

Local **CONTENT** *digest*

Special Edition 2024

NCDMB STAKEHOLDER MAGAZINE



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Award of Contracts Employment & Human Capital Development



Capacity Development Initiative/NC Remediation



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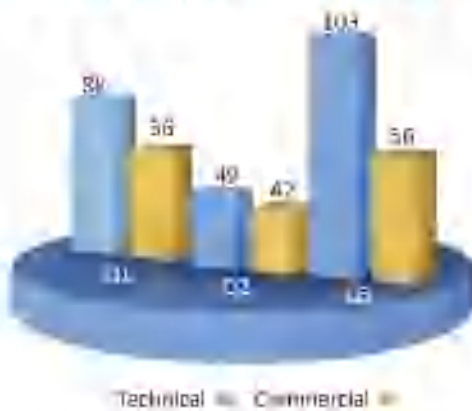
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SMART FACT

Number of Technical & Commercial Evaluation Reports Issued in 2024



Number of NCDC Issued in 2024



Number of NCR Issued in 2024

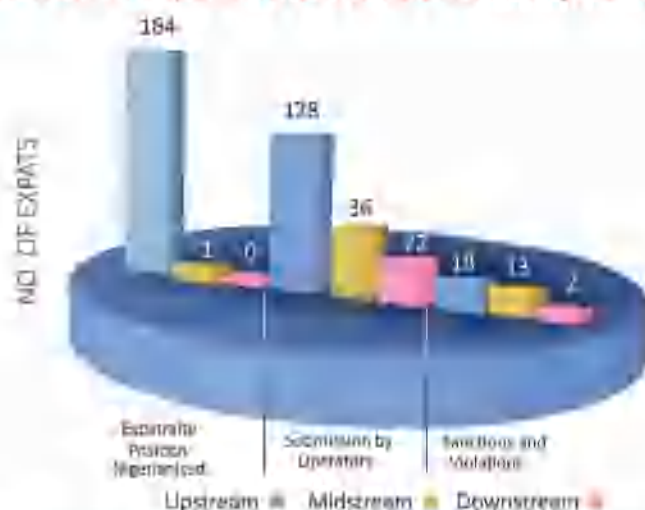


Number of Temporary Work Permits approved/rejected in 2024



SMART FACT

Number of Expatriate Quota Approved/Rejected in 2024



Number Of NCEC Issued IN 2024



Number of Biometric Cards Issued In 2024



NJQS Additional Performance Records In 2024





Let's reset & Leap
Forward

If I were asked to describe my experience in the last 12 months serving as the Executive Secretary of the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB), I would say it had been impactful and eventful; impactful because we took important decisions that create value and stimulate the nation's economy, and eventful because some activities engendered by the NCDMB were momentous and significant.

Within this period, I received immense support and goodwill from a broad spectrum of oil industry stakeholders. I believe that with team work and close collaboration we can accomplish the targets of the Nigerian Content 10-year strategic roadmap, and quickly increase our nation's crude oil production and shore up our national revenue.

These were the key charges I received upon my appointment from President Bola Ahmed Tinubu and my immediate bosses, Senator Heineken Lokpobiri, Minister of State for Petroleum Resources (Oil), and his gas counterpart, Rt Hon. Ekperikpe Ekpo. These twin objectives drive NCDMB's policies under my watch and undergird our policies to catalyse new oil and gas investments.

NCDMB is fundamentally a business enabler than a regulator. This posture informed our conception of the Service Level Agreement (SLA), introduced with the Nigeria LNG in 2017, before extending to other entities. The SLA provided for 180 days contract approval cycle.

The Presidential Directives (PDs) on Local Content, introduced in March 2024, took a bullish approach to shorten oil sectors' project approval timelines, incentivise investments and increase crude oil production. It shortened the project approval cycle to just six months and introduced other significant changes that impact us, the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited and operating companies.

We have taken several steps to comply with the PDs, collapsing our touch points in the contract approval process from nine to five, reducing the number of days allotted to NCDMB on the cycle and eliminating intermediaries with no demonstrable capacity from the tendering cycle, among other changes. We will be launching our new Contracting Cycle Guidelines at the 2024 Practical Nigerian Content Workshop from December 3 to 5.

More importantly, we promote a win-win strategy in our review and approval of projects. While being pragmatic in applying the provisions of the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development (NOGICD) Act, we insist that every available capacity in-country must be utilised to create jobs for our people and grow the economy.

I'm delighted that some operators are outlining plans to take final investment decisions (FIDs) on major projects, in response to our policies and the incentives detailed in the three PDs. Chevron Nigeria Limited is considering some major projects; Total Energies E&P signaled plans to push forward with the Preowei deepwater project; and SNPECO is accelerating Bonga North deepwater project, plus HI and HA projects, to provide gas feedstock for the operations of the NLNG Train 7.

The reference to the Train 7 is apposite, being the biggest midstream project in recent times, with substantial impact on the local oil service industry. Another gladdening outcome from the ongoing Train-7 development is the 10,000 tonnes per annum galvanising plant constructed by Daewoo Engineering Nigeria Limited.

We have deepened our focus on research and development (R&D). Recently we inaugurated new members into the Nigerian Content Research and Development Council (NCRDC), and organised R&D workshops across major zones in the country, held two-day R&D roundtable in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State and sponsored Tripple Helix Nigeria's SciBiz Conference in Abuja in October.

Our support for oil and gas service companies continued, to sustain their impressive growth and ensure that service companies and manufacturers that have established capacities in the country enjoy patronage from the sector.

Regarding our capacity building mandate, we launched a series of programmes that are pivotal to the economic restoration agenda of Mr. President, particularly in human capital development and youth empowerment.

The promotion of African Local Content remains on the front burner. One highlight was the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) we signed with the Petroleum Commission, Ghana (PCG) to help develop and deepen local content regulations in their country's upstream petroleum sector. We also held experience sharing workshop with key officials of the Uganda National Oil Company (UNOC) in June and Mozambique's national oil company, Empresa Nacional de Hidrocarbonetos (ENH) in February. In addition, we shared the Nigerian Content experience at the Namibia Oil and Gas Conference in Windhoek, in August.

In Q1 of this year, we received dividends from two of our investments, notably Nedogas Development Company Limited and Waltersmith 5,000 barrels per day modular refinery, in the sum of US\$1million and ₦450million, respectively.

Our sterling performance as an organisation was recognised through notable national honours within this period, reflective of the hard work by our diligent staff and management. We are committed to improve our processes and offer our stakeholders the best quality service.

One of the new strategies to deepen our service is the Back to the Creeks Initiative, conceived to take local content's benefits to rural communities across the country. We will drive this policy through several initiatives, one of which is the repackaged Community Contractors Finance Scheme (CCFS) we are set to launch at the 2024 Practical Nigerian Content Workshop.

Under the Back to the Creeks Initiative, we would also intervene in basic education in local communities, the start point of capacity building. That is why we partnered the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) to implement the NCDMB-UBEC Smart Schools' Development Initiative (NUSSDI). We hope to get the full collaboration of industry stakeholders on this important initiative.

While we recognise the enormous challenges facing our national economy, it is imperative that the oil and gas sector would lead efforts to pull the country from the precipice. Nigerian Content implementation must remain at the centre of those efforts, creating value, as well as opportunities, and going back to the creeks.

It's time to reset and leap forward.

We have taken several steps to comply with the PDs, collapsing our touch points in the contract approval process from nine to five, reducing the number of days allotted to NCDMB on the cycle and eliminating intermediaries with no demonstrable capacity from the tendering cycle, among other changes. We will be launching our new Contracting Cycle Guidelines at the 2024 Practical Nigerian Content Workshop from December 3 to 5.

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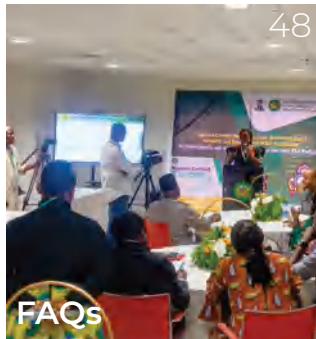
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NCDMB, together with industry stakeholders and academia, is building a market-driven R&D ecosystem. Mr. Abdulmalik Halilu, Director, Monitoring and Evaluation, NCDMB who doubles as President of Triple Helix Nigeria, shares insights on what has been achieved and next steps.

NCDMB visit to NLNG





Publisher

Felix Omatsola Ogbe

Editorial Advisory

Abdulmalik Halilu
Naboth Onyesoh
Uduak Obot

Editor-in-chief

Esueme Kikile
+234 803 7055 780
esueme.kikile@ncdmb.gov.ng

Editor

Obinna Ezeobi
+234 803 4063 371
obinna.ezeobi@ncdmb.gov.ng

Contributors

Abdulmalik Halilu
Hamisu Hauwa
Teleola Oyeleke
Ifeanyi Nwokemodo
Chinedu Ikejiani
Chinomnso Nworgu
Ophelia Jackson
Odoya Manfred Onisdemya
Petra Unuigbije
Beke-Izonlade Benne
Princess Halifax-Chinedu
Dianam Dakolo

Social Diary compiled by:

Ifeanyi Nwokemodo

Concept & Production

Four Points Communications
+234 817 053 8888
adewole.ojo@fourpoints.ng

Photography

Studio B, Yenagoa

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It is good to be back!

Local Content Digest had a one-year hiatus. Indeed, the last edition coincided with PNC 2023, while the re-packaged edition is coming at PNC 2024. Between then and now, we have experienced a change in leadership, with Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe taking the helm of affairs about a year ago.

The assumption of office of our new Executive Secretary has refocused our minds to the connection between local content and how it benefits the people. Engr. Ogbe wants to take the benefits of local content to the communities where people live, work and play. It is an ambitious vision, and we have attempted to distill it to granular details- its implementation, and ways communities can key into the policy. Aptly named *Taking Local Content Back to the Creeks*, the **Cover** story is much more than dissecting a policy; it is how the targeted beneficiaries can find quick wins.

On quick wins, one of the featured content in the **Pacesetters** segment is the Board's novel approach to remediation when companies flout provisions of the NOGICD Act 2010. Rather than wield the big stick, NCDMB seizes the opportunity to secure trainings and jobs for young Nigerian graduates. Christened Nigerian Content Non-Compliance Remediation (NCNC-REM), identified

One of the featured content in the Pacesetters segment is the Board's novel approach to remediation when companies flout provisions of the NOGICD Act 2010. Rather than wield the big stick, NCDMB seizes the opportunity to secure trainings and jobs for young Nigerian graduates.

companies train and where possible, provide jobs for Nigerians as 'fines' for infractions. It is a win-win for everybody. The defaulting company finds the scheme a good, cost-effective talent pipeline.

We bring you our usuals – travels, food, music, in an entertaining and informative mix. Who would have thought that the deserts in the Northeast hold much prospect for tourism, or that afrobeats, Nigeria's unique contribution to global music, has a massive global audience, thus delivering substantial earnings to artistes, an excellent example of local content gone global.

With Nigerian music going global, we see a reversal of sorts, of global know-how gone local with Bell Oil & Gas sophisticated pipe threading and valve assembly facility launched in November. The services the company would provide from its new facilities were hitherto the preserve of foreign firms. We are impressed with the rate local companies are moving the local content needle forward.

Welcome back, our dear readers.

Esueme Dan Kikile



INVESTMENT: Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary, NCDMB with Mr. Julius Rone, Managing Director, UTM Offshore Limited, handing over the prototype of FLNG (Floating Liquefied Natural Gas) facility project during a visit to the Nigerian Content Tower, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

Engr Ogbe lauds Nigerian content achievements in NLNG's Train 7 project

The Executive Secretary of the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB), Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, has lauded the significant local content strides the Nigeria LNG Limited (NLNG) Train 7 Project has made. Engr. Ogbe spoke in September when he visited NLNG six-train plant, Train 7 Project construction site, and the NLNG Shipping and Marine Services Limited (NSML) training centre, Maritime Centre for Excellence (MCOE) at Finima in Bonny Island in Rivers State.

The Executive Secretary expressed delight about how the Train 7 Project has significantly boosted local capacity through the production of ancillary components and accessories in Nigeria. "The accomplishments we are witnessing today at the NLNG Train 7 Project are a testament to the NLNG's unwavering commitment to Nigerian Content. This project stands as a beacon of what we can achieve when we prioritise our local industries and talents," he said.

The Executive Secretary praised NLNG's management for achieving 52 million man-hours on the Train 7 project with zero lost time injury (LTI). He commended his immediate predecessor, Engr. Simbi Kesiye Wabote, for his immense contributions to the approval, take-off and success of the Train 7 project.

Engr. Ogbe said he was delighted that the Maritime Centre for Excellence is the first training centre in Africa to receive accreditation from the UK Maritime and Coastguard Agency (UK MCA) to deliver and issue certificates for the STCW 2010 Electronic Chart Display and Information System (ECDIS) and Basic Liquefied Gas Tanker Cargo Operations courses.

NLNG's Deputy Managing Director, Mr. Olakunle Osobu, who lauded NCDMB's support for the Train 7 Project, described the partnership Local Content Digest, 2024

as a shining example of the public-private collaboration that could drive Nigeria's industrial growth. He said Nigerian Content was not just a regulatory requirement for NLNG but a core business strategy.

NCDMB seeks more innovation in O&G as new Research Council is inaugurated

Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary, NCDMB has inaugurated new members of the Nigerian Content Research and Development Council (NCRDC). The event took place during the Council's third quarter meeting in Lagos State.

The NCRDC members include the Executive Secretary as Chairman; Mr. Isaac Yalah, Director, Research and Development, Alternate Chairman; and Mr. Silas Ajimajaye, General Manager, Research and Development, Secretary. Other members include representatives from the Oil Producers Trade Section (OPTS), Petroleum Contractors Trade Section (PCTS), the National Universities Commission (NUC) and National Board for Technology Incubation (NBTI). The Petroleum Technology Association of Nigeria (PETAN), the Independent Petroleum Producers Group (IPPG) and the National Office for Technology Acquisition and Promotion (NOTAP) are Institutions represented on the Council.

Engr. Ogbe affirmed NCDMB's commitment to stimulate indigenous R&D ideas in the oil and gas industry and linkage sectors. R&D, he said, is critical to the growth of Nigerian Content, hence the need to use it as a key enabler in the Nigerian Content 10-year strategic roadmap. Amal Technologies Gas Leak Detection Device and Printed Circuit Board Manufacturing Facility at Idu, Abuja, proved that the agency's contributions to the R&D space, the NCDMB boss said. He urged the new Council to "do more to bring up more research and development into Nigeria".

Mr. Abdulmalik Halilu said NCDMB's R&D framework was anchored on seven-policy

thrust: Focus on market-driven research, establishment of world-class R&D Centres of Excellence, establishment of R&D Council, and funding to support R&D, among others.

Commission takes data protection campaign to NCDMB

The Nigerian Data Protection Commission (NPDC) in September visited the Nigerian Content Tower (NCT), the corporate headquarters of Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State. NPDC advised organisations across the country to treat personal data as highly sensitive information by taking appropriate measures to minimise data breaches.

Speaking at a one-day Data Protection and Privacy Induction Training for staff of the Board, facilitators drew attention to the Nigerian Data Protection Act (NDPA), 2023, which aims "to safeguard the rights of individuals regarding their personal data and establish guidelines for organisations handling such data". They highlighted multiple vulnerabilities in current data management systems.

In the lead presentation, Ms. Adaobi Fatima Sanni said data protection is primarily concerned with measures and mechanisms to safeguard data against unauthorised access, as well as breaches or loss. She noted that under Section 37 of The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as Amended), "The privacy of citizens, their homes, correspondence, telephone conversations and telegraphic communications" is "guaranteed and protected."

To ensure compliance with the NPD Act, she urged organisations to develop a data privacy policy, process data in line with the principles of the NDPA and designate a senior staff officer as a data protection officer, among other key measures.

Mr. Ene Ette, Acting General Manager, Planning Research and Statistics (PRS) at NCDMB, expressed appreciation to the NDPC for the

training provided to the Board's workers at no cost, promising that the knowledge obtained would be put into practice.

NCDMB, Petroleum Commission Ghana sign MoU on local content

The Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) in October signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Petroleum Commission, Ghana (PCG) towards developing and deepening local content regulations in the country's upstream petroleum sector. The signing ceremony took place on the sidelines of the 2024 Annual Local Content Conference and Exhibition held at Takoradi, Ghana.

The MoU is valid for three years and is centred on the desire to build synergies through information sharing and transfer of skills for mutual interest and benefits. Under the MoU, NCDMB will offer PCG strategic advice and guidance in the areas of laws, frameworks, knowledge exchange, procedures for baseline study, data collection on capacities in Ghana. It will also design strategic plan for local content implementation in Ghana and other capacity development initiatives.

The MoU will also foster collaboration, provide opportunity for global experience, and facilitate advancement of knowledge, leading to local content development in the upstream petroleum sector. In addition, NCDMB will offer technical support to develop the framework in formulating regulations and policies for PCG Local Content laws.

Mr. Abdulmalik Halilu, and the Director Legal Services, Mr. Naboth Onyesoh, Esq, representing the Executive Secretary, signed for NCDMB while Mr. Egbert Fabille Jnr, Executive Secretary/Chief Executive Officer of Petroleum Commission, Ghana, and the Acting General Counsel, Nana Akua Agyei, signed on behalf of their organisation.

Addressing the conference, Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe urged African oil and gas service companies to collaborate and leverage their unique capabilities and capacities. This approach, he said, would grow African local content sustainably and help to meet the aspirations of the African Continental Free Trade Area.

Abia Industrial Park to enjoy NCDMB's support

The Abia Innovation and Industrial Park (AIIP) at Owaza, will enjoy the support of the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB). Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary, NCDMB said this in September when he met with the Governor of Abia State, Dr. Alex Otti, at the request of the state government.

The meeting followed the Board's participating Local Content Digest, 2024

in the groundbreaking of the AIIP a year earlier, where both sides made a mutual promise to share experience for the successful delivery of the project.

The Board's experience in delivering industrial parks is well regarded, as it had completed the pilot phase of its Nigerian Oil and Gas Parks Scheme (NOGaPS) at Emeyal 1 in Bayelsa State and at Odukpani in Cross River State, which will come on stream soon. Other oil and gas parks the Board is developing are located in Ikwe Community, Onna Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State; Oguta in Oguta Local Government Area, Imo State; and Ilaje, in Ilaje Local Government Area, Ondo State.

NOGaPS was conceived by the Board to develop facilities close to oil fields where manufacturing of oil and gas components as well as research and development could be carried out. The Board adopted a shared-services strategy, providing power, security, and infrastructure - road network, water, waste treatment- among others, for businesses that are to be located on the site. This enables manufacturers to focus on their core business of manufacturing, thereby lowering the cost of operations.

Daewoo's galvanising plant commissioned for Train 7 Project

The 10,000 tonnes per annum galvanising plant constructed by Daewoo Engineering Nigeria Limited, one of the engineering, procurement, and construction (EPC) contractors of the Nigeria LNG Limited (NLNG) Train 7 Project, has been commissioned by Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary, NCDMB.

The event took place in August at Daewoo Galvanising Plant at Abam-Ama, Okrika, Rivers State.

The galvanising plant is one of the capacity development interventions for the Train 7 project. It followed NCDMB's requirement that the execution of major EPC projects in the country includes the development of a legacy invest-

ment that would close a critical capacity gap in the oil and gas industry.

The Executive Secretary praised NLNG and Daewoo Engineering for responding positively to the Nigerian Content legacy requirement, saying the commissioning of the hot deep galvanising plant had increased Nigeria's galvanising capacity to over 180,000 tonnes/annum with other facilities established by Dorman-Long Engineering, Sparkwest Steel Industries and African Industries Group. He said the plants and other strategic Nigerian Content investments could enjoy patronage from sister African countries, courtesy of the Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement.

Mr. Andy Odeh, erstwhile General Manager, External Relations and Sustainable Development, who represented NLNG's Managing Director, emphasised the gas company's commitment to achieving its Nigerian Content objectives in the Train 7 Project. "The visit to the Daewoo Galvanising Plant is a further 'show-and-tell' of our compliance with the NOGICD Act and our sincere vision of being a globally competitive LNG company helping build a better Nigeria," he said.

NCDMB retains top ranking as the most efficient and transparent agency in Nigeria

The Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) has retained its top ranking in business efficiency and transparency among ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs), as captured in the latest assessment by the Presidential Enabling Business Environment Council (PEBEC).

In the '2024 Half Year Transparency and Efficiency Compliance Report (January 2024-June 2024),' released on in August by PEBEC, the Board scored 71.6 percent in *Efficiency Compliance* and 100 percent in *Transparency Assessment*, to emerge with an *Overall BFA Performance* score of 80.1 percent. The Overall Business Facilitation Act Performance of MDAs, as explained by PEBEC, was based on



R&D: Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary, NCDMB with the newly Inaugurated Research & Development Council Members in Lagos.



Mr. Andy Odeh, erstwhile General Manager, External Relations and Sustainable Development, NLNG Limited; Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary, NCDMB; Mr. Young Phil Oh, Deputy Director, Construction, NLNG Train 7 Project; Mr. Abdulmalik Halilu, Director, Monitoring and Evaluation, NCDMB with other officials of the NCDMB, NLNG, Daewoo and representatives of IOCs at the commissioning the Daewoo Engineering and Construction Nigeria Limited Galvanising Plant in Okrika LGA, Rivers State.

“using an efficiency and transparency scale weighted at 70 percent and 30 percent, respectively.”

With the latest Report, NCDMB has retained the top ranking for 30 consecutive months, having first secured the coveted position in the January 2022-June 2022 review period and subsequently in the second half of that year and the whole of 2023.

Under the Efficiency Compliance Ranking, PE-BEC focused its evaluation on “adherence to service level agreements (SLAs), cost management, procedural efficiency, One Government directive, and instances of Default Approval, as provided in the Business Facilitation Act, 2022”. For Transparency Ranking, the focus was on “how effectively MDAs make essential information accessible to the public” with particular emphasis on “clarity and completeness of published details on service level agreements, operating procedures, eligibility requirements, timelines and fees”.

Forty MDAs, under PEBEC Priority categorization, were covered in the 2024 Half Year Transparency and Efficiency Compliance Report.

BEAMCO receives plaudits for in-country equipment assembly

Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary, NCDMB, has expressed delight at the growing in-country assembly of equipment required in the oil and gas industry. He spoke during his visit to BEAMCO Nigeria Limited in August.

The Executive Secretary praised the Nigeria Liquefied Natural Gas (NLNG) Limited, Saipem-Daewoo Joint Venture, and BEAMCO Limited for boosting in-country value addition. He said locally assembled pumps and valves were set for installation and pre-commissioning preparations on NLNG Train-7 project.

Speaking at the load-out ceremony at BEAMCO's facility at Apapa, Lagos, the NCDMB boss noted sourcing such vital components in-country was made possible by the Equipment

Component Manufacturing Initiative (ECMI) launched by the NCDMB in 2013.

The initiative necessitated the issuance of Nigerian Content Equipment Certificate (NCEC) as a requirement for participation in equipment supply in the oil and gas industry. The implementation ensured that the NLNG, through its main contractor, Saipem-Daewoo, awarded a contract to BEAMCO for the supply of 17 API (American Petroleum Institute) Pumps and 19 Control Valves in line with NCDMB's Approved Vendor List for NLNG Train-7 project.

Among the components and accessories sent forth at the event were four pumps (2 Reflux pumps and 2 Amine booster pumps) and five valves (2 Mark 100 valves, 1 Mark One valve and 2 flowtop valves).

The Executive Secretary was accompanied by some senior management of the NCDMB, including the Director, Monitoring and Evaluation, Mr. Abdulmalik Halilu, and Director, Finance and Personnel Management, Mr. Ifeanyi Ukoha.

Changes coming to enhance Nigerian Content Fund

Changes that will enhance Nigerian Content Intervention (NCI) Fund and increase its impact and efficiency are being put together by the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB). This was announced by Engr. Felix Omatsola, Executive Secretary of the Board, at the quarterly engagement forum with the Bank of Industry (BoI), custodians of the fund, in June in Lagos.

The Executive Secretary confirmed that the NCI Fund had since its inception, played a crucial role in transforming the Nigerian oil and gas industry. He noted that by providing essential financial support, the fund had empowered many Nigerian companies and fostered local capacity development as well as promoted sustainable growth, extending to linkage sectors. “We will be proposing several strategic changes that will further enhance the impact and efficiency of the NCI Fund,” Engr. Ogbe declared.

The Nigerian Content Intervention Fund (NCI Fund) is a portion of the Nigerian Content Development Fund (NCDF), which was set up by Section 104 of the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development (NOGICD) Act. The NCDF is contributed by one percent deduction from contracts awarded in the upstream sector of the Nigerian oil and gas industry.

The NCI Fund is the most successful fund scheme in the country, considering the faithful repayment by beneficiaries and the growth of the fund. The Bank of Industry carries out quarterly project monitoring on the loan beneficiaries, while the NCDMB holds an annual monitoring review on the fund scheme and beneficiaries.

NCDMB unveils MAVIS app for marine assets real time data access

NCDMB has unveiled the Marine Vessel Information System Software (MAVIS), a platform to boost access to in-country marine vessel capacities, during an industry stakeholders meeting in September in Lagos.

When activated, the application will enable stakeholders conduct inventory searches of vessels and vendors, verification of licences, certifications and status of assets of all marine assets operating in Nigerian and beyond using integrated APIs linked to several global marine asset databases. The app also contains databases of government agencies in the Nigerian petroleum and marine industry. The app will be available on mobile and desktop devices.

Engr. Jefferson Tuatonga, General Manager, Upstream Monitoring, NCDMB said the Board identified gaps in its NOGICQS Marine Categorisation. He said the Board had been working to create a system that would close the gaps and strengthen the Board's ability to monitor compliance and effectively categorise assets in the marine sector to enable stakeholders have real time access to data on marine assets.

Mina Ofriokuma, Chairman of the Nigerian Content Consultative Forum (NCCF), Shipping and Logistic Sectorial Working Group (S&L-SWG), who presented the demo app, said some of its value propositions include robust repository for marine assets, improved administration and governance, efficiency in operations and cost reduction. He explained that the platform would enhance port utilisation and operations, lead to improved logistics, safety and environmental standards, as well as facilitate a reduction in downtime, enhance risk assessment and underwriting and ensure improved fleet management.

Gas development will lead Nigeria to prosperity – Ekpo

Hon. Ekperikpe Ekpo, Minister of State for Petroleum Resources (Gas), said the Federal Government is determined to harness the nation's gas resources for economic prosperity. The minister said this in August in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, when he visited NCDMB facilities and projects, where he serves as the co-chair of the Governing Council of the Board.

He underlined President Bola Tinubu's support for the gas sector with initiatives across the entire value chain. Federal Government's drive, said the minister, was geared to lower the cost of transportation, the cost of living and impact every part of the country positively.

erations, and discuss how to continue driving local content development in the nation's gas sector.

Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary of NCDMB, thanked the Minister for visiting the Board's facilities and assured him of the commitment of the management and staff of the Board to supporting the Federal Government's economic aspirations.

The minister and his entourage toured NCDMB's facilities, including the Technology Innovation and Incubation Centre (TICC), listened to presentations by three incubates on their technology solutions and how NCDMB was supporting them from concept to commercialisation. The team also visited the NCDMB Conference Hotel project, currently undergoing construction, the NCDMB gas hub at Polaku, Yenagoa, as well as the 10 megawatts gas-power plant, which supplies electricity to the Nigerian Content Tower and selected offices of the Bayelsa State government.

NCDMB, Senate Committee collaborate on Local Content

How to improve the implementation of the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development (NOGICD) Act, 2010 was the major outcome of a three-day retreat organised for members of the Senate committee on Local Content and senior management of NCDMB.

The Executive Secretary said the Board was focused on fulfilling the mandate set out in the NOGICD Act- to build the capacity of Nigerian companies and people participating in the oil and gas industry and to monitor the compliance of oil and gas companies. He stressed that the mandate had not changed, despite the change of leadership in the Board. Ogbe promised to sustain the growth of Nigerian Content in the oil and gas industry.

The Executive Secretary maintained that NCDMB would continue to operate as a business enabler and support the value chain efficiency and project delivery. "Consistent with the recent Presidential Directives on Local Content and in line with our Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the oil and gas industry, we are simplifying our processes and accelerating our approval timeline to enable business delivery," he said.

Senator Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Local Content, lauded the successes that have trailed the implementation of the NOGICD Act, especially in the development of critical assets and the emergence of Nigerians with the requisite skills in delivering complex projects and lead operations in the oil and gas industry.

Key directorates of the Board, including the Director, Monitoring and Evaluation, Mr. Abdulmalik Halilu, made presentations in specific areas. Halilu discussed how monitoring activities were carried out to ensure that operating and service companies comply with the provisions of the NOGICD Act. The Director, Projects Certification and Authorisation Division, Engr. Abayomi Bamidele, urged stakeholders in the Nigerian oil and gas industry to ensure that at least one final investment decision (FID) was taken every year to keep oil and gas service facilities, investments and employees engaged.

Bristow Helicopters plans key collaborations with NCDMB

A partnership between NCDMB and Bristow Helicopters will yield immense benefits for the oil and gas industry, Mr. Oladapo Oyeleke, Managing Director of Bristow Helicopters Nigeria has said. Oyeleke said this when he visited Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary, NCDMB, in May, at the Board's headquarters in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

The Bristow Helicopters boss said there were opportunities in setting up a centre of excellence for the training of manpower for the aviation subsector of the oil and gas industry and the introduction of search and rescue support services in the oil and gas industry. The third possible area of collaboration, he noted, was the planned investment in light-wing aircraft for the sub-sector. This, he added, would require training Nigerians to man the fleet.

The Managing Director, who led the company's team that met with the Executive Secretary, acknowledged Bristow had found com-



NCDMB management and staff with the management of Bell Oil & Gas Limited during a courtesy visit to the Nigerian Content Tower, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

Ekpo said 60 percent of NCDMB's investments were gas-based and advised that new projects by the agency should focus on Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) because of the direct impact on transportation and cost of living. He hailed the NCDMB for its remarkable strides in promoting local content and for constructing the magnificent 17-storey headquarters building, signifying impressive growth and depth of local capacity.

Ekpo added that the visit gave him an opportunity to meet with management and staff of the Board, learn more about the agency's op-

The retreat, with the theme: Creating Synergy for Sustainable Local Content Development, was held in July in Abuja.

Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary of NCDMB, stressed the importance of collaboration with relevant stakeholders in managing and growing Nigerian content in the oil and gas industry. He said the retreat was a key platform for actualising the needed collaboration, describing the National Assembly as one of the most important stakeholders to collaborate with.

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fort in the Nigerian environment and provided services to diverse clients within and outside the Nigerian oil and gas industry using its fleet of aircrafts. “We carry 3,000 passengers every day. The magnitude of our impact cannot be over emphasised,” he said In the area of human capacity development, Mr. Oyeleke said Bristow had trained over 300 Nigerian pilots and engineers in partnership with the NCDMB. “We have done very well in human capacity development. We trained Nigerian pilots and engineers heading the aviation departments of most international oil companies,” he added,

Welcoming his guests, Engr. Ogbe praised Bristow Helicopters for professionalism and excellent services. He expressed interest in the opportunities presented by the new light-wing aircrafts, confirming that the Board would seek to train young Nigerians to acquire capabilities required to operate the aircraft.

African extractive economies urged to adopt local content

The adoption of local content practices that have worked well in the oil and gas industry, in the extractive economies have the potential to transform such economies. Dr. Ama Ikuru, Director, Capacity Building, NCDMB has said. Ikuru spoke at this year’s African Natural Resources and Energy Investment Summit in July in Abuja.

In a keynote address delivered on behalf of the Executive Secretary of NCDMB, Dr. Ikuru urged managers in the extractive industry to integrate local capabilities and resources into the delivery of opportunities and projects in a safe and environmentally responsible manner to achieve a high level of economic success. “Local content has a direct link to the economic performance of a country and strengthens the gross domestic product of the economy. The higher the level of local content of a country, the higher the level of development, standard of living, gross domestic product, life

expectancy, and the overall productivity of the country,” said Dr. Ikuru.

Drawing from Nigeria’s two decades of local content practice in the oil and gas sector, he prescribed a number of measures that would aid the exploitation of resources in the extractive industry in sister African countries. The director urged them to develop clear and compelling local content legislation that would define targets and guidelines for successful integration of the people and thus build trust. In concluding his presentation, Dr. Ikuru enjoined all African states to treat the environment as a precious treasure handed to them to keep for posterity.

This year’s Africa Natural Resources and Energy Investment Summit (AFNIS24), had the theme: Natural Resources for Economic Development, with attendees drawn from several African countries with significant mining activities.

NCDMB, GACN inaugurate joint working committee on gas commercialisation

The Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) in July constituted a Joint Working Team (JWT) with the Gas Aggregator Company Nigeria (GACN) Limited on gas utilisation and commercialisation.

Speaking at the inauguration at the Board’s liaison office in Abuja, Mr. Abdulmalik Halilu, Director, Monitoring and Evaluation, who represented the Executive Secretary, acknowledged the correlation between the mandates of the NCDMB and GACN. Mr. Halilu said the aim of setting up the team was to jointly develop a roadmap and strategies on new modalities for achieving collaboration and coordination among key stakeholders towards the effective commercialisation of Nigeria’s gas resources, thereby enhancing market penetration, fostering investment, and promoting sustainable growth in the Nigerian gas subsector.

Mr. Chijioke Uzoho, Managing Director, Gas Aggregator Company Nigeria Limited, said the Federal Government declaration of Decade of Gas was focused on transforming Nigeria into a gas-powered economy by 2030. “We need to develop favourable market-based policies and a natural gas transmission and distribution network; increase availability and access to CNG refueling stations and public awareness and begin with bi-fuel/dual-fuel automobiles,” he added.

Mr. Halilu and Mr. Uzoho will serve as co-chairpersons on the steering committee. Members from the NCDMB include Ms. Tassalla Tersugh, Mr. Adedamola Aderibigbe, Mr. Ibrahim Sule, and Mr. Brilliant Okon. Representatives from the GACN are Oche Agbese, Tari Mayor-Bright, Somkene Tassie, Muhammed Abdulhamid, Kufre Medo and Ekene Ebenebe. Market Development Initiatives and Strategies, Collaborative Coordination of Industry Events, and Industrial and Innovative Park Development are JWT’s key activity areas covered by the terms of reference.

SAIPEM Daewoo UJV, NCDMB deepen ICT education in Bonny

SAIPEM Daewoo Unincorporated Joint Venture (SDUJV), in partnership with the NCDMB, in June commissioned and handed over a fully equipped Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Centre to Bonny National Grammar School (BNGS), Bonny, in a joint effort to foster digital education in the community. Facilities at the Centre include 31 units of computers, software, high-performance servers, security system (Advanced Firewall), videoconferencing equipment, an interactive screen, and power back-up.

Mr. Patrick June, Manager, Midstream Operations at the NCDMB who represented the Executive Secretary, said the centre would deliver tangible benefits to youths and able-bodied men and women from the oil and gas producing community, which should be grabbed to enhance development. “The Centre represents more than just computers and Internet facilities and accessories. It’s a symbol of progress and a direct response to past challenges. We envision this Centre as a launchpad for the students of Bonny National Grammar School,” said Mr. June.

SDUJV said the initiative was borne out of the need to execute a capacity development programme in the community in line with its corporate social responsibility (CSR). “Our principal goal is to positively impact Bonny community by enhancing ICT access, awareness and fostering skills development among its youths,” said the company’s spokesperson. Mr. Gift Nweke, Principal of the school, expressed profound appreciation to SDUJV and the NCDMB for the donation of such a facility to the school. He assured the donors that students would make the best use of them.



NCDMB, GACN inaugurate joint working committee on gas commercialisation.

In closing remarks, Mr. Taridouye Gagariga, Manager, NCDMB Properties, urged the school management to ensure the equipment were well protected. He urged residents to use them properly.

Workshop to deepen oil and gas law practice held in Yenagoa

A two-day capacity building workshop on Nigerian Energy Law and Practice to deepen oil and gas jurisprudence was organised in July at the Nigerian Content Tower, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State. Hosted by the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) in conjunction with the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) and the Institute of Continuing Legal Education (ICLE). The workshop was attended by 700 lawyers drawn from states in the South-south.

Tobenna Erojikwe, Chairman, NBA-ICLE, said few indigenous lawyers understood issues about the industry and the governing laws. The lawyer said the Nigerian authorities spent an average of US\$230 million yearly on the services of foreign lawyers. According to him, the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited (NNPCL) and sister federal agencies connected with the sector claimed that Nigerian lawyers lacked the requisite knowledge and expertise, hence their dependence on legal practitioners from overseas countries.

He said the workshop was part of efforts of the NBA-ICLE to raise awareness and increase the knowledge of Nigerian lawyers on industry-related issues. Erojikwe stressed that “money that belongs to a country must come to citizens of the citizenry”.

The facilitators included Prof. Bayo Adaralegbé, Head, Energy Group, Babalakin and Co, who dwelt on *Upstream Operations in Nigeria: Legal and Regulatory Framework*, and Sir (Dr.) Serena Dokubo-Spiff, of Serenity Legal Union and Partners, spoke on *Lawyer in the Nigerian Petroleum Sector*.

NCDMB lists gains of NOGICD Act at Namibia Oil and Gas Conference

The Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development (NOGICD) Act, 2010, and its successes in resetting oil and gas industry spending and in-country capacity development was the fulcrum of a presentation by Esueme Dan Kikile, Esq., General Manager, Corporate Communications and Zonal Coordination, who represented NCDMB's Executive Secretary at the 2024 Namibia Oil and Gas Conference in Windhoek, in August.

Speaking on the theme of the conference: *Local Content and Sustainable Inclusive Economic Growth*, Kikile noted that recent discoveries of hydrocarbon deposits had increased the oil

and gas reserves in the continent to about 126 billion barrels of oil and 614 trillion cubic feet of gas.

He noted that the adoption of local content policy for the oil and gas industry and other resources was “one veritable means through which African countries can ensure that the utilisation of our resources will translate to energy security, economic development, and industrialisation of the continent”. He alluded to the Nigerian experience to buttress his point.

Kikile, who shared NCDMB's experience as a major regulator responsible for deepening and driving local content in the Nigerian oil and gas industry, said: “A successful local content policy must entail the deployment of six key parameters, namely: regulatory framework, gap analysis, capacity building, funding and incentives, research and development, as well as access to market. A law, or decree, depending on the political arrangement in a country, sets the framework and boundaries for all local content practitioners. In Nigeria, the NOGICD Act of 2010 is the regulatory framework that drives local content policy.”

NCDMB boss pledges continued support for indigenous companies

The Executive Secretary, Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB), Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, has assured Nigerian oil and gas service companies of continued support to sustain the impressive growth in local content and to boost their production operations.

Speaking during a facility tour of the 10,000-square-metre fabrication yard of Lee Engineering and Construction Company Limited, Warri, Delta State, in July, Ogbe recalled similar visits to other service companies across the country. The Executive Secretary said he was highly impressed by the facilities and competencies acquired in the pursuit of local content development.

Impressed by the various top-grade engineering equipment and industrial machinery in the expansive operational base of the company at NPA, he said: “Seeing is believing, I've come, I have seen! I'm impressed with your facilities.” He congratulated the company on its 34 years of active engagement in engineering, construction, operations, and maintenance (EPCOM) services with major oil and gas industry players.

Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Lee Engineering and Construction Company, Chief (Dr.) Leemon Ikpea, while thanking the Executive Secretary and his entourage for the visit. He said the company boasted several subsidiaries operating in Warri, Port Harcourt, as well as in Europe and the United States. Recalling the state of the oil and gas industry in Nigeria

in the early 1990s, Ikpea noted that the dominance by foreign companies and production inputs had a negative impact on the growth of local service companies. The enactment of the NOGICD Act, 2010, marked a turning point for the industry and the nation as indigenous oil and gas companies began to vie for and execute projects, he said.

Chief Ikpea lauded NCDMB for living up to the billing as an enabler of businesses.

Importance of manufacturing, R&D to local content reiterated at MAN AGM

The Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) in November in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, outlined its programmes designed to enhance local manufacturing and research and innovation. It noted that the growth of Nigerian Content demands the strengthening of in-country industrial capabilities.

Speaking at the 40th annual general meeting (AGM) of the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN), Rivers and Bayelsa branch, Dr. Obinna Ezeobi, Deputy Manager, Corporate Communications and Zonal Coordination, who represented the Executive Secretary, said the Board was working towards a target of 70 per cent local content by 2027 and that substantial growth of manufacturing capabilities in the oil and gas industry was imperative for success.

“Local content in the oil sector is not the mere award of contracts to Nigerian firms but is majorly the manufacturing of components required by that industry and linkage sectors, which the NCDMB has undertaken to promote through the establishment of the Nigerian and Gas Parks Scheme (NOGaPS), a US\$50 million Nigerian Oil and Gas Parks Manufacturing Product Fund, and Equipment Components Manufacturing Initiative (ECMI),” he said.

According to him, the idea of NOGaPS, for which critical infrastructure, like power and access roads, are being provided, is “to develop oil and gas parks close to oil fields where we can incubate the manufacturing of machinery and components of equipment used in the oil and gas industry and linkage sectors”.

The Equipment Components Manufacturing Initiative, introduced by the Board in 2013, is meant to encourage original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) and their representatives in Nigeria “to set up factories in the country for the purpose of manufacturing or assembling components, spares and packages which are utilised in the Nigerian oil and gas industry”.

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NCDMB, JTF pledge to support oil industry security

NCDMB and the Joint Task Force for South-south, Operation Delta Safe, have promised to work together to maximise the development of local content in the oil and gas industry and enhance security for the oil and gas industry.

Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary, NCDMB, and his JTF counterpart, Rear Admiral John U. Okeke, made the pledge when Ogbe visited Okeke in May at the military outfit in Igbogene, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

Rear Admiral Okeke examined the connection between the mandate of the NCDMB and that of the JTF, saying the protection of oil and gas facilities and stopping oil theft were critical to the attainment of local content goals. "We are going to assist the Board achieve its mandate. We assure you we'll achieve the common purpose for the good of the nation," said the Admiral.

Engr. Ogbe praised the military "for keeping the nation safe and ensuring that we are all

the Board and Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria (SPDC) to visit companies that deliver pipe coating and related services. The team visited Brightwaters Energy Limited (formerly Willbros Nigeria Limited), Solewant Nigeria Limited, and Pipe Coaters Nigeria, managed by Tenaris Nigeria Limited.

The Executive Secretary said the visits were meant to assess the companies' facilities and determine how the Board could galvanise the industry to patronise them. He stressed the essence of getting first-hand information on in-country capabilities before making key decisions on oil and gas projects. Engr. Ogbe insisted that operating companies must support and patronise local oil and gas service companies in compliance with the provisions of the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development (NOGICD) Act.

The management of the companies the team visited expressed appreciation to the Board. Mr. Scott Gregory, CEO of Brightwaters Energy, conveyed the management's aspiration to return the firm to the peak of its performance.

Rising from the board meeting of Waltersmith Refinery and Petrochemical Company, Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary of NCDMB, said a total dividend of ₦4.5billion had been approved for the Year 2023, pending final approval at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). The company reported a total profit of ₦23.6billion as profit after tax for the same year.

Engr. Ogbe said the receipt of the interim dividend payment was a testament to the strong performance and profitability of the refinery. "The NCDMB is proud to be a part of this success and looks forward to continued collaboration with the company in the future," he said. The Executive Secretary affirmed that the company was upscaling the refinery capacity to 10,000bpd. The expansion project is 44 percent completed and on time to be commissioned by early 2025.

NCDMB's investment in the Waltersmith project was geared to catalyse the industrialisation of the Nigerian oil and gas industry and its linkage sectors, as well as deepen Nigerian



NCDMB management with the management of Bristow Helicopter Nigeria during a courtesy visit to the Nigerian Content Tower, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

safe in Bayelsa". He recalled that President Bola Ahmed Tinubu had called for teamwork, adding: "We have to work as a team to make sure that we grow production in oil and gas operations".

On the team of the Executive Secretary were senior management staff, including Mr. Peter Isu Odo, General Manager, Health, Safety and Environment (HSE), Engr. Mofe Megbele, Senior Technical Assistant to the Executive Secretary; and Dr. Obinna Ezeobi, Deputy Manager, Media and Publicity.

Indigenous pipe coating firms receive support

The Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) has reassured oil and gas stakeholders that service companies and manufacturers that have established capacities in the country will continue to enjoy patronage.

Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary, NCDMB, gave the assurance in May in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, when he led officials of

Dr. Ernest Nwapa, pioneer Executive Secretary of NCDMB and currently Chairman of Tenaris Nigeria, commended the agency's efforts to push local content in the industry and showcased the company's facilities and new investments to the team.

The SPDC team was led by Mr. Lanre Olawuyi, General Manager, Nigerian Content Development.

NCDMB's Waltersmith Modular Refinery investment yields dividend

A major milestone was recorded in April when Waltersmith Refinery and Petrochemical Company paid ₦450million as interim dividend to the NCDMB for the 2023 financial year.

NCDMB had in July 2018 invested US\$10million to acquire 30 percent stake in the 5,000 bpd modular refinery located at Ibigwe, Imo State, in support of government's policy on modular refinery, to stimulate investment and create jobs.

Content in the oil and gas industry. It was the first third-party investment embarked by the Board, and it provided proof of concept and paved the way for other successful investments the Board had made.

NCDMB boss hails Coleman Wires and Cables for capacity development

Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary, NCDMB, has lauded the remarkable accomplishments of Coleman Wires and Cables as a manufacturer of top-grade cables for industrial use and other purposes.

The NCDMB boss said he was particularly impressed by the breakthrough the company had made in the manufacture and deployment of cables for different industries, including fibre optics in the telecommunication sector, which was hitherto entirely dependent on imports and foreign expertise.

At a meeting in March at the Nigerian Content Tower in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, Mr. George Onafowokan, Managing Director/Chief Execu-

tive Officer of the company, narrated how the NCDMB and the implementation of the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Development (NOGICD) Act had led to the success of the Coleman Wires and Cables.

Mr. Onafowokan praised NCDMB for catalysing indigenous businesses, saying his company's success was a testimony to how impactful the Board had been in the implementation of the NOGICD Act, 2010. "What the NCDMB impact creates is sustainable development a continuous drive for local content leads to continuous drive for sustainable growth," he added.

On areas of collaboration, he said: "Coleman Wires and Cables can collaborate with the NCDMB on initiatives aimed at technology transfer and capacity building within the local workforce."

The company's technical capabilities and accomplishments, as presented by its CEO, include low voltage, medium voltage and high voltage cables, earthing cables and conductors; fibre-optic cables (2-288 fibre cables); submarine EPR cables (LV/HV), and construction of a copper and aluminum smelting plant.

Coleman Wires and Cables commenced cables production in 1996.

NCDMB earns US\$1m RoI from NEDOGAS

Nedogas Development Company Limited (NDCL) in April handed over a US\$1million cheque to NCDMB as a part of the return on investment (RoI) on one of the Board's strategic investments.

The cheque was presented by the Chairman of the company, Engr. Emeka Ene when he visited the Nigerian Content Tower in Yenagoa Bayelsa State, where he was received by Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary, NCDMB, and other members of the Board's management.

NEDOGAS Development Company is a joint venture company between Xenergi Limited and NCDMB Capacity Development Intervention Company. Nedogas constructed a 300mmscfd Capacity Kwale Gas Gathering (KGG) and injection facility in the Umusam Community, near Kwale in Delta State. The facility was designed to handle stranded gas resources in Nigeria's OML56 oil province by providing the opportunity for operators in the area to monetise natural gas from their fields through the gas gathering, compression, injection and metering infrastructure for quick market access.

The NCDMB boss noted that the success story of NEDOGAS could be replicated in other oil- and gas-producing communities to minimise gas flaring. "The model should be extended to other parts of the country where gas flaring is continuing. They have shown that with the modular system, we can quickly remove flaring



Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, NCDMB's Executive Secretary, with Mr. George Olutope Onafowokan, Managing Director/CEO, Coleman Wires and Cables, when the company visited the Executive Secretary at the Nigerian Content Tower in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

from our operations in Nigeria," he stated. Mr. Emeka Ene, Chairman of NEDOGAS, conveyed the company's excitement in returning part of the credit and profit. "This proves that NCDMB's investment was a success, and they are getting back that investment. We look forward to further collaboration with the NCDMB to expand the scope. NCDMB is now doing effectively and practically and tangibly what it was set up to do, which is to impact the economy by direct interventions," he said.

The partnership with NEDOGAS is one of NCDMB's 15 strategic investments geared towards actualising the Federal Government's aspirations in key areas of the oil and gas industry.

300 youths benefit as NLNG begins Nigerian Content HCD trainings

The Nigeria Liquefied Natural Gas (NLNG) Limited in November kicked off its Nigerian Content Human Capacity Development (NC-HCD) Basic Training Programme for Train 7 Project with 331 young graduates.

Beneficiaries were drawn from the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content (NOGIC) Joint Qualification System (JQS) portal. Areas of training cover ICT, Engineering, Welding and Fabrication and Non-destructive Testing (NDT), Lifting and Working at Height, Quality Management System, Marine and Offshore Services, and Facility Management and Maintenance.

Engr. Joshua Anemeje, NLNG's Corporate Liaison Manager, said execution of the Train 7 Project has progressed significantly, commending the NCDMB for the support given to the gas company. "We would not be where we are but for the NCDMB; we appreciate the enablement received," he added.

Dr. Ama Ikuru, Director of Capacity Building and Corporate Services at NCDMB was de-

lighted the training finally commenced after a prolonged delay, "in fulfilment of the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development (NOGICD) Act requirement on human capital development."

He said the programme, designed to build a pool of skilled and globally competitive workforce to support the development and growth of the Nigerian oil and gas industry and its linkage sectors, "represents a crucial investment in our country's future, a commitment to the empowerment of the next generation of skilled professionals."

The Capacity Building Director told the trainees that this opportunity was to enable them "to build a strong foundation both in knowledge and practical skills", assuring the young Nigerians of a comprehensive welfare package, which covers feeding, accommodation, and travel.

The training is taking place in Port Harcourt, the Rivers State capital.

NCDMB shares local content experiences with Uganda energy officials

Key officials of the Uganda National Oil Company (UNOC) in June paid a working visit to the NCDMB to learn from the Nigerian agency's achievements.

Welcoming the four-member UNOC delegation at the Nigerian Content Tower in Yenagoa, the Director, Monitoring and Evaluation, Mr. Abdulmalik Halilu, said the visit would open up new vistas for beneficial collaboration in oil and gas operations between Nigeria and Uganda. Citing data on the resource base of African countries in hydrocarbons, he said: "The picture looks very good. What we need to do is to work together on how to foster structured partnership."

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According to director, African oil-producing countries will underperform when they operate in silos.

Mr. Halilu suggested a local content value proposition for Africa, saying the continent's oil and gas producers would be able to deepen regional integration through value chain optimisation.

Describing the anticipated interactions between the UNOC officials and their NCDMB counterparts during the five-day visit as knowledge exchange, the director expressed the hope that there would be exchange programmes between training institutes of both countries. He added that the two organisations had the support of their political leaderships.

Mrs. Jessica Kyeyune, National Content Specialist at UNOC, expressed appreciation for the warm reception and hospitality her team got in Nigeria, and the wide scope of engagements it received to facilitate adequate exposure to critical aspects of local content implementation and enforcement. She said her country was a new entrant into oil and gas operations and that it needed to tap from the knowledge of Nigeria's industry regulator on local content to guide them in the management of the industry.

NCDMB's Project 100 companies explore emerging market

About 35 indigenous oil and gas companies attended an interactive session with a delegation from the Uganda National Oil Company (UNOC), in Port Harcourt, Rivers State capital. The Ugandan team was in Nigeria in June seeking for collaboration and investments in the east African country's petroleum sector.

The event, which was facilitated by the NCDMB, gave the companies, the beneficiaries of the Board's Project 100 initiative, the opportunity to obtain first-hand information on the current state of Uganda's oil and gas industry, where production operations were scheduled to begin in 2025.

Mr. Silas Ajimijaiye, General Manager, Planning, Research and Statistics, lauded the zeal exhibited by the companies. Recalling the beginnings of the initiative in January 2019, he noted that "Project 100 was just an idea; today, it has a life of its own," and that some of the beneficiary indigenous firms "are already making forays into other countries within Africa and beyond".

According to him, NCDMB, in conjunction with the Ministry of Petroleum Resources, set out to create fully indigenous oil and gas companies, nurture them to the next level, enhance their capacities and support them financially through the NCI (Nigerian Content Intervention) Fund. The General Manager said the agency would also help such companies to help find opportunities in the industry.

Also, as part of strategy to create access to markets, Project 100 companies were encouraged to participate in international and local summits where they would meet key players in the industry and business people.

A member of the Ugandan delegation and National Content Specialist at UNOC, Mrs. Jessica Kyeyune, told the participants at the event that they greatly appreciated the reception accorded them and the opportunity they got to interact with the indigenous oil and gas companies in Nigeria.

NCDMB commits to capacity utilisation and patronage of Nigerian service companies

The promotion and deployment of indigenous oil and gas service companies will remain of strategic importance to NCDMB in order to take advantage of the massive development of operational capabilities since the implementation of the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development (NOGICD) Act over the years.

This was the submission of Mr. Abdulmalik Halilu, Director, monitoring and Evaluation at NCDMB during the load-out ceremony of OML100 skidded ejector package, fabricated

and assembled for residual gas recovery by Wilkriss Nigeria Limited, an indigenous company in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. Halilu expressed the Board's excitement at seeing companies make significant breakthroughs in the fabrication space. He commended TotalEnergies and its Joint Venture (JV) partners, sponsors of the project, for providing the opportunity for capacity utilisation by an indigenous company. He hailed Wilkriss for the top-notch quality in project execution.

According to the NCDMB Director, the project was significant in two respects. "First is the output, which is the skid itself. Being able to deliver the right quality on schedule," Halilu said. He described metrics he had observed as quite good, stressing that they were positive for Monitoring and Evaluation. The other leg, he explained, was "where we try to evaluate the outcomes in terms of the jobs created on the back of this project".

He added: "We will be interested in all those metrics: we want to see the manhours covered, the skills developed, probably new capabilities – some of the equipment that you didn't have before but because of the opportunity that TotalEnergies has provided, you're able to acquire them." The director advised the company to update its profile on NCDMB's Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Joint Qualification System (NOGIC-JQS) platform as soon as possible "to show that this is additional capability that you have acquired."

Engr. Naaba Umahi, an Executive Director of Wilkriss, praised NCDMB for honouring the invitation to the load-out ceremony, which he said marked a major milestone not only for the company but the industry and the country. He noted that a project of such magnitude could be executed in-country with a workforce that included 6-G-certified welders who were 100 percent Nigerian. He also commended Total Energies its support all through the project.

FID for Bonga, gas projects takes centre stage as Shell visits NCDMB

The leadership of Shell Companies in Nigeria in February sought the support of the NCDMB to accelerate development of three major oil and gas projects, notably Bonga North Deepwater, as well as HI and HA, which are conventional gas projects.

Mr. Osagie Okunbor, Chairman of Shell Companies in Nigeria (SCIN), conveyed the company's determination to take Final Investment Decision (FID) on some of the major projects, which would benefit the Nigerian oil and gas industry and the national economy.

He gave the assurance that the planned divestment by Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) would not affect any contract the company had signed, while the major projects in the pipeline, especially the gas projects, would be developed under SNEPCo. He added that the divestment was a business realign-



Sen. Heineken Lokpobiri, Minister of State for Petroleum Resources (Oil) (6th Right); Hon. Ekperikpe Ekpo, Minister of State for Petroleum Resources (Gas) (7th Right) with Mr. Mele Kyari, Group Chief Executive Officer, NNPC Limited at the Final Investment Decision Ceremony of the OML58 Ubeta Field Development Project at NNPC Towers in Abuja.

ment that would only affect the shareholding structure of the company while the operations and the staff would remain intact.

Okunbor hinted that the Bonga North project would be a tie-back to unlock about 350 million barrels of oil equivalent and extend the life of Bonga Floating Production Storage and Offloading for another 15 years. He said the company had made appreciable progress in its plans for HI and HA projects, which would supply 50 percent of the gas required for the successful operation of NLNG Train 7 project.

The Chairman underscored the need to develop the gas projects speedily to avoid delaying the Train 7 operation date. Thanking NCDMB for its support for the company's various projects, Okunbor urged the Board to fast-track the approvals on the new projects for accelerated full execution. He added that the economics of the projects were challenging, making it imperative to carefully manage the expenditures for in-country and out-of-country scopes of the project.

The Managing Director of SNEPCo, Mrs. Elahor Aiboni, reiterated that the company's plan to develop the Bonga North project as quickly as possible, to increase the country's crude oil production.

Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary, NCDMB, reiterated that the Board would sustain its momentum in expeditious consideration and approvals of oil and gas projects by meeting the timelines set by the Service Level Agreement (SLA) instituted for shortening the contracting cycle for oil and gas projects.

The executive Secretary urged international oil and gas companies in Nigeria to meet the thresholds set by the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development (NOGICD) Act in their projects and show transparency while being transparent with in the project plans they submit to the Board. He suggested that oil and gas projects should be executed with a win-win mindset, whereby NCDMB is able to meet its mandate and create opportunities for local oil service companies to get engaged and employ Nigerians, while the operating companies deliver their projects profitably and timely.

NCDMB, NBS hold workshop in readiness for baseline census

The NCDMB and the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) have organised a workshop on how to gather credible data on oil and gas industry for companies engaged in well and drilling services and petroleum engineering services, ahead of a new phase of Nigerian Content baseline census.

The workshop, which took place in February in Abuja, was opened by Mr. Silas Ajimijaye, General Manager of Research, Statistics, and Development who represented Director, Planning, Research and Statistics.



Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary, Management and staff of the Board with His Excellency, Sen. Douye Diri, Governor, Bayelsa State during a courtesy visit at the Government House, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

The new baseline census is a follow-up to similar exercises conducted for companies operating in fabrication, design engineering and manufacturing of components used in the oil and gas industry. The baseline census will cover over 200 companies, said Mr. Ajimijaye.

The purpose of the sensitisation workshop, the GM said, was to educate the representatives of the service companies on the importance of baseline data collection. The exercise will create a credible database for periodic gap analysis of service companies in the sector. Ajimijaye added that the data collated from the baseline census would be used by the government for policy formulation and enable the Board to grow local content. The baseline census will also help the Board to identify the areas that create the highest mileage among wells, drilling and petroleum engineering services.

Mr. Michael Akinola, Head of Data Processing and Analysis at NBS, lauded the collaboration between NCDMB and data agency, reiterating the importance of incorporating stakeholders in robust data gathering.

Dorman Long Marks 75 years of operation in Nigeria

Foremost engineering company, Dorman Long Engineering Limited, has marked 75 years of operations in Nigeria. Dr. Timi Austen-Peters, Chairman of the company, announced the milestone when he visited the NCDMB in January.

He lauded NCDMB's commitment to the growth of local content, particularly for the support it offered to the fabrication subsector of the Nigerian oil and gas industry.

The Chairman underscored NCDMB's contribution to the success of Dorman Long and other fabrication firms, noting that the Board ensured that international and indigenous operating oil and gas companies patronise local service companies.

Engr. Chris Ijeli, Managing Director of the company, traced Dorman Long's history to 1948. He said the company had delivered several iconic projects, including railway projects, UAC and PZ warehouses and the first Niger Bridge. Engr. Ijeli said some of the capacities the company developed in the oil and gas industry had been deployed to other sectors of the economy, including its partnership with the Nigerian Navy at the Lagos Dockyard.

Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary of NCDMB, commended Dorman Long Engineering for its decades of service to the Nigerian economy. He assured the company of the Board's continuous support to enable it growth further. The Executive Secretary described the company as a role model for local startups, particularly in quality-of-service delivery and resilience.

Mr. Abdulmalik Halilu, Director of Monitoring and Evaluation at NCDMB, hailed Dorman Long Engineering for outliving its founding fathers and leveraging its competencies and capabilities in other sectors.

Chevron, NCDMB parley on incentives, speedy approvals of oil industry projects

Chevron Nigeria Limited has called for incentives to boost new investments in the oil and gas industry. Mr. Cosmas Iwueze, Deputy Managing Director of the company, made the suggestion when he led the company's officials to visit Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary, NCDMB, in February at the Nigerian Content Tower, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

Mr. Iwueze commended the Executive Secretary for adopting collaboration and pushing to increase crude oil production in Nigeria. He stressed the need to produce crude oil at competitive costs, saying the primary aspiration of oil companies and the Federal Government is to ramp up Nigeria's crude oil production and shore up the revenue accruing to the national coffers.

Trends

The Deputy Managing Director noted that international oil and gas companies in Nigeria compete for capital with their sister operations in other oil producing nations. “The capital we need for big oil and gas investments is domiciled with global investors. We need to always present Nigeria as an investor-friendly destination where people can come and do business,” he added.

Iwueze announced that the company was working on some major projects in deepwater and Escravos gas-to-liquids (EGTL). The Deputy Managing Director said he looked forward to receiving the Board’s support and collaboration when the projects get consideration and approvals.

The Executive Secretary restated the Board’s commitment to accelerated approvals of requests and documents submitted by operating oil and gas companies. The goal, he said, was to ensure speedy development of projects and contribute to increased oil production.

He emphasised the need for all oil and gas companies to comply with the provisions of the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development (NOGICD) Act. Engr. Ogbe also encouraged oil companies to see NCDMB as partners, adding: “We want to create the enabling environment that will minimise conflicts with international oil companies (IOCs) and attract investments into the sector. We want to create job opportunities for our youths and help achieve the economic objectives of President Bola Tinubu. We want to make international oil companies comfortable and reverse the exit of foreign investors because they create jobs, and we need all hands on the deck.”

Total Energies promises to raise local content bar with Ubeta

Mr. Matthieu Bouyer, Managing Director and Country Chair, Total Energies E&P Nigeria Limited, said new, massive projects will push local content boundaries. Bouyer spoke when he led his team on a visit to the Board in Janu-

ary at the Abuja liaison office. Final investment decision (FID) on the Ubeta gas project and some other big projects would follow shortly, he declared.

The Managing Director said the company had an outstanding track record of developing key oil and gas projects in the last 10 years across the country. Some of the projects, he explained, were in deepwater as well as shallow water, creating Nigerian Content records, such as the fabrication of six modules of Egina’s Floating Production Storage and Offloading (FPSO) vessel in Nigeria. The MD also said the company was determined to unlock new projects in Nigeria, and solicited the continued cooperation of the NCDMB for accelerated Nigerian Content reviews and approvals. He added that the Ubeta project was designed to contribute gas to the Nigeria Liquefied Natural Gas (NLNG) plant and meet other domestic gas supply needs.

According to him, other projects on the horizon include the Preowei deepwater project, situated at OML 130, north of Egina field. He promised that the company would work closely with the NCDMB to achieve speedy development of the project for increased crude oil production and revenue for the country.

Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary of NCDMB, assured the TotalEnergies E&P team that the Board would fast-track the approvals the company needed to deliver speedily on its oil and gas projects. Referring to the Service Level Agreement (SLA) instituted by the Board with industry’s key stakeholders for shortening contracting cycle, the NCDMB helmsman promised that the Board would strive to improve the turnaround time for its approvals on projects.

He restated the commitment of the NCDMB to create an enabling environment that would attract investments and new projects into the sector, thereby creating jobs for youths and addressing insecurity in the polity, in line with President Bola Tinubu Administration’s Re-

newed Hope Agenda. The Executive Secretary urged the company to comply with the provisions of the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development (NOGICD) Act, assuring that the Board would support all bankable oil and gas projects and grant accelerated approvals when they meet the specified Nigerian Content regulations.

Another issue both sides discussed was the commitment of TotalEnergies E&P to aggregate the Human Capacity Development (HCD) Fund on its projects and use it for strategic HCD initiatives, as stipulated in the Guideline for Nigerian Content Human Capital Development Implementation Strategy introduced by the NCDMB in June 2020. The ongoing reconciliation of Total Energies E&P’s remittance of the Nigerian Content Development Fund (NCDF) was also deliberated upon.

AfCFTA: NCDMB advocates database skills, goods and services uniformity

As implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) continues to unfold, NCDMB has called for the removal of visa restrictions among African nations, creation of a database of available skills, and simplification of cross-border labour mobility.

Dr. Ama Ikuru, the Executive Secretary, Director of Corporate Services, NCDMB, who represented the Executive Secretary, said this in the keynote address he delivered February in Lagos at the Nigerian Local Content AfCFTA Energy Summit organised by the Board in partnership with the Petroleum Technology Association of Nigeria (PETAN).

The director harped on the need to unlock barriers that inhibit free intra-Africa trade, advising the continent’s leaders to create unified codes and standards for goods and services, reform the services sector, and enhance trade facilitation programmes.

Mr. Abdulmalik Halilu, Director of Monitoring and Evaluation, NCDMB, urged oil-producing countries to specialise in different manufacturing and service areas of the oil and gas industry, as well as develop their competencies to the right specifications to enable them trade with one another.

In seeking synergy among African countries, Dr. Omar Farouk Ibrahim, Secretary General of the African Petroleum Producers Organisation (APPO), said no African oil-producing country could single-handedly provide the financial, technological, and marketing resources needed to be self-sufficient. He added: “If resources are pooled together, African countries can go far.” Ibrahim advised Nigerian oil and gas companies to be diplomatic when engaging their counterparts from other African countries and to coopt other nationals when planning to operate in foreign jurisdictions.



Mr. Abdulmaik Halilu, Director, Monitoring and Evaluation, NCDMB with officials of the NCDMB and organizers of the Triple Helix Conference at Abuja.

NCDMB, ICPC team up to enhance procurement and human resource processes

In a bid to deepen transparency and excellence, the NCDMB in March partnered the training arm of the Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) in risk assessment of procurement and human resources processes.

Initiated by the Anti-Corruption and Transparency Unit (ACTU) of the NCDMB as part of its 2024 Action Plan, the comprehensive risk assessment aimed at identifying and assessing corruption risks in processes by evaluating the effectiveness of existing control mechanisms and recommending improvements to mitigate identified risks and promoting a culture of integrity and ethical behaviour.

Engr. Felix Omatsola Egbe, Executive Secretary of the Board, who welcomed the ICPC team, said the collaboration signified the Board's dedication to ensuring the integrity of its procurement processes and the effectiveness of its HR practices. "Insights gained from the exercise will not only enable us to identify and mitigate potential risks but also to optimise our operations and enhance organisational resilience," he said.

The NCDMB boss added: "As we work hand-in-hand with the esteemed professionals from ICPC Academy, we strengthen our collective expertise and empower our staff to navigate the complexities of governance with confidence and proficiency."

The work of the project team included in-depth review of policies, procedures, and practices within the aforesaid departments.

NCDMB to sponsor new R&D projects

NCDMB has announced its plans to support new research and development (R&D) projects as part of its Technology Innovation and Incubation Strategy. The new R&D projects will add to the 14 applied research projects the Board currently sponsors at various stages of technological readiness. They include the Amal Technology, manufacturers of gas leak detection devices and printed circuit board.

Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary, NCDMB, whose keynote address at the 2024 edition of the Triple Helix Nigeria SciBiz Conference in October in Abuja, was delivered by Mr. Silas Ajimajaye, General Manager Research and Statistics, said research and innovation was the lifeblood of Nigeria's hydrocarbon industry. "NCDMB has consistently applied local content development to enhance research and commercialisation of innovative solutions for the country's oil and gas sector. This way, it hopes to accelerate the cycle of innovation and wealth creation by fostering partnerships among universities, research institutions, and industry players," he said. The Executive Sec-

retary added: "The \$50 million Nigerian Content Research and Development Fund was created by the Board in 2020 from the Nigerian Content Development Fund (NCDF) and was designed to provide much-needed research funds in the oil and gas R&D space."

In his presentation, the President, Triple Helix Nigeria, Mr. Abdulmalik Halilu, said the THN, whose membership has grown from an initial 12 founding members to 240, realised that research and innovation have fuelled human and societal development and that the body was seeking to catalyse enterprises so oriented.

According to him, THN is committed to fostering value creation in the Nigerian economy in line with local content philosophy of looking inwards, promoting the development of technology skillsets required to solve African problems by Africans, promoting strong advocacy platform for building research capabilities in knowledge institutions, and fostering structured partnerships between industry and research community, to attract research-based funding in the direction of Africa-based researchers.

Highlighting the organisation's vision, Halilu, who is Director, Monitoring and Evaluation at the NCDMB, said: "Triple Helix Nigeria seeks to inspire at least 10 knowledge institutions to accelerate innovation and have at least 10 percent equity in 10 listed companies in the next 10 years."

Chairman of the Planning Committee of the Conference, Prof Eucharia Nwaichi, said her members were "so joyous to witness 156 authors submitting 47 high-quality papers on various subjects that directly contribute to the theme of the Conference, which is: Integrating Research, Innovation, and Policy: Triple Helix Pathway to Research Commercialisation. She expressed confidence that "together, we can build a robust ecosystem where research meets industry, innovation drives policy, and Nigeria rises as a global leader in science, technology, and innovation".



Dr. Ama Ikuru, Director, Capacity Building, NCDMB, at the inauguration of the newly built Engineering Design Studio and Information and Communication Technology hub at the Federal University of Technology, Owerri in Imo State.

FID Week proposed as platform to unlock new investments

As part of the strategies to increase Nigeria's crude oil production and enhance revenue accruing to the national treasury, NCDMB has advocated for a week to be set aside each year for signing the final investment decisions (FIDs) on new oil and gas projects.

Engr. Abayomi Bamidele, Director, Projects Certification and Authorisation Division, NCDMB, who represented the Executive Secretary at the 2024 African Energy Week (AEW), in Cape Town, South Africa, in November, said if the FID Week is adopted, it could be incorporated into the existing annual international oil and gas conferences to feature international and indigenous operating companies. He posited that dedicating a week every year for FID signing could compel companies and relevant regulators to fast-track their processes to meet the deadline.

He noted that the Nigerian oil and gas industry needed to have at least one or two final investment decisions on major projects to be signed every year to catalyse activity in the local service sector and the national economy and ultimately increase crude oil and gas production and revenue for the country.

He alluded to the three Presidential Directives (PDs) by President Bola Tinubu announced in March for the oil and gas industry. Bamidele said NCDMB had complied fully with the directives for fast-tracking the contracting cycle and eliminating middlemen from the oil and gas value chain. Already, NCDMB had applied the Presidential Directives in approving five oil and gas projects, which are currently in the funnel. He hinted that the expected production values of those projects are one billion standard cubic feet of gas per day and 350,000 barrels of crude oil per day.

Trends

Gas use spreads in Northern Nigeria as Butane Energy opens Kaduna plant

The NCDMB and Butane Energy Limited in November recorded a significant milestone in their collective drive to make liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) a widely accessible, cleaner, and more cost-effective fuel option for cooking in the country, with the commissioning of a 180-metric-tonne LPG Filling Plant in Kaduna, Kaduna State.

The facility, the second after the commissioning of another 100MT LPG storage and bottling plant in Katsina State, in 2021, is part of a joint venture to establish five of such facilities in Northern Nigeria with a combined storage capacity of 1,000MT. Kano LPG Storage and Bottling Plant in is slated for commissioning in the first quarter of 2025, while work on another in Bauchi is at an advanced stage. Abuja is next in line.

Mr. Abdulmalik Halilu, Director, Monitoring and Evaluation of NCDMB, who represented the Executive Secretary, expressed satisfaction with the impressive strides of Butane Energy.

He said the agency was motivated to enter into equity partnership with the indigenous LPG storage, trading and marketing company after the latter presented “a bankable business plan aimed at enhancing gas penetration in northern Nigeria”.

NCDMD, said the director, was also interested in job creation through such projects. At least 200 Nigerians gained employment, and there was the added benefit of local content growth, he added.

Alhaji Isa Inuwa Muhammed, Chairman of Butane Energy, expressed gratitude to the agency for reposing believing in the company’s vision.

The LPG filling plant is part of NCDMB’s strategic third-party investments aimed at supporting in-country capacity development, reducing reliance on traditional fuels, fostering sustainability and building a greener future for Nigeria

Industry-wide Support sought to ramp up crude oil output, energy security

Industry-wide support for initiatives to the reverse negative trends in Nigeria’s energy sector has been canvassed by the NCDMB at the 42nd Annual International Conference and Exhibition of the Nigerian Association of Petroleum Explorationists (NAPE), which took place in November in Lagos.

Esueme Dan Kikile, Esq., General Manager, Corporate Communications and Zonal Coordination, who represented the Executive Secretary, while presenting a paper titled: *Resolving the Nigerian Energy Trilemma: Energy Security, Sustained Growth, and Affordability*, said the



Mr Abdulmalik Halilu, Director, Monitoring and Evaluation, NCDMB and some NCDMB staff with the management of Butane Energy at the commissioning of LPG plant at Kaduna. Butane Energy is one of the Board’s third party investment.

scale of pipeline vandalism was a threat to Nigeria’s energy security. Major oil and gas projects are required as well as a robust security strategy based on mutually beneficial collaboration with host communities to reverse the trend.

To achieve the above objectives, the Board has undertaken to work with stakeholders in the industry to dedicate one week in every calendar year to signing Final Investment Decisions (FIDs) on new projects, as prospective investors could be motivated to act expeditiously to meet agreed-upon deadlines and regulators are similarly encouraged.

On the Board’s strategy to create a safe and secure operating environment for oil and gas companies and thus eliminate the huge costs associated with vandalism and attacks on workers and installations, the Executive Sec-

retary disclosed that NCDMB has introduced a new policy known as *Back to the Creeks Initiative*.

He said: “We are convinced at the Board that the incessant tampering with crude oil pipelines and hostilities in oil-producing communities have a huge impact on energy security,” and that the new initiative is geared towards curtailing incidences of disruptions of oil industry operations through targeted interventions.



Mr Esueme Dan Kikile, General Manager Corporate Communications & Zonal Coordination with delegates at the Nigerian Association of Petroleum Explorationists (NAPE).



Opening of **DAEWOO** **ENGINEERING** Nigeria galvanising plant

Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary of the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board in August commissioned the 10,000 tonnes per annum galvanising plant constructed by Daewoo Engineering Nigeria Limited, one of the engineering, procurement, and construction (EPC) contractors of the Nigeria LNG Limited (NLNG) Train 7 Project. The event took place at Daewoo Galvanising Plant at Abam-

ama, Okrika, Rivers State.

The facility will serve the Nigerian oil and gas industry and linkage sectors, including telecommunications, power and transportation that require galvanised materials.

Taking **Local Content** Benefits to the Creeks

It is a new era at the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board and the emerging policy seeks to deepen local content benefits and implementation to the grassroots, helping to address age-long community challenges and impacting the national economy sustainably.



A raft of changes has been sweeping across the country in the last year and a half, including at the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB), where Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe assumed office as the Executive Secretary on December 7, 2023, continuing the transformational leadership began by his predecessors since the inception of the agency in 2010.

The new NCDMB helmsman lives a quiet private life, the real reason his rich pedigree was lost on many oil and gas industry stakeholders in Nigeria when his name was announced by President Bola Ahmed Tinubu.

It has been a year since the leadership change and a new direction is emerging for the NCDMB. The agency's quality service delivery has continued apace, evidenced by the national honours it won 2024, such as the top federal agency in transparency and efficiency, awarded by the Presidential Enabling Business Environment Council (PEBEC), best federal organisation in digital engagement, conferred by the Bureau of Public Service Reforms (BPSR) and the second best website operated by federal agencies, also adjudged by BPSR. These recognitions confirm that NCDMB's streak of excellent performance is not tied to strong individuals or philosopher kings; rather, it is rooted in its foundation and strong DNA.

BENEFITS OF POLICY CONTINUITY

One of the inspired decisions by Engr. Ogbe was continuing the implementation of the Nigerian Content 10-year strategic roadmap- the detailed blueprint initiated and championed by Engr. Simbi Kesiye Wabote, the immediate past Executive Secretary of NCDMB, to move Nigerian Content development from 26 percent in 2017 to 70 percent by 2027. The roadmap propelled NCDMB to lofty achievements in the last seven years, harnessing the efforts of internal and external stakeholders within the oil and gas and linkage sectors.

It is instructive that some of NCDMB's notable achievements, like the 17-storey Nigerian Content Tower at Swali, Yenagoa, the Nigerian Oil and Gas Parks Scheme (NOGaPS) and innovative policies, like the Nigerian Content Equipment Components Manufacturing Initiative (ECMI), were conceptualised under Engr. Ernest Nwapa, the pioneer Executive Secretary of NCDMB, and nurtured to maturity under the immediate past chief executive.

The current leadership's commitment to the 10-year strategic roadmap would engender continued successes in the short to the medium term, particularly from maturing projects like the NCDMB Conference Hotel project, which is nearing completion and situated beside the Nigerian

Content Tower and Butane Energy Limited, which commissioned its Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) bottling plant at Kaduna in November, one of the five plants it partnered NCDMB to invest in five northern states, including the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

Such projects follow in the line of NCDMB's successful investments, like the Amal Technologies, that was commissioned in December 2023, which manufactures gas leak detection devices and printed circuit boards, Nedogas Development Company Limited (NDCL), which paid NCDMB US\$1million in April 2024, being part of the return on investment (ROI) and Waltersmith Refinery and Petrochemical Company Limited, which paid NCDMB ₦450million as interim dividend payment out of the ₦1.5billion declared for the year ended 2023.

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Barely weeks in office and without the luxury of a honeymoon, Engr. Ogbe began to engage chief executives of international and indigenous operating oil companies as well as sister organisations in the oil and gas value chain. The intent was to give assurance to stakeholders that NCDMB was on steady hands and would accelerate Nigerian Content-related approvals for oil industry projects, even faster than the timelines set in the Service Level Agreement (SLA)

FAST-TRACKING OIL INDUSTRY PROJECTS APPROVAL PROCESSES

Among the first industry issues that confronted Engr. Ogbe was the pressure for NCDMB to further fast-track approval of oil and gas projects. Perennially, NCDMB faces unfounded criticisms that its approval processes and overall Nigerian Content implementation causes major delays and cost escalation of oil and gas projects. The complaints intensified in 2024, when the nation's crude oil production plummeted below 1.5million barrels per day, owing to various technical challenges, depleting the revenue accruing to the federation.

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operating oil companies as well as sister organisations in the oil and gas value chain. The intent was to give assurance to stakeholders that NCDMB was on steady hands and would accelerate Nigerian Content-related approvals for oil industry projects, even faster than the timelines set in the Service Level Agreement (SLA) it conceptualised and signed in September 2023 with the Nigerian National Petroleum Company (NNPC) Limited as well as international and indigenous oil producing companies. The Executive Secretary also promised that NCDMB would grant justified waivers and accede to cogent and urgent requests from oil companies to spur new oil and gas production and avoid delays that could cause cost escalations.

Determined to incentivise speedy development of new oil and gas assets, and ramp up volumes from existing fields, President Bola Tinubu gazetted three Presidential Directives



Past and Present: Dr. Ernest Nwapa, pioneer Executive Secretary, NCDMB and Chairman, Tenaris Nigeria, with Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary, NCDMB during the inspection of Pipe Coaters Nigeria Limited's (PCNL) facility in Onne Free Trade Zone, Rivers State.

Tentative Illustration of Back to the Creeks Initiative



(PDs) in March 2024. The Directives are: *Local Content Compliance Requirements, 2024 (EO 41)*, *Reduction of Petroleum Sector Contracting Costs and Timelines, 2024 (EO 42)* and *Oil and Gas Companies (Tax Incentives, Exemption, Remission, etc.) Order, 2024*.

Engr. Abayomi Bamidele, Director Projects Certification and Authorisation, NCDMB, explained in October that the PD on Local Content Compliance addressed issues pertaining to NCDMB, while the PD on Reduction of Petroleum Sector Contracting Cost and Timelines focused on the NCDMB and the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Ltd and its investment arm, the NNPC Upstream Investment Services (NUIS). Similarly, the PD on Oil and Gas Companies (Tax Incentives, Exemption, Remission, etc.) introduces tax incentives for investments in the gas industry.

Bamidele noted that the PDs mandate the exclusion of intermediaries with no demonstrable capacity, allowing only service companies that have built proven capacities and capabilities to participate in oil and gas tenders. The PDs also reduced NCDMB's and NNPC's touch points on projects' approval process and fast-track oil and gas projects.

NCDMB complied immediately with the Presidential Directives and observed a significant increase in the number of oil and gas projects it approved. To put a seal to its new processes, Bamidele promised that

NCDMB would launch its new Contracting Cycle Guidelines at the 2024 Practical Nigerian Content Workshop. NCDMB, he added, was equally supporting firms seeking to fast-track gas investments to take advantage of the Presidential Directive on Tax Incentives, Exemptions and Remissions for the Oil and Gas Companies

NCDMB'S NEW DIRECTION - BACK TO THE CREEKS INITIATIVE

While Engr. Ogbe may have fully settled into his role at the NCDMB, what might define his tenure is his pet initiative, called *Back to the Creeks*. This mantra encapsulates a grand plan to take some of the benefits of oil and gas operations and local content implementation to rural communities across Nigeria.

The Warri-born Executive Secretary revealed he had always hoped for an opportunity to contribute meaningfully towards ameliorating the developmental challenges facing oil bearing communities and other hinterlands around the country. This is no-brainer because the Niger Delta is probably the best case study of failure in using proceeds from natural resources exploitation to provide amenities for communities where the resources are derived from.

TIME FOR MICRO PROJECTS

Although Engr. Ogbe celebrates the gigantic projects and remarkable



Senior officials of the NCDMB, NLNG and OGTAN at the commencement of the Nigerian Content Human Capacity Development (NC-HCD) Basic Training Programme for Train 7 Project for 331 young graduates.

successes recorded by the NCDMB and industry players in different areas of Nigerian Content development in the last 14 years, he reckons that it is time to redirect some focus to micro projects, to take local content's benefits to rural communities across the country. This model, he maintains, would bring the oil industry closer to the local populace, making it less elitist. It would also address disruptions of oil industry's operations by community youths and cut down the cost of securing industry's activities and installations which, in his view, are the major causes of delays in project execution and cost escalations.

POSSIBLE RAMIFICATIONS OF THE POLICY

Although the *Back to the Creeks* Initiative sounds like a corporate social responsibility (CSR) mantra, it is actually anchored on one of the six key thrusts of the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development (NOGICD) Act, which is "to integrate oil and gas producing communities into the oil and gas value chain". Additionally, it has nexus with the Nigerian Content 10-year strategic roadmap, while the successful implementation would enhance the operations of international and indigenous oil companies and impact positively on the national economy. The policy is equally pivotal to meeting four key items on President Tinubu's Eight-Point Economic Agenda, notably: poverty eradication, job creation, access to capital and growth.

CAPACITY BUILDING STRATEGY, INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

One key Nigerian Content channel for implementing the *Back to the Creeks* initiative is the Nigerian Content Human Capital Development (HCD) programmes. Most of the projects executed under this programme are funded with HCD funds, pooled from one to three percent of oil and gas firm's projects' costs. As stipulated under the Guideline for Nigerian Content Human Capital Development Implementation Strategy, the actual percent pooled decreases as the budget increases (US\$1 million-US\$100 million; US\$100 million-US\$500 and US\$500 million and above) and the pooled funds are in the custody of the oil company pending utilisation.

Engr. Ogbe confirmed that he had started engaging the leadership of oil and gas companies, getting them on board the plan to deploy the HCD funds to develop basic educational facilities and ancillary facilities in local communities, in select parts of the country. He plans a new strategy for the utilisation of the HCD Funds that will lead to impactful outcomes and accountability of the funds.

Already, NCDMB has set an example by partnering the Universal Basic Local Content Digest, 2024

Education Commission (UBEC) to implement the NCDMB-UBEC Smart Schools' Development Initiative (NUSSDI). The Executive Secretary of NCDMB and his UBEC counterpart, Dr. Hamid Bobboyi, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in October 2024. The NCDMB boss said the Smart Schools partnership aligned with the *Back to the Creeks* policy, while the UBEC boss lauded the profound and lasting impact it would make on the lives of children, families, and Nigeria's future.

The NUSSDI targets the establishment of schools in areas with high rates of out-of-school children and underserved rural communities. The schools will be equipped with modern technology and innovative teaching methods, while also building the capacity of teachers and educational administrators and improving overall learning outcomes. Through this initiative, NCDMB hopes to develop a pipeline of talents for Nigeria's oil and gas industry, starting from the basic education level, which is the foundation of human capital development, Engr. Ogbe said.

NCDMB's HCD strategy in recent years had focused on collaborating with operating oil and gas companies to equip universities, revamp and equip select technical and vocational schools across the country under the Institutional Strengthening programme and the complementary policy, which is the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Centres (TVETs) upgrade programme. The goal is to develop competent technical manpower, including skilled craftsmen to support activities in the oil and gas industry and other key sectors of the economy, so said Dr. Ama Ikuru, the Director responsible for Capacity Building at the NCDMB.

Some of the beneficiary institutions include Government Technical College, Amoli in Enugu State; Government Technical College, Abak in Akwa Ibom State, Government Craft Development Centre in

One key Nigerian Content channel for implementing the Back to the Creeks initiative is the Nigerian Content Human Capital Development (HCD) programmes. Most of the projects executed under this programme are funded with HCD funds, pooled from one to three percent of oil and gas firm's projects' costs. As stipulated under the Guideline for Nigerian Content Human Capital Development Implementation Strategy



R-L: Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary, NCDMB; Rt. Hon. Ekperikpe Ekpo, Minister of State for Petroleum Resources (Gas); His Excellency Rt. Hon. (Elder) Monday Onyeme (JP), Deputy Governor of Delta State with Engr. Emeka Ene, Chairman/CEO, NEDOGAS at the commissioning of the 300MMscfd capacity Kwale Gas Gathering (KGG) and injection facility in Kwale, Delta State.

In the revised features, the Community Contractors Fund Scheme has grown to a ₦15billion fund and the new obligor limit set at ₦100million. The Bank of Industry and commercial banks will be responsible for administering the fund to qualified community contractors awarded valid contracts by operating companies. Mr. Abdulmalik Halilu, Director, Monitoring and Evaluation, NCDMB, assured that the repackaged Community Contractors Fund product paper would be launched by the Executive Secretary at the 2024 Practical Nigerian Content Conference, 2024.

Bassambiri in Bayelsa State; and the University of Ibadan Vocational Centre in Oyo State. Similarly, NCDMB, Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) alongside its Joint Venture (JV) partners in October 2024 donated a world-class Engineering Design Studios and an Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Hub at the Federal University of Technology, Owerri (FUTO). In addition, NCDMB is currently partnering SPDC and Total Energies Limited to transform Government Technical College (GTC) in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, into a centre of excellence for the training of craftsmen.

Mr. Osagie Okunbor, Country Chair of Shell Companies in Nigeria, affirmed that his com-

pany's collaboration with the NCDMB aligned with the Nigerian Content Human Capacity Development Plan, the provisions of the NOG-ICD Act and NCDMB's HCD Guidelines of 2020.

ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE CREDIT FOR COMMUNITY CONTRACTORS

A key plank for implementing the *Back to the Creeks* initiative is making affordable credit available to oil and gas community contractors, to enable them scale up and execute small to medium scale contracts. As part of the plan, NCDMB repackaged the Community Contractors Fund Scheme, one of the five products under the Nigerian Content Intervention Fund (NCI Fund). According to Mr. Ifeanyi Ukoha, Director, Finance and Personnel Development, NCDMB, the intent is to make the community contractors fund more accessible and appealing to qualified oil and gas local contractors, while securing the funds and ensuring repayment.

The objective of the Community Contractors Fund is "to promote the participation of genuine community contractors in oil and gas projects and integration of communities in the industry value chain as part of the strategy to grow the local economy and promote peace and tranquility in the communities". In the old form, the Community Contractors product could only provide a loan of ₦20million to qualified borrowers, with a maximum tenor of five years and interest rate of five percent. Regrettably, no community contractor has successfully accessed the loan from the Fund administrators, the Bank of Industry (BoI), in the last seven years, owing to a variety of reasons. The inaccessibility stuck out because other products under the NCI Fund, notably the Manufacturing Loan, Asset acquisition loan,

Contract Finance loan and Loan re-financing have been oversubscribed by qualified oil and gas firms and the percentage of repayment is over 90 percent.

In the revised features, the Community Contractors Fund Scheme has grown to a ₦15billion fund and the new obligor limit set at ₦100million. The Bank of Industry and commercial banks will be responsible for administering the fund to qualified community contractors awarded valid contracts by operating companies. Mr. Abdulmalik Halilu, Director, Monitoring and Evaluation, NCDMB, assured that the repackaged Community Contractors Fund product paper would be launched by the Executive Secretary at the 2024 Practical Nigerian Content Conference, 2024.

COMMUNITY CONTENT GUIDELINE, AWARD OF CONTRACTS

Another opportunity for implementing the *Back to the Creeks* initiative entails NCDMB working closely with operating oil and gas companies to fully implement the provisions of the Community Content Guideline (CCG).

The CCG was derived from the NOGICD Act and was conceptualised in close collaboration with oil industry stakeholders. The Guideline is anchored on four broad pillars: project office, funding, employment and human capital development and procurement of goods and services.

The establishment of project and community offices would facilitate opportunities and award of contracts to competent local vendors. Further to that, NCDMB will be expected to liaise with oil and gas companies to ensure the inclusion of qualified community contractors in the companies' vendor lists for major oil

A typical oil producing community. Back to the Creeks initiative is aimed at transforming such communities, making life a lot more meaningful.

and gas projects, leading to the award of contracts. This approach would empower community contractors, create job opportunities and create wealth in local communities.

EMPLOYMENT AND HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

The *Back to the Creeks* initiative will equally benefit immensely from the effective implementation of the Community Content Guideline's provision on the engagement of indigenes of communities in oil and gas projects. As stipulated in the CCG, indigenes of a location where project or operation is domiciled are entitled to all unskilled jobs on the project, as well as 50 percent of semi-skilled job roles and at least 10 percent of skilled roles. During the operations phase, the indigenes are eligible for a minimum of 20 percent of the personnel, and 30 percent during the selection of candidates for project-based trainings.

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE/NIGERIAN CONTENT REMEDIATION

Capacity Development Initiative (CDI) and Nigerian Content Remediation are existing programmes of the Board that can be used to implement the *Back to the Creeks* initiative. CDIs are those structures which oil and gas op-

erating or service firms pledge to develop in exchange for the compliance waivers granted by the NCDMB in the course of executing their oil and gas projects. The CDIs can be applied in targeted community programmes for maximum effect.

Nigerian Content Remediation is another programme that can be tailored to support the *Back to the Creeks* initiative. These are the reparation or compensation programmes that oil and gas companies are compelled to execute, for violating provisions of the Nigerian Content Act. The remediation activities could include trainings, research and development or other activities agreed between the firm and the NCDMB. Such programmes can be dedicated to communities, if the Board considers it appropriate.

COLLABORATION WITH AGENCIES, OIL FIRMS

One of the best strategies for actualising the *Back to the Creeks* initiative is through close collaboration with sister agencies like the Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission, Niger Delta Development Commission, the Amnesty Office, North-East Development Commission (NEDC) and other specialised entities. Collaboration and Stakeholder Engage-

ment is one of the four enablers of the Nigerian Content 10-year strategic roadmap. This enabler underlines the criticality of engaging internal and external publics and the complementary role of other agencies and players in the oil and gas value chain towards achieving Nigerian Content objectives.

THE JOURNEY AHEAD LOOKS PROMISING

Though it is barely a year since Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe assumed office as the Executive Secretary of NCDMB, there are pointers that he would be a success.

Ernest Nwapa once described the position of NCDMB's Executive Secretary as a relay race, which every runner must perform well for the team to win. It is evident that Engr. Ogbe has effectively picked up the baton and is running with dynamism. Every indication suggests that he would finish strongly, to the benefit of the Nigerian economy.

By the time *Back to the Creeks* policy is fully implemented, communities hitherto neglected, alienated from benefitting from oil and gas operations would have developed a sense of ownership, and in so doing, be the most committed promoters of oil and gas operations in their communities.

NCDMB's HCD strategy in recent years had focused on collaborating with operating oil and gas companies to equip universities, revamp and equip select technical and vocational schools across the country under the Institutional Strengthening programme and the complementary policy, which is the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Centres (TVETs) upgrade programme. The goal is to develop competent technical manpower, including skilled craftsmen to support activities in the oil and gas industry and other key sectors of the economy, so says Dr. Ama Ikuru, the Director responsible for Capacity Building at the NCDMB.



Dr. Obinna Ezeobi is the Deputy Manager, Corporate Communications.

Felix
Omatsola
Ogbe

Primed for a Mission

The December 7, 2023 announcement of Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe as Executive Secretary of the NCDMB by the Presidency caused a stir of varying intensity in different quarters around the nation.

The name did not ring a bell among many oil industry stakeholders, prompting a flurry of Google searches for some background information. The interest was understandable: NCDMB plays a critical role in the Nigerian oil and gas industry and linkage sectors. Within 13 years, the agency carved a preeminent image for itself across the continent as an efficient agency and promoter of local content, in addition to erecting a 17-storey edifice as its headquarters, at Swali, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

Unfortunately, Google search and the Internet availed little on the new NCDMB helmsman. Little wonder then that some social media commentators declared that he had “no digital footprint,” while others dubbed him the ‘invisible man’.

When Engr. Ogbe featured at the 2024 Nigerian Oil and Gas Conference in June at Abuja, he revealed that he intentionally stayed away from social media. Leading by example, his immediate family members avoided the pressure and distractions that come with social networks. That decision paid off as his two children grew into

responsible adults, pursuing successful careers.

Many stakeholders were pleasantly surprised to learn that Ogbe, a fellow of the Nigerian Society of Engineers (NSE) is one of Nigeria’s most accomplished professionals, and a holder of a Master of Science (M.Sc.) degree in Civil Engineering and a second master’s degree in construction management.

For 24 unbroken years (1990-2014) he was in the employ of oil giant, Chevron Nigeria Limited (CNL), for the most part, in management positions that saw him in the driver’s seat for conceptualisation, engineering, designs, project, and construction management. As construction engineer he was for years engaged in CNL’s operations in San Ramon, California, United States, international headquarters of Chevron.

In the position of Construction Services Group Superintendent, Engr. Ogbe oversaw some 200

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highly technical personnel – Nigerians and expatriates – in diverse areas of operation, including offshore projects, liquefied natural gas (LNG), water drilling, treatment, storage facilities, civil, building, and dredging, among others.

Instructively, his expertise led to frequent redeployment in what industry lingo terms 'cross-posting,' to such diverse places as South Korea, USA, and other oil-producing African countries. In San Ramon, he handled such critical responsibilities as project specifications, estimation and implementation, costing and budgeting, safety in design, use of software for project costing and budgeting.

Engr. Ogbe played key roles in the construction of Escravos Gas to Liquid (EGTL) Plant and Gas Plant in Escravos, near Warri in Delta State and the Escravos Gas Project, otherwise known as EGP-3B, Lagos and Warri.

CNL considered no cost too great to continually upskill their prized civil engineer, and so exposed him to numerous courses in-country and overseas in such fields as design and construction strategy for oil and gas production facilities and project execution and management, among others. In addition to his long registration by the Council for the Regulation of Engineering in Nigeria (COREN), he became a member of the American Institute of Civil Engineers.

After he retired voluntarily from Chevron in 2014 and founded an engineering firm, BREFEL Limited/NIMA Energy LLC, Engr. Ogbe set out to

demonstrate the sophistication of indigenous expertise and capabilities and how they could effectively compete in the same space with foreign firms.

In a matter of years, BREFEL became known for execution of landmark engineering projects across the oil and gas industry as well as medical services within and outside Nigeria.

On assumption of office at NCDMB on December 14, 2023, he laid down the marker to take the Board to new levels. He describes himself as "less of a talker and more of a doer". Since then, he has led NCDMB to further fast-track Nigerian Content approvals for oil and gas projects, contributing to the nation's quest for increased crude oil production. He has conceptualised a revolutionary project tagged Back to the Creeks, with the intent of taking oil industry benefits to local communities through educational support, access to affordable capital for local contractors, among other laudable initiatives.

With an astute pedigree, candour, humility and maturity, he inspires confidence and industry-wide support. His varied experiences working in core operations of CNL and the service side provides him with unique and broad perspectives on the role. Barely 12 months in office, he is becoming the toast of NCDMB's staff and support personnel, because of his welfare oriented policies.

Engr. Ogbe brought to his task his excellent educational background, expertise, experience, exposure, and inward-looking orientation as well as ethical standards demanded by his high office. And he has been remarkable on the saddle, sustaining the momentum attained by predecessors that moved Nigerian Content in the oil and gas industry from five per cent in 2010 to 54 per cent in 2023. Under his leadership, NCDMB has retained all the operational characteristics for which the organisation was renowned, nationally and internationally on account of strategic domiciliation of oil and gas industry operations.

As with the years 2022 and 2023, the Board emerged the best among all ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) in efficiency and transparency in half year 2024, in the coveted Executive Order (EO1) performance ranking by the Presidential Enabling Business Environment Council (PEBEC).

In every single push by Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe and the army of technically-sound personnel, they have demonstrated that their sights are on 70 per cent Nigerian Content come 2027 as set out in the Nigerian Content 10-Year Strategic Roadmap.

Search his name again on Goggle, certainly he is no longer 'invisible' as was the case in early December 2023.

- Dianam Dakolo

Chief Leemon Ikpea, Executive Chairman, Lee Engineering and Construction Company with Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary, NCDMB, during a visit to the company's facility at Warri, Delta State.

An engineer's reimagining of corporate wears

Even though the vibrant patterns and rich colours of *Ankara* have shown to be a staple in African fashion, it is the traditional use that has been predominant. Those who make an outfit from this do it for casual or when they need special attire during festivities, instead of what one typically sees in a corporate environment. But times are changing, and Nigerian couture makers, like renewable energy engineer Elakeche Priscilla Oche, are at the forefront of this sartorial revolution.

What she has been doing out at her base in Abuja is fusing interests in home automation and embedded systems with a tailor's mind. That is how the Benue State native plans to inspire a shift in thinking when it concerns what works in a corporate environment.

The question posed is not just about fashion; it is about cultural identity, modernity, and the evolution of the workplace dress code. Can *Ankara* be worn as a corporate outfit? Absolutely, and here is how Engr. Oche has been making things happen.

For those who prefer a hint of colour, *Ankara* can be used as an accent on collars, and cuffs, or as a pocket square. Another tip is pairing an *Ankara* blazer with solid-coloured trousers or a pencil skirt. Together, they create a look that is both professional and stylish.

"My work schedule as an engineer is pretty flexible, says the multiskilled professional whose list of passions is just what Nigeria's policymakers want. They are desirous of seeing entrepreneurs blossoming as much as they care for the sight of foreign direct investment in the country.

"I am currently attached to Intavalto Nigeria Limited and I chose freelance marketing because in the last 10 years, I have done hardcore engineering where I have sat down behind a

soldering board and worked on hardcore appliances. But now, I am happy about the fact that I choose to market these products instead of having to wear a helmet and go to the site.

"Basically, I focus on the marketing and technical aspects of my engineering job. I also get clients who come into my fashion workspace and we have conversations that can vary from inverter systems to making a proper load analysis," she said.

Challenging the notion that Western attire is the only acceptable form of dress in professional environments has never been so important. By incorporating *Ankara*, Nigerians can bring a piece of their culture into the workplace, fostering a more inclusive and diverse atmosphere.

One thing that African fabrics tend to do, according to the Smallsun dressmaker, is to down-tone the magnitude of how an outfit should look like.

"To fix this, I try to incorporate this Nigerian essence into the corporate setting, making sure that there is an edge to every Africanness you see in my designs especially when you look at my *bubu* outfits," Oche said.

The reception of *Ankara* in corporate settings has been overwhelmingly positive. Companies are beginning to recognise the importance of cultural expression and are adjusting their dress codes accordingly. This shift is not just happening in creative industries but across various sectors, signaling a broader acceptance of what professional attire can entail.

In today's society, she added, what people do are defined by what others are doing due to the norms, beauty and even fashion standards. For her, being too grounded in originality prevents her from copying.

"Sometimes, I borrow ideas and tweak them to my taste. And considering my love for really

comfortable clothes, you often find in my hub, loose-fitting, not snugly fit, more elegant, not too revealing just to balance that whole idea of true womanhood and femininity with fashion as well.

"So, I am inspired by being an ideal woman who is beautiful and confident. So, I pour my confidence into my designs, even though some might say my style tends to be defined as being overdressed, I really don't mind. It's better to be overdressed than under-dressed," Oche said.



Engr. Elakechi Oche

YOU MUST DIVERSIFY YOUR STOCK PORTFOLIO

The downsides of a localised investment are too many, and risky

Investopedia defines diversification as “the process of spreading investments across different asset classes, industries, and geographic regions to reduce the overall risk of an investment portfolio.”

Arguably the greatest stock investor of our time, Warren Buffet, famously said: “Diversification is a protection against ignorance. It makes very little sense for those who know what they’re doing.” Interestingly, Buffet’s investment portfolio is highly diversified and includes shares in companies in the United States, Japan, China, Ireland, Taiwan, the Caribbean and Central America. The industries he invested in through Berkshire are also varied: mining, automobile, telecommunications, consulting, and alcoholic beverage, among others.

Diversification helps investors attain their long-term goals while minimising the risks associated with stock investment. “Generally, investment is a long-term exercise but if short-term reward emanates, it can be harvested. But ensure to construct an investment portfolio which is diversified along non-correlated asset classes,” says David Adonri, vice chairman of Highcap Securities Limited.

Imagine that you had all your investments in the collapsed Heritage Bank. Or your portfolio has only Nigerian stocks. A collapse of the country’s stock market could cost you your entire life’s savings. It happened in 2009 when the Nigerian stock market crashed, with investors losing a mindboggling circa ₦8trillion.

Stock investment is a high risk and diversification is one way to hedge that risk. Prof Uche Uwaleke, Director of the Institute of Capital Market Studies at Nasarawa State University, Keffi, encourages investors to adopt the DHL approach, which speaks to the diversification of portfolio, hedging of risks by investing across different asset classes and climes, and adopting a long-term investment perspective.

Diversifying into global stocks is sound investment. Benefits include access to growth opportunities and reduced risks associated with investing in a single market. However, while global stock investment is desirable, it is important to appreciate both the benefits and the drawbacks. Associated risks may include selecting the right markets, navigating regulatory and tax considerations, currency exposure challenges, economic and political considerations in targeted markets, and liquidity concerns, among other challenges.

And most importantly, an investment strategy must be developed to ensure the best possible outcome for your investments. The investor must then decide what investment platform best suits his investment plans. One can invest through the traditional stockbroker or via a fintech platform.

Fintech platforms offer cost benefits and access to real-time trading opportunities and many come equipped with research and analytics tools to help guide your investing activities. The platforms give retail investors affordable access to international stock markets. Some can enable you, through fractional share offerings, to invest in high-priced stocks in the US and other areas without spending huge sums of dollars. For instance, through such platforms, one can buy shares of Apple, Microsoft, and Nvidia, among others.

Trading or investing in global stocks requires a domiciliary account. Some fintech platforms offer multi-currency accounts that will enable seamless trading in stocks denominated in dollar, yen, euro, or other international currencies, and they help hedge the currencies to minimise the risk of fluctuations. Fintechs offer tools such as stock screeners to help an investor access fundamentally sound stocks. And some are integrated with research services to provide insights on stocks across markets, thus helping the investor make smart investment decisions.

Overall, fintech platforms are more nimble and innovative though susceptible to technical issues and downtime. IT experts say one cannot rule out system outages and connectivity problems capable of disrupting trading activities and potentially causing inconvenience and financial losses.

Traditional stockbrokers, on the other hand, have a strong track record of performance and offer investors personalised advice, and the opportunity to interact with real human beings compared to fintechs whose operations are machine driven. These services come at a cost though. However, many traditional stockbrokers have digitised their operations and have software that can also deploy some of the functionalities of fintech platforms.

The biggest benefit of a diversified portfolio, with global stocks is the ability to hedge against local inflation and fluctuating exchange rates. Earning in dollars or euros will enable your income to withstand value erosion.

Stock investment is a high risk and diversification is one way to hedge that risk. Prof Uche Uwaleke, Director of the Institute of Capital Market Studies at Nasarawa State University, Keffi, encourages investors to adopt the DHL approach, which speaks to the diversification of portfolio, hedging of risks by investing across different asset classes and climes, and adopting a long-term investment perspective.

Rt. Hon. Ekperikpe Ekpo, Minister of State for Petroleum Resources (Gas) and co-Chair of NCDMB governing Board, lays out the case of gas driving Nigeria's development, creating jobs and wealth for the country.

What is your impression of the Nigerian Content Tower and NCDMB's performance in the last 14 years?

The fact that the NCDMB 17-storey building was constructed entirely by a local company is impressive and commendable. It showcases the capability and expertise of Nigerian firms in handling large and complex construction projects. This achievement aligns with NCDMB's mission of promoting local content and indigenous participation in the oil and gas sector. It also serves as a symbol of the growing capacity and self-reliance of Nigeria's construction industry. This milestone will boost confidence in local enterprises and inspire further investments and developments led by Nigerian companies.

Over the past 14 years, the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board has demonstrated remarkable performance in promoting indigenous participation, building capacities, and creating job opportunities within the sector. Their efforts have led to substantial increases in local content value retention, which has positively impacted the Nigerian economy.

What are the key policies you are focusing on as the Minister of State for Petroleum Resources (Gas)?

The first of the policies is the acceleration and operationalisation of the gas-driven NOGaPS in Cross River, Bayelsa, and Akwa Ibom states. The second is to focus on consolidating the gains from NCDMB investments in gas-related projects, like the Kwale Gas Gathering (KGG) Project, in addition to identifying and driving support for more gas-based Industries, as well as expanding and consolidating the Human Capacity Development initiative.

The Decade of Gas is one of the key initiatives of the FG. What strategies are you pursuing to actualise it?

The Decade of Gas is the initiative of the Federal Government through the Ministry of Petroleum Resources and its agencies and the organised private sector for gas upstream and midstream development in the country. This initiative has achieved phase one of its target in actualising major gas development projects in the country.

We were able to expand the first phase from 10 projects, which were projected to provide roughly 3bcf/d to 20 projects, which is estimated add 4.6bcf/d to the gas sector by 2030. Maintaining the health of our upstream gas projects funnel is crucial.

We
will **ensure**
more **Gas**
resource
utilisation

Additionally, we have worked hard to complete all identified unlocks (such as favourable gas fiscals, early licence renewals, waivers for Nigerian content, among others) for these important projects. This has resulted in the Presidential Executive directives to help the sector.

The delivery of critical gas infrastructure projects has shown some progress and transparency. The Obiafo-Obrikom-Oben (OB3) link line, which completes the East to West gas connectivity, is currently 97 percent complete due to ongoing technical difficulties. But deliberate work is being done to complete this project, and NNPC has assured us that it will be finished before the end of August 2024, allowing us to increase domestic gas production and distribution by 20 percent.

By Q1 2025, gas is expected to reach Abuja from the Ajaokuta-Kaduna-Kano (AKK) project, which is now 57 percent completed. The Assa North-Ohaji South (ANOH) spur line was commissioned by Mr. President in June. The Odidi-Warri line and the Escravos-Odidi line are being advanced as part of ELP's expansion, while the ELP's midline compressor project has quickly advanced to 57 percent completion with delivery in Q4 2025.

Over 60 percent of NCDMB's investment projects are focused on gas. How will the ministry under your watch collaborate with NCDMB to ensure they become successful and achieve the intended objectives?

We shall continue consistent engagement with the management of the NCDMB to ensure that the Board's projects and activities are executed seamlessly. We shall continue to engage stakeholders in the gas industry to identify and implement workable strategies to ensure the Board achieves its mandate of growing the capacity of Nigerian companies to operate in the Industry.

In addition, we shall continue to monitor the performance of Nigerian companies to ensure that they deliver on the investments that have been made to help them compete in the Industry.

Over the past 14 years, the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board has demonstrated remarkable performance in promoting indigenous participation, building capacities, and creating job opportunities within the sector. Their efforts have led to substantial increases in local content value retention, which has positively impacted the Nigerian economy.

How would the Ministry of Petroleum Resources under your watch strengthen NCDMB to continue to deliver on its mandate?

As the Minister of State for Petroleum Resources (Gas), my office will work collaboratively and continuously with the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) to ensure their activities in the gas sector are effectively aligned with the overarching mandate set forth by the President. This includes several strategic initiatives

One of these is in capacity building and local content. Strengthening the NCDMB's capacity to enforce local content policies is crucial. We will ensure continuous training and development programmes for local businesses and professionals to increase their participation in the gas sector.

We will also push for enhanced investment promotion. We will focus on creating an attractive investment climate by implementing policies that encourage both domestic and international investors to participate in the gas sector.

We will also ensure more gas resource utilisation. Leveraging our vast gas resources, we will prioritise projects that enhance domestic utilisation. This includes expanding gas-to-power projects, promoting the use of compressed natural gas (CNG) and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) for transportation and domestic use and supporting industrial applications of gas.

The interview was conducted in August when the Minister visited Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.





Banter, hilarious moments, then business, as Petroleum Minister outlines key initiatives on gas

The Minister succinctly outlined key initiatives of his Ministry.

These include “investments in critical gas infrastructure to support the transportation and distribution of natural gas across the country; promotion of domestic gas utilisation for power generation, industrial applications, and transportation, as well as strengthening the capacity of NCDMB to build capacity and enforce local content policies”.

Welcoming the Minister of State for Petroleum Resources (Gas), Hon. Ekperikpe Ekpo, to the Nigerian Content Tower (NCT) in Yenagoa, the Corporate Headquarters of the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB), was an exhilarating experience for the Management, led by the Executive Secretary, Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, and staff.

From the moment the august visitor alighted from his official car and stepped into the capacious and magnificent lobby with a smile on his face, everyone in the Management line-up that shook hands with him knew instinctively that August 7 was going to be a memorable day, loaded with pleasant surprises for the guest and his hosts.

And so it proved to be, beginning from the reception through the Technology Innovation and Incubation Centre (TIIC) within the NCT, the 1,000-seater Conference Centre, NCDMB Conference Hotel (still under construction), the on-site Creche, and NCDMB Gas Hub at Polaku in Gbarain Clan, Yenagoa Local Government Area.

Three incubates at the TIIC dazzled the audience with a thorough demonstration of technology solutions they learnt in the course of their year-long research and innovative work at the NCDMB facility, fully sponsored by the Board. Solutions to identified operational problems in the oil and gas industry, upstream, midstream and downstream, were among the areas they were taught to proffer.

To the Minister, the incubates, now engaged in active service delivery in the oil and industry, were set to contribute to the value addition and local content development - and much more - after the presentations. He expressed the conviction at what appeared like a town hall meeting with the Management and staff at the agency's Conference Centre. He began with his general impression about the aesthetics of the place: “It was as if I was either in U.S., or London. (But) my sense of geography told me, ‘You are still in Nigeria – in Bayelsa, in Yenagoa.’” A rapturous applause followed, forcing the Minister to pause.

Ekpo added: “Kudos to Simbi (Kesiye Wabote, immediate past Executive Secretary) and his team for putting this structure together to

the glory of God.” There was another round of deafening applause. “You extend my appreciation to him and to his team, that is, all of you who assisted him to put this structure together for the use of humanity. I salute all of you. Thank you so much.”

The staff were elated at the ministerial recognition for their part in the attainment of the Board's success. In response to remarks by the Executive Secretary, whom he described as “my brother,” Ekpo declared: “It would have been an error if your Minister of Gas didn't come to identify with you.”

The minister acknowledged the workers' “unwavering commitment” to corporate goals and their “diligence and relentless pursuit of excellence”. He said those ideals made it possible for the Board “to achieve significant milestones and set new standards in the industry”.

In promise to the Management and staff, he said: “We'll continue to invest in your development and provide the necessary support to help you excel in your roles.” The minister urged them to “maintain the highest standards of professionalism and integrity” in their endeavours.

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deavours”.

After the banter, the guest focused on the main business of the day, beginning with the assurance that the Federal Government wanted “the living standard of our people to be bearable because with gas, we can drive the economy of the nation. We are looking at a gas-driven economy by the year 2030.” He added: “It is time for us to go into the field and do the needful, especially on the Compressed Natural Gas (CNG), which is cleaner, safer, and cheaper than Premium Motor Spirit, PMS. So, we should try as much as possible to encourage investors to develop CNG so as to meet the demands of our country.”

The Minister succinctly outlined key initiatives of his Ministry. These include “investments in critical gas infrastructure to support the transportation and distribution of natural gas across the country; promotion of domestic gas utilisation for power generation, industrial applications, and transportation, as well as strengthening the capacity of NCDMB to build capacity and enforce local content policies”.

Highlighting other initiatives under his ministry, Hon. Ekpo that the Government was “encouraging and supporting gas-to-power projects to ensure a reliable and sustainable supply of electricity.” He hinted the audience about the government’s plan to use natural

gas to tackle many national challenges. “By leveraging natural gas resources, we aim to address the power deficit and support industrialisation,” the minister said.

According to him, the government is expanding the country’s capacity to export liquefied natural gas to generate revenue and position Nigeria as a key player in the global gas market. In addition, he said the Federal Government was working to streamline the policy and regulatory frameworks governing the gas sector to create an enabling environment for investments and innovation. These measures, he emphasised, were designed “to unlock the full potential of Nigeria’s gas resources, creating jobs, fostering economic growth and ensuring a sustainable energy future for our country”.

Hon. Ekpo described the Presidential Executive Order on gas as “a significant step towards creating a more attractive investment climate for non-associated gas production and development”. The minister noted that it was intended to “streamline regulatory processes, bureaucratic bottlenecks and provide fiscal incentives that make investment in gas projects more viable”.

Alluding to current happenings in parts of the country, he stated: “Today, people are talking about #EndBadGovernance because they are

ignorant of what the President is doing.... In the next one to three years, we will see all the projects that we have put in place coming to fruition and then Nigerians will realise that the President meant well for his people.”

In his remarks, Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe thanked the Minister for the visit and assured him that the NCDMB would implement the Presidential Executive Order to the letter. “We are going to drive the process and we are going to improve from where we are now. It is our responsibility to ensure that we move NCDMB from the current position (54 percent local content in the oil and gas industry) to 70 per cent by 2027, and we will try and make sure that Nigerian companies are empowered,” he said.

Key management personnel who accompanied the minister include Engr. Ogbe, Dr. Ama Ikuru, Director Corporate Services, Mr. Abdulmalik Halilu, Director, Monitoring and Evaluation, Engr. Abayomi Bamidele, Director, Project Certification and Authorisation Directorate, Esueme Dan Kikile, Esq., General Manager, Corporate Communications and Zonal Coordination, Engr. Silas Ajimijaiye General Manager, PCAD, and Dr. Obinna Ezeobi, Deputy Manager, Corporate Communications.

- **Dianam Dakolo**

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Pix 1. Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary, NCDMB; Sen. Heineken Lokpobiri, Minister of State for Petroleum Resources (Oil) (4th left); Oritsemeyiwa Eyesan, former Executive Vice President, Upstream with guests at the inauguration of NCDMB Governing Council Board in Abuja.

Pix 3. NCDMB management with some VIPs at the sub- Sahara Africa International Petroleum Exhibition and Conference in Lagos

Pix 5. Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary, management staff of NCDMB, with senior management of Chevron Nigeria Limited led by Mr. Cosmos Iwueze, retired Joint Venture Director, Chevron Nigeria Limited and Mr. Segun Kuteyi, new JV Director during a visit to the NCDMB liaison office in Abuja.

Pix 7. NCDMB management and staff in a group photograph with the executives of Women in Energy Oil and Gas (WEOG) Nigeria at a courtesy visit to the Executive Secretary, at NCDMB liaison office in Abuja.

Pix 9. Barr. Esueme Dan Kikile, General Manager, Corporate Communication and Zonal Coordination, NCDMB and staff of the Board with Mr. Azu Ishiekwe, Editor in Chief, Leadership newspaper after Ishiekwe's book reading session in Yenagoa in September

Pix 2. Daewoo Galvanising Plant: Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary, NCDMB leading oil and gas stakeholders at the facility tour of Daewoo Engineering and Construction Nigeria Limited Galvanising Plant in Okrika LGA, Rivers State.

Pix 4. NCDMB management and staff with Executive members of the Ijaw National Council after a courtesy visit to the Nigerian Content Tower, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

Pix 6. NCDMB management and staff with the Nigerian Data Protection Commission (NDPC) team after the data protection training at the NCDMB Conference Centre, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

Pix 8. NCDMB management staff in a group photograph with Senior Officers of the Joint Task Force, South-South (Operation Delta Safe) in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.



Pix 10. Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary, NCDMB with Mr. Fabrizio Bloomfield, Managing Director, Nigerian Agip Oil Company Limited (NAOC) during a courtesy visit at the NCDMB liaison office in Abuja.

Pix 12. Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary, NCDMB with Mr. Oladapo Oyeleke, Managing Director, Bristow Helicopter Nigeria during a courtesy visit to the Nigerian Content Tower, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

Pix 14. Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary, NCDMB with Senator Heineken Lokpobiri, Minister of State for Petroleum Resources (Oil) and friends at a reception in honour of the minister at his hometown in Ekerem-OR LGA, Bayelsa State.

Pix 16. Mr. Augustine Timbiri, General Manager Capacity Building, NCDMB, Dr. Ama Ikuru, Director, Capacity Building, NCDMB with officials of the Industrial Training Fund (ITF) and trainees during the kick-off ceremony of the NCDMB/ITF collaboration on Vocational Training Programme in Abuja.

Pix 18. Mr. Abdulmalik Halilu, Director, Monitoring & Evaluation, NCDMB with some Board's staff and SEPLAT Team during the NCDMB/SEPLAT joint courtesy visit to Delta State University in Abraka, Delta State.

Pix 11. Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary, NCDMB with Sen. Douye Diri, Governor, Bayelsa State at a courtesy visit to the Government House, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, in January 2024.

Pix 13. Mr. Abdulmalik Halilu, Director, Monitoring and Evaluation, NCDMB with panelists at the eighth sub-Saharan Africa International Petroleum Exhibition and Conference (SAIPEC) in Lagos.

Pix 15. Barr. Esueme Dan Kikile, General Manager, Corporate Communication & Zonal Coordination, NCDMB and some staff of the Board with participants at the opening ceremony of the OPTS/NCDMB Marine Accelerator Training Programme at Bonny Island, Rivers State.

Pix 17. Barr. Esueme Dan Kikile, General Manager, Corporate Communication & Zonal Coordination, NCDMB with stakeholders at the 2024 Niger Delta Stakeholders Summit organised by the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

WASTE2WEALTH

NCDMB'S INVESTMENTS IN KGC AND NEDOGAS PLANT DELIVER HUGE BENEFITS

Nothing like it has ever happened in recent memory in Ndokwa West Local Government Area of Delta State! Two multi-billion naira assets of importance to the nation were commissioned simultaneously, June 6 by the Minister of State for Petroleum Resources (Gas), Rt. Hon. Ekperikpe Ekpo.

It signaled the commencement of operations at the 300million standard cubic feet per day (MMscfd) Kwale Gas Gathering (KGG) Hub and Nedogas Modular Gas Plant by the project promoter, Nedogas Development Company Limited, a joint venture company between Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) and Xenergi Limited, an indigenous company.

It was the latest in a string of successes recorded by the NCDMB in strategic partnerships, most notable among which are Waltersmith Petroman Oil Company Limited, owners and operator of the 5,000bpd Waltersmith Modular Refinery at Ohaji-Egbema in Local Government Area of Imo State, and Duport Midstream Company Limited, owners and operator of Duport Energy Park at Egbokor in Edo State.

To the Minister and chief executive officers (CEOs) of the federal agencies at the June 6 event, it was an occasion for celebration as the facilities came on stream. It was a remarkable milestone in the actualisation of Federal Government's Decade of Gas Programme launched in 2020 and the Nigeria Gas Flare Commercialisation Programme initiated earlier in 2015. In that ceremony also was sufficient evidence of NCDMB's dedication to creating in-country value through partnership with indigenous oil and gas companies.

What the HGG Hub and Nedogas Plant mean to Federal Government

The Minister said the event represented "a significant advancement in the country's efforts to promote sustainability, energy efficiency and economic expansion". Also, it marked "a major turning point in Nigeria's continuous quest to use its abundant natural gas resources for the country's development. It gives us immense pride".



"We are proud of the strategic projects we are developing in partnership with other investors in the last 10 years, especially in the gas sector. These projects are geared towards actualising the Federal Government's policy direction. We would like to emphasise that NCDMB is a business enabler, not just a regulator of local content."

- Engr. Felix Omasola Ogbe.

The facilities would solve a persistent environmental issue through the process of capturing associated gas that would otherwise be vented. The process, noted Hon. Ekpo, “turns a potentially waste product into a useful resource”.

In a summation of what the KGG Hub and Nedogas Plant mean to the country, Hon. Ekpo said: “A greater supply of gas will boost the electricity supply to industry, improve industrial productivity, and offer more environmentally friendly home energy options. Thus, our people’s quality of life will improve, sustainable development will be promoted, and Nigeria will be positioned as a major player in the world energy market.”

The minister did not forget to acknowledge those he called “these outstanding initiatives”, to whom he paid a glowing tribute.



Value proposition of the KGG facility

01

Total eradication of flared gas and conversion of an environmental pollutant into products of value

02

Creation of a strategic gas gathering hub and injection node for quick access to market for gas owners to monetise gas

03

Provision of alternative gas supply to the Western flank of the OB3 line to add to required volumes for economic sustainability of the line

04

Contribution of up to US\$240 million per annum to Nigeria’s GDP within the first four years through trunk line tariffs, liquid product sales to off-takers and other infrastructural tariffs and tolling revenue due to the network and trunk line operators

The Minister and NCDMB's strategic partnerships

Elated by what he had seen, Hon. Ekpo said: “The NCDMB and Nedogas Limited, of which Xenergy Limited is a part, deserve a praise for their tireless work and steadfast dedication to this admirable cause.” Their collaboration, he emphasised, “serves as evidence of the effectiveness of our local content policy, which seeks to increase the involvement of Nigerian businesses in the oil and gas industry while promoting local knowledge and capability.”

He also acknowledged that creative engineering and forward-thinking planning, as well as joint public-private sector efforts, made the accomplishment possible.

Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe on principles that guide NCDMB interventions

The Executive Secretary spoke as the industry regulator and chief implementor of Nigerian Content, as enshrined in the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development (NOGICD) Act, 2010. He was categorical about the vision

and mission of his agency and the mode of its interventions to advance the objective of local capacity building and utilisation of in-country resources.

He said: “We are proud of the strategic projects we are developing in partnership with other investors in the last 10 years, especially in the gas sector. These projects are geared towards actualising the Federal Government’s policy direction. We would like to emphasise that NCDMB is a business enabler, not just a regulator of local content.”

Engr. Ogbe added: “Our mandate under the NOGICD Act is to promote development and utilisation of local capacities in the Nigerian oil and gas industry.” The executive Secretary stressed that the facilities would also “serve as catalysts for local content development, job creation”, and a lot else.

Pursuant to that mandate, the Board had ensured the utilisation of local capacities on an unprecedented scale in the construction of the Nigeria Liquefied Natural Gas (NLNG) Train 7 project, resulting in 50 percent domiciliation of the US\$12 billion project.

As he rounded off his address, Engr. Ogbe declared: “We are not just celebrating; we are reaffirming our commitment to the principle of Nigerian Content development. NCDMB will continue to support initiatives that promote local content, drive economic growth and improve the quality of life of all Nigerians.”

Remarks by Nedogas Chairman

In his welcome address, the Chairman of Nedogas, Engr. Emeka Ene, expressed appreciation to the company’s partners in completing the two projects. He was particularly impressed by NCDMB’s strategic capacity development initiatives under successive managements. Engr. Ene was optimistic that the location of the KGG hub, close to the Delta State Industrial Park, would significantly enhance economic activities and the development of the state.

On the wider significance of the KGG Facility, he said: “This is a modular plant; it can be replicated 10 times over,” adding that similar facilities needed to be developed to deal with the 140 flare sites in the oil-producing areas.

- **Dianam Dakolo**



OGONI LAND CLEAN UP

Local bioremediation products deliver cost-effective results

A landmark achievement in in-country value addition was recorded this year with the completion of field trial of Solpawa Soil Bioremediation Products (SSBP) at a hydrocarbon-impacted site in Ogoniland, Rivers State. It is an excellent nod to NCDMB's research to market initiative.

The exercise, involving key regulatory agencies, namely, the National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency (NOS-DRA), Nigeria Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission (NUPRC), Hydrocarbon Pollution Remediation Project (HYPREP), and the Federal Ministry of Environment, marked a significant turning point in Federal Government's programme for clean-up of contaminated sites in the Niger Delta region.

Cost-effective methods of eliminating hazard-

ous and toxic pollutants and restoring such sites through the new technology offered by the Solpawa product means the end of dependence on prohibitively expensive foreign proprietary nutrients that had cast doubts on the feasibility of extending the remediation efforts to not only the 21 impacted sites in Ogoni land, but the over 2,500 others in the Niger Delta region.

Environmental disaster meets in-country ingenuity

In compliance with the recommendations of the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), as contained in its 2011 Report, titled: *Environmental Assessment of Ogoniland*, the Federal Government, in conjunction with oil and gas companies and other stakeholders, including Ogoni communities, initiated a comprehensive clean-up programme in 2016

under the management of HYPREP, which is funded under a US\$1billion Ogoni Restoration Fund.

UNEP stated that the fund was barely adequate for the preliminary phase of the work and that an estimated \$6billion would be required. For the rest of the Niger Delta, spanning about 27,000 square miles of swamps, creeks, and mangroves with the aforesaid 2,500 contaminated sites, another \$44 billion is needed.

In government's express approval and adoption of the UNEP Report was an unstated invitation to the NCDMB to advance some of its own corporate objectives: "To engage in targeted capacity-building interventions that would deepen indigenous capabilities" and to promote in-country "manufactured materials and local supplier development". The decon-



Mr. Abdulmalik Halilu, Director, Monitoring and Evaluation, NCDMB at the clean up site.

taminants for the field trial are a classic instance of in-country “manufactured materials and local supplier development”.

Patent holder of *Solpawa Soil Conditioner 101X* and *Solpawa Soil Booster 102X*, Mrs. Olufolahan Emmanuel-Tella, knew where to turn to for effective support to achieve her company’s ultimate goal of commercialising her products as well as access to market.

Armed with a well-crafted proposal, she came calling at the Nigerian Content Tower in Yenagoa to solicit institutional consideration for her company’s locally formulated products. Solpawa Products were tacitly signaling to the Board that it was time the nation looked inwards - away from foreign inputs, like Petroleum Reduction Product (PRP), Nutroil-NP5, SF 1000, among many others - for technological solutions to the huge and capital-intensive clean-up and remediation. NCDMB got that message.

The technique – bioremediation – adopted by Solpawa in preference to others, entailing chemical and thermal processes, held a special appeal for the Board because of its suitability for the Niger Delta environment. It ensures that contaminants are degraded to a level that renders them absolutely harmless to the environment. NCDMB’s research and innovation evaluation mechanisms had to be activated as the proposal reached the Nigerian Content Research and Development Council (NCRDC) and

the Technical Advisory Board (TAB). Also, specific processes in the Board’s Product Development Cycle had to be adhered to, namely, Product Validation, Prototype Development, Field Trial, Business Development and Product Deployment.

Bearing in mind that it was mandated to “facilitate the perpetual licensing of SSBP by the relevant agencies for a broader field application as a bioremediation solution to enhance the quality of the environment”, as highlighted in the project report, NCDMB put in place an appropriate machinery for field tests that would conform to international best practices.

A Solpawa Field Trial Monitoring Team (SFTMT) was duly constituted, comprising experts from NOSDRA (Dr Kenneth N. Aroh), HYPREP (Messrs. Pene Raphael Barikuma, Clinton Wonodi), Federal Ministry of Environment (Mr. Thomas Adepoju), Rivers State University (Dr. Reuben N. Okparanma, Dr. Achike Okogbule-Wonodi), NCDMB (Messrs Chinedu Chidi Ikejiani, Jonathan Njoku), and Solpawa (Mrs. Emmanuel-Tella, Mr. Rowland Tella). Mr. Abdulmalik Halilu, NCDMB’s Director of Monitoring and Evaluation coordinated the team.

The SFTMT was constituted to “Monitor the procedure for soil sampling before application,” “Monitor bioremediation application techniques adopted,” and “Facilitate product and sample tests by relevant agencies to accelerate its certification for use as a bioremedia-

tion solution.” At LOT 052, Okuluebu-2 (Ajedkpori Well 3) in Ogale, Eleme Local Government Area, Rivers State - a legacy petroleum hydrocarbon-contaminated site delineated by HYPREP for the field trial- the bioremediation exercise began on 7 May 2022.

Field samples from the site were collected and taken to the NOSDRA Reference Laboratory (NRL) in Trans Amadi, Port Harcourt, for the analysis of its petroleum hydrocarbons.

Excellent, excellent results

The team ensured that the standards spelt out in 2018 by the defunct Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR), now NUPRC, were adhered to in sample management. For 40 days, the treatment of the samples was done in the semi-engineered bio-cell built in accordance with specifications of HYPREP.

The result, as captured in the Technical Report - *Field Trial of Locally Produced Solpawa Soil Bioremediation Products: A Report* - Reuben N. Okparanma, stated: “The initial TPH concentration at the impacted area was 5,420mg/kg at 3 metres depth while the concentration of TPH in uncontaminated (control) area was 27.28mg/kg. However, upon treatment with SSBP, there were indications of reduction in TPH concentrations over time.

“Within nine to 16 days of treatment, results from one of the laboratories, EBIC, show that TPH was degraded to 308.309mg/kg and 152.899mg/kg at the top and bottom soil layers, respectively, representing an average of 95.79 TPH reduction. On the other hand, laboratory results from NOSDRA show that within 38 to 40 days of treatment, TPH was degraded to 513.73mg/kg and 173.27mg/kg at the top and bottom soil layers, respectively (representing an average of 93.68 percent TPH reduction.”

The results state unequivocally that there is “a clear indication of biological life (micro-organisms), green plants, and phytoplankton”. It was further noted that “for the plants to be growing in the bio-cell is a clear indication of the level of decontamination” achieved.

Solpawa Soil Bioremediation Products represent a significant breakthrough in Nigeria’s quest for indigenous technology and a giant stride in in-country value addition, as championed by the NCDMB. By this success, which potentially translates to in-country retention of expertise and money, the Board, as key facilitator, moves notches higher as chief implementor of the Nigeria Oil and Gas Industry Content Development (NOGICD) Act, 2010, its enabling statute.

- Chinedu Ikejiani and Dianam Dakolo

Mr. Chinedu Ikejiani of NCDMB, is a member of the Solpawa Field Trial Monitoring Team.





How DE&I is facilitating workplace productivity

The success of any organisation is tied to the productivity levels of its personnel, which is reflected in the bottom line. To this end, organisations and HR managers put a high premium on their recruitment processes. They want to ensure that the best candidates or the 'best fits' are engaged and motivated to put in the shift.

The modern labour market is dynamic with a huge pool of diverse talents and expertise to pick from across the globe that HR leaders are often in a fix. Sometimes, as organisations look to staff, the best fits might be thousands of miles away from the office where their talent or expertise is needed; they may have physical or sociocultural attributes that might go against the grain, against societal norms; yet, their special talent is undeniable.

No smart business or HR manager will pass up the opportunity to engage quality hands that can help drive sustainable business growth based on location, race, gender, or other attributes. This new thinking birthed the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DE&I) values espoused by organisations in the modern workplace.

DE&I initiatives empower employees while fostering a comfortable environment that enables talents to thrive. Thus, today's workplaces are more supportive, adaptive, and equitable directly enhancing productivity. Foluso Phillips, founder and chairman of Phillips Consulting, recently said that the modern workplace has evolved and that businesses must learn to look beyond the physical attributes and locations of potential hires, if they desire the best.

DE&I initiatives are hiring and workplace practices adopted by organisations to draw from a wider pool of talents across sociocultural groups and locations, and these talents are given equal opportunity to thrive within the diverse workplace environment. The initiatives encourage HR managers to employ talents without prejudice to sex, age, race, location, or physical attributes, and give all a fair chance to contribute to business growth.

Such a DE&I environment has been known to be highly productive. A study by McKinsey & Company showed a direct correlation between a diverse workforce and business profitability. "More diverse companies, we believe, are better able to win top talent and improve their customer orientation, employee satisfaction, and decision making, and all that leads to a virtuous cycle of increasing returns." The study showed that gender-diverse companies are 15 percent more likely to outperform their peers that are not. Similarly, ethnicity- or race-diverse companies are 35 percent more likely to outperform their peers that are not. "Every good idea at Oracle comes from our employees. By building diverse and inclusive teams, we benefit from each other's strengths and perspectives. That's what turns good ideas into great ideas," says Safra Catz, Oracle CEO.

In a heterogeneous society, like Nigeria, organisations must fully embrace DE&I initiatives to achieve sustainable business growth. The

Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB), charged with ensuring a diversified workplace in Nigeria's oil and gas industry through the Local Content Act, has been a bellwether of a diversified work environment. The composition of NCDMB's workforce, including its management team and governing council, reflects the country's diversity. The agency's efforts to ensure the oil and gas workforce reflects a heterogeneous society is paying huge dividends. The annual Nigeria DEI Report has shown the country's oil and gas leads in DE&I initiatives, thanks to NCDMB's efforts. The maiden report in 2021 showed the oil and gas industry in third place in DE&I in the country. In the 2022 report, the oil and gas industry had taken the lead. The industry remains a high flyer in DE&I.

Societies are becoming highly heterogeneous. This is true about Nigeria, with its multi-ethnic and religious composition. The companies or industries that fully embrace a heterogeneous workplace will continue to lead growth into the future, a Financial Times research has shown.

Indeed, for the myriad of benefits of DE&I, including a highly motivated workforce, innovative ideas, reduction in attrition rates and retention of top talents, enhanced productivity levels, and most importantly, 'better financial results', organisations will need to continue to refine their DE&I initiatives.

Mimi's pepper soup recipes

Nigeria's heterogeneous nature is expressed in its foods, and no better dish captures this than the legendary pepper soup. While other countries may have one standard pepper soup recipe, Nigeria has many, which are all tasty (as pepper soup should be).

Mimidoo Iyorkaa, founder of Mimi's Taste Food Hub & Bakehouse Limited in Abuja is capturing and serving the tasty delights of Nigerian pepper soups. From running her restaurants and others for corporate organisations,

her business has evolved into an online bulk food services where customers pick up pre-ordered meals and cakes as they book their events. Mimi also runs a catering academy where she trains people who have zero or little knowledge about culinary to become master chefs in African and continental cuisines, cakes and pastries.

Here are three out of the many Mimi's pepper soup recipes you could try at home. And you do not have to be a master chef to pull it off.



Mimidoo Iyorkaa, Founder, Mimi's Taste Food Hub & Bakehouse.

ASSORTED PEPPERSOUP

- This is mainly offal-liver, heart, throat, *shaki* (tripe), intestines, which must be opened up with scissors to enable a thorough wash using salt and vinegar to neutralize the smell
- Then transfer it into a pot and add fresh pepper, scotch bonnet pepper, blended onion, salt, *uyaya* (Adan fruits), and seasoning cubes without the addition of water to allow the mix to steam properly till it releases its broth.
- When the broth has dried up, add room temperature or hot water and check for taste with additional spices that might have reduced from the steaming.
- Let it cook for some time because this particular type takes longer. If you prefer very tender meat, you can first cook in a pressure pot till it is soft before transferring to a pot and the spicing starts. .
- Add thinly sliced scent leaves and hot leaves, which usually come in last.
- Once the flavours can be perceived, we put off the heat to avoid overcooking

CATFISH PEPPERSOUP (RIVER OR POND CATFISH)

- Pour hot water over the catfish to wash it clean from all the sliminess. Repeat the process until the fish is clean.
- In a separate big pot, put some water with blended *ehuru* (African nutmeg), *uziza* (West African black pepper), *Aidan*, *uyaya*, scotch bonnet pepper, salt, and seasoning cubes.
- When it has come to a boiling point, add blended onion, then put in the fish. The fish comes in last because of its softness. You want to maintain its size.
- Depending on the heat, time it for eight to 10 minutes, then add scent leaves, hot leaves and after steaming a bit, put the heat off.
- The catfish pepper soup can be served with *agidi* (corn meal), bread rolls. For women who just gave birth, it is served with Irish potatoes or boiled yam to rejuvenate their system and serve their first meal.

GOAT MEAT PEPPERSOUP

- Thoroughly wash the goat meat, which is cut in smaller bits for easy carriage.
- Place the washed goat meat in a pot without water in order to brace the protein and allow the meat cook deeply with blended African nutmeg, scotch bonnet pepper, salt, and seasoning cubes.
- When the stock has dried up, add room temperature or hot water and check for taste, with additional spices that might have reduced from the steaming
- Then add sliced scent leaves and hot leaves.
- Put off the heat in order not to overcook.



MARKET-DRIVEN RESEARCH

How NCDMB's strategy is bolstering in-country capabilities

How can research efforts be turned into beneficial products and services? How do we move research and development (R&D) from academic and laboratory exercises to solving problems in the oil and gas industry and meeting societal needs? These are some of the drivers of the Nigerian Content 10-year research and development strategy.

At the October 2024 gathering of oil and gas industry players, senior academics and resource persons at a research and development (R&D) roundtable at Nigerian Content Tower (NCT) in Yenagoa, the fruitful transition from ideation and groundwork to results was immediately evident. Reports from recently concluded R&D regional workshops across the six geopolitical zones of the country were ready for extensive review.

It was particularly remarkable that the gathering took place barely three days after the conclusion of the maiden edition of the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board-sponsored Triple Helix Nigeria (THN) SciBiz Conference 2024 in Abuja, themed *Integrating Research, Innovation, and Policy: Triple Helix Pathway to Commercialisation*, and a research collaboration meeting between academics, industry stakeholders and government functionaries at the Rivers State University, Port Harcourt, on 23 October, also sponsored by the Board.

The Yenagoa R&D roundtable was thus an exercise analogous to stocktaking, as the host, the NCDMB, and attendees evaluated what had become of an institutional framework to advance local content-related R&D objectives, including commercialisation of research outcomes through partnerships between industry and the academia as well as government.

For sustained funding of R&D, innovation and entrepreneurship, the Board established the \$50million Nigerian Content Research and Development Fund (NCRDF), having decided to pursue a programme of upscaling and commercialisation of R&D. NCDMB seeks to see research results translated into products and services that would check capital flight and promote economic growth in-country.

Research as enabler of capacity building

The pathway of research and collaboration had been deliberately chosen by the Board, pursuant to a key statutory mandate, which is to *develop the capacity of the local supply chain for effective and efficient service delivery to the oil and gas industry without compromising standards*. In fulfilling that mandate, the Board sought to place the research-driven petro-dollar petroleum industry and the grossly under-resourced universities in mutually beneficial partnerships.

Participants at the aforesaid Yenagoa roundtable had to review technical reports that emanated from a vast array of research-re-



lated projects and programmes, some of which are connected with identified needs, undertaken by the NCDMB in its single-minded pursuit of in-country capacity building and in-country value addition, based on a thorough appraisal of the state of the petroleum industry and, ultimately, a 10-year detailed plan on R&D developed by Pricewaterhouse Coopers (PwC).

Key R&D needs of the industry

From technical input by key petroleum industry experts and rigorous assessment of the operating environment, NCDMB identified the following as immediate needs to be addressed in R&D endeavours to bolster the local supply chain: enhanced oil recovery techniques, real-time logging data processing, oil field chemicals (such as additives and drilling fluids), modern technologies for welding pipes, galvanised bolts and knots for rigs, barites for drilling, hydraulic fracturing, ultra-high temperature high pressure (HTHP) cementing, and produced water management.

NCDMB'S strategy for market-driven R&D

From its studies of the industry, the Board identified eight success pillars that had to be addressed to effectively deepen R&D capabilities and achieve domiciliation of research activities within knowledge institutions, whereby companies in the oil and gas sector would carry out all required research projects in Nigeria.

The pillars are Funding, Infrastructure, Capability, Commercial Framework, Collaboration, Governance, Legal Framework, and Enforcement. All of these, considered as central to the attainment of targets within the Board's Nigerian Content 10-Year Strategic Roadmap (2017-2027), have received required attention through its US\$350million Nigerian Content Local Content Digest, 2024

Intervention Fund (NCIF), managed by the Bank of Industry (BoI).

For sustained funding of R&D, innovation and entrepreneurship, the Board established the \$50million Nigerian Content Research and Development Fund (NCRDF), having decided to pursue a programme of upscaling and commercialisation of R&D. NCDMB seeks to see research results translated into products and services that would check capital flight and promote economic growth in-country.

A Nigerian Content Research and Development Council (NCRDC) was similarly established by the Board with membership drawn from the Oil Producers Trade Section (OPTS), comprising all international oil companies operating in Nigeria, such as Petroleum Contractors Trade Section (PCTS), National Universities Commission (NUC), National Board for Technology Incubation (NBTI), Petroleum Technology Association of Nigeria (PETAN), Independent Petroleum Producers Group (IPPG), and the National Office for Technology Acquisition and Promotion (NOTAP).

To address the identified infrastructure deficit for R&D, among other things, the Board established and equipped six Centres of Excellence in six universities across the six geopolitical zones, each of which has a special focus. A Centre of Excellence at Niger Delta University (NDU), Amassoma, is for engineering services studies; at Federal University of Technology, Owerri (FUTO), for local raw materials substitution studies; Federal University of Technology, Minna (FUT Minna), for technology development studies; Federal University of Technology, Akure (FUTA), for geological and geophysical studies, and Modibbo Adama University of Technology, Yola, for safety and environmental studies.

The Abuja workshop, organised by Triple Helix

Nigeria (THN) and supported by NCDMB, added another dimension to the strategy of the Board for research advancement. Affirmations and commitments by notable organisations and experts at the SciBiz Conference 2024 did echo at the Yenagoa event.

The Yenagoa R&D Roundtable

Mr. Isaac Yalah, Director, Planning, Research and Statistics, who represented the Executive Secretary of NCDMB, set the tone for the Roundtable in his keynote address. He said the expectation was that the event would be "an opportunity to x-ray some of the Board's initiatives, proffer areas of improvement, and propose new ways to enhance the research ecosystem in the oil and gas industry".

A striking takeaway from his address was the announcement that NCDMB "intends to on-board more impactful research projects in the coming months, in addition to the 14 applied research projects that we are presently sponsoring at various stages of technological readiness."

Mr. Silas Ajimijaiye, the General Manager, Research, Statistics and Development Division, provided an overview of major R&D initiatives of the NCDMB. He emphasised the importance of market-driven research, noting that partnerships and collaborations would enhance local capacity and boost the national economy. To all participants, he conveyed the assurance of the Board that the outcomes of the workshop would be implemented.

The Amal Technology gas leak detector and printed circuit board manufacturing facility provides the evidence that research efforts could solve societal problems, and more would come from the NCDMB.

- **Dianam Dakolo**

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PLANTING TREES CAN BE FUN

Additional benefits includes team building, effective communication in the workplace

Businesses are increasingly exploiting the potential of tree planting to help them achieve key outcomes that benefit employees' well-being and productivity, the company's corporate social responsibility objectives, and help contribute to the nation's efforts at reducing its carbon footprint. In recent years, Seplat Energy, Nestle Nigeria, and UBA announced plans to plant millions of trees. The increasing popularity of tree planting as a team-building activity stems from its ability to foster team bonding, encourage effective communication, and ultimately enhance productivity.

When employees come together for a shared cause, they bond in ways that bring lasting benefits to the workplace. The mental rejuvenation and morale boost gained from a day spent outdoors can make a big difference.

There is also empirical evidence of a direct link between greenery and better quality of life and longevity. Trees supply humans with the oxygen they breathe in, the shade from the sun's glare, food and medicine. A study published in *Science Advances* showed that people who live near more green spaces may live 2.5 years longer on average. Another study in *The Lancet Planetary Health* discovered that "people who live near green spaces are less likely to die before their life expectancy".

Science has shown other benefits of green spaces, including heart health improvement, lower risk of diabetes and high cholesterol, lower blood pressure, and the slowing down of aging. Greenery reduces stress, anxiety, and depression, and improves concentration and focus. Green spaces, such as parks and gardens also encourage physical activity and community interaction, which can contribute to better health outcomes. Desmond Majekodunmi, an environmental activist, calls trees and the natural environment "our life support systems".

Some areas in the world have been tagged Blue Zones because people in those places live very long – beyond their 90s – and healthy lives. Places like Singapore, Sardinia, Italy, Nicoya Peninsula, Costa Rica, Okinawa, Japan, and Loma Linda, California have Blue Zones. One common factor in these areas is the greenery, the abundance of trees, and nature. The Singaporean case was unique; the life expectancy in the city used to be around 65 years 50 years ago, but that changed drastically with life expectancy today in the 80s.

Tree planting by organisations presents numerous benefits to the employees, the company, and the community. Managing Director, Seplat West Limited, Seplat Energy, Ayodele Olatunde said the company's tree planting initiative will, "promote the physical and mental wellbeing of our people".

Tree planting helps to build camaraderie among employees. The activity offers an informal setting that allows employees to let down their hair and interact even on a personal level. It enables collaborative planning as team members discuss the planting site, spacing, planting techniques, and other details for the tree planting. It also helps to highlight employees' critical thinking and problem-solving skills as they tackle a new challenge. There is also that joy of achieving goals together. The junior employees are thrilled to get their hands dirty right beside their bosses. This helps to break the invisible

barrier and allows for bonding, which can be carried over to the workplace.

Being outdoors and engaged in a meaningful activity can rejuvenate the mind. Studies show that being in nature reduces stress and improves mental well-being, which boosts morale. After a tree-planting day, teams often return to work with fresh perspectives, a greater sense of purpose, and renewed energy.

The interesting part is organising a tree planting day for employees is not complicated at all. The planning committee works with the community and necessary authorities to get an appropriate and safe site. Necessary supplies, such as shovels, watering cans, gloves, cutlasses, and seedlings are procured. It is important to engage an expert on tree planting who will guide the activity. Goals are then set for the day, like how many trees to plant, what areas of the site to cover that day, and so on. Teams are then assigned to different sections of the planting site.

For companies looking to strengthen team cohesion and make a positive impact on the environment, tree planting is an ideal activity. It is a simple yet powerful team-building activity that nurtures collaboration and employee engagement.

PETTY OFFICE ASSISTANT TO HSE MANAGER-CONSULTANT

NOGIC JQS keeps empowering young Nigerians

The potential of the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Joint Qualification System (NOGIC JQS) to empower young Nigerians with industry knowledge, skills and experience continues to throw up delightful surprises.

Elendu Nelson Dagogo, then a 31-year old graduate striving to survive on a meagre salary while working as an office assistant in an environmental consultancy and laboratory firm in Port Harcourt, the Rivers State capital, accessed the Board's NOGIC-JQS portal. He gained a training opportunity to become highflyer in the oil sector and since then, has not looked back

Driven by the desire to gain practical experiences and improve his chances of settling into a rewarding career in the oil and gas sector, the 2006 Electronics and Computer Engineering graduate from the University of Calabar, opted to respond to an advert online calling for interested individuals to register on the NOGICJQS portal to get opportunities in the Nigerian oil and gas sector. That singular step paid off. Dagogo was contacted within a year by the Board and shortlisted to participate in West African Ventures (WAV)/Chevron (CNL) SONAM Project, which lasted 20 months.

The young engineer was trained alongside 18 others at WAV in Lagos, and Onne, Rivers State, in 2016. The 20-month training focused on hands-on field engineering, construction and safety operations both offshore and onshore. The programme helped Dagogo to acquire industry skills and certifications, including BOSIET (Basic Offshore Safety Induction and Emergency Training), NEBOSH-IGC (NEBOSH International General Certificate), CIEH-Risk Assessment Principles and QHSSE Operations.

Dagogo recalls that the training equipped him with relevant skills and broadened his horizon for real life experiences in the oil and gas industry. The training provided the necessary platform and pedestal for my career path. The structure and hands-on experience on the field was something that only a few companies were willing to offer ordinarily to trainees. "The programme gave me the opportunity to work offshore, before and after the relaxing of the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. I can boldly say that my experience during the training was a stepping stone that created a pathway for me into the oil and gas industry," he said.

Upon completion of the training, Dagogo was retained to work with WAV and Petrolog Group as HSE Coordinator for the completion of various projects between 2017 and 2020.

With a burning desire to apply himself even more in the industry with a view to delivering more value, Dagogo formed a consulting company where he helps companies who find it difficult in processing documentations for tenders, bids, regulatory compliance and registrations.

He credits his rise in the industry to the experience he garnered from the training, which has now made him a renowned Quality Health Safety and Environmental (QHSE) and Management Systems consultant. Indeed, Dagogo was nominated as one of the speakers at the 2022 International Energy, Safety and Security Summit and is now a member of various safety organisations, both at the national and international stages.

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Dagogo currently works as Operations/HSE Manager, Alkanes Diapulous Limited while he still consults for companies that require his expertise on matters on ISO Management Systems Certifications, QHSSE Operations and Organisational structure, as well as regulatory compliance advisory. He described the NCDMB training as a well thought-out pathway for young Nigerians to gain requisite experience which places them in good stead to work in companies, since most companies require, and often times demand for experienced hands on their projects. With this, NCDMB greatly has bridged that gap, he stressed.

Now 41, Dagogo urged other young Nigerians to log in to the NOGIC JQS portal and register to take advantage of opportunities to garner invaluable experiences, which money cannot buy, and to continuously develop themselves.

- **Teleola Oyeleke**

NC-NC REM

Novel approach to regulatory engagement

Innovative, transparent and empowering are just a few of the epithets that have been used in describing the remedial solution to infractions in the industry.

Securing job opportunities in the oil and gas industry is the dream of many young Nigerian graduates. For Joy Munachimso Ukpabia, Precious Ogbeide and their classmates, the dream became reality courtesy of the Nigerian Content Non Compliance Remediation (NCNC-REM), an initiative of the NCDMB.

Joy Ukpabia and Chimzurum Adimchinobi Iwuanyanwu were selected from the NOGIC JQS portal, the database of human and material capacities maintained by the NCDMB. They participated in the NCNC-REM training sponsored by Rivers State based Greenville LNG Limited. The hands-on training which was conducted by Dextrous Applied Training Institute in Port Harcourt, the state capital, lasted one year. At the conclusion of the programme, the trainees were employed by the company. Greenville LNG specialises in liquefying and distributing LNG to power plants and industrial customers in Nigeria.

Also benefiting from the NOGIC JQS platform are Precious Ogbeide, Ininifi Aboyewa, Temple Ezekiel, Kelvin Akogun, Henry Umeanor and Adebayo Okiki. They took part in the NCNC-REM Training sponsored and conducted by Les Energy Services/PFL Engineering. All six candidates were retained at the completion of the one year programme, although one of the trainees decided to pursue other endeavours.

NCNC-Rem trainings are sponsored by oil and gas firms as atonement or retribution for failure to comply with certain provisions of the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development (NOGICD) Act. NCDMB introduced the innovative solution because it is far more beneficial and cost-effective to the economy, compared to meting other forms of sanctions. NCNC-REM can equally be conducted through research and development or infrastructure development, as agreed by the Board and the defaulting organisation.

A journey of personal growth and professional fulfillment

Each trainee selected by the NCDMB is an eloquent testament of the Board's vision to up-skill and empower young Nigerians. Joy Ukpabia, a biochemistry graduate had long aspired to join the oil and gas industry. Despite initial

challenges with the application, she persevered, eventually earning a place in the NCDMB training. Her experience was transformative as she gained essential skills in occupational health and safety, positioning her as a valuable laboratory analyst. Reflecting on her experience, she advises applicants to focus on building knowledge rather than immediate financial gain. "The expertise you gain is more beneficial in the long run," she says.

Precious Ogbeide, who was trained at Les Energy/PFL Engineering, came from a background of welding and fabrication engineering. Determined to broaden his skills, Ogbeide embraced the technical rigours of rope access, non-destructive testing (NDT), and scaffolding. His dedication made him an invaluable part of his team. He credits NCDMB's structured training for giving him an edge in the field. He encourages future trainees to stay adaptable and fully embrace the learning journey, noting that the programme is a stepping stone to a successful and rewarding career in the oil and gas industry.

demonstrated alignment to our culture of excellence, hard work, and environmental sustainability, which made it an easy decision to retain them."

A key element of NCDMB's training programmes is accessibility. NCDMB has developed a selection process that ensures opportunities are open to Nigerians from every region. Mohammed Ahmed Ndaman, Manager of Service Utilisation and Penalty Administration at NCDMB, elaborates: "We select Nigerians from every geo-political zone of the country to ensure that free and fair opportunities are given to all Nigerians."

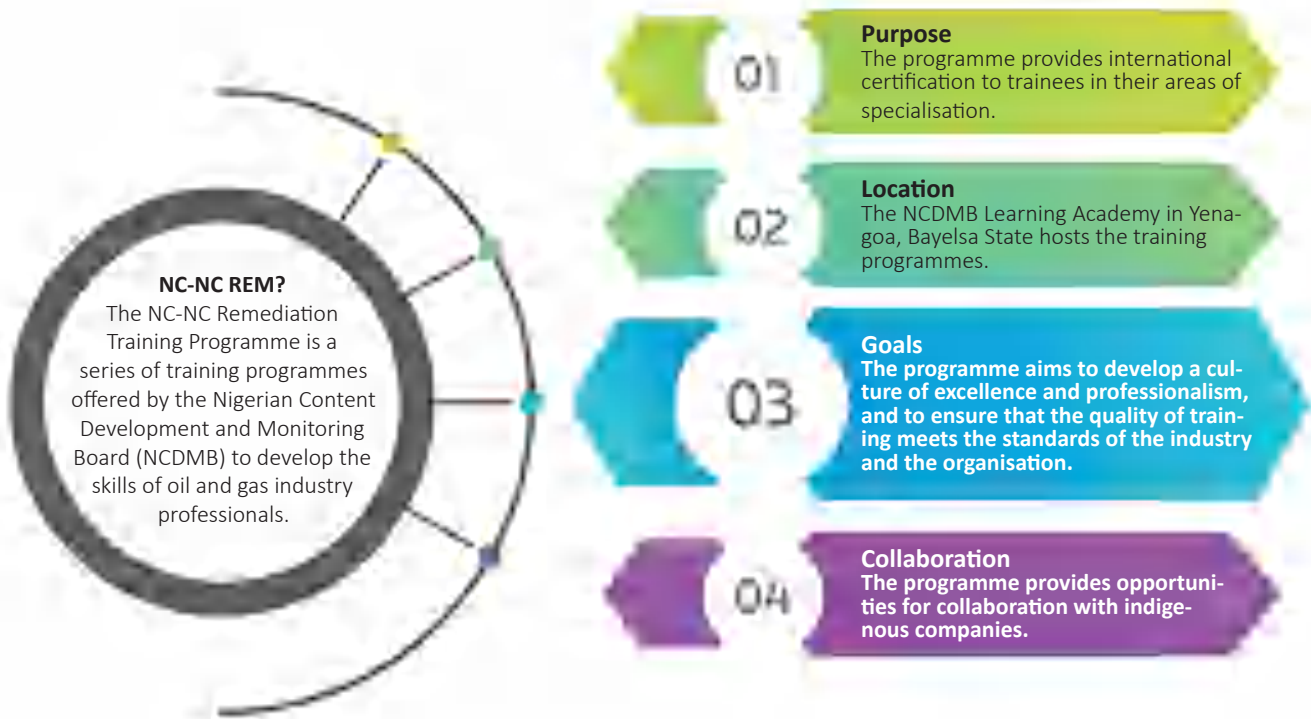
Partnerships that work

Greenville LNG's a prime example of how NCDMB non-compliance remediation strategy directly impacts the broader economy. The company found NCDMB's trainees to be fit for its operations. Ritu Sahajwalla, Managing Director of Greenville LNG, says "the trainees



Precious Ogbeide

Ukpabia Munachimso Joy



NCDMB’s application of the innovative NCNC-REM is closing skill gaps in the industry and providing companies with a rich pool of well-trained Nigerians to recruit from, thereby reducing reliance on expatriate workers and ensuring that critical technical roles are filled by skilled Nigerians. Greenville LNG’s MD recognises the economic significance of the programme, noting: “Through the trainings programmes, NCDMB has enabled companies like ours to find qualified Nigerians to fill roles, which would have otherwise been occupied by expatriates. This is important for both the Nigerian economy and the sustainability of our organisation.”

It is an equal opportunity platform

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Ritu Sahajwalla
MD Greenville LNG

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Through a transparent selection process of computer-based testing and interviews, NCDMB identifies the most promising candidates to participate in the programmes.

The NCDMB’s mission goes beyond just training; it’s a long-term investment in Nigeria’s workforce. Mohammed explains that the non-compliant companies contribute to the NCDMB’s goal by supporting training initiatives that bring value to Nigerians. “By directing resources into skill-building, we ensure that critical areas of expertise remain within Nigeria, boosting the local industry,” he says.

- Ophelia Jackson



Trainees at the close-out of the one-year NC-Rem Training programme organised by PFL Engineering Services. The trainees were retained by the company.

AFRO BEATS

GROWING ALLURE AND MONEY

Songs selling a new look Afrobeats, loved by both young and the not-so-young

Burna Boy's unique blend of Afrobeats, reggae, and dancehall is at the forefront although he has equal challengers lining up beside him. Ever since he won the Best Global Music Album accolade for *Twice As Tall* at the 63rd GRAMMY Awards in 2021, the artiste has garnered a massive following, leading to sold-out concerts and significant streaming revenue. His deep connection to Nigerian roots and themes of African pride have resonated with fans worldwide, earning him numerous awards and accolades.

In 2024, Burna Boy continued to captivate audiences around the world. His performances were not just concerts but cultural phenomena, bringing together diverse fans united by his music. Ticket sales remained robust, with many events selling out quickly, demonstrating his enduring appeal and the sustained growth of his career. His stage presence and the energy he brought to each performance were pivotal in maintaining his status as one of the leading figures in the Afrobeats genre.

Regarding his most influential song, *Last Last* (2022) stands out as a significant track in Burna Boy's discography. It has resonated with audiences globally, becoming a staple on streaming platforms and earning substantial streaming revenue. The song's relatable lyrics and catchy beat have contributed to its

widespread acclaim, making it one of the most streamed Nigerian songs of all time on platforms like Apple Music. This track, among others, has contributed to Burna Boy surpassing three billion streams on Spotify, a testament to his impact and the reach of his music.

And Rema is next on the list of the Afrobeats stars making the genre all the more global. His rise to fame has been meteoric, with his distinctive sound and youthful energy propelling him to the top of the Afrobeats scene. His breakout hit *Dumebi* (2020) and subsequent releases have not only charmed listeners but also caught the attention of international stars, resulting in high-profile collaborations.

In 2023, Rema's influence was particularly notable as he became the first Afrobeats artiste to perform at the Ballon d'Or ceremony, showcasing the genre's reach within the realm of global sports and entertainment. His performance of the hit single *Calm Down* not only marked a historic moment for Afrobeats but also solidified his status as a global ambassador for the genre.

Rema's success has translated into substantial earnings. His 2023 concert tours, which included sold-out venues across North America and Europe, significantly boosted his income. Reports suggest that his net worth surged to nearly US\$100million since 2022, with a considerable portion attributed to his performance fees, ticket sales, and endorsement

contracts. This financial milestone underscores the commercial viability of Afrobeats and Rema's ability to draw massive crowds.

Before Rema and Burna Boy made it to their time to shine, *Essence* (2020) singer Wizkid, known for his charismatic performances and collaborations with artistes like Drake and Beyoncé, had solidified his status as a global icon already. His Grammy-winning track *Brown Skin Girl* in Beyoncé's 2019 soundtrack album *The Lion King: The Gift*, is a testament to his international appeal and the widespread success of Afrobeats.

The year 2023 saw the emergence of new talents like AMAARAE, BNXXN, and Oladapo, who brought fresh perspectives to the genre. Their innovative approaches and unique voices have contributed to the genre's dynamism and continued popularity. The introduction of the Billboard Afrobeats singles chart and the Recording Academy's Best African Music Performance category further underscored the genre's growing prominence.

Streaming platforms have played a crucial role in the financial success of Nigerian artistes, with Spotify royalties for Nigerian artistes alone exceeding ₦25billion in 2023, a figure that doubled from the previous year and marked a staggering 2,500 percent increase since 2017. This growth has been fueled by a surge in paid streaming services, with Nigerian artistes earning over ₦10million in royalties quadrupling since 2018. The democratising power of streaming has allowed independent artistes and labels to thrive, with Nigerian artistes owning over 80 percent of the tracks featured on Nigeria's daily Top-50 chart in 2023.

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3 of the biggest songs that kept listeners tuned to the artistes

Afrobeats has taken the world by storm, and nowhere is this more evident than in Nigeria, where the rhythm of the drums and the melody of the streets come alive in the songs that top the charts.

Now, we are about to capture all the biggest tracks released between June and October through Spotify’s Best of Afrobeats Hits 2024. On the list, you witness the personal stories behind each song up-close. You also find out why they are special to the listener.

PIECE OF MY HEART BY WIZKID FEAT. BRENT FAIYAZ

Haven’t we all lost someone? It is sort of inevitable when it happens. Dropped October 18, this song features as a soulful collaboration that blends Afrobeats with R&B. It’s a piece that resonates with listeners for its heartfelt lyrics and the personal touch Wizkid brings, paying tribute to his late mother. The lyrics of *Piece of My Heart* speak to the inevitability of loss but also to the enduring nature of love. It is a piece that not only resonates with listeners for its heartfelt expression. The song has quickly gained popularity, with the official video amassing millions of views shortly after release. This single is a shining example of how music can be a healing force, providing comfort and understanding in times of sorrow.



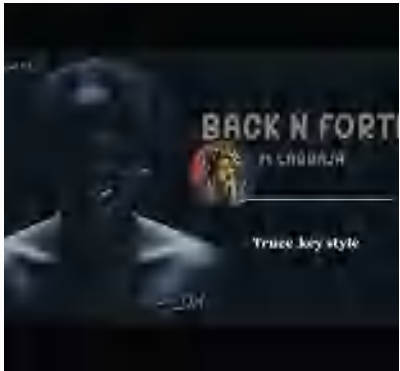
BURNING BY TEMS

Tems releasing the track *Burning* on June 7, 2024 brought a song reflecting on her journey to fame and the internal battles that accompanied that. It is a track that burns with passion and the fire of Tems’ experiences in the industry she conquered during the Covid-19 pandemic. Tems’ introspective track is a fiery narrative of personal growth and the struggles that shape us. For many Nigerians, her rise to global acclaim mirrors the national spirit of resilience and the relentless pursuit of dreams amid adversity. *Burning* is the third single from her debut studio album, *Born in the Wild*, and it showcases Tems’ songwriting prowess as she collaborates with GuiltyBeatz. The lyrics are a candid reflection of her emotions during the rapid rise to fame and the deceit she encountered in the music industry. It is a song that speaks to the heart, discussing the triggers and struggles that come with public life. The music video for *Burning*, released on August 5, 2024, is a visual treat that complements the song’s introspective nature. Directed by Tems herself, it features her traversing the streets of New York, interspersed with clips of her performances and red carpet appearances, symbolising her musical journey.



BACK N FORTH BY FIREBOY DML FEAT. LACBAJA

A fusion of Fireboy DML’s modern sound with Lagbaja’s traditional beats, *Back n Forth* was released on August 28, 2024. It is a dialogue between generations, proving that music is a timeless conversation. Fireboy DML, known for his modern Afrobeats melodies, joining forces with Lagbaja, whose traditional beats are synonymous with the rich musical legacy of Nigeria, is a testament to the power of music to transcend time and generational divides. Their collaboration quickly resonated with listeners, becoming a symbol of unity and the enduring nature of musical dialogue. The track is part of Fireboy DML’s album *Adedamola*, which has been making waves since its release. The official video for *Back n Forth*, available on YouTube, showcases the unique blend of Fireboy DML’s smooth vocals and Lagbaja’s iconic saxophone and percussion, creating a sound that is both fresh and familiar. Each of these tracks carries a personal story, a snippet of the artiste’s journey, and a connection to the listener that goes beyond mere sound waves.



Bell Oil & Gas aiming to become the 'Rolls Royce' in the valve space

*During the commissioning of its multi-million dollar factory at Ibeju Lekki, Lagos, the CEO of Bell Oil & Gas, **Dr. Kayode Thomas**, tells how three bullish young entrepreneurs established and grew the firm into becoming a reference point in OCTG/pipe threading and valve assembly in 22 years.*

HOW BELL OIL & GAS WAS ESTABLISHED

The cliché, against all odds, embodies everything about our organisation, Bell Oil & Gas, and our pipe threading, valve assembly and composite pipes facility. Three individuals- myself, Ayo Aderibigbe and Akin Rockson- spied on Nigeria whilst working abroad. Without any offices, no industry experience, no godfather, no contacts and only a little cash, we stepped into the unknown, armed with only a handful of tools.

The year was 2002. We were doing extremely well in the United Kingdom and had a choice. But we believed - and still believe in project Nigeria- and decided to return to actively contribute our own quota, no matter how small. Bell Oil & Gas is, indeed, a case study and a shining example of how a local company can create a vision and actualise it, in a highly challenging industry and a typical VUCA business environment (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex Ambiguous).

BREAKTHROUGH IN THE OIL INDUSTRY

Bell Oil & Gas is yet another evidence that the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development Act of 2010 is working. We recorded our first major success in the deepwater space when we won our first contract for the installation of Composite Pipes on the Bonga FPSO with Shell in 2004. This marked the beginning of a successful track record by the company. Between 2005 and 2010, we won and delivered major line pipe and OCTG contracts with several key players in the industry, including Shell, Chevron, ExxonMobil, Total, Agip, Addax, Afren, and later on Seplat, to name a few.

EGINA DEEPWATER PROJECT AND OUR INVESTMENT IN SPOOLABE GRE PIPES

In 2013, with the support of the NCDMB, Bell Oil & Gas won its most significant deepwater line pipe contract to supply flowlines and risers for Total's Egina deepwater project. The com-

pany also led the supervision of the composite pipe installation on the Egina FPSO when it arrived at the Ladol Yard in Lagos.

In 2014, Bell Oil & Gas introduced the spoolable GRE piping system into the Nigerian market. Spoolable pipes are flexible piping systems with a unique characteristic of having a continuous line pipe of up to one kilometre on a reel whilst maintaining the structural integrity of the pipe. This innovative drive not only drastically reduces pipeline installation times significantly, but it also provides major overall cost savings over the project cycle.

In 2015, the NCDMB supported and commissioned our first major investment in a Composite Pipe Spooling workshop in Port Harcourt for GRE, GRP, and FRP Pipes. The facility was the first in Nigeria.

That same year and in 2016, the BOG delivered some major composite pipe fabrication and installation projects executed at that facility. This include Chevron DSO Project (EPC - HH1) - 24,160 man-hours; 567 spools fabricated; Total Ofon 2 Project (EPC - Ponticelli) - 21,630

man-hours; 475 spools fabricated and Total Ofon 2 Project (EPC- Nigerdock) - 3,920 man-hours; 321 spools fabricated.

Thereafter, the company invested in a rotating equipment service centre in Port Harcourt for pumps and compressors, as well as a hose fabrication and assembly centre to support on-shore and offshore operations.

HOW WE FACED AND OVERCAME CHALLENGES

The downturn in the oil industry after 2016 hampered our company’s progress significantly and slowed down our pace, but it did not blur our vision or dampen our spirit.

The company raised the bar with this project: setting up our own pipe threading and valve assembly plant in a space generally and traditionally dominated by foreign entities. This would prove to be our most challenging venture, indeed. The journey started with creating a blueprint and conceptual framework.

Then a road show to China followed, where we visited several provinces and any pipe mill that was worth talking to. The objective was clear: find the right manufacturer that will provide us with the technology required and transfer technical knowledge to our people. That process took about three years from the start to signing our MoU.

The next and most brutal stage was funding, which we finally managed to resolve partially in 2019 with a private equity investor. The rest of 2019 and most of 2020 were spent on design. We broke the ground at Lekki Free Zone, Lagos, with the NCDMB spearheading that on the 24 September 2020. But by 2022, when we had expected to commission this project, we had run out of money. And all hell broke loose. But I’ve always believed in the saying that to get the lion’s share in life, you must have a lion’s heart. And we do have a lion’s heart in this company. The construction of our factory started during the COVID-19 pandemic and we had zero support from any local bank. It was always a case of show us existing contracts or bring security that is untenable.

In fact, I do not feel that any local bank believed in us. Bear in mind that at that stage, we had gone as far as 70 percent completion. And when we offered the equipment here as security, they kept saying: “Oh, they are too specialized, and will be difficult to liquidate if need be.” Even when we had an attractive source of funding that required only a bank guarantee, no Nigerian bank was willing to back us. Nigerian banks should try and support local projects more. Without that, we will not grow at the pace required.

PROJECT EVOLUTION

In BOG, we have always won with whatever hand we’ve been dealt consistently, persistently and repeatedly. We named this proj-



ect an “evolution” for one simple reason - it depicts the transition of our organisation into a different sphere. The BOG we see here today is vastly different from its earlier form, as I’m sure the BOG of tomorrow will be even better.

COMPONENTS OF OUR FACILITY

Our facility is unique in so many ways. It is an indigenous project and a plant run by Nigerians. It is the first of its kind in Lagos State.

It will provide 50,000 tonnes of capacity for OCTG threading, machining, repairs and the production of pup joints, crossovers and other accessories for drilling operations. OCTG Oil Country Tubular Goods is a wide-range of steel tubular products used in oil and gas exploration and production/drilling operations.

There is also the valve manufacturing, assembly, repairs, testing, sand blasting and painting, including a mobile repair and testing workshop (gate, globe, check valves up to 2inches, ball valves up to 24inches, as well as control valves and safety relief valves). We are set to become the Rolls Royce in the valve space.

A valve is a device that regulates, directs, or controls the flow of a fluid by opening, closing, or partially obstructing various passageways. By their very nature, valves can be very critical safety components in any operation. In the very near future, the first made-in-Nigeria valves for the oil and gas industry (and beyond) will be produced from this world-class facility. It will employ hundreds of people once we get to full capacity, with room here for future expansion.

HOW OUR CLIENTS AND NCDMB GOT US THIS FAR

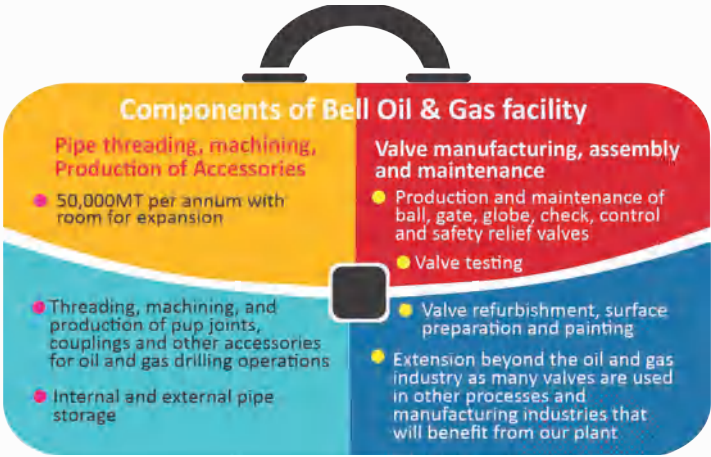
I thank our numerous clients who have kept faith with us, who got us this far, and without whose patronage this

would be a waste. I urge you to continue to support us by placing your trust in this local company for the services we render.

I thank NCDMB for driving more local companies towards what I call real capacity building. I spent four years researching strategic alliances and local capacity development in the Nigerian oil and gas industry, with the role of the regulator (in this case NCDMB) being central to the actualisation of such a feat. Without the commitment and drive from the NCDMB, local capacity development would have remained a pipe dream.

My only plea to the NCDMB is to look at the structure of the Nigerian Content Development Fund (NCDF), a laudable initiative, and make this more accessible to local companies. Funding has been the single largest bottleneck to this project and we have a lot of insights and lessons to share. In the final analysis, without affordable funding, our capacity development as an industry will not be rapid.

What is visible here in Bell Oil & Gas today is nothing compared to what is still feasible. So, expect the bell to ring even louder!



AN IMPERFECT STORM

Frontline insights on ordeals of COVID-19

An *Imperfect Storm* is a profound narrative that delves into the personal, professional, and institutional challenges faced during the COVID-19 pandemic in Nigeria. Co-authored by Dr. Chikwe Ihekweazu and his wife, Dr. Vivianne Ihekweazu, the book offers a dual perspective on the global health crisis.

Dr. Chikwe Ihekweazu, who led Nigeria's Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) from 2016 to 2021, provides an insider's view of the public health strategies and struggles, while Dr. Vivianne Ihekweazu, a health communications expert leading Nigeria Health Watch, shares her experiences from outside the government.

The novel's themes are deeply rooted in the love of humanity, the power of family, hope, resilience, and collaboration. These themes are not just abstract concepts but are mirrored in real-life events and responses to the pandemic. As authors with strong links to public health delivery, the couple presents a compelling account of Nigeria's struggle against COVID-19, highlighting the leadership and determination that drove the country's response.

The early onset of the book traces Dr. Chikwe Ihekweazu's upbringing in Nsukka, Nigeria, where his father's role as a doctor and his mother's pioneering work as a professor instilled in him a deep respect for community service, which later benefitted their country and indeed the world. He had a foundation of values that carried him through his career and influenced his approach to leading the NCDC during a disruptive pandemic.

An Imperfect Storm shows a system striving to find stability amidst bureaucratic inertia, limited resources and a dependency on donor funding that has long plagued African public health systems. The narrative also sheds light on the complexities behind the political scenes, where public health emergencies are met with medical strategies, negotiation, diplomacy, and sometimes outright defiance of traditional norms.

Both authors recount moments of absurdity that illustrate larger systemic issues, such as the delay in announcing Nigeria's first COVID-19 case due to the health ministry's social media handler being asleep. These anecdotes underscore the perpetual conflict within one of Africa's best health systems.

Moreover, the book discusses the critical role of donor funding in sustaining public health initiatives in Nigeria. It reveals pivotal moments, like when the country's health minister opposed expanding health security operations with national emergency health funds, preferring the comfort of donor support instead. This reliance on external funding is a recurring theme, highlighting the challenges and dependencies of the Nigerian health system.

There is a personal glimpse into the lives of the authors too as the narration goes on. That closer glimpse includes an excerpt describing the slower pace of life in their village, where days begin with leisurely breakfasts filled with family, tradition, and community. This intimate portrayal

adds depth to the narrative, showing how the co-authors' personal experiences and values influence their professional lives and perspectives.

Another opportunity the book opens up for view is a testimony of resilience and creativity when problems are being solved in a third-world setting. It is a story of a system and a nation coming of age, navigating the complexities of a global health crisis with ingenuity and determination.

For those familiar with the public health landscape in Africa, the insights shared are both affirming and unsettling, painting a picture of a system in conflict with itself yet striving for progress.

Dr. Chikwe Ihekweazu and Dr. Vivianne Ihekweazu succeeded in making a significant impact on the readers who set eyes on their joint work. The memoir was praised for its intimate and detailed account of managing a public health crisis in Africa's most populous country.

The Ihekweazus' account is written like a fast-paced thriller, filled with suspense and revelatory intrigue, keeping readers engaged from start to finish. It highlights the creativity and optimism required to manage the pandemic, offering a rare glimpse into the behind-the-scenes efforts that went into Nigeria's public health strategy.

Overall, *An Imperfect Storm* has resonated with readers, affirming the resilience and determination of those at the forefront of public health in Africa's most populous nation while also providing a window into the systemic issues that impact such efforts.

Both authors recount moments of absurdity that illustrate larger systemic issues, such as the delay in announcing Nigeria's first COVID-19 case due to the health ministry's social media handler being asleep. These anecdotes underscore the perpetual conflict within one of Africa's best health systems.



3 BOOKS TO EXPLAIN HOW UNPREDICTABLE 2024 HAS BEEN

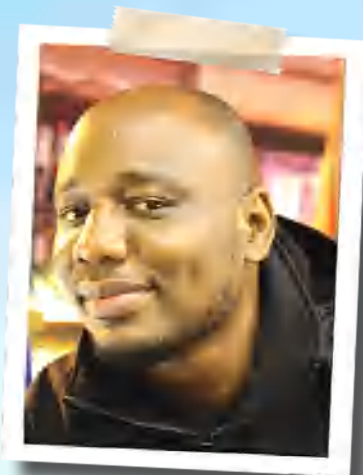
As a wave of new enlightenment makes it relentless sweep in the Nigerian minds, the dust that followed also infected ponderous writers, hence these three special deliveries questioning just how deep a novelist can channel their thoughts to build imaginations around an oddly familiar subject to a curious reader.

This is sort of how the Nigerian literary scene appears to have been winning hearts in this tight 2024. Here, we delve into three recently released books that are garnering attention for their unique feel, captivating narratives and profound insights. Off to the first one showing the continent of Africa like everyone is living in sci-fi.



CONVERGENCE PROBLEMS BY WOLE TALABI

Through Wole Talabi’s *Convergence Problems* we see a riveting collection of short stories that weave together science fiction and African futurism. Talabi’s prose is crisp and evocative, but do not just take our word for it. You should explore. While you are still reading, we warn you about a book transporting readers into worlds where the boundaries of technology and humanity blur. The stories are intellectually stimulating; they challenge perceptions of the future, our place within it and what is real.



ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE MYSELF BY ONYI NWABINELI

This is Onyi Nwabineli’s debut novel, *Allow Me to Introduce Myself*, as the world continues to see a woman go through the perpetual state of evolving. Here is a powerful exploration of identity and belonging. Through the eyes of a protagonist, Nwabineli examines the complexities of life as a modern Nigerian woman, such as *Anuri Chinasa*, a character. The narrative is both intimate and expansive, offering a window into personal struggles confronting a man’s helper as well as broader societal issues that weren’t initially visible until stumbling on this novelist Onyi Nwabineli breaking her duck. In the writer’s voice, we hear one who is bold and unapologetic, the mark of a formidable new talent starting an icon’s dash.



GHOSTROOTS: STORIES BY 'PEMI AGUDA

Unlike the far beyond of the European world, there is an acceptance of mysticism as a way of life and that is the impression that ‘Pemi Aguda’s *Ghostroots: Stories* would have tried to make should a reader find themselves in a moment of intimacy shared with this haunting collection delving into the supernatural and the surreal. Aguda’s storytelling is lush and atmospheric, with each tale drawing the reader deeper into its enigmatic world. The stories in *Ghostroots* are as much about the ghosts that haunt us as they are about the roots that hold us. Aguda’s work is mesmerising- it blends folklore and contemporary life, revealing the thin veil between the known and the unknown.



Yobe's Tulo-Tulo Dunes

are a tourist bliss

In the heart of Nigeria's Yobe State lies the Tulo-Tulo sand dunes which rise like golden waves frozen in time, a stark reminder of nature's paradoxical beauty. These dunes, located in the Yusufari Local Government Area, present a visual spectacle that probes the harsh reality of their existence. They are a testament to the transformative power of climate change—a force that has both given and taken away.

For the local farmers, the encroaching sands are a curse. The dunes, driven by winds and exacerbated by the effects of climate change, have swallowed arable lands, rendering them infertile and inhospitable for agriculture. The once fertile grounds that supported crops and sustained livelihoods are now barren expanses, leaving the farmers to grapple with the loss of both their sustenance and heritage.

Edited to taste is how an X profile OmolyaBoye pictured it when he saw the dunes back in July. He had seen several images of Yusufari residents and their lambs walking across vast spaces of sandy earth and that looked good. Being positioned to Tulo-Tulo so close made observers wonder why there has not been a focus to develop this asset to draw even more tourists in.

More eyes have started to notice the change; therefore, reports from international media, like Al Jazeera highlight the plight of communities on the fringes of the Sahara desert. Over there, the desertification process continues to affect lives and livelihoods.

Yet, for the fearless traveler, these dunes offer a blissful escape. The undulating landscape, with its reddish hue at sunset, provides a picturesque backdrop akin to the famed Saharan vistas. The Tulo-Tulo dunes have become an emerging tourist destination, offering experiences that rival the desert safaris of more renowned locales. Visitors can indulge in dune bashing, camel riding, and even overnight camping under the starlit African sky, all while being enveloped in the serene silence of the desert.

The beauty of these dunes is not just in their form but also in their ecological significance. The dunes of Tulo-Tulo are part of a larger ecosystem that includes oases—verdant patches that defy the arid surroundings. These oases serve as natural reservoirs, supporting a variety of flora and fauna that have adapted to the extreme conditions. The presence of water in such a parched landscape is a marvel in itself, offering a stark contrast to the surrounding sands.

Climate change has played a pivotal role in shaping

these dunes. Rising temperatures and changing precipitation patterns have weakened the vegetation that once anchored the soil, allowing the winds to sculpt the land into the dunes we see today.

This phenomenon is not unique to Yobe; it is a global issue that has seen similar effects in coastal regions and other arid zones. The mobility of dunes, as reported by the United States Geological Survey, poses threats to infrastructure and human health, highlighting the need for sustainable environmental practices.

More than a visual treat

A visit to the Tulo-Tulo dunes is more than just a visual treat; it is an educational journey. Tourists can learn about the local culture, the impact of climate change on the environment, and the resilience of the communities that call this place home. The Yusufari Local Government has recognised the potential of these dunes as a tourist attraction and is calling for investment to develop the area sustainably.

For those planning a getaway to the Tulo-Tulo dunes, the experience is multifaceted. The journey to the dunes is an adventure in itself, traversing rugged terrains that challenge even the most robust four-wheel drives.



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Accommodations may be sparse, but the hospitality of the locals is abundant. Visitors can stay in nearby towns like Damaturu or Potiskum, using them as bases to explore the dunes and the surrounding oasis.

The Tulo-Tulo dunes are a microcosm of the broader narrative of climate change. They embody the duality of natural phenomena—destructive for some, yet wondrous for others.

As a tourist destination, they offer a unique blend of natural beauty, cultural richness, and ecological education. For the farmers, the hope lies in finding sustainable solutions to combat the desertification process and reclaim their lands.

Wondering how to access the dunes? Yobe State is bordered by four states: Bauchi, Borno, Gombe and Jigawa. Depending on you were you are coming from, you might want to fly to any of the states with an airport, and then hire a four wheel drive that would take you to the Tolu-Tolu would continue on the main roads towards Yobe State, following signs. In addition, you would need local guidance to reach the Yusufari Local Government area. It is advisable to travel with

a local guide familiar with the terrain. The four wheel drive would handle the potentially challenging road conditions better than a salon car

The Tulo-Tulo dunes serve as a reminder of nature's dual role as both a challenge and an asset. They highlight the need for sustainable environmental practices and the potential for natural features to provide opportunities, even in the face of adversity. The dunes of Tulo-Tulo are a landscape of contrasts, where the struggle against desertification coexists with the beauty and utility of a desert oasis.

It is enjoyable to see picturesque dunes appearing from a distance like waves, yet there is a warning touch challenging humans to reflect on their impact on the planet. Hopefully, that would inspire seeking harmony with the natural world.

Whether as a symbol of climate change's adverse effects or as a beacon of natural splendour, the Tulo-Tulo dunes stand as a testament to the enduring spirit of the Earth and its inhabitants.



Idris Elba stirring the hornets' nest

playing Okonkwo in THINGS FALL APART

The announcement that Idris Elba will take on the role of Okonkwo in the upcoming television adaptation of Chinua Achebe's seminal work, **Things Fall Apart**, has stirred a whirlwind of reactions across Nigeria and beyond, attracting both applause and apprehension, certainly igniting a debate that taps into the heart of cultural representation and the global reach of African literature. Indeed, it is about local content.

On one side of the divide, there is a sense of pride and anticipation. Elba, a celebrated actor with a track record of powerful performances like playing South African leader Nelson Mandela in *Long Walk to Freedom* from the latter's 1994 autobiography, is expected to bring a level of gravitas and international appeal to the series.

Although British, Idris Elba's African ancestry spread across two parts of West Africa. On the father's side, he is a Sierra Leonean while having Ghanaian blood because of his mother. His involvement promises to shine a spotlight on Achebe's masterpiece, potentially introducing it to audiences who might otherwise have remained unacquainted with the story of *Okonkwo* and the fictional village of *Umuofia*.

However, this casting choice has also raised questions about authenticity and ownership. Critics argue that a Nollywood actor, steeped in the culture and nuances of the Igbo portrayed in the novel, would bring an intrinsic understanding to the role instead of Elba. They think that for all his talent, he might not be able to fully capture the cultural nuances the way the last known *Okonkwo* - Pete Edochie - did it in the late '80s.

Critics and doubters contend that the character of *Okonkwo* - a complex figure whose life is deeply rooted in the traditions and customs of his community - deserves to be portrayed by someone who has lived and breathed the experiences depicted in the narrative. Idris Elba had an answer to that at a film industry event in Ghana in October.

I would certainly consider settling down here (in Africa); not even consider, it's going to happen. This move to relocate will probably happen in the next five, 10 years, God willing, says the actor talking to the BBC. I'm here to bolster the film industry - that is a 10-year process - I won't be able to do that from overseas. I need to be in-country, on the continent.

The debate extends beyond the casting of Elba and touches on broader issues within the film industry. It highlights the ongoing struggle for representation and the need for African stories to be told by African voices.

While the inclusion of international actors can bring much-needed attention and resources to a project, it also raises the question of whether such decisions ultimately serve or undermine the story being told.

The imminent adaptation of *Things Fall Apart* has no flesh yet but the fact that it is being put together alongside another British of Nigerian descent, David Oyelowo, may soften the hearts of those

calling for an Igbo-absorbed personality to come play *Okonkwo*.

The series, which is still in the works, has yet to reveal how it will navigate these complex waters. With no writer currently attached to the project, the direction and tone of the adaptation remain open questions. What is clear, however, is that the production has already succeeded in sparking a vital dialogue about the intersection of art, identity, and representation.

Ultimately, the *Things Fall Apart* series presents an opportunity - an opportunity to celebrate African literature, to challenge the norms of casting and representation, and to engage in a meaningful exchange about who gets to tell African stories. Whether the series will rise to meet this moment remains to be seen, but the discussion it has ignited is, in itself, a testament to the enduring impact of Achebe's legacy.



BEST FLICKS OF 2024

The woman, a laughable
family and fast lanes

As Nollywood continues to grow, it is clear that the appetite for home-grown stories that reflect the nation's identity remains strong. The success of **Queen Lateefah**, **Ajosepo**, and **Lakatabu** in 2024 is a testament to the power of Nigerian cinema and its enduring appeal to audiences across the country and, increasingly, a global audience.

These films are not just entertainment; they are a testament to the growth and dynamism of a very attractive lineup of directors pushing to be where no other has ventured in their web of telling a story to the hearts willing to learn.

QUEEN LATEEFAH

A cinematic gem by first-time producer Wumi Toriola, *Queen Lateefah* has taken Nollywood by storm, grossing an impressive ₦269.5million. The film is a daring exploration of power and resilience, following the journey of a young queen navigating the treacherous waters of royalty and betrayal. The film's protagonist, *Lateefah Adeleke*, is a complex character whose life is a tapestry of lies spun to escape her impoverished upbringing. The movie's ongoing success is reflected in its impressive box office numbers, grossing over ₦150million just 12 days after its release and maintaining its position as the top-grossing title for two consecutive weekends. Its blend of drama, humour, and a star-studded cast has resonated with Nigerian audiences, making it a standout hit.

AJOSEPO

Kayode Kasum's *Ajosepo* is a delightful blend of humour and drama, weaving a tale of love, family, and the chaos of wedding preparations. With a box office tally of ₦257.2 million, this film resonates with its audience through relatable characters and situations that are quintessentially Nigerian. The film tells the story of a young couple and their tumultuous journey towards marriage, set against the backdrop of family drama and societal expectations. *Ajosepo* has shown remarkable staying power, holding the top spot at the Nigerian box office for four weeks after its release. Its relatable narrative and comedic elements have made it a favourite among cinema-goers.

LAKATABU

Odunlade Adekola's *Lakatabu* is a thrilling crime drama that has kept viewers on the edge of their seats, earning ₦202.2 million at the box office. The story revolves around a notorious criminal whose reign of terror comes to an unexpected end. Adekola's storytelling is masterful, blending suspense with a deep understanding of the human psyche. Here we are seeing a film bring a thrilling mix of action, comedy, and Yoruba mysticism to the big screen. The film's gripping storyline follows a notorious criminal armed with mythical powers, leading to a series of daring heists that baffle the authorities. *Lakatabu* has not only dominated the box office but also topped the charts on Prime Video in Nigeria.



Scott-Brown Akpede speaks on Seakey Marine's wide range of services in the marine sector



Mr. Scott-Brown Akpede, Group Managing Director, Seakey Marine Limited, discusses the varied offshore services provided by the company and how Nigerian Content implementation improves opportunities.

WHERE WE PROVIDE SECURITY SERVICE OPERATIONS

We provide services where offshore oil and gas facilities are located in Nigeria. Most of these terrains are volatile due to certain grievances from the host communities. The locations are also flashpoints for violence and other activities that normally disrupt the services of oil and gas firms. Our security solutions are tailored to provide environments that are conducive for the people to work in such dangerous places.

RANGE OF VESSELS PROVIDED BY THE COMPANY

The vessels we charter range from Anchor Handling Tug

Supply Vessels (AHTS), platform supply vessels (PSV), fast support intervention vessels (VSV), and offshore construction vessels (OCVs). Our major clients are basically anyone that has a requirement for vessel services in the offshore oil and gas industry. We provide services to the likes of Total E&P, NNPC Exploration and Production Limited, Chevron, and the likes. But our services are not limited to them. Anyone that has a requirement for logistics and vessels in the oil and gas industry, we are there to serve them.

HOW NIGERIAN CONTENT IMPLEMENTATION IMPACTED OUR COMPANY'S GROWTH

The Nigerian Content Act has impacted our growth remarkably. Before now, Nigerian companies were not the first preference for multinationals. But because of the NOGICD Act, the multinational oil companies now come to us as first preference before they go out to look for equipment. For those equipment and services that we provide, the compe-

tion is now among Nigerian companies. This has given us the room to grow, to develop our personnel, and develop our fleet.

RECOMMENDATION TO NCDMB

The Nigerian Content Act is the major driver of development in the oil and gas industry. NCDMB can deepen this and give Nigerian companies first priorities. For example, if Nigerian companies cannot provide certain services, instead of subscribing to foreign companies, they should encourage Nigerian companies to partner foreign companies so that at the end of the day, the knowledge and skills will be transferred to Nigerian companies. That way, we are able to build local content, skills and the equipment base for the industry.

Emphasis should be placed on the possibilities that are available in the industry. We have a lot of facilities that it properly engaged can provide employment opportunities for thousands of Nigerians. We have port facilities, like Calabar, Warri, and Port Harcourt, that are not fully operational. If those ports are operational, the scale of the shipping industry will increase and that will encourage other derived services.

I also recommend for the NCDMB to organise a platform for the development of the security sector in the oil and gas industry. NCDMB can provide a platform for collaboration between the Army, Navy, Civil Defence, among others, to synergise their operations in the oil and gas in-

dusty. This is important to sensitise them on the impact of the NCDMB and how they can collaborate to drive the growth of the maritime and oil and gas industry.

CHALLENGES WE HAVE

Most of our services are tailored to the needs of our clients. One of the major challenges we face is adaptability to the requirements of our clients. But we are handling that by constantly training ourselves and our personnel to proffer smart solutions to clients before the need arises.

GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

We hope to provide drydocks, to provide platforms where indigenous and foreign vessels can come and berth. We see a situation where we provide platforms for maintaining and servicing their vessels. That would make trade and shipping in Nigeria more useful. If your vessel is coming to a port, you will be comfortable if there is facility you can take your vessel to fix any mechanical issues.

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NCDMB/ITF vocational training programme Phase 3 kicks off in Abuja

The Nigeria Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) and the Industrial Training Fund (ITF) in September launched the third phase of their Vocational Skills Programme at the Raw Materials and Research Development Centre Auditorium in Maitama, Abuja.

Dr. Ama Ikuru, Director of Capacity Building at NCDMB, who represented the Board's Executive Secretary, underscored the Board's commitment to President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's economic restoration agenda, particularly in human capital development and youth empowerment. He acknowledged ITF's efforts in vocational, technical, and entrepreneurship skills development, saying these are crucial for Nigeria's economic growth.

Dr. Ikuru said vocational training for 100 Nigerian youths aligns with the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development (NOGIC) Act 2010 and NCDMB's 10-year roadmap. The six-month training included classroom instruction and intensive hands-on practicals.

Mrs. Olayinka Shodunke, Director of the Public Affairs Department at ITF, who represented the intervention agency's DG, restated Federal Government's dedication to equipping Nigerian youths with advanced technical and vocational skills to tackle poverty and joblessness. She recalled the 2019 visit by the NCDMB management team to the Model Skills Training Centre (MSTC) in Abuja, which led to the initiative to train 225 unemployed youths in technical vocational skills.

The programme collaborates with three professional bodies—Institute for Tourism Professionals of Nigeria (ITPN), Association of Engineering Craftsmen – COREN, and CISCO Academy—to ensure trainees receive professional certification in industrial automation, mechatronics, instrumentation, and process control.

NCDMB donates wheelchairs to PWDs

People living with disabilities in Bayelsa State have received 52 wheelchairs from Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary, NCDMB, on behalf of the Board. The PWDs got the donation through the Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities, Bayelsa State Chapter.

Engr. Ogbe said the donation was in fulfilment of a pledge he made in March at a meeting between the Management of the Board and leaders of the association. "We are not turning our eyes away from your needs. We have to aid your mobility," he said.

Engr. Ogbe urged members of the Association to avoid antagonism in seeking the attention of public agencies on any issue. The Executive

Secretary said the entitlement mentality had not helped Niger Delta youths. He stressed that resources under the management of Federal Government agencies were for all Nigerians. He promised that the Board would provide training in vocational skills for members of the Association of Persons with Disabilities in the near future.

Hon. Ekpomukumor Mayor, the Association Chairman who received the wheelchairs on behalf of other members, expressed appreciation to NCDMB Management for its prompt action on the requests it made in March. "This is a good sign. You are a listening leader," he said joyfully. Mayor also thanked NCDMB for the planned training programmes.

NCDMB hosts book reading in Yenagoa

The Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) in August hosted a book reading session with a special focus on how writers could practise their art beneficially by utilising available digital resources. The event took place in August in Yenagoa, the Bayelsa State capital.

Esueme Dan Kikile, Esq., General Manager, Corporate Communications and Zonal Coordination, who represented the Executive Secretary, said the Board was committed to honing the skills of writers, journalists and university undergraduates in servicing the oil and gas industry.

The GM said a well-researched 2024 publication by media practitioner, Mr. Azu Ishiekwe, titled: *Writing for Media and Monetising It*, had important content that could enhance the skills of journalists and writers as well as students on the state of the media industry globally. He said this was necessary for the media to thrive. "We wanted to ensure that there is an opportunity for the media and students in this environment to tap from the knowledge of Mr. Ishiekwe."

Expressing appreciation to leading members of the Association of Nigerian Authors (ANA), the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR), journalists, writers, and students at the event, he said: "We believe that we can build the capacity of those who practise within this space. At NCDMB, talent development is key to delivering our mandate."

Ishiekwe, who has over 35 years media management experience, commended NCDMB for the initiative. He noted that the event was organised to inspire the next generation of authors and writers.

Smart Schools Initiative set to transform early education

NCDMB and the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) in October signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the implementation of the NCDMB-UBEC Smart Schools Development Initiative (NUSSDI).

This would foster the provision of educational infrastructure, particularly in areas with high rates of out-of-school children as well as underserved rural communities, integration of technology in learning, building the capacity of teachers and educational administrators, as well as improving overall learning outcomes.

At the signing ceremony in Abuja, Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary the Board, explained that the NUSSDI would leverage the combined mandates, expertise and resources of the two federal agencies "to bequeath smart schools equipped with modern technology and innovative teaching methods," and thus "equip the next generation of leaders with the knowledge, skills, and technological capacity necessary to thrive in an increasingly digital world".

He described basic education as the foundation of human capital development, saying the NCDMB was deliberate in its efforts to develop "a pipeline of talents for Nigeria's oil and gas



CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY: Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary, NCDMB and Top Management after handing over Wheelchairs to the National Association of Persons with Disabilities, Bayelsa Chapter at the Nigerian Content Tower, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

industry”.

Dr. Hamid Bobboyi, Executive Secretary of UBEC, described the MoU as a game changer in the funding and implementation of basic education, adding that the partnership would have a profound and lasting influence on the lives of children, families, and Nigeria's future. Under the MoU, NCDMB will provide training and professional development opportunities for teachers, while UBEC and NCDMB will collaborate on infrastructure development projects. The MoU also seeks to develop and implement local content programmes in basic education, foster research and development in basic education and promote industry-academia partnerships.

The Smart Schools Development Initiative represents a systematic broadening of NCDMB's programmes in the promotion of digital education as well as the study of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) under which the Board has equipped several secondary schools in the country's six geopolitical zones.

NCDMB, SNEPCO, PTI graduate divers/dive technicians

NCDMB and Shell Nigeria Exploration and Production Company (SNEPCO) in July recorded a major breakthrough in capacity building for oil- and gas-related offshore operations. They graduated 20 professional divers as Dive Medic Technicians (DMTs) at the Petroleum Training Institute (PTI), Effurun, Delta State.

The 20 DMTs, who have secured full-time employment at oil and gas companies, were the first set of such professionals to be trained in Nigeria. In the absence of indigenous manpower in that area of industry operations, foreigners had been dominant, and Nigerians had to be sent to South Africa for training and certification by the International Marine Contractors Association (IMCA), with its international headquarters in London.

Mr. Mohammed Ahmed, who represented Mr. Abdulmalik Halilu, Director of Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate at the close-out ceremony for the 12-month training programme, expressed appreciation of the Board about the remarkable accomplishment of the PTI. “A training like this had never been done in-country,” he said.

Engr. Obi Onochie, SNEPCO's Nigerian Content Development Manager, thanked the NCDMB and PTI for making the training programme a huge success. He echoed Ahmed's remarks that a milestone had been achieved. In his opening remarks, Managing Director, PTI Consultancy Services Limited, Dr. Oriri Asemota Omoriodion, who lauded the collaboration of NCDMB and SNEPCO, noted that it yielded an outcome that was crucial to oil and gas industry manpower requirements.

Commenting on the scope of the programme,

Local Content Digest, 2024



Barr. Esueme Dan Kikile, General Manager, Corporate Communication and Zonal Coordination, NCDMB and staff of the Board with Mr. Azu Ishiekwene, Editor in Chief, Leadership newspaper after Ishiekwene's book reading session in Yenagoa in September.

Director/Coordinator, PTI Offshore Technology Energy Centre, Dr. Stanley Okiy, said 10 months were dedicated to on-the-job training, which entailed placement of the trainees in oil and companies, while two months were for class work.

NCDMB, SEPLAT to set up research centre at Delta State University

NCDMB and SEPLAT Petroleum Development Company Plc. have announced a plan to establish a world-class research centre of excellence at the Delta State University, Abraka, Delta State. The announcement was made in June when the authorities of the university and the other parties unveiled the design and implementation framework.

At a preliminary consultative session in the Conference Room of the Vice Chancellor, NCDMB's Director of Monitoring and Evaluation, Mr. Abdulmalik Halilu explained that the project was conceived as part of the Board's core mandate to grow indigenous capacity to drive the Federal Government's local content development programme. “Where the capacity exists, it must be utilised by all the oil and gas companies, whether they are from abroad or indigenous marginal producers,” he said.

The Management of SEPLAT, represented by Engr. Simeon Ogari, Nigerian Content Manager, Supply Chain Management and Operations, Amaechi Okoronkwo, and Emeka Ezenwa, expressed the desire to have a footprint at Delta State University. They said the company had a major gas plant close to the institution. The SEPLAT officials said they hoped the project would be very beneficial to DELSU.

DELSU's Vice Chancellor, Prof. Andy O. Egwunyenga, said he was overwhelmed by the gesture of the NCDMB and SEPLAT in choosing his institution for an intervention of such a magnitude. He said: “This initiative is coming unsolicited,” adding that the development

spoke volumes about the commitment of the two organisations to research and gas development.

Security agencies, youth groups pledge sustained collaboration with NCDMB

Security agencies have promised to always secure the businesses and people of Bayelsa State and other residents of the Southsouth. They made the pledge at a security summit in May in Yenagoa, the Bayelsa State capital. The security agencies promised to build on efforts of the NCDMB to make the environment more conducive for businesses to thrive.

The summit was attended by representatives of Bayelsa State Police Command, the Department of State Service (DSS), Joint Task Force (JTF) Operation Delta Safe, and youth groups.

Chief Superintendent of Police (CSP) Asinim Butswat said Bayelsa State had the lowest crime rate in the Southsouth and ranked very high among all the states in the federation.

Commander J.O. Bayode of Operation Delta Safe lauded the existing collaboration among security agencies in Bayelsa State. Mr. Bernard Matthew, representative of the DSS, said greater synergy among security agencies through information sharing and joint operations would further curb crime. Femi Olufunmi, a professor of International Relations and Strategic Studies at Igbinedion University, said socially deviant acts never served any useful purpose.

Dr. Obinna Ezeobi, Deputy Manager, NCDMB, who represented Esueme Dan Kikile, Esq., General Manager, Corporate Communications and Zonal Coordination, stressed that the Board's philosophy of stakeholder engagement and collaboration had been demonstrated from the beginning of its operations in Yenagoa.

Goodwill messages were delivered by representatives of Ijaw Youth Council, the Bayelsa State wing of National Youth Council, and the Movement for Survival of Ogoni People, as well as others from Akwa Ibom State, Afenifere (Southwest), Ohaneze (Southeast), National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS), National Parliament, Edo State, and Presidential Amnesty Programme, Phase II beneficiaries.

Mr. Ene Ette, General Manager, Planning, Research and Statistics, delivered the vote of thanks in which he assured that NCDMB would always engage stakeholders.

Female students shine in STEM at NCDMB Science Quiz

The NCDMB in March at the Nigerian Content Tower (NCT), Yenagoa, marked the close-out of the 2023 edition of its Science Quiz Competition for Secondary Schools in Bayelsa State. Prizes were presented to institutions and their

He GM said NCDMB was awarding prizes of greater value than previous editions. The gesture, he explained, signaled the Board's desire to put in more resources towards the sustenance of STEM education. Esueme stressed the need to get more schools to participate in future.

Belary School, Yenagoa, was the overall best and received a life-size human skeleton system and a microscope for its laboratory, a giant photocopier/printer/scanner, and a trophy, among other items. Two of its students received 2023 computer laptops. The first runner-up, Milkway Academy, Yenagoa, and its students received a similar set of items, while the second runner-up, Community Comprehensive Secondary School, Agbura, also in Yenagoa, and its students received similar prizes, but a smaller trophy.

the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development (NOGICD) Act, 2010, to coordinate and superintend over research and development towards developing Nigerian Content in the oil and gas industry.

He announced that NCDMB had developed a Research and Development Roadmap, which had helped to identify critical gaps hampering the research climate in the oil and gas sector. Lack of research infrastructure, funding, and weak commercial frameworks are key challenges, and efforts are being made to close the gaps, Ajimijaye said.

The Nigerian Content Research and Development Fund, he explained, was launched by the Board in 2021 with an initial seed capital of US\$50 million. Amal Technology Printed Circuit Board Manufacturing Facility in Abuja is a major success of the fund. The research commercialisation of the Amal project was achieved through the NCDMB Technology In-



(R-L): Engr. Abayomi Bamidele, Director, Project Certification and Authorisation; Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary, NCDMB; Rosario Osobase, Managing Director, Tenaris Nigeria and Dr. Ernest Nwapa, Chairman, Tenaris Nigeria and pioneer Executive Secretary, NCDMB, during Ogbe's tour of Pipe Coaters Nigeria's facilities in Onne Free Trade Zone, Rivers State.

overall best students.

Organised in partnership with the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA), the competition, which has entered its seventh year, was designed to stimulate interest in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education among secondary school students and to orientate them towards academic disciplines that are vital to oil and gas industry operations.

Esueme Dan Kikile, Esq., General Manager, Corporate Communications and Zonal Coordination, who represented by the Executive Secretary, said it was remarkable that female students participated in appreciable numbers and won prizes in the 2023 edition. He expressed his hope that the trend would continue and that gender gaps would be minimised in technical disciplines and ultimately in the oil and gas industry's manpower pool.

NCDMB holds R&D workshop for academia, oil industry players

Given the importance of Research and Development to growing Nigerian Content in the oil and gas industry and meeting the objectives of the Nigerian Content 10-year strategic roadmap, the NCDMB in March organised a three-day R&D Zonal Workshop for oil industry players and the academia.

The workshop, which held at the Federal University of Technology, Owerri, Imo State focused on needs-driven research, and how to deepen collaboration and linkages between the oil and gas industry and the academia, among other objectives.

Mr. Silas Ajimijaye, General Manager, Planning, Research and Statistics, NCDMB, who represented the Executive Secretary, said the Board is empowered by Sections 36-39 and 70(m) of

novation and Incubation policy, which created the Technology Innovation and Incubation Centre inside the Nigerian Content Towers at Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

The workshop is scheduled to be held in the six geopolitical zones of the country where NCDMB domiciled its Centres of Excellence.

NCDMB lauds SNEPCO, Bayelsa Govt as digital library is inaugurated at Niger Delta University

Shell Exploration and Production Company Limited (SNEPCO) has donated a digital library to Niger delta University on the Wilberforce Island in Bayelsa State. The state-of-the-art facility, which has three floors, a 2,300-seater library building, a fully equipped digital library, also has a Wi-Fi Lounge, offices, digital educational technology rooms, a 500KVA generator, 500KVA transformer, a dedicated water facility

and overhead tank, a restaurant and recreation hub, among others, has been commended by the NCDMB.

Dr. Ama Ikuru, Director of Corporate Services of NCDMB who represented the Executive Secretary at the inauguration ceremony in April, expressed appreciation to the state government for making the environment conducive for business activities. "Those of us in the oil and gas industry know that without the enabling environment, there will be no projects and without projects, there will be no local content growth and no projects like this one," he said.

Regarding the sponsor of the project, Dr. Iku-ru said: "I will thank Shell Nigeria Exploration and Production Company Limited (SNEPCO) and, by extension, Shell Companies in Nigeria, for showing faith, commitment, and good execution in the delivery of this project." The company's major partner, Nigeria Upstream Investment Limited, Dr. Ikuru said, was similarly commended "for approving the execution of this project".

Mrs. Elohor Aiboni, Managing Director, SNEPCo, said the learning complex embodied the commitment of her company to improving access to education for all Nigerians. She noted that the achievement was "the culmination of a vision shared by Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited (NNPCL), SNEPCo, our co-venture partners, the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board, and, of course, the Niger Delta University."

Mr. Osagie Okunbor, Managing Director, Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria and Country Chair, Shell Companies in Nigeria, reminded the audience, which included the Deputy Governor, Dr. Lawrence Ewhrudjakpo, and the Secretary to the State Government, Prof Nimibofa Ayawei, among others that "the history of Shell in Nigeria began in Bayelsa State".

Dr. Ewhrudjakpo thanked initiators of the project, urging Shell and other oil and gas industry players to continue partnering the Bayelsa State Government.

Construction of the Learning Centre and Digital Library was initiated by SNEPCo in 2007 to enhance educational infrastructure in the country.

NCDMB, Green Energy remediation training Programme kicks off in Yenagoa

A Nigerian Content Non-Compliance (NC-NC) Remediation Training Programme of the NCDMB began in April in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, with 20 Nigerians drawn from across the country participating in the 12-month scheme.

The training, which centred on critical skill sets, such as Piping Engineering, Project Engineering, Safety Engineering, and Electrical

Engineering, as well as basics in Information and Communication Technology (ICT), was sponsored by the NCDMB as part of its human capital development initiative to boost indigenous participation in the nation's oil and gas industry.

Speaking at the kick-off ceremony, Ms. Lekoma Sonia Phimia, General Manager, Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate of NCDMB, said the initiative represented a pivotal step towards building and fortifying skills essential to the oil and gas industry.

The GM commended Green Energy International Limited for collaborating with the Board in the training programme and for its decision to retain the top five performers at the completion of the programme. She also expressed appreciation to the facilitators, Dexterous Training Institute, for the top-grade expertise the organisation imparted.

Dr. Lyn Udochu, Managing Director, Green Energy International, thanked the NCDMB for its bold initiatives in capacity building in the oil and gas industry and for creating opportunities for collaboration with indigenous companies. She assured the Board that her company would do its best to make the collaboration beneficial to the two organisations and the industry.

The NC-NC Remediation Training Programme is one in a series through which the trainees receive international certification in their specific areas of specialisation.

NCDMB organises workshop to deepen R&D ecosystem

Oil and gas industry stakeholders and leading academics in March held a three-day Research and Development (R&D) Zonal Workshop at the Niger Delta University (NDU), Amassoma, with special focus on needs-driven research and deepening of collaboration and linkages. The workshop was sponsored by the NCDMB.

The platform provided a forum for discussions and demonstration of research breakthroughs on software and hardware in relation to oil and gas industry needs, bioremediation and related oil field chemicals solutions, such as additives and drilling fluids, as well as renewable solutions to meet industry needs.

Mr. Isaac Yalah, Director of Planning, Research and Statistics at NCDMB, delivered the keynote address on behalf of the Executive Secretary. He said the Board was empowered by sections 36-39 and 70 (m) of the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development (NOGICD) Act, 2010, to "coordinate and superintend over research and development towards the further attainment of the goal of developing Nigerian content in the Nigerian oil and gas industry".

He stressed that "critical gaps hampering the research climate in our sector, notably lack of research infrastructure, funding and weak commercial frameworks," had been identified in the Board's 10-Year Strategic Roadmap, which was developed in 2017. Appropriate measures to close such gaps were also identified, the director added.

Establishment of research centres of excellence in the six geopolitical zones of the country and the US\$50million R&D Fund to stimulate research in the oil and gas sector were some of the measures recommended to remedy the identified gaps. The director emphasised the importance of building a viable R&D ecosystem, adding: "Together, we - industry, academia and government - can unlock new frontiers of development."



R&D (L-R): Hajia Mrs. Shehu Tijani Abdullahi; Mr. Shehu Tijani Abdullahi, Chief Executive Officer, Amal Technologies Limited, Mr. Ayodele Olawande, Minister of State for Youth Development; Dr. Dele Alake, Minister of Solid Minerals with Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary, NCDMB commissioning Amal Technology Gas Leak Detection and Printed Circuit Board Manufacturing facility in Abuja.

20 youths acquire skills under NCNC remediation programme

The essence of empowering people to acquire specialised skills was on display in February when 20 young people received international certification for specialised skills acquired during a 12-month Nigerian Content Non-compliance (NCNC) Remediation Training Programme mounted by Newcross Exploration and Production Limited.

At a close-out ceremony in Port Harcourt, Ms. Lekoma Sonia Phimia, General Manager, Quality Assurance, NCDMB, who represented the Director of Monitoring and Evaluation, advised the beneficiaries to sustain the commitment they exhibited during the programme and continually improve on the knowledge acquired.

The beneficiaries unanimously said they were sufficiently equipped as skilled service providers in their diverse areas of specialisation.

Encouraging the graduands to look beyond paid employment, the GM noted that getting a job was a good thing but doing something on their own would be better. Ms. Phimia also commended Newcross E&P measuring up to the commitment to facilitate the remediation training and for putting together experts and other resource persons who made the programme a success.

Kofi Blankson, spokesman for Newcross, thanked NCDMB for coming up with the NCNC-Remediation Training Programme, which he said provided the trainees with critical skills for productivity in the industry and self-employment.

The NCNC-Remediation Training Programme is one of several skills development programmes in NCDMB's capacity building initiatives aimed at empowering Nigerian youths and deepening the pool of human resources available in the oil and gas industry.

NCDMB empowers youths with electric house wiring skills

NCDMB's Human Capacity Development initiatives continue to record milestones. The sixth batch of Electric House Wiring Training programme at the Akangba Regional Training Centre of the National Power Training Institute of Nigeria (NAPTIN) took place in February in Lagos. Fifty young Nigerians selected across the country were beneficiaries.

Mr. Tobin Spiff, Supervisor, Capacity Building Division (CBD), who represented his general manager, echoed the Board's commitment to developing local capacity in collaboration. He emphasised the importance of Electric House Wiring Training programme in bridging skill gaps and reducing dependence on foreign expertise in the power sector.

The Electric House Wiring Training programme was tailored to equip Nigerian youths with essential skills in electrical installation, said Mr. Spiff, noting that it holds significant promise for the nation's economic development. With a focus on enhancing local content and empowering indigenous talent, the programme, according to him, aims to create a pool of certified installers capable of meeting the growing demand for electrical services across various sectors.

Beneficiaries were issued two certificates: one for attendance from NAPTIN, and the other a Personal Licence to practise in the power sector. Engr. Abdullahi Aliyu, NAPTIN's Deputy Director, Training, who represented the agency's director general, said the programme addressed critical gaps in the power sector. He noted that qualified installers played an important role in powering the nation's facilities.

The Electric House Wiring Training programme represents a collaborative effort between NCDMB and NAPTIN to strengthen Nigeria's power infrastructure and foster economic growth through local capacity development.

NCDMB, Shell JV Partners donate engineering studio, ICT hub to FUTO

The NCDMB and Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC), with its joint venture (JV) partners, in October unveiled engineering design studios and an information and communication technology (ICT) hub at the Federal University of Technology, Owerri (FUTO). The new facilities include two state-of-the-art engineering design studios and a fully furnished 100-seater main ICT lecture hall, equipped with computers and smartboards. Other facilities are a 200KVA diesel generator, diesel storage tank, generator house, bore-hole, overhead water tank, perimeter mesh wire fence, a car park, as well as shallow drains and landscaping.

Dr. Ama Ikuru, NCDMB's Director of Capacity Building who represented the Executive Secretary, said the studios and hub were initiated in furtherance of Federal Government's aspirations for the development of competent technical manpower to support activities in the oil and gas industry and its linkage sectors. The impartation of specialised skills through expansion and modernisation of academic infrastructure, he noted, has to be accelerated. "We shall keep enhancing institutional capacity to equip our students with the requisite knowledge and skills needed to compete globally," he added.

Igo Weli, General Manager, External Relations, SPDC, who represented the IOC's country chair, said the facilities were the result of a fruitful collaboration, adding that the school was selected because it is in the catchment area of SPDC's Assa North Ohaji South Gas Development Project. "A 40KW solar system will be installed in the coming weeks to ensure sustainable energy supply to the facility," he promised.

Expressing appreciation, FUTO's Vice Chancellor, Prof. Nnenna Nnannaya Oti said: "The facility aligns with the critical mandate of the university to jumpstart national development through indigenous technology-based teaching pedagogy that emphasises practical knowledge, innovations and problem solving."



COLLABORATION: Mr. Abdulmalik Halilu, Director, Monitoring & Evaluation, NCDMB with management and staff of the Board with the delegation from the Ugandan National Oil Company during an understudy/knowledge gathering session at the Nigerian Content Tower, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.



TRIPLEHELIXNIGERIA'S VISION

10

Nigerian universities to own 10% equity in 10 quoted companies in 10 years

The theme of the 2024 Annual Triple Helix Nigeria Conference was *Integrating Research, Innovation, and Policy: The Triple Helix Pathway to Research Commercialisation*. It followed the successful launch in 2021.

The conference was part of our efforts to galvanise participation of members of the association in intellectual discourse, to promote research and innovation culture in Nigeria and Africa.

The new role of universities in research commercialisation

We are in the era of continuous transforma-

tion and the mission of the university has undergone a fundamental shift. No longer is the role of universities confined to the education of minds or the advancement of theoretical knowledge. We now recognise that universities must play a central role in the commercialisation of research, turning knowledge into tangible products that drive economic growth. The transition from education through research to commercialisation heralded an

evolving frontier where academia, industry, and government collaborate under the Triple Helix model to ensure research transcends the boundaries of laboratories and classrooms to solving real-world problems and fostering economic prosperity.

Linkage between innovation and economic growth

According to the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), Nigeria's annual patent

in December 2023. Through this period, our membership has grown from an initial 12 founding members to over 240.

The vision of Triple Helix Nigeria

We collectively set an ambitious Vision 10-10-10-10 to demonstrate our commitment to bequeathing an entrepreneurial university system in Nigeria. Through this vision, Triple Helix Nigeria seeks to inspire at least 10 knowledge institutions to accelerate innovation and have at least 10 percent equity in 10 listed companies in the next 10 years. This model has worked in many of the regions where Triple Helix Association has a strong presence and we have no doubt that it can happen in Nigeria and Africa.

In line with Triple Helix Association's requirement to maintain a pipeline of knowledge-sharing sessions, our chapter successfully organised eight webinar series, where subject matter experts were invited to share their wealth of experience on how to unlock the latent potentials of Africa in the research and innovation space.

Triple Helix Nigeria's objectives are to foster value creation in the Nigerian economy in line with local content philosophy of looking inwards, to promote the development of technology skillsets required to solve Africa's problems by Africans, to provide strong advocacy platform for building research capabilities in knowledge institutions and to foster structured partnerships between industry and research community, and to attract research-based funding in the direction of Africa-based researchers.

The four pillars of our strategic blueprint

Currently, we stand at the crossroads of science, technology, and business, united by the goal of driving forward innovation and economic growth. The conference was a testament to the power of the Triple Helix model where academia, industry, and government come together to set the agenda for solution-based research culture in Africa.

We have our strategic blueprint, which encapsulates the framework for our vision 10-10-10-10. It is built on four key pillars: Innovation-Infrastructure-Development, Innovation Financing, Entrepreneurial Orientation, and Research and Development Collaboration. Together with the policy document, we forecast a future where our research fuels industries, where our innovation transforms societies, and where our policies enhance the seamless translation of knowledge into value.

Abdulmalik Halilu, PMP, FNIM, is the President, Triple Helix Nigeria and Director, Monitoring and Evaluation, NCDMB

Triple Helix Nigeria's objectives are to foster value creation in the Nigerian economy in line with local content philosophy of looking inwards, to promote the development of technology skillsets required to solve Africa's problems by Africans, to provide strong advocacy platform for building research capabilities in knowledge institutions and to foster structured partnerships between industry and research community, and to attract research-based funding in the direction of Africa-based researchers.

application has risen from below 100 in 2016 to more than 400 in 2023. This significant growth suggests that with the right policy environment, propelled by the quest to develop market-driven, home-grown technology, Nigeria has the potential to transform universities to solution-based entrepreneur centres of excellence.

When we compare the astronomical growth in patent registration in China over the last two decades (in 2022 China's patent registration was 1.5 million) with its annual growth rate of six to eight percent over the same period, it can be concluded that there is a nexus between innovation and economic growth. These indicators encouraged like-minded persons in Nigeria to promote the establishment of Triple Helix Nigeria in 2021.

The essence of Triple Helix Nigeria

In response to the identified challenges and Local Content Digest, 2024

opportunities inherent in a knowledge-based economy, the journey of Triple Helix Nigeria started in October 2021 when a group of professionals that share common interests of economic development through research and innovation decided to establish Triple Helix Chapter in Nigeria.

Our drive was to adapt the operational experience of the global Triple Helix Association in fostering knowledge exchange among scholars, practitioners, and policymakers on the collaborative impact of interaction across university-industry-government. Triple Helix Association has a global network of six regions, including North America, Latin America, Europe, North Asia, South Asia, and Africa.

We scaled through all the rigorous processes of evaluation that led to establishing the Nigerian chapter in December 2022 as a National Chapter in the Africa region. This was followed by the official registration of the association with the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC)

FELLOWSHIP



Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary, NCDMB was inducted as a Fellow of the Nigerian Society of Engineers (FNSE). The induction was conducted by **Engr. Margaret Aina Oguntala, President/Chair-in-Council, Nigerian Society of Engineers** at the society's annual conference in Abuja in May.

DOCTORATE



Uduak Obot, Zonal Coordinator, Akwa Ibom/Cross River Zonal Office, earned a Doctorate Degree in Development Communication, and participated in the convocation ceremony at the University of Nigeria (UNN), Nsukka, Enugu State, in May 2024.

Zuwairat Asekome, Supervisor in the Strategy and Transformation Project Division, earned a Doctorate degree in Strategy Project Leadership (DBA) and Project Management Office (PMO) in September 2024.



ROYAL VISIT



Engr. Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary and some members of Management of the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) after a courtesy visit to **Ogiame Atuwatse III**, the Olu of Warri Kingdom at the King's Palace in Warri, Delta State.

WEDDING



← **Mr. Ebifagha Monigha**, an officer in the Capacity Building Division, walked down the aisle with former Miss Datonye Charles on 27th July 2024 at Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), City of Praise Parish, Port Harcourt, Rivers State. We wish them a blissful married life.



→ **Engr. Abubakar Lawal Musa**, an officer in the Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate, performed the marital rites with former Miss Aisha Muhammad on 3rd February 2024 at Misau Central Mosque, Misau Local Government Area, Bauchi State. We wish them a blissful married life.



← **Former Miss. Chizoba Ilodigwe**, an officer in the Audit Division, got hitched and wedded by Mr. Etaoghene Jesse Abolor on 4th January 2024 at St. Gabriel Parish, Ifite Dunu, Dunukofia, Anambra State. We wish them a happy married life.



→ **Mr. Joseph Obamo**, an officer in the Information & Communication Technology (ICT) Division, married his sweetheart former Miss Omolara Owoyemi on 24th August 2024 at God's Favour Revival Church, Igbara-Oke, Ondo State. We wish them a blissful married life.



NOGaPs

Industrial Hubs Production Centers

NCDMB is enabling oil and gas parks that will domicile equipment manufacture in-country, meet the needs of the oil and gas industry and sectoral linkages

Features

- ④ Firms in the park to access US\$50m Manufacturing Fund
- ④ 2,000 jobs to be created at each park
- ④ Dedicated power supply
- ④ Shared services

- ④ Oil and Gas Park @ Emeyal 1, Bayelsa State, nearing completion
- ④ Oil and Gas Park @ Odukpani, Cross River State, nearing completion
- ④ Oil and Gas Park coming up @ Onna, Akwa Ibom State
- ④ Oil and Gas Park coming up @ Ilaje, Ondo State
- ④ Oil & Gas Park coming up @ Oguta, Imo State

NCDMB

Nigerian Content
Development and
Monitoring Board

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...Building local capacities in the Nigerian oil and gas industry.



70% Local Content by 2027

Moving Nigerian Content to 70% by 2027, based on our 10-Year Strategic Roadmap, is accelerating. This will lead to greater domiciliation of capacities and spend in-country, jobs and greater prosperity for Nigerians.

KEY PILLARS

01

Technical
Capability
Development

02

Compliance
and
Enforcement

03

Organisation
Capability

04

Enabling
Business
Environment

05

Sectorial and
Regional
Market
Linkage

ENABLERS



Funding






Regulatory
Environment



Collaboration and
Stakeholder
engagement and
Research and
Development

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...Building local capacities in the Nigerian oil and gas industry.