for peer review and operational exchange.

Dr. Abdulmalik Halilu, Director of Corporate Services, speaking on behalf of the Executive Secretary said such sessions help agencies learn from one another to identify weaknesses and adopt best practices. He noted that NCDMB values peer engagement as a two-way exchange of knowledge and experience to enhance stakeholder service.

Dr. Halilu highlighted the Board's governance framework, including its Anti-Corruption Unit and automation systems that support transparency and continuous improvement. He also mentioned the "Community Content Guideline" and "Back-to-the-Creeks" initiatives, which integrate host communities into oil and gas value chains and empower local youths through education and skills programmes.

In response, NDDC's Director of Corporate Governance, Mr. Anele Stephen Nzelaw, praised NCDMB for its results-driven systems, stating that the Commission seeks to replicate such efficiency. He said NDDC's new leadership aims to shift from transactional to strategic operations and has engaged KPMG to develop a governance framework that promotes policy continuity.

The session featured technical presentations by NCDMB managers on governance, HR systems, transparency, and internal audit processes. The NDDC team also toured key facilities at the Nigerian Content Tower, including the Technology Innovation and Incubation Centre and the ultramodern Conference Centre.

Ex-Minister Kachikwu urges NCI Fund increase, oil block timelines

Prof. Emmanuel Ibe Kachikwu, former Minister of State for Petroleum Resources, urged that the Nigerian Content Intervention (NCI) Fund be increased, from US\$450 million to \$1 billion to finance large oil and gas projects, pipe mills, and local equipment manufacturing. He also called for oil and gas companies to provide clear timelines for developing awarded blocks.

Kachikwu made these recommendations in September at the Business Mentorship Lecture Series hosted virtually by the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board



Barr. Esueme Dan Kikile, General Manager, Capacity Building Directorate, NCDMB, receiving delegates from the Industrial Training Fund (ITF), Yenagoa branch, during a courtesy visit at the Nigerian Content Tower, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

(NCDMB), which drew nearly 500 participants via Zoom and YouTube.

He said the expanded NCI Fund should include contributions from operators and investors, not government alone. He advised that blocks left undeveloped for long periods should be cancelled, to enforce performance.

Prof. Kachikwu commended NCDMB's Executive Secretary, Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, for advancing local content and creating enabling policies. He emphasised that local content is a tool for industrialisation, job creation, and skills transfer. The former minister encouraged young professionals to uphold integrity, develop relevant skills, and adapt to industry changes.

Engr. Abayomi Bamidele, NCDMB Director of Capacity Building, said the lecture supports the NOGICD Act mandate, while Dr. Obinna Ezeobi, General Manager, Corporate Communications, praised Kachikwu for insights and highlighted the growth of the NCI Fund to \$450m.

West African Ventures (WAV) Nigeria Limited and other established local firms have been urged to expand into deepwater oil and gas operations.

West African Ventures, others urged to explore deepwater operations

Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary of the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB), threw the deepwater challenge to the companies during a facility tour of WAV's Fabrication Yard, Machine Shop, and jetties at the Federal Ocean Terminal, Onne, Rivers State, in September.

"WAV is a 40-year pioneer in the industry, and has been engaged in training personnel for critical roles in maritime, engineering, and EPC subsectors," Mr. Michael Dumbi Amaeshike, WAV Managing Director, said. He highlighted WAV's capabilities in platforms, jackets, mod-

ules, and offshore logistics, urging NCDMB's support to increase industry patronage.

Engr. Ogbe highlighted the company's advanced capabilities, including a 50mm rolling mill, ocean-going vessels, and heavy-lift cranes. He recalled awarding WAV its first offshore pipe-laying contract while at Chevron, praising the firm's performance.

The NCDM boss emphasised that deepwater projects offer vast opportunities, noting that participation is based on competitive bidding, and that the NCDMB prioritises transparency and professionalism. He expressed confidence that Nigerian companies have the expertise to succeed in this space.

NCDMB urges prioritisation of homegrown R&D

The Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) has called on oil and gas companies to strengthen research and development (R&D) as a means to create local technologies and retain more value within the sector. This call was made in September at the Board's Technology Innovation Challenge (TIC) Workshop in Port Harcourt, the Rivers State Capital.

Mr. Ene Ette, General Manager, Planning, Research and Statistics at the NCDMB, who represented the Executive Secretary, highlighted the Board's 10-Year Strategic R&D Roadmap and the Nigerian Content Research and Development Fund, launched in 2021 with US\$50 million seed capital. He also spoke on the NCDMB Technology Innovation and Incubation Strategy, which birthed the Amal Technology Printed Circuit Board facility in Abuja and supports 14 other applied research projects.

The general manager encouraged close collaboration between academia and industry, urging stakeholders to share operational challenges to guide research efforts. The workshop was part of preparations for TIC 2025, designed to identify, nurture, and scale innovations from concept to commercialisation.

Ms. Tassalla Tersurgh, Acting GM, Research, Statistics, and Development Division, explained that the competition offers innovators a platform to address industry problems. NCDMB officials, including Doris Opwuari, Teddy Bai, Babatunde Akhihiero, and Ifeanyi Nwokemodo, also participated.

122 trainees graduate in NLNG's Advanced Oil and Gas Skills Programme

A major milestone was recorded in September with the successful conclusion of the Train 7 Project Human Capital Development (HCD) Advanced Training Programme at the NLNG plant complex in Bonny Island, Rivers State.

One hundred and twelve 122 trainees, having completed prior HCD Basic Training, participated in a rigorous three-month, on-the-job training covering plant and facility management, instrumentation, electrical, mechanical, lifting and rigging, fabrication, and preventive and corrective maintenance.

NLNG Train 7 Project Corporate Liaison Manager, Engr. Joshua Anemeje, hailed the trainees for their discipline and commitment. He noted the programme's zero-incident safety record and NLNG's culture of operational excellence. He praised NCDMB and training partners, including Candix Engineering, AOS Orwell, Arco Marine, Dover Engineering, and Amaiden Energy, for delivering the world-class training.

Barr. Esueme Dan Kikile, General Manager, Human Capacity Development at the NCDMB, commended the programme for producing a skilled and globally competitive workforce. He noted that 27 trainees received special recognition, with six offered automatic employment by AOS Orwell. He encouraged graduates to apply their skills to advance the Nigerian oil and gas industry and serve as ambassadors of the programme.

The programme underscores the impact of strategic collaboration in building Nigeria's

technical and managerial capacity in oil and gas.

Industry leaders speak on Nigerian Content Academy Lecture Series

The Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) has kicked off the Nigerian Content Academy Lecture Series to drive thought leadership and human capacity development in the oil and gas sector.

The 12-week series, started October 9, 2025 featuring leading figures in Nigeria's energy and economic landscape, including former President Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, pioneer NCDMB Executive Secretary Dr. Ernest Nwapa, Special Adviser on Energy Mrs. Olu Arowolo Verheijen, and former Seplat CEO Mr. Austin Avuru.

Dr. Ama Ikuru, Director of Nigerian Content Academy at the NCDMB, said the lectures are aimed at exploring emerging industry challenges, innovative strategies, and pathways for sustainable local content development. Some sessions will be delivered virtually, while others will be in person, bringing together operators, NCDMB personnel, and industry partners.

Dr. Nwapa opened the series on *Staying the Nigerian Content Course in the Midst of Delivery Challenges*. On October 29, Avuru spoke on *Indigenous Operators as the Pillars for Local Content Growth*, and Mrs. Verheijen on November 12.

The Academy would equip Nigerians with critical skills, promote entrepreneurship, and ensure the workforce is ready to drive growth across the oil and gas value chain. Additional speakers include Mr. Chidi Nkazi, Prof. Mike Onyekwu, Dr. Nosa Omorodion, Barr. Mohamed Umar, Mazi Sam Onyechi, and Prof. Joseph Atubokiki-Ajenka.

The lecture series will provide a platform for



NCDMB staff with participants at the kick-off ceremony of the NCDMB Digitalisation Initiative (NDI) Training for the Southwest Region in Lagos.

stakeholders to address key issues, propose solutions, and strengthen Nigeria's local content development for national growth.

torship, as the trainees are being prepared for technical roles in the industry and linkage sectors, such as maritime, and also for self-employment.

10 beneficiaries participate in Chevron's rope access technology training

Ten young graduates have started a 12-month training and certification programme on rope access technology, under the Human Capital Development (HCD) initiative of Chevron Nigeria Limited and the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB).

The training started in October and will prepare the trainees for rope access operations in difficult-to-reach locations in the oil and gas industry, onshore and offshore. It has technical and non-technical modules, including classroom instruction, field practices, and entrepreneurship. Foundational safety is the focus of the initial phases, while intensive rope access instruction, workshops, and hands-on learning follow.

Exposure to offshore operations in the oil and gas industry for practical understanding and real-world readiness is a critical component of the training programme, as well as men-

Mrs. Tarilate Teide-Bribena, Manager, Human Capital Development (HCD) of the NCDMB, congratulated the trainees on their success in the competitive screening exercise. She reiterated the Board's commitment to advancing local capacity through skill-focused and industry-aligned training programmes, while urging the trainees to rise up to the challenge by being diligent. "At the end of 12 months, we'll be releasing competence into the industry," she said.

The manager lauded Chevron for the HCD programme, noting that "they have consistently shown that they are ready to partner the Board towards ensuring that our vision of building capacity within the oil and gas industry is achieved".

Mr. Iroegbu Obiora, the Nigerian Content Advisor of Chevron, pointed out that the skills to be acquired would make the trainees stand out wherever they would be.



Participants at Community Contractors Capacity Development programme, held as part of the Nigerian Content Stakeholders' Retreat 2025, organised by NLNG Limited, in partnership with NCDMB, at Finima, Bonny Island, Rivers State.



Mr. Teddy Bai, Chief Supervisor, Government Relations, NCDMB, with beneficiaries at the close-out ceremony of the Women Tech Makers Training programme in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

3,700 youths to benefit from digitalisation training

A comprehensive digitalisation training has been launched by the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB), targeting about 3,700 youths across the country.

The initiative is under the NCDMB Digitalisation Initiative (NDI) and is designed to equip young Nigerians with the essential skills needed to thrive in the current and emerging waves of industrial revolution. The initiative is sponsored by Seplat Energy Plc, in collaboration with NCDMB's Human Capacity Development Division.

About 100 candidates are participating in the pilot phase. The beneficiaries were selected through the NOGIC JQS portal, which is the Nigerian oil and gas industry's repository for human and material capacities. They underwent pre-selection tests conducted across the six geopolitical zones.

Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary NCDMB, observed that the oil and gas industry and its linkages sectors have adopted advanced technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Big Data, Cloud Computing, Cybersecurity, Industrial Internet of Things (IIoT), Robotics, Virtual and Augmented Reality, Drones, and Blockchain-based data exchange.

The shift towards digitisation enables the players to improve productivity, cost optimisation, and low carbon emission operations, he said. Other benefits of adopting digitisation include achieving remote operations, lean structure, smart and preventive facility management and business processes automation.

The NCDMB boss reaffirmed the Board's commitment to its mandate of preparing and empowering the Nigerian oil and gas industry supply chain to be relevant in the emerging oil and gas landscape.

Dr. Abdulmalik Halilu, Director Corporate Services, NCDMB, emphasised that NCDMB remains committed to empowering Nigerians to take on critical roles within the oil and gas

supply chain. He explained that the NDI specifically targets young people within the 35-year age bracket, with resources strategically directed toward high-impact areas that enhance digital expertise, generate rapid value, and drive sustainable growth.

305 youths trained at Marine and Offshore Centre

Three hundred and five Nigerian youths are acquiring knowledge in oil and gas technical skills at the Centre for Marine and Offshore Technology Development (CMOTD), Rivers State University (RSU).

The four-month programme, sponsored by NCDMB, covers seven key areas, including Automation, Instrumentation and Control, Mechanical and Process Piping, Pressure Vessel and Heat Exchanger Design, Transformer Repairs, Industrial Ship Design, Oil Well Surveillance, Big Data Analytics, in addition to International Class Welding and Fabrication.

Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, the Executive Secretary, Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB), visited the training centre in July, and said that the programme aligns with the Board's Human Capacity Development initiative, which addresses manpower gaps through the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Joint Qualification System (NOGICJQS). He urged participants to maximise the opportunity, stressing that the skills are in high demand in the oil and gas sector and its linkage industries.

He assured that the NCDMB would continue to provide industry-relevant training and create employment opportunities in line with President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's economic agenda.

Engr. Ogbe also visited the Advanced Marine and Offshore Engineering Research Centre built by an international oil company under the Nigerian Content institutional strengthening initiative. He promised to ensure the facility's furnishing and partitioning for use and to review the delayed completion of staff quarters built by the Board.

The delegation was received by Isaac Zeb-Obipi, Vice Chancellor, RSU; Sylvanus Eferebo, National Chairman, NIMENA and CMOTD Board Chair; and J. Akpa, Dean, Faculty of Engineering. Eferebo said 70 percent of CMOTD trainers are from the oil and gas industry, ensuring the courses meet industry standards and COREN requirements for engineering education.

NCDMB trains youths in solar panel installation, bag-making

Fifty-one young Nigerians have completed a comprehensive training programme on solar panel installation at the Standard Institute of Technology (SIT), Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. The initiative is part of the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) ongoing effort to develop skilled manpower across the country.

The training, which covered procurement, installation, and maintenance of solar systems, is one of several programmes taking place simultaneously at six centres nationwide.

Bertha Alaribe, Zonal Coordinator for Akwa Ibom and Cross River states at NCDMB, said the goal is to equip citizens with practical skills that drive productivity and economic participation. "We all need skills to be able to earn a living," she said, urging participants to use their new expertise responsibly and to represent NCDMB positively in their communities.

Similarly, 20 youths have completed a bag-making and empowerment training sponsored by the NCDMB at the UNDP Multipurpose Vocational Training Centre, Warri, Delta State. Harmony Kunu, Senior Technical Assistant on Projects, NCDMB, recommended to the trainees to use cooperatives and business hubs to strengthen their operations and improve access to credit facilities. He also urged the beneficiaries to use social media to promote their products and maintain creativity to stay competitive.

The trainees completed a comprehensive programme covering the design and production of bags made from leather, fabric, and other



NCDMB staff with participants at the close-out ceremony of the Capacity Building programme for local contractors and vendors for oil and gas host communities in Warri, Delta State.

materials. Each of the 20 graduates received an industrial sewing machine and accessories to commence production.

NCDMB, Chevron, Geoscape mark human capital development milestone

The Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB), in partnership with Chevron Nigeria Limited and Geoscape Nigeria Limited, in July held a close-out ceremony in Lagos to celebrate the completion of a one-year Human Capital Development (HCD) training programme.

The programme focused on composite repairs, leak sealing, machining and bolting, managing and working safely, and entrepreneurship/business management skills. It aligns with NCDMB's mandate to build local capacity in the oil and gas industry.

Esueme Dan Kikile, General Manager, Human Capacity Development at NCDMB, said the 11 trainees were selected through the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Joint Qualification System (NOGIC JQS). The initiative, he added, reflects the Board's Project-Based HCD framework under its 10-Year Strategic Roadmap.

The general manager praised Chevron for supporting local talent development and commended Geoscape for its professionalism. He described the event as a celebration of public-private collaboration for nation-building.

Victor Inyere, Chevron's representative, reaffirmed the company's belief in investing in people and local content. He described the programme as a step towards building a stronger industry. Modupeola Jegede, Managing Director of Geoscape Nigeria Limited, thanked Chevron and NCDMB for their partnership and urged the graduates to apply their skills productively.

The only female trainee expressed gratitude to the partners and noted that her participa-

tion showed growing gender inclusion in the oil and gas sector. The event is an attestation of NCDMB's drive to expand local participation and create opportunities across Nigeria's oil and gas value chain.

NCDMB, ITF empower 100 youths with technical skills

The Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board, in partnership with the Industrial Training Fund (ITF), concluded a six-month Technical and Vocational Training Programme that equipped 100 Nigerian youths with key technical skills in eight trade areas. The closing ceremony was held in August at the Raw Materials and Research Development Centre (RMRDC), Abuja.

Barr. Esueme Dan Kikile, General Manager, Human Capacity Development, NCDMB, who represented the Executive Secretary, said the programme aligned with the Board's 10-Year Strategic Roadmap and aims to close manpower gaps in the oil and gas industry.

Kikile described the programme as a celebration of skills and national growth, noting that the training covered Automation and Mechatronics, Building Technology, Air-Conditioning and Refrigeration, Electrical and Mechanical Maintenance, Instrumentation, ICT, and Mobile Phone Repairs.

Dr. Afiz Oluwatoyin, Director General of ITF, commended NCDMB for its collaboration and stressed the need for continuous technical and vocational training to boost jobs and entrepreneurship.

The initiative reinforces NCDMB's commitment to developing skilled Nigerians for the oil and gas industry and its linkage sectors.

NCDMB outlines achievements at youth and media workshop

The Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) in August 2025, organised a workshop for media and youth groups in Port Harcourt, the Rivers State capital, on its structure, achievements, and future targets after 15 years of driving local content in the oil and gas sector.

Dr. Abdulmalik Halilu, Director, Corporate Services at NCDMB, who represented the Executive Secretary, said the session was vital to strengthen public understanding of the Board's work and promote accountability in public service. He explained that the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development (NOGICD) Act, 2010 gave the Board two key mandates, which are: building local capacity and ensuring compliance with set standards.

Dr. Halilu highlighted major gains in fabrication, marine services, and partnerships, citing projects such as Waltersmith Refinery, NEDO Gas Plant, and Better Gas Energy Services Limited as success stories. He said Nigeria now has over 50 fabrication yards, with some exporting their products. He also mentioned the Board's investments in research and development, and the establishment of Centres of Excellence in six universities to support innovation and industrial growth.

Dr. Obinna Ezeobi, General Manager, Corporate Communications, urged the media to verify and share accurate information about the Board's activities. He called for agenda-setting stories that promote local content and national growth.

The workshop featured presentations by Mr. Silas Ajimijaye, General Manager, Monitoring and Evaluation, and Mr. Tareowei Bufazi, Deputy Manager, Capacity Building Directorate, who shared insights on the Board's efforts to improve human capital and GDP contribution of the oil and gas industry.

39 youths benefit from Chevron-Intels NC-HCD Programme

Capacity building in Nigeria's maritime sector received a boost in August in Port Harcourt, the Rivers State capital, as 39 young graduates began preliminary processes for cadetship under a Nigerian Content Human Capacity Development (NC-HCD) programme, sponsored by Chevron Nigeria Limited and Intels Nigeria Limited.

The NC-HCD initiative follows the 60:20:20 Strategic Training Model of the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB). It provides sea-time experience, Certificate of Competence (CoC) training, and practical exposure at Stoilic Shipping Limited, Lagos.

African Local Content

Barr. Esueme Dan Kikile, General Manager, Human Capacity Development at NCDMB who represented the Executive Secretary, described human capital development as a non-negotiable pillar of local content growth. He noted that embedding capacity building in strategic planning makes local content a reality, not just an aspiration.

The general manager commended Chevron Nigeria Limited for its commitment to capacity development and compliance with Nigerian Content regulations. He also lauded the Oil and Gas Trainers Association of Nigeria (OGTAN) for aligning training with industry needs and improving employability.

Mr. Victor Inyere, Chevron's Capacity Building Advisor urged the cadets to seize the opportunity to build skills that would shape their future and strengthen national development.

Mrs. Chimamanda Okafor, General Manager, Administration, Stoilic Nigeria Limited, announced that the company's cadets recorded a 100 percent pass rate in CoC assessments

M. Tawfik, Project Contractor, Morpol Engineering Services.

Engr. Bamidele said the project must be protected and sustained through shared responsibility and stakeholder engagement. Weli urged stronger state and local government participation to secure the site.

Phase One, which covers workshops and an ICT centre, is complete. Phase Two includes perimeter fencing, drainage and road networks, an 18,000-litre water tank, and a 250 KVA generator. Sixty percent of equipment is procured and in secure storage. The project supports NCDMB's TVET policy to produce skilled technicians for Nigeria's oil and gas industry.

NCDMB and Renaissance Africa pledged intensifying stakeholder alignment ahead of the handover. Partners will set timelines for the completion of Phase Two, equipment installation, and a public handover ceremony.

Engr. Harmony Kunu, representing NCDMB's Executive Secretary, while encouraging the engineers, highlighted the training as a bridge between theory and real-world industry practice. He noted that future sessions would involve practical simulations for better exposure.

Dr. Abraham Apereseikumo Alfred of NCDMB's Strategy Transformation and Projects Division, stressed the Board's commitment to human capacity development and called the participants the nation's potential in oil and gas growth.

Ijalla Engineering Services commended the engineers' discipline and noted that the enhanced skills would equip them for effective industry contribution.

OGTAN confers award on NCDMB

The Oil and Gas Trainers Association of Nigeria (OGTAN), at its 4th Annual Human Capital Development Awards in September conferred the award of Government Partner of the Year on the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB).

Barr. Esueme Dan Kikile, General Manager, Human Capacity Development at NCDMB, who received the award on behalf of the Executive Secretary, described the recognition as a tribute to stakeholders, partners, and Nigerians who see human capital as the most valuable asset for industrial growth. He stressed that infrastructure and technology cannot replace skilled people.

Kikile highlighted NCDMB's achievements, including over 10 million training man-hours delivered to more than 9,000 Nigerians across critical oil and gas skills. He outlined upcoming initiatives, including the Nigerian Content Trainers Registration Certification and the Top Ten/Top Twenty Skills Gap Programme, designed to close critical skill gaps.

He also referenced the 'Back to the Creeks Programme' and the NOGIC JQS, which connect Nigerian professionals to industry opportunities. The general manager praised OGTAN for advancing professional training, noting its evolution since 2010 into a leading human capacity development body.

Kikile reaffirmed NCDMB's commitment to developing industry-ready professionals, emphasising the Board's role in emerging sectors such as renewables, gas monetisation, and digital energy solutions.



Capacity Building: NCDMB management and staff; the management team of Chevron Nigeria Limited, and PE Energy, with trainees at the close-out for the Human Capacity Development (HCD) training for Chevron's Makaraba-Utonnana Gas Management Project in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

and hinted at plans to establish a world-class maritime university in Nigeria.

The NCDMB delegation included Mr. Suleiman Amolegbe, and Ms. Ophelia Jackson.

Institutional strengthening Project at GTC PH inspected

The institutional strengthening project at Government Technical College (GTC), Port Harcourt, the Rivers State capital, sponsored by the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) and Renaissance Africa Energy Company Limited was visited in August by senior leadership of both organisations.

Engr. Abayomi Bamidele, Director, Capacity Building Directorate led the NCDMB team, while Igo Weli, Executive Director, led the Renaissance Africa delegation. They inspected Phase 1 infrastructure of the project. The delegation was received by Mrs. Augusta Ojima, Principal, GTC Port Harcourt, and Mr. Edward

Young Engineers trained on oil and gas project management

Fifty young facility engineers have been trained in Port Harcourt, the Rivers State capital, on project cost management and maintenance records in the oil and gas sector. The exercise was held in September by the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB), in partnership with Ijalla Engineering Services Limited.

The engineers were trained on costing for a structured Field Development Plan (2026–2029), covering well interventions, drilling campaigns, flowline installations, surface facility upgrades, and compression station expansion.

On maintenance, participants learned to manage work orders, maintenance schedules, and equipment histories. The emphasis was on accurate documentation for compliance, auditing, and informed decision-making.



Mr. Olugbenga Sheba, General Manager, Capacity Building Directorate, NCDMB (first right) at the commissioning of the Remodelled 40-seater ICT Centre, Baptist High School in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

NCDMB restate commitment to local content excellence as it wins NAEC award

The Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) has reaffirmed its commitment to advancing Nigerian content, deepening indigenous participation, and sustaining future-ready investments across the nation's energy landscape. The declaration came as the Board was honoured for its sustained efforts in building indigenous capacity within the Nigerian oil and gas sector.

It bagged the Local Content Champion of the Year Award at the 2025 Annual Energy Conference of the Association of Energy Correspondents of Nigeria, an event in October.

Dr. Obinna Ezeobi, General Manager, Corporate Communications received the award on behalf of the Board and also delivered the Board's goodwill message. He commended NAEC for providing a credible platform that has consistently enriched national energy discourse and strengthened public understanding of Nigeria's energy policies.

"NCDMB has been a close friend and partner of NAEC since its establishment in 2010 under the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development Act," he said. "Our achievements over the years have been enabled by the strong communication support of the media. Section 67 of the NOGICD Act mandates us to promote Nigerian content, and communication - both above and below the line - is central to achieving that goal."

The general manager highlighted several initiatives to strengthen industry competitiveness and promote sustainable energy transition. "About 60 percent of NCDMB's investments are in the gas value chain," he revealed. "We have streamlined the Nigerian contracting cycle from nine to five touchpoints, in line with presidential directives to enhance efficiency. We have also disbursed the Nigerian Content Intervention Fund to empower indigenous firms and the remodelled Community Contractors Fund to

benefit host community contractors."

Dr. Ezeobi added that the interventions reflect the Board's commitment to ensuring Nigerian companies remain resilient and globally competitive as the energy landscape evolves.

NCDMB immortalises staff with youth resource centre

The Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) has honoured its late staff, Mr. Ukan Rowland Idagbo, Supervisor in the Zonal Coordination Division, by naming a newly established youth facility in his memory. The Ukan Idagbo Youth Resource Centre in Abiochiche, Cross River State, was unveiled in August.

The event drew dignitaries including Rt. Hon. Peter Odey, Deputy Governor of Cross River State; Rt. Hon. Legor Idagbo, Ukan's elder brother; members of the National and State Assemblies; Bekwarra Local Government officials; and Mr. Ifeanyi Ukoha, General Manager, Zonal Coordination Division at the NCDMB who represented the Executive Secretary.

Initially conceived during Rt. Hon. Idagbo's tenure as Chairman of Bekwarra Local Gov-

ernment, the centre was later enhanced and equipped by the NCDMB. It will serve as a hub for youth empowerment and vocational training. The Bekwarra Legislative Council had earlier passed an ordinance naming the centre after Ukan to honour his dedication to service and community growth.

Born on September 27, 1980, Ukan was known for his intellect, humility, and passion for writing. He authored several works, including Behind Enemy Lines and The Winter Song of Second Chances. Until his passing on August 5, 2025, he was admired for his professionalism and calm spirit.

The NCDMB community expressed deep condolences to his family, describing him as a man whose impact will endure through generations.

NCDMB and NLNG partner for digital learning

The Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB), and Nigeria's flagship gas firm, Nigerian Liquefied Natural Gas Limited (NLNG), recently unveiled a remodelled and fully equipped 40-seater Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Centre at Baptist High School, Port Harcourt. The commissioning ceremony, which took place in October, fulfilled a shared vision to empower young Nigerians through access to modern digital learning tools.

The package included over 40 units of computers with desks and chairs, digital smart boards, air-conditioners, and a 20KVA solar-inverter system to ensure continuous power supply. Additionally, the partnership provided a fully renovated and furnished administrative building, upgraded classroom blocks, a stabilised walkway, and a new gatehouse.

Mr. Olugbenga Sheba, General Manager, Infrastructure, Capacity Building Directorate, who represented the Executive Secretary of NCDMB, represented by described the new



Management and staff at the fourth Biennial International Conference on Hydrocarbon Science and Technology (ICHST) at the PTDF Conference Centre, Abuja.



NCDMB management and staff with participants at the 2025 NCDMB Technology Innovation Challenge (TIC) Workshop in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

facilities as "a gateway to knowledge, innovation, and future opportunities". He charged the students that the center should be the place where "the next great Nigerian tech entrepreneur, software engineer, or digital innovator is discovered".

Dr. Sophia Horsefall, General Manager, External Relations and Sustainable Development, of NLNG, affirmed the company's pride in being part of the school's story of excellence and thanked the NCDMB for the fruitful partnership.

NCDMB drives research-industry collaboration at SciBiz 2025

A national effort to connect the academia, government, and industry, in addressing Nigeria's research and development challenges was held in October, as stakeholders convened in Abuja for the 2025 Science and Business (SciBiz) Conference. The event, themed "Collaborative Ecosystems for Sustainable Innovation and Economic Growth," united policymakers, academics, and private sector leaders to foster a knowledge-driven economy.

Representing Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary of NCDMB, was Dr. Abdulmalik Halilu, Director of Corporate Services and President of Triple Helix Nigeria. He emphasised that NCDMB, via its Research and Development Framework, supports initiatives that bridge research and industry, fostering indigenous innovation. He noted that since its legal establishment four years ago, Triple Helix Nigeria has achieved remarkable progress in Nigeria's innovation dialogue.

Professor Eucharia Nwaichi, Conference chair, praised the NCDMB for its crucial role, stating that the Board's leadership has shown that public institutions can serve as "powerful catalysts for innovation". She outlined the programme's guiding vision, known as 10-10-10-10, which aims for 10 Nigerian universities to acquire at least 10 percent equity in 10 listed public companies over the next 10 years.

ThankGod Egbe, Technical Director and CEO

of CypherCrescent, announced his company's collaboration with the University of Port Harcourt to establish the Energy Technology Institute, an initiative grounded in the Triple Helix philosophy. Professor Owunari George-will, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Port Harcourt, added that "no sector can succeed in isolation".

"Oil industry investments not stifled by local content"

The drought of new investments for some years in Nigeria oil and gas sector was not caused by stringent implementation of local content policies, Dr. Ernest Nwapa, pioneer Executive Secretary of the NCDMB has said. According to him, "There are many government policies that are affecting FIDs."

He spoke in October at the pioneer Nigerian Content Academy Lecture, dismissing the notion that strict local content policies had stifled oil industry investments. He admitted that stakeholders face "an increasingly complex environment", but insisted that Nigerian Content, since the NOGICD Act of 2010, has been a national aspiration, delivering practical skills and job opportunities for young engineers and technicians.

Dr. Nwapa, who served as Group General Manager, Nigerian Content Division of the NNPC from 2005-2010, cited the significant number of Nigerians who worked at the Egina Integration Yard as proof of the initiative's success. He also drew attention to "unintended ambiguities in the Presidential Directives" introduced in February 2024, which have created systemic problems that require "institutional adjustment".

He stressed the authority of the Board, declaring, "If you challenge a letter from the NCDMB, it wouldn't stand". Addressing the issue of high costs, he argued that companies must "bite the bullet right now", and use local activities to drive costs to competitive levels. He further advised that project costs need to be evaluated on a project-by-project basis and handled strategically by the Board, utilising its

power to work with industry players.

NLNG, NCDMB, celebrate close-out of asset legacy training

The close-out ceremony of the Nigeria Liquefied Natural Gas (NLNG) Asset Legacy Training programme, executed on the back of the multibillion-dollar Train-7 project, was held on October 2025, in Port Harcourt. The event witnessed attestations from the industry regulator, partner companies, and outgoing trainees regarding the success of this major human capital development (HCD) initiative.

The 12-month advanced hands-on programme successfully trained 20 participants in specialised skill sets, including Onshore/Offshore Subsea Systems Design, WordPress Coding, Nitrogen Generation, Confined Space Entry, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), and Digital Studies.

Mrs. Tarilate Teide-Bribena, Manager, Human Capital Development at NCDMB, said the successful completion marked a decisive step in the drive for a capable, world-class Nigerian workforce. She stated that the graduates are now prepared, not only as skilled professionals, but as future leaders and innovators, who will drive Nigeria's industrial transformation, equipped for both employment and self-employment. She commended the partner training companies, Dexterous Applied Training Institute, Hommaston Limited, Amborg Global Resources, and BG Technical Limited, for achieving zero loss incidents during the program.

Dr. Sophia Horsfall, General Manager, External Relations and Sustainable Development of the NLNG, noted that the training was focused on "unlocking potentials", and providing participants with "the mindset to innovate, to continue to collaborate, and to solve real-world problems." Engr. Dumam Abila, of Dexterous Applied Training Institute, affirmed that trainees gained all required expertise. The success was highlighted by Mr. Kingsley Chibuzor Ude, one of the outgoing trainees, who was offered employment at BG Technical Limited during the hands-on segment of the training.

NCDMB Executive Secretary lauds Gas Minister on GECF presidency

Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary of the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB), has congratulated Rt. Hon. Ekperikpe Ekpo, Honourable Minister of State, Petroleum Resources (Gas) and Co-Chairman of the NCDMB Governing Council, on his recent emergence as President of the Gas Exporting Countries Forum (GECF).

Engr. Ogbe described the appointment as a

well-deserved recognition of the Minister's visionary leadership, deep industry expertise, and consistent drive to position Nigeria as a global gas powerhouse. He noted that, under the Minister's stewardship, the nation has recorded significant progress in unlocking gas for prosperity through accelerated midstream development, expansion of domestic gas utilisation, and implementation of the Decade of Gas Initiative.

"The Minister's tireless advocacy for gas as Nigeria's transition fuel and his unwavering support for policies that enhance investor confidence and deepen value addition clearly distinguished him as a natural choice for this global role," the Executive Secretary stated on Sunday, October 26, 2025.

Engr. Ogbe also congratulated Dr. Philip Mshelbila, Managing Director of Nigeria LNG Limited, on his election as Secretary General of the GECF, describing it as another milestone that underscores Nigeria's growing influence on the global gas stage. He reaffirmed the Board's loyalty and partnership under the Minister's guidance and expressed NCDMB's commitment to advancing the vision of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, in strengthening the gas industry and driving sustainable economic growth.

Cornerstone of Capacity: 100 graduates commence NCDMB/Renaissance/PETAN internship

One hundred young graduates from diverse academic disciplines in October began a transformative Graduate Internship Programme jointly sponsored by the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB), Renaissance Africa Energy Company (RAEC) Limited, and the Petroleum Technology Association of Nigeria (PETAN).

The 2025/2027 NCDMB/PETAN/Renaissance Graduate Internship Programme will deploy the 100 participants drawn from engineering, geology, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), and natural sciences to PETAN member companies for structured, targeted, and industry-relevant training designed to bridge the gap between academia and operational reality.

Speaking at the kick-off in Port Harcourt, Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary of the NCDMB, said the initiative was a "strategic contribution to the national effort toward deepening human capacity development and promoting sustainable local participation." Engr. Ogbe, who was represented by Mr. Esueme Dan Kikile, Esq., General Manager, Human Capacity Development (HCD), emphasised, that while infrastructure is essential, "human capacity development stands as the cornerstone" of NCDMB's mandate. He commended Renaissance Africa Energy (formerly

Shell Petroleum Development Company) and PETAN, for sustaining the programme, which is now in its second edition, and for their alignment with the national content agenda.

Engr. Ogbe urged the interns to approach the opportunity with diligence, as they "represent the next generation of professionals who will sustain Nigeria's energy future." Dr. Okey Ukaegbu and Mr. Chinedu Maduaku, representatives of PETAN, noted that the interns are expected to advance innovation and operational excellence. In his closing remarks, Mr. Kene Akubue, General Manager, Nigerian Content Development (NCD), of Renaissance Africa Energy, affirmed the partnership as a sign of progressive industry trends designed to deepen indigenous participation.

NCDMB commends partners on drillship training for Egina Project

The Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) has commended TotalEnergies and PIDWAL for the successful completion of the Human Capacity Development (HCD) training under the "Provision of Drillship for the Egina Project." The closeout ceremony was held on Tuesday, November 6, 2025, at Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

The one-year programme provided intensive training in Sea-Time operations, Certificate of Competency (COC) preparation, and Hydraulic Mechanics/Technician development. This initiative, implemented under NCDMB's HCD framework, was designed to develop skilled Nigerians for the nation's maritime and oil and gas industries.

Representing Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary NCDMB, Tarilate Teide-Bribena, Manager, Human Capacity Development, described the completion as a major milestone and a testament to effective industry collaboration. She noted that the training was executed successfully "without a single incident or disciplinary report," reflecting the

ees. She congratulated the trainees, urging them to view their new skills as a launchpad for professional growth, stating, "You are no longer just trainees; you are assets to Nigeria's maritime and oil and gas workforce."

Mrs. Teide-Bribena praised TotalEnergies for its strict adherence to Nigerian Content requirements and commended PIDWAL for its consistent technical support. She reaffirmed the Board's commitment to strengthening local capacity through structured HCD programmes that reduce skill gaps in marine and oil and gas operations.

Speaking on behalf of TotalEnergies, Mr. Daniel Dent, Human Capacity Development Officer noted that the company remains a fully compliant partner committed to Nigerian Content development. Dr. Timothy Oyeniyi, General Manager Human Resources for PIDWAL, also appreciated the guidance and collaboration in delivering the successful programme.

SEPLAT Energy champions local content as national imperative

Mr. Samson Ezugworie, Chief Operating Officer of Seplat Energy PLC, recently described local content development in Nigeria's oil and gas industry as a "national imperative" to achieve global competitiveness and usher in economic prosperity. He spoke at the weekly Nigerian Content Academy Lecture Series, and affirmed that the implementation of the NOGICD Act has seen local content topping 56 percent since December 2024. He pointed out that with the NCDMB's 10-Year Strategic Road Map targeting a 70 per cent minimum threshold, there is still substantial room for improvement.

Mr. Ezugworie spoke further on managing non-technical risks. He identified vast opportunities for indigenous participation in the value chain, including Engineering, Manufacturing and Fabrication, and Supply Chain Logistics. He detailed that companies must



Dr. Abdulmalik Halilu, Director, Corporate Services, NCDMB, with Management and staff of the Board and the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), after a familiarisation and learning visit to the Board's Head office in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

encompassing regulatory issues, political factors, and community expectations. He emphasised that a key starting point for operators is compliance, stating, "If you understand the intent of the regulation, and you comply upfront, you will find out that your life will be a lot easier".

Citing available statistics, he noted significant improvement in security, with crude losses down to below five per cent as of the third quarter (Q3) of 2022. Finally, he shared SE-PLAT's corporate policy to call host communities "neighbours" and not "host community," fostering lasting solutions and ensuring they are "intertwined with our business".

Minister lauds Tamrose for growing fleet, pledges to grow Content Fund

Senator Heineken Lokpobiri, Minister of State for Petroleum Resources (Oil) has commended Tamrose Limited for utilising the loan facility from the Nigerian Content Intervention Fund to grow its fleet and expand operations to Angola and other markets on the continent.

The company had accessed a US\$10 million credit facility from the fund through the Bank of Industry (BoI), the fund managers in 2019, and successfully expanded its operating fleet from four patrol vessels in that year to 15 in 2025. It also completed repayment of the entire loan in September 2025.

The Minister pointed out that the NCI Fund was created "to strengthen local capacity not only to service the oil and gas industry in Nigeria, but also to service the oil and gas industry globally". He called on other beneficiaries of the fund to pay up or face legal action.

He assured of his commitment "to continue to grow this fund so that companies like Tamrose would continue to acquire additional capacity and render the services that are needed in the oil and gas industry".

Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary of NCDMB said the "Board remains committed to supporting credible Nigerian enterprises and is determined to strengthen its frameworks, deepen transparency, and expand programmes that equip companies to match global competition".

Represented by Mr. Esueme Dan Kikile Esq., General Manager, Human Capacity Development (HCD), he said a new product, Nigerian Content Equity Fund (NCEF) would be unveiled at the 2025 edition of the Practical Nigerian Content (PNC) Forum in December. The new fund is to provide long-term risk capital to support Nigerian companies in high-value and high-impact sectors, he added.

16-year-old OAU female student wins NCDMB Annual National Essay contest

Miss Josephine Oyinkansola Akande, a 16-year-old undergraduate of Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife recently emerged overall winner of the ninth Award and Prize-giving Ceremony of the NCDMB Annual National Undergraduate Essay Competition.

The award ceremony was held in November at the Nigerian Content Tower, Yenagoa, where Oyinkansola, a 200-level medical student, who hails from Osun State, defeated nine other finalists to clinch the first prize of ₦1 million and a computer laptop, among other items.

The first runner-up, 23-year-old Mr. Sonuga Sultan Opeyemi, also a 200-level medical student of Federal University of Technology, Akure, received ₦700,000 and a laptop, while the second runner-up, Miss Amarachi Precious Aguigwe, a 200-level student of computer science at the University of Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, received ₦500,000 and a laptop. Seven of the finalists got consolation prizes.

Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary of the NCDMB, said the Board sponsors the essay competition, "to inculcate local content consciousness among undergraduates in our higher institutions," and to make them understand that local content is an economic imperative for sustainable development, among other reasons.

The theme of the 2025 edition of the competition, *Sustaining Local Content Policies in the Transitioning Oil and Gas Industry*, derives from the global preoccupation with energy transition programmes and the need for Nigeria to also evolve appropriate local content strategies to achieve energy security.



Finalists of the Ninth NCDMB Annual National Undergraduate Essay competition at the award ceremony, which took place at the Nigerian Content Tower, Yenagoa in November.

African Local Content

As part of NCDMB's African Local Content advocacy, the agency was invited to the Namibia Oil and Gas Conference at Windhoek in August, Africa Oil Week at Accra, Ghana in September, African Energy Week at Cape Town, South Africa, in October and Ghana's Local Content Conference and Exhibition (LCCE) in November. At the events, NCDMB's personnel, alongside PETAN officials, made presentations on Nigeria's local content models, and also took part in panel discussions with experts across the continent, proffering ideas on how local content policies can be advanced effectively across Africa.

The Minister of State for Petroleum Resources (Oil) and Chairman of NCDMB Governing Council, Senator Heineken Lokpobiri, the Minister of State for Petroleum Resources (Gas) and Co-Chairman of NCDMB Governing Council, Rt. Hon Ekperikoe Ekpo and the former Executive Secretary of NCDMB, Engr. Simbi Kesiye Wabote visited the Board's exhibition booth at the Africa Energy Week.



NCDMB at the fourth edition of African Petroleum Producers Organisation (APPO) conference and exhibition on local content in Africa, in Brazzaville, Congo.





Nigerian Content R&D strides

Research and Development (R&D) is critical to optimising Nigeria's huge hydrocarbon resources, localising the knowledge and expertise required to drive innovation and industrialisation, ensuring the long term prosperity of Nigeria powered by its energy industry.

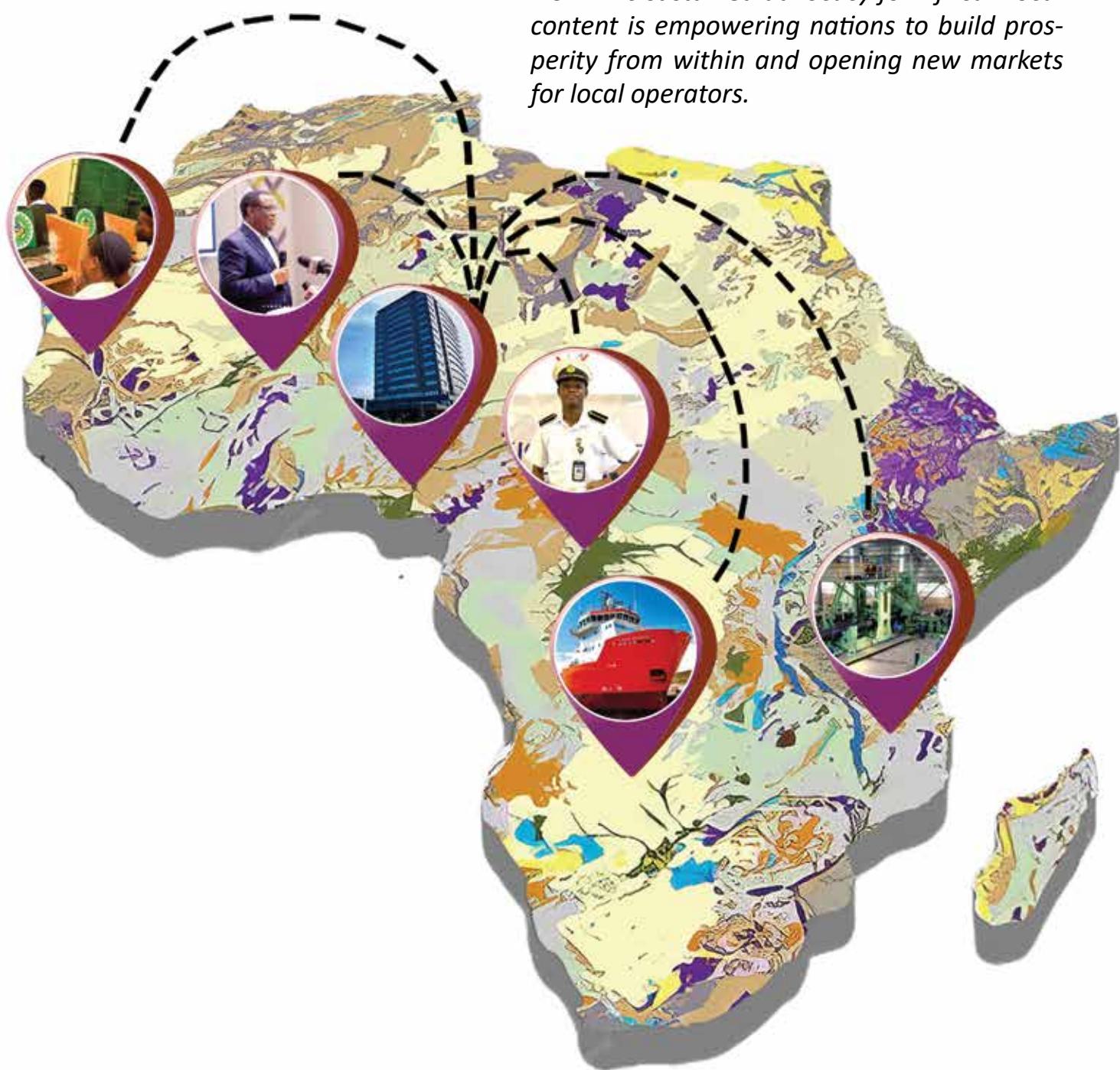
In achieving this objective, NCDMB has:

- Endowed US\$50m Nigerian Content Research and Development Fund (NCRDF).
- Established NCDMB's Technology Incubation and Innovation Centre.
- Established R&D Centres of Excellence in Federal Universities of Technology in Minna, Akure and Owerri; Niger Delta University, Amasoma and Modibbo Adama University of Technology, Yola.
- Supported Research Commercialisation, Basic and Applied Research.
- Endowed professorial chairs in universities and research institutions.

AFRICAN LOCAL CONTENT

New markets, Big opportunities

NCDMB's sustained advocacy for African local content is empowering nations to build prosperity from within and opening new markets for local operators.



As Africa's energy sector grapples with energy transition pressures, funding and technical challenges, as well as the need for inclusive growth, Nigeria's proven local content model is being signposted as the pathway to an assured African energy future. Under the guidance of Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB), which has retained the position as best agency in Nigeria for three successive years, is championing knowledge exchange, and policy harmonisation to ensure that Africa's vast hydrocarbon resources benefit Africans first.

The Board's active participation in four major oil and gas conferences in Africa in recent months underlined its commitment to sharing valuable local content practices with sister African countries, while creating regional linkages and opportunities for Nigerian oil and gas firms. The events were the Namibia Oil and Gas Conference, at Windhoek, in August; Africa Oil Week at Accra Ghana in September; African Energy Week at Cape Town, South Africa in October, and the African Petroleum Producers Organisation (APPO) Conference and Exhibition, November, at the Republic of Congo.

Each of the events drew over 1,500 participants, underscoring Africa's importance to the world's energy security, and confirming S&P Global's projection that the continent has the potential to grow its oil and gas production from 11.4 million barrels of oil equivalent per day (MMboe/d) to 13 MMboe/d in 2030.

While speaking to audiences that cut across political leaders, policy makers, operating and service companies, original equipment manufacturers, and others, Engr. Ogbe and other senior NCDMB officials shared Nigeria's successes in growing local content from five percent in 2010 when the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development (NOGICD) Act was enacted, to 56 percent by December 2024.

In their presentations, panel discussions, and local content master-classes, NCDMB officials proposed initiatives for sustainable African local content growth and positioned local content as a cornerstone for maximising value from the continent's natural resources, building a skilled workforce, and ensuring the energy sector drives sustainable prosperity through shared expertise. For the policy to be effective, Engr. Ogbe recommends that local content implementation must be pragmatic because it represents the resolve to build indigenous capacity, retain value within the continent, and create sustainable jobs for Africa's young and dynamic population.

Collaboration, specialisation... path to economic growth

NCDMB's African content advocacy aligns with the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), which seeks to boost intra-Africa trade, particularly value-added production, and trade across all sectors of Africa's

economy. By recommending technology transfer, and joint projects, NCDMB canvasses for each African nation to specialise in niche areas of the oil and gas value chain.

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The Director, Corporate Services at the NCDMB, Dr. Abdulmalik Halilu, gives the example of Boeing, the global aircraft manufacturer. He explained that Boeing assembles its aircraft with components sourced from countries across the world. He envisions an African energy sector where different countries contribute specialised expertise to a production process. Perhaps, Nigeria can specialise in fabrication and equipment components assembling, Namibia in exploration, Ghana in dry-docking and ship repairs, among others. Such specialisation would create a robust, self-sustaining industry, and build resilient regional supply chains, he enthused. This model was also a focal point at AEW 2025, where discussions emphasised harmonising policies to build regional supply chains and leverage institutions like the African Energy Bank (AEB).

Tailoring capacity building to needs

For African nations to optimise value from their oil and gas activities, developing human capital is paramount. The citizenry needs to acquire technical skills required for industry operations. Engr. Abayomi Bamidele, NCDMB's Director, Capacity Building, stated this while participating in a panel discussion at the AEW 2025. He counselled African countries to tailor their capacity building strategies to their country's specific needs. Policy makers, he advised, need to understand the mindset and skillsets of their nationals, and ensure that local content policies and capacity building models are not just relevant, but are also applicable to their country's technological, educational, and manpower capabilities.



Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary, NCDMB with Mr. Jagir Maxi, Chairman and Managing Director, ESSO Exploration and Production Nigeria Limited and his team, after a courtesy visit to the Board's liaison office in Lagos.



(L-R): Mr. Bayo Ojulari, Group Chief Executive Officer, Nigerian National Petroleum Company Ltd; Senator Heineken Lokpobiri, Minister of State for Petroleum Resources (Oil) and Rt. Hon Ekperikpe Ekpo, Minister of State for Petroleum Resources (Gas), touring NCDMB's booth at NOG 2025.

For Nigeria, which is a mature oil and gas basin, new capacity building efforts are being focussed on high demand and emerging areas, he hinted. Some of the skill areas include underwater welding, subsea engineering, geosciences, project management, deepwater operations, instrumentation and controls, digitalisation, helicopter piloting, and many others. For these programmes, NCDMB will adopt classroom training, laboratory/workshop practicals, and skills certifications with emphasis on hands-on work experience, he said.

Strategies for African local content growth

Several other successful local content models were discussed and recommended to African oil producing nations at the events.

Speaking in a panel discussion at the Namibia Oil and Gas Conference, at Windhoek, Namibia, NCDMB's Dr. Obinna Ezeobi, General Manager, Corporate Communications, discussed the "Project 100 initiative", a programme that provided strategic financial and non-financial support to select local service companies, and helped them to upscale their capacities, including access to market. He also suggested governments' partnerships and investments in competent private sector players to deliver strategic energy projects that meet a nations' needs.

The Director, Corporate Services at the NCDMB, Dr. Abdulmalik Halilu, gives the example of Boeing, the global aircraft manufacturer. He explained that Boeing assembles its aircraft with components sourced from countries across the world. He envisions an African energy sector where different countries contribute specialised expertise to a production process.

Another idea is government's facilitation of partnership between local companies and original equipment manufacturers (OEMs), and the sponsorship of local service firms to international oil and gas conferences to expose them to opportunities and new technologies.

Another nugget was home-grown research and development, discussed by Mr. Omomehin Ajimijaye, General Manager, Monitoring and Evaluation at the NCDMB. He explained how the agency developed a research and development roadmap. This included the establishment of six centres of excellence in Nigerian universities and support for bankable research ideas with the objective to mature them into commercial products.

Funding an African local content revolution

One recurring subject at oil and gas conferences is finance. The emphasis is understandable. Affordable finance is a key enabler of oil and gas operations. It is also key to workforce development, and investments in skills to meet growing energy demand.

Dr. Obinna Ezeobi recommends that African oil producing nations should introduce dedicated fund schemes to support oil and gas operating and service companies. Speaking at the Namibian conference at Windhoek, he described the Nigerian Content Intervention

Meeting in-country needs Going continental



The largest fibre optic factory in Africa opened in Sagamu, Ogun State, Southwest Nigeria in October, 2025. It will be the first to produce fibre-reinforced plastic in Africa. Promoted by Coleman Cables, the factory is expected to meet in-country needs and as well as export to Africa and other parts of the world.



One of the largest steel pipe manufacturing facilities in Africa is located in Ushafa, Abuja, Nigeria's federal capital. In October 2015, the company inaugurated its 280,000 tonnes per annum production facility, thereby deepening in-country capacity for steel pipe manufacturing.



In November 2023, **MG Vowgas** inaugurated its **Dish Head Forming Machine**, a state-of-the-art heat treatment facility in Port Harcourt, South-south Nigeria. The facility significantly grew Nigeria's capacity and sophistication in fabrication and manufacturing pressure vessels, boilers, and ships. It is the largest in West Africa.

One of the biggest outcomes from the Namibian oil and gas conference was the formation of a continental forum known as the African Local Content Organisation (ALCO), to foster collaboration among African oil and gas service providers to deliver complex projects, create and retain value in the multibillion-dollar African energy sector to grow the economy.

Fund as a blueprint for oil and gas projects financing.

Ms. Fateemah Mohammed, General Manager, Nigerian Content Development Fund (NCDF) elaborated on this at AOW in Accra, and at AEW in Cape Town. She said the NCI scheme has provided funding to 147 oil and gas service companies, through the Bank of Industry and NEXIM Bank managed schemes enabling them to grow their capabilities, and deliver on projects, while repaying the loans successfully. She added that plans are afoot to enlarge the fund and also create new products to support larger and more diverse oil industry projects.

Mohammed noted that financial products like the Women in Oil and Gas Fund promote gender inclusion, leading to a diverse workforce. She equally pointed to the ₦50 billion Community Contractors Fund as another impactful NCI product that is easily replicable in other African oil producing countries.

At the continental level, APPO has established the African Energy Bank (AEB) to fund major energy projects across the continent, and bridge the funding challenges impeding the development of oil and gas project. NCDMB's contributions to the establishment of the AEB is well documented, dating back to the inaugural African Local Content Roundtable (ALCR) held in June in 2021 in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, where Engr. Simbi Wabote, former Executive Secretary of the Board recommended the establishment of the African Local Content Fund.

Thought leadership, Nigeria's success stories

At the Namibian Conference, Nigeria's local



L-R: Mr. Isaac Yalah, former Director Research and Statistics, NCDMB; Dr. Ernest Nwapa, pioneer Executive Secretary, NCDMB; Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary, NCDMB; Mazi Sam Azoka Onyechi, member of NCDMB Governing Council and Dr. Abdulmalik Halilu, Director Corporate Services, NCDMB at the 2025 Nigerian Oil and Gas Conference.



Prof Emmanuel Ibe Kachikwu, former Minister of State for Petroleum Resources; Dr. Obinna Ezeobi, General Manager, Corporate Communications, NCDMB; Mr. Richmond Osuji, compere and Mrs. Chika Udora, Supervisor Capacity Building, after the Nigerian Content Business Mentorship Lecture by Prof Kachikwu.

content successes was a reference point. Dr. Abdulmalik Halilu, Director, Corporate Services who represented Engr. Ogbe, detailed NCDMB's achievements: world-class fabrication yards, human capital programmes, manufacturing initiatives, and FPSO integration.

He spoke on new waves of development, which includes: equipment assembly, SME development, R&D, and gas-based industrialisation. Dr. Halilu outlined strategies for growing African local content, emphasising specialisation and trade, and strong political will.

"Local content implementation is not a sprint but a marathon and must be executed as a

AFRICAN FACT SHEET



business, not as corporate social responsibility," he added. The director also urged countries to apply regulations uniformly, include grassroots communities in capacity building, and tie initiatives to new project developments.

At the Accra event, NCDMB hosted the Africa Content Forum, and the Executive Secretary stressed the need for enduring policy frameworks, human capital deployment, infrastructure development, and cross-border partnerships. Panel discussions at Accra highlighted the power of breaking silos and sharing best practices to accelerate progress. Likewise, at AEW 2025 in Cape Town, NCDMB-sponsored panel discussion reinforced that local content is essential for Africa's energy future, focusing on supplier and workforce opportunities.

Service sector collaboration and big-ticket projects

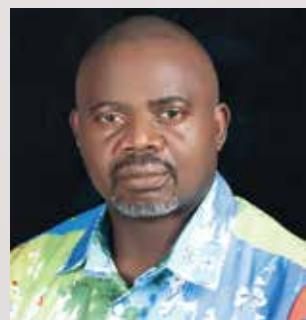
One of the biggest outcomes from the Namibian oil and gas conference was the formation of a continental forum known as the African Local Content Organisation (ALCO), to foster collaboration among African oil and gas service providers to deliver complex projects, create and retain value in the multibillion-dollar African energy sector to grow the economy.

Drawing membership from 14 African countries, ALCO plans to institute close partnership with African Petroleum Producers Organisation (APPO) and the African Energy Bank (AEB), and position members of the body to execute key scopes of the projects that would be financed by the Energy Bank. That would guarantee value and spend retention in the continent, helping to catalyse the continental economy, the group claims.

Call to a united African energy sector

With Africa holding 10 percent of global oil reserves, and producing about 10 million barrels per day, which is 10 percent of global crude oil production. It is evident that the continent's future hinges on intra-African trade and local content policies to fuel prosperity. Engr. Ogbe urges African nations to collaborate to build an energy sector owned by Africans, and harness their energy wealth through collaboration, specialisation, and value retention.

As the preeminent local content agency in the continent, NCDMB will continue its mission of promoting African local content, sharing Nigeria's blueprint and creating opportunities for local service companies. As Engr. Ogbe affirms, "We are committed to partnering to build an African energy sector that provides jobs for our youth, creates wealth for our nations, and brings true prosperity."



Mayor Ikoroha is a writer, media consultant and public affairs analyst. He is the author of *The End of Happiness*.

LOCAL CONTENT IS KEY PATH TO NIGERIA'S ENERGY SECURITY



Mr. Austin Avuru is a cerebral and accomplished leader of the Nigerian oil and gas industry. Renowned for serving as the pioneer Managing Director of Seplat Petroleum Development Company, he is currently the Chairman of AA Holdings and Board member of NNPC Ltd. He played a pivotal role in the formulation of Nigeria's Local Content Policy. Here, he shares deep insights and recommendations on the implementation of the Nigerian Content Act.

How we envisioned the Local Content policy

I have been part of the local content journey. We started this journey in year 2000 when NNPC set up an all-industry committee to prepare the blueprint for local content practice. I chaired that committee, and it cut across the entire industry. It was the work of the committee that created what we call the joint qualification system. It was a part of the local content policy.

The joint qualification system was supposed to be a pool of local services and service providers available to the industry, ranked continuously by their performance. When a local company renders services, the receiver of the services will rank the firm after the job, and that ranking is continuously posted into that database. Over time, once you click on that database, you will see different categories of companies based on their rankings, and when you pick service providers from that database, you will know who you're inviting.

What we envisioned was to build capacity, and ensure that those who invest in building capacity are rewarded, while those who do not build capacity will eventually drop out. It was clear from the beginning that all the privileges that we were putting into the policy, in terms of reserving jobs and different terrains for local companies, were intended to lead to rapid capacity building.

When you look at the NOGICD Act, you will see that those definitions are there and you can understand the intention. We defined Nigerian content as the quantum of composite value added, to be created in the Nigerian economy. Which means even if it's not a Nigerian company, but that value is created

within the economy by systematic development of capacity and capabilities through the deliberate utilisation of Nigerian human and material resources and services. That was the intention and that was key. And we defined an indigenous company as a Nigerian independent company. Two sides, the operators and the service providers.

How the policy benefitted indigenous operating companies

For the operators, we said that a Nigerian, independent operator shall be given first consideration in the award of oil blocks, oil field licenses, and so on. That's why a lot of us have been benefiting from the marginal field rounds, and other bid rounds that were open to indigenous companies, even if you partner with foreign companies. That has gone a long way to produce the current spectrum of independent operators that we have. That was derived from this Nigerian content mandate.

What we meant by exclusive consideration

The local content law also says that there shall be exclusive consideration of Nigerian indigenous service companies that demonstrate ownership of equipment, Nigerian personnel, and capacity to execute such work that they bid for. I don't think we have adhered strictly to this definition. When I represent a foreign company that has the equipment and I bid for work reserved for indigenous companies, using equipment that I do not own, that runs contrary to this definition.

An indigenous company was understood from the beginning to be a company registered in Nigeria and owned at least 51 percent by Nigerians, with the resources and capacity to execute the work it seeks to do.

The overarching intent of the local content policy and programme is capacity development - capacity to drive national economic development. Once we deviate from this, we begin to see the fallouts of the practice, and some are not necessarily beneficial to the economy.

How independent producers increased crude production

Seplat took over the ExxonMobil assets when they were producing between 150,000 and 170,000 barrels a day. Now, they are doing about 200,000 barrels a day, plus their traditional production of about 250,000 barrels. I've not included about 500 million standard cubic feet (scf) of gas on a BOE basis. Heirs Energies, that's OML 17, took that asset from zero production to 50,000 barrels a day.

When you look at the current total production from indigenous companies, even including the ones that are performing poorly, indigenous companies now account for almost 50 percent of national production. Fifteen years ago, we accounted for 2.7 percent of national production. And there are key implications of figures like this for national energy security. When the bulk of your production comes from indigenous companies, it says a lot about domestic energy security.

Let's look at domestic gas. Indigenous companies account for about 80 percent of domestic gas production - about 1.5 BCF, a day from near zero 10 years ago. But what's more important is that we are hoping to achieve 2.5 to 3 BCF per day of domestic gas. All of that incremental is going to come from indigenous companies, and the reason is that multinational companies have no reason to be interested in domestic gas delivery. They've been forced to do so in the past, but they never did it efficiently because it was never their prior-

ity. The currency for domestic gas is in naira. Even if you price it in dollars, the payment is in naira. No multinational is likely to be interested in the oil and gas business where the currency is in naira. So, the mandate is on indigenous companies to deliver gas to the domestic market and ensure domestic energy security, and they're living up to it.

In the next two years, between two or three of the key indigenous companies, they'll probably be delivering about 2.5 BCF of gas a day. They're doing business, making commercial sense out of it, but more importantly, they're doing it because they're indigenous companies.

There are assets for domestic gas delivery. I will be specific: the ANOH gas projects that SEPLAT is right now commissioning to deliver 300 MMscfd had been in the works for 15 years. The only reason it never came to fruition was that the multinationals insisted that if that gas didn't go to NLNG, they will not develop it. But today, SEPLAT is commissioning it and is going to deliver it into the domestic market.

I've seen an increase in oil production and an almost dominance of domestic gas. We're also leading the drive for clean cooking, one of the critical elements of the energy transition.

A company like Platform is doing 15,000 metric tonnes of LPG a year of LPG. But look at Dangote, which has a capacity to do 900,000 metric tonnes just from its refinery at full capacity. Right now, it's doing between 500,000 and 750,000 metric tonnes. In just coming on stream, Dangote has disrupted the LPG market. What this shows is that if we get the Warri and Port Harcourt refineries to function, in addition to Dangote even at half capacity, and the other indigenous gas developments, we'll be able to do 1.2 to 1.5 million metric tonnes, which will cover today's national consumption.

Today, where does LPG come from? The NLNG exports LPG into Nigeria because they were forced to. Their own LPG was meant for export. All their infrastructure for delivery was

export infrastructure. They are doing ship to trans-shipment.

But today, and looking at where the trend is going in the next couple of years, all of our LPG consumption will be met by domestic production. And then, of course, if you add domestic refining capacity, which is where we're heading, hopefully, we'll bring Warri and Port Harcourt eventually into full function to add to Dangote and his proposed expansion. And that's not counting the other smaller refineries.

The intention is that in the next three years, and certainly by 2030, we'll be doing close to 1.5 million barrels per day refining capacity. This is where we should have been from the beginning, which is to say, we should be able to refine everything we produce. That's the best thing the economy can expect, instead of just taking crude oil and exporting it to feed refineries that meet the energy security needs of foreign countries.

We're heading to a point where, in fact, we'll probably become a net exporter of all petroleum products by 2030. Those are very good stories of what local content has done.

Local content has redefined our economic growth

The local content programme is not just to beat our chest, tick the boxes and check the numbers. It's a whole national programme that we have to completely redefine our economic growth. In the past 65 years, our industry has taken raw materials, that is crude oil and natural gas, and exported them in their raw form to power industries outside of this country.

Those who came here to explore oil and gas were doing so to satisfy their own domestic energy security, and they have done so at our expense for 65 years. Historically, all we had was export of crude oil and natural gas. There was no consideration for the requirement of this same raw material for the development of our own economy. We had an industry con-

Local content policy is the path to our domestic energy security if we're going to ever have secure supply of domestic gas. This economy will be judged not by how much gas we export, but by how much gas we consume domestically: secure supply of clean cooking gas and secure supply of petro-chemical products.

African Local Content

tributing, at some point, 90 percent of our foreign exchange earnings and about 80 percent of federal revenues with less than 10 percent contribution to the GDP.

Now, we are turning things around and doing substantial value addition through domestic refining. Hopefully, we'll get to a point where all of our crude is refined locally and we're actually exporting petroleum products, petrochemical products, and so on.

Domestic gas supply, is probably the most painful. We can all talk about the success of the NLNG, and I love that. But look, in the 20 years of LNG production, add up the total revenue. The total revenue that has gone to the federation account versus the multiplier effect of just one BCF of gas per day, what it has on economy. An additional two BCF of gas a day, what impact it will have on power generation, on fertiliser, and petrochemicals, name it.

These are all the things that we have lost in 65 years because all we had was just historical export of natural gas and crude oil. Now we're paying attention to gas to electricity, gas-to-fertiliser, gas to petrochemicals.

Local content policy is the path to our domestic energy security

Local content policy is the path to our domestic energy security if we're going to ever have secure supply of domestic gas. This economy will be judged not by how much gas we export, but by how much gas we consume domestically: secure supply of clean cooking gas and secure supply of petrochemical products.

With enough gas, we'll have ultimately secured supply of electricity.

The four critical things that an economy will need from an energy point of view - domestic gas, domestic petroleum products, clean cooking gas, and electricity. All of it is going to come from how we implement the local content programme. None of it is going to come from foreign direct investments. If we

are hoping to achieve this with the practice of the local content policy, then we should be asking ourselves: "how best can we create this capacity?" "How best can we implement?" Can we do what we're doing at the minimum cost possible?" And it can be done. The costs don't have to be this high. The people who do not have capacity don't have to remain in this industry.

For NCDMB, it's probably time to look inwards and ask yourself: after 15 years of the Local Content Act, haven't you given enough room, haven't you made enough sacrifice as an economy for those who are serious to build capacity? Is it not time to flatten the playing field and those who do not have capacity should not be protected to participate in the industry? They should be allowed to go.

I'm sure that is the reason for the Presidential Order on contracting. If it is properly understood, that's what is intended to cure. That is to say, only those service providers who have the resources to do the job they claim they can do efficiently should be allowed to participate. And only operators who have the resources and competence to operate their field and deliver maximum production should be allowed on the playing field. And only two regulators can ensure that this happens - NUPRC for the upstream, and NCDMB for service providers.

The local content policy defines the future of our industry and defines the future of our economy. We can't take it lightly, but we also cannot implement it in a manner that is injurious to this economy.

Impact of insecurity, delay in contracting cycle, on cost of crude oil production

The discussion today was on local content. It was never my position that local content accounts for all of the 60 percent extra costs that our industry is bearing today. Security is tied to something like evacuation.

In those days, once you pay the tariff, in fact,

at some point it was as low as 80 cents per barrel, your crude oil was delivered to the terminal. There was nothing like theft. If you delivered a barrel, you got a barrel at the terminal. Now, there's the cost of security, and the multiplier effect of that is that people have now resorted to evacuation methods that are almost alien to the industry. People are now trucking crude oil as if they are moving diesel. We are beginning to see evacuation cost alone that can be as high as \$18 per barrel. Clearly, this is not acceptable.

For security and all these ramifications, I will put 50 percent. If we sorted out security in a most efficient manner, because even if the industry paid an extra \$1 per barrel to take care of all the surveillance and all the issues about pipeline security, and we got the pipelines to work efficiently, we would still bring evacuation costs down from an average of \$8 to \$12 a barrel, to maybe \$4 per barrel. Security is, I would say, 50 percent.

As for contracting cycle, even NNPC now realises it. I used to put 30 percent to contracting cycle, especially for big contracts. You have to build in all the extra factors, knowing that for 18 months you are going round and round bidding for this job. By the time it's awarded, you don't even know how it was awarded.

NNPC itself is taking steps now to cure that. I'm sure that very soon you are going to see it start happening. They've largely increased the approval thresholds for different levels of management in NNPC. Once you raise the threshold substantially of things that shouldn't even show up at the Board, you find out that a contracting cycle that should take six weeks will no longer take two years. Those are being addressed. I hope NCDMB will also do the same thing, so that going to NCDMB doesn't then become a roadblock that makes the contracting cycle longer than necessary.

If you are looking for percentages, I will put it at 50 percent for security, 20 percent for contracting cycle and 30 percent to competence associated with the lack of capacity or lack of resources and equipment.

THE LEISURE SIDE OF BAYELSA



Okpoma Beach, Brass in Bayelsa State.

Bayelsa State might be small geographically, but it has beautiful landscape, and rich in legends. Every corner offers something memorable, like the quiet lakes, and even the vibrant festivals. Whether you are visiting for work or leisure, here are some places and experiences that will make your stay fun, and memorable.

Okpoma Beach, Brass

Located in the Okpoma Town in Brass Local Government, the town boasts wide sandy beaches and cool sea breeze. People visit for picnics, beach soccer, and music. Fishermen bring fresh fish, while vendors grill seafood on the beach. Sunset exposes the beach's beauty.

Oxbow Lake Pavilion

Right in capital city of Yenagoa. Oxbow Lake is one of the city's most popular attractions. Locals often go there for roasted fish, pepper soup, and seafood platters by the water side. On weekends, you will find boat rides, concerts, and food vendors serving roasted plantain and coconut drinks. It is a great spot to relax and taste the city.

Blossom Bistro

Blossom Bistro offers quiet comfort and rich flavours. It is known for seafood pasta, grilled chicken, and suya, paired with a relaxed setting and music.

Hamilton Gardens

Hamilton Gardens is for those who bask in community energy. Soccer matches are played on small pitches, while people sit and watch. As the sun sets, music drifts across the open space, vendors

set up grills, and the garden fills up with laughter. Hamilton Gardens can be described as Yenagoa's social heartbeat.

Heline's Court Karaoke and Lounge

Evenings in Yenagoa are not complete without karaoke at Heline's Court. The lounge attracts visitors looking to unwind, sing, and enjoy local cocktails. The relaxed vibe also makes it perfect for small gatherings and late-night fun.

Barcode Lounge

Barcode is the city's indoor fun zone. With snooker tables, gaming arcade, and board games, it is ideal for friends or coworkers to relax. The youthful crowd and upbeat music give it an easy, friendly feel, a good place to meet new people or show off your gaming skills.

Oloibiri Oil Well

About an hour from Yenagoa, Oloibiri holds deep national significance as the site of Nigeria's first oil discovery. The area remains symbolic, reminding visitors of where the country's energy story began. A planned museum will soon make it a key stop for history and learning tours.

Nembe and the White Man Cemetery

A boat trip to Nembe gives you a glimpse of riverine life, silent waterways, stilt houses, and bustling jetty markets. Among its landmarks is the White Man Cemetery, where early explorers and missionaries were buried. It is a serene site that tells stories of the area's colonial past and long-standing cultural resilience.



George Obidah 10.4K Walk

Health and unity meet every year in the George Obadiah 10.4K Walk. Hundreds of residents join the walk to promote fitness and togetherness. The walk takes participants through major parts of Yenagoa, ending with music and refreshments at the finish line.

Food and Art Festival

Yenagoa comes alive in December during the Food and Art Festival. The event blends food, culture, and design. Here, you get seafood, palm wine, local crafts and exhibitions. It draws artists, chefs, and visitors from across Nigeria, closing the year on a creative note.

And the rest

Bayelsa State Cultural Centre - home to plays, dances, and art shows.

Peace Park - a calm space for evening walks.

Swali Market - vibrant with spices, seafood, and handcrafted goods.

Planning Your Trip: Practical Tips

Getting there: Bayelsa International Airport in Yenagoa offers commercial flights on select days, with routes connecting Lagos, Abuja, and Port Harcourt. It is the most direct way to reach the city. By road, Yenagoa is about one and half hour from Port Harcourt and two hours from Warri. Tricycles and rides are also available to ease movement within the city.

Best time to visit: The best time to enjoy Bayelsa is the Dry Season, from November to March. This is also best for outdoor activities and river trips. December stands out for its lively festivals and

events.

Where to stay: You can find a range of hotels and serviced apartments in Yenagoa. Make your reservations early during the December and Easter holidays to avoid the hotel scramble.

What to eat: Seafood is the star in Yenagoa. Try grilled fish and plantain at the sports complex, fisherman soup in local food spots, or seafood pasta and suya at Blossom Bistro and Pizzeria.

Safety and etiquette: Bayelsa people are warm and welcoming. Always ask before taking photos in rural or traditional settings. Carry some cash; not all outlets accept cards.

Getting around: Tricycles and taxis cover most of the city. For trips to Nembe or Brass, use verified boat operators, or travel with a local guide, especially on longer water routes.

Packing essentials: Light clothing, sunscreen, insect repellent, and a pair of comfortable, waterproof shoes will serve you well for both city walks and creek trips.

Local insight: Join locals at Hamilton Gardens for football in the evenings, or unwind with karaoke at Heline's Court. You will experience Yenagoa's friendly side fast.

- **Ophelia Jackson**



1. Mr. Esueme Dan Kikile, Esq. General Manager, Human Capital Development, NCDMB; (4th left) Sen. Heineken Lokpobiri, Honourable Minister of State for Petroleum Resources (Oil); (5th left) Mr. Ambrose Ovbiebo, Managing Director, Tamrose Limited with other board members of the company at the celebration ceremony to mark the completion of NCIF loan repayment held at the NCDMB Conference Centre in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

2. Dr. Obinna Ezeobi, General Manager, Corporate Communication, with staff of NCDMB and participants at the NCDMB engagement with media practitioners and youth stakeholders in the Niger Delta in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

3. Cross-section of participants at the NCDMB's organised ISO training programme for security personnel, janitors, firefighters and contract staff at the Nigerian Content Tower, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

4. Newly Reconstituted Executive Committee members reciting the oath of office before Dr Abdulmalik Halilu, Director, Corporate Services and Chairman, ACTU-NCDMB, and Mrs. Ekere Usiere, Resident Anti-Corruption Commissioner, ICPC, during their inauguration at the Board's head office in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

5. Dignitaries at the ceremony organised by Tamrose Limited to celebrate the successful repayment of \$10 million Nigerian Content Intervention Fund.

6. Barr. Esueme Dan Kikile, General Manager, Human Capacity Development, with staff and management of the Industrial Training Fund (ITF) at the close-out ceremony of the NCDMB-sponsored initiative, in collaboration with ITF Vocational Training in Abuja.

7. Cross-section of participants at the second edition of the NCDMB-sponsored Book Reading programme by Dr Dayo Oketola, of his book, *The Catalyst: Nigerian Tech Evolution through a Journalist's Lens*, at the Nigerian Content Tower, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.



8. NCDMB management and staff at the 2025 Africa Natural Resources and Energy Investment Summit (AFNIS) conference at the State House, Abuja.

9. NCDMB management and staff with participants at the Centre of Excellence Harmonised Policy Review Roundtable meeting in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

10. NCDMB management and staff with participants at the South-South edition of NCDMB stakeholders' sensitisation and engagement forum held in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

11. Dr. Obinna Ezeobi, General Manager, Corporate Communication, NCDMB, with other awardees at the 2025 Association of Energy Correspondents of Nigeria (NAEC) Energy Conference held in Lagos.

12. Cross-section of trainees at the kick-off ceremony of the NCDMB Digitalisation Initiative Training in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

13. Cross-section of trainees at the kick-off ceremony of the NCDMB Digitalisation Initiative Training in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

14. Barr. Esueme Dan Kikile, General Manager, Capacity Building Directorate, NCDMB, with graduate trainees at the close-out ceremony of the Nigerian Liquefied Natural Gas (NLNG) T7 advanced training programmes in Bonny, Rivers State.

15. Mr. Teddy Bai, Chief Supervisor, Government Relations and Mr. Ifeanyi Nwokemodo, Supervisor, Media Relations, both of NCDMB presenting an award to Mr. Bassey Willie, winner of the Economy Reporter of the Year at the Bayelsa Media Award (BMA) 2025 in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.



After handling major projects in Nigeria, Dorman Long sets sights on Africa

Dr. Timi Austen-Peters, Chairman, Dorman Long Engineering, x-rays his company's growth plans and offers positive assessment of NOGICD Act and recent divestments of operating assets by some IOCs.

Impact of the NOGICD Act and NCDMB initiatives on Dorman Long's operations

Dorman Long is very proud to be a foster child of NCDMB. We shout it from the rooftops. We're very proud that much of the work that we do today is because the NOGICD Act has given us that opportunity.

So, whether it is pressure vessels for the first time, or platforms for the first time, and now we have galvanising plants that is one of the biggest in black Africa, we are very proud that NCDMB has consid-

ered us and has given us platforms to participate in major projects such as NLNG Train 7. It has been absolutely fundamental to the trajectory of our development.

Our role in NLNG Train 7 project

It was written in the contracting strategy that galvanising aspect of the job must be executed locally, and this gave us the job because we are the only company that has large scale galvanising infrastructure in-country. Beyond that, when they're also looking at how to achieve cost savings, the fact that we already had extensive infrastructure, we have trained people, processes, that meant a significant portion of the work came to us.

During the COVID-19 Pandemic, when a lot of companies had to run back to their home countries, we remained here. We had hundreds of people skilled, trained, and properly certified. We were able to

keep all the FPSOs and many other vital infrastructures working throughout the COVID shutdown. And that's because we've been given the opportunity to do so.

Before the NOGICD Act, the international oil companies were not interested in working with people like us but the Act changed the game. We are now participating actively in the energy sectors and other key sectors of the economy.

Dorman Long in the next five years

Over the next five years, we're very ambitious about what we are aim to achieve. We intend to increase the scope of what we are doing. We started off fabricating basic things. Now, we have gone from pressure vessels to complete EPC platforms. We are beginning to look at pipelines, both in terms of manufacturing and also laying of pipelines in Nigeria and other Africa countries.

It was written in the contracting strategy that galvanising aspect of the job must be executed locally, and this gave us the job because we are the only company that has large scale galvanising infrastructure in-country. Beyond that, when they're also looking at how to achieve cost savings, the fact that we already had extensive infrastructure, we have trained people, processes, that meant a significant portion of the work came to us.

As we speak, we have already engaged some of our partners and counterparts in Ghana, Uganda, and Mozambique. We want to replicate the experience that we have as Nigerians across the continent in a way that, hitherto, is only done by people from America, United Kingdom, and Germany. We now are able to share with our brothers across the continent all of our experiences and help them to develop.

Nigerian content in the next five years

Nigerian content implementation can only help us to continue to grow in the various directions. It is fundamental that we increase our capacity, that we increase the sophistication and all of the projects that are being done partly by expatriates at the moment. We would like to be able to see that NCDMB helps us in doing that. We would like to see Nigeria as a hub for local content in Africa.

Much of the work that has to be done requires fi-

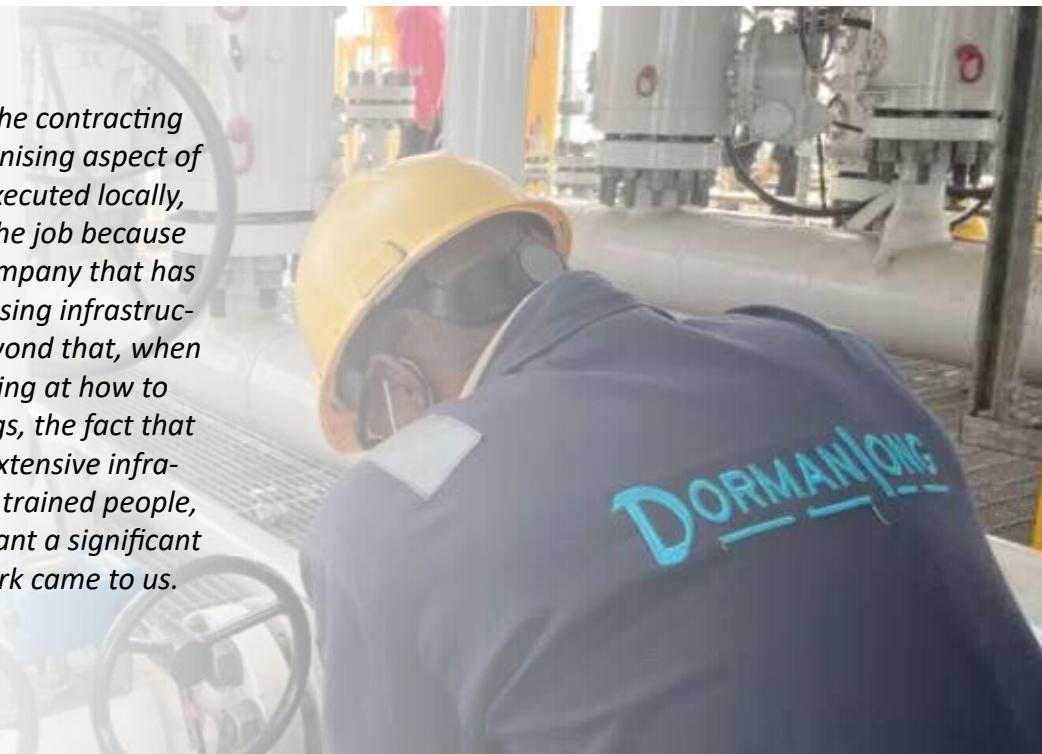
nancing. Now, it is critical that NCDMB begins to help us to look for solutions that will enable us to achieve these objectives. And, of course, none of this can be done without R&D.

If NCDMB makes it easy for us to not only to undertake the R&D but also to use it to deploy in a practical sense, those are the kind of things that we need NCDMB doing for us in Nigeria in the next five years.

Impact of divestment of assets by some big IOCs

It's a huge opportunity and a significant gain. The companies that make up the buyers of the divested assets are people that we work for. So, whether it's First E&P, Aradel, ND Western, these are people we have built platforms for. They are platforms producing 30,000 to 40,000 barrels a day.

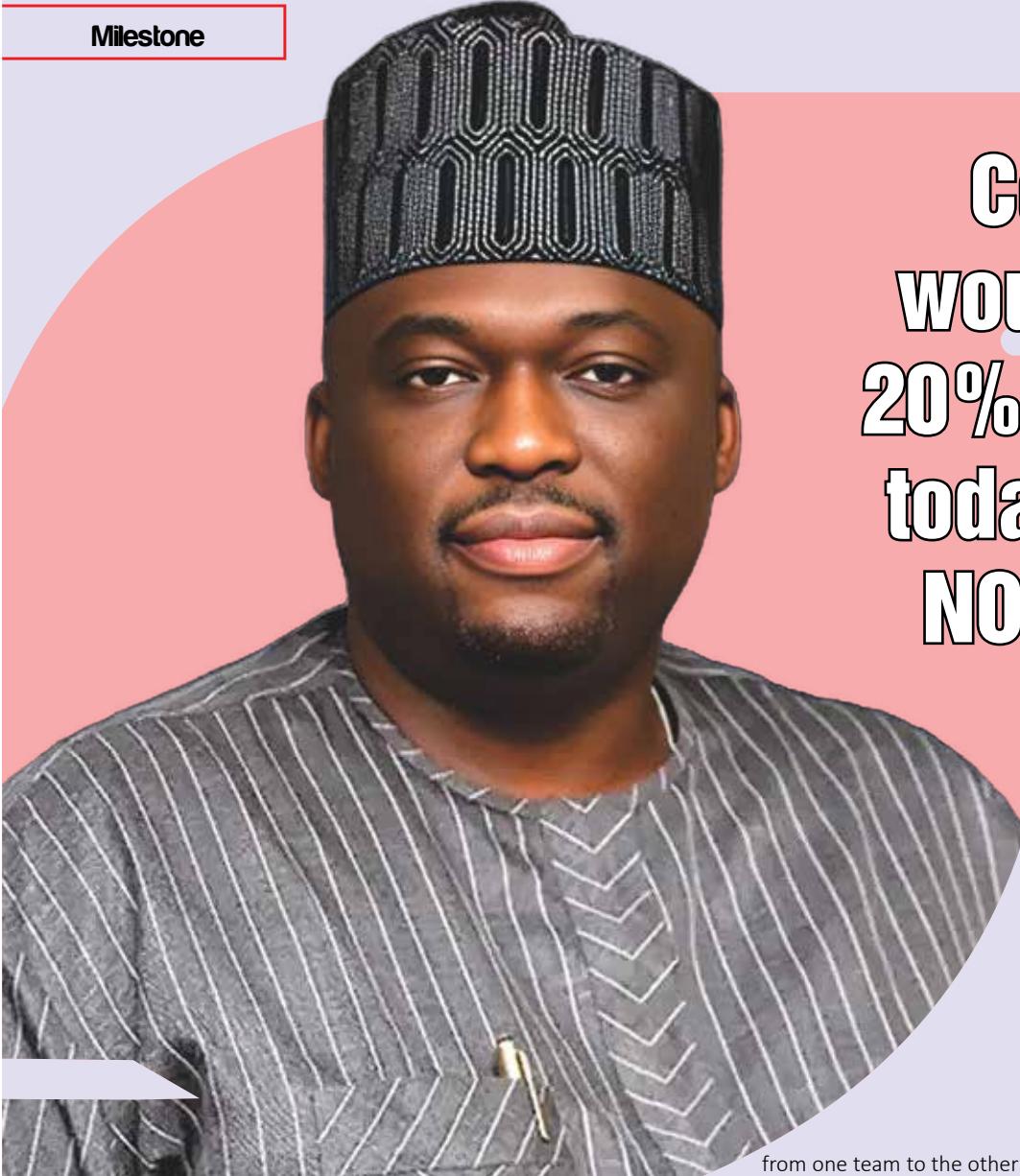
They know and trust the integrity of the work that



we are doing. We have already been working for SPDC. We did Assa North, a huge gas processing facility. If we work for the SPDC, which has now been sold, and we have worked for the companies that bought it over, there is no reason why we wouldn't be working for this new entity in the foreseeable future. Hence, we are very excited and very optimistic about the opportunities that are presented to us.

Dorman Long's assessment of indigenous participation

Generally speaking, I will say it's been very impressive because, if you look at where Nigeria was in terms of local content participation before the enactment of the NOGICD Act, and where we are today, we have moved from as low as five percent of indigenous participation to over 50 percent today. Because of the Act, we are now participating significantly in all aspects of the oil and gas value chain. The Act has brought about significant growth in the sector.



Coleman would not be 20% of its size today without NOGICD Act

Mr. George Onafowokan, Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer of Coleman Wires and Cables, highlights how the oil and gas sector has been transformed by the NOGICD Act, 2010, and how much more the manufacturing sub-sector could be further supported to drive growth.

Fifteen years of the NOGICD Act

We have seen massive growth, both in industry, in people's skills, knowledge and in the ability for us to impact the biggest resource that we have, oil and gas. Considering the difference between when the NOGICD Act was enacted and 15 years after, the NOGICD Act and the Board have allowed us to regain what we lost in decades. Local content is impacting oil and gas and it's bringing about a big change.

I will say that, in the last 15 years, we've clawed back 40 years of what we lost before the Act. That, to me, is the biggest change. Nigerians have been able to actually solidify impact by growing capacity in this country, and setting a strategy for the future of this country to create more jobs and guarantee sustainability.

Sustainability of the future is what the NOGICD Act and the Board have managed to do. And it's a future that now enables investment to be seen differently. For us, we should really, as Nigerians, be proud of what has come out of that NOGICD Act and be extremely proud of what the Board has achieved over the last 15 years.

Now, we can all say that NCDMB is the best agency, and it's been consistent. Agencies are never consistent, because they change

from one team to the other and they lack consistency. But, for the Board, I will say what has been done right from the first day of the NOGICD Act, and the setting up the Board has changed the dynamics of what an agency should be in Nigeria, and how it can sustain growth and impact.

Impact of NOGICD Act on Coleman

NOGICD Act has had a big impact on Coleman, it became strategically our reason for growth, starting off with the first part of the NOGICD Act that says 90 metres of every 100 metres of cable should be locally procured.

The second part was the greater guarantee for us in strategy. It provides that 45 metres of every high voltage cable should be locally procured. At the time the NOGICD Act was enacted, we had zero capacity and that became a strategic focus for growth and capacity building. We had more capacity on low voltage, but the high voltage was at zero.

Prior to the enactment, Nigeria had cable companies for over 45 years and no one was producing one metre of high voltage cable. For us, it became a direct capacity of growth to create, using the Act as reason. If there were no Act, there would not have been a strategic reason for investment. The Act created the reason for strategic investment in a product that was imported up until that day. It took us five years to deliver the first production plant in Nigeria. And when you look at it, the day we started producing high voltage cables in Nigeria, in 2015, up until then, there were only four countries in Africa that had production capacity. Till date, Nigeria remains the fifth country. This demonstrates how hard investment it is. The NOGICD Act made a company in the country to refocus its strategy and crystallise an investment in Nigeria. And it wasn't creating a solution for the oil and gas sector alone, but for other sectors.

The NOGICD Act did not only impact oil and gas, it simultaneously impacted the whole country. See what a simple Act can do and what an agency

African Local Content

focusing on its mandate has created. For us, we created a solution for the oil and gas, and simultaneously created a solution for the whole country.

We can say that if there was no NOGICD Act, Coleman would not be 20 percent of its size today. The Act created a solution for the oil and gas sector and simultaneously created a solution for Nigeria. By the enactment of the Act, we went into high voltage cable, instrumentation cable and fibre optic cable. These are cables that still make Nigeria the fifth country of production.

NCDMB pushed the Act, a company locked on its strategic development and sustainability goals to that same Act. If the Board did not show impact and capacity to deliver its goals, there will be no investment because you can have all the best laws in the world, if there is no implementation, investment will not happen.

You cannot tie the private sector, since we are not a government-based company. We are not contractors. We don't take contracts from the government. We're dependent on creating a business that is either profitable or not. You do not put money or borrow money into a venture that literally is going to kill your business. But you have a certain level of security from the NOGICD Act and from the people that are implementing the law. That gave me the biggest confidence to blindly take up any position, or any debt of investment, knowing well that the Act will protect, and the Act has protected.

Coleman's foray into markets overseas

Going into other countries might not be that easy. We have done some of the West African coasts, and we are deliberately pushing. Entry into other countries always has some challenges. I think every country in Africa seems to be afraid that the entry of Nigeria is a takeover of their business. But we need to collaborate, work together and grow the market. We're not shying away from it even though it has been a tough entry, but we are seeing massive possibilities.

The other key factor is that you cannot build capacity that has been driven by certain development, and just focus on Nigeria or the oil and gas sector. We're producing 50 to 60 percent of cable that nobody else is producing in West Africa. We're now servicing other parts of West Africa. We see ourselves in West Africa, East Africa, and Central Africa over the next five to 10 years. Apart from that, the next focus then becomes other markets like Europe, among others. But if you look at that impact, the export market for us is critical mass development. We see it as a strategic goal to build these capacities.

Nigerian content strategies to deepen manufacturing

It is wrong to say that Nigerian content strategies have not worked in the manufacturing sector.

There are certain funding opportunities that are already provided by the NCI Fund, which is managed by the Bank of Industry. I think the next phase is the deliberate aspect of those funding being deployed to manufacturing. We've done well in services and we see funding going there. But I think there needs to now be a deliberate push towards certain manufacturing sub-sectors.

Currently, there is focus on research and development and funding going there. How do we turn those research and development into actual products? And, that, to me, is telling you that NCDMB does not shy away from creating more capacity, even in areas where it actually has struggled, but it's still developing.

For me, we need to be deliberate with manufacturing as you cannot start manufacturing and building skill sets overnight. It needs to be deliberate, funding towards the manufacturing sector, making sure that investment is coming into manufacturing. Fifteen years of NCDMB has impacted every area but more efforts should be geared towards manufacturing. For us at Coleman, with the way things are going, we see manufacturing, the level of capacity building and impact in oil and gas, increasing.

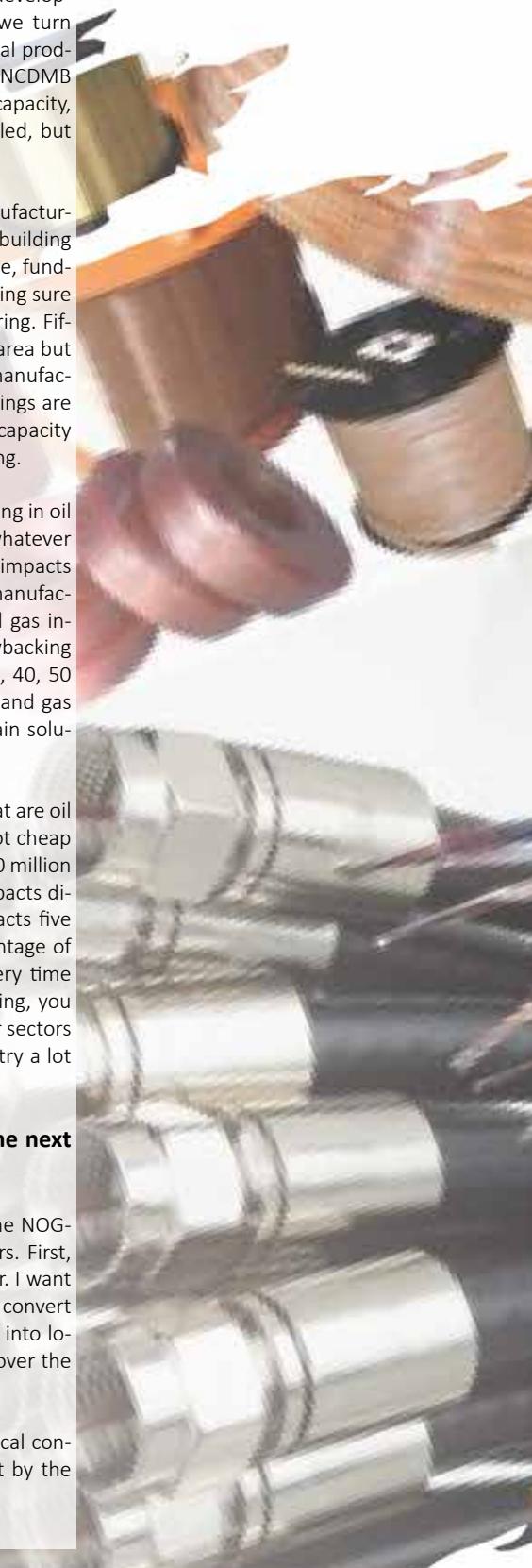
The best aspect of focusing on manufacturing in oil and gas is that, 99 percent of the time, whatever the manufacturing sector comes out with impacts every other sector. You will never find a manufacturing sector that impacts just the oil and gas industry. They'll always find that they're piggybacking oil and gas, but they also have, maybe 30, 40, 50 percent of their business that are non-oil and gas related. So, you are actually creating a chain solution.

If you look at most of these investments that are oil and gas based in manufacturing, they're not cheap investments. You're ranging from US\$30, 40 million to 100 million in each impact. But that impacts directly one sector and simultaneously impacts five more sectors. And that's the biggest advantage of capacity being built in manufacturing. Every time you build any new capacity in manufacturing, you simultaneously increase capacity into other sectors of the economy. And that makes the country a lot better, and even Africa a lot better.

Nigeria content implementation in the next five years

Where we want to see the NCDMB and the NOGICD Act is greater impact into more sectors. First, is more impact in the manufacturing sector. I want us to get more manufacturers onboard and convert a lot more of the tools used in oil and gas into localised manufacturing as much as we can over the next five years.

I also want us to increase the growth of local content, to achieve the strategic roadmap set by the Board.



THE 39 WHO SET SAIL

NCDMB's HCD vision takes to the high seas



Through a collaborative Human Capacity Development initiative, NCDMB, Chevron, and Stoilic are empowering a new generation of globally certified seafarers.

When the morning sun rose over the Port Harcourt waterfront, it carried hope and reflected it softly off the crisp white uniforms of 39 young Nigerians standing proudly in formation. Behind those smiles were stories of endurance, of many years of searching for opportunity in an industry that often seems out of reach. But on this day, there was something different in the air. The tide was turning.

This was not just another flag-off ceremony; it was a defining moment in Nigeria's drive to develop a globally competitive maritime workforce through structured human capacity development.

The Human Capacity Development (HCD) initiative, sponsored by the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) in collaboration with Chevron Nigeria Limited, Intelis Nigeria, and Stoilic Shipping Limited, forms part of NCDMB's strategic effort to produce a workforce that can thrive locally and compete globally across the oil and gas, and linkage sectors.

Speaking at the launch, Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary of NCDMB, reaffirmed that every trained Nigerian adds long-term value to the industry.

His words reflected the philosophy behind the Board's 60-20-20 Nigerian Content Human Capacity Development (NC-HCD) Strategic Training Model, a framework that allocates 60 percent to core technical skills, 20 percent to cross-sectoral employability, and another 20 percent to innovative, on-the-job learning. The idea, he said, is not to "train for training's sake", but to build competence that sustains jobs, promotes innovation, and strengthens the national economy.

Under this framework, the cadetship project stands out as one of the Board's flagship HCD interventions, a tangible reflection of its commitment to nurturing globally certified professionals from the Nigerian oil and gas ecosystem.

Charting the course: From classroom to vessel

The 18-month maritime cadetship programme, managed by Stoilic Shipping Limited, offers participants real-time sea experience, Certificate of Competency (CoC) training, and the opportunity to work aboard international vessels. It bridges the long-standing gap between theory and practice, a challenge that has limited many young maritime graduates.

According to Barr. Esueme Dan Kikile, General Manager of Human Capacity Development at NCDMB, the programme reflects the Board's core belief that embedding human capacity in project execution ensures sustainability. "When we embed human capacity development into our plans, local content becomes our reality. This programme is more than training. It is a declaration that our future workforce will be Nigerian, skilled, and globally respected," he declared.

The 39 cadets were selected through the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Joint Qualification System (NOGIC JQS), NCDMB's transparent database for registering and vetting Nigerian professionals seeking opportunities in the oil and gas value chain.

Dreams at sea: Voices of the cadets

For Arijovwode Oghenevwegba, a Marine Engineering graduate from Niger Delta University, this training marks the moment theory becomes practice. "Getting sea-time experience in Nigeria is tough. Most of us have the degree but no shipboard experience. This programme gives us that missing link," he said, visibly excited about finally applying classroom learning in real-world conditions.

Similarly, Adegbile Kehinde Huzzain, a Nautical Science graduate from the Nigeria Maritime University, described his selection as a dream fulfilled. "When my name appeared on the list, I was speechless," he recalled. "This training will give me the confidence I need to

face my CoC exams and start a career at sea."

Others, like Ayama Ediseye, view it as redemption. "Many of my colleagues gave up because they could not find sea-time placements. This has rekindled my hope. I am ready to work hard and make my mentors proud," she said.

For David Timothy Jatau, another Nigeria Maritime University graduate, it is a test of resilience. "Working on a vessel will test my discipline and patience. But it will also teach leadership, lessons that go beyond the ship deck."

Their stories remind us that behind every training number is a real Nigerian, striving to convert opportunity into destiny.

Private sector partnership, public impact

Chevron Nigeria Limited's involvement goes beyond partnership; it demonstrates private-sector commitment to sustainable capacity building. Victor Inyere, Chevron's Capacity Building Advisor, urged the cadets to seize the opportunity with purpose. He noted that each participant represents a step toward national progress and that Chevron's collaboration with NCDMB aligns with its broader sustainability goals.

This cadetship initiative is one of the practical ways NCDMB is implementing its 10-year Strategic Roadmap, which aims to raise Nigerian Content participation in the oil and gas industry to 70 percent by 2027. By aligning with the 60-20-20 model, the Board ensures that every investment in human capital translates into measurable competence.

"You have earned this place through hard work," he said, addressing the cadets. "Now, your responsibility is to learn, grow, and contribute to Nigeria's development. Chevron will continue to support NCDMB in advancing Nigerian Content through human capacity development." He added that Chevron's investment in people was strategic: "Every young professional we train strengthens not just our operations but the Nigerian economy as a whole."

At the operational end, Stoilic Shipping Limited carries the responsibility of transforming these young Nigerians into certified professionals. The company's General Manager, Administration, Mrs. Chimamanda Okafor, citing internal data, Stoilic cadets have consistently achieved a high success rate in the Certificate of Competency examinations, a testament to its rigorous training standards. "Our cadets undergo extensive onboard training under strict international safety and environmental protocols," she explained. "We ensure they are not only technically skilled but also professionally disciplined."

Okafor also disclosed Stoilic's broader ambition: to establish a maritime university in Nigeria in partnership with global institutions. "It will be a hub for advanced maritime education," she said, "and a natural extension of our mission to make Nigeria a centre for maritime excellence."

Anchored in strategy, afloat with promise

This cadetship initiative is one of the practical ways NCDMB is implementing its 10-year Strategic Roadmap, which aims to raise Nigerian Content participation in the oil and gas industry to 70 percent by 2027. By aligning with the 60-20-20 model, the Board ensures that every investment in human capital translates into measurable competence. These 39 cadets now represent the promise of that vision, young Nigerians equipped to meet international standards and compete anywhere in the world.

When they return with their Certificates of Competency, they will not only be qualified seafarers but also ambassadors of Nigeria's local content success story. As one NCDMB official aptly puts it, "When we send Nigerians to sea, we are not exporting labour; we are exporting skill, pride, and proof that local content works."

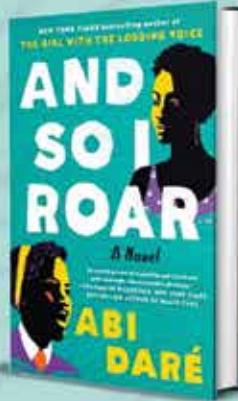
In an industry often dominated by foreign expertise, these young cadets are sailing toward something far greater than jobs, they are sailing toward a future where Nigerian competence carries its own flag, and the world salutes it.

- **Orphelia Jackson**



AND SO I ROAR

a work of fiction, asking questions of the real world



After winning a much-coveted literary prize, the book joins a growing list of Nigerian stories going global.

When Nigerian author Abi Daré published *The Girl with the Louding Voice* in 2020, she became one of the most distinctive new voices in African fiction. Five years later, her sequel, *And So I Roar*, arrives not just as a literary continuation, but as a national moment. The novel recently won the 2025 *Climate Fiction Prize*, earning global recognition for a story that manages to be deeply Nigerian, yet universally resonant.

Daré's book does not approach climate change through statistics or slogans. Instead, she tells it through the land, through droughts that silence farms, rivers that vanish, and women whose lives bend to nature's harsh moods. It is a novel where the environment is not a backdrop, but a witness.

At the heart of *And So I Roar* is Adunni, the bright, defiant girl from Daré's debut novel, returning to her village to face murder accusations and the shadow of her past. Her journey is not just personal, it mirrors a nation's quiet confrontation with justice, memory, and loss.

Through alternating perspectives between Adunni and Tia, the Lagos journalist who comes to investigate her case, Daré builds a portrait of a Nigeria split between tradition and progress. The soil beneath Ikat, Adunni's village, is dry and cracked, a reflection of the moral erosion that has seeped into its people.

In an era when climate fiction often feels heavy-handed, *And So I Roar* succeeds because it is intimate. The drought, the hunger, the changing rhythm of the earth; these are not metaphors. They are reality, conditions of existence.

Daré once noted in an interview that she did not set out to write a climate story, but that when one writes about rural Nigeria, 'the land tells its own story whether you ask it to or not'. That instinct, to let the environment speak through people, is what gives the novel its quiet power.

It is also what makes her win so significant. Nigeria's environmental crises; oil pollution in the Niger Delta, deforestation in the North, and flash floods in urban areas are often reported, but are rarely narrated. Daré's work bridges that gap, humanising what policy reports cannot.

Daré's achievement is not solitary. It is part of a larger shift where Nigerian authors are shaping global literature and cultural conversations. From Ayòbámi Adébáyó's emotionally charged *A Spell of Good Things* to Chigozie Obioma's spiritually layered narratives and Chimamanda

Ngozi Adichie's trailblazing comeback, *Dream Count*, Nigerian fiction continues to expand its reach and relevance.

These authors are no longer writing for validation; they are setting the agenda. Their works are studied in universities, adapted for movies, and debated in climate and policy circles. Nigerian literature has become an export of ideas, not just stories, bridging the gap between culture, governance, and sustainability.

And So I Roar may be a work of fiction, but it poses questions that policymakers, climate activists, and industry leaders cannot ignore. What does progress mean if it costs people their connection to the land? How do we measure development if the soil that feeds us no longer breathes?

In giving voice to Adunni, a girl, a woman, a witness, Daré gives voice to Nigeria's silenced landscapes. Her victory at the Climate Fiction Prize is not just literary; it is symbolic. It marks a shift where Nigerian stories are no longer waiting for global validation. They are defining the global story itself.





SANYA OYIN OLUGBILE

There is something remarkable about a woman retelling the story of a god, and this year, Oyin Olugbile did just that. Her novel, *Sanya*, has won the 2025 NLNG Nigeria Prize for Literature, Africa's most prestigious literary award worth US\$100,000.

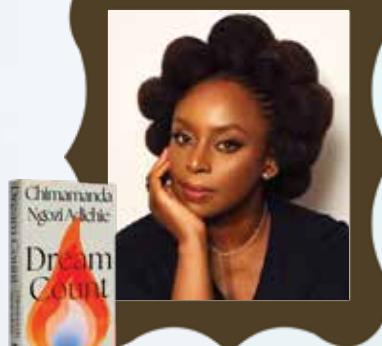
In a time when Nigerian fiction is often steeped in realism and pain, *Sanya* breaks new ground. The novel reimagines sàngó, the Yoruba god of thunder, through the eyes of a woman, finely blending myth, faith, and femininity in a voice that is both fierce and tender. Oyin does not simply revive an old tale: she reclaims it, centering the feminine perspective in a world long told by men.

Oyin Olugbile's path to *Sanya* was born out of curiosity and discipline. A graduate of Creative Arts from the University of Lagos, with advanced degrees from King's College London and additional training at Lagos Business School, Harvard Business School Online, and the School of Politics, Policy and Governance, Olugbile brings both intellect and sensitivity to her work. Her research into the story of sàngó revealed gaps most had overlooked, and she turned those gaps into art.

Through *Sanya*, Olugbile explores what it means for a woman to carry divine power. It is not rebellion, but an invitation to see myth through a more inclusive lens.

By winning the ultimate prize, Olugbile joins literary greats like Chika Unigwe and Abubakar Adam Ibrahim. But more importantly, it signals a shift that Nigerian storytelling is entering an age where imagination and myth are as valid as memory and pain.

Sanya is not just a retelling. It is a reclaiming. It reminds us that myths still breathe, and when a woman enters the mind of god, thunder speaks in a new voice that is steady, strong, and beautifully human.



DREAM COUNT CHIMAMANDA ADICHIE

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Dream Count* reaffirms her position as a leading voice in global literature, but this time through a quieter, more introspective register. The novel is a study of memory, migration, and identity across three continents, following four women whose intertwined stories reflect the shifting dynamics of power, ambition, and belonging.

Set between Abuja, Lagos, and Washington D.C., *Dream Count* explores the emotional cost of movement, the way migration shapes personal dreams and fractures collective identity.

Adichie's prose retains her signature lucidity and social precision, but her focus here is interior: the compromises women make between love, career, and selfhood in transnational spaces.

Thematically, *Dream Count* situates itself within a growing canon of post-diasporic African fiction, where displacement is no longer about exile, but negotiation. The novel resonates with conversations on brain drain, feminism, and the emotional economies of success. Adichie's characters are not victims of the West; they are architects of multiple selves, adapting to changing definitions of home.

Critics have linked *Dream Count* to contemporary global debates around migration and cultural identity, with particular relevance to Nigeria's creative diaspora. The book's exploration of transnational belonging aligns with real-world shifts, as more Nigerian creatives, tech founders, and academics shape hybrid identities abroad while redefining what "home" means.

In literary terms, *Dream Count* consolidates Adichie's evolution from chronicler of postcolonial Nigeria to philosopher of global womanhood. It is a work of psychological precision and emotional restraint, reflecting both the fragmentation and resilience of the modern Nigerian experience.



THIS KIND OF TROUBLE TOCHI EZE

Tochi Eze's *This Kind of Trouble* marks one of the year's most compelling Nigerian debuts, an intricate family saga that spans generations and geographies. The novel examines love, faith, and the unspoken legacies of colonialism through a multigenerational narrative, stretching from 1960s Lagos to present-day Atlanta in the United States of America.

At its core is a story of inheritance, of secrets buried within families and the ways historical wounds resurface in modern lives. Eze's layered storytelling uses dual timelines and shifting perspectives to explore how the personae is always political, and how unresolved history shapes identity. Critics have compared her narrative structure to Yaa Gyasi's *Homegoing* and Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* for its seamless weaving of intimacy and history.

What distinguishes *This Kind of Trouble* is its grounding in Nigeria's postcolonial transition, the economic, social, and emotional fractures that define its middle class. Through complex female protagonists and emotionally wounded men, Eze paints a portrait of modern Nigeria as both inheritance and burden. Her prose, subtle yet cinematic, captures the quiet rhythm of ordinary lives marked by extraordinary circumstances.

The novel mirrors Nigeria's broader reckoning with identity, between modern aspiration and traditional continuity. It also speaks to the growing prominence of female authors redefining historical fiction in Africa, using domestic and emotional narratives as lenses for national reflection.

In a literary landscape eager for fresh Nigerian voices, *This Kind of Trouble* asserts Eze's arrival with confidence and grace. Her storytelling is intimate and panoramic, reminding readers that history is not behind us: it lives and breathes in the everyday choices of those who inherit it.

WALTERSMITH PETROMAN OIL

An emerging energy giant with local content roots

Mr. Oladapo Filani, Chief Executive Officer of Waltersmith Petroman Oil Limited projects the company will play strongly in Nigeria's energy ecosystem, and its successes are a true reflection of the positives of the implementation of the NOGICD Act 2010.

Assessment of the NCDMB implementation of the Act so far

For someone that has been in the energy industry for a while, if I look back at when the NOGICD Act was passed in 2010, and assessing the 15 years journey, I would say, for us at Waltersmith Petroman, the Act has been very transformative for the industry. The NOGICD Act has had a very significant impact on the Nigerian oil and gas industry, especially the fact that Nigerians are taking pivotal positions in the onshore and shallow water space. That demonstrates a lot of growth and transformation. There are several other benefits of the NOGICD Act.

How the NCDMB helped establish our modular refinery

Our refining business in Waltersmith is a clear beneficiary of the funding part that was enabled by the NOGICD Act. The foundational fund upon which our refinery was established a few years back was based on the provisions of the Act and it is something we're very grateful for.

NOGICD Act has positioned Nigerians in the industry

If I look at Nigeria's energy industry in terms of local participation, as well as ownership, we have done very well. The NOGICD Act provided an enabling environment. In terms of workforce development and capacity development, the Act has done very well. We now have Nigerians holding their place, both as technical experts, as well as in leadership positions within the oil and gas industry.

Before now, the industry was highly dependent on foreign companies for every facet of our service industry, both for the onshore and the shallow water spaces. Today, based on the implementation of the Act itself and the follow-through by the leadership of NCDMB over the years, we have competent service companies in-country, service yards in-country that can provide things around topside, pipeline, infrastructure development and the likes.

We have competent entities now that can manage operations anywhere in Nigeria, sub-Saharan Africa, and anywhere in the world. When it comes to project delivery, Nigerians have delivered high-impact projects in the last few years.

Waltersmith's contributions to Nigerian content

For us, we see the NOGICD Act itself as a pivotal part of our business. This goes beyond compliance. We see it as a business philosophy, and that is why it is embedded in how we do our business across our upstream, midstream, and downstream. It is part of our growth strategy.

Firstly, compliance is priority for us. Also, we do a lot of partnerships with Nigerian companies, which is something that the Act itself promotes. We have been a beneficiary of that, which is what you see in our upstream business, where we have partnered with other competent Nigeria companies. These joint venture partnerships have been highly successful.

Also, in terms of our workforce development. I was checking with my HR team recently and I can clearly say we are 100 percent Nigerian. We are owned by Nigerians, and run by Nigerians. Our leadership is 100 percent Nigerian



and I say this based on the statistics that we have today. In terms of our employees, we have about 99 percent, because we still have a few support consultants within our refining business but overall, we have more Nigerians working for us.

As we head towards the future, we're setting ourselves on a sail for growth in our upstream, our midstream, and our downstream business. In three years from today, I can say we will be a fully integrated energy company, contributing to the welfare and the benefits of our country. We will also be contributing energy solutions to Nigeria and sub-Saharan Africa.

Waltersmith's goals for the next five years

Currently, we have a very solid upstream business and we are also in the onshore space. We have footprint and joint ventures partnerships in the onshore space. We are also part of the consultants that recently acquired and took over SPDC's asset and the JV in the onshore and shallow water spaces.

In the next five years, we are hoping to grow our upstream business to the point that we can provide energy feedstock for midstream and downstream businesses. The engine for

growing our midstream and downstream businesses will come from our upstream business. By doing that, we'll grow our oil and gas reserves base.

We will grow our oil and gas production in such a way that we can provide energy feedstock. As we are aware, gas is the energy solution for Nigeria and sub-Saharan Africa, so we will grow our midstream gas business in such a way that we can provide gas for clean cooking, gas to power, and energy solutions.

And in terms of our refining business, it's to expand it in such a way that we can provide refined products to meet the needs and requirements for Nigeria, sub-Saharan Africa, and potentially to other parts of the world as we grow.

Today, we're in the downstream, we have a refining business. We're very popular with our refining business, and we have been very successful working with NCDMB. In two to three years from now, we want to be known as a company that's providing good feedstock from our upstream business to meet energy requirements in Nigeria.

Before now, the industry was highly dependent on foreign companies for every facet of our service industry, both for the onshore and the shallow water spaces. Today, based on the implementation of the Act itself and the follow-through by the leadership of NCDMB over the years, we have competent service companies in-country, service yards in-country that can provide things around topside, pipeline, infrastructure development and the likes.



NCI FUND FOR WOMEN IN OIL AND GAS SUCCESS STORY

Forelight Energy Solutions sets sights on bigger projects



With over two decades in key roles in the oil and gas industry, Lady Gracetiti Fredson, Executive Director, Corporate and Business Development for Forelight Energy Solutions Limited, charts exciting prospects for women in the oil and gas industry, and how they can deploy their unique skills to play major roles in the industry.

Business focus of Forelight Energy Solutions

Forelight Energy offers engineering, supply chain management and procurement services. We provide engineering services to some international and indigenous operating companies. We're also engaged in the end-to-end of the supply chain, manpower supply, procurement of mechanical equipment, instrumentation, installation, calibration, and other services to our clients in the oil and gas industry.

Major projects we currently execute

We have two major projects. One is a 2+1 project, which has to do with calibration of all instrumentation equipment for this particular joint venture company. It's been running for two years and we still have one year to go. In the second one, we're providing about 38 personnel for an international oil producer. The

personnel cut across various competencies - engineering, drilling, HSE, security, and administrative roles. These personnel are actually our staff, but are seconded to the IOCs to work in their various fields and blocks in Port Harcourt and Lagos.

We're still undergoing some tenders to provide similar services to other producing companies.

How the NCI Fund impacted our company growth

I have to commend the NCDMB. We accessed the NCI Fund for Women in Oil and Gas facility through NEXIM Bank, and it has been transformational for us. It's the catalyst that got us where we are, moving from just a procurement company, transforming into an engineering company and doing big-ticket jobs. By accessing the loan, we've been able to do a lot of jobs and our cash flow has increased by 1,000 percent. The loan has been instrumental, not just to us as a local company, but also to every other local company that the Board has helped.

How we qualified for the fund

We were able to access the NCI Fund for Women in Oil and Gas because I'm the highest shareholder in Forelight Energy, even

though I'm not the managing director. Those were some of the conditions of the Fund.

At first, it was a bit cumbersome because the Fund has some requirements before any local company can become eligible, but that helped us to become intentional with our documentation. We got qualified, and we applied for it. I think we're going in for the fourth.

I really want to appreciate the NCDMB and the federal government for that fund, because it is a major catalyst to our business. We're where we are because of that fund. The interest rate is 8 percent per annum, and you can't get that from any commercial bank. The fund is there for us to draw down whenever we want to service our contract. And our contracts are there, payment comes in every month. So, it's been a major catalyst.

We don't have to apply every three months like it happens with the regular commercial banks. And the percentage difference is not comparable. It has enabled us to quote very low. So normally, if we're tendering for a job, and we have to quote 40 percent markup when we know we're taking a loan with interest at 36 percent. Right now, we can quote half of that or even less than that, even as low as eight to nine percent because of the NCI Fund. That has helped us to get more jobs. And of course, you know what that means. It means more cash flow, more revenue, more profit for us. So, yes, it's been a major catalyst. It's what has taken Forelight to where it is and where it's going to.

How other women can access the NCI Fund for women in oil and gas

Every loan has to have requirements that

will determine eligibility. For those who push through, it shows their seriousness. What are these requirements?

One is that the obligor must have an existing and valid contract. This is necessary because it shows that there's going to be a cash flow and there's a security for that fund given to that woman. The female-led organisation also needs to be making payment through their company accounts. This is one of the challenges local companies face. They carry out transactions that are for companies through personal accounts. When it's time to access a loan and you're being asked to come up with three years' turnover, you won't be able to present anything.

Paying taxes is also important because the loan requires that you should present evidence that you are a patriotic citizen as far as paying taxes is concerned. It also requires you to show that you have the licenses to operate. You can't have a valid contract when you don't have a license to operate. That means even the IOCs or the LOCs are not doing their due diligence. The requirement for the loan are what any serious company should have in place if they're actually providing services to the LOCs or the IOCs.

How I thrive in a male-dominated industry

I have a strong, deep-rooted belief that competency should be the focus, not my gender. I also have a robust support system that help me in this aspect. I am from Okrika, Ogloma Okrika, Rivers State. As a Niger Delta indigene, there is passion to ensure that my community benefits, being that I'm from an oil producing community. These two things propelled me to push through, even in a male-dominated sector.

I had to build myself up, right from the ground, up. I hold a Masters in project management from the University of Wales. I also have masters in international commercial law. I have a certification in international project management. Across all the local companies and the international companies I worked in, I ensured that I trained myself in contract, procurement, and stakeholder management. So, I built up my competence to compete with my male counterparts and beat them to the game. That's how I'm able to dominate the so called male-dominated sector.

I have to commend the NCDMB. We accessed the NCI Fund for Women in Oil and Gas facility through NEXIM Bank, and it has been transformational for us. It's the catalyst that got us where we are, moving from just a procurement company, transforming into an engineering company and doing big-ticket jobs. By accessing the loan, we've been able to do a lot of jobs and our cash flow has increased by 1,000 percent. The loan has been instrumental, not just to us as a local company, but also to every other local company that the Board has helped.

Our unique company ownership structure and our growth

My husband and I are professionals in our field. I've been in the oil and gas field for over 22 years before moving over to co-found Forelight Energy Solutions. Although we co-founded the company in 2007, I was just providing support because I was in paid employment in the international and local operating oil companies. I worked in one IOC, one government producing company and four NOCs. Working in all these companies was transformational for me. That gave me foundation to be able to bring in good governance, professionalism into Forelight Energy Solutions.

My husband also worked in a mud and drilling servicing service company. Because we have the same vision and desire to raise a dynasty, we're putting that professionalism at work. And, of course, we employ the right personnel that share the same vision and have that competence to help us drive this company.

Forelight Energy growth plans

In the next five years, we see ourselves as an energy player. We're moving from just being a service and procurement company to being

a player in the downstream sector. We're going to be establishing a 10,000 metric ton LPG storage and dispensing terminal in Okrika, by the seaside. I'm going back home.

At the beginning of the interview, I did say that one of the things that pushed me in this male-dominated industry was that I wanted to give back to my community. I wanted my community to have a company that will bring jobs, development, and where young people can intern. When we have that kind of development, it reduces insecurity, because private companies are meant to complement the efforts of governments in providing an enabling environment.

I'm happy to announce that we're in advanced discussion. Immediately we sign off with some of our equity partners, we're going to start land preparation, procurement of a long lead item after the engineering design is approved. And, in 24 months from when we sign off with our partners, we should go into commercialisation. And then, voila, here we are, an energy player in the industry. That's where we see ourselves. That's where we're going.

Recommendation on the NCI Fund

I want to thank the NCDMB for the impact they are making in the communities across the Niger Delta. On behalf of all the female-led organisations, I want to say thank you for the work you're doing. And, I also want to further advocate that they look at a more gender-friendly, gender-centric fund. It's not every female-led organisation that would have that 30 percent equity to contribute to assess the NEXIM Fund.

I'm advocating that the equity should be reduced to 10 percent. This is also because when we have service a contract, it takes time for us to turn over. Some companies delay in paying. I'm advocating that the principal should be 12 months moratorium, and the interest be six months. That will give us a leeway to be able to pay back and be in a good financial health.

Then, kindly impress on the IOCs and the LOCs to pay us, the contractors, based on the terms of reference they executed with us.

Keep doing the work you're doing, keep impacting the local people, keep making us competitive. As you build us up, we're also building the nation together with you.

WHY MENTAL HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE IS OFTEN OVER-LOOKED IN HSE

It is, more often than not, viewed as bordering on madness. Change is coming, albeit slowly.

In Nigeria, the word “mental” is synonymous-ly linked to raving madness. It connotes an irredeemably mad individual. Perhaps, that cultural connotation and the traditional HSE mindset that focuses on physical risks explain why organisations in the country often focus attention on physical injuries when the focus is on Health, Safety, and Environment (HSE) issues.

While organisations have made remarkable progress in reducing physical injuries in the workplace, a quieter crisis, mental health, is creeping in stealthily. The World Health Organisation (WHO) and International Labour Organisation (ILO), in a joint report, said mental health costs the global economy, including Nigeria, \$1 trillion yearly in lost productivity.

A 2019 Nigeria Workplace Mental Health Survey led by WellNewMe showed that “four in five employees in Nigeria are at an increased risk of developing mental health issues”. A mental health expert, Dr. Olayinka Atilola, said: “Most workplaces in Nigeria do not have an employee mental health policy that guides operations. So, the only thing they are concerned about is physical health.”

The WHO defines mental health as “a state of well-being in which an individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.” The health body added that “mental health is fundamental to our collective and individual ability as humans to think, emote, interact with each other, earn a living, and enjoy life”. Indeed, mental health is integral to every aspect of our lives, including our work life. Poor mental health manifest in feeling chronically stressed, unfulfilled, isolated, anx-

ious and panic attacks, depressed, persistent nonchalance, numb, feeling hopeless or helpless, constant withdrawal from others, and being uncommunicative.

Triggers of mental health in workplaces

A number of situations related to job content or work schedule may trigger mental health issues. Some of the most common causative factors include excessive workloads or work pace due to understaffing, unclear job role, long, inflexible work hours, unsafe or poor physical working conditions, bullying, violence, harassment, discrimination, exclusion, inadequate remuneration, job insecurity, or authoritarian supervision.

Mental health is critical to the health of any organisation or business. Why then is it neglected? Two key reasons are responsible. First, it is often not reported in the workplace in the same manner a physical injury would be immediately reported. Second, as noted by Dr Atilola, there is often no policy in place to address the issue.

In many workplaces in the country, cultural barriers and connotation of linking all mental illnesses to madness, as well as the associated stigma, prevents workers suffering from mental illnesses from coming forward. They suffer in silence, and such silence often complicates the challenge, leading to a drop in productivity.

Many workplaces do not have mental health policies because of the traditional HSE mindset, which focuses attention on physical risks and injuries. This focus is a consequence of HSE systems historically designed to see and measure risks. Fire, for instance, can be seen and its damage quantified. Mental health, however, cannot be seen.

Related to the historical HSE systems is the fact that the typical HSE executive is not trained to recognise or manage mental health issues. They are mostly trained on risk management and engineering safety. Thus, it is difficult for the average HSE professional to integrate mental health metrics into safety reporting systems, or even recognise the early signs of burnout, depression, or anxiety in a worker.

What can be done

To underscore the seriousness of mental health to business growth and value creation, international bodies such as WHO, ILO, and the World Economic Forum developed guidelines to help address mental health in the workplace. The HSE systems need rejigging to address intangible safety issues such as mental health. Businesses must also work out a more robust HSE policy that will highlight mental health.

Dr Atilola encouraged workplaces “to put in place policies that will promote mental health” and to institute an employee-assistance programme as well as take employee health insurance policies that have mental health components. Another mental health expert, Dr. Maymunah Kadiri urged employees to seek help when they experience mental health issues. “You are not of a weak character or a bad person if you seek help,” Dr Kadiri urged.

Knitting stages a comeback

Fashion has evolved. We have watched people move from skinny jeans to baggy trousers, and oversized T-shirts. Then came the “alter” fashion wave: colourful, daring, and full of attitude. Now, there is a new trend taking over among young people: knitting. Not the old-school, grandma-type sweaters, but a fresh, creative twist on them.

This generation has taken knitting to another level. Instead of those thick wool jumpers our parents wore, we now see knitted vests, skirts, and matching tops, even trousers, designed to fit today's style and vibe.

Several forces have aligned to bring knitting back into the fashion spotlight. First: nostalgia and craftsmanship. Younger designers and consumers are weary of fast-fashion ephemera and disposable styles. They want something with roots, texture, and meaning. As it is regularly said, “knitted outfits had a major boom, and intricately-made knitted outfits captured the hearts of fashionistas” in Nigeria.

Second, sustainability and slow fashion. “The rise of eco-friendly knitwear” in Nigeria has been noted, with hand-knit, quality yarns, smaller batches, and artisan techniques, rather than mass-made.

Finally, the influence of social media, influencers, and street style. Knitters, crocheters, DIY creators on Instagram and X are showing off textured pieces, mixing bright yarns, oversized silhouettes, and unique patterns, making knitwear cool again.

Together, these drivers make knitting not just acceptable, but trendy. Who are the leading lights, and how fashionable are their pieces? In Nigeria, the designers bringing knitwear forward deserve special mention.

The leading knitters

Leading this movement are home-grown designers like Kelechi Obichukwu of Obikels Creations, who is reimagining traditional crochet and knit techniques into modern silhouettes. Others mix macramé, hand-weaving, and embroidery to create new forms of textile art.

Another name gaining attention is Ore Akiinde, a crochet dress-maker whose social-media posts show pieces that took up to 80 hours to create. The orange cross-back dress she revealed recently serves as an example of knitwear elevated to statement piece.

These are not the shapeless cardigans of the

More suitable to temperate regions, Nigerian designers are rethinking the craft with lighter yarns and breathable weaves that suit the tropics.



Kelechi Obichukwu, the visionary behind Obikels Creations, meets with former Vice President Yemi Osinbajo in 2024. She is one of the leading lights of the revival of the knitting culture.

Courtesy: The Guardian

past. Today's Nigerian knitwear is daring: cropped tops paired with tailored trousers, slouchy coats worn over crisp shirts, and knit dresses that hug the body in confident colour blocks. Each piece shines differently, and as wearable as it is also artistic.

Are Nigerians really buying into it?

The answer is yes, but not everyone. Knitwear's revival is most visible among young Nigerians, particularly those active on social media, or living in Lagos, Abuja, and Port Harcourt. Influencers love it; fashion enthusiasts wear it.

Still, there are limits. High-quality knits demand skill, time, and premium materials, all of which naturally push up prices. For Nigerians, that makes knitwear more of a style statement than an everyday essential. And with the country's warm climate, designers are rethinking the craft, making use of lighter yarns and creating breathable weaves that suit the tropics.

Knitting is fun, and also (big) business

The Nigerian knitted-fabric market was valued at over ₦1.06 trillion in 2024, and projected to hit ₦1.8 trillion by 2030. Aside that, online sales for sweaters alone are also expected to reach ₦28 billion by 2025, growing by about 14.5 percent annually through 2029.

While not all of this relates to fashion design, it signals that the sub-sector is expanding, from niche craft to a recognised player in Nigeria's creative economy. Over 70 small-scale knitwear manufacturers were recorded nationwide by September 2025, reflecting a craft on the rise.

The knitting of yesterday was functional and imported, today's knitting is expressive. Designers are weaving in heritage: earthy tones inspired by the North, beadwork drawn from Yoruba coral traditions, and motifs that echo Igbo uli art.

It is a cultural reawakening. It tells the story of a people rediscovering beauty in patience and artistry in process. It is about slowing down, finding joy in details, and turning ordinary looking yarn into wearable poetry.

Nigerian knitwear is proving that tradition and innovation can coexist beautifully. And as 2025 draws to a close, it is safe to say, knitting is no longer just your grandmother's hobby. It is the country's next great fashion love affair; looped, stitched, and proudly Nigerian.



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Mental health is boosted with every step outdoor

Science says it is a no-brainer nature is our best route to overall wellbeing.

We often hear adults in their 40s and above talk about the good old days defined by numerous outdoor activities. Be it social, religious, sporting, political, or cultural activity, many activities in time past were outdoor in nature: owambes under the open skies, tales by moonlight, and drinking palm wine under a tree while playing draft. Outdoor sporting activities, farming, cultural events, and even cinemas, were mostly openair affairs back then in many and urban communities. People were connected to nature and mostly lived happy, healthy lives.

Fast-forward to today, indoor activities have dominated a tech-driven, urban-living world. Nature is sparse. We have sealed ourselves indoors, and it is not surprising that stress levels have continued to rise.

Nature has therapeutic powers. Studies have shown that one of the simplest and most effective therapies for mental wellness is nature. Whether an individual is gardening, in a park, or simply sitting under a tree, time spent outdoors has been proven to sharpen focus, boost mood, and reduce anxiety. Nature is right outside our doors, in abundance, and totally free. Lisa Nisbet, a psychologist at Trent University in Ontario, Canada, who studies connectedness to nature, said: "You can boost your mood just by walking in nature, even in urban nature." Oluwatosin Oyeniran, a physiologist and biomedical sciences researcher, also says outdoor exercise is "one of the most effective forms of medicine in promoting good health".

Nature: Stress and anxiety buster

Medical scientists emphasise that when humans step into a natural environment, the body responds almost instantly. Tests showed that when an individual is within a natural environment, the cortisol level, the hormone which controls stress, begins to drop. Researchers at Stanford University discovered that individuals who walked, jogged, or cycled in nature for 90 minutes showed reduced activity in the brain's "worry centre" compared to those who walked in urban areas.

According to clinical scientists, sunlight induces the body to produce the hormone serotonin, which enhances mood and focus. The sun is nature's antidepressant. It also helps in the production of vitamin D, essential for bone health. A few minutes of sunlight daily can improve sleep patterns through the regulation of melatonin. The brain and the body are literally recharging in the sun.

Scientists believe that when we spend time outdoors, we boost our mental clarity, and experience attention restoration. Studies also show that exposure to natural settings restores our ability to concentrate and solve otherwise challenging problems. Remember Isaac Newton and his law of gravity? A falling apple while sitting under the tree inspired the law. Alo George de Mestral and VELCRO, who invented the versatile fastener on blood pressure machines that secures the band to the arm, got his inspiration while walking in the forest.

Organisations are beginning to realise this unusual power of nature and are taking advantage of it. Nike, the sportswear giant, is an exemplar: the company now encourages 'walking meetings' outdoors.

Nature builds emotional resilience

Unlike the disconnection we experience in the digital age, where everybody is in their silos of virtual worlds, outdoor activities nurture a sense of connection to others around us, the

environment, and the planet. Outdoor gatherings in parks or picnics build or strengthen social bonds, gardening teaches patience and mindfulness while outdoor sports build camaraderie and team work.

Someone once said the best things in life are free. Indeed, nature is free, accessible, and medicinal. In cities like Lagos or Port Harcourt, beaches are ideal outdoor arenas that do wonders to our mental balance. The cool sea breeze on the face, the sight and sound of the unrelenting waves, and the solid sheet of blue stretching as far as the eyes can see have a calming effect, helping to improve mental health metrics such as fatigue, stress, and emotional well-being.

For many executives, the reality is that they are in enclosed spaces all through the work day: exchanging one meeting room for the next or busy at a desk trying to meet tight deadlines. Still, they must find a way to incorporate outdoor activities into their daily routine. One way to achieve this is to take a few minutes' walk before heading for the office or at the end of the work day. Surround the home with nature. Use the backyard or balcony to plant shrubs, flowers, or indoor plants. Rather than a gym, join an outdoor fitness club. Weekends should be fully utilised for outdoors.

The dizzying grind of modern living marked by reliance on technology and increased urbanisation is increasingly disconnecting us from nature. We sometimes forget that we are a part of nature. For sanity and mental health, it is critical that we reconnect with our roots.





UPSKILLING FOR THE MARKET

NCDMB HCD initiative accelerates the training of 10,000 Nigerians

As the oil and gas industry begins to hum again with new investments, opportunities are closely following behind. This insight defines the latest move by the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB), an ambitious Oil and Gas Field Readiness Training Programme, a human capital initiative designed to train over 10,000 young Nigerians in high-demand technical fields.

The announcement, made by NCDMB's Executive Secretary, Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe comes at a critical time. Nigeria's energy sector has witnessed a resurgence of Final Investment Decisions (FIDs), unlocking a wave of new upstream and midstream projects. For NCDMB, the question is not whether these projects will come, but whether Nigerians will have the skills to take the jobs they create.

A human capital strategy for a new oil era

The Oil and Gas Field Readiness Training Programme is part of a broader Human Capacity Development (HCD) drive to close technical gaps that have been identified across the industry. The Board's review of Expatriate Quota applications revealed persistent shortages in certain specialist roles, which include subsea engineering, automation and digitalisation.

The training initiative, therefore, is not random. It is a direct response to data drawn from field realities and consultations with industry stakeholders, including the Petroleum Technology Association of Nigeria (PETAN), the Oil Producers Trade Section (OPTS), and the Petroleum Contractors Trade Section (PCTS).

NCDMB also reviewed findings from its 10-Year Strategic Roadmap and previous studies by the Petroleum Technology Development Fund (PTDF) to identify the top 10 most in-demand skills for the evolving oil and gas landscape.

These include: Subsea Engineering (wellheads, flow-lines, umbilicals, subsea trees), Underwater Welding Control and Automation Engineering, Helicopter Piloting Seafaring and Vessel Operations Production and Maintenance Engineering, Quality Assurance and Quality Control (QA/QC), Non-Destructive Testing (NDT) Levels 1-3, Geoscience and Wellsite Geology

Digitalisation: AI, Machine Learning, IoT, and Drone Technology. Each area represents a critical component of oilfield operations, and each has historically depended on expatriate expertise. The programme's goal is to reverse that pattern, to ensure Nigerians occupy these high-value roles in projects both onshore and offshore.

Hands-on competence, ready for work

What makes this initiative particularly innovative is its practical design. It is not another theoretical immersion, but a full-cycle readiness model integrating classroom training, laboratory work, global certification, and on-the-job experience.

According to NCDMB's Director of Capacity Building, Engr. Bamidele Abayomi, the training will run for 12 to 18 months, depending on the skill area. Participants will undergo six months of supervised on-the-job training (OJT), in partnership with service companies, to ensure they gain real industry exposure.

At least three service companies will be paired with each skill area, while HSE certifications and soft skills will be delivered by OGTAN-registered training providers. Every participant will receive pre-mobilisation medicals, PPEs, stipends, and insurance coverage, a comprehensive welfare package to ensure focus, and safety during training.

Eligibility and registration process

This initiative is deeply inclusive, creating opportunities for qualified Nigerians to take part. The program is open to Nigerians under 35 years of age who hold OND, HND, or BSc qualifications in petroleum, mechanical, chemical, electrical, civil, gas, welding and metallurgy. Other applicable fields include geology, geophysics, computer science, and other related science or engineering disciplines.

Participation begins with registration on the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Joint Qualification System (NOGICJQS) portal, the national platform for profiling and certifying industry talent. New applicants must create an account on nogicjqs.gov.ng/accounts/login,

The Oil and Gas Field Readiness Training Programme is part of a broader Human Capacity Development (HCD) drive to close technical gaps that have been identified across the industry. The Board's review of Expatriate Quota applications revealed persistent shortages in certain specialist roles, which include subsea engineering, automation and digitalisation.

update their profiles and academic records, and then proceed to register for the Oil and Gas Field Readiness Training Programme.

Successful participants who complete the programme and are assessed as competent will be added to NCDMB's Skills Database, from which service and operating companies can recruit, fulfilling Section 10(1b) of the NOGICD Act (2010), which mandates first consideration for Nigerians in employment and training.

Linking skills to investment momentum

The timing of this programme is no coincidence. It comes as the sector experiences a renewed investment wave following recent FIDs: the US\$2 billion HI Field Gas Project by Shell Nigeria Exploration and Production Company (SNEPCo) and Sunlink Energies; the \$550 million UBETA Gas Project by TotalEnergies; and the \$5 billion Bonga North Deepwater Project by SNEPCo.

Together, these projects mark one of the most significant inflows of upstream investment in recent years, collectively expected to add thousands of technical and support roles across Nigeria's oil and gas ecosystem. By training 10,000 Nigerians ahead of these developments, NCDMB is positioning the country's workforce to plug directly into the employment pipeline.

The programme's introduction aligns with President Bola Tinubu's three Presidential Directives for the oil and gas industry, issued in March 2024. These directives focused on promoting indigenous participation, accelerating contract approvals, and unlocking long-delayed projects, policies that are now bearing fruit. By coupling these reforms with workforce readiness, the Board is ensuring that Nigerians are not just spectators in the next oil boom, but active contributors driving value creation.

An adaptive, data-driven framework

The Field Readiness Training Programme is not static. Engr. Abayomi explained that it will be implemented over two to three years, after which the Board will reassess and adjust the top skill areas based on emerging industry needs. This feedback-based model ensures the programme stays relevant, even as new technologies reshape operations.

This adaptive mechanism is one reason industry stakeholders see the initiative as a strategic innovation rather than a one-off intervention. It demonstrates how data, partnerships, and foresight can merge to produce long-term developmental outcomes.

Moreover, by integrating young Nigerians directly into high-skill disciplines, NCDMB is expanding the nation's human infrastructure, a crucial counterpart to physical assets like pipelines and refineries.

The real innovation in this initiative may not lie only in its scale or technical focus, but in its inclusive design. By drawing participants from across the federation, working with both international and indigenous service companies, and integrating HSE, digital, and leadership modules, the programme redefines what local content means in 2025 and beyond.

In the words of Engr. Ogbe, "Our goal is to ensure that every new project in Nigeria's oil and gas industry finds its workforce ready, skilled, and proudly Nigerian."

It is a vision that blends policy with practice, one that sees people as building infrastructure and training people as investment. If Nigeria must truly achieve 70 percent local content by 2027, then programmes like this are not just complementary, they are essential.



Oil & Gas GoEs should be transformed to venture studios

Engr. Thankgod Egbe, Technical Director, CypherCrescent Limited, shares how his company leverages computational mathematics, petroleum engineering and software to develop solutions for Nigeria's oil and gas industry.

Foray into the oil and gas industry

I worked for Shell for about 10 years before resigning to set up CypherCrescent to drive research and development (R&D) in the oil and gas industry. I'm also the National Vice President, Innovation of Triple-Helix Organisation and the Vice Chairman of the Governing Council of the Energy Technology Institute, University of Port Harcourt.

I've been in the R&D space for the past 20 years, driving R&D in the oil and gas industry and I'm happy to be back to Nigeria to drive local content in collaboration with stakeholders like NCDMB and APPO.

R&D has been my dream from university. When I left the university, I started computer programming, then in Fortran, and then wrote a book on Visual Basic. I was privileged to be given an application to develop for a marginal field oil company as far back as 20 years ago. I developed a petroleum economics application, and that launched me into the oil and gas industry. And, after that, I joined Shell to further understand the oil and gas industry. I was deployed to the Netherlands, and I worked in the Shell R&D Centre. That gave me a lot of insights on how software development is done in the oil and gas industry. I was able to leverage the skills that I had before joining Shell, and then gain industry understanding. I resigned to set up a full R&D company focused on software development.

Arguably, we should be the first in the country to be focused on leveraging computational mathematics, petroleum engineering expertise, as well as leveraging software development to develop solutions for the oil and gas industry. I would say that as far back as my universities days and my stay in Shell, helped me to gain insights on the importance of R&D in helping the country to enhance production, helping the country to develop local content, and capacity to support the oil and gas industry.

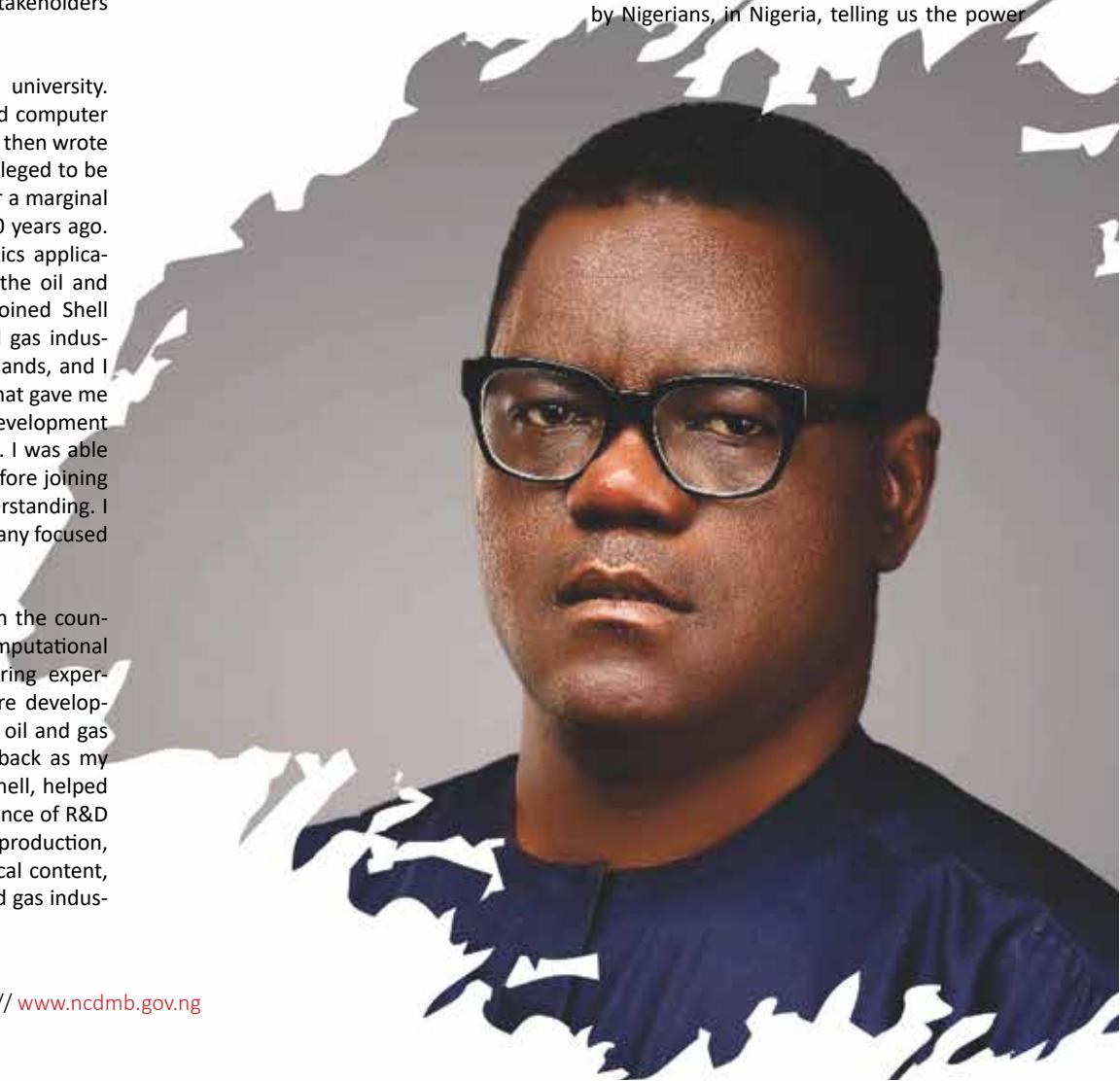
Services CypherCrescent provides in the oil and gas industry

Our services are basically to help oil and gas companies enhance production, as well as well integrity service. There's a lot of data on declining production. How do we harness, and integrate the data to form a single source of truth, to get insights that will help companies increase production? We call it integration of interpretation. Interpreting those data, integrating the interpretation and getting insights that will lead to well intervention that will restore production to very good levels. We leverage AI, analytics, computational mathematics to manage that, and we develop them in-country and they are being used by a number of companies across the industry for the past 10 years since I left Shell.

R&D solutions developed and deployed by CypherCrescent

The first solution we deployed was called SEPA, for opportunity identification in the oil and gas industry. That was deployed about nine years ago to NEPL, Belema Oil, SEPLAT, Eroton, and a host of other companies that are using it to enhance production, to integrate insights, and do forecasting. We also have a business forecasting solution. We have also developed an application for injectivity decline in collaboration with SEPLAT during COVID-19. We deploy it in terms of managing the performance of injectors. We are currently working with NEPL to develop an enterprise planning solution that will help the end-to-end planning of their assets.

Currently, we are partnering with NNPC RTI to develop a couple of solutions across the NNPC value chain, and all these are done in-country by Nigerians, in Nigeria, telling us the power



of local content. Thanks to NCDMB for the support we have received over the years to be able to get this done.

Exploring opportunities, markets across Africa

We've been in the oil and gas industry in Nigeria for the past 10 years, and our objective now is to see how we can deploy our solutions across Africa.

We attended the African Oil Local Content Conference organised by the African Petroleum Producers Organisation in November, in Congo, Brazzaville, where we appeared in a panel session, and then had a discussion with stakeholders on how we can deploy our solution across the French-speaking countries of Africa. And my colleague, Dr. Nadia Albana, was in Ghana at the Ghana Petroleum Commission Local Content Event, where she discussed about leveraging Triple-Helix to accelerate gas monetisation. Discussions are ongoing to deploy our solutions in Ghana, as well as in Congo. Our objective is basically to attend these conferences, leverage NCDMB, leverage APPO, and a host of other stakeholders to expand our services beyond Nigeria to other African countries. And, we were very well-received in Congo as well as in Ghana.

Low-hanging R&D ideas in African oil-producing country to add value to operations

I see two things. Gas monetisation, as well as produced water management that are really very low-hanging fruit. R&D companies, as well as oil and gas companies, can set up R&D companies and partner with either universities or companies themselves to drive these. We are also currently working on a gas-to-liquid project that helps to convert flared gas to liquid. And, we just recently got our patent, and we're discussing with stakeholders. In fact, we are discussing very well with NCDMB to see how we can monetise this solution and develop a prototype.

Once we are able to get a gas-to-liquid solution right, that would move local content from the current 56 percent to more than 60 percent, because that is going to be huge for Ni-

geria and Africa. There are lots of flared gas, a lot of stranded gas around, and if this solution is deployed, we can monetise it across that.

The second one is basically produced water. A lot of money is spent on treating water. Why can't we develop R&D from the university, leveraging Triple Helix, a company focused on water chemistry? We are having discussions with stakeholders, but this requires help.

So, companies can focus on gas, on water, and surveillance. These low hanging fruits can help companies increase production. And these things can be done within a year, but the impacts are very significant in terms of revenue and also in terms of capacity building in-country. And it's doable because we have done even more complex things than that.

How NCDMB's R&D Centres of Excellence can be optimised for value addition

I've been following discussions with NCDMB and the Centre of Excellence initiative. I visited the Centre of Excellence in FUTA, Minna and had discussions with the Director three years ago. Kudos to NCDMB, for it is doing well. We are also trying to collaborate with some of these centres of excellence to drive innovation. But the world has evolved since the Centre of Excellence idea was conceived. How do we go beyond the Centre of Excellence to establishing university venture studios? Here, you are bringing in five key stakeholders into the Centre of Excellence, to create an ecosystem that will help in commercialising the research. One of the stakeholders is government, in this case, NCDMB.

The second is university, which is the host. The third component is industry. We need to get a committed industry partner. The fourth would be bringing in entrepreneurs, and the fifth would be bringing in the financials. So, we call it like a triple helix plus plus model or a pentahelix model.

So, can the Centre of Excellence adopt a triple helix plus plus model where they can bring in five key stakeholders, especially the entrepreneurs and the venture capitalists into that system that will drive research, where they are given targets to say this Centre of Excellence

this year, we want to convert it to a venture studio, and we want you to give us 10, 20, 30, 40 startups per year, depending on the amount of funding given to them. This will actually help to realise the objective of NCDMB, setting up the Centre of Excellence.

I would say that it's a very good idea setting up the Centres of Excellence, but the things have evolved, where the objectives and the KPIs have gone beyond research for publication to research to develop commercial products.

Converting the Centres of Excellence to venture studios would be a great thing for NCDMB to do. If we are looking at probably five or six Centres of Excellence across the country, we should be having like 20 startups that will actually support the industry going that way. It requires commitment of the five stakeholders, which of course NCDMB, based on NOGICD Act, has the mandate to do that very well.

How to improve contributions of local R&D to Nigerian oil and gas industry

There is need to go down to the basics; equip students and the researchers with adequate tools, industry-led tools. Thanks to NCDMB, they've bought a couple of licences of SEPA and given to two universities for now, Petroleum Institute, as well as Federal University of Petroleum Resources in Warri. The discussion is ongoing to extend this across the country. It is basically leveraging a couple of the learnings that we have had from there, to bring in lecturers who are providing support for us.

If this can be done for other solutions developed by Nigerians, and given to students to use, it's going to have two effects: supporting the companies to improve their solution, as well as getting the lecturers and the students to know what is happening in the industry. It will be key strategy in terms of collaborating between industry, academia, and government to drive innovation. It is also similar to the University Venture Studio, where the solutions are actually coming from the university, supported by the university, used to teach the programme, and then for consulting in the industry. If this is done and is sustained over the years, we'll have local content support for the industry to be really very high.

Nollywood in a fight to maintain its authenticity

Global streaming platforms have reshaped the unique storytelling art, pushing it to conform to the tastes of a global audience. Yet, the industry seems to be finding its mojo again.

For decades, Nollywood thrived on grit and improvisation. It was a film industry powered more by passion than resources, one that turned street corners and uncompleted building into movie sets.

The films were sold in CDs, often before the final credits were even cut. The business model was simple - make it fast, sell it, and pray the pirates did not find your work too soon. In those days, quantity reigned over quality. During recording, cameras shook, sound sometimes faded mid-scene, but the audience stayed loyal because the stories were purely Nigerian - unfiltered, dramatic, and very familiar.

Change has come. Very fast.

When Netflix first began acquiring Nigerian films, it did not just open a new distribution channel, it changed the very DNA of the industry. Suddenly, Nollywood producers were making movies not just for the Nigerian market, but for London, Toronto, and Johannesburg screens.

That shift brought about higher expectations, and with them, bigger budgets. Cinematography improved, scripts tightened, and actors grew bolder, knowing their work was reaching viewers across continents. The films got glossier, and the stories were more layered and deliberate. For the first time in a long time, profit and prestige felt attainable in the same breath.

Streaming also brought something Nollywood

had long been denied, which is creative freedom. In the old DVD economy, many filmmakers were forced into formulaic storytelling, repeating love triangles, ritual plots, or slapstick comedies because those were the stories that sold in the markets. But the streaming revolution introduced new incentives. The global audiences and licensing deals provided room to experiment, explore more diverse themes, and complex characters, stories that did not have to end in the predictable "happy ever after". It was more about the liberation to create something true, something that could finally hold its own beside any film in the world.

For a while, Netflix and Prime Video stood as the ultimate dream, the gateways to global recognition. To have your film tagged "Now Streaming on Netflix" was to "arrive". But as the novelty wore off, new questions emerged. Who truly benefits from these deals? What happens to filmmakers who cannot access them? And how much control do creators really have over their work once it enters those global ecosystems?

In recent years, a quiet revolution has been unfolding, not on subscription screens, but on the open stage of YouTube. The platform, long dismissed as casual or amateurish, has become a serious player in Nigeria's streaming culture. It offers accessibility. No monthly fees, no gatekeepers, no algorithms deciding what is worth - just stories made and shared freely. A filmmaker can upload directly, retain ownership, and monetise through advertisements or sponsorships.

Even when data costs and economic realities limit subscriptions, YouTube's ad-supported model makes sense. Viewers can watch on mobile, creators can earn from views, and the feedback loop is immediate. It has birthed its own ecosystem of web series, dramas, and short films: raw, funny, emotional, and often

deeply Nigerian. These are stories that may never make it to Netflix but still reach millions, sometimes racking up views that rival feature-length releases. It is a kind of homegrown democratisation of entertainment, a reminder that Nollywood's magic has always been its ability to thrive in its own way.

Yet, for all its progress, the industry now stands at a delicate crossroad. As Nigerian films gain more global visibility, there is a subtle pressure to conform, to polish away accents, to trim cultural peculiarities, and to "neutralise" stories for broader appeal. Some of the biggest recent releases, while technically excellent, have drawn criticism for feeling distant from everyday Nigerian realities.

The challenge, then, is to find balance to evolve without erasing oneself.

Streaming has undeniably elevated Nollywood. It has provided money, structure, visibility, and credibility. It has raised the bar and reminded the world how bold the Nigerian cinema is.

If the industry's future is to be truly sustainable, it must keep its identity intact. The soul of Nollywood was never just in its scripts or production value, it was in its voice, its humour, and its messy, relatable humanity. Technology has given that voice a megaphone; now what remains is to ensure it still sounds unmistakably Nigerian.

In the end, the story of Nollywood's evolution is not just about platforms or profits. It is about expression, the enduring urge to tell our stories, in our way, on whatever screen will have us. Whether through Netflix's polished productions or YouTube's raw energy, Nollywood will keep adapting, keep growing, and keep finding its audience, because storytelling, at its core, has always been Nigeria's most exportable art.

When Netflix first began acquiring Nigerian films, it did not just open a new distribution channel, it changed the very DNA of the industry. Suddenly, Nollywood producers were making movies not just for the Nigerian market, but for London, Toronto, and Johannesburg screens.



It starts with a whisper down a quiet corridor, the kind that chills the spine before it is even heard. *Ms. Kanyin*, directed by Uche Okocha for Nemsia Studios and released June 27, re-tells the “Madam Koi-Koi” legend through the lens of modern-day ambition and guilt. The film follows Amara (Temi Otedola), a promising university student whose thirst for academic recognition leads her into a deadly cover-up after a classmate’s mysterious death. What begins as fear turns into a haunting experience that would not let her rest.

Michelle Dede’s *Ms. Kanyin* is no ordinary ghost; she is the embodiment of karma, graceful yet relentless. The camera lingers on hallways shrouded in red light, with the tap of her heels echoing memory itself. Every scene feels soaked in dread, not from gore but from the weight of silence.

While the pacing slows in the middle, the story’s emotional current never fades. *Ms. Kanyin* explores how guilt binds people tighter than any chain, and how secrets echo louder in the dark. The ending is not explosive but haunting, a quiet reckoning that leaves you staring long after the credits roll. This is not just horror; it is a poetic meditation on consequence and conscience.



Uche Okocha



To Kill a Monkey, released July 18, a Netflix Series, begins in the soft hum of Lagos nightlife, laughter spilling from beer parlours, generator noise in the distance, and in the middle of it, a young man makes a desperate choice.

Efemini (Bucci Franklin), a struggling programmer, joins a cybercrime syndicate that promises wealth, freedom, and escape from poverty, but what follows is a slow, mesmerising descent into moral chaos.

Directed, written, and produced by Kemi Adetiba, the eight-part Netflix series feels like Nollywood’s answer to *Breaking Bad*, but more local, more personal. Each episode strips away another layer of Efemini’s innocence, revealing how survival can become sin in a city that rewards ruthlessness.

Adetiba frames Lagos as both predator and muse, its skyscrapers, neon lights, and quick smiles all masking a fear beneath the surface. The cinematography is crisp, the performances searing, especially Franklin’s tortured restraint and Bimbo Akintola’s steely mentorship.

At its heart, *To Kill a Monkey* is not about hacking or money, it is about the small compromises that turn a dreamer into an accomplice. By the final episode, you are left breathless, not by violence, but by recognition. You have seen this story before, only now it wears a Nigerian face.



Kemi Adetiba



What begins as a love affair ends like a sermon. *The Devil Is a Liar*, directed by Moses Inwang, follows Adaora (Nse Ikpe-Etim), a successful real estate executive whose picture-perfect life unravels after an affair with a married man. When her choices spark betrayal, blackmail, and tragedy, she turns to faith, but discovers that the devil she is fighting might not be the one wearing horns.

Released on Netflix in August, the movie blends glossy melodrama with spiritual introspection. Lagos gleams under cinematographer Tunde Aina’s lens: luxury homes, candlelit dinners, whispered confessions, until it all collapses in a storm of deceit.

Nse Ikpe-Etim commands every scene, moving from confident to broken with aching precision. Opposite her, Nancy Isime and Mercy Aigbe bring texture to a world where loyalty is currency and sin is seductive.

Yes, the plot flirts with predictability, but the emotional core holds it together. Inwang’s film is not just about infidelity, it is about the cost of pretending perfection. The ending, a mix of heartbreak and redemption, feels earned as a slow-burning reminder that sometimes the devil does not tempt; he whispers.

The Devil Is a Liar is rich, emotional, and beautifully flawed. A parable in designer heels, asking whether success means anything if your soul is bankrupt, a reprise of the admonition: “What kind of deal is it to get everything you want but lose yourself? What could you ever trade your soul for?”



Moses Inwang





NCDMB STAKEHOLDER FORUM 2025

Building confidence and accountability in local content delivery

A chronicle of commitments and continuity in Nigeria's oil and gas sector.

There was a shared sense of urgency and purpose at the expansive EUI Centre, GRA II, Port Harcourt, the Rivers State capital, as the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) convened stakeholders for its 2025 Sensitisation and Engagement Forum. The event, held on 8 October 2025, reaffirmed one clear message: that the path to achieving 70 percent local content by 2027 will depend on the Board's ability to simplify processes, strengthen access to finance, and sustain trust with industry players.

The Forum drew participants from a cross-section of Nigeria's oil and gas ecosystem, chief executives of service companies, contractors from host communities, representatives of Women in Oil and Gas, financial institutions, and project supervisors. Together, they converged on one purpose: to engage directly with the Board on compliance, funding, and transparency mechanisms that determine the success of Nigeria's local content aspirations.

The event was not another ceremonial gathering. It was designed as a working forum to clarify the issuance of the Nigerian Content Development Fund (NCDF) one percent Compliance Certificate, unveil upgrades to the NCDF payment portal, introduce the Nigerian Content Fund Clearance Certificate (NCFCC), and discuss revised financing frameworks for community contractors.

Representatives from the Bank of Industry (BoI), the Nigerian Export-Import (NEXIM) Bank, and First City Monument Bank (FCMB) addressed financing challenges and opportunities within the industry.

Building clarity, confidence, and capacity

From the outset, Mr Ossa Uchendu, Director of Finance and Personnel Management, NCDMB, who represented the Executive Secretary, emphasised that the Forum's objective was to demystify procedures that often discourage indigenous participation. He explained that the Board's mandate extends beyond regulations to creating a transparent and enabling environment for Nigerian companies to thrive.

The introduction of the NCFCC marked a significant step in improving compliance tracking. Mr Uchendu described it as a "verifiable and transparent instrument that serves as tangible proof of compliance by remitting companies", reinforcing the Board's commitment to accountability. He also highlighted the importance of financing, noting that the partnership with BoI, NEXIM, and FCMB was a deliberate effort to derisk funding for local operators and expand in-country value creation.

The Forum echoed the intent of the Nigerian Content 10-Year Strategic Roadmap, launched in 2017 to grow local content from 26 percent to 70 percent by 2027. The roadmap identifies five pillars: Technical Capability Development, Compliance and Enforcement, Enabling Business Environment, Organisational Capability, and Sectoral Linkages. The Port Harcourt Forum offered a real-time evaluation of how these pillars are being strengthened through collaborative action.

Reinforcing partnerships and practical reforms

Bol's Executive Director for Large Enterprises, Dr. Ifeoma Uzokpala, in her goodwill message, reaffirmed the synergy between the bank and the NCDMB. She described the engagement as a "reflection of a shared commitment to strengthen the Nigerian oil and gas value chain". As the fund manager for the NCDF, Bol, she explained, has a duty to ensure that the Fund achieves its purpose, which is to enable indigenous companies to participate meaningfully in the oil and gas sector. "Together, we are building a more competitive, inclusive, and sustainable oil and gas ecosystem," she concluded.

The Head of Specialised Business at NEXIM Bank, Mr Muhammed Awami, also commended the NCDMB for consistently steering the local content drive through pragmatic reforms. He assured participants that NEXIM remained committed to supporting indigenous businesses through export financing, logistics, manufacturing, and technology-driven services. "NEXIM is willing to facilitate access to finance, derisk projects, and promote initiatives that align with the NCDMB's Strategic Roadmap and the African Continental Free Trade Agreement," he said.

These collaborations complement the Board's other flagship projects, such as the Nigerian Oil and Gas Parks Scheme (NOGaPS) in Bayelsa and Cross River States, which are designed to provide manufacturing infrastructure for local service providers, and the Project 100 initiative, offering business and technical support to high-potential Nigerian oil and gas

companies.

The Forum was not all praise and policy talk. The Question-and-Answer session revealed the realities confronting contractors and vendors in the field.

A participant from Geocardinal Integrated Services raised concerns about subcontractors being denied payment by service companies after completing a project. In response, NCDMB's Engr. Bashir Ahmed clarified that while such matters fall under contractual agreements, the Board has, in some cases, mediated disputes where petitions were received. "It is not something we can enforce, but we do not ignore it," he explained.

Another participant, Mr Ifeanyi Amali of ARCO Integrated Solutions Limited, questioned the bottlenecks surrounding bank guarantees for Bol loans. He argued that deposit money banks often refuse to provide guarantees because of risk-shifting by development finance institutions. Bol's representative acknowledged the concerns and explained that certain charges, including Commitment and Appraisal Fees, are standard but could be reviewed through discussions.

Building trust and measurable delivery beyond policy

The conversation on access to finance grew particularly charged when participants suggested that commercial banks develop tailored products for contractors working under larger service companies. "Banks can be more creative," Engr. Ahmed noted, earning applause from the audience. "If a subcontractor

can show evidence of a running project with an IOC or major service company, that is enough proof to design a product," he said.

In her closing remarks, Ms. Fateema Mohammed, General Manager of the Nigerian Content Development Fund, reflected on the day's deliberations. "This has been more than an event," she said. "It has become a conversation that will guide how we move forward." She confirmed that the NCFCC would take effect from January 1, 2026, and announced that the next edition of the Stakeholders Sensitisation and Engagement Forum would hold in Warri, Delta State.

Together, these initiatives reflect a consistent pattern of delivery. Through the Board's Human Capacity Development programmes, partnerships with financial institutions, and the creation of industrial parks and innovation hubs, NCDMB continues to build confidence in the sustainability of local content implementation. The results, thousands of trained Nigerians, expanded fabrication capacity, and growing indigenous ownership are proof of how policy has translated into performance.

Beyond the discussions, the Forum reemphasised one critical truth: that local content development is not an abstract policy but a lived process, shaped by collaboration, feedback, and measurable delivery.

For NCDMB and its partners, this is not the end of a conversation but the continuation of a national mission, one that will be measured not by policies on paper, but by the opportunities created for Nigerians across every link in the oil and gas value chain.

- **Dainam Dakolo**

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The original Nigerian tune has not only gone global, it now has a category all by itself.

When Davido, one of Afrobeats' big stars was announced as a voting member of the Recording Academy, the body that oversees the Grammy Awards, it did not just mark a personal win for the artiste. It was a symbolic moment for a sound that has travelled far, from the bustling streets of Nigeria, to the world's biggest stages. This appointment was not a token gesture; it was validation that the rhythm of Africa now beats at the heart of global music.

For years, Afrobeats existed as the soundtrack of regular Nigerian life. It was the music of bus conductors and barbershops, street carnivals and weddings; it is a vibrant, unpretentious, and fiercely local. Artistes like Fela Anikulapo-Kuti, 2Baba, and D'banj gave it voice and swagger long before it became a streaming powerhouse. What began as cultural expression is now a global industry, a sonic revolution that sits comfortably beside the likes of R&B, pop, and reggaeton.

Davido's inclusion in the Grammy voting academy is an eloquent testament to that global shift. It signals not just recognition, but influence, a seat at the decision-making table where the future of music is shaped. For Afrobeats, it is a foothold in one of the most prestigious institutions in global entertainment, a sign that the world is no longer listening out of curiosity, but with respect.

Africa's sound, the world's pulse

Authentic and deeply rooted, Afrobeats has done what few genres have managed; it has stayed true to its African core while becoming

universally relatable. It is to Africa what R&B is to America and Salsa is to Latin America: a cultural signature, born of struggle, rhythm, and joy. Its percussion-heavy beats, layered vocals, and call-and-response style embody the continent's collective heartbeat, a mix of heritage and innovation.

Today, Afrobeats fills stadiums in Paris, Tokyo, and New York. It dominates global charts, fashion runways, and even film soundtracks. Yet, its authenticity remains intact. The world is not just consuming African sound; it is embracing African identity through music. From Fela's revolutionary message to Burna Boy's Grammy award, Tems' soulful calm on global stage, and Rema's futuristic energetic sound, each artiste carries a distinct piece of the culture. Their success is proof that African music does not have to be diluted to be celebrated.

Vanguard of a global movement

Afrobeats' rise did not happen by chance. It was powered by a generation of artistes who understood the value of visibility and self-definition. Wizkid, with his seamless blend of Afro-pop and Caribbean rhythm, opened global airwaves to African sound. Burna Boy brought a message of pride and defiance that resonated across continents. Tems redefined femininity in African music, soft but powerful, local yet borderless. Artistes like Rema, Ayra Starr, Tiwa Savage, Omah Lay and many represent a new school that treats Afrobeats not as a genre, but as a canvas for experimentation.

Behind the music lies an evolving industry infrastructure: better production quality, global collaborations, and streaming platforms that have dismantled old barriers. With Sony, Universal, and other major labels now investing in African markets, Afrobeats has become both an export and an economy, giving rise

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to producers, stylists, dancers, and video directors who now shape global pop aesthetics.

Still, the question lingers, what is next? With the Grammys' foothold secured, where will Afrobeats be in the next five or ten years?

The danger for any global genre is overexposure, the risk that imitation will overshadow authenticity. But if history is any guide, Afrobeats has shown remarkable ability to evolve without losing its soul. Its fusion with Amapiano, trap, and highlife proves it is not a fixed formula but a living sound. The next decade will likely see Afrobeats expand into new subgenres, new collaborations, and new audiences, perhaps even more African-led award categories at the Grammys.

The task ahead for Nigerian and African artistes is clear: maintain ownership. Afrobeats should remain African in leadership, creativity, and profit. The Grammy Award may be a prestigious platform, but Afrobeats' true power lies in its ability to tell African stories on African terms.

When the beat drops at the next Grammy Award, it will not just be entertainment, it will be testimony. The same rhythm that once rose from local studios only in Nigerian streets now commands global attention. Afrobeats has not just arrived; it has anchored itself in history.

Gimme Dat — Ayra Starr ft. Wizkid

The first thing you notice about Gimme Dat is the nostalgic feeling it gives from the beginning. There is something hauntingly familiar in those opening chords that immediately remind you of Wyclef Jean and Mary J. Blige's Someone Please Call 911. But, this time, through the sound of Afrobeats. But where the original reminds us of ache and heartbreak, Ayra Starr and Wizkid flip the script; they turn the pain into pleasure, the longing into rhythm.

Released in August 2025, Gimme Dat feels like a full-circle moment in Afrobeats, a bridge between millennial and Gen Z moods. Wizkid, smooth and understated, brings that unhurried confidence he has mastered over the years, while Ayra Starr, never one to play small, meets him head-on with voice and presence. Together, they brought a soft yet headshaking rhythm.

The production, handled by P2J, is warm and fluid, an elegant blend of Afro-fusion and soft R&B that lets both artistes breathe. There is no rush here. Every drum hit feels intentional, every lyric lands in rhythm.

And that is the beauty of Gimme Dat: it is not trying too hard to prove anything. It is sensual, confident, and distinctly Nigerian, the kind of song you hear playing in both rooftop bars and quiet car rides home. Beneath its simplicity is a lesson in control.

Ayra's voice, especially, feels like the heart of the song: soft one moment, sharp the next, sliding easily between vulnerability and command. Wizkid complements that energy with his trademark restraint, adding texture without ego.

What makes Gimme Dat more than just a catchy duet is how it reclaims memory. Sampling a global R&B classic could have felt derivative, here it becomes reinvention, proof of how far Afrobeats has come.

Getting Paid — Sarz feat. Asake, Wizkid & Skillibeng

Release on September 25, the track shot to number one on the UK Official Afrobeats Chart, marking Sarz's first time topping that list. In Nigeria, it also clinched the top spot on Apple Music's Top Songs chart. Meanwhile, in the United States, it made an impactful debut, entering the Billboard USA Afrobeats Top Songs Chart at number five. Those chart positions hint at both reach and resonance, local and global recognition in one sweep.

From the first beat, you sense this is a carefully calibrated collaboration. The production is sleek and confident. Percussion hits just right, space is made for each artist, and transitions feel intentional. This time, Sarz went all out to curate a lasting impressionable sound.

Wizkid slides in smooth and assured, an old voice, he does not need to shout, it insinuates. He owns presence in minimalism, reminding listeners that legacy and control still command attention. Asake follows with melodic depth and streetwise flair. His delivery carries both swagger and vulnerability, somewhere between storyteller and hype man. Skillibeng, on the other hand, injects grit. His raw texture and urgency contrast with the smoother flows, keeping the song dynamic and grounded in hustle. Together, they avoid clashing. Instead, they sync in tension and release.

Beyond the hype, Getting Paid feels like a stamp on ambition and entitlement. It is layered, glamorous yet grounded. Some lines land in half-heard references, so repeat listens yield more payoff.

The chart performance underscores its impact. Hitting number one in the UK Afro space and topping charts at home suggests the song is not just riding names; it is carving space. Breaking into the United States charts too signals that it is not just a regional success but part of the ongoing export of Afrobeats.

Love — Burna Boy

When Burna Boy dropped Love in October, it did not arrive with noise. It crept in quietly, the way songs that end up lasting often do. It is not the type of record that fights for attention; it draws you in.

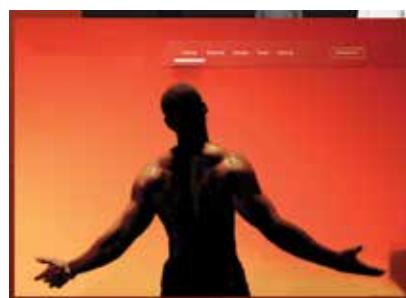
The first thing that hits you is how bare it sounds. No heavy drums, no dramatic horns. Just soft guitar strings and Burna's voice, rough around the edges, got steady, human. You can tell he is not performing here, he is talking. There is something tired in the tone, but it is the kind of tired that comes from growing, not from giving up.

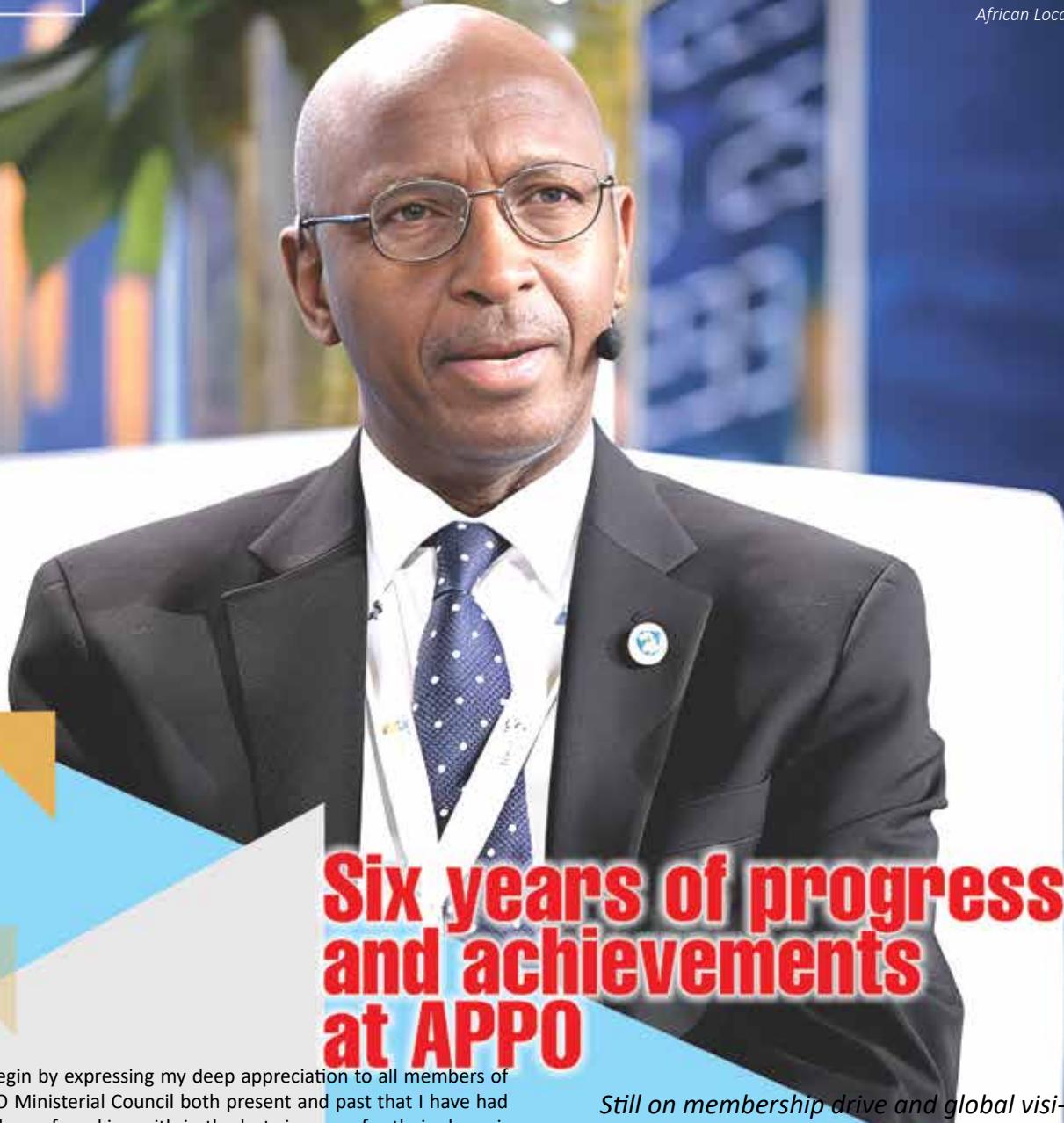
This is not the Burna Boy of Last Last. This is the Burna who has seen the world, tasted its applause, and come back home to think. The lyrics feel personal, a man measuring love against everything else fame has given and taken. Love no be say I no try, he sings, and for once, it sounds like he is saying it to himself, not a crowd.

Telz keeps the production clean and low, soft percussion, faint horns, and the kind of beat that gives space to emotion. Nothing is rushed. Every note feels deliberate, and that restraint makes it powerful.

Since its release, Love has found its place slowly. It has not dominated the charts, but has stayed around, on playlists, radio spins, and the late-night drives when people just want music that feels honest.

Burna Boy has built a career on energy and defiance, but Love reminds everyone that even the loudest voices sometimes need quiet. It is the sound of an artiste who is not trying to impress anyone any longer, but is trying to connect.





Six years of progress and achievements at APPO

I like to begin by expressing my deep appreciation to all members of the APPO Ministerial Council both present and past that I have had the privilege of working with in the last six years, for their clear vision, guidance, and leadership throughout my tenure as APPO SG. I am particularly grateful to the six APPO Presidents that I worked with.

I am also grateful to Members of the Executive Board for their oversight of the activities of the Secretariat and for their guidance and direction. My colleagues in the Secretariat deserve my appreciation for their invaluable contribution to our success, sometimes under very difficult conditions.

I would like to say that I am leaving the Secretariat as a fulfilled person, having delivered on most of what I pledged to achieve. I recall that in my first ministerial Meeting in June 2020, I had pledged the following:

- i. That I will work to create a truly professional Secretariat where merit, efficiency, transparency and accountability shall be the hallmark of our operations.
- ii. I had also assured that we will strive to remain focused on addressing the challenges of the oil and gas industry on the African continent.
- iii. Furthermore, I undertook to work to enhance cooperation and collaboration among Member Countries, especially at operations level
- iv. I pledged to work hard on to increase the membership of our Organization and to raise its international profile in the global energy fora.

How have we fared in these promises?

I am pleased to say that, from being the only staff of the Secretariat at my assumption of office in January 2020, all other staff having been asked to leave by ministerial council so that APPO will have a

Still on membership drive and global visibility I am pleased to say that APPO is now invited to most global energy events. For the first time in APPO's history, we were invited in 2024 to the Annual Presentation of Energy Outlooks that the Paris-based International Energy Agency, the Vienna based OPEC Secretariat, and the Doha based GECF, organize, where APPO made a presentation on Africa's Energy Outlook. Today, we are partners with Africa Energy Chamber in organising one of the most successful annual energy events, not just in Africa but globally, the Africa Energy Week in Cape Town.

clean start, today we have nearly the full complements of approved positions. We did this in phases, beginning in 2021. Your Excellencies may recall that the year 2020 was a challenging year for the world as COVID-19 ravaged societies and economies. The 2 Directors appointed at the same time with me by the Ministerial Council could not assume duty because of travel restrictions due to COVID-19. It took 10 months, January to end of October, for Director of Research to join us in Brazzaville. The Director of Support Services did not take up the appointment.

African Local Content

We launched phase two recruitment processes at the end of 2020, and by Q2 we had in the Secretariat the Heads of Units. Thereafter, we launched phase three, namely analysts, editor, IT specialist, among others, which we completed in 2022. At the same time, having failed to meet the expectations of the new APPO we want to build, the Director of Research was not confirmed, and so we had to start a new recruitment process.

I would like to use this opportunity to express my profound appreciation to the Ministerial Council for the trust and confidence they reposed in me by acceding to my request to allow the Secretariat to head-hunt the next Director of Research. In particular, I want to thank H.E. Mohamed Arkab, Minister of Energy, Mines and Renewable Energies of People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, then President of APPO, for his support and guidance. It was not until mid-2022 that the Secretariat had near-full compliments of staff.

The rationale for the phased recruitment, beginning with the Directors, was to allow us develop some institutional work culture that those we recruit in phases will key into. Where so many staff come to the Secretariat from different backgrounds and cultures, it becomes more difficult to develop an Organisational culture. I am pleased to say that we have made good progress in developing APPO institutional culture.

Excellencies, critical to transparency and accountability is good record keeping and data management. Towards this end, all paper documents, files, folders, reports, studies, and audio-visuals from creation of APPO in 1987 were scanned, digitized, and curated in APPO Document Management System (DMS). Today, I am pleased to say that all records of APPO from 1987 to-date are safely stored on APPO electronic DMS making it possible for our Ministers, EB Member, or any authorised official to have online access to these records from any part of the world that he or she may be.

To further enhance professionalism, the Secretariat proposed the establishment of EB Committees on Audit and on Budget and Finance to take deeper look into the Secretariat's submissions before they are deliberated at Board Meetings.

On our commitment to remain focused in our objectives, the Secretariat proposed, and the Ministerial Council graciously approved the conduct of a major study on the future of the

oil and gas industry in Africa in the light of energy transition. Conducted with Mackenzie, the study established that the global energy transition poses three imminent challenges to the African oil and gas industry, namely funding, technology, and markets.

To practically address each of these challenges, APPO in took the following steps:

a. With the authorisation of the Ministerial Council in Luanda in 2022, we signed an MOU with Afreximbank, with the objective of setting up the Africa Energy Bank (AEB). After two years of intensive negotiations, APPO and Afreximbank finalized the Establishment Agreement of the Bank as well as the Charter of the Bank.

We succeeded in getting the required number of APPO Member Countries to sign and ratify the Establishment Agreement and Charter thereby legally giving birth to Africa Energy Bank, as the Banks Establishment Treaty had come into force.

We succeeded in selecting the Headquarters of the Bank, and the host country has confirmed its readiness to hand over the Headquarters to the promoters of AEB.

Although the authorised share capital of the Bank is US\$5 billion, we are beginning with 1.25 billion or 25 percent. Of that 25 percent, we want to takeoff when we have raised 40 percent or \$500 million. APPO, its Member Countries and Afreximbank are each expected to contribute \$250 million. We have raised from our Member Countries 60 percent of the \$250 million expected from us.

I want to use this opportunity to express appreciation to the Council of Ministers for the trust and confidence in saddling us with the responsibility of negotiations and midwifing the AEB, which is in its final stages of birth. In particular, I want to thank H.E. Diamantino Pedro Azevedo, who gave anticipatory approval even before the Ministerial Council had met to review our proposal.

To address the technology and expertise challenge, we revived the Forum of CEOs of APPO National Oil Companies (NOCs). I am pleased to say that this forum has been so successful, evident in the number of CEOs that participate in the Forums. I recall that when the Forum met in Algiers, 12 of the then 15 Member Countries NOC CEOs were there in person, not represented. Let me use this opportunity to welcome the latest Member of that very important Forum, the new CEO of Sonatrach, Mr. Noureddine Daoud, in our midst.

Together with the NOC CEOs, we created the forum of Directors of Oil and Gas Research and Development Institutions, and the Forum of Oil and Gas Training Institutions. Our medium and long-term objectives are to have regional centers of excellences in the various sectors of the industry - upstream, midstream, and downstream. This is important for Africa, as the countries that have been providing these services to Africa are moving away from oil and gas to renewables. These efforts were in recognition of the fact that no one APPO Member Country has all it takes to excel in all the sectors of the industry. However, working together, we have all it takes to excel in all the sectors.

On membership drive, it is interesting to note that for 10 years, beginning from 2012, APPO was at a standstill. Our aggressive membership drive that took us to several Heads of State between 2021 and 2022 resulted in three new members joining us in 2022.

Still on membership drive and global visibility I am pleased to say that APPO is now invited to most global energy events. For the first time in APPO's history, we were invited in 2024 to the Annual Presentation of Energy Outlooks that the Paris-based International Energy Agency, the Vienna based OPEC Secretariat, and the Doha based GECF, organize, where APPO made a presentation on Africa's Energy Outlook. Today, we are partners with Africa Energy Chamber in organising one of the most successful annual energy events, not just in Africa but globally, the Africa Energy Week in Cape Town.

On staff welfare, I am pleased to say that APPO considers its staff as its most precious asset. Unlike in the APPA days when staff could go for three-five months without pay, no staff of APPO has gone beyond 25th of the month without getting his or her pay. Furthermore, we have built Reserve Funds from near zero in 2020 to about three million euros, excluding debts owed by Member Countries.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, have we made progress? Yes. Have we reached our desired destination? No. There is still a lot to do, and the momentum must not be lost.

Valedictory address of Dr. Omar Farouk Ibrahim, outgoing Secretary General, African Petroleum Producers Organisation (APPO) to the APPO Ministerial Council and the Conference and Exhibition on Local Content in Africa, Brazzaville, November 4, 2025.



BUYER'S REMORSE is more frequent than you think. How to avoid it

It is common, widespread and not easily noticeable. If not checked, it could leave a big hole in your finances.

This happens to the best of us. We walk into a mall, a market, or even scroll online with a specific item in mind. But then, something else catches our eye, something we never planned to buy and do not even need, yet we feel all excited about it. And something inside urges us to get it and we eventually we give in. It is called impulse buying. According to Nimi Akinkugbe, a financial advisor, "If you shop on impulse and without a list, you easily lose focus and end up buying things that you don't need."

When we take a second look at home at the 'exciting' product we impulsively bought, it suddenly feels ordinary, leaving us wondering why we bought it in the first place. That second reflection on the product, that query, the uneasy feeling over the product is called buyer's remorse.

Impulse buying is more common than many of us care to admit. Research shows that impulse buying accounts for between 40 percent and 80 percent of purchases. Millions, men and women, regularly spend money on what they do not need and then regret it. But why?

Professor of economics and psychology at Carnegie Mellon University, George Loewenstein, in a study led by Princeton University, said psychological cues of sight, touch or smell of a desirable object often "cause people to

take impulsive actions that they later regret".

Marketing tricks

The number one reason for that is simply the power of marketing. Effective marketing thrives on repetition, building trust, creating urgency, and communicating a bargain. Smart brands and advertisers tap into this to play on the human mind. Consumer research highlights retail signage, store ambiance, marketing activities, and conspicuous displays as factors influencing consumer behaviour.

Sometimes we find ourselves unconsciously humming the advertising jingle or song. The advertisers build trust by using influencers, individuals that we know and trust, and even follow online, usually celebrities. We reason: if our celebrity idol uses the product, many other followers of our celebrity are probably using the product too, and therefore, it must be good. Then advertisers create a feeling of urgency. They tell us the product is almost out of stock. They then throw in the hook by telling us there is a flash sale ongoing - we immediately think of a bargain - which will end soon. Or, that if we bought at a particular time, we get a discount. All these are marketing gimmicks playing on our psyche.

In essence, we are not just buying a product; we are buying a story, one that sells belonging, status, happiness, or financial prudence.

Convenient spending

Two key developments are driving the rise in convenient spending: banking apps, which

Clinical scientists say when we buy something new, our brains release dopamine, a "feel-good" chemical. The chemical creates a brief emotional high - comparable to a sugar rush - that tricks us into believing we are happier. However, guilt sets in as the excitement wanes. Peer pressure is another reason for this. We are constantly comparing notes with our social circle, and the fear of missing out (FOMO) sometimes compels us to buy things we do not need.

give us 24/7 access to our money, wherever we may be, and two, e-commerce, platforms which make goods and services available at our fingertips. We are a click away from some of the largest shopping stores around the world: Alibaba, Jiji, Temu, Konga, Amazon, eBay, among others. Buying and paying for goods and services has never been easier.

The easier it is to get a bargain, the greater the temptation. Temu is especially skilled at pushing merchandise. But many of these bargains are illusions of affordability because, over time, the money adds up, putting pressure on our finances and us. Imagine buying many of the good stuffs on Temu priced at ₦999, but costs soon add up and our houses become cluttered with items that we hardly use while leaving our finances in jeopardy.

Psychology behind impulse buying

Clinical scientists say when we buy something new, our brains release dopamine, a "feel-good" chemical. The chemical creates a brief emotional high - comparable to a sugar rush - that tricks us into believing we are happier. However, guilt sets in as the excitement wanes. Peer pressure is another reason for this. We are constantly comparing notes with our social circle, and the fear of missing out (FOMO) sometimes compels us to buy things we do not need.

A financial advisor, Harry Sherdil, advised that we "maintain a stable mindset that prioritises your financial future". In essence, we should delay buying non-essentials. The delay gives our logic time to override emotion. We can also unsubscribe from marketing emails and influencer ads. Draw up our budgets and stick to them.

Impulsive buying is about feeling, not about our needs. The challenge is learning to detach our emotion from the transaction. Once we achieve that, we gain real financial freedom.

In Nigeria, street Foods rule

Tasty, tempting, and a little bit risky.



If there is one thing Nigeria is known for, it is food - street food. Every corner has it. It is fast, affordable, and chaotic, yet it brings people together in ways that fancy restaurants cannot. Long before fast-food chains and confusing menus, street food fed most people.

You will find a banker in a tie sharing a bench with an okada rider, both waiting for their turn to eat, not caring if someone's sweat dropped into the stew or if the hands behind the food have seen soap and water. Hunger is the driver, and when the stomach calls, nothing else matters.



North: Suya, smoke, spice, and spirit

If the North had a perfume, it would smell like suya. Suya is skewered beef or ram, roasted on open fire and coated in yaji, a pepper-ginger-groundnut mix that hits every sense. It is traditionally associated with the Hausas. From there, it spread and became Nigeria's unofficial night meal. Early evenings, you would see grills coming out in Nigerian cities and semi-urban areas, signalling that that the night is promising with grilled meat.

Places like Yahuza Suya or Kisco Suya in Kaduna still pull crowds. Hygiene depends on trust that the meat is fresh, the knives are clean, and the fire burns away whatever should not be there. Risky, but every bite feels worth it.

East: Abacha, salad of the streets

In the East, *abacha* is the real deal: colourful, spicy, and proudly local. Made from cassava flakes, palm oil, pepper, garden eggs, and smoked fish, it began in Igbo kitchens where leftovers found new life.

Now, it is one of the most loved meals on the streets of Enugu and Owerri. Chi Chi Abacha Joint at Uwani and Nwanyi Achi opposite Mr Biggs in Enugu are among the popular spots. In Owerri, women still balance bowls on their heads, dishing out abacha that burns and soothes at the same time. Hygiene may be a gamble, but flavour always wins.

The hustle, the hygiene, the heart

Many of these foods carry high sodium, fat, and cholesterol, yet Nigerians keep going back. The idea is to watch the environment and buy from a vendor you trust, because street food is not just about taste - it is about survival, connection, and comfort. It is where culture meets hunger, and every bite feels like home.

West: Amala and ewedu, the street king of the southwest

Here, lunchtime means one thing: hot amala turning in iron pots, served with ewedu and gbegiri. Formed in old Oyo, amala began as a farmer's meal made from yam flour leftovers. Over time, it became a symbol of pride and strength.

If you want to taste it right, visit Amala Shitta in Surulere, Iya Oyo in Yaba, or any of the bustling bukas in Oshodi. The hygiene may not always be certain, but no one cares. When that hot amala lands on the plate, what you are eating is more than food; it is culture and identity served steaming.

South-South: In bole and fish, fire meets flavour

Journeying through Yenagoa or Port Harcourt is not complete without *bole* and fish. Roasted plantain, paired with peppered fish soaked in oil and spice, rules the cities.

Born from the South-South's riverine abundance, *bole* feeds everyone. At House of Bole or Maleesky Special, the tables are oily, but no one minds. *Bole* satisfies the body and the spirit in one bite.

Middle Belt: Masa, the Northern delight that travels

If you could eat rice in another form, it should be *masa*. Made from fermented rice batter, it comes out round and fluffy, often paired with *miyan taushe* or a small piece of *suya*. It was born from old Hausa feasts where leftover grains found new life over a fire.

In Abuja, try Mariam's Masa Spot at Gwarinpa or Masan Bauchi in Asokoro. Locals swear they taste like home. Hygiene depends on how clean the day's water is, but no one hesitates. Once it is hot and fresh, people dig in happily.



This informal food market is massive. In 2023, over 65 percent of Nigerians rely on street-food vendors for at least one meal a day. The risk is there, but so is the reward. After all, food in Nigeria is more than what fills the stomach, it is what fills the heart.

NCDMB staff show skills in 2025 Sport Fiesta

Members of staff of the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board took time off work to compete in the 2025 NCDMB Sport Fiesta, held from September 23 to 25, 2025 at four locations in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State. The theme of this year's fiesta was Uniting through Sport to Consolidate Excellence.

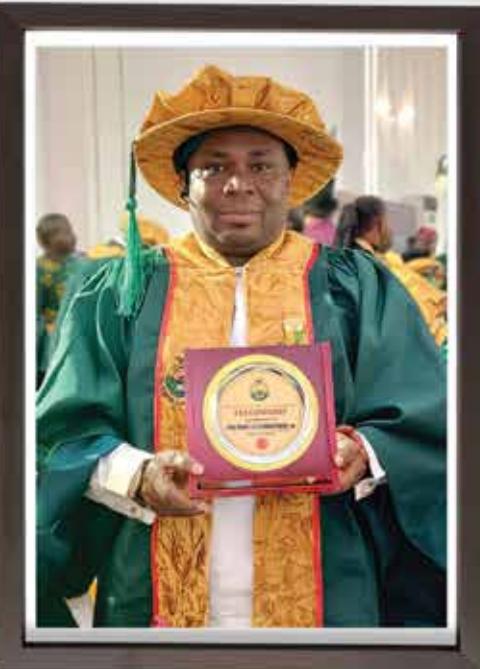
The theme speaks to the resolve of Board's personnel to work together as a team, showcasing mantra of professionalism and passion in exceeding set targets, said Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary, NCDMB.

The 2025 Sport Fiesta was coordinated by the Human Resources Division of the Board to enable staff consolidate on the NCDMB's outstanding achievements at the 2024 Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Games (NOGIG). It was also an opportunity to prepare the team that would represent the Board at NOGIG, scheduled for the first quarter of 2026.

The Local Organising Committee (LOC) randomly assigned personnel of the Board into four teams, and they competed in eight sports - lawn tennis, swimming, basketball, football, table tennis, chess, eight ball pool, and scrabble.

At the end of the fiesta, the medal table showed the brilliance of the teams, with Team Emerald emerging overall winner of the 2025 NCDMB Sport Fiesta.



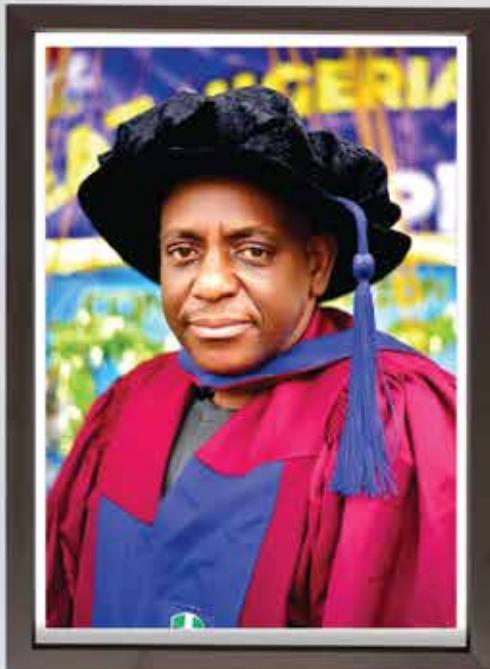


Engr. Maurice Kelly Iwhiwhu, FNSE, FNIMechE, General Manager, Health, Safety, Security and Environment, NCDMB, was conferred and inducted as a Fellow of the Nigeria Society of Engineers (FNSE) on July 14, 2025



Engr. Erefa Sampson, FNSE, Supervisor, Project Certification and Authorisation Directorate (PCAD), NCDMB, was conferred and inducted as a Fellow of the Nigeria Society of Engineers (FNSE) on July 14, 2025.

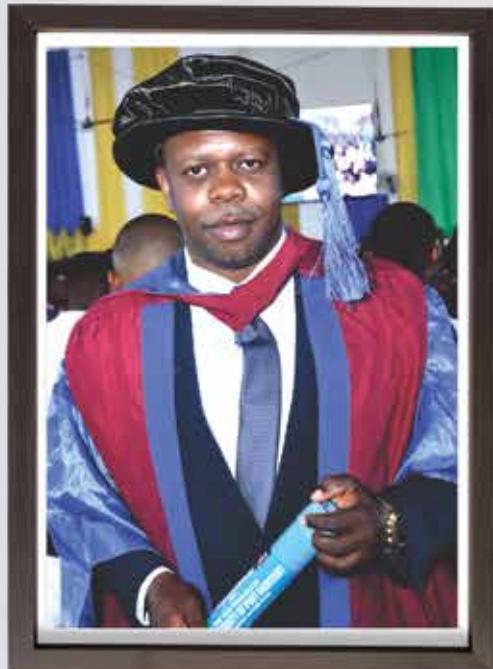
Doctorate



Dr. Abdulmalik Halilu, Director, Corporate Services, NCDMB, bagged a Doctorate at the 35th combined Convocation of the University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State, on July 26, 2025. Dr. Halilu earned his PhD in Energy, Economics, Management, and Policy, marking another milestone in his years of leadership and service at NCDMB across strategy, planning, research, and corporate management roles.

In October, the NCDMB Branch of the Petroleum and Natural Gas Senior Staff Association of Nigeria (PENGASSAN) elected a new executive. The officers include:

Pius Waritime - Branch Chairman
Onyemakonor Chuks - Vice Chairman
Aliyu Liman - Secretary
Shuaib Baba - Assistant Secretary
Favour Parke - Treasurer



Dr. Obinna Ezeobi, General Manager, Corporate Communications Division, NCDMB, bagged Doctorate degree at the 35th combined Convocation of the University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State, on July 26, 2025. Dr. Ezeobi earned his PhD in Energy Communications. His convocation ceremony also featured the public presentation of his book, Local Content: A Journey of Strategic Communication and Economic Transformation.

Opuwari Moses - IRO
Ekpera Alexander - Financial Secretary
Bello Kazeem - PRO
Wisdom Alfred - Auditor
Bariyereba Oghale - PWC
Torty Borma - IPC

Appointment



Mr. Austin Uzoka, assumed office in August as the **Senior Technical Adviser, Technical & Strategic Support** to the Executive Secretary, NCDMB. He has got vast experience, spanning over 28 years, across key oil and gas industry chains. A former staff member of Shell's head office in The Hague, he led the development and execution of comprehensive local content strategies, ensuring compliance with diverse regulatory frameworks and propelling sustainable supplier development.

He previously served as Nigerian Content Manager with Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC), and a member of the Interim Implementation Committee set up after the enactment of the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development (NOGICD) Act, in April 2010. At some point, he supported the Nigerian Content Consultative Forum (NCCF), the Oil Producers Trade Section (OPTS, NCD subcom), and the Oman Military Academy, building local capacity and advancing industry standards. With an educational background in engineering from the University of Ibadan (Nigeria) and Rice University (Houston), he equally studied supply chain strategy and management from MIT, and decision-making and negotiation from Harvard Business School.

Wedding



Ms. Hauwa Hamisu, a Chief Supervisor in the Strategy Division of the Board was engaged and wedded her heartthrob, Mr. Ubaidullah Aminu on October 26, 2025 in Kaduna, Kaduna State. We wish them a happy married life.

Mr. Andrew Ossaowa Uchendu, was appointed in July as the **Acting Director, Finance and Personnel Management** Directorate, NCDMB. He is a highly accomplished financial services and public sector executive with over two decades of progressive leadership experience across banking, corporate finance, and public revenue administration. Mr. Uchendu is a fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (FCA), known for his strong record in strategic planning, financial management, policy formulation, risk management, and team leadership.

He served in the public service at the Rivers State Board of Internal Revenue, after holding multiple executive and senior management positions in Nigeria's top-tier financial institutions, including Access Bank Plc, Fidelity Bank Plc, and Keystone Bank Limited. The new DFPM is also a seasoned leader with international executive education from prestigious institutions, including the Wharton Business School and Harvard Business School, which equipped him with advanced capabilities in leadership, strategy, revenue management, policy formulation, risk management, and business transformation.

Sent Forth



NCDMB in October organised a private farewell dinner in honour of **Mr. Osagie Okunbor**, former Country Chair of Shell Companies in Nigeria and Managing Director SPDC. In attendance were close family and friends and officials of the NCDMB.

Obituary

Mr. Ukan Idagbo, a former Supervisor in the Zonal Coordination Division, NCDMB, passed away on August 5, 2025, and was buried on August 27, 2025. We miss his cheerful and hardworking personality, and we remain prayerful for his soul.



OFALA FESTIVAL

Festival of unity, perseverance, and pride

In the radiant city of Onitsha, the economic backbone of Anambra State, where the River Niger meets the horizon, the 2025 Ofala Festival unfolded with grandeur and meaning. This year's theme, Njiko na Ntachi (unity and perseverance), struck a deep cultural chord, a call to togetherness, resilience, and pride in identity. For three days, from 16 to 18 of October, the city was a living stage of colour, music, tradition, and royal majesty.

The aim of the theme is to foster unity by encouraging the people to come together with a sense of belonging and purpose; promote resilience by inspiring individuals to draw strength from the cultural heritage, community, and perseverance; and uphold enduring communal values by strengthening and preserving the timeless values that define the community.

Day One: The pulse of the youth: Street cultural carnival

The celebrations opened on Thursday 16, October, with the Youth Street Cultural Carnival, an energetic prelude that transformed the bustling streets of Onitsha into an embodiment of creativity and heritage. Young men and women paraded in vibrant traditional outfits of different tribes. Their faces were painted in the colours of the land - red for strength, white for purity, and black for continuity.

Drummers pounded traditional rhythms that echoed down the streets, while dance troupes twirled to ancestral beats, merging the old with the new. It was a spectacular scene of cultural rebirth, where local designers, artisans, and performers showcased the dynamism of a generation proudly reconnect-

ing with its roots. For visitors and tourists, it was an intimate encounter with the heartbeat of Onitsha's youth, a generation proving that tradition is not static, but alive, evolving, and deeply woven into their sense of belonging. The air was filled with the scent of abacha, roasted yam, and nkwoobi, as street vendors turned every corner into a feast for the palate.

Days Two and Three: Royal splendour at the palace

On Friday, October 17, the focus shifted to the Obi of Onitsha's Palace, Igwe Nnaemeka Alfred Ugochukwu Achebe, Agbodidi, the 21st monarch of Onitsha, where the city's rhythm slowed into regal cadence. The palace grounds glowed with anticipation as dignitaries, and guests from around the world gathered beneath canopies of fluttering fabrics.

The day began with the Obi opening of the Oreze Art art exhibition in the palace museum, displaying spectacular paintings, sculptures and ceramics by some Nigerian artists, followed later in the day with the arrival of Ndichies (chiefs), with colourful regalia and hats (Okpu Ata), adorned with feathers of assorted colours, dancing majestically, with family and well-wishers acknowledging them. This reminds us that the strength of a people lies not in wealth or power, but in the shared values that hold them together.

Then came Saturday, October 18, the grand finale, where the festival reached its climax. The sound of royal cannons echoed through the air, announcing the emergence of His Majesty, Obi Nnaemeka Alfred Achebe, Agbogidi, the revered monarch of Onitsha. Adorned in coral beads, a gold sword, and a crown of ea-

gle feathers, the Obi emerged from seclusion to bless his people and the land. The crowd hailed Agbogidi, as he danced graciously with his white regalia round the palace courtyard.

The palace courtyard erupted in joy as the monarch performed the Ofala dance, flanked by red-capped chiefs and titled men. The symbolism was unmistakable - leadership renewed, unity reaffirmed, and perseverance celebrated. The royal orchestra filled the air with ancestral music, a sound that seemed to bridge centuries. The galleries were filled with different age grades dressed with vibrant colours, waiting for the age grade best dressed and dance competition.

The final day of the Ofala is reserved for paying homage, and reaffirming loyalty to the Obi. On this day, the Ndichies (red cap chiefs), titled men, age grades, and groups gather in colourful traditional attires to salute the monarch. It is a moment rich with symbolism, one that reinforces unity, hierarchy, and respect within the traditional structure.

A Celebration Beyond Borders

The 2025 Ofala Festival was more than a royal tradition; it was a powerful statement of identity and endurance. Under the banner of Njiko na Ntachi, Onitsha once again reminded the world that culture is not merely heritage, it is a living force that unites, inspires, and sustains.

For travelers, Ofala offered a rare and immersive experience: a journey into the soul of Igbo civilization, where hospitality meets history, and every drumbeat carries a message of pride and perseverance.

In a world still learning the meaning of resilience, Onitsha's Ofala stands tall, a royal celebration that reminds us all that unity is strength, and perseverance is victory.

- Dr. Timpre Willis Amah



VOCATIONAL TRAININGS



VOCATIONAL SKILLS: Beneficiaries displaying their starter kits during the close-out ceremony of the empowerment programme of the Catering and Events Planning training for 50 women in the Niger Delta region in Warri, Delta State.



TRAINING: Management and Staff of the Board with trainees at the close-out of the Capacity Building Training Programme on Renewable Solar Energy System (Solar Panel) Installation at the Standard Institute of Technology in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.



Engr. Kunu Harmony, General Manager, NCDMB Projects, beneficiaries after the close-out ceremony of the Catering and Events Planning training at the Multipurpose Vocational Centre, Egbokodo in Warri, Delta State.



Management and staff of NCDMB with trainees at the close-out ceremony of the Board-sponsored Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) and fire alarm empowerment programme for youths in the Niger Delta region at the Multipurpose Vocational Centre, Egbokodo in Warri, Delta State.



Cross-section of trainees at the close-out ceremony of the NCDMB-sponsored Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) and fire alarm empowerment programme for youths in the Niger Delta region at the Multipurpose Vocational Centre, Egbokodo in Warri, Delta State.



TRAINEES IN ACTION: Trainees showcasing their welding and fabrication skills during the training programme in Warri, Delta State.



NCDMB Staff with trainees at the close-out ceremony of a one-month welding and fabrication training at the Multipurpose Vocational Centre, Egbokodo in Warri, Delta State.



Engr. Kunu Harmony, General Manager, NCDMB Project, and staff of the Board with trainees at the closeout ceremony of the bag-making training at the Multipurpose Vocational Centre, Egbokodo in Warri, Delta State.



Engr. Kunu Harmony, General Manager, NCDMB Project, and staff of the Board at the closeout ceremony of the bag-making training at the Multipurpose Vocational Centre, Egbokodo in Warri, Delta State.

REFORMS IN THE OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY

International service companies are returning to Nigeria

Sen Heineken Lokpobiri, Minister of State for Petroleum Resources (Oil) has superintended over vast improvements in Nigeria's oil sector. He sees a return of international service companies, working side-by-side their local counterparts.

Assessment of the NOGICD Act in the past 15 years of its implementation

I was a senator when the NOGICD Act was passed into law. I was among those who passed the bill into law. We understood that, for us to sustainably develop local content in our oil and gas industry, we needed a legislation. See how time flies. It's already 15 years since the Nigerian Content Bill was signed into law by President Goodluck-Jonathan.

So much has been achieved, although we are not where we want to be. But we've taken the lead in Africa, as far as local content implementation is concerned. In terms of local capacity development, we've done much better than our contemporaries on the African continent.

I've had occasions to discuss with fellow ministers across Africa, and many of them are enthusiastic about coming to Nigeria to understudy our local content policies.

The implementation has also led to tremendous growth of local capacity in the oil and gas sector. Most members of PETAN play one role or the other in terms of services rendered in the sector. I believe there's a lot more to be done.

Areas of improvements in local content implementation

In the recent past, there was a bit of misapplication of the law to mean local substitution. Most international services companies left. Right now, the complaint in the industry is that there is monopoly. We now have a challenge, which is to win back the confidence of many international service companies.

The complaint was that we promoted middlemen. We had scenarios where Nigerians would go and get oil and gas contracts, and they would look for other companies to execute the contracts for them, thereby increasing costs. At a point, the international oil services companies had to leave. But we had meetings with them and invited them to return.

When we had interactions with international service com-



panies, they said they left because the jobs they could do, they were not even allowed to participate because local companies were introduced, and those companies ended up sub-contracting the jobs because they lacked capacity.

However, we have assured them that under my leadership that things will be done differently. And that is why they are all coming back. That is why you are seeing new projects.

Opportunities for international service companies

We believe that the coast is big enough to accommodate the big international service companies, alongside the indigenous players. I sincerely believe that our indigenous players have acquired enormous capacity. But, in terms of offshore operations and deepwater, we don't yet have the capacity to go deep offshore and do the kind of services that the big international service companies offer.

The Nigerian oil and gas sector is massive enough to provide market for all companies. In the last 15 years, we have laid solid a foundation. I believe that we can build on that. We can identify the pitfalls, and then improve continuously. But we need to be mindful of the mistake we made in the past that led to the exit of the big service companies.

Mr. President's vision on local content development

If you look at the Executive Orders, they're very specific. Local content plays a very critical role in the oil and gas sector, especially in the area of building local capacity, and inclusivity of the oil and gas producing areas.

Mr. President's intent is that we achieve the

full potentials and objectives contained in the NOGICD Act. That is why Mr. President directed through the Executive Orders that we can achieve local content, develop local capacity, but not promote middlemen, not by substituting indigenous companies for the big international service firms.

Mr. President's aspiration is also to reduce cost of projects. His intention is that we achieve the objectives contained in the NOGICD Act and continue to play a leading role on the African continent. A lot of people are trying to come and understudy the local content. We have to teach them, while bearing in mind that we had made mistakes as pioneers in the oil and gas industry.

My focus as Chairman of NCDMB Governing Council

As Chairman of the NCDMB Governing Council, I want to ensure that we have a paradigm shift from what drove the international service companies to exit the country, and bring them back. Once you create the opportunity for all participants to operate in the market, which is big enough, they will come back.

Some people want all operations in the industry to be executed by local companies. But they should know that when a local company lacks capacity, he or she is basically a briefcase contractor. When such local company gets a contract, it will try to partner with an international company. All these things add up the cost. In some cases, the cost of crude oil production in Nigeria gets higher than some countries that are at war.

I want to see a complete paradigm shift.

We will create local capacity within the industry, but not by substitution. The job you can-

not do, you certainly cannot do it. Do the ones you can do onshore.

The ones that you cannot do offshore and in shallow waters, perhaps, leave it for those who can do it so that we can keep our costs globally competitive. Otherwise, we'll continue to experience this problem that we're experiencing today.

Why Nigeria must keep her crude oil production cost competitive

Today, Nigeria no longer has monopoly in crude oil production. Almost every country in Africa and in many other parts of the world have discovered crude oil deposits. So, do not think that Nigeria is still the way it was some decades ago.

And, CAPEX is blind. CAPEX is directed to go to wherever the owners direct them.

If you talk to the International Oil Companies, even Independent Petroleum Producers Group (IPPG) members, the view is the same. What we are all saying is that we need to stop thinking small. If you have more projects, there will be more opportunities.

The Nigerian oil and gas sector is massive enough to provide market for all companies. In the last 15 years, we have laid solid a foundation. I believe that we can build on that. We can identify the pitfalls, and then improve continuously. But we need to be mindful of the mistake we made in the past that led to the exit of the big service companies.



Introduced **Back to Creek**

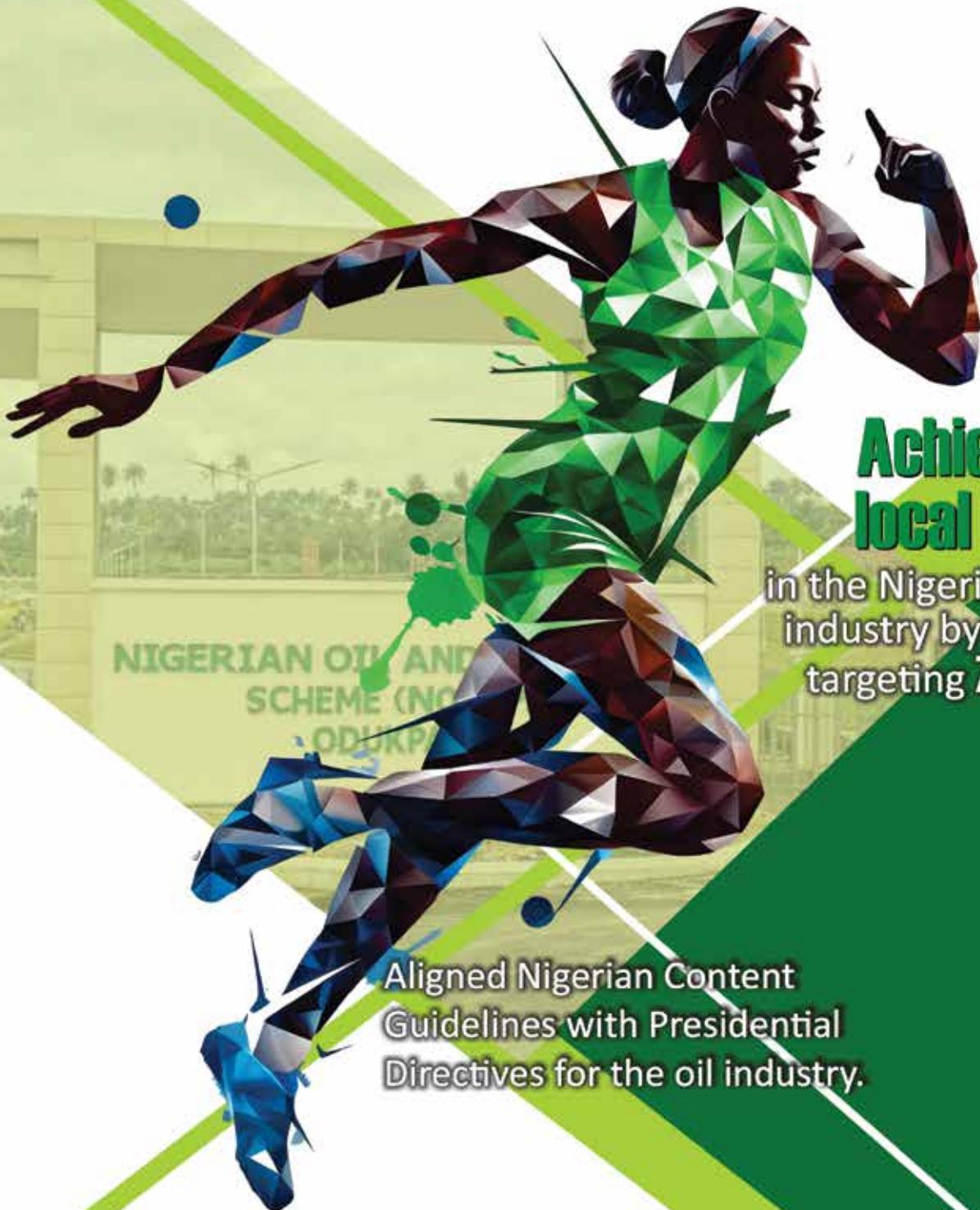
Initiative to enhance basic education infrastructure in rural and underserved areas, upskill teachers' capacities and equip youths with skills to meet industry demands.





NCDMB No 1 CHAMPION

on Ease of Doing Business in Nigeria
2022-2024, by PEBEC



**Achieved 56%
local content**

in the Nigerian oil & gas
industry by Dec 2024...
targeting **70%** in 2027.

Aligned Nigerian Content
Guidelines with Presidential
Directives for the oil industry.

NCDMB

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