

H1 2021

Local CONTENT Digest

NCDMB stakeholder magazine

ENERGY TRANSITION

Gas as fuel for driving sustainable
economic development





Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB)

NCDMB CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS: NIGERIAN CONTENT TOWER OX-BOW LAKE, SWALI, PMB 10, YENAGOA BAYELSA STATE

PUBLIC NOTICE ON PROCUREMENT OF BARITES FOR OIL AND GAS PROJECTS

PREAMBLE

The General public, especially Operators, Alliance Partners, EPC Contractors, Sub-contractors, Vendors/Service Companies, etc. are hereby notified of the availability of in-country processed barites that meet the specifications of the Oil and Gas Industry.

The Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) is mandated to develop capacity of the local supply chain through Direct Capacity Development Interventions or support to investors to set up facilities. NCDMB has a key responsibility to ensure that these investors are protected in line with the intents of the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development (NOGICD) Act.

The policy intervention by the Board to encourage such investments is to mandate stakeholders to prioritize the utilization of manufacturing facilities in the procurement of barites.

Accordingly, all project promoters in the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry, are by this Public Notice, required to ensure that procurement for barites required for any project in the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry shall be procured only from the under-listed Nigerian Barites processing companies with a **Category A Nigerian Content Equipment Certificate (NCEC)**:

S/n	Name of Company	Address/Location	Contact Details
1	Nishan Industries Limited	25 Reclamation Road, Port Harcourt, Rivers State.	Nishanminerals@yahoo.com 08033102222, 08065229737
2	Delta Prospectors Limited	Km.7, Jos Road, Lafia, Nasarawa State.	ezemegwa@yahoo.com 08037401877
3	Ana Industries Limited	Plot 375 High Street, Trans Amadi Industrial Layout, Port Harcourt, Rivers State.	ana@anaindustries.net 07032404640
4	Baker Hughes Company Limited	Federal Lighter Terminal, Onne Port, Rivers State.	Obele.bille@bakerhughes.com 08039790410

The following companies below have also been identified and shall be upgraded to Category A NCEC, as soon as they meet the requirements of the Guideline for the Utilization of Locally Produced Barite and Drilling Fluids in the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry:

S/n	Name of Company	Address/Location
1	Hopeup Integrated Industries Nig. Ltd	4-6 Davies Ikanya Drive, Port Harcourt/Aba Expressway, Rivers State.
2	Mansid Nigeria Ltd	225 East/West Road, Uniport Road, Ozuoba, Port Harcourt, Rivers State.
3	Cledop West Africa Ltd	Km.18 East West Road, Nkpolu-Rumuigbo, Port Harcourt, Rivers State.
4	Finestone Processing Co Ltd	Finestone Factory, Winners Chapel Road, Calabar, Cross River State.
5	Oxbow Concept and Resources Ltd	Oxbow Yard, Km 4 East West Road, Port Harcourt, Rivers State
6	Qualchem Global Concept Ltd	East-West Road, Rumuokoro, Port Harcourt, Rivers State
7	Rockfield Industries Ltd	Tar-Ukpe Market, Yandev Gboko, Benue State.
8	Helicon Industrial Services Nig. Ltd	Plot 109 Trans Amadi Industrial Layout, Port Harcourt, Rivers State.
9	Fugard Mining & Mineral Processing Co. Ltd	1 Ladi Club Road, Barkin Ladi, Plateau State.
10	JPO Investment Nig. Ltd	115 Port Harcourt/Aba Road, Obiga, Asa, Ukwa LGA, Abia State.

In compliance with Sections 11 and 12 of the NOGICD Act of 2010, procurement of barites shall be granted only to vendors certified by the Board.

The Board will be expecting quarterly reports from operating companies confirming the procurement of barites and other related chemicals through Purchase Orders (PO) given to these companies.

Note: All Barites must be procured from Nigerian Barites processors for all projects/contracts in the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry.

The exploration and production companies, operators and project promoters, including major and marginal field operators, drilling services companies, drilling fluids manufacturing companies, barite mining and processing companies and vendors in the Barite and Drilling Fluids production, procurement, supply and utilization value chain of the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry, are required to strictly comply with this Public Notice.

The consequences of violating this Public Notice shall include the following:

- Refusal of the Board to issue Certificate of Authorization to the operator, project promoter and contractor.

- Refusal of the Board to participate in the Operator's Tender or issuance of Nigerian Content Compliance Certificate (NCCC).
- Denial of the issuance of Nigerian Content Equipment Certificate for the production and supply of locally produced Barite and Drilling Fluids in the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry for a period to be determined by the Board.
- Initiation of penal sanctions, as provided in Section 68 of the NOGICD Act.
- Invoking of administrative sanctions in line with section 70 (i) and (p) of the NOGICD Act.
- Any other penalties determined and deemed fit by the Board, in line with the provisions and aspirations of the NOGICD Act.

This public notice is published for compliance, Dated this 27th of May 2021.

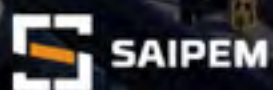
Engr. Simbi Kesiye Wabote, FNSE
Executive Secretary

A wide-angle photograph of an offshore oil and gas platform. In the foreground, several large, circular, grey storage tanks are visible, some with metal grates on top. Behind them, a complex network of steel walkways, railings, and structural beams forms the platform's deck. In the background, the blue sea stretches to the horizon under a clear, bright blue sky. A tall, slender derrick or crane is visible on the left side of the platform.

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Changing energy landscape and NCDMB's strategic interventions

*"Do not empty the water pot just because you hear rain is coming;
the clouds do not always mean rain ..."*
- African Proverb

Despite the uptick in oil prices, the future of hydrocarbon industry is uncertain. With growing advocacy by the developed countries for global carbon reduction by shifting to renewable and clean energy sources, the fate of hydrocarbon industry hangs in the balance.

As many governments continue to declare their aspiration to reduce greenhouse gas emissions on the back of the Paris Agreement (under COP21), hydrocarbon development projects will continue to face stiffer regulations. Implicated as responsible for about 80 percent of anthropogenic carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions (that is human induced pollution), the hydrocarbon industry is always in the eye of the storm over climate change and sustainable development debates.

With the changing energy landscape, accelerated by uptake of renewable technologies and wider adoption of electricity to power end-use applications in transport and heat, the hydrocarbon industry is under pressure to either reform or recoil.

To compel the industry to reform or recoil, financial markets and investors are shifting attention to renewable projects and low-carbon energy transition solutions. They are not only allocating capital away from fossil fuels but also de-rating hydrocarbon projects.

De-rating of hydrocarbon projects does not bode well for the industry. The implication is that whilst the hydrocarbon sector struggles to raise new capital, companies driving the energy transition find it relatively easy to raise capital and to expand. Hence, *International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) 2021 World Energy Outlook* reports that in 2015, there were just three mega factories dedicated to producing electric vehicle batteries, but

today, there are over 150 active and planned battery mega factories.

The predicament of the hydrocarbon industry in the face of ongoing transition to limit global warming to 1.5°C underpins the forecast that oil demand in 2050 will decline by around 85 percent while electricity will become the most important energy carrier.

Although the International Energy Agency (IEA) has set a roadmap to achieve the zero-carbon goal, whether net-zero emissions can be achieved by 2050 and global warming limited to 1.5°C is debatable. Indeed, whether or not the world would be able to follow through the roadmap is a different conversation.

What I see in the energy transition debate is the redistribution of energy mix, not swapping one energy type for the other. Yet, the reality is that the unfolding scenarios cannot be dismissed with a wave of the hand. On the contrary, they ought to arouse us to act. As a country that is highly dependent on hydrocarbon, the changing energy landscape invites us to rethink and re-strategise. Doing nothing is not an option; merely talking about these developments is not sufficient.

Thus, Nigerian government's declaration of "Decade of Gas" programme deserves commendation and commitment by all stakeholders. Indeed, President Muhammadu Buhari planted the seed of industrial revolution on 29 March 2021, when he launched the "Decade of Gas in Nigeria" initiative, pledging that his administration would actively drive optimal development and utilisation of Nigeria's abundant gas. This is a clear policy direction for the oil and gas industry in the next 10 years because gas has the potential to speed up Nigeria's economic diversification and transition to clean energy.

“What I see in the energy transition debate is the redistribution of energy mix, not swapping one energy type for the other. Yet, the reality is that the unfolding scenarios cannot be dismissed with a wave of the hand. On the contrary, they ought to arouse us to act. As a country that is highly dependent on hydrocarbon, the changing energy landscape invites us to rethink and re-strategise. Doing nothing is not an option; merely talking about these developments is not sufficient.”

President Buhari's Decade of Gas Policy is a critical initiative, which puts the spotlight on gas development and utilisation via rapid oil production and reinvestment of proceeds into new gas infrastructure and tech solutions.

As the African proverb quoted earlier suggests, it is clearly unwise to empty one's water pot on hearing that rain is coming. Nigeria cannot abandon its huge oil reserves in the subsurface because of the threat of energy transition. After all, “the clouds do not always mean rain”, as it is said in another Africa proverb. Now is the time to ramp up production, utilise the proceeds judiciously and reinvest in gas projects to deepen domestic penetration, support power sector, agriculture, petrochemicals, pharmaceutical industry and export.

These proverbs underscore the importance of government's Decade of Gas policy, which is already catching on, driven by key gas projects, like the \$2.9 billion AKK Gas Pipeline, \$3.5 billion Brass Gas Hub, \$6.6 billion Nigeria LNG Train 7 project, \$1.4 billion ANOH gas project and other ongoing oil and gas projects in different parts of Nigeria.

These ongoing oil and gas projects in Nigeria mean so much for sustainable local content development. As I have always reiterated at various fora, without projects, there is no local content. In NCDMB, we see major projects as critical vector for development of in-country capacities and capabilities. Steady and well-sequenced stream of major projects are essential to sustain established capacities and attract additional investments for growth.

New projects provide us at the Board the leverage to actualise key policies and aspirations of government, like the Decade of Gas

Initiative. Translating government's policies into concrete reality is the real impetus behind most of our ongoing gas interventions and partnerships, including the establishment of Methanol processing plant in the Brass Free Zone; Ammonia fertiliser plant in Akwa Ibom State; LPG Storage and Loading Terminal Facility in Koko, Delta State; LPG composite cylinder manufacturing in Polaku, Bayelsa State and LPG Cylinder manufacturing in Alero, Epe, Lagos State; CNG mother station in Egbokor, Edo State and the LPG bottling plants and depots in 10 Northern states of Kano, Kaduna, Katsina, Bauchi, Nassarawa, Zamfara, Niger, Plateau, Gombe, Jigawa and Abuja – to mention but few.

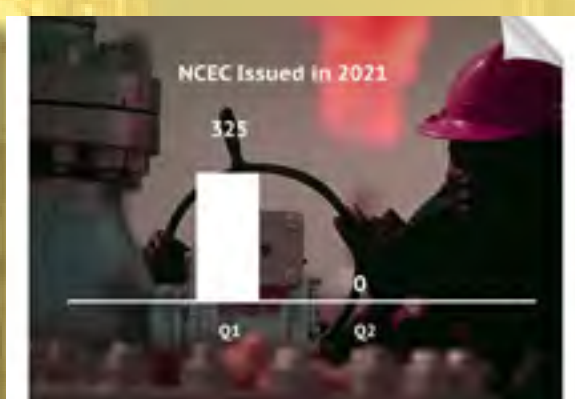
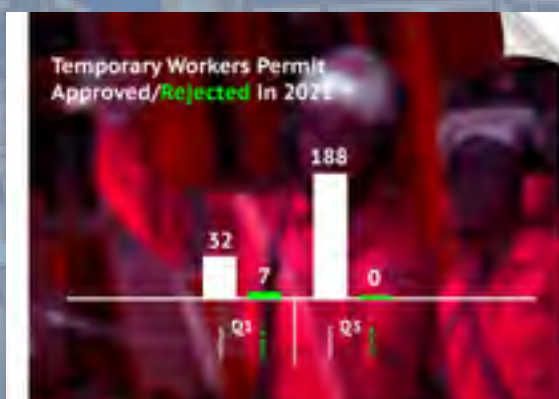
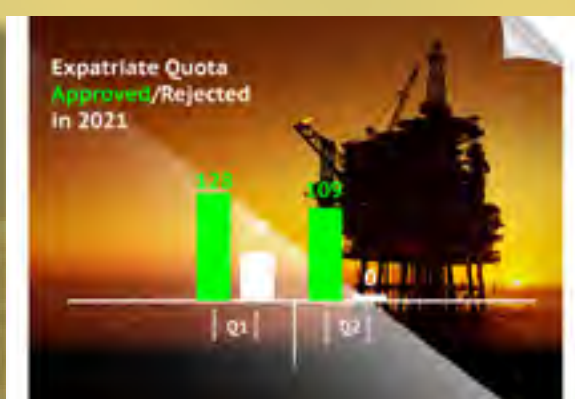
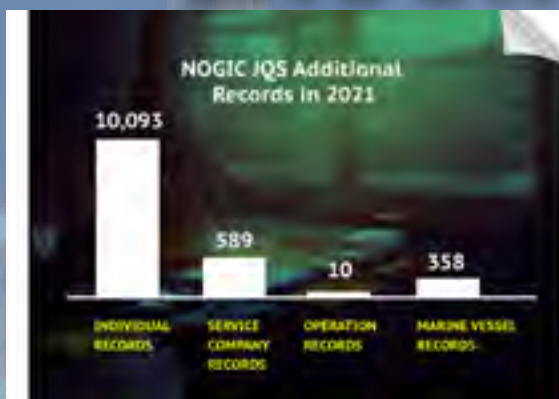
Cumulatively, our spend to catalyse gas development and utilisation is \$228 million, \$80 million in modular refinery and \$24million in other strategic interventions, all of which sum up to \$332 million deployed to attract \$3.7 billion investment into the industry. These interventions were designed deliberately to spur investment and operationalise government's Decade of Gas Initiative. They also help to keep projects in the funnel, expand value-adding activities, create efficient resource utilisation, capital retention and generate jobs to reduce insecurity.

Our strategic interventions highlight our remarkable style of pragmatic regulation by which NCDMB applies the NOGICD Act, guidelines, implementation tools and other legal instruments to enable businesses and actualise key government policies. Where investors seem to be hesitant, we come in to move them to cross the Rubicon and take FID for projects that we believe have the potential for in-country value addition, capacity utilisation and job creation.

Through these interventions and streams of projects, the Board is well able to pursue its mandate of developing Nigerian content in the oil and gas industry and to grow the level to 70 percent in 2027, in line with our 10-year strategic roadmap, not distracted by the changing energy landscape.



SMART FACT



Compiled by Hauwa Hamisu

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Local Content Digest is a publication of the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board, NCDMB Headquarters, Nigerian Content Tower, Swali, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

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Editorial

Naboth Onyesoh

The Big Question

Is oil on its way out? This is a big question. With the push by some developed countries to stop global warming and bring down temperature by 1.5°C by 2050, all kinds of speculation have arisen about the future of crude oil.

The jury is out! Opinions are divided. Evolving trends and patterns tend to suggest that the days of fossil fuel are numbered; still, there are strong assumptions that oil will be around and remain a vital part of the energy mix for many decades to come, even beyond 2050.

In this edition of *Local Content Digest*, our **Cover** story looks at all the issues in play – the various scenarios and drivers, the race to de-carbonise and to renewables; the spike in electric cars, increased electrification of transport systems and accessories, national aspirations under COP21, fears of oil dependent countries, the response of Nigerian government, symbolised in the “Decade of gas policy” aimed at monetising gas, and NCDMB’s strategic interventions in gas projects and more. It is so loaded, engaging and educative on all aspects of the shifting energy landscape.

In this edition also, we brought in fresh voices, new faces and vistas in our **Milestone**, **Music**, **Books** and **Travelogue** segments.

Milestone featured Mazi Sam Onyechi, the new President of the Oil and Gas Trainers Association of Nigeria (OGTAN) and CEO, Inspection and Tests Nigeria Limited. In his characteristic candour and matter-of-fact manner of speaking, he talked about the criticality of capacity development in the oil and gas industry, how NCDMB is helping the industry to skill up and close critical skill gaps. He highlighted neglected blue-collar jobs and pointed clearly to the low hanging fruits that can rapidly reduce the scourge of unemployment in Nigeria and boost capital retention.

Our *Music* segment featured Burnaboy, the young musician (arguably now the biggest music superstar from Africa), who brought international acclaim to the country as recipient of the coveted Grammy Awards,

In this edition of Local Content Digest, our Cover story looks at all the issues in play – the various scenarios and drivers, the race to de-carbonise and to renewables; the spike in electric cars, increased electrification of transport systems and accessories, national aspirations under COP21, fears of oil dependent countries, the response of Nigerian government, symbolised in the “Decade of gas policy” aimed at monetising gas, and NCDMB’s strategic interventions in gas projects and more. It is so loaded, engaging and educative on all aspects of the shifting energy landscape.

effectively shifting attention from all the bad news of killing, abductions and wanton destruction of public assets in Nigerian.

On *Books*, we featured a review of the newest literary output of our own distinguished Noble Laureate, Prof. Wole Soyinka, titled: “Chronicles from the *Land of the Happiest People on Earth*.” In his usual satire, he depicts betrayal and dashed hope of the main cast who seek to change their nationality. A very engrossing book worth having and reading.

Under *Travelogue*, we unveiled the captivatingly refreshing environment of Lakowe Golf Course in Lagos. An excellent choice of holiday and resort for leisure and group retreats with its state-of-the-art facilities, lush green vegetation interlaced with winding lake, 18-hole golf course, cottages, spa, and lots more - far removed from the hustle and bustle of Lagos.

Yes, this edition has much more to read, pick and savour by our readers and followers. Happy reading! ■

Fifty percent of Train 7 project to be executed locally

Half of the scope of the Train 7 project being undertaken currently by the Nigeria Liquefied Natural Gas (NLNG) Limited will be executed in-country, Engr. Simbi Kesiye Wabote, Executive Secretary, Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) has said. The net cost of the project is estimated to be US\$5 billion and a similar amount would be spent in the upstream development of gas that will feed the project.

Wabote announced this in Lagos in May. He said: "When we executed Trains 1-6, there was minimal Nigerian participation. But today, the Nigerian Content and out-country scope is split 50/50. Most of the cryogenic areas would be done outside the country because we do not have the capacities. But 50 percent of the whole project activities would be done through Nigerian businesses and must be in-country. That is the value that would be retained in

the local economy. We would achieve more in the upstream scopes of the project because we have developed capacities in that area."

The Executive Secretary noted that local capacities developed in the oil and gas industry sustained crude oil productions during the COVID-19 pandemic, citing an example with First E&P Company, an indigenous operating company that started producing oil during the pandemic. "NCDMB insisted that First E&P must build its platform in-country. They thanked us later because if the project were to be executed overseas, it would have been suspended during the period."

He stressed that Local Content implementation was not at all cost and that the economics and return on investment on each project must be viable. That was why the Board adopts pragmatism in its implementation of the NOGICD Act, he added. ■

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70 teachers trained on STEM educational device

Teachers from the nine oil and gas producing states, including Lagos and Oyo, were among the beneficiaries in the five-day capacity building trainings organised recently by the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

The teachers were selected from schools where NCDMB had

donated ICT centres. The trainings were focused on K-Yan Device, a digital classroom solution designed to promote interactive and ICT-driven learning as well as improve Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education in schools.

Dr. Ama Ikuru, General Manager, Capacity Building Division, underscored the Board's



Engr. Simbi Wabote, Executive Secretary, Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board with panelists at the Nigerian International Petroleum Summit in Abuja.

Trends

determination to improve the abilities of the students in STEM education so that they can meet the level required by the oil and gas industry. "Often times, we retrain graduates, and that takes a lot of time and resources. Technology is changing, and we need to upscale our capacities. We also want to see standardisation of curriculum. If teachers can deliver, then, we would have the human capacities to support oil and gas development in Nigeria," he said.

Ikuru added that the training was intended to equip teachers with the knowledge, skills and competences required to use the K-Yan Device, familiarise them with technology-driven teaching methodologies/techniques, promote STEM education and reposition learning and teaching in Nigerian secondary schools, as well as enhance the global competitiveness of the Nigerian educational system. ■

ANOH Gas to complete oil and gas training centre

The Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) has partnered Anoh Gas Processing Company Limited to complete the Centre for Skills Development and Training (CSDT) at Greater Port Harcourt Area, Rivers State.

The project was conceived by the Petroleum Technology Development Fund (PTDF) to meet the low-to-middle level human resources needs of the Nigerian oil and gas industry. But work on the project was stalled in 2014 due to paucity of funds.

Engr. Simbi Kesiye Wabote, Executive Secretary, NCDMB said Anoh Gas Processing Company (AGPC) Limited was engaged to complete the project under the Nigerian Content Capacity Development Initiative (CDI), in collaboration with operators and service providers in the oil and gas industry to address identified gaps in local capacities and grow local capabilities. He explained that making the facility functional would enable the Board to attain one of its mandates of developing local capacities and capabilities. It will also fulfil the technical capacity development pillar of the Nigerian Content 10-year strategic roadmap.

In addition, it will be a major achievement of the Ministry of Petroleum Resources and, especially President Muhammadu Buhari, who is very keen to finish abandoned government projects.

Mr. Okechukwu Mba, Managing Director, Anoh Gas Processing Company Limited, noted that the completion of the CSDT was part of the company's US\$10 million CDI commitment made on the back of the development of the 300 million standard cubic feet of gas per day (MMscfd) capacity ANOH gas processing plant, located on OML 53 in Imo State. ■

NCDMB, Amnesty Office partner on capacity development for ex-agitators

The Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) will partner the Presidential Amnesty Office in human capacity development for some ex-agitators.

Engr. Simbi Kesiye Wabote, Executive Secretary, NCDMB, announced this when Col. Milland Dixon Dikio (retd), Interim Sole Administrator of the Presidential Amnesty Programme (PAP), visited the Board's headquarters in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, in April.

He said some of the trainings provided for the ex-agitators were not conducted by internationally recognised institutions, hence most of the beneficiaries could not be employed with the skills and certificates they acquired. "The oil and gas industry is very specific in terms of certifications required. It is also technology-driven, hence can only employ a limited number of people," he added.

He also advised the PAP to diversify its activities to agriculture and allied sectors to achieve its mandate and accomplish President Muhammadu Buhari's vision of economic diversification.

Wabote stressed that NCDMB is not an intervention agency for the Niger Delta region but a regulatory agency mandated to increase the participation of Nigerians in the oil and gas industry and develop human capacity development in the oil industry and linkage areas.

Col. Milland Dixon Dikio (retd), said: "The Amnesty Programme had successfully re-integrated about 22,000 ex-agitators with trainings and empowerment in various skills. We seek NCDMB's collaboration in specific needs of the oil sector where people can be trained and engaged."

He added that the PAP planned to transform the remaining 8,000 ex-agitators to become entrepreneurs who would contribute to the national economy. ■



L-R): Engr. Abayomi Bamidele, General Manager, Strategy & Transformation Projects, NCDMB; Dr. Ginah O. Ginah, General Manager, Corporate Communications & Zonal Coordination; Engr. Simbi Wabote, Executive Secretary, NCDMB; Mr. Akintunde Adelena, Director, Monitoring and Evaluation, NCDMB and Mrs. Funmi Ogbue, Managing Director, Jack Riley Limited at the Press Conference to unveil the 2021 edition of the Nigerian Oil & Gas Opportunity Fair (NOGOF).

Seven Ministerial Regulations on Nigerian Content approved

Seven Nigerian Content Ministerial Regulations have been approved and gazetted, making them subsidiary legislations that can be implemented by the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB).

The guidelines include Research & Development (R&D); Training, Capacity Development; Growth of Indigenous Capacity and Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Enforcement and Compliance Regulation. Others are: Registration of Operators and other professionals with Nigerian professional bodies, Technology Transfer and Establishment of operations in Nigeria.

Sections 36, 40, 41, 42, 47, 55 and 101 of the NOGICD Act empower the Minister of Petroleum Resources to make regulations that will foster the development of Nigerian Content. The Board held several engagements with industry stakeholders before finalising the regulations and transmitting it to the Minister of State for Petroleum Resources for ratification.

Barr. Mohammed Umar, Director, Legal Services, NCDMB, announced this at a colloquium organised by the Board with the Nigerian Bar Association's Section on Business Law (NBA-SBL) that Chief Timipre Sylva, Minister of State for Petroleum Resources, approved the guidelines, and they became effective on 2 April 2021.

One of the key regulations is the Nigerian Oil and Industry Content Development Compliance and Enforcement Regulation. It is intended to ensure compliance with the NOGICD Act and other regulations. It gives effect to Section 68 of the Act and ensures efficient and accountable promotion of local content in the diverse sectors of the oil and gas industry in Nigeria. In the new regulation, offences punishable under Section 68 of the Act have been divided into two categories. The first category encompasses the major offences, which can lead to criminal prosecution, while the other offences would be treated with administrative sanctions. ■

Oil and Gas Park in Bayelsa ready Q4 2022

Chief Timipre Sylva, Minister of State for Petroleum Resources, has lauded the quality of work and the progress recorded on the

Nigerian Oil and Gas Park being developed by the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB), using wholly Nigerian companies.

In April, Sylva led members of the Governing Council of the Board and other industry stakeholders to inspect the level of work done on the site in Emeyal 1, Ogbia, Yenagoa Local Government Area, Bayelsa State.

He said the project was 70 percent completed and would be commissioned before the end of 2022 by President Muhammadu Buhari. "I'm very impressed by what I saw today. This place used to be a swamp, but a lot of work has been done to bring it to this standard," he said.

The minister explained that oil and gas parks were being developed by NCDMB in oil producing states to provide opportunities for original equipment manufacturers to produce components that would serve the oil and gas industry and its linkage sectors. The project supports Mr President's agenda on job creation as it would create about 2,000 direct and indirect jobs upon completion, he said.

Chief Sylva also applauded the host community for sustaining the prevailing peaceful atmosphere and urged them to also sustain their support to ensure completion of the project.

The Executive Secretary NCDMB, Engr. Simbi Wabote, said Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) was supporting the project with the construction of Effluent Treatment Plant, Fire Station and acquisition of two fire trucks. The company was also committed to constructing a water treatment plant, sewage systems and piping network for water. ■

'NCDMB invests only in Govt policies, projects'

The Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) invests only in strategic policies and projects that are promoted by the Federal Government. Engr. Simbi Kesiye Wabote, Executive Secretary of NCDMB, said this when members of the Women in Energy Oil and Gas (WEOG) Nigeria visited the Board's liaison office in Abuja.

He said the Board would not invest in businesses with competitive players because such investments would compromise its moral position as a regulatory agency. "Our role is to act as a catalyst of strategic government policies and programmes and we exit once those businesses become successful," he added.

In line with the Board's vision to serve as a catalyst for the industrialisation of the Nigerian oil and gas industry and its linkage sectors, the NCDMB had partnered investors in modular refineries, manufacturing of LPG cylinders, LPG depots, gas processing facilities, lube oil production plant and a methanol plant using gas as feed stock.

Wabote listed some policies introduced by the Board to support women in the oil and gas industry to include the inauguration of the Diversity Sectorial Working Group in the Nigerian Content Consultative Forum (NCCF), and the creation of the Women in Oil and Gas Product in the Nigerian Content Intervention Fund (NCI Fund), which is managed by the Bank of Industry (BoI).

Dr. Oladunni Owo, President of WEOG, said the group visited the Board in furtherance of the International Women Day and to show appreciation for the laudable policies for women in the oil and gas sector. ■



Cross-section of traditional rulers at the townhall meeting organised by the Bayelsa State Government and the Ministry of Petroleum Resources in Bayelsa State in January.

Trends



Engr. Simbi Wabote, Executive Secretary, NCDMB exchanging pleasantries with Mr. Roger Brown, CEO/Executive Director, Seplat Petroleum Development Company after his courtesy visit to the Board's headquarters in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

Wabote bags *Most Impactful CEO* award

The Executive Secretary, Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB), Engr. Simbi Kesiye Wabote, was, in March, conferred with the award of the *Most Impactful Chief Executive* in the Niger Delta by the Bayelsa Media Awards.

Dr. Goodluck Jonathan, former President of Nigeria, who spoke at the event in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, commended the Executive Secretary for his sterling performance in office. The former President had signed the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development (NOGICD) Bill into law in 2010. He said: "He (Wabote) has been in the oil industry for quite some time. He knows exactly what to do and he is committed. We encourage him to do more."

The Executive Secretary, while accepting the award, commended the organisers for recognising the efforts of the Board and the impact of its interventions in the oil producing states and other parts of the country.

Represented by Barr. Naboth Onyesoh, Manager, Corporate Communications, the Executive Secretary said the Board's effective implementation of its mandate had spurred investments, closed capacity gaps, addressed infrastructural needs and created thousands of jobs for the youth of the region and stimulated the local economy. ■

255 Youths Graduate from NCDMB/ITF vocational training

Two Hundred and fifty-five youths have graduated from vocational training programmes conducted recently by the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB), in collaboration with the Industrial Training Fund (ITF).

The trainings were in Hospitality and Tourism, Mobile Phone Repairs and Troubleshooting, Information and Communication Technology and Electrical/Electronic Technology. Other areas included Industrial Automation and Mechatronics, Instrumentation and Process Control, Mechanical Services & Maintenance, Residential Air-Conditioning and Refrigeration Maintenance and Building Technology.

Engr. Simbi Kesiye Wabote, Executive Secretary of the NCDMB, said the trainings were carried out as part of the Board's 10-year strategic roadmap, which targets, among other objectives, to create 300,000 direct and indirect jobs for Nigerians and drive Human Capacity Development to boost the Nigerian economy.

Mr. Patrick Daziba Obah, Director, Planning, Research and Statistics at NCDMB, who represented the Executive Secretary at the graduation ceremony in Abuja, stated that NCDMB had trained over 10,000 youths and

committed over nine million manhours in the trainings, with a bid to provide young people with skills required to support activities in the Nigerian oil and gas sector and the wider economy.

Sir Joseph N. Ari, Director General of the ITF, urged the trainees to take full advantage of the opportunity to not only put food on their tables but to also make meaningful contribution to the Nigerian economy. He charged them to utilise the start-up kits they were given and never to contemplate selling them. ■

Duport Modular Refinery Ready Q4 2021

The 2,500 barrels per day modular refinery being established at Egbokor, Edo State by Duport Midstream Company Limited in partnership with the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB), will be ready for commissioning in the last quarter of 2021.

Engr. Simbi Kesiye Wabote, Executive Secretary of NCDMB visited the project site in April to assess the progress of work. He confirmed that the project had reached 80 percent completion.

He said the modules for the two megawatts power plant and the control room were being fabricated and assembled in Lagos for delivery to the site.

The modular refinery is part of the Duport Energy Park, which would include a 30-million standard cubic feet per day gas processing facility and a power plant.

NCDMB's partnership with Duport Energy Park was approved in June 2020 by the Board's Governing Council chaired by Chief Timipre Sylva, Minister of State for Petroleum Resources. The project is promoted under NCDMB's commercial ventures programme and the Board's vision to serve as a catalyst for the industrialisation of the Nigerian oil and gas industry and its linkage sectors.

The operational phase of the refinery would create about 100 direct jobs and indirect and induced jobs for about 1,500 persons.

Dr. Akintoye Akindele, Chairman of Duport Midstream Company, hinted that project would be the first integrated energy park, with a scalable and environmentally friendly modular refinery, power generation and distribution plant. ■

Rungas to become leading gas cylinder manufacturer

Nigeria is on course to become the world's largest manufacturer of composite gas cylinders with the groundbreaking of Rungas ALFA plant in March by Chief Timipre Sylva, Minister of State for Petroleum Resources, at Alaro City, Lekki Free Trade Zone, Epe, Lagos State.

The facility, alongside its sister plant - Rungas Prime in Polaku, Bayelsa State - is being developed with equity investments by the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB). It will have a combined capacity of over 1.2 million composite cylinders per annum, the largest in the world.

The Minister said cylinder plants were key to achieving deep penetration of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) and Compressed Natural Gas (CNG), in line with the Federal Government's commitment to economic diversification using the oil and gas industry as a pivot. He added that cylinders are the most visible element in the LPG value chain. Sylva said the manufacturing facilities would bring affordable and durable cylinders to Nigeria, thereby creating countless direct and indirect jobs for citizens.

Engr. Simbi Kesiye Wabote, Executive Secretary of NCDMB, put the completion date of the facility at 12 months. He said the Board delivers successfully on any project it participates in. The Executive Secretary said the Type-3 Composite LPG

cylinders offer unique features, such as safety, lightweight and durability. "Our handshake with the Rungas Group will catalyse the transition away from the heavy metallic LPG cylinders. It will also address the issue of high importation of LPG cylinders with the attendant economic losses," Wabote said. ■

'NCDMB would be the best government agency in the country'

The Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) is striving to become the best federal agency in terms of service delivery in the nearest future, declared Engr. Simbi Kesiye Wabote, Executive Secretary, NCDMB. He made the declaration when he signed the NCDMB SERVICOM Service charter at the Board's headquarters in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

The Executive Secretary noted that the Board was passionate about service delivery, and this is evident in the diligent

and professional way the staff discharge their statutory responsibilities to the oil and gas industry and execute all the Board's activities. "We want to be the Number One government agency in the country, and we are working towards it. To achieve this, we are investing in our people, our service delivery and the turnaround time in everything that we do."

Wabote hinted that the Board signed a Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with key stakeholders in the oil and gas sector to ensure promptness and effectiveness in the delivery of its statutory responsibilities. He said: "We challenged the oil and gas industry that we have a 15-day rule that anything they send to us and they do not get a response within 15 days, they should assume that it has been approved. Nobody has been able to take us to task on it because we meet the SLA that we signed."

He confirmed the Board's efficient service delivery contributed significantly to securing the approval for the NLNG Train 7 contract within a year, as against the usual three-year contract approval cycle in time past. ■



R-L: Mr. Lanre Runsewe, Chief Executive Officer, Rungas Group, showcasing models of the composite gas cylinders to Chief Timipre Sylva, Minister of State for Petroleum Resources and Engr. Simbi Kesiye Wabote, Executive Secretary of NCDMB, at the ground-breaking ceremony of Rungas ALFA composite cylinders manufacturing facility at Alaro City, Lekki Free Trade Zone, Lagos in March.

Trends



L-R: Mr. Isaac Yalah, Director, Finance and Personnel Management, NCDMB; Mr. Mina Oforiokuma, Representative, Nigerian Content Consultative Forum (NCCF); Engr. Simbi Wabote, Executive Secretary, NCDMB; Chief Timipre Sylva, Minister of State for Petroleum Resources/Chairman, NCDMB Governing Council; Barr. Oyanbo Peace Owei, Representative, Ministry of Petroleum Resources (MPR); Mr. Nicolas C. Odinuwe, Chairman, Petroleum Technology Association of Nigeria (PETAN), and Barr. Mohammad Umar, Director, Legal Services, NCDMB after the Governing Council meeting at the Board's headquarters in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

African Oil Producers canvass regional investments

Members of the African Petroleum Producers Association (APPO) will strive to develop regional oil and gas investments. They will also demand the renegotiation of the COP-21 Climate Change Agreement, which is driving the move by developed countries to disuse fossil fuels and embrace renewable energy sources. These were some of the outcomes of the African Local Content Roundtable held in June at the Nigerian Content Tower in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

Chief Timipre Sylva, Minister of State for Petroleum Resources tasked African oil-producing countries and their oil and gas companies to share capacities and capabilities that would optimise hydrocarbon deposits and achieve economic growth and development. He said it was time to “create innovative funding mechanisms for major projects, using local resources and breaking away from the yoke of depending on foreign lenders who are becoming increasingly reluctant to fund hydrocarbon-related projects”.

Engr. Simbi Kesiye Wabote, Executive Secretary, Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB),

recommended the creation of an Africa Local Content Fund that could be utilised to set up a bank or finance institution to provide funding for the development of oil and gas projects in Africa. Wabote also emphasised the need for African oil producers to invest in research and development. He stressed that local content thrives where there is a robust research and development guideline to drive development of home-grown technology.

Dr. Omar Farouk Ibrahim, Secretary General, APPO, said the association, in partnership with the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), would call for the renegotiation of the climate change agreement during the upcoming United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) in November 2021. ■

NCDMB, NEXIM Bank sign US\$30m working capital fund MoU

The Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) and Nigerian Export-Import Bank (NEXIM) have signed a deal on the administration of US\$30 million Working Capital Fund for oil and gas service companies. The Fund was conceived by the NCDMB to support local oil companies against the adverse effects of COVID-19 pandemic, loss of contracts due to low oil price and to ensure that there are no job losses in the beneficiary companies.

Target beneficiaries include members of the Petroleum Technology Association of Nigeria and Oil and Gas Trainers Association of Nigeria (OGTAN).

Engr. Simbi Kesiye Wabote, Executive Secretary of NCDMB, said the roll-out date is July 1, 2021. The Bank will provide matching funds of the same amount in naira. “The scheme would cover loans for working capital support and capacity building, invoice discounting, including acquisition of low-end equipment to service short-term contracts/service obligations,” he added.

The maximum amount that can be borrowed by a single obligor is \$1 million, or its naira equivalent, while the tenor of the loan would be up to 12 months for working capital loans and three years for capacity building loans with moratorium of up to 12 months.

The Executive Secretary added: “The applicable interest rate shall be five percent per annum all-in for dollar-denominated loans and eight percent all-in per annum for naira-denominated loans. The rate shall be fixed throughout the tenor of the loan. Maximum processing time shall be 21 working days from the date the applicant has provided all required documentation.”

Mr. Abubakar Bello, Managing Director of Nigerian Export-Import Bank, said the institution was collaborating with NCDMB with a goal to support local service companies to export their services. ■

Four firms approved to supply barites

Four firms have been approved by the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) to supply Barites for any drilling project or contract in the Nigerian oil and gas industry.

The firms are: Nishan Industries Limited, located in Port Harcourt, Rivers State; Delta Prospectors Limited in Lafia, Nasarawa State; Ana Industries Limited in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, and Baker Hughes Company Limited at Onne Port, Rivers State.

The NCDMB released the list in its "Public Notice on Procurement of Barites for Oil and Gas Projects," signed by Engr. Simbi Kesiye Wabote and dated 27 May 2021.

According to the Board, all project promoters in the Nigerian oil and gas industry are to ensure that the Barites required for any project shall be procured only from approved Nigerian Barites processing companies with Category A Nigerian Content Equipment Certificate (NCEC).

The Board also listed 10 other companies that "have also been identified and shall be upgraded to Category A NCEC, as soon as they meet the requirements of the Guideline for the Utilisation of Locally Produced Barite and Drilling Fluids in Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry". It informed operators, contractors, service companies and other stakeholders of the availability of in-country processed barites that meet the specifications of the oil and gas industry.

The Board said it is mandated to develop capacity of the local supply chain or support investors to set up facilities. The Board, therefore, has a key responsibility to ensure that investors are protected in line with the intents of the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development (NOGICD) Act. ■

Second batch of Project 100 Companies inaugurated

Forty companies were in February inaugurated as the second batch of Project 100 Supplier Development Programme.

The Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) started the Project 100 initiative in January 2019 with 60 companies, with the goal of nurturing 100 wholly owned oil and gas service providers in a competitive and sustainable way through targeted interventions, into larger scale players that create high impact.



Engr. Simbi Wabote, Executive Secretary, NCDMB commissioning the Integrated Catering Company Limited (The Promise) ultra-modern catering facility in Bonny Island, Rivers State.

Engr. Simbi Kesiye Wabote, Executive Secretary of the NCDMB, said the successful implementation of Project 100 would increase contributions of the oil and gas sector to the nation's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), create jobs and access to market, increase industrialisation opportunities, increase retention of industry spend and substitute imports in the industry.

He said the 40 new beneficiaries were selected from the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Joint Qualification System (NOGICQS), the industry database of competencies. Six hundred and nine (609) applications were received, out of which 40 companies were selected.

The benefits that would accrue to the new

Project 100 companies include bespoke development plans to improve critical business capabilities and access to market opportunities with oil and gas operators on industry projects. They would also enjoy identified access to critical industry and operational insights, information and data, and participation in local oil and gas opportunity fairs and strategic events as well as advocacy for policy recommendations that would unlock some of the challenges identified by the beneficiaries.

Mr. Nik Odinuwe, Chairman of the Petroleum Technology Association of Nigeria (PETAN), described Project 100 as a noble initiative that can accelerate Local Content aspirations of government and other stakeholders. ■



Engr. Simbi Kesiye Wabote, Executive Secretary, NCDMB on a site visit with officials of the Board to Sparkwest Steel Industries Ltd to ascertain in-country capacity in the area of steel galvanizing.

Trends

IOCs urged to develop new projects

International Operating Oil and Gas Companies have been advised to emulate Total Exploration and Production Company in sponsoring new projects.

Engr. Simbi Kesiye Wabote gave the advice in February when Mr. Mike Sangster, Managing Director of Total Exploration and Production visited the Nigerian Content Tower in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State. He said Total MD deserved his emergence as the chairman of the Oil Producers Trade Section (OPTS) because no other international operating company had sanctioned major oil and gas projects in recent times than the company.

Wabote expressed confidence in the determination of the Ninth National Assembly to pass the Petroleum Industry Bill (PIB). He urged other IOCs to develop their new projects, which are needed to grow Local Content and create work opportunities for local fabrication and manufacturing yards that have been idle since the conclusion of Total's Egina deep water project in 2018.

The Executive Secretary remarked that the Egina Project remained "the benchmark of upstream project delivery because of

its record-breaking performance in local content practice in the oil and gas industry".

Mr. Sangster remarked that the company has been in Nigeria for 60 years and remains the only IOC that operates in the upstream, midstream and downstream sectors of the Nigerian oil and gas industry. He said the company developed the last three Floating Production Storage and Offloading (FPSO) platforms in Nigeria and Egina created new records, including recording 40 million manhours in-country.

Sangster hinted that the company would record first oil before the end of 2021 at the Ikike Oil Field project.

He advised that the fiscal provisions in the PIB should be fair to key stakeholders, in order to stimulate new investments in the industry. ■

Wabote charges oil workers on Fourth Industrial Revolution

Oil and gas workers have been advised to brace up for the Fourth Industrial Revolution that has brought Artificial Intelligence (AI), Internet of Things (IoT), Energy Transition and other concepts into the oil and gas industry.

Engr. Simbi Wabote, Executive Secretary of the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB), said this in February at the Petroleum and Natural Gas Senior Staff Association of Nigeria (PENGASSAN) National Executive Council (NEC) meeting in Owerri, the Imo State capital.

He hinted that the switch to fully automated Floating Production Storage and Offloading (vessel) with zero manning on board and countries phasing out petrol-driven cars were indication of the types and number of jobs that would be available and the skills sets that would be demanded in the new era. He urged the union leaders to transit their members into emerging job roles and arm them with necessary skills to fit into the emerging eco-system of energy transition.

Comrade Festus Osifo, National President of PENGASSAN said the gathering was meant to review its strategies, advocate initiatives and approach of engagement to re-align them with the current realities, even as it moved to protect its members and other Nigerians who may not have a platform to speak for them. ■



Barr. Mohammed Umar, Director, Legal Services, NCDMB (2nd right) with executives of the Nigerian Bar Association's Section on Business Law (NBA-SBL) at the colloquium on Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development (NOGICD) Act - Strides, Challenges & Opportunities, in May.

NCDMB targets US\$3.7bn investments in commercial partnerships

The Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) has committed US\$332 million under its commercial ventures partnership programme with a view to attracting project developments in-country valued at \$3.7 billion.

Some of the partnerships include the 5,000 barrels per day Waltersmith Modular Refinery at Ibigwe, Imo State and NEDO Gas Processing Company in Kwale, Delta State, for the establishment of 80 million standard cubic feet per day (MMscfd) gas processing plant and a 300MMscfd Kwale Gas Gathering hub.

Others include the development of 5,000 metric tonnes LPG Storage and loading terminal facility by Triansel Gas Limited in Koko, Delta State, and construction of Energy Park, inclusive of a modular refinery, power plant and 40MMscfd gas processing facility at Egbokor, Edo State, by Duport Midstream.

The Board also partnered Brass Fertiliser for the development of a 10,000MT/day Methanol Plant and 500MMscfd gas processing plant at Odiana in Brass as well as with Rungas Group for the manufacturing of 1.2million composite LPG cylinders annually in Bayelsa and Lagos states. This is in addition to Butane Energy to deepen LPG utilisation

in the North with the roll-out of LPG bottling plants and depots in Kano, Kaduna, Katsina, Bauchi, Nassarawa, Zamfara, Niger, Plateau, Gombe and Jigawa states, as well as the Federal Capital Territory.

Engr. Simbi Kesiye Wabote announced this at the *Nigerian Oil & Gas Opportunity Fair (NOGOF) 2021* in May. He said some of the partnerships would be completed within the next two years, notably a modular refinery in Edo and Bayelsa states, LPG cylinder manufacturing plants, gas processing plant, industrial parks and commercialisation of at least one R&D project and closing of skills gaps in under-water welding. ■

500 Bauchi youths graduate from NCDMB GSM training

Five hundred Bauchi State youths have successfully completed their training in GSM phone repairs, hardware, software and entrepreneurship development under its Youth Empowerment Programme sponsored by the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB). Similar trainings were in Kano, Kaduna, Cross River

and Yobe states, which had impacted about 2,900 youths.

Engr. Simbi Kesiye Wabote said the Board conducted the training as part of its mandate and in line with Mr. President's commitment to lift 100 million Nigerians out of poverty. He said the empowerment programme was aimed at providing lifelong support to young people who desired to be empowered in high impact economic sectors, which information and communication technology is one of them.

The Executive Secretary was represented by Mr. Abdulmalik Halilu, General Manager, Research, Statistics and Development. He stated that the Board's intervention in the ICT sector and collaboration with NITDA were designed to maximise in-country value creation for the ICT sector in the areas of manpower training, design and development of local capabilities in infrastructure, software solutions and hardware devices.

He urged the beneficiaries to consolidate on the gains and achieve high local content level from the acquisition of GSM phones, saying that the GSM training has provided trainees with ample opportunity to harness the potentials in the ICT sector based on the unique end-to-end training delivery model. ■



Official of Megastar Construction explaining the ongoing works at the Nigerian Oil and Gas Park (NOGAPs) to Chief Timipre Sylva, Minister of State for Petroleum Resources and Chairman, NCDMB Governing Council and other members of the Governing Council during an inspection visit.

Trends

‘Security is pre-condition for oil firms to return to Niger Delta’

For oil and gas companies to relocate to the Niger Delta region, youths and residents of the region must eschew restiveness and work for peace and security, Chief Timipre Sylva, Minister of State for Petroleum Resources has said.

Chief Sylva said this in Yenagoa, the Bayelsa State capital, at a special town hall meeting. The minister noted that asking the companies to relocate without addressing the security concerns would only escalate Nigeria’s cost of crude oil production. He said: “We look at it from the perspective of cost. It will be cheaper for oil companies to operate from here because it is nearer the operating areas. But if you do not have peace and security and the oil companies move back here, then you add to the cost of oil production.

“Shell was in Port Harcourt and Warri, and most of the other companies were here. They ran away when insecurity took over the region. It is time to bring back peace and security so that those firms can return. The Ministry is not against the oil companies moving back.”

Sylva also said the Federal Government was promoting the development of Nigerian Oil and Gas Park and facilitating the development of the 12,000-barrels per day Hydroskimming modular refinery being constructed by Azikel Petroleum Limited at Obunagha, Gbarain, and the 2,000-barrels per day modular refinery being developed by Atlantic International Refinery and Petrochemical Limited at Okpoama, Brass Local Government Area.

He added that the Federal Government had also taken final investment decision on the Brass Fertiliser and Petrochemical Project, among other projects. ■

Sylva performs groundbreaking of Atlantic Energy Infrastructure Park

Chief Timipre Sylva, Minister of State for Petroleum Resources, has performed the groundbreaking of the Energy Infrastructure Park being developed by Atlantic International Refinery and Petrochemical Limited, in partnership with the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) at Okpoama, Brass Local Government Area, Bayelsa State.

He said one of the best strategies to curb restiveness in the Niger Delta region was to create jobs and opportunities for young people. The minister advised the people of Okpoama Kingdom and other parts of the Niger Delta to provide an investment-friendly environment that would attract oil and gas, and manufacturing facilities, to the region.

The minister also commissioned three corporate social responsibility (CSR) projects executed by the Atlantic International Refinery for the people of Okpoama Kingdom. They include the Okpoama Cottage Hospital, Iseleama Health Centre and Okpoama Community Water Works.

Engr. Simbi Kesiye Wabote, Executive Secretary of NCDMB listed the elements of the Energy Park project to include a 2,000 barrels per day modular refinery, power plant and jetty.

Dr. Akintoye Akindele, Chairman/CEO of Atlantic International Refinery, said the company was building the first integrated energy park, comprising a scalable and environmental-friendly modular refinery, power generation and distribution plant and world-class jetty services in Brass, Bayelsa State.

He added that the park would not only transform the economic activity in Brass, but would also act as a commercial hub for logistics in the Niger Delta region, unlocking significant development in Brass community and its environs. ■

UNICORN opens Incubation Campus

UNICORN Incubation Campus has opened in Lagos, with a reputation to be Africa’s largest incubation campus and a mission to prepare Nigerian youths in the application of science, technology, and innovation to create home-grown business solutions to everyday problems in the different sectors of the Nigerian economy.

Chief Timipre Sylva, Minister of State for Petroleum Resources, opened the campus in June. He hailed the company for investing in youth development and skills acquisition.

Engr. Simbi Kesiye Wabote, Executive Secretary, Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB), commended the promoters for investing in the development of human capacity and nurturing tech and innovation start-ups. He described the choice to invest in youths and nurture the next generation of entrepreneurs as patriotic and inspiring.

The Executive Secretary harped on the

need for Nigerians to prepare and position themselves for the Fourth Industrial Revolution that is already underway, especially with cloud computing, Internet of Things, Robotics, Big Data, and many more disruptions that have emerged. He added that facilities such as the UNICORN Incubation Campus, are vital in the ecosystem of technology development infrastructure. ■

NCDMB, NNPC invest in ₦10.5bn Brass Petroleum Products Terminal

The Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB), the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) and ZED Energy Limited, in June, signed a shareholders’ agreement on the construction of Brass Petroleum Products Terminal Limited (BPPT), to be located at Okpoama, Brass Local Government Area, Bayelsa State.

The estimated cost is ₦10.5 billion. NCDMB and NNPC each own 30 percent while ZED Energy - a private firm - holds 40 percent and would operate the terminal. The terminal would make refined petroleum products available to riverine communities of the Niger Delta region at the standard prices, discourage illegal refineries and create jobs for the people.

The terminal would serve as a strategic reserve for the country as it would hold up to 50 million litres of petroleum products. It would also load land and marine trucks with automotive gas oil (AGO), premium motor spirit (PMS), dual purpose kerosene (DPK) and aviation turbine kerosene (ATK). Chief Timipre Sylva, Minister of State for Petroleum Resources, described the project as another major achievement of President Muhammadu Buhari in the Niger Delta region.

Engr. Simbi Kesiye Wabote, Executive Secretary of NCDMB, underscored the economic benefits of co-locating the BPPT with the Energy Infrastructure Park being developed at Okpoama and the Brass Fertiliser and Petrochemical Company Limited (BFPCL) at Odioma, Brass, both projects being developed with equity financing by the NCDMB.

Mallam Mele Kyari, Group Managing Director of NNPC, said: “Beyond the clear social responsibilities, this makes business sense. The location of the planned depot would create a platform for the delivery of petroleum products to some of our offshore facilities. ■

AFRICAN LOCAL CONTENT ROUNDTABLE

The maiden edition of the African Local Content Roundtable was hosted by the NCDMB in June at the Nigerian Content Tower in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State. The event was facilitated by *Heritage Times*. Delegates from member states of the African Petroleum Producers Association (APPO) attended the two-day event.

Chief Timipre Sylva, Minister of State for Petroleum Resources delivered the keynote address at the maiden event.





NIGERIAN CONTENT DEVELOPMENT AND MONITORING BOARD PUBLIC NOTICE ON SUBMISSION OF STATUTORY REPORTS FOR 2021

The Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (the Board) seeks to remind stakeholders, especially Operators and service providers executing projects and carrying out other activities in the Upstream, Midstream and Downstream sectors of the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry, on submission of all applicable statutory reports as indicated in the relevant sections of the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development (NOGICD) Act, 2010 listed below:

- **Section 60** - Project Progress Performance Report to be submitted within sixty days of the beginning of the year (not later than 2nd March 2021)
- **Section 18** - Job Forecast Reports to be submitted each quarter (30 days prior to the first day of each quarter)
- **Section 24** - Procurement Report for list of contracts, subcontracts and purchase orders above 1 Million Dollars to be submitted each quarter (30 days prior to the first day of each quarter)
- **Section 24** - Procurement Report for list of contracts, subcontracts and purchase orders below 1 Million Dollars to be

submitted each quarter (30 days prior to the first day of each quarter).

- **Section 24** - Marine Services Utilization Report to be submitted each quarter (30 days prior to the first day of each quarter)
- **Sections 49, 51 & 52** - Legal, Insurance and Financial Services Report to be submitted bi-annually.
- **Section 29** - Employment and Training Plan to be submitted annually.
- **Section 29** - Employment and Training Report to be submitted quarterly
- **Section 38** - Research & Development Plan to be submitted annually.
- **Section 39** - Research & Development Report to be submitted quarterly.
- **Section 33** - Succession Plan Template to be submitted per Expatriate.
- **Section 44** - Technology Transfer Plan to be submitted annually.
- **Section 46** - Technology Transfer Report to be submitted annually.

The table below shows the reporting frequency for the relevant sections listed above:

S/N	SECTION OF NOGICD ACT	REPORT	REPORTING FREQUENCY
1	60	NC Performance Report	Annually, Quarterly & on contract (project) basis
2	18	Procurement/Job Forecast	Quarterly
3	24	Procurement Report	Quarterly
4	24	Marine Services Utilization Report	Quarterly
5	49	Insurance Report	Bi-annually
6	51	Legal Services Report	Bi-annually
7	52	Financial Services Report	Bi-annually
8	29	Employment & Training Plan	Annually
9	29	Employment & Training Report	Quarterly
10	38	Research & Development Plan	Annually
11	39	Research & Development Report	Quarterly
12	33	Succession Plan Template	Per Expatriate
13	44	Technology Transfer Plan	Annually
14	46	Technology Transfer Report	Annually

Stakeholders may obtain current versions of the templates for the respective statutory reports from the Board's website (www.ncdmb.gov.ng or www.nogicd.gov.ng).

Kindly note that refusal to submit or late submission of these statutory reports constitutes a violation of the NOGICD Act, 2010 and will result in the commencement of sanctions against your company, in accordance with the provisions of the NOGICD Act 2010. This would include the consequences listed in the Board's publication of March 22nd 2018.

For enquiries, please contact the office of the Director, Monitoring and Evaluation, NCDMB on 070000NCDMB.

Ensure compliance!

Engr. Simbi Kesiye Wabaso (FRC, FIMM)
Executive Secretary, NCDMB

ENERGY TRANSITION

Gas as fuel for driving sustainable economic development

The emerging Energy sector presents a vantage opportunity in the use of gas to diversify Nigeria's energy mix and grow Local Content for economic sustainability.

Energy transition is one of the most discussed topics in the global oil and gas industry today. While many stakeholders fear that energy transition would cut global demand and price of crude oil and stymie economies of oil producing nations, the upside is a vantage opportunity for nations to diversify their revenue base by exploring and developing projects with the emerging energy sources.

This is the advisable course of action because, as Engr. Simbi Kesiye Wabote, Executive Secretary of the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) put it succinctly, the world is at the point of another energy transition wherein the change is no longer 'slow and steady' but 'sure and steady'.



Mr. Bitrus Bako Nabasu, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Petroleum Resources; Chief Timipre Sylva, Minister of State for Petroleum Resources; Mallam Mele Kyari, Group Managing Director, Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation; Engr. Tony Attah, Managing Director, Nigeria Liquefied Natural Gas Limited and Engr. Simbi Wabote, Executive Secretary, Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board at the Nigerian International Petroleum Summit in Abuja.

Unending transition

Humanity has continually transitioned from one energy source to another - from firewood to coal and then fossil fuels – all in the search for more efficient, accessible and affordable energy. The difference is that the current transition is geared largely towards reducing global carbon emissions and curbing global warming, with the recognition that fossil fuels constitute the largest single source of carbon emissions.

It is also true that this current energy transition is mired by global politics while multinational oil companies have acquiesced because their apron strings are tied to politics. Many of them have differed big oil and gas projects, shifting budgets to renewable energy initiatives, like solar, wind, hydrogen, among several others.

Engr. Tony Attah, Managing Director, Nigeria Liquefied Natural Gas Limited (NLNG), remarked in May that one of his company's institutional shareholders was already betting on gas and solar, another on wind, and still another opting for hydrogen – efficient and bountiful in supply, albeit with challenges. He admitted that “we do not know where technology will go, and it is moving so fast. We are positioning to stay relevant and stay core on the gas plane”. Total Nigeria E&P led the way recently, changing its name to Total Energies, positioning itself for a new focus on electricity, according to its Chief Executive Officer Mike Sangster.

Already, most member-countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) have set deadlines for switching from gasoline cars to electric cars, confirming forecasts that by 2040, more than 35 percent of global passenger vehicles sales will come from electric vehicles (EVs).

Dr. Omar Farouk Ibrahim, Secretary General of African Petroleum Producers Organisation (APPO), had warned in January 2020 that OECD countries were already overseeing discriminatory policies

against hydrocarbons as primary energy sources and were discouraging research and investments in the sector to make fossil fuels less accessible and more expensive, thus positioning other sources of energy as viable alternatives.

These changes are expected to have a huge impact on global demand and the price of crude oil.

Way forward for oil producing countries

Some doomsday analysts have predicted that the current energy transition would kill the oil industry and economies of oil producing countries. Nigeria, for example, depends on crude oil sales for 70 percent of government's revenue and 90 percent of its foreign exchange earnings. With this level of dependency on the black gold, many fear that Nigeria, like some other nations, might go into a tailspin, should the demand and the price of crude plummet permanently. We saw a bit of that at the height of COVID-19 pandemic in Quarter 2 2020 when the crude oil price entered the negative territory as the world economy ground to a screeching halt.

However, the alternative view by the International Energy Forum (IEF), the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and some other reliable data sources is that fossil fuels would remain a significant part of the global energy mix in the coming decades, despite the rise of renewables. According to Dr. Mohammad Barkindo, OPEC Secretary General, oil and gas will contribute about 50 percent of the global energy mix in the next three decades. He adds that rising global population and projected growth in the global economy would grow energy demand above the capacity of renewable sources. Wabote added his voice to the conversation, when he said energy transition would pan out as the redistribution of energy mix, rather than an outright swap of one form of energy for the other.



Interestingly, President Muhammadu Buhari holds the view that the hydrocarbons industry will remain a multi-trillion naira industry in decades to come. He hinges his optimism on projections by some experts that 80 percent of global energy needs between now and 2040 will still come from hydrocarbons. Rather than gaze into the crystal ball or worry unduly about the future, Wabote urged oil producing countries to quickly develop projects that would sustain their economy in the face of the transition.

Chief Timipre Sylva, Minister of State for Petroleum Resources, expressed a similar view during a town hall meeting at Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, in January 2021. He counseled that hydrocarbons should be maximised now that they still have a high value. He added that stakeholders must also brace up for life beyond oil and gas operations by embracing the economic diversification programme of the current administration, which seeks to drive investments in the Agricultural sector to cushion the effect of any eventuality.

Gas key to energy transition

The Federal Government's strategy for building a resilient economy under energy transition is centred on gas. As the Petroleum Minister put it, gas is Nigeria's transition energy. His office backed it up with deliberate policies, including the National Gas Expansion Programme, Gas Network Code and Flares Commercialisation programme.

This strategy got acceleration in March when President Muhammadu Buhari declared *Nigeria's Decade of Gas* and affirmed his administration's ambition to power the economy with gas by 2030. Mr President noted that gas has the potential to diversify and uplift the economy, given the country's 200 trillion standard cubic feet of gas (tscf) proven deposits, potential of over 600tscf reserves and the rising global demand for cleaner energy sources.

The declaration was widely applauded by key industry stakeholders, notably the Nigerian Gas Association (NGA), led by Mr Ed Ubong and Attah, who commented that gas would always be relevant in any energy mix that would evolve in the future. He also confirmed that NLNG is supporting the Federal Government to unleash the country's gas potential and ensure that it underpins the next economy. He said: "Gas is not just fuel; gas is food. It is employment, industrialisation and a lot more."

The Federal Government's strategy for building a resilient economy under energy transition is centred on gas. As the Petroleum Minister put it, gas is Nigeria's transition energy. His office backed it up with deliberate policies, including the National Gas Expansion Programme, Gas Network Code and Flares Commercialisation programme.



L-R: Engr. Simbi Kesiye Wabote, Executive Secretary, Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board; Chief Timipre Sylva, Minister of State for Petroleum Resources; Mallam Mele Kyari, Group Managing Director, Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation and Mr. Onesi Obendi, representative of ZED Energy Limited displaying the shareholders agreement signed on the construction of Brass Petroleum Products Terminal Limited (BPPT) in Abuja in June.



Mr Ed Ubong, President of Nigerian Gas Association (NGA) with other executives after a courtesy visit to Engr. Simbi Wabote at the Board's Abuja liaison office.

Mr Usman Yusuf, Chief Operating Officer, Gas & Power, Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), echoed a similar view. He hinted that gas was becoming increasingly important to Nigeria's sustainability and would play a key role in energy transition. He also posited that gas could lead to food sufficiency, industrialisation, increase in gross domestic product (GDP) and electricity sufficiency.

Strategic investments, hope for sustainable development

NCDMB, NNPC and NLNG have led the way with bankable gas projects that signpost Nigeria's determination to play big in energy transition. These investments are expected to keep the nation's oil and gas industry competitive when the new order is fully underway.

Year	LPG Consumption	Tonnes
1999-2007	Total national consumption	50,000
2020	Current consumption	1,000,000
2020	NLNG market share of LPG supply	380,000
2021	NLNG projected supply	450,000
2020	Other local suppliers and importers	620,000
2020	Estimated suppressed national demand	5,000,000

Source: Tony Attah, MD, NLNG

THE PROJECTS INCLUDE

NLNG Train 7

The Train 7 Project is currently underway and is the biggest gas project in Nigeria in the last decade. It is expected to expand NLNG's production capacity by 35 per cent, from 22 million tonnes per annum (MTPA) to 30 MTPA, retaining Nigeria's place as the fifth largest LNG exporter in the world, according to the company's managing director.

The partners – NNPC, SPDC, Total and NAOC – took the final investment decision (FID) in December 2019, after the project had been on the drawing board for over a decade. Five months after the FID, the Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) contract was awarded and signed with the Saipem, Chiyoda and Daewoo (SCD) joint venture at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mallam Mele Kyari, Group Managing Director of the NNPC, said at that time that Train 7 project would deliver at least US\$20 billion net revenue per annum for the federation and create 12,000 direct and 40,000 indirect jobs for Nigerians.

Speaking in the same vein, the Nigeria LNG boss indicated that the full value networth of the project was about \$12 billion, including the net cost, additional spend at its operational base in Bonny, Rivers State, and spend on upstream development to bring additional gas for the project.

NCDMB played key roles in the entire process, completing its regulatory approvals timeously and providing institutional support for the successful take-off. Attah revealed in October 2020 that "the Executive Secretary worked assiduously to ensure that the project became real. Without his personal support and commitment, we may not have Train 7 today."



Brass Fertiliser and Petrochemical Company Ltd (BFPCL)

This project's package entails a 10,000 tonnes per day methanol plant and 500 million standard cubic feet per day gas processing plant in Odeama, Brass, Bayelsa State.

NCDMB and NNPC would invest \$670 million, while lenders, including China Exim Bank, African Development Bank (AfDB), international commercial banks, regional banks and African institutions would raise 70 percent of the fund.

Sylva enthused that the project would have significant economic and developmental impact, including support for gas-based industries, revenue generation, foreign exchange preservation and achieving import substitution for methanol needs of the nation that is currently 100 percent imported.

On his part, Kyari described the Brass Fertiliser and Petrochemical plant as the third most important project that had taken FID in the last five years. He noted that achieving FID was proof of Federal Government's commitment to monetise the nation's gas resources, notwithstanding the challenging investment environment. The NNPC boss also pledged the corporation's commitment to ensure the delivery of the methanol plant on schedule by 2025. He said: "The country is blessed with abundant gas resources. As energy transition processes go on, you must monetise these gases as quickly as possible. NNPC will continue to collaborate with all the key partners. We will ensure that feedstock is available for this project and subsequent projects that will happen in the Brass hub."

Chief Ben Okoye, Managing Director of Brass Fertiliser and Petrochemical Company Limited, the holding company of the project, informed that methanol could be used to produce 67 items used in households every day, and could also serve as a key chemical agent in pharmaceutical and agro-chemical industries. He said the company acquired 600 hectares of land in the Brass Free Zone and aspired to attract other entities to the location.





Representatives of member countries of African Petroleum Producers Association (APPO) and delegates to the African Local Content Roundtable with Engr. Simbi Kesiye Wabote, Executive Secretary, NCDMB.



Nigerian Government officials with their counterparts from the Kingdom of Morocco at the signing of strategic Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) for the ammonia, fertiliser plant in Akwa Ibom State.



L-R: Mallam Mele Kolo Kyari, Group Managing Director (GMD) of the NNPC; Engr. Simbi Wabote, Executive Secretary, NCDMB and Chief Ben Okoye, Executive Vice-Chairman of BFPCL after signing the Final Investment Decision (FID) for the construction of 10,000 tonnes/day methanol production plant by Brass Fertiliser and Petrochemical Company Limited (BFPCL).

Ammonia, fertiliser plant in Akwa Ibom State

Another strategic gas-based investment will come from the five Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) signed at Marrakech, Morocco, in February 2021 by the OCP Africa, an agency of the Kingdom of Morocco, Nigeria Sovereign Investment Authority (NSIA) and the NNPC.

Under the agreements, Nigeria will import phosphate from the Kingdom of Morocco and blend it with gas to produce high-grade fertiliser for the local market and export. As part of the project, an ammonia plant will be established in Akwa Ibom State and part of the product would be exported to Morocco. The minister hinted that President Buhari had mandated that the first phase of the project be kick-started before the expiration of his administration's second term by May 2023.

To underline government's commitment, Engr. Simbi Kesiye Wabote and Mallam Mele Kyari confirmed that NCDMB and NNPC would take equity in the ammonia plant when the final investment decision would be taken.

The GMD also assured that NNPC would deliver gas to the plant, reiterating that the national oil company was aligning itself to the emerging energy transition meant to diversify its portfolio significantly.

Mr Udom Emmanuel, Governor of Akwa Ibom State, confirmed that land had been designated for the ammonia project and that the state government would provide any other support needed to actualise the project.



NCDMB's firm footprints in gas

Aside the big-ticket projects, the NCDMB partnered other project promoters to enhance gas exploitation and utilisation. In a recent interview with Real News magazine, the Executive Secretary revealed that the Board devoted more than 70 percent of its partnership investments to the gas sector.

These projects and others outside the gas sub-sector will help the Board to accomplish its vision of being the catalyst for the industrialisation of Nigeria's oil and gas industry and its linkage sectors, as well as meeting the key targets of Nigerian Content 10-Year Strategic Roadmap.

Local Investments, platform for job creation

Among the several positives in these projects is the symbiotic collaboration between key Federal Government agencies and indigenous firms. Wabote announced that the Nigerian oil and gas industry has come of age and cannot continue to wait for international operating oil and gas companies to initiate projects that would create huge in-country value and employment opportunities for the populace. This is noteworthy because providing jobs for the youth is easily the best strategy to curtail restiveness and insecurity in the polity, especially in the Niger Delta region.

Dwelling on the Train 7 project, the Executive Secretary said the expected job explosion was hinged on the Nigerian Content Plan, which provides that 50 percent of the total project scope would be executed in-country and through Nigerian contractors.

He was also optimistic about the methanol project, which is expected to create 15,000 jobs during the construction stage and additional 5,000 jobs during the operations phase. "The opportunities provided by this project in job creation, gas utilisation and local availability of methanol for primary and secondary users are massive. We are excited to serve as a catalyst for the realisation of the project," he said.

Sylva expressed similar hopes about the planned ammonia and fertiliser plant in Akwa Ibom State. He said the project would broaden economic opportunities for Nigeria and the Kingdom of Morocco, in addition to improving the wellbeing of the people. It would also make positive impact in agriculture, stimulate the growth of gas-based industries and lead to massive job creation.



NCDMB's mandate and strategic investments

A few critics have insinuated, albeit incorrectly, that NCDMB had deviated from its mandate by investing in strategic oil and gas projects. In response, Wabote explained that the NOGICD Act, particularly Section 70 (h), mandates the Board to "assist local contractors and Nigerian companies to develop their capabilities and capacities to further the attainment of the goal of developing Nigerian content in the Nigerian oil and gas industry." He added: "This provision of the law empowers us to go into partnerships with select project promoters to catalyse the realisation of Federal Government's policy pronouncements in the energy sector."

Wabote stressed that the Board is mandated to build capacities in the oil and gas industry, ensure the catalysation of manufacturing facilities and harness opportunities to create jobs. "You cannot create jobs if you do not get involved in projects," the ES said. He also emphasised that Local Content can only grow sustainably through mega projects, which provide opportunities for utilising local capacities and capabilities built over the years.

On the rationale for project selection, Wabote said the Board only builds partnerships in strategic policies and projects that are promoted by the Federal Government and not in businesses that have competitive private players, to avoid compromising its moral position as a regulatory agency. "Our role is to act as a catalyst for strategic government policies and programmes and we exit once those businesses become successful," he added.

The current energy transition should not breed morbid fear for the local oil and gas industry. Instead, it should challenge the industry to position for agility and sustainability. The outstanding success recorded by the NLNG, particularly the huge dividends and taxes paid to the Federal Government every year, is a pointer that gas projects could be the silver lining for Nigeria's economy.

The danger of energy transition to African economies

Dr. Omar Farouk Ibrahim

It is important to remind ourselves, especially the political leadership of African Petroleum Producers Association (APPO), of the dangers posed to our economies by energy transition. Energy Transition is a fall-out of the Paris Renewable Energy Agreement called COP 21, signed by world leaders, including African leaders, in 2015. The essence is to reduce fossil fuel use by 20 percent, increase renewable energy by 20 percent, and both objectives were to be achieved by the year 2020.

Our leaders signed the document without considering that their economies are heavily dependent on oil and gas revenues to run their government and meet their daily obligations to their people. This dependence is not set to abate in the very near future. On the other hand, the world has been moving aggressively away from fossil fuels to renewable energy, with a programme aimed at bringing an end to the use of fossil fuel not later the middle of this century.

They have done this by introducing discriminatory policies against fossil fuels. International financial institutions - World Bank, IMF and others - have stopped or plan to stop funding fossil fuel projects; even the International Oil Companies that built their fortunes from fossil fuels are now redirecting their investments away from oil and gas. International centres of excellence in universities are now closing their faculties in order to be seen to be in conformity with the new global paradigm shift.

Implications for African countries

With proven oil reserves of over 100 billion barrels still in our grounds and economies that are still heavily dependent on export oil revenue, why should African countries forgo the production of those 100 billion barrels and classify them as wasted assets? One of the implications is that in the next few years, advancement of new technologies in the industry would grind to a halt; financing would dry up and influx of capable hands and renewal of skills would grind to a halt. When we remember that our countries' dependence on oil is in threefold: revenue, technology and human capacity in the industry, then, the dangers stare us in the face.



Action plan by APPO

We have an opportunity in COP 26 before the end of this year in Glasgow, to argue that we had been railroaded into signing the previous document and they need to consider our continent. We have 600 million people who do not have access to modern energy, and we do not believe that with our two percent contribution to green gas emissions, that we should deny our people access to energy. Without energy, you cannot achieve development and good health.

APPO has been discussing with the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) whose members have the same problem and other like-minded organisations. We are going to work between now and November to come up with a position that we would canvass at the 2021 United Nations Convention on Climate Change, for a review of some of these things that our leaders signed on our behalf.

We are aware that the dependence in African countries on oil revenue is not the same as some OPEC countries like Saudi Arabia or Kuwait. A number of OPEC members have been able to diversify their economies. If you shut their oil industry, it would not fundamentally collapse their economy. But if you shut the oil industry in Nigeria, everybody would feel it.

APPO has commissioned a study on the future of oil and gas in Africa in the light of COVID-19 and COP 21. The outcome of this study would assist us in the development of a long-term strategy for the industry in our continent. The African Local Content Roundtable is an important forum. APPO would be happy to co-sponsor and ensure that it institutionalised as a truly continental programme to be held across continental capitals at regular intervals. We should begin to lay a solid foundation for the design of Africa-wide Local Content programmes and Nigeria is an excellent

example. APPO would participate actively in the deliberations to bring this laudable operation to fruition. We should take this as a continent-wide challenge.

Cooperation is imperative for African countries

Different African countries started oil and gas operations at different times and in different capacities. It is high time we admitted these differences and took advantage of the opportunity to learn from one other, especially from those that had accumulated many years of experience. There is an existing bilateral relationship. What has been missing is a continent-wide initiative. The era of going it alone in this continent and this industry is gone. The foreign financiers and experts and their technology are gradually leaving us. We need to pull resources together before it is too late. Together, we have what it takes to extend the life of oil, if not for the global market, at least to energise our continent, which has over 600 million people living without access to modern energy. We want the life of oil, which is the mainstay of our national economies, to last as long as possible to enable us use this revenue to effectively diversify our economies.

Our industry is very capital-intensive. We need groupings within the continent, where three to four countries can come together and plan for a big petrochemical plant. Ghana alone, Benin Republic, Togo cannot do it. We need to come together and invest in one of these countries and know that it belongs to these countries; it doesn't have to belong to the governments. We believe in APPO, that the time has come when the industry needs to close its eyes to artificial boundaries. ■

Dr. Omar Farouk Ibrahim is the Secretary General, African Petroleum Producers' Organisation (APPO).

Economic Sustainability

The current energy transition should not breed morbid fear for the local oil and gas industry. Instead, it should challenge the industry to position for agility and sustainability. The outstanding success recorded by the NLNG, particularly the huge dividends and taxes paid to the Federal Government every year, is a pointer that gas projects could be the silver lining for Nigeria's economy. Dr Zainab Ahmed, Minister of Finance, rightly described the receipts from the Nigeria LNG in 2020 as a bright spot in the government's revenue performance for the year, despite the COVID-19 pandemic and economic shutdown. More receipts would be expected when Train 7 and other gas projects mature.

It is also hoped that the National Assembly would resolve the knotty fiscal and stakeholders' differences around the Petroleum Industry Bill (PIB) and pass the legislation without further delay. This way, big investments in Nigeria's oil and gas sector that have been pending, could be unlocked and thus prepare the country fully for energy transition, in which ever shape or form. ■



Obinna Ezeobi is with Corporate Communication and Zonal Coordination, NCDMB.

As the world slowly recovers, headwinds will remain strong for businesses

There is optimism in the relative success achieved in combating the COVID-19 pandemic, but challenges remain.

Businesses had a tough time in 2020 achieving set objectives due to the Coronavirus pandemic-induced disruptions. Across the world, including here in Nigeria, socioeconomic activities were shut down in a bid to curtail COVID-19 spread.

The disruptions led to economic as well as political tensions, globally. The poor management of the pandemic in the United States, for instance, led to thousands of businesses collapsing and millions of jobs lost, and the eventual loss of Donald Trump's and his Republican party's re-election bid. In Nigeria, the pandemic further exacerbated an already worsening economic and security situation. Many businesses, including in the oil and gas sector, were forced to lay off workers or slash salaries as they streamline operations. The resultant spike in unemployment rate, coupled with insurgencies in the North, compounded the security risks in the country. "There is no doubt that Year 2021 will be more challenging in terms of security," says a security expert, Wale Adeboye. "You can see that from two human security angles of food and health."

The pandemic remains a real risk to economies and businesses in 2021, despite the availability of vaccines. The 2021 Risk Outlook report by International SOS, a global health and security solutions company, highlighted five key workforce associated risks in 2021. "The risk level to the global workforce has reached its highest since 2016," the International SOS findings showed. So, what are these risks?

First is that ecopolitical turbulence will exacerbate tensions, civil unrest and crime. Perceived poor handling of the pandemic led to civil unrests in many parts of the world. This had a domino effect on everything: economies, businesses and individuals. The Nige-

rian economy has continued to struggle. Expectedly, there is tension across the country, which is expressed in various forms.

Second is that pandemic-borne crisis management teams will redefine Duty of Care practices. Indeed, the pandemic became both a health and a safety or security issue, and the confusion lingers about who should be responsible for what in organisations.

Third is that the growing infodemic will increase demand for trusted sources of health and security information and advice. There continues to be a slew of information and misinformation about the pandemic as well as the efficacy of available vaccines.

Fourth is that mental health issues will become primary productivity disruptors. Fifth is that a singular focus on COVID-19 will create risk blind spots. Indeed, in Nigeria, malnutrition, cholera, Lassa fever, mental health and other equally serious health risks have been completely pushed aside.

To think that Nigeria and Nigerian businesses are insulated from these risks would be akin to believing the elephant can fly. Government's earnings took a beating from falling oil demand and declining crude prices. The Nigerian Economic Summit Group, a private sector-led think tank, warned that "policy-makers must understand that the business-as-usual scenario will only lead Nigeria down the drain of economic hardship".

Businesses have been the hardest hit. The twin collapse of crude oil price and demand led to a significant reduction in upstream (exploration and production) activities. Oil rig count in Nigeria declined from 23 in February 2020 to 10 in September 2020. Thus, there has been fewer oilfield servicing contracts. "There have been declining invest-

ments in oil and gas exploration," said the Group Managing Director of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), Mele Kyari. This, he noted, would "further affect the growth of the market".

The effects of the risks on businesses will be high. They may have to contend with cash-flow issues as demand declines, industrial disputes with dissatisfied workforce, huge manpower losses from staff calling in sick, cyber-attacks due to exposures to unsecured or unmonitored connectivity from third parties: workers working out of office. Third party, declining productivity due to poor motivation, huge investments in software, healthcare and security; dearth of competent hands and incidences of *force majeure*; forced repatriation of critical foreign workers due to perceived security risks and disruption of operations will necessitate *force majeure*.

Businesses cannot just simply fold their arms due to the above challenges, hoping for a miracle. Management must devise ways to mitigate them. A complete review of business continuity plan and crisis management will be needed. An assessment must be made on the twin threat of health and safety challenges and a comprehensive health and crisis management plan adopted. To stop further losses, management may look to reduction in expenditure, renegotiation of contracts, and possible downward review of salaries and allowances (a hard sell with the inflation inching north).

Management needs to enhance its communications and engagements with its internal stakeholders to manage expectations. Most importantly, players in the oil and gas sector must seriously start to consider diversification into new fields and markets. ■

A complete review of business continuity plan and crisis management will be needed. An assessment must be made on the twin threat of health and safety challenges and a comprehensive health and crisis management plan adopted.

For the Record

PROSECUTORIAL POWERS OF THE NIGERIAN POLICE UNDER NOGICD ACT

A case for other enabling statutes

By Solomon Arase

1. Introduction

Oil and gas are amongst Nigeria's enormous natural resources and account for a huge amount of the country's revenue. Despite their contributions to the economic development of the country, their exploitation and utilisation are fraught with challenges. One age-long challenge is the lack of adequate technological know-how by Nigerians, thereby hindering their capacity to control the oil and gas industry. Consequently, while Nigeria relies on international oil companies for major operations in the industry, the level of participation and control of operations of the industry was abysmally low. Technological capacity building for Nigeria was slow. Technology transfer was far-fetched. There was, therefore, the pervading mischief in the lack of Nigerian content in the oil and gas industry. It is with a view to removing this mischief and ensure indigenous content that precipitated the enactment of the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development Act, 2020 (NOGICD).

Accordingly, the preamble to the Act captures this object as an "Act to provide for the development of Nigerian Content in the Nigerian oil and gas industry, Nigerian content plan, supervision, coordination, monitoring and implementation of Nigerian content; and related matters". As laudable as that objective is, it can only be achieved if there is effective enforcement of the relevant provisions of the legislation.

It is against this background that I consider it apt this discourse on the powers of the Nigeria Police to prosecute defaulters, vis-à-vis the limitations of Section 68 of the NOGICD Act. The teeth of enforcement bite not only in terms of prevention and detection of crimes but also in prosecution of defaulters under the NOGICD Act. Prosecutorial powers of the police are not exercised in a vacuum but on positive law on crime.

The main focus of this paper is the prosecutorial powers of the police in the special context of the provisions of the NOGICD Act with special reference to Section 68 of the Act, which creates criminal liability and attendant punishment. In seeking to achieve these outcomes of the paper, it will encapsulate conceptual clarification, powers of the police to prosecute and limitations thereto, as well as a case for reform of the NOGICD Act in order to achieve enforcement of the legislation through an effective criminalisation policy.

2. Conceptual Clarification

For purposes of setting a perspective for this discourse, it is apposite to clarify a few concepts: "prosecution", "police" and "enforcement". The word "prosecute" includes "to commence and carry out a legal action. "Prosecution" often refers to the pursuit of legal proceedings, particularly criminal proceedings. Thus, "prosecution" often refers to "a criminal proceeding in which an accused person (now called

defendant) is tried". It is also termed criminal prosecution. Police is used to "mean the Police Force; that is, the Nigeria Police Force established under the Constitution and all officers of such force or body. By Section 141 of the Police Act 2020, "police officer" means "a member of the Nigeria Police". "Prosecuting officer" means any person appointed by the Attorney-General of the Federation or of the States to prosecute crimes on their behalf and for the Nigeria Police". Enforcement is "the act or process of compelling compliance with a law, mandate, command, decree, or agreement".

3. Powers of the Police to Prosecute

The powers of criminal prosecution are generally given to the Attorney-General of the Federation and Attorneys-General of the respective states. In respect of the Federation and States, sections 174 and 211 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999, as amended, respectively, provide for powers of the respective Attorneys-General to institute and undertake, take over and continue, and discontinue, criminal proceedings against any person before any court of law in Nigeria, other than a court martial, in respect of any offence. In view of the constitutional powers of the Attorney-General in public prosecutions, it is necessary to briefly examine whether or not the police can prosecute under NOGICD Act and the extent of police prosecutorial powers vis-à-vis those of the Attorney-General. The question turns on whether only the Attorney-General can institute and undertake criminal proceedings especially in the context of the provisions of NOGICD Act.

The police officer is competent to prosecute in any Nigerian court. The power of the police to prosecute or undertake criminal prosecutions is vested in the police by a number of legislations subject to the exercise of the powers conferred on the Attorney-General by the provisions of the Constitution. These include Section 66 Police Act, 2020; sections 88(2) and 106(b) Administration of Criminal Justice Act (ACJA), 2015; Section 227 Criminal Procedure Code and Section 98(1) Federal Capital Territory High Court Act.

The power of the police to prosecute is mainly, but not exclusively, derived from Section 66 of the Police Act 2020. The section states:

S. 66(1) Subject to the provisions of sections 174 and 211 of the Constitution and Section 106 of the Administration of the Criminal Justice Act which relates to the powers of the Attorney-General of the Federation and of a State to institute, take over and continue or discontinue criminal proceedings against any person before any court of law in Nigeria, a police officer who is a legal practitioner may prosecute in person before any court whether or not the information or complaint is laid in his name.

(2) A police officer may, subject to provisions of the relevant criminal procedure laws in force at the Federal or State level, prosecute before the courts those offences which non-qualified legal practitioners can prosecute.

(3) There shall be assigned to every Police Division at least one police officer:

(a) who is qualified to practice as legal practitioner in accordance with the Legal Practitioners Act; and

(b) whose responsibility is to promote human rights compliance by officers of the Division.

Similarly, Section 88 (2) ACJA provides:

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary, in any other law, a police officer may make a complaint in a case of assault even though the party aggrieved declines or refuses to make a complaint.

Thus, the power of the police to prosecute for offences is subject to the powers conferred on the Attorney General. In *Olusemo v Commissioner of Police*, it was held by the Supreme Court that the Police were competent to appear to prosecute in the High Court of the Federal Capital Territory Abuja. In interpreting Section 23 of the Police Act, sections 56 and 57 of the Federal High Court, and sections 174 (1) and (2) of the Constitution, the Supreme Court held in *FRN v Osahon and Others* that police officers are competent to prosecute not only in the Federal High Court but also in any court in Nigeria whether the officer prosecuting is legally qualified or not. *Belgore, JSC* stated, inter alia:

The provision of Section 56 of the Federal High Court has not closed the category of those who could prosecute criminal cases in the Federal High Court. If it purports to do so, it will conflict with Section 174(1) of the Constitution. The Police Act in Section 23 is made subject to sections 174(1) and 211(1) of the Constitution. The Constitution cannot be trivialised or be terrorem of any law. The use of the phrase "subject to" used in Section 23 of the Police Act is a very clear manifestation of the provisions of the Constitution vis-à-vis any other law. In the face of the provisions of the Constitution, the Acts or laws of the country brood no ground for classification into specific or general provisions to defeat the Constitution. At any rate, there is no conflict between the provisions of Section 23 of the Police Act and Section 56(1) of the Federal High Court Act once they are juxtaposed and then read with section 174(1) of the Constitution.

By Section 66(1) Police Act, 2020, it is only a police officer who is a legal practitioner that may prosecute in person before any court, whether or not the information or complaint is laid in his name. This does not mean that a police officer who is not a legal practitioner cannot prosecute. A police officer can make a complaint in case of assault, notwithstanding anything to the contrary in any other law. In addition, a police officer may, subject to the criminal provisions of the relevant criminal procedure laws in force at the Federal or State level, prosecute before the courts those offences which non-qualified legal practitioners can prosecute. A good example of a federal criminal procedure law to that effect is the ACJA as well as Section 98(1) Federal Capital Territory Act, laws of the respective states, for example, Section 227 Criminal Procedure Code Laws of states in the North that have not yet enacted Administration of Criminal Justice Law.

Since there is no provision in the NOGICD Act vesting the power to prosecute in the NOGICD Board or its legal officer, as in Section 150(2) Electoral Act 2010, as amended, in 2013, a police officer can prosecute for offences created under the NOGICD Act. Even if there were to be such provisions in so far as the provisions are not in conflict with Section 66 Police Act, 2020, police officers would still have been able to prosecute for offences under NOGICD Act.

In instituting or initiating criminal proceedings in superior courts, the police do not need the fiat of the Attorney-General of the state. This is because by virtue of Section 211(1)(b) of the Constitution, the Attorney-General is empowered to take over and continue proceeding, which "may have been instituted by any other authority or person". The import of this is that the Attorney-General cannot take over cases instituted by himself, but he could take over criminal proceedings instituted by other authority or person. This implies that there are other authorities or persons who have powers to institute and undertake criminal proceedings. These other authorities include the police, as laid out in Section 318(1) of the Constitution, which defines "authority" to include government (extending to the police), which are part of the public service of the Federation.

Section 105 of the High Court Law provides:

In the case of a prosecution by or on behalf of the State or by a public officer in his official capacity, the state or that officer may be represented by a Law officer, Director of Public Prosecution, State Counsel, Administrative Officer, Police Officer or by any Legal Practitioner or other person duly authorised in that behalf by the Attorney-General, or, in revenue cases, authorised by the head of the department concerned.

By virtue of Section 315(1)(b) 1999 Constitution, Section 105 of the High Court Law and Section 227(1) of the Criminal Code Law, Laws of Northern Nigeria, which are in pari materia with Section 105 High Court Law, are existing laws.

The combined effect of reading Section 211(1) 1999 Constitution, Section 105 of the High Court Law, Section 23 of the Police Act and Section 227 of the CPC, disclose clearly that there are two categories of persons who may institute and prosecute criminal proceedings before a State High Court:

- (i) Those who may do so, of right, include the Attorney-General, police officer or public officer, or;
- (ii) Legal practitioner or other persons duly authorised by the Attorney-General or in a revenue case, his head of department.

Therefore, the constitutional powers of the Attorney-General are not exclusive. The practice of police referring matters to be tried by the High Court to the Attorney-General's office is not obligatory. No law exists that compels the police to seek advice or hand over case diaries or files to the office of the Attorney-General for prosecution.

In *COP v. Magaji Ibrahim*, the High Court stated the above position of the law, and also held as follows:

Where the police have legal experts on its staff as it is obtained today, this marriage of convenience cannot without legal backing be held to be binding. The Attorney-General cannot under the constitution and the relevant laws prevent the police from proceeding straight

from the police station to the High Court to prefer a charge and prosecute the same. It is their right. It is their prerogative.

In the above case, a police officer, Mr. Ehindero, sought to arraign Magaji at the Jos High Court for culpable homicide punishable with death. In doing so, on 14 April 2000, by an ex parte motion applied for leave for court pursuant to Section 185(b) of the CPC and Section 3 of the CPC (application for leave to prefer a charge in the High Court) Rules 1970, to institute proceedings against the accused person, accompany the application with the charge and proof of evidence. As he moved the application, the Attorney-General of Plateau State objected to his appearance and applied under Section 211(1) (b) 1999 Constitution to take over the proceedings. The police officer submitted that the Attorney-General could not take over that which did not exist and that until leave was granted, the Attorney General could not take over and continue with the proceedings.

The issue turned on whether the police *qua* Commissioner of Police, Plateau State had the right or *locus* to institute criminal proceedings. The court ruled that the application of the Attorney-General was premature. The court held that until the *locus standi* of the police to institute this action was determined, there was nothing for the Attorney-General to take over and continue, and accordingly refused the application to take over. The court consequently called for arguments on the powers of the police to institute the criminal proceedings. The court held as stated above, upholding the argument of Mr. Ehindero and his team.

Offences for which the police can prosecute fall within Section 251(1)(n) of the Constitution and involving “mines and minerals (including oil fields, oil mining, geological surveys and natural gas), and as such only the Federal High Court has powers and jurisdiction to try for relevant offences”. Accordingly, only a police officer who is a legal practitioner can prosecute offences created by the NOGICD Act before the court.

4. Interpretation of Section 68 NOGICD Act

A cardinal rule of interpretation of a statute is to seek the intention of the legislature and look at the policy, scope and object of the statute. The marginal note to Section 68 NOGICD Act reads “offences and penalties”. “By the wording of the section, the nomenclature of the offence created is ‘carrying out project contrary to the provisions of the Act’. Two elements of the offence are required to be proved by the prosecutor, and of course, beyond reasonable doubt, in accordance with the accusatorial principle in our criminal justice system. The first element is that the defendant should be an operator, contractor or sub-contractor at all material time.

Under Section 106, “operator” means “the Nigeria National Petroleum Company (NNPC), its subsidiaries and joint venture partners and any Nigerian, foreign or international oil and gas company operating in the Nigerian oil and gas industry under any petroleum arrangement”. The second element is that the defendant should carry out a project contrary to the provisions of the Act. To “carry something out” means “to do or complete something, especially which you have said you would do or that you have been told to do”. “Carry out a project means to do or complete a project. This implies that

commencement of project will not fall within the meaning of carrying out a project.

The intention of the lawmaker is to include commencement of project as a prohibited act when the NOGICD Act is read holistically. The prohibitions under the section are ones concerning projects which can be carried out. This is evident from the connection between punishment and project as drawn from the section, even though there are several prohibitions in some other sections of the Act which do not connect projects. A lacuna, therefore, exist as to prohibitions which bar carrying out projects. The punishment for the offence created is also tied to the affected project. It is five percent of the project sum for each project or cancellation of the project.

5. Limitations of Section 68 NOGICD Act

There are a lot of limitations arising from the offence created by Section 68 NOGICD Act, and these have far-reaching implications for the powers of the police to prosecute under the Act.

1. First and foremost, the offence created by Section 68 does not wholly reflect the overall policy and object of the Act, which is to provide content in the Nigerian oil and gas industry. This is because, in addition to other reasons discussed in this paper, the section appears to create an offence broadly but restrictive in its consequence for purpose of prosecution, identifying the defendants, drafting of charges and determining liability.
2. The number and nomenclatures of offences created are very limited.
3. Some persons and entities that are prohibited from violating provisions of the Act are not captured in the creation of offence in Section 68. For example;
 - (a) “project promoter” who violates prohibitions in sections 10(2), 14, 20, 21, 28, 29 and 49 are not captured.
 - (b) “Any other body” violating submission of content plan contrary to Section 10(2) of the Act is not captured.
 - (c) “Alliance partners” who are prohibited from violating sections 11(3), 15 and 49 are not listed as persons who can be prosecuted in Section 68.
 - (d) “Companies operating in the Nigerian oil and gas industry” which fail to “employ” only Nigerians in their junior and intermediate cadres or any other corresponding grades designated by the operator or company” as stipulated by Section 35 of the Act, are left at large of prosecution as they are not mentioned in Section 68.
 - (e) On legal services, “other entities engaged in any operation, business or transaction in the Nigerian oil and gas industry requiring legal services” within the provisions of Section 51 of the Act and prohibitions in sections 52 and 53 are not also stated as committing any offence under Section 68.
 - (f) With due respect, the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) and its members who are in charge of supervision, co-ordination, monitoring and implementation are not stated to be liable for any acts or omissions prohibited or enjoined to be performed under the Act.

The need to encapsulate the aforementioned entities in couching offences under the Act is underscored by the provision on the philosophy or policy of the Act under Section 2. The section reads:

All regulatory authorities, operators, contractors, subcontractors, alliance partners and other entities involved in any project, operation, activity or transaction in the Nigerian oil and gas industry shall consider Nigerian content as an important element of their overall project development and management philosophy for project execution.

4. As has been stated, the fact that some prohibitions stipulated under the Act are not criminalised within the meaning of Section 68 is a grave limitation to the section. Such prohibitions are those that do not relate to projects. For example, failure to make available to the Board conditions of service and staff demography for all operations as required by Section 31(3); failure to submit to the Board a list of insurance companies and insurance brokers through which insurance covers were obtained under Section 49(2); placement of offshore insurance within the oil and gas industry without the written approval of the National Insurance Commission.
5. Section 68 is quite nebulous, but does not define or create several offences that are definable or creatable under the NOGICD Act. Under Section 36(12) of the Constitution, “a person shall not be convicted of a criminal offence unless that offence is defined and the penalty therefore is prescribed in a written law”. An addition to this rule of lenity in criminal proceedings is that if there appears any reasonable doubt or ambiguity, it will be resolved in favour of the defendant.
6. The limitation in the elements of offence created under Section 68 creates a problem for a police prosecutor who has to draft charges against a defendant to be prosecuted. It is trite law that there is need to have a charge to which a defendant in an offence can plead. Failure to obey the rules of joinder of parties or offences can vitiate a criminal trial.
7. Another major limitation to police prosecution in Section 68 is the limitation of parties to offences. Our criminal justice system requires that parties to an offence are not only persons who actually do or omit to do an act that constitutes an offence, but also persons who aid, assist, actual committers. Like the actual committer, such a person is, in our criminal jurisprudence, a principal offender. Furthermore, it is silent on other parties to offences, such as conspirators and accessories after the fact. There is need to also incorporate these categories of parties to offences under the Act.
8. Limitation of punishment is discernable in Section 68. Under the section, punishment of fine is to be alternative to cancellation of project. Since there are prohibitions that are not connected to projects and which can be criminalised, there is a need to include fines not connected to projects, and imprisonment. Imprisonment and withdrawal of operational licences can also be added to the current punishment regime in Section 68. The mere fact that an entity can pay for its violation of a legislation intended to transform the economic and social well-being of Nigerians and the country at large can defeat the purpose of the legislation. After all, foreign oil and gas companies are rich and can pay fines easily. Imprisonment is likely to serve deterrence purposes to violators of the provisions of the Act.

6. Proposals for Legislative Reform

The NOGICD Act is a milestone in the development of oil and gas industry in Nigeria and its intended transformation of Nigerian content to the benefit of Nigerians and the nation's economic development. Criminalisation policy under the Act is wide in scope, as stated in many sections of the Act, but the language of Section 68 does not reflect that scope in creating offences that can ease prosecution and widen the net of culpability.

Several limitations in Section 68 have been identified as hindrances to effective prosecution and enforcement of the provisions of the Act. As it stands, prosecutions will be far between under Section 68. Resort to other statutes to carry out prosecution under the section or other sections of the Act will be a herculean task because of the relevant constitutional provisions and the nature of our criminal justice system, which is skewed in favour of the defendant. Prosecution under other statutes may only be feasible for general offences as forgery, uttering, assault and conspiracy, which may not directly relate to Section 68 offence and indeed the intention of the lawmaker to develop Nigerian content in the Nigerian oil and gas industry.

The following recommendations are proffered for purposes of reforming the NOGICD Act.

1. There should be a comprehensive amendment of the Act by incorporating salient provisions on criminalisation policy into the legislation.
2. In the proposed reform legislation, offences created should be explicitly specified and defined. One way of doing this is to create offences with punishments under the sections that stipulate several prohibitions. For example, sections 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11(3), 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 26, 28, 30, 31(1), 31(3), 34, 38, 42, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 60 and 66.
3. The proposed amendment legislation should incorporate the entities that are missing from Section 68, namely, project promoter, any other body, alliance partners, companies operating in the Nigerian oil and gas, entities engaged in any operation, business or transaction in the Nigerian oil and gas industry, Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board, its members, officers, directors or agents of the aforementioned bodies, as the case may be. There is also the need to define such terms as ‘alliance partners’, ‘project promoter’, ‘contractor’ and ‘sub-contractor’, for ease of interpretation.
4. Furthermore, there should be further enlargement of parties to offences created under the legislation to include a person who aids, assists, enables, procures, counsels, conspires and persons who are accessories after the fact of offences created.
5. Punishment should include imprisonment and withdrawal of operation licences.
6. Punishment should be stated in terms of fines, and not tied to projects in all cases as there are prohibitions or offences that do not relate to projects.
7. Offences that are tied to projects should also be tied to transactions, contracts and activities.
8. It should be stipulated in the proposed amendment legislation that offences under the Act are triable in the Federal High Court. ■

Mr. Solomon Arase is former Inspector-General of Police



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Engr. Simbi Wabote on Train 7

I am excited FID was taken during my tenure

Impact of Brass Petroleum Products Terminal

The Brass Product Terminal located in Brass is quite significant, particularly for the Niger Delta region and Bayelsa State. Despite the quantity of crude oil produced from Bayelsa State and the quantity of gas, it has no product terminal of any nature. So, this is one statement that the current administration is making to ensure that development is taken to where the resources is coming from. Secondly, there is so many illegal refining going on in the Niger Delta and they do this because petroleum products are not available for people to procure and even if they are available, they are very expensive, most times twice the approved price. The Brass Products Terminal will create an opportunity and make petroleum products available within the riverine communities.

In addition, the terminal will have the capacity to service the offshore activities that happen within the coast of Brass and Bayelsa because almost 80 percent of the Floating Production and Storage (FPSO) vessels we have today in the country are within that axis and these are serviced from Lagos, Calabar and the rest. But with the Brass Product Terminal, they would be able to service most of those FPSOs and other platforms.

In terms of jobs, we have said it before that within the constructions stage, it has the capacity to create about 1,000 direct jobs and about 3,000 indirect and induced jobs. During the operation phase, it would still maintain that number because a lot of activities will happen around that product terminal. It is a win for the country, a win for the Niger Delta and particularly, a win for Bayelsa State, and that's perhaps the greatest significance. Because if you listen to the yearnings of the people, part of what they struggle with is that these products come out of the region but they don't get to procure it at the approved price. The Brass Product Terminal has the potential to make sure products get to them at the approved price when they need those products.

Furthermore, NNPC, some years back, tried to develop the floating stations in order to dispense Premium Motor Spirit (PMS) to local boat operators but that floating filling stations never really took off because the avenue to supply the products did not exist. This product terminal can fill that gap and make those floating fuel stations become useful. At the end of the day, the project is quite significant and I am very much excited about it.

Import of the Groundbreaking of NLNG Train 7

The NLNG Train 7 project has achieved a lot of firsts. Most importantly, we signed the contracts with the winning contractor during the height of the Coronavirus pandemic, which is quite significant. It took the international community by surprise that we could make that happen. We also celebrated the flag-off of the construction work recently in Bonny by President Muhammadu Buhari.

The Local Content scope that that was agreed and signed off in the project

by NLNG is that 50 percent of the entire construction work will happen in-country. The only bit that will happen outside the country is the cryogenic units, which has a lot of patents as well as the fact that most of the capacity exist outside the country. Apart from that, the procurement, construction, jetty, roads, camps, fabrication of pressure vessels, steels materials, everything will happen in-country.

During the pandemic, most of the fabrication yards that we had built over time with capacities to handle about 250,000 metric tonnes a year were all idle. With the Train 7, we can see them bracing up to be busy, which is significant. And like Mr. President said during the ceremony, we expected that NLNG would have gone up to Train 12 by now. But nothing happened since 2007 when they built the 6th Train. They've been in discussion on how to start the 7th Train,



I am particularly excited because we took Final Investment Decision on those projects during my tenure, and we are going to finish these projects in three to four years. Secondly, when this administration came on board particularly the Honourable Minister of State for Petroleum Resources, Chief Timipre Sylva, he promised that before the end of his tenure, we would take about three to four major final investment decisions. One is gone and we are expecting HI and Bonga Southwest. The goal will be achieved, that for me is very exciting

but today, they have started and by the grace of God, nothing is going to stop us. It is expected to create about 10,000 direct jobs and almost 40,000 indirect jobs.

Other international operating companies are also coming up with upstream projects that will supply gas to Train 7. For instance, the HI, which belongs to SPDC and the HA, which also belongs to SPDC. I am sure Total and ENI who are partners to the Train 7 project will also kick-start their own projects in order to feed gas into Train 7 project. We are expecting that almost US\$10 billion to \$12 billion of foreign investment is going to come into the country. You can imagine the significance of that in terms of local content development.

It is a very proud moment for us. I am particularly excited because we took Final Investment Decision on those projects during my tenure, and we are going to finish these projects in three to four years. Secondly, when this administration came on board particularly the Honourable Minister of State for Petroleum Resources, Chief Timipre Sylva, he promised that before the end of his tenure, we would take about three to four major final

investment decisions. One is gone and we are expecting HI and Bonga Southwest. The goal will be achieved, that for me is very exciting, because people would ask questions: during your tenure, which final investment decision did you take and I can point to these. When I came on board, we were still building the Egina Project and majority of the works happened then. But majority of the investment decision were taken before my tenure, so taking this decision on the Train 7 and other upstream projects is, indeed, very exciting to me.

Collaboration between NCDMB and other agencies on projects

One of the things that the current Minister of State for Petroleum Resources has always emphasised is collaboration by the inter-agencies within the Ministry of Petroleum Resources. That has been reinforced by our various collaborations to take investment positions in some significant projects. We talked about the Brass Product Terminal that is in conjunction with NNPC. The Brass Fertiliser project is also in conjunction with NNPC and today, NNPC is also looking at some of the modular refineries that we are also developing. ■



1. Delegates at the Petroleum and Natural Gas Senior Staff Association of Nigeria National Executive Council (NEC) meeting in Owerri, Imo State with Engr. Simbi Wabote, Executive Secretary, NCDMB.
2. Engr. Simbi Wabote, Executive Secretary, Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board with staff of the Board at the Nigerian International Petroleum Summit in Abuja.
3. Engr. Simbi Wabote, Executive Secretary, NCDMB formally being handed over the 10-megawatts gas-fired power plant located at Elebele, Bayelsa State by the Nigerian Agip Oil Company (NAOC) at the Board's Liaison office in Abuja.
4. Dr. Ginah O. Ginah, General Manager, Corporate Communications/ Zonal Coordination, NCDMB and staff of the CC/ZC with Mr. Lelei Suoteigha, Chairman, Association of Medical Laboratory Scientists of Nigeria (AMLSN) and his team shortly after their courtesy visit to the Board.
5. Chief Timipre Sylva, Hon. Minister of State for Petroleum Resources, commissioning corporate social responsibility projects donated by Atlantic Energy Infrastructure Park to the Okpoama community, Brass Local Government Area, Bayelsa State.



Photospeak



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6. Engr. Simbi Wabote, Executive Secretary, NCDMB and Mallam Mele Kolo Kyari, Group Managing Director (GMD) of the NNPC signing the Final Investment Decision (FID) for the construction of 10,000 tonnes/day methanol production plant by the Brass Fertiliser and Petrochemical Company Ltd (BFPCL), committing equity investment of US\$670 million.

7. **PARTNERSHIP:** Engr. Simbi Wabote, Executive Secretary, NCDMB; Mr. Okechukwu Mba, Managing Director, Anoh Gas Processing Company Limited (3rd right) with other top management staff of the Board at the flag-off partnership arrangement with Anoh Gas Processing Company Limited for the completion of the Centre for Skills Development and Training (CSDT), Greater Port Harcourt Area, Rivers State.

8. Engr. Simbi Wabote, Executive Secretary, NCDMB and top management of the Board with Mr. Roger Brown, CEO/Executive

Director, Seplat Petroleum Development Company and his team after his courtesy visit to the Board's headquarters in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

9. Executives of the Women in Energy Oil and Gas (WEOG) Nigeria, presenting a souvenir to Engr. Simbi Wabote, Executive Secretary, NCDMB in appreciation of the laudable policies the Board has introduced for women in the oil and gas sector, in March.

10. (L-R): Mr. Obinna Ezeobi, Chief Supervisor, Media & Publicity; Barr. Naboth Onyesoh, Manager, Corporate Communications and Mr. Teleola Oyeleke, Supervisor, Media & Publicity at the Bayelsa Media Awards in March, where Engr. Simbi Wabote was conferred with the award of the Most Impactful Chief Executive in the Niger Delta. ■



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Milestone

Sokoto may actually be in our Shokoto. The Nigerian oil and gas industry overlooks some of these trainings that may not sound so dignifying as drilling engineering, but are actually global money spinners for countries like India, China, Malaysia, among others, which have discovered their hidden values and are massively training their nationals in them, shipping them across the globe.

Blue collar jobs offer Nigeria huge opportunities to deepen the jobs market

Mazi Sam Azoka Onyechi, President of the Oil and Gas Trainers Association of Nigeria (OGTAN) and CEO, Inspection and Tests Nigeria Limited, identifies opportunities for closing skills gaps in the oil and gas industry. He charts a way forward for Nigeria playing key roles in human capital resourcing, not only in the African oil and gas markets, but also beyond the continent.

Congratulations on your emergence as the new OGTAN President. Tell us a bit about your career background.

Thank you very much. I am Mazi Sam Azoka Onyechi, the CEO of Inspection and Tests Nigeria Limited (ITL), a quality control and quality assurance company working for the oil and gas industry in Nigeria. I am also the Chairman of ITL Training and Certification Limited. I am a businessman and a quality professional, one of the Lead Assessors of Nigerian National Accreditation Service (NiNAS). I graduated from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, where I read English. I also have an MBA in Leadership from the University of Liverpool, UK, among other professional certifications relevant to the work I do in the industry. I am currently the President of Oil

and Gas Trainers Association and have worked in the oil and gas business in various capacities for the past 30 years.

OGTAN has a good succession plan for the emergence of its leadership. How has this helped the growth of the training body?

Yes, indeed, it is something that happened from practice, not essentially a written code but basically because if you didn't play football, you will not be able to coach the game. It made sense to fit round pegs in round holes, being that someone mentored in a process stands a better chance of performing well in that process. Somehow, those elected to run these offices mostly come from existing officers and those who have served the association in one way or the other.

Milestone

OGTAN is a professional body and we do our best to avoid undue politicisation of what we do in order to maintain desired progress. I was the vice-president in the last administration and the ex-president, Dr Mayowa Afe, was also a top executive of the Professor Onyekonwu-led administration. This helps administrative continuum and encourages seamless progression of relevant mandates of the association.

OGTAN made some progress in the last few years. What landmark initiatives do you intend to pursue under your term to take the association to new heights?

Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks, says the good book. As a quality professional, it is our intention to add quality to OGTAN and its membership. Our administration believes that if you want to be taken seriously, you apply international standards to what you do, and level the playing field. We intend, therefore, to pursue the certification of the quality management system of OGTAN to ISO 9001:2015 with a view to accrediting it to ISO 17065, the international standard for bodies rendering professional services to others. This would enable OGTAN to certify our members' training service delivery, and for those in conformity, be issued the OGTAN mark of excellence as an Authorised Training Practitioner. We are already carrying out standardisation of our members in readiness for this and carrying out awareness trainings to make this seamless.

There has been a persistent demand by the NCDMB for the categorisation of training companies in the oil and gas industry. How is OGTAN complying with this?

We are working closely with the Human Capacity Division of the Board to agree all parameters for this categorisation that would encourage quality as an end product of the process. By the categorisation exercise, the Board is simply telling our members, 'you need to up your game to be recognised and given a chance to grow your business and grow human capital', which is one of the mandates of the NOGICD Act to the Board.

NCDMB is desirous of growing human capital in the oil and gas industry, hence it set up OGTAN to organise Nigerian trainers in a manageable pool that would make the desired impact. OGTAN can only deliver on the NCDMB mandates if it can prove that its members can match any trainers globally in setup and learning services provision. Our members are willing and able to comply with the categorisation process. This administration is assisting members to be ready for this via our Standardisation programme, drawn along same parameters as the Categorisation matrices.

The ES NCDMB recently tasked OGTAN to come up with niche areas that have high job opportunities. What are those areas and how can OGTAN use those areas to address the unemployment challenge in the country?

Thank you very much. During our courtesy visit to the ES in May 2021, he indeed made this call, which he stressed as our competitive advantage to carve out niche areas of training that would align with the NCDMB 60-20-20 HCD principle, where training programmes that would ensure at least 60 percent post-training engagement of the trainees would be automatically considered by the industry. We have designed a gap analysis template that would identify these training types and would soon revert to the Board with our findings.

Having been a player in the industry for 30 years, this is one area I can assure you that what we are looking for in Sokoto may actually be in our Shokoto. The Nigerian oil and gas industry overlooks some of these trainings that may not sound so dignifying as drilling engineering, but are actually global money spinners for countries like India, China, Malaysia, among others,

which have discovered their hidden values and are massively training their nationals in them, shipping them across the globe.

One of such trainings that are overlooked is the current ASNT Level 111 NDT training, which the Board recently engaged in and has commenced the training of 100 members of Association of Nondestructive Testing Practitioners (ANTEP). China and India have thousands of their citizens certified to NDT Level III. Not only does this help their oil and gas industry to manage quality in construction and fabrications, but these are globally accepted and mandatory personnel for the industry; these are skills that attract billions of dollars annually to these countries.

There are others in welding and related fields, including international welding engineers; I know the number of Nigerians with this certification is so far below even local needs that we still import these guys for major welding projects. I know a lot of them would be needed for the upcoming Train 7 project.

What is the possibility of OGTAN members collaborating or forming a consortium to establish training centres of excellence?

We are seriously working on developing among our members this culture of collaboration, which is not the average Nigerian businessman's strong point. This is needed now more than ever that only few jobs are available in the industry and strong alliances are needed to grab the few that are available or we lose them to foreigners. We have approached the Board to help carry out training for our members in this regard, since the Board is already preaching this as part of value retention for local content. We are also working on building the OGTAN House, which would incorporate training centres of excellence, among other facilities, that would encourage local training efficiency and effectiveness.

There is a movement to grow local content across Africa. What collaboration is OGTAN looking to forge with regional associations to grow human capacity?

This administration has this as a major focal point, which is one of the reasons we are pursuing standardisation of OGTAN and its members because we want to bring the Nigerian experience to the African table and see how that helps not only Africa develop skills set that would reduce unemployment of Africans, but would encourage free exchange of trade and investment in learning services provision among partnering nations. We have spoken to South Africa, Kenya, Ethiopia, Ghana and Uganda. OGTAN is looking at having something concrete on this in 2021.

It has been 11 years after the enactment of the Nigerian Content Act. What positives have you witnessed with the implementation process, particularly around local human capacity development?

A lot, a whole lot. It has been great so far with the innovative management of the Board by the Wabote-led administration. The training methodology adopted by the Board, which focuses on real empowerment of the trainee, is something after my heart. In my company, we had to put a hold at a stage on NDT training because it became an all-comers affair where someone with no industrial experience in NDT and no facilities to ensure practical content of the training he or she is offering, would simply commercialise the training by hiring a level III trainer and carry out 40 hours of basically classroom training and issue a certificate to the trainee, who goes to a site prancing about with his Level III brand new certificate, only to mess up a project with a wrong interpretation of indications that a Level 1 with relevant experience would have seen outright.

NCDMB, to counter such practices, introduced the OJT formula

for trainees, some as long as six months, to ensure that the fresher does not go out a novice to the industry. The support of NCDMB and the genius of creating OGTAN is a major milestone in HCD because, if not for that foresight, local training would not have had the right focus and progression. With this master stroke, the volume of Nigerians with the right training and qualifications to participate in oil and gas industry across the value chain has seen unprecedented increase. The common statement that no qualified Nigerians to man certain positions is a permanent thing of the past. Thanks to NCDMB.

The price of crude oil has recovered significantly since the onset of COVID-19. How did the pandemic affect the business of your members and how much recovery have they recorded since then?

The pandemic was and still is an ill-wind that blew nobody any good. OGTAN is estimated to have lost about ₦2 billion worth of training opportunities in the peak period of the pandemic and associated global lockdown. But, as it is said, every disappointment has some blessings in disguise. Somehow, the new normal of distance learning, virtual training via elearning platforms and other innovative ways of training had to be adopted and perfected by some of our members. As a body, we are also trying to see how we can encourage the rest to join by assisting with bulk purchases of some of these technologies and trainings on their application. These are some of the value-adding packages of our administration.

Many operating and service companies continue to apply for substantial expatriate quota approvals from the Board, claiming that the capacities they seek are not available in-country. How far is OGTAN working to identify these seemingly non-existent capacities and equip Nigerians with the skills?

You know, the beauty of the NOGICD Act is that it gives no room for such excuses, no matter how seemingly valid, to deny Nigerians the opportunity to participate in any industry activity. The Act states, in relevant sections, that the employment and training plan of any operator shall list skills needed for the operation and any anticipated local skills shortage in good enough time to enable Nigerians prepare for occupying such positions during the project's life cycle. The Act further states that the operator shall apply such trainings to Nigerians where there still exists a shortage. It also makes provision for a succession plan for a maximum of four years for a Nigerian to understudy the expatriate and so Nigerianise that position within that time frame.

Non-Destructive Testing is an area where Nigeria has suffered deficiency in personnel in recent years, especially in Level 111. What caused this deficit and what concrete steps have been taken to bridge the gap?

NDT and DT and QA/QC trainings are low hanging fruits for cutting down drastically the high level of unemployment in the industry for Nigerians within the shortest possible time. The beauty of NDT training, in most cases, is that the programmes are relatively short duration, ranging from one week to three months. It is also largely a TVET programme, which gives it wider coverage, from basic to mid-level education to graduate level manpower.

The deficiency noted in them comes from not understanding their relevance to the industry and so were largely overlooked because they are not fancy professions, especially in our setting that downplays blue-collar jobs in preference for white-collar jobs. The time to change this wrong perception is now. Thank God for NCDMB, an unrivalled industry innovator, the campaign is on and with 100 Nigerians being trained in NDT Level III by the

Board, I believe the jinx is broken. In the words of the ES, he is waiting for sound proposals to further ameliorate this deficiency.

What are the specialised training programmes and projects offered by your company and how does that benefit core operations of the oil and gas industry?

My company, Inspection and Tests Nigeria Limited (ITL) has been a first in the industry in most NDT and related training areas. Because of our in-depth knowledge of the NDT industry and the lack of qualified manpower we experienced in rendering our QQA/QC services to the industry, we quickly saw an opportunity to empower Nigerians in this area and have qualified manpower to carry out our services.

We started NDT training in the early '90s and demystified the possession of Level 11 NDT Certification, which were being used to mesmerise Nigerians before then. We followed up quickly with a partnership with The Welding Institute (TWI) of the UK with an Agency Agreement that brought one of their best trainers, Tom Woolhouse, as Africa's regional trainer for CSWIP Welding Inspectors Certification programme. Over 70 percent of Nigerians currently possessing CSWIP Welding Inspectors certificates got them under the ITL agency with TWI. This was ongoing for about five years before security situations in the country impacted the arrangement negatively.

We were rendering training in welding inspection to Angola and Ghana from Nigeria. Right now, we are one of the two Authorised Training Bodies (ATBs) in Nigeria licensed under Nigeria Institute of Welding to carry out welder training across the care to international welding engineer. We have also advanced NDT Training to the type of certifications issued by PCN of UK, under the requirements of ISO 9712. We are also into various trainings that are overlooked by the industry but which carry internationally accepted certifications that would empower any holder to work anywhere in the world.

We just concluded API 570 Training for NPDC and their staff are scheduled for the examination conducted by American Petroleum Institute this July. These are core needs of the industry specific to certain areas, like the API 570 is for understanding and applying piping inspection codes to oil and gas facilities for fresh and practicing industry engineers. There are not many Nigerians with this specialist certification.

What are the landmark projects you have delivered in the last five years?

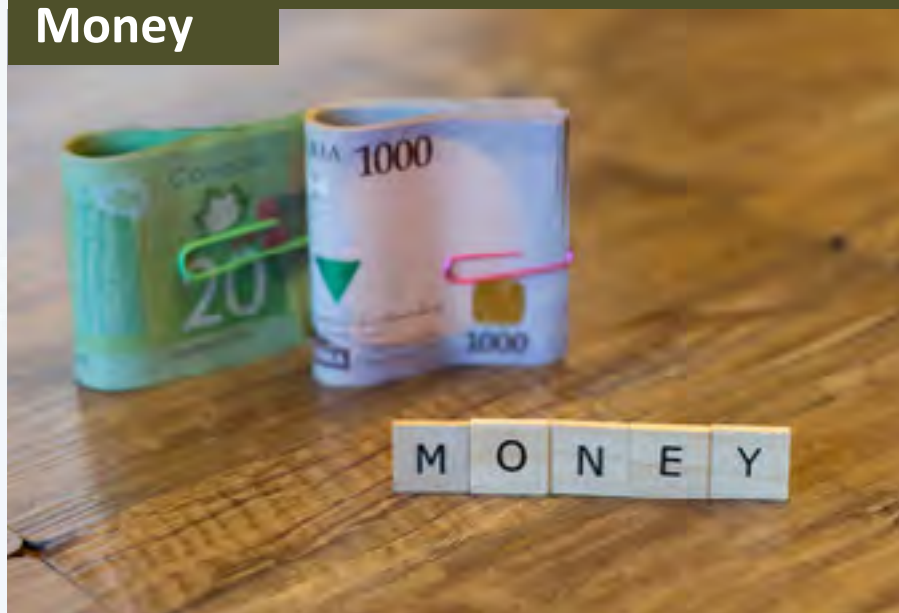
The ITL brand is a known name in the industry. We have worked and are still working for almost everyone in the industry. We have been retained as in-house QA/QC and NDT company with several companies, including IOCs and LOCs, as well as several major construction companies. This is the nature of what we do in NDT. You hardly can find any industry project where we are not needed. On the training aspect, we are one of the two companies currently running the ASNT NDT Level III training for 100 Nigerians, a landmark project of the NCDMB.

What's your company's outlook in terms of growth?

We are looking at completing our TVET School for the training programmes we are running, and also enlarging the training scope of what we are doing currently to accommodate more courses relevant to the industry, and also to secure additional accreditations for what we do in laboratory testing and inspection.

We already have existing certifications in ISO 9001 and 45001 and the lab has just been accredited to ISO 17025. We will invite your team, by God's grace, for the official launch of these and other accreditations we seek in a short while. ■

Money



Moonlighting is frowned upon in many organisations. However, if well managed, both the employee and employer benefits from it.

The many upsides of a second income stream

A second income could be the difference between wealth creation and living from salary to the next salary, for the regular employee. Maintaining a quality lifestyle on one salary could be daunting, much less building wealth. Truly, if you wish to build wealth over your career lifespan, 20 to 35 years, you may need to start considering a second stream of income. Before we go on, we need to define wealth for better understanding of where you are now on the scale. According to finance guru, Nimi Akinkugbe, who is also the Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Bestman Games, an individual is wealthy or financially free when he gets “to the point where you work only because you want to and not because you have to”.

Now, let us make it more empirical for proper appreciation of the importance of a second stream of income. Let us imagine as a worker, you earn ₦700,000 monthly or ₦8.4 million yearly, your tax liability under PAYE would be around 10 percent. You are taxed ₦70,000 monthly or ₦840,000 yearly. Your net income is ₦630,000 monthly or ₦7.56 million yearly. For pension, at eight percent, ₦50,400 is further deducted from ₦630,000. That leaves you with ₦579,600 as your take-home pay. Let us assume you live in a standard three-bedroom apartment with your family where you pay ₦600,000 yearly in rent. That is ₦50,000 monthly.

Deduct this from your take-home of ₦579,600 and you are left with ₦529,600. Now, from this, you deduct school fees. Money for house-keep for the month, food and other household items (let us be conservative and budget ₦70,000 per month for a family of three – you, your wife, your child), then deduct for clothing for three (again, let us be conservative and budget ₦60,000), money for transportation/fueling the family vehicle (₦50,000 monthly),

deductions for vehicle and generator maintenance, fueling for generator, utility bill (pre-paid meter), DSTv subscription, then pocket money for you, and other miscellaneous expenses. After all these deductions, you hardly have enough left for anything else. You then wait for the next salary payment and the cycle goes on and on.

With this rough sketch, you have an idea of how difficult it is creating wealth from a single income. And, if you think a salary raise will address this issue, remember to also factor in inflation – over the past 12 quarters, it has been on a steady rise, now at 17.3 percent – which erodes your purchasing power. What this means is that your salary would need to be increased by more than the current inflation rate to consider it a plus; otherwise, you are still at the same level before the increase or even worse off.

This is why a second income is so important for an employee. Such income can easily be saved and invested. However, taking a second income stream requires planning because it takes time and effort. “Everybody needs a side gig,” says Dr Tayo Oyediji, former MD of Me-

dia Perspective and author of *How I Retired* at 40. Many simply take a part-time job that can be performed on weekends without affecting the regular one. But then, if there is no adequate rest from working two jobs all week long, there is the risk of burnout and eventually a decline in productivity in both the regular and the part-time jobs.

To mitigate the possibility of a burnout, it is often suggested that one starts with his talent, something that you can do effortlessly that would not take too much effort and time. Says Oyediji: “I was working full-time in a bank while writing my first book. The most important lesson I learnt from that first venture is to do what comes naturally.” An accountant, for instance, who is talented at compering, can take on weekend gigs, maybe two weekends monthly. Or, he may provide a biweekly book keeping/auditing services to SMEs in his neighbourhood. Income from the part-time job can then be invested to yield him passive income: real estate, equity, and farming, among other opportunities. Once the passive income is fully established, he can then pull back from the part-time job, if he so desires.

These days, opportunities abound to make extra income in logistics, drop shipping, training, network marketing, and other sectors, by tapping into a network of friends and acquaintances. New skills that will bring in lucrative deals in the long term can also be learnt. Thankfully, there are numerous platforms online today that provide free trainings on every subject area.

An employee with a second income stream may actually help to save cost for his company. Such an employee is less financially pressured; he is, therefore, emotionally stable and able to fully concentrate on his regular job, which helps productivity. ■

An employee with a second income stream may actually help to save cost for his company. Such an employee is less financially pressured; he is, therefore, emotionally stable and able to fully concentrate on his regular job, which helps productivity.

Ekpang Nkukwu

Beautiful
Nollywood
thespian,

**Xiolla Anietie
John**

Nollywood actress and film maker, Xiolla Anietie John, a Human Anatomy graduate from the University of Calabar, is no doubt, also dexterous in the kitchen. She learnt the skill from her mother.

“My mother would say that it is a taboo to eat a meal you don’t know how to prepare. So, in order to enjoy all the delicacies, you must learn to prepare them. One of my favourite meals is *ekpang nkukwu*,” Xiolla says.

Ekpang nkukwu (cocoyam porridge) is a rich traditional delicacy of the Efik/Ibibio people, in southern part of Nigeria.

Below is Xiolla’s take on *ekpang nkukwu*.

Ingredients

- 1kg water yam
- 1.5kg coco yam
- Periwinkles
- *Nkukwu* leaves (cocoyam leaves, the soft/fresh ones) or *ugu* (pumpkin)/green leaves.
- *Pomo* (cow hide)
- Goat meat/beef
- Dry fish
- Crayfish
- Seasoning cubes
- Pepper
- Salt
- Palm oil
- *Effrin* (Scent leaves)

Preparation

1. Peel the cocoyam and water yam. Wash them thoroughly and cut into chunks.
2. With a wooden grater, grate the two together.
3. Once done, mix them thoroughly with a wooden spoon and then add

some seasoning cubes and salt. Mix the paste again to ensure it goes round.

4. Wash the *nkukwu* leaves, ugu or green (any one you decide to use).
5. Begin to wrap the paste in the leaves in tiny bits (this may take about an hour or longer).
6. The *ekpang* must be wrapped directly into the pot you want to cook with (make sure you pour your periwinkles into the pot before you begin to wrap your *ekpang* into it so it does stick to the pot while cooking).
7. Wash and steam your meat, pomo, dry fish. Once done, pour the protein mix into the wrapped *ekpang*.
8. Boil water and ensure you bring it to a boiling point. Pour it into the pot of *ekpang*, cover it and put on the fire to cook (please do not Stir).
9. Cook for about 30 minutes before you stir. Cover it again and continue to cook.
10. Keep stirring until you are sure it’s well cooked. You can add some water, if it looks too dry.
11. Once you’re sure it is well cooked, add some palm oil and your sliced scent leaves.
12. Your *ekpang* dish is ready, bring it down and treat yourself to a rich meal. ■



NIGERIAN CONTENT STIC

Unearthing innovative ideas to solve critical challenges

The NCDMB innovation competition among Nigerian undergraduates is entering its final leg, ushering hope of unique ideas that address local challenges.

Promoting innovation is one of the best strategies to move an economy from import dependency to self-sustenance and, thereafter, export oriented. This explains why the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) identified Research and Development (R&D) as one of the key enablers for actualising its Nigerian Content 10-Year Strategic Roadmap.

In the last few years, the Board has operationalised its R&D mandate through several initiatives, such as the development of R&D 10-Year Roadmap, creation of US\$50 million R&D Fund and establishing the Nigerian Content R&D Development Council, among others. Engr. Simbi Kesiye Wabote, Executive Secretary, NCDMB, said countries that have witnessed appreciable local content levels, such as Brazil, attributed the growth to the priority attention paid to R&D.

In engendering the innovative spirit among young people in Nigeria and channelling their energies towards R&D, the Board, late last year, launched the Science Technology Innovation Challenge (STIC), with Enactus Nigeria as its implementing partner. At the event, Wabote noted that the STIC is an enterprise-development programme designed to spur undergraduates from Nigerian tertiary institutions to stretch their ingenuity by applying



Winning Team of the Nigerian Content STIC, Team DC's Solar Element Stove from Cross River University of Technology celebrating their winning of the competition.



The winning innovation, Solar Element Stove.



Governor of Bayelsa State, Senator Douye Diri and Executive Secretary NCDMB, Engr. Simbi Kesiye Wabote arriving the grand finale of the Nigerian Content Science Technology Innovation Challenge.

science and technology to create home-grown, innovative and technology-driven business solutions, which will address pressing everyday challenges, and in the process, create jobs and grow wealth.

One of the aspirations, said the NCDMB helmsman, is to encourage research and development as well as local content development in Nigerian tertiary institutions by fostering collaboration between the academia and the private sector. "The STIC seeks to inspire Nigerian students to embrace and imbibe the culture of critical thinking and R&D, while also stimulating ideas that can open up development in science, engineering and technology," said Engr. Wabote.

Mr. Michael Ajayi, Country Director of Enactus Nigeria, explained that the competition would motivate the next generation of Nigerians to think of innovative ways to apply science and technology to solving the deep problems experienced in every sector of the Nigerian economy. The winners of the contest will be awarded prizes, in addition to being mentored by industry experts to help them scale up their innovations into profitable business ideas.

Dr Ama Ikuru, General Manager, Capacity Building, NCDMB, echoed the same thoughts. He said STIC is one of NCDMB's numerous efforts at developing talents and local content, while at the same time improving the research and development capabilities in Nigerian tertiary institutions.

Competition like no other

The dedicated online portal for the competition, www.stic.org.ng, was opened from November 19, 2020 until January 31, 2021. Five hundred and eleven entries were received from undergraduates in 129 tertiary institutions across the 36 states, including the Federal Capital Territory.

To ensure ease of management, three zones were designated for the contest: Northern region, Eastern/Southern region and Western region. After entries were submitted, a panel of 63 individuals from diverse fields, ranging from business development to information technology, business strategy and social enterprise development committed over 156 man-hours to select the best five teams for three major regions designated for the contest.

The top five institutions that came tops from the Northern region included University of Ilorin, Kwara State; University of Jos, Plateau State; Federal University of Agriculture, Makurdi, Benue State; Federal University Dutse, Jigawa State and Usman Danfodiyo University, Sokoto State. From the Eastern/Southern region are Cross River University of Technology, Cross River State; Niger Delta University, Bayelsa State; Federal Polytechnic, Nekede, Imo State; Alex Ekwueme Federal University, Ndufu-Alike, Ebonyi State and Federal University of Technology, Owerri, Imo State. Also, Tai Solarin University of Education, Ogun State; University of Ibadan, Oyo State; Yaba College of Technology, Lagos; Anchor University, Lagos and Babcock University, Ogun State, were selected from the Western region.

Each of the 15 universities in the competition was represented by two undergraduates and a faculty guide. With the teams advancing to the 'proof of concept' stage of the competition, they each received ₦500,000 to develop functional prototypes of their ideas. Subsequently, the 15 teams moved on to compete at the regional finals, which held at the University of Abuja for the Northern zone; NCDMB Towers, Yenagoa, for the Southern/Eastern and Covenant University, Ota, for the Western regional competitions.

During the in-person regional final competitions, the teams were challenged to demonstrate their functional prototypes to the panel of judges. Their task was to show how their proposed innovations would solve identified problems, create jobs and wealth, if supported and transformed into business ventures.

To further spike interest in this stage of the contest, the presentations by the groups and the entire process were televised live on NCDMB's Social Media handles that have over 30,000 followers on Twitter and Facebook, aside other dedicated followership on Youtube and LinkedIn.

At the end of the contest, teams from the Federal University of Technology, Owerri and Cross State University of Technology came tops from the Eastern/Southern region, while their counterparts from the University of Jos and Federal University of Agriculture, Makurdi were victorious from the Northern region. Similarly, the Tai Solarin University of Education and Anchor University carried the day from the Southern zone.

Driven teams showcasing original thinking

Team Questers from the University of Jos focused on combating the challenge of hunger and food insecurity. The promoters, El-Nathan Ata Nathan and Israel Obidah Smarta developed a hydroponic system of growing food. The Federal University of Agriculture, Makurdi's Team TED sought to solve the hydra-headed issue of erratic power supply with its noiseless, fuel-less electric generator. James Terhembra Thomas and Edwin James Edwin, proponents of the project, hoped to provide alternate power source, which will serve as renewable energy to the society.

Team Incandescent from Tai Solarin University of Education showcased a solar-powered phototherapy device that will help in the treatment of neonatal jaundice. Abosede Adelekan and Michael Olatunde, drivers of the project, believed that their equipment will reduce neonatal deaths due to jaundice across the country. Team AUL Applied Physics from Anchor University believed that their work on piezoelectric effect would meet the need for renewable sources of energy to solve erratic power supply in the country. The proponents are John Ayeleso and Ruth Sunday.

The team from the Federal University of Technology, Owerri worked on a solution similar to Team Incandescent. The members, Gladys Nwaokoma and George Ekwebelem, hoped to eliminate neonatal deaths due to jaundice with their solar-powered foldable phototherapy crib for the treatment of jaundice in newborns. Team DC from the Cross River State University of Technology proposed Solar Element Stove hope. Championed by Victoria Effiong and Dogban Paul Okim, the project sought to provide a renewable, environmentally friendly and cheaper fuel for cooking, thereby fitting into the ongoing narrative for climate change.

In the past few years, young Nigerians have achieved great feats in the technology space, creating innovative products that have attracted the attention of technology giants and players across the globe. The accomplishments of Flutterwave, among several others, are just a scratch on the surface of the goldmine of talents abundant among Nigerian youths.



Top three winning teams: Team Ted, Federal University of Agriculture Makurdi (3rd place); Team Quester, University of Jos and Team DC Solar Element Stove from Cross River University of Technology with the Executive Secretary NCDMB, Engr. Simbi Kesiye Wabote and Country Director of Enactus Nigeria, Mr Michael Ajayi at the end of the competition.

Prizes galore

In June, the six regional finalists proceeded to a four-week mentorship programme, which culminated in a one-week boot camp where seasoned business development, marketing and communication professionals worked with NCDMB and Enactus Nigeria to review and enhance the teams' business plans and transform their ideas into sustainable business ventures.

At the grand finale, which took place at the NCDMB Towers in Yenagoa in June, Team DC, from the Cross River State University of Technology was selected by the judges. Their innovation, Solar Element Stove, was considered the best among the lot. Team Ted from the Federal University of Agriculture, Makurdi and Team Quester from the University of Jos, were adjudged third and second, respectively.

Engr. Wabote promised that the Board will send the top teams to the UNICORN Incubation Campus to further refine their innovations into compelling businesses. He said the Board will continue to support R&D and innovation as they held the key to national development.

The winning team of the STIC 2020 competition received a ₦10 million grant with business incubation;

first runner-up team got ₦4 million and business incubation, while second runner-up team got ₦1.5 million. Faculty Guides were not left out in the recognitions. The faculty guide for the winning team was awarded ₦750,000 with Apple Mac laptop while the first runner-up took home ₦500,000 and the second runner-up got ₦250,000.


And the icing on the cake: The winning institution will get a fully equipped research and development centre.

In the past few years, young Nigerians have achieved great feats in the technology space, creating innovative products that have attracted the attention of technology giants and players across the globe. The accomplishments of Flutterwave, among several others, are just a scratch on the surface of the goldmine of talents abundant among Nigerian youths.

Judging from the keen interest shown by undergraduates across the country and the commitment of the NCDMB and Enactus Nigeria, there is every hope that the Nigerian Content Science Technology Innovation Challenge (STIC) would propel the next big idea from young Nigerians. ■

-Teleola Oyeleke





The sun was barely up when we began to hear the impatient honking of vehicles and particular Lagos fixture – yellow buses and their conductors reel out, rather incoherently, what routes they were taking.

Although we had left early, my business partner and I prayed to avoid go-slow. That is the way Lagos is - even the most random occurrences, anything from traffic lights to sympathetic onlookers on the scene of an accident, could result in a major gridlock. Listening to the morning news on our favourite radio station and updating our social media handles, we killed time as our driver navigated the treacherous stretch of road from Yaba, on the Lagos Mainland, to the Third Mainland Bridge. Manchester United had lost to Villarreal via penalties, COVID-19 was still a real threat and local politics was still full of the peculiar Nigerian doses of the unexpected. The driver, consulting his Google maps, ensured we came out unscathed. By the time we arrived at our destination, the sun was already shining brightly

My only thought as we checked in, was how perfect this place was to unwind in, after a long week at work. There were specialised menus and hot water. We had a quick meal of baked beans, sausage, toast and scrambled eggs, putting our feet up and listening to Burna Boy. South of our location, was the Atlantic. The proximity to the water meant that you could sense the ocean, taste it in the air.

It was a good day to escape. Our getaway (if you have not guessed) was Lakowe Lakes Golf and Country Estate. Located at KM 35, Lekki-Epe Expressway, Ibeju Lekki, Lagos, the stunning expanse of land and water was a sight to behold.

"This place," my business partner tweeted, "is practically an oasis at the edge of the fast-moving metropolis." I retweeted her thoughts and smiled to myself. Knowing how introverted she was, her enthusiasm had a novel feel to it. Even though I had visited once, briefly, I appreciated how, upon entering, one realises how it is much different from the realities of day-to-day Èkó living.

The first thing you will notice as your car sweeps through the gates is the greenery: well-manicured grass, well-trimmed trees. If the atmosphere could elicit a visible joyful reaction from my business partner whose entire knowledge of golf began and ended with Tiger Woods and his extramarital scandal, the picturesque setting and tranquility could elicit a positive reaction from anyone.

The manager, with whom I had spoken on the phone, was delighted to welcome us. On a whim, my partner had asked if her pet pooch would be allowed on the course. The manager was sad to let us know Lakowe has a strict no pets' policy. Currently, however, the man was trying hard to ensure we were satisfied with everything else. "It's built on eighty-two hectares of green," he beamed. "Surrounded by interconnected man-made lakes that make it the first of its kind in Nigeria." Idly, I wondered how many times he had said that to visitors.

The corporate accommodation and vacation rentals were available for booking online - we did ours at www.spcebook.com. The prices ranged from ₦86,000 per night for the studio cottage, to ₦201,500 per night

for the four-bedroom apartment. It helped that we booked way ahead of time; it was either that or a weekday visit; the weekend being always busy. Strictly observing the rules of social distancing, we watched other families in sports gear come and go, while final arrangements were made for our stay.

When we were done, we walked down a sturdy bridge overlooking the famous 55-hectare Lakowe Lake. From where we stood, we could see people enjoying boat rides and folks fishing. The bridge led directly to a row of quaint houses surrounded by green and flowering plants.

Balinese inspired Cottages and Spa

From the palm trees to the colourful birds chirping nearby, the cottages looked absolutely beautiful outside! Inside, the living spaces provided facilities such as 24-hour electricity, air conditioning, mind-blowing natural vistas, tea and coffee makers, flat screen television sets, mini-fridges and full access to complimentary services.

My only thought as we checked in, was how perfect this place was to unwind in, after a long week at work. There were specialised menus and hot water. We had a quick meal of baked beans, sausage, toast and scrambled eggs, putting our feet up and listening to Burna Boy. South of our location, was the Atlantic. The proximity to the water meant that you could sense the ocean, taste it in the air.

A short way off, the deep hue of the lake became the poetic song of light that played upon its wind-dancing ruffles. We were able to see the Obudu villas with the two bedroom apartments and garden views; the Villa Bella— premium four bedrooms with contemporary architectural style and minimal ornamentation, as well as The Cove.





Later on, we would try our hands at golf. For ₦15,000, you could get professional lessons. For a membership, however, you would have to pay US\$5,000 annually or its equivalent in Naira. A bit on the high side, but totally worth it in an 18-hole international championship golf course. Our self-appointed instructor was keen on teaching us about stances.

For the record, setting up a perfect golf stance is one of the most important pre-shot routines for any golfer. There seemed to be a lot of ‘Do not’s’ flying around: do not talk during someone’s backswing; do not walk through someone else’s line (that is the line from their ball to the hole); do not hit the ball into the group ahead of you; do not get angry after every shot that is not perfect; do not play difficult courses or from difficult tees until you are ready; aim, don’t just swing. Between his demonstrations and gesticulations, he could very easily have passed for a motivational speaker.

I did as I was told - 10-finger grip. Symmetrical posture. Draw an imaginary line from your left pectoral muscle straight to the floor... And boom! The ball flew 273 yards right in the centre of the fairway – do not even get me started with the sound echoing in the vast green. “You should take lessons from a professional,” our instructor said before he swanned off. “With time, you can get your golf game on point, or on tee!” That last bit was clever and it made us laugh.

Golf is a difficult sport at first, one has to be persistent to really learn it. Because of the coronavirus pandemic, we had to bring our own water bottles as we were not sure if the carts would be equipped with water coolers. But they were! At Lakowe, they paid special attention to visitors and tried to make sure there was less contact with other people than had been allowed pre-COVID-19.

More than the green

We quit playing after a while as the sun was beginning to bear down fiercely. Heat-induced exhaustion and heat stroke are real. One should not risk either for a round of golf.

As my business partner and I hopped into the golf cart, I smiled to myself. This is the perfect place for an executive to get away from all the stress of work. In this expanse of greens, there were more shades than anyone could ever name. Yet, here they were for any appreciative soul to see. The land stretched on as though time and space were conjoined, undulating through the ages as much as to the horizon. Over it was laid a path, one that branched through the open landscape, leading back to our cottage. I hopped out and began to walk there, a frisson of joy in my steps for all the choices to come, each one of them laden with discoveries. ■

Hannu Afere is a poet and author based in Lagos.



With COVID-19 receding

It's time to bring back team bonding

Bonding in the workplace has taken several steps backwards with remote working. Now that workers are returning to offices, HR practitioners must fashion out ways to recreate bonds for greater productivity.

Ask the average HR professionals and eight out of 10 will likely tell you that the most difficult part of their job is maintaining a healthy and highly productive workforce. A consistently productive workforce is a function of motivation. There are several ways a workforce could be motivated: good remuneration, adequate working tools, work ethics and flexibility, team spirit/bonding, among others.

Team spirit or developing healthy relationships in the workplace has been identified as critical to business success, and rightly so. Team spirit or bonding has been known to break workplace barriers, such as petty jealousy, unnecessary prejudices, tensions, and the silo, I'm-alone-here attitude while helping to nurture mutual respect, empathy, teamwork and the willingness to help others.

Team spirit is simply that feeling, the knowledge a worker has that his colleagues have his back. Developing such a feeling comes from constant interactions among employees, with informal team engagements outside the workplace, such as sporting or social activities identified as being most effective for workplace team bonding.

A research by the Social Issues Research Centre in the United Kingdom showed that "sport ...can have a positive impact on boosting morale and improving mood, motivation and productivity in the working environment." Coach Adewunmi Aderemi, who once coached First Bank's female basket team, puts some perspective on the research. "There's a euphoria, a less guarded attitude that outdoor sporting activities seem to unlock in participants that make such activities beneficial, particularly for corporate organisations. Out in the open, taking part in a sport,

people feel more relaxed and are able to interact freely," he says.

Smart organisations have realised this and have incorporated informal team bonding sessions into their operations to help the workforce know one another beyond the nameplate. Outdoor team building activities help organisations to achieve two things: build a fit and healthy workforce and create friendships, both of which are great for productivity.

Unfortunately, the poor security situation in the country, with kidnapping, robbery and other crimes on the rise, has dampened the enthusiasm for outdoor workplace team activities. People are increasingly becoming withdrawn, due to escalating insecurity, suspicious of the next person and thus are wary to build relationships even at work. Then the Coronavirus pandemic struck, further compounding outdoor team engagements.

A sports psychologist and lecturer, Joshua Umeifekwem, however, believes organisations can still tap into the benefits of staff sporting activities by being "more creative in the planning while ensuring security concerns are built into such activities". As COVID-19 restrictions gradually ease, HR managers must start developing exciting outdoor team activities for employees. The rule of thumb here is for a business to develop an outdoor activity that aligns with the prevailing interest areas among its workers. So, for instance, a company with many youthful workers who take active interest in football will be smart to develop an outdoor team activity around football. Or a firm with a strong female contingent of fashionistas will be mindful to develop a team activity that reflects such pervasive interest. Below, we have highlighted some interesting outdoor activities that are likely to energise a workforce.

Outdoors



Football (5-A-side)

It is a no brainer that football will be a great idea for a team-building exercise. A greater majority of Nigerians, old and young, male and female, are avid football lovers. Go to a typical office on a Monday and you are likely to catch a whiff of argument and analysis on the weekend matches across European leagues. Organise a 5-A-side league for the company, with different departments or regions, if the business is pan-Nigeria, competing against each other. Football is a great leveller.

Sports meet

This encompasses all games. It would be the Olympics of the company, which takes care of whatever sporting passion is prevalent in the company: football, basketball, volleyball, swimming, card or board games like scrabble, checkers, and chess, among others. It would be a day or two when the business rents the Yakubu Gowon Stadium in Port Harcourt, for instance, or the Godswill Akpabio International Stadium, Uyo, to engage in the sporting meet.



A picnic party

Nigerians love good music, good dining experience and they love to dance. Creating a picnic party for team bonding will not be a bad idea. The party may even double as a talent show, where the workers are encouraged to showcase their talents, be it painting, singing, spoken word poetry, dancing, juggling things, magic, name it. A cultural attire display session can be featured to spice things up. Any good park or garden in the city can host this.

Mini-stadium

An organisation with a large expanse of land can create its own stadium where as many sporting facilities as can be incorporated are built, and maybe twice a month, or whatever timing suits the organisation, the workers meet at the venue for sports.

The human resource managers in the oil and gas industry, particularly, certainly have their work cut out as they balance team building activities with positive effects on productivity against insecurity and its corrosive nature on workers and productivity.



FNB DESIGNS

Partnership delivering unique Nigerian fashion to a global audience

Johnbosco Ahuama and Udo Frank Amanze, co-owners of FNB Designs, a leading fashion house based in Abuja, belie the claim that partnerships rarely work in Nigeria. The partnership is not only working, it is in the forefront of evolving Nigerian fashion, delivering unique wears to a global market.

As a powerful influencer, fashion has continued to control not only the way we dress but our overall attitude as well. The craft, it appears, has become more daring as the industry competitively makes bold statements, enabling fashionistas to freely express their styles. In Nigeria, fashion is a unifier of people and ethnicities, as it blurs the established thinking of how the various tribes dress.

Abuja-based FNB Designs is arguable at the forefront pushing Nigeria's evolving fashion industry to new frontiers. Its collections are sought after in Abuja and well beyond the Federal Capital Territory. Since its launch in 2009, the label has been pushing the boundaries of ethnic cohesion, exploring the country's rich cultural heritage, owing to its firm belief in the aesthetic and sustainability values of local fabrics. These talented youngsters, once course mates at Abia State University, Uturu, joined forces to pursue their entrepreneurial dream – to become iconic clothiers.

Shared bonds

Like two peas in a pod, theirs is a meeting of minds occasioned by mutual affinity for style and the resolve to promote local content by making bold statements through creative traditional wears. How did they catch this vision? "Our designs came into existence at a time when Dr. Goodluck Jonathan was the President of Nigeria. The President and his entire cabinet members, including senators and members of the House of Representatives, were on a mission to showcase Nigeria to the world. They wore their traditional attires everywhere and anywhere. This provided an opportunity for every creative designer to tailor traditional outfits to modern-day formal wears," says FNB.

This friendship forged over the years, which metamorphosed into partnership, dates back to their undergraduate days as course mates. The magnet was their shared interests - style and fashion, which later played a significant role in the



berthing of FnB Designs.

Says Frank: "I read in a style magazine that 'A person without a style rarely sticks to the mind'. This changed my perception about life and stuck with me. Ever since, I have lived by that rule.

Bosco, on his part, says: "I grew up in a place I consider the fashion production hub of Nigeria, which is Aba in Abia State. By default, my love for looking good was never cut short; my style turned heads on campus, opening doors and conversations, even with strangers. Within a short while, I had become a fashion consultant for many of my new friends."

The Abia State indigene added: "Frank and I were course mates and had become close friends due to our common lifestyle and interests in fashion. So when we graduated and moved to Abuja to find something to do before the Youth Service in 2010, the rate of enquiries and interests in our personal outfits became more frequent. This set of new friends and strangers were willing and ready to pay for the service. At that point, we realised we could actually build a successful career in the fashion and design industry."

Evolving African fashion led by Nigeria

"We know the challenges African menswear fashion lovers face with their tailors," says the FnB partners. "We came with the commitment to end those challenges, bringing sanity to the Nigerian fashion industry and making the industry respected once more. Luckily for us, there has been other professionals contributing their quota to making fashion designs business an enviable career path."

Operating in Nigeria has not been a walk in the park, but FnB seems to have been overcoming the hurdles. The partners shared their positive story on the reception of the brand since the label was launched, saying their designs have received lots of positive reception from people of style. "Our designs have been well accepted at every level. The fashion industry has evolved so much that among every 10 young people you talk to, many have an interest in going into the fashion business or already working on it."

As consumer taste and aspirations change, with many more people tending towards cultural proclivity, designers have been on the search for more creative ways of meeting local demands and invariably improving customer satisfactions. The ever-changing industry demands, says FnB, have significantly driven Nigerians' affinity for traditional wears. "Africans, home and abroad, including some foreigners, have come to love African attires so much and Nigeria is at the forefront of its production and marketing. We are a customer-focused industry. We consider what the people want first before considering the industry

because without the people, there won't be any industry."

Nigerian fabrics going into uncharted territories

As the focus on Nigerian textiles by international luxury industry grows, FnB believes this provides a huge opportunity for socio-economic growth in the country. "This is like a dream come true for FnB Designs, because we visualised this a long time ago, worked and are still working for it. International collaborations are expected and this earns the Nigerian economy some gains in the foreign exchange market," say the partners.

The co-owners believe fabrics are an integral part of creative designs and every label requires mental alertness and concentration. "Fabrics are the most integral part of our job. Sourcing fabrics is usually a serious mental work: You need concentration to feel, visualise an outfit, visualise various body frames and imagine current regional weather conditions, amongst other factors," they say.

The partners noted that Nigerian textiles have become the rave in high fashion and are much appreciated for their aesthetic and sustainability. "Nigerian fabrics and African prints have been making fashion statements across the globe and so many fashion influencers in the global scenes have been filmed rocking this fabrics and prints. Personally, I love the *adire* fabric due to its complexity and richness in cultural prints, easily customisable. They can also be used to sew any attire you can think of," says Frank.

Digital media, particularly the social media, have undoubtedly played significant roles in the development of the fashion industry. FnB believes the new media is the life of fashion business today. The world we live in today is more alive in the social space than it is in reality and the fashion industry evolves with the revolution.

For designers in Nigeria, social media bridges the significant distance between labels and their customers; importantly, it showcases Nigerian fashion to a market that hitherto would have been impossible to reach.

There is undoubtedly pressure on designers to always produce and showcase their greatest collections. The duo, however, counsels aspiring label owners to be a lot more circumspect. "It is good to have a great season, a great year or a great decade, but what's more important is to have a great life. Our advice to younger designers or fashion entrepreneurs in Nigeria is to focus on creating quality and timeless collections, putting their customers first and the runways second." ■



"Africans, home and abroad, including some foreigners, have come to love African attires so much and Nigeria is at the forefront of its production and marketing. We are a customer-focused industry. We consider what the people want first before considering the industry because without the people, there won't be any industry."



The African Giant

with a Grammy in the bag

Born Damini Ebunoluwa Ogulu, Burna Boy, aged 29, is one of the most recognisable vocalists from the African continent. With his unique Afro-fusion sound sampled by superstars like Drake, Fallout Boy, Beyoncé, Sam Smith and others, it is impossible to deny just how impactful and influential his music has become.

His music became a pop-culture staple after *Like to Party*, the lead single off his 2012 album, shot him into the limelight. Since then, he has amassed an impressive discography, releasing iconic albums like *African Giant* and *Twice as Tall*, winning a Grammy for the latter and a nomination for the former. He was even featured on the playlist for Joe Biden's inauguration!

Burna Boy is a true artiste. He strives to create honest and original sounds, free of the repetitive lyrics plaguing some other Nigerian musicians. It is easy to figure out the fuel behind his supernova, his electric performances, the way he stridently defends his art against criticism or seeming disrespectful font sizes.

Burna Boy revels in the magic of music-making, in the hype machine that has bestowed him with superstatus. He, like every great artiste before him, has figured that art gives the artiste a boon nothing else can, immortality. That arrogance bleeds through his work into constant controversy some fear might adversely affect his career. But Burna Boy is either unaware of the worried whispers or in true Burna fashion, simply does not care.

He embraces his Nigerianess and wears it as a badge of honour and, why not? It is a billboard to the world that for every iota of international recognition he has got, he has put in the work equivalent. It is a rallying cry to Nigerians and other Africans that greatness is achievable. ■

MUSIC

Feeling - Ladipoe Ft Buju

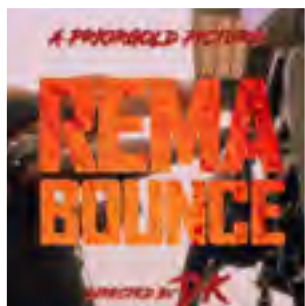
Ladipoe's tongue-in-cheek Andre Vitez-produced track is a confident, smooth, and slow hip-hop medley with controversial crooner Buju. Together, they create a beautiful melody. On it, he stresses the relaxed feeling the song sinks into the listeners through carefree lyrics and a melodic hook. He speaks to a generation that has turned relaxing into an art.

Coming off hit singles, like *Know You* featuring Simi and Rap Messiah, Ladipoe has slid smoothly into his comfort zone with this song. His sign with Mavin, a record label dedicated to creating unique sounds for their artists, is working in his favour. ■

**Bounce – Rema**

Produced by Don Jazzy and infused with the very catchy South African amapiano sound, this song has become an anthem on Nigerian streets and clubs.

This earworm devolves into heady hedonism that leaves its listeners with the urge to shake *something* regardless of whether or not this song comes on in the comfort of one's home, in the office or middle of the weekly shopping at a crowded supermarket aisle. It is a bold move for Rema who is not a stranger to a bit of vulgarity to mature a bit musically on this track while keeping things essentially Rema. ■

**Bad Dancer - Johnny Drille**

Drille has constantly impressed with his top-notch vocals and this soulful ballad is no different. His smooth vocals and lyrical prowess shine through once again, making this nostalgic love song worth a repeat to listen to. With his album release imminent in the middle of the year, Drille teases with this impeccable single, assuring his fans that he will surpass the expected quality.

Bad Dancer is a soothing oasis of sound that is proof of Drille's statement when he claimed *Bad Dancer* is the best love song of this year. And it really just might be. ■

**Five others**

- **Away** - Ayra Starr
Mavin sweetheart impresses with this Louda-produced single. It is short, sweet and surreal.
- **Focus** - Joeboy
Since the release of his first single,

Joeboy has been a steady hit maker. This is no different as he urges his love to tell him how she feels.

- **Early Momo** - Vector Ft Good Girl LA
This is a cozy love song with soothing melodies. It is very sensual and

the chemistry between the singers is through the roof.

- **Calling My Phone** - Lil Tjay and 6lack
While 6lack has been a force in the music industry, Lil Tjay was a beautiful surprise on this song. ■



Jenifa

Finding the money in comedy

In 2008, when Olufunke Ayotunde Akindele-Bello starred in *Jenifa*, the movie, she might not have guessed that the movie and franchise that would follow less than a decade after would turn her into a comedic tour de force in the Nigerian entertainment industry. Funke Akindele was born in Ikorodu, Lagos State, on 24 August 1977 and got her first acting job on a popular sitcom, *I Need to Know*. She has starred in a number of Yoruba films before finding her big break in the movie, which is based on a village girl trying to fit into a very urban university.

Not only did that role earn her the Best Actress in a leading role award at the African Movie Academy Award, it birthed the franchise of *Jenifa's Diary*, one of Nigeria's most watched and longest-running comedic series. Funke Akindele is brilliant in her use of not only slapstick comedy, the staple of most Nigerian comedic movies, but more subtle humour to deal with the serious issues the show has focused on over the years.

She successfully made the switch from acting in predominantly Yoruba movies to big cinema releases, refining her image on and off the screen. Now, when audiences think of Funke Akindele, it is with a mental image of refined class, subtle and witty humour and one of the titans of Nollywood.

Some of her other notable movies include *Chief Daddy*, *Return of Jenifa*, *Your Excellency*, *Who's the Boss*, *Isoken*, *Omo Ghetto* and *Omo Ghetto: The Saga*.

The secret to her success? Talent, hard work and consistency. Funke has put in the best in doing her work, delivering stellar performance after stellar performance to the point that her name can, and has pulled millions of viewers, to the cinema. It is certainly no surprise that she has taken her expertise behind the camera as the CEO of Scene One Film Production.

Funke has changed the way audiences view comedic movies in Nigeria by proving that humour can be a blend of subtle and overt, as audiences appreciate both. After all, *Omo Ghetto: The Saga* is the highest-grossing Nollywood movie, beating *The Wedding Party* that held the record for four years.

Funke Akindele-Bello is proof that humble beginnings are no match for determination and persistence. She has proven that comediennees can be savvy businesswomen who are unafraid to stand head and shoulders above the limitations of the industry. ■



Ponzi

When a poor Nigerian neighbourhood welcomes an American returnee, the son of the local chief, he decides to take advantage of their gullibility by introducing them to a shady Ponzi scheme. After the neighbourhood has been successfully duped, two men come up with a plan to break into the Chief's house to steal back what was stolen from them.

Ponzi leverages on the still fresh memories of MMM and uses comedy to teach moving lessons about financial responsibility and how never to be a victim of a Ponzi scheme. It does help that the theme song of the film is pretty catchy. ■



My Village People

My Village People is a hilarious take on the "village people" trope popular in Nigerian pop culture. Bovi plays the role of Prince, who travels to his rustic village for his sister's wedding and finds himself the subject of a love triangle between the witches of his village and the marine kingdom.

This movie is fantasy; it does not try to take itself too seriously. It is a smooth ride filled with exaggerated mishaps and a star-studded cast in comfortable and comforting roles. This is a feel-good and stress-free movie. ■



Ayinla

Jadesola Osiberu-produced *Ayinla* follows the life of iconic *apala* musician and titular character, Ayinla Omowura. It chronicles his journey to find fame, his brutal murder at the hands of his trusted manager and his deep-seated love for his craft.

Ayinla seeks to remind us of the often forgotten colourful stories that make up our cultural identities as Nigerians, doing so with a beautiful, suspenseful story masterfully portrayed by the talented Lateef Adedimeji. ■

And More...

- **Mamba's Diamond** - Two incompetent thieves are on the run for their lives after accidentally stealing the world's most expensive diamond in a carjacking gone wrong.
- **Mimi** - A girl is taught a lesson in humility after her adoptive parents send her to spend two weeks in the slums living with her biological parents.
- **Silent Murder** - The lives and struggles of everyday people are changed for the better through acts of kindness and love for a better society.
- **The Fate of Alakada** - After sneaking into a movie premiere, they successfully con a Lagos socialite into believing they are party planners with access to celebrities. Yetunde must now plan the party of the season with no experience.
- **Lockdown** - Six strangers are forced into a 21-day lockdown at Life Care Hospital after a pandemic begins. Chaos and mayhem ensue. ■

Africa's Nobel Laureate as the conscience of a people

Wole Soyinka has been a force and a revolutionary voice in the African and global literary space for decades. He won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1986 and catapulted his art into the mainstream, a prize some argued was politically motivated. But, was it?

Prof. Soyinka is a visionary writer who has crafted flawless works of art, traversing the genres of prose, drama and poetry. He often tackled themes, such as colonialism, public service and democracy in a bold, sometimes, satirical tone while balancing the political commentary cleverly disguised in his works with a light-hearted and brilliant narrative style. Politically motivated or not, Wole Soyinka's longevity has proven his mettle and shown his art deserving of the highest possible recognition.

Soyinka is no stranger to activism. With someone like Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti as an aunt, it runs in the family. The Nobel Laureate has been a vocal opposition to colonialism, dictatorship in African countries and abuse of power. He uses his essays, protest dramas and even speeches as a

rallying cry to Nigerians and Africans to recognise their common enemy, the military governments bent on filling the shoes of the colonial masters. He has been in and out of prisons, even sentenced to death in absentia. Despite the challenges and sacrifices, he still advocates for a democratic and thriving Africa today.

Some of his more notable works include *The Lion and the Jewel* (1959) where he explores the conflict of Western ideologies versus African traditions; *The Trials of Brother Jero* (1960), which tackles a false prophet with propensity for womanising; *Death and the King's Horseman* (1975), a critically acclaimed drama about the disruption of tradition by colonialist; *Kongi's Harvest* (1963) and *King Baabu* (2001), among many other plays, collections of poetry, memoirs and mini-autobiographies.

In the last few years, Africa's first Nobel Laureate has made some often misunderstood statements. These do not, however, detract from his legacy. Like all great artistes, behind the great works and the legend lies a man who has proven over and over again that he has his people's best interests at heart. ■





The Will to Win – Dotun Adeganmbi

An established public relations guru, a former editor of *Business Times*, and an award-winning business journalist, there is no one more qualified to tell the story of Biodun Olushina Shobanjo, Chairman of Troyka Holdings and Nigeria's leading marketing communications firm, better known as advertising czar.

authoritative biography follows the seemingly ordinary beginnings of Biodun Shobanjo to his meteoric rise in the world of advertising and business. This book unravels the mystery of the man behind the legend and gives insight into the ideologies of a titan in the Nigerian advertising industry, in addition to the challenges and rewards of doing business in Nigeria. ■

Published by Havilah Books, this

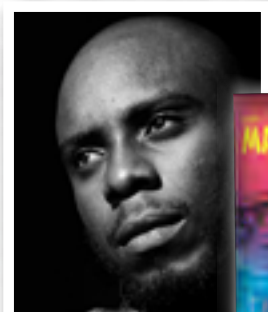


Chronicles from the Land of the Happiest People on Earth – Wole Soyinka

Wole Soyinka's first fiction in four decades, he once again tackles tricky themes, like friendship, betrayal, religion, hope set in modern-day Nigeria. This 524-page novel is a masterfully told tale of four friends who plan to change their nation, the dramatic and often processes of friendship, and their brushes with the influential

members of society.

This engaging read uses humour and unforgettable characters to weave a beguiling plot, drawing the reader on a rollercoaster ride that has everything, from satire to a whodunit. This book is entertaining from the first page to the last. ■



The Madhouse – TJ Benson

This hypnotic narrative sweeps across from the African continent to Amsterdam in Europe, telling a tale of deep familial love and deep familial distrust. Andre and Max, two brothers who share dreams and their complicated parents, live in a mysterious house at the end of a lane. With each chapter twisting time, a slow pace and a rhythmic nar-

rative, the author effortlessly infuses surrealism into a simple tale, evoking a deep feeling of melancholia, set against the backdrop of tumultuous Nigeria in the 70s.

This unputdownable read is an alluring and a sensory feast. ■

And many more...

Son of the Storm – Suyi Davies Okungbowa

A sweeping high fantasy novel set in a world inspired by colonial Africa, Danso, a gifted scholar, is about to find more than he bargained for.

Remote Control – Nnedi Okorafor

Sankofa is a daughter of death, her touch can kill but does her life and her gifts serve a higher purpose?

Formation: The Making of Nigeria from Jihad to

Amalgamation – Fola Fagbule and Feyi Fawehinmi

It tells the story of Nigeria's beginnings via a series of

very unlikely events, from the conquests of the Jihad to the British amalgamation.

Dear Senthuran – Akwaeke Emezi

A memoir that narrates creativity, the exploration of self-discovery and emancipatory choices as they navigate life, spirituality and love.

Klara and the Sun – Kazuo Ishiguro

An artificial friend who waits to be chosen in a store observes the world go by and learns a few important lessons from humanity. ■

NIGERIAN CONTENT FAQs

Implementation of the Service Level Agreements (SLAs) signed with the Nigeria LNG Limited, Oil Producers Trade Section (OPTS) and the Independent Petroleum Producers Group (IPPG).



Targets set in the NOGICD Act have been exceeded

By Engr. Paul Zuhumben

The Service Level Agreements are among the first things Engr. Simbi Kesiye Wabote introduced to the industry during his first tenure as Executive Secretary of NCDMB to ensure that we shorten the contracting processes in the oil and gas industry. We have implemented them for about four years; they have made great impact. We implemented the SLA with respect to the NLNG Train 7 project. We followed it strictly and we were able to put the contract in place in just about 14 months.

The SLA has been a great success, but it also has some challenges

We have just concluded the Quarter 4 2020 and Quarter 1 2021 reviews with the OPTS group. On the average, our performance within the SLA is that we are almost achieving 85 percent successes. We

have challenges in some of the feedbacks we get and we are working on them. Our aim is 99 percent.

For the IPPG group, we have just started our review for the first quarter of 2021. I can confirm that the SLA have been very good tool that we have used in our interactions in the oil and gas industry. They are reducing our cycle time with respect to documents reviews. It is quite an interesting document, and it is really supporting us. It also helped us greatly during the COVID-19 pandemic because we were able to work within the SLAs' time limit. They have been quite successful, overall.

Matching Nigerian Content performance with the minimum targets set in the NOGICD Act.

Every target is an aspiration. There are some areas where you can find wins. For

NIGERIAN CONTENT FAQs

us, one of those quick wins is in engineering. Prior to the NOGICD Act, the engineering level was quite low in terms of domiciliation; it was around 50 to 60 percent. The NOGICD Act set the target for engineering between 80 and 90 percent, depending on the location, and 50 percent for LNG projects. But if you take the NLNG Train 7 project, we aimed at 55 percent and that was what we got in the tender processes and received the nod for it.

Since the enactment of the NOGICD Act, we have been able to carry out 100 percent of engineering activities in Nigeria. In fact, on the HI project, which has Sunlink Petroleum Limited as the operator and Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) as the technical partners, we just approved the Nigerian Content plan and it is 100 percent engineering in Nigeria. Also, for fabrication activities, depending on the type of fabrication, we are looking at 50 to 70 percent. For the Total E&P's Ikike project, we set the target at 100 percent and we have achieved 100 percent fabrication in-country.

As mentioned earlier, some of the areas where we have exceeded targets are in engineering and some fabrication activities, depending on the complexity of the project. But you will still see some challenges when it comes to things like galvanising steel structures, depending on the volume and type. This is because we do not have all the required capacities in-country. These are areas we should be looking to improve, in addition to manpower requirement and skills.

We also need improvement in complex technologies and things that need to be manufactured. You must be aware about the paints that were used for the Egina deepwater project. We manufactured the paints here in Nigeria and exported them to South Korea for usage. I do not see any reason why we should import any paints in the oil and gas industry. We are also making inroads in the area of pressure vessels construction in Nigeria and we are winning very fast.

For cables, we have high and low voltage cables that are being produced in-country. The Executive Secretary has made it clear that there should not be importation of cables for activities in the oil and gas industry. Despite the fact that the NOGICD Act targets about 60 percent of number and quantities, we are going for 100 percent. On a general note, Nigerian Content is about systematic development of capacities in both human and material resources. There are several areas where we have exceeded targets and we thank the current Executive Secretary for ensuring that all these things come

to play.

Key activities of PCAD in the ongoing execution of the Train 7 contract

Our key activities were to support the tendering processes up to the award phase. Now that the project has been awarded, what we do presently is to support the Directorate of Monitoring and Evaluation in engaging NLNG to ensure that the agreed targets and the scope of activities that should be domiciled in-country are implemented, that they do not only remain on paper but become successes. Those targets include materials, procurement activities and manning of the project. We also work with the Directorate of Planning Research and Statistics (DPRS) to ensure that the utilisation of labour with respect to Nigerians and expatriates are adhered to, as agreed when the project was planned.

We also support the Capacity Building Division, giving them maximum support for project certification. Remember that we developed the Nigerian Content plan; they need our support for interpretation to ensure that we have a successful project execution in respect to Nigerian Content targets that were agreed upon.

NLNG Train 7 project will create huge opportunities for Nigerians

The number of Nigerians that will be on this Train 7 project will be huge. One of the major targets of the Federal Government is job creation. If you look at what is happening at Train 7, in terms of Nigerian Content Act, you cannot compare it with what happened from Trains 1 to 6. There would be more fabrication in-country and many welders will be utilised; the percentage of engineering activities has increased and more engineers will be engaged. It is going to create a lot of opportunities for several contractors as well as provide jobs.

The project would involve local vendors, sub-contractors of Nigerian origin and many artisans. It would be huge and that will stimulate the economy, keeping people busy as well as have an impact on the GDP of the country.

Apart from the direct jobs, there will be indirect impact as people will need food, accommodation and other things. The project will stimulate the economy in the right direction.

Key activities of PCAD since 2021

Year 2021 is unique, especially with the COVID-19 pandemic regressing in Nigeria and globally. Our major activities for the year is to ensure that we adhere strictly to the SLAs, working

with the IOCs to ensure that tenders are completed within six months, which is the target given to us by the Minister of State for Petroleum Resources. We are also looking at major projects like HI. We will continue to support the project. We are almost concluding the commercial phase and we are expecting that this will be concluded quickly by Sunlink Petroleum and Shell to ensure that we have a project in place that will have a lot of activities that keep fabrication yards and Nigerian economy busy again. We will continue to support Bonga South West, which is another project from Shell. We have been in the commercial phase. My department will continue to support that project because it has a huge potential to stimulate the industry.

We are also looking at HA, which is another project from Shell. We are at the technical stage, looking forward to concluding that process so that we can have a project in place. Bonga North West is another project coming up for Shell. We will continue to work with Shell to ensure that we complete the Front-End Engineering Design (FEED) and move into the other stages in order to keep the industry busy.

There are operations and maintenance projects, contracts that are being put in place. Existing assets have to continue producing to keep the country going. We will continue to work with the Independent Petroleum Producers Group (IPPG) and the OPTS group to ensure that most operating and maintenance contracts as well as tenders that are put in place are completed within the stipulated contract time of six months, and that is part of the SLA to ensure that most of these are being tracked.

We will continue to support Total E&P for the Ikeki project, ensuring that vendor review and upgrades are done quickly so that we get our first oil from it and the country starts earning income from the project. As you know, our focus is to ensure that all requests that are coming, in terms of tenders, are put in place in reasonable time. We

intend also to work with the National Petroleum Investment Management Services (NAPIMS). Where there are challenges, we will sit down and sort them out quickly.

The Executive Secretary is very particular about that. Remember, we are the only government organisation that has told clients that if they do not hear from us after a certain period, they can take it as a yes. PCAD is the only Division that helps the Board achieve this pledge in respect of tenders and we will continue to ensure that the targets being set by the Minister and the Executive Secretary for short contracting cycle are achieved.

How PCAD delivers on its mandate despite working virtually

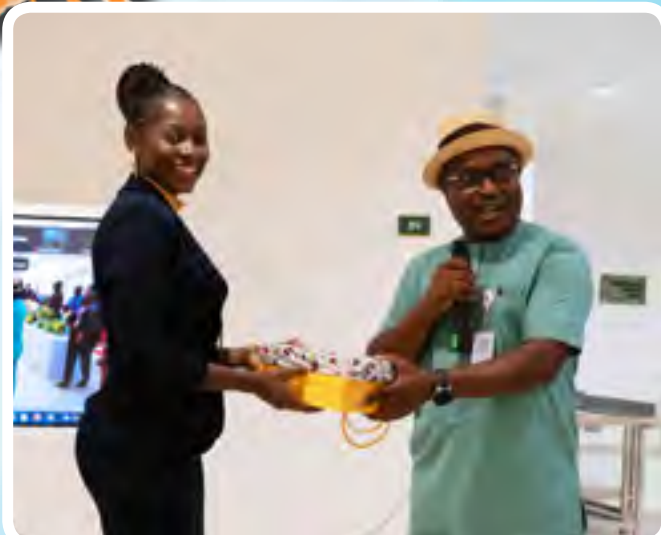
We are quite thankful for the present leadership of the Board. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, NCDMB's management strengthened the ICT infrastructure. PCAD capitalised on this, even before the pandemic, such that most of our activities were handled virtually. During the pandemic, we discovered that our efficiency and effectiveness improved because the ICT infrastructure was in place already. We continued to support the industry throughout the period. We have made a lot of improvements, such that most of our meetings, our participation and evaluations of tenders are done online.

That has been working very well. By so doing, we have a few number of staff coming for the essential services while others work from their homes to support the industry in terms of tender evaluation, review of documents and ensuring that set targets are met. I can assure you that the COVID-19 pandemic and the present way of working virtually is not impacting negatively on our identifying the right targets and making sure they are implemented on projects and tenders. ■

Engr. Paul Zuhumben is General Manager, Projects Certification and Authorisation Division (PCAD), NCDMB.

Nigerian Content is about systematic development of capacities in both human and material resources. There are several areas where we have exceeded targets and we thank the current Executive Secretary for ensuring that all these things come to play.

Enhancement Programme



Mrs. Blessing Kenneth of the Planning, Research and Statistics (PRS) Directorate, receiving an award as the **Overall Best Participant** in the Officers Career Enhancement Programme, Batch 005 from Mr. Partick Daziba Obah, Director, PRS Directorate.



Senior staff of NCDMB, with their facilitators after completing the Chief Officers' Transition Programme (COTP) organised by the NNPC Leadership Academy in Abuja, April, 2021.



Participants in the NCDMB Officers' Career Enhancement Programme (OCEP) Batch 005 (Great Achievers) with their facilitators, after completing the programme organised by the NNPC Leadership Academy in Abuja, March, 2021.



Female participants in the NCDMB Officers Career Enhancement Programme, Batch 005 with management staff at the closing ceremony of the Officers Career Enhancement Programme, Batch 005.



Male participants in the NCDMB Officers Career Enhancement Programme, Batch 005 with management staff at the closing ceremony of the Officers Career Enhancement Programme, Batch 005.

Promotion



*Barr. Umar Mohammed Babangida has been confirmed as the **Director, Legal Services, NCDMB** with effect from May 01, 2021. Prior to his promotion, Barr. Umar was the Acting Director, Legal Services in the Directorate of Legal Services.*



Sabbatical leave

Prof. Donbebe Solomon Wankasi joined the Board in 2021 on sabbatical leave. He served previously as the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Administration at the Niger Delta University (NDU) Bayelsa State. He is presently working in the Planning, Research and Statistics (PRS) Directorate of the NCDMB.

Obituary



Barr. David Ikenna Okagbue, Manager, Litigation, Enforcement and Compliance (LEC) in the Directorate of Legal Services of the Board passed on March 04, 2021 after a brief illness. He was buried on April 16, 2021 at Okagbue's Residence in Onitsha, Anambra State. Late Okagbue joined the Board in October 2011 as a Supervisor in the Legal Directorate and worked on various projects.

May His gentle soul rest in the bosom of our Lord.



POLICY



How we attracted Aker Solutions Subsea Training Centre

By Akintunde Adelana

Role of Monitoring and Evaluation in Nigerian Content development

The Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development (NOGICD) Act and the Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB) are both children of necessity. They came up because of obvious gaps between the global requirements of the oil and gas industry, in terms of skill, competencies, equipment, infrastructure, facilities and assets and what is available in the country. As a result, a law was enacted to address the deficiencies. The name was arranged to reflect this line of thought because you need to develop and close the gaps before you talk about monitoring and compliance.

Closely related to development is evaluation. We must do all the data gathering and analysis to reveal if we need more petroleum engineers, inspectors, surveyors, drillers, divers, ROVs, or we need to establish facilities in-country. You must evaluate to establish trends and demand profile. Following that, you can then point to some areas that still have gaps based on findings, analysis, evaluation, interaction with the industry and feedback.

Key activities of the Directorate of Monitoring and Evaluation in recent past

COVID- 19 pandemic disrupted activities worldwide. But there was never a gap in NCDMB's activities. We quickly adjusted our business model. Under the leadership of the Executive Secretary, we introduced the Crisis Management Team; we met every day. Our first focus was on the welfare of our staff because the pandemic was killing people and we wanted to guaranty the safety of our staff and continually educate them to follow the laid down protocols and guidelines.

The second was business continuity. How do we continue to ensure that we run our business unhindered. The third focus was on what we do to support the government and the community where we operate. Before then, we had long embraced technology, so working virtually was not new to us. It was just a matter of activating what was on ground. We started utilising the virtual platforms to have our meetings, to interact

with the industry. We were ahead of the industry. Many of them were shut down completely. We were working and continually knocking on their doors.

For monitoring, we were also involved in trainings; we converted some of them to virtual trainings. We did candidates' selection virtually. We carried out a few inspections virtually. It might not have been perfect but it guaranteed continuity at that point in time.

It was also during the lockdown that we secured the Final Investment Decision for NLNG Train 7. It was also this period the result of the assessment of Ministries Departments and Agencies was released and NCDMB rose from 27 among 58 agencies in the country to Number Three. We commenced the planning of the Nigeria Oil and Gas Opportunity Fair 2021, which is a biannual event. Unlike many other events that were completely canceled, we decided that we will not miss this year's edition.

The development of the Aker Solution Subsea Academy did not stop. We were able to carry out the physical inspection of the facilities frequently while observing all the protocols. And in August or thereabout, we will commission the facilities.

Within that same period, we were able to utilise our third-party monitoring vendors, who were able to do a lot of desktop analysis for us. That was an opportunity to look at our documents and carry out further analysis. We also took time to review our in-house processes and rejig them where necessary, ready for when the world would open. On behalf of the Board, we were also involved in the National Gas Expansion Programme. We are going to be deploying in three states: Katsina, Bayelsa and Ebonyi. All the equipment are under construction in Nigeria.

Delivering the first-ever virtual NOGOF

We were convinced that we could hold NOGOF. The next thing we considered was how to do it and the methodology. At a point, we considered having a physical event, hoping that the restrictions would have eased by the date we chose. Later, we considered a hybrid with some parts of the activities holding in Bayelsa, with physical exhibi-

tion. We concluded that the only thing that could be guaranteed was carrying out a 100 percent virtual event. At that point, we began to talk about technology, what tool we could deploy to make it happen.

We began by identifying the show-stoppers - the things that could go wrong. If we do it virtually, what are the benefits of virtual over physical? With the virtual event, we did not have to worry about the complexity of logistics, accommodation, among others. That gave us more time to focus on the event proper. On the day before the event, we created two situation rooms, one was in Lagos and the other in Abuja. We chose those two locations because of internet reliability. I had to lead from the front. I was there with the technical team to ensure we were able to reach out to all the key stakeholders, the speakers, delegates and the sponsors. We reached them days before and minutes before each of the events, through telephone and all available technology. I also believe that we were lucky. We held a 100 percent virtual NOGOF, which was state-of-the-art and globally acknowledged as one of the most successful events all around.

Benefits of the Aker Solutions Subsea Training Centre

The Aker Solutions Project is not the first of its kind in NCDMB's history. We have had the FPSO Integration Yard at the LADOL facility in Lagos, which was a commitment extracted on the back of the Total Egina project. Close to US\$300 million was attracted to develop that facility and the purpose was to utilise the facility for the integration of the Egina FPSO.

Aker Solutions Subsea Academy was tied to a project and we extracted a commitment from the company to build a Subsea Academy in Bayelsa. We had arguments over many years but we remained dogged. At some point, they proposed to move it out of Bayelsa but we refused. At the end of the day, we came to an agreement, identified the site, got over the community challenges and did the groundbreaking. Today, the project is about 99 percent completed and will be commissioned very soon. The project is of global standards. We believed that sitting it in Bayelsa would create proximity to the local community. We also believe that it

is long overdue we started having facilities of this nature in the oil producing communities. Bayelsa is the homestead of oil and gas activities and is the seat of NCDMB.

When you bring the training facilities close, the people can begin to tap into it and in another three to five years, you begin to have a lot of skilled personnel in this area.

The oil industry can also benefit as we are bringing facilities that can offer trainings that are ordinarily organised outside Nigeria. It would save us foreign exchange. We are also going to develop a lot of competencies and skills in areas people thought were otherwise out-of-reach. Although it is basically for subsea training, the centre will also be available for other trainings, and we can also train for export. We can train to serve our region, the rest of Africa and by extension, the world.

Impact of Third-Party Monitors

The third-party monitoring is supported by the NOGICD Act. The drafters of the law recognised that there could be challenges of personnel, time, knowledge and skills. And there could be some experts out there in the field that you could call in to support. That is a clear business case. There are lots of other benefits. NCDMB is a very young organisation, barely 11 years old compared to some other organisations that have been around for decades. We have achieved so much because we do not pretend to be the masters of all. We willingly and gladly accommodate partnerships, contributions and ideas that could impact us positively as per our mandate.

Bear in mind that not many persons are like our Executive Secretary, Engr. Simbi Kesiye Wabote, who has been around doing local content business and has learned through the process. Many of us never learnt local content in any school or institution. We are bringing our experiences from different fields to drive the philosophy. Another crop of staff came in, young, fresh and they needed to be trained. We also have limited personnel and we cannot reach everywhere, even though that can be mitigated by deploying technology. We also have some staff who are experienced in the industry. The idea was to bring in the third-party monitors and gradually we would develop subject matters experts within the organisation.

Our primary aim was to work with the experts and form a training ground for our personnel. In the last two years that we have been on this, the quality of the ground staff has improved tremendously. There are still gaps but the challenge is to open

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the channel for people to report noncompliance through whistleblowing or through any other means, such that we can respond appropriately. People should be interested in how we respond and how we take care of those complaints when they come.

Collaboration between Monitoring and other directorates

Our activities in Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate are closely connected with other directorates, divisions and departments (DDDs) and we are all working to achieve one common goal, which is to implement the provisions of the NOGICD Act 2010 and ensure that Nigerian goods, services and manpower are utilised.

The output from most DDDs becomes our input for monitoring. The Project Certification and Authorisation Division (PCAD) represents the face of NCDMB. That is where project philosophies are first discussed and sanctioned. The sanctioning is to critically review the Nigerian content philosophy of that project and then see how it aligns with the vision and mission of NCDMB and, by extension, the vision and mission of our dear country. Project promoters are expected to reach out to NCDMB through PCAD and discuss their projects and all the activities involved, and agree on the set of activities that can be done in-country, where they are going to draw them in-country and the ones that are not available in-country and where they would draw them from out of country.

And then finally, they give them what we call the Nigeria Content Compliance Certificate (NCCC). This document lists out all the commitments, the services we want to get in-country and otherwise. That document becomes our input in Monitoring and Evaluation. When the project takes off, we use that document to check compliance of companies.

There is Section 33 of the NOGICD Act, which covers the expatriate quota approval process for the oil and gas industry. The Ministry of Interior is responsible for approving expatriates. But for oil and gas, another layer for endorsement was introduced because of the technicality and professionalism before you can bring people to the industry. We serve as the clearing house

before it goes to the Ministry of Interior for final approval. The Directorate for Planning Research and Statistics (PRS) is responsible for that, and once an approval is given for expatriate, it becomes the responsibility of Monitoring to monitor the compliance of the company.

The PRS Directorate also manages our NOGIGJS, which is the system that manages all our activities. We draw a lot of information from there: list of vendors and marine vessels; we also draw list of specialised Nigerians, individuals, skills and capacities that are available in the country.

There is also the Nigerian Content Equipment Certification (NCEC), which is a certificate issued on a back of the Equipment Component Manufacturing Initiative. The idea is to drive local manufacturing of equipment in-country.

The Capacity Building Division deals with training, capacity development, infrastructure, and people, among others. Based on our guidelines, a percentage of the budget of projects is dedicated to training Nigerians in areas or competencies of that particular project. Once it is agreed, it becomes a document for monitoring. In most cases, many DDDs draw feedback from monitoring to be able to enhance the quality of their documents.

Section 104 of the NOGICD Act talks about the Nigeria Content Development Fund (NCDF), which is the one percent statutory deduction from all contracts, which is set aside for the development of local content. We also monitor to ensure that the remittances of the NCDF is unhindered from time to time.

Aside from these ad-hoc interventions, we also have the statutory reports, the procurement forecast, the technology transfer forecast, the R&D plans and the report of the capacity building training plans, employment forecast and so on. All of these are submitted to MED periodically and they are analysed and where necessary, we relate to the relevant divisions and directorates. The Legal, insurance and finance reports also come to us and we relate with the Legal department. Again Section 68 talks about penalties for noncompliance. We need the Legal Directorate to enforce that. We always try to steer the industry in the right direction, but there are still people who deliberately want to flout the process. At that point we activate Section 68, and that is managed by the Directorate of Legal Services. These collaborations come together to lead to an increased local content in the country. ■

Mr. Akintunde Adelana is the Director, Monitoring and Evaluation, NCDMB.



22 Years of Unbroken Democracy!

We rejoice with our dear country and all Nigerians as we mark 22 years of our continuous democratic journey.

We commend the Executive, Legislature and Judiciary for their roles in sustaining our democracy journey.

We thank President **Muhammadu Buhari** (GCFR) for energizing the implementation of the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development Act through the Executive Orders 03 and 05, which promote Local Content in Public Procurement and in Contracts, Science, Engineering and Technology.

NCDMB pledges to deepen Nigerian Content performance for greater economic benefits for Nigeria and all Nigerians.

Happy Democracy Day Nigeria!
Long Live NCDMB!!
Long Live Nigeria!!!

www.ncdmb.gov.ng

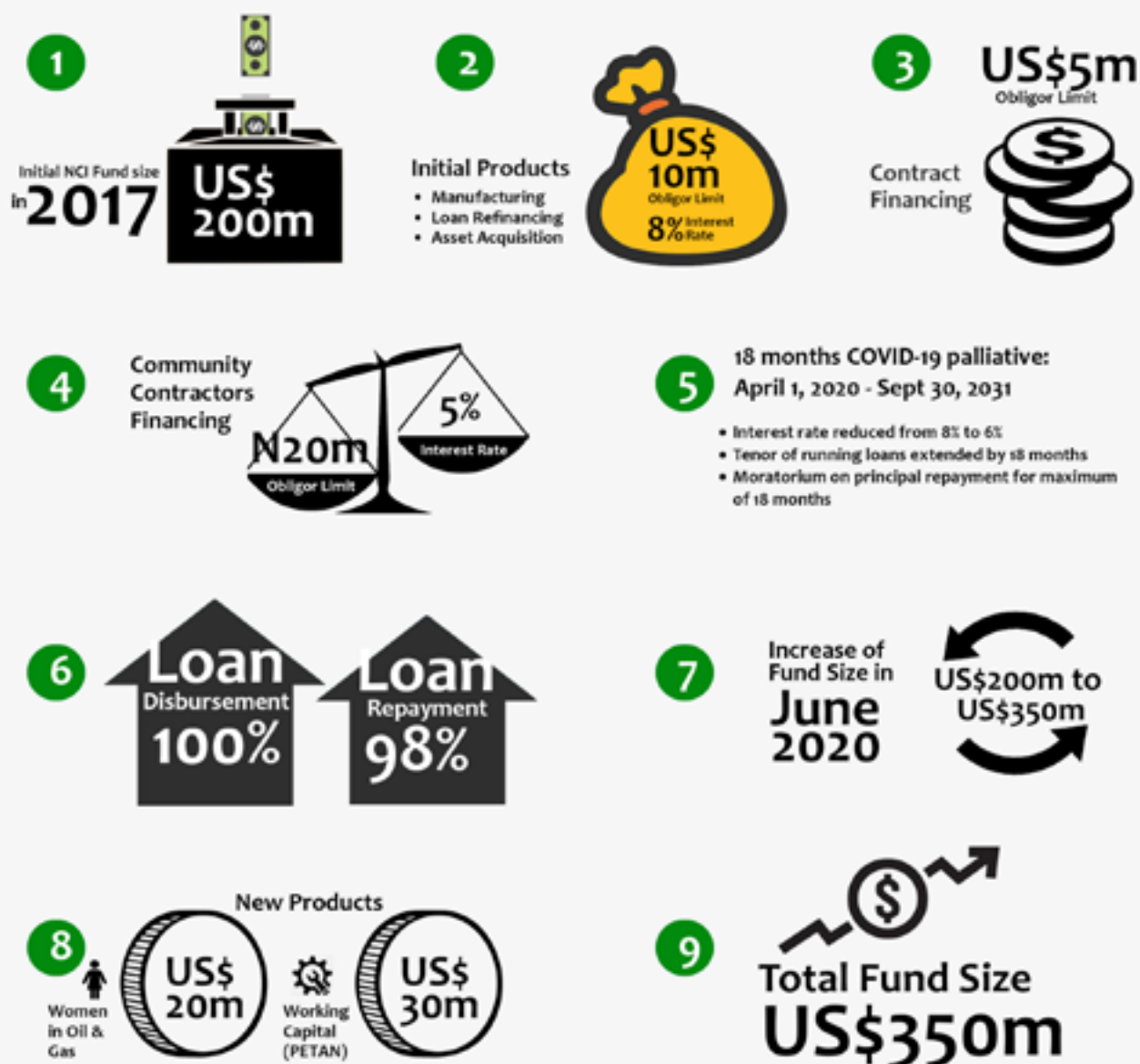
NCDMB ... Building a new Nigeria oil and gas industry and using Nigerian Content development as an instrument for Industrialisation of Nigeria.



Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board (NCDMB)

Nigerian Content Tower, Ox-Bow Lake, Swali, Yenegoa, Bayelsa State.

Nigerian Content Intervention (NCI) Fund Report Card



NCDMB ... Building a new Nigeria Oil & Gas Industry and using Nigerian Content Development as an Instrument for Industrialization of Nigeria.