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Commentary

States renew commitment to historic day

It started 135 years ago. In what was later known as the Haymarket Affair in Chicago, U.S., on May 4, 1886, there was a violent confrontation between police and labour protesters in which one person was killed and several others were injured by the police.

Three years later, in 1889, the international federation of socialist groups and trade unions named May 1 the day to support workers to mark the Chicago Haymarket Riot.

Over time, International Workers' Day observance has evolved, reflecting different countries' diverse cultural and historical contexts.

While, for example, some countries mark what is also known as Labour Day in May, others, like Canada and the U.S., observe it on the first Monday of September, demonstrating this significant day's global reach and adaptability.

In Nigeria, May 1 every year is observed as Workers' Day, and union leaders throughout the country give speeches to reconnect with the hopes and aspirations of their base.

Elected public officials are not left out. This year, for example, state governors across Nigeria treated May 1 as more than just a ritual. They took advantage of the theme for 2024, "People First: Ensuring Safety and Health at Work in a Changing Environment," to renew their pledge to work for the well-being of workers in the states.

In Kebbi State, for example, Governor Nasir Idris said his administration had abolished casual work, a thorny, resented issue in labour circles. The governor added that over 3,000 workers had been converted to permanent, pensionable jobs.

Governor Biodun Oyebanji of Ekiti State said 20,000 jobs had been created in the formal and informal sectors, apart from conditional cash grants and other palliatives.

From Akwa Ibom to Zamfara and Osun and from Kano to Kebbi to Abia and Benue States, state governors renew their pledge to work in workers' best interest and emplace systems prioritising workers' welfare.

We bring all of that to this May edition of the magazine while keeping the historic nature of the day firmly in our sights.

This edition also welcomes our new Director General, Dr. Abdullateef Shittu, who took over from Mr. Asishana Okauru, who retired after serving for 15 years. Dr. Shittu, an Economist and Human Development expert with over 28 years' experience, was until his appointment, Executive Director, Strategy and Research.

Also in this edition, we feature the profile of the Niger State First Lady, Her Excellency, Fatima Mohammed Bago, a woman whose accomplishments in promoting healthcare and education not only make a compelling read but also earned her an award.

Other highlights in this edition are the programme by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to train 330 girls in 93 schools in the North East in the fundamentals of menstrual hygiene, a skill that would not only be valuable for them while in school but one that they would need throughout life.

Strategies to enhance climate finance were a major issue at the NGF Roundtable, as the Forum collaborated with development partners to find ways of raising funds for climate finance put at \$1.3 trillion globally as of 2021. Similar collaborations are also going on with partners on pathways to sustainable forest management and development.

Already, Kwara is aggressively greening the state, and we bring that to you as well; while in "News from the States", we share the report of a partnership between the Jigawa State government, John Deere and Tata to transform the agricultural landscape.

If you find yourself reading this edition again and again, it's because we have taken our time, as always, to keep you riveted!

Enjoy!

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PUTTING THE PEOPLE FIRST

STATES COMMITTED TO WORKERS' BEST INTEREST

An annual ritual on May Day used to be the stream of glamorous speeches delivered by the presidency and state governors. However, many of the promises of heaven on earth were only fulfilled in the breach until the next International Workers' Day.

This year's celebration has been different, as almost every governor associated himself with the theme of the 2024 Labour Day, "People First: Ensuring Safety and Health at Work in a Changing Climate".

Most speeches were not longer than necessary, as each governor paid attention to the national minimum wage and other goodies. Governors also dwelt on their accomplishments, with 25 or 26 governors showcasing their one year in office.

NEW MINIMUM WAGE

While the federal government and the organised labour (represented by the Nigeria Labour Congress and the Trade Union Congress) continue to find a common ground on the minimum wage issue, state governors haven't relented in their quest to ensure workers' welfare.

Even before May Day, a state like Edo had announced an increase of the minimum wage for its workers to N70,000.

A labour leader in Kogi had indicated the workers' readiness to accept just N35,000. Cross River State had declared N40,000 for its workers. Ebonyi governor Francis Nwifuru just added N10,000 to workers' salaries.

SOLID ACHIEVEMENTS

This year's Workers' Day was not defined by empty promises. Several state governments flaunted solid achievements for workers' welfare "in a changing climate".

Akwa Ibom really means business. Governor Umo Eno declared every first and third Friday of the month as work-free days to enable workers to engage in farming. The existing Bulk Purchase Agency, he said, was a short-term intervention. "For a more sustainable solution, we must go back to the farm, working with the Ministry of Agriculture," he stated.

Other specific achievements by the Akwa Ibom administration include: payment of N18.1bn to defray



6 Adeleke also made promises: to unleash the state task force on petroleum products on those hoarding fuel, and “to sanction any official caught” divulging official documents against the Official Secrets Act

the backlog of gratuities to retired workers, refund of outstanding 7.5% contributory pension scheme, payment of three months' promotions, release of 2023 promotions, and investment in affordable housing units for workers.

Governor Eno said, “Work is ongoing at the 3rd Ring Road so we can link our workers there to Uyo. We have approved your land allocations, so you can begin your building anytime. We recently swore in permanent secretaries. Of course, the 13th month salary is ongoing. We have approved the recruitment of health workers in the state for the primary health centres.”

The Osun State administration has paid over N12bn in palliative wage awards to public servants and pensioners: N15,000 for public servants and N10,000 for pensioners. Over 2,000 civil servants have been

promoted, with cash backing from December 2023 to April 2024.

“We all know it has never happened before for a political party to place workers' welfare as the first item on its manifesto for the state,” Osun State governor Ademola Adeleke stated. “Our party and government made a conscious decision to place workers at the core of our governance agenda.”

Among other achievements, Governor Adeleke said he has appointed permanent secretaries, “thereby eradicating the wicked obnoxious policy...of the use of coordinating directors to serve as accounting officers of MDAs”. His government has also enrolled numerous retirees on the state's health insurance scheme (OHIS) to ensure they had access to quality health care. “We have continued to release bond certificates to retirees under the pension scheme,

which to date has run into billions of naira,” he said.

The “Giant in the Sun” (Kano) had more than promises to offer also. Governor Abba Kabir Yusuf, represented by his deputy Comrade Aminu Abdulsalam, said his government was returning the state to the National Housing Fund scheme. This is to ensure that workers who wanted to own decent

and affordable houses realise their dreams, he said.

For Lagos, the “Centre of Excellence”, the priority is on manpower development. Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu told the workers: “We will continue to invest in education, training, and skills development to equip our workforce with the tools they need to succeed in their places of work because we recognise the vital role that workers play in driving progress and prosperity in our society.”

Kebbi is more interested in improving and upholding the dignity of civil servants. The state governor, Nasir Idris, said his administration had abolished casual work by converting over 3,000 casual workers across the state to permanent and pensionable workers. Earlier, the NLC chairman in the state, Comrade Murtala Usman, thanked the governor for paying leave grants and gratuities to retired civil servants.

Abia State governor Alex Otti has acted in a similar way: he defrayed the backlog of pension arrears owed retirees by his predecessors. He thanked Abia workers for their sacrifices as his government “strives to rebuild the state from the ruins of the past”.

Ekiti State governor Biodun Oyebanji pays N15,000 wage award “to cushion the effect of inflation”. In addition, his government has created about 20,000 jobs for job-seekers in the formal and informal sectors of the economy, he said, “With succour being provided in the form of conditional cash grants and other palliatives”.

Governor Lucky Aiyedatiwa of Ondo State said he was fully implementing the workers' contributory health insurance scheme, ORANGHIS, and considering the inclusion of pensioners in the scheme. Besides, his government steadily pays N200m monthly for inherited arrears of gratuities; it made a special provision of more than N1.2bn for clearance of arrears of gratuities up to 2014.

In Governor Hyacinth Alia of Benue State's message on May Day, he said his administration was “already working in line with the theme of the 2024 Labour Day”. He was on the same page with the workers and stated that, “having renovated the State Secretariat and also provided a dedicated 33KVA transformer to enable the workers have a healthy and conducive environment to operate”.

To mark the 2024 Labour Day in Kaduna, Governor Uba Sani flagged off the implementation of N500m revolving loans for civil servants.

Through the Nigeria Governors' Forum, _The Executive_ learned that all the governors committed to improving the courts' infrastructure in their states and increasing the remuneration of judicial officers.

PROMISES

The governors were not short on promises, however. Apart from a pay rise, each claimed he would thenceforth prioritise workers' welfare and ensure better working conditions.

In Edo State, Governor Godwin Obaseki, who had two days earlier announced an increase of the minimum wage for the state's workers from N40,000 to N70,000, indicated that he would make it higher on one condition: if the federal government made available funds from the savings made from fuel subsidy.

Zamfara State governor Dauda Lawal pledged to reform the civil service by digitizing all government activities. A modern approach to conducting government business, he said, would “block leakages and prevent frauds”. After clearing the backlog of salaries and gratuities, he promised, there would be prompt payment of both.

The Delta State governor, Hon. Sheriff Oborewori, promised to set up a committee to look into workers' demand for a pay rise. This pattern could be adopted by several states. The governor said, “This administration has already demonstrated its commitment to the welfare of serving and retired civil servants, and we will continue to do so through our policies and actions.”

Osun's Adeleke also made promises: to unleash the state task force on petroleum products on those hoarding fuel, and “to sanction any official caught” divulging official documents against the Official Secrets Act.

Kebbi's Nasir Idris pledged to hire 2,000 teachers to boost education in his state. The state NLC chairman, Comrade Murtala Usman, reminded him of his pledge to be the first governor to pay the new minimum wage when announced by the federal government.

Governor Alia of Benue promised that aside from the prompt payment of workers' salaries, his administration would continue to pay owed arrears, attend to issues of promotions and allowances, ensure training and retraining of the workers, “and issues of workers in the state generally will always be of prime concern” in his government.

Otti of Abia said he would not only implement but backdate and pay arrears of the new minimum wage. Ironically, Abia was yet to begin payment of wage awards despite the governor's unmatched strides in infrastructure development. The governor promised to look into it and take action soon, but the workers demanded a definite statement.



'OLIVER TWIST' WANTS SOME MORE

Like the character Oliver Twist in Charles Dickens' novel, the labour leaders across the country demanded more worker-friendly policies and programmes, after thanking the governors for their achievements so far. They did not overlook the appointment of former labour leaders as special advisers on labour matters to the governors of Kogi and Ondo states.

They, however, requested that primary school teachers unjustly sacked in Abia by a previous administration in 2016 be recalled. While thanking the Delta governor for paying N5.6bn as promotion arrears, they asked him to dole out N800m more to pay the entitlements of those omitted.

In Kano, the state NLC chairman, Comrade Kabiru Inuwa, reminded the government that it had paid wage awards only once. He urged the Yusuf administration to revisit the issue of pension contributions,

totalling N75bn as of May 2023, which were not remitted by some organisations.

Ekiti workers applauded Governor Oyebanji for all he had done but called for the recapitalisation of their housing and car loans. "It has not been recapitalised for 20 years. The maximum car loan now is N750,000, but this can't buy a motorcycle; help us to increase it," the Ekiti labour leaders said.

According to the Osun State NLC chairman, Comrade Abimbola Arapasopo, "Osun workers have never had it so good." Yet, he did not hesitate to submit a list of demands to Governor Adeleke, adding, "We are Oliver Twist asking for more."

CELEBRATING WITH WORKERS

Overall, the 2024 May Day was a celebration of modest achievements. The Nigeria Governors' Forum led by AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq of Kwara had soothing words for labour. The NGF stated in its

communicate that governors were reviewing their fiscal space to arrive at an improved minimum wage they could pay: "Forum celebrates with workers across the country for their dedication to service and patience, as we work with the federal government, organised private labour and relevant stakeholders in arriving at an implementable national minimum wage.

"While we acknowledge the various initiatives adopted of recent by way of wage awards and partial wage adjustments, it is imperative to state that the 37-member tripartite committee inaugurated on the National Minimum Wage is still in consultation and yet to conclude its work.

"As committee members, we are reviewing our individual fiscal space as state governments and the consequential impact of various recommendations to arrive at an improved wage we can pay sustainably."

With additional agency reports.

COMMISSIONER FOR HEALTH PROFILE

DR. HENRY EGBE AYUK

CROSS RIVER



Born in Bendeghe Ekim in Etung Local Government Area of Cross River State, Dr. Henry Egbe Ayuk is a renowned medical doctor, epidemiologist, and public health physician with an overwhelming wealth of experience in health system management, primary healthcare development and global health.

He attended the popular Government College, Katsina-Ala in Benue State. The young Ayuk was admitted to the College of Medicine of the University of Ibadan where he bagged his Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS) in 1986. Upon graduation from the University of Ibadan, he did his internship at Immanuel Hospital, Eket. He also did his National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) at the Primary Health Centre Iseyin, Oyo State, and subsequently practiced in rural health establishments (private, public and faith-based) in Nigeria before taking further training and career in public health and development in 2002.

He earned a Master of Public Health (MPH) in 2006 from the University of Calabar and an MSc. in Medical Epidemiology in 2007 from the University of Ibadan. He obtained a PhD in Development and Global Health Sociology in 2017 from the University of Calabar. He investigated the health economics of poor HIV households as his doctoral thesis.

Dr. Henry Egbe Ayuk is a man of many firsts who has excelled in many areas of life. He has additional professional training and certificates in Project Management and Leadership in Health from the University of Washington, as well as a postgraduate certificate in Health System (Cancun, Mexico 2009), among others.

He was appointed as the Commissioner for Health by Governor Bassey Out of Cross River State in 2023.



Dr. Ayuk has over 30 years' cognate working experience in medicine, public health and development sectors. Within that time, he had provided managerial and technical leadership at all levels of healthcare in Nigeria for the implementation of projects supported by international donors and partners including PEPFAR/USAID, Global Fund, WHO, World Bank, FHI360 AFRICARE, etc. He is a key player in epidemic management and control of HIV, TB, Malaria and COVID-19 in Nigeria and Cross River State in particular.

Prior to his work development and global health sectors, he had a successful career spanning over 15 years rendering public service to the people of Cross River State. During his stay in the state civil service, he helped establish the first HIV Counselling and Testing Center at Dr. Lawrence Henshaw Memorial Hospital in Calabar. Before he was made commissioner, he worked with Global Fund and the National Agency for the Control of AIDS (NACA), where he provided technical assistance

to the Cross River State Ministry of Health on private sector integration of HIV, TB and malaria.

Before his appointment, the astute medical professional was also a part-time facilitator at the National Open University of Nigeria where he taught and supervised research projects of postgraduate students of Public Health.

As an active player in the public sector, Dr Ayuk served as the Executive Chairman of Ikom Local Government between 1991-1993. He was the head of Governor Otu's medical team during the campaign and also served as the Secretary of the Health Cluster of the Transition Review Committee set up by the governor.

Dr. Ayuk is an ordained elder of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria. He is also the Health Coordinator of the Upper Cross River Synod of the church and a member of the board of governors of the new Presbyterian College of Health Technology, Mbembe Obubra, Cross River State.

Dr. Joseph Onojaeme is the Delta State Commissioner for Health. He has a Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS), and a Master's degree in Public Health.

He was Medical Director of New Life Hospital Ughelli from where he joined the Delta State Health Management Board in 2015, rising to Principal Medical Officer.

A vibrant social and political activist, he was one-time Secretary of the National Association of Delta State Medical and Dental Students, Secretary of the University of Benin Students' Union Government, and Chairman, the National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) Joint Campus Committee.

In the medical circle, he rose from Treasurer to Deputy Secretary of the Ughelli Chapter of the Nigerian Medical Association (NMA) and was subsequently elected Welfare Officer of the Delta State Chapter of the NMA.

Upon his appointment as commissioner for health, Dr. Onojaeme said the government of Sheriff Oborewori intended to build more modern health facilities to support existing ones, as well as upgrade existing facilities to meet up with the demands of present-day health challenges.

"We are also going to engage in recruitment exercise to inject more health workers into the system to meet the rising demands of health care needs in the state to ensure that there is uninterrupted flow in our service delivery, we are entering a long-term maintenance MOU with the equipment manufacturers to keep the machines up and running 24 hours, this will build the confidence



of Deltans to rely on Delta state health care services in the state," he said.

The National Association of Government General Medical and Dental Practitioners (NAGGMDP) expressed confidence in the capabilities of Dr. Onojaeme, saying his appointment as the Commissioner for Health, Delta State was timely. NAGGMDP's Chairman, Dr. Ogbo James, said Onojaeme's appointment was needed in giving life to the health sector, adding that the group was optimistic that the sector would be better for it in the actualisation of the Governor Sheriff Oborewori of Delta State M.O.R.E agenda.

Judging by his statements and actions, the commissioner seems to understand the vision of his principal. "There is much work to be done in the health sector this year, and I am here to pilot the team to action so that we can continue delivering

the M.O.R.E agenda to health care services through this ministry.

"Governor Oborewori is very concerned about improving the quality of health care delivery to Deltans and will stop at nothing to provide premium health facilities and services to Deltans.

"The Governor has consistently reiterated that His M.O.R.E Agenda is not a political slogan, but a social contract with Deltans, to listen and do MORE.

"In his well-articulated MORE Agenda, the Governor has promised to give special attention to the health sector, introduce realistic reforms, commence facility and equipment upgrade and improve the human capital resources to handle the prevailing health challenges Deltans are faced with and this is reflected in the 2024 'Budget of Hope and Optimism,'" the commissioner said.

Dr. Bashir Gambo Saulawa is a vastly experienced public servant who holds a Master's degree in Environmental Management and a doctorate in Environmental Science. From starting as a classroom teacher, Dr. Saulawa moved to become the Executive Chairman of Katsina Local Government before serving as Senior Special Assistant to the Governor.

Dr. Saulawa is a specialist consultant in land degradation and desertification, climate change adaptation, environmental policy and governance, food security, sustainable development, hydrology, water resources ecology and project management.

Not long after his appointment, Dr. Saulawa announced that the Katsina State Government under Governor Dikko Umar Radda had successfully acquired 16 state-of-the-art dialysis machines which were installed at the newly constructed dialysis center in General Amadi Rimi Specialist Hospital.

At the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between UNICEF and the Katsina State Government to construct an ultra-modern medical warehouse in the state, Dr. Saulawa, commended the development partners for the gesture, saying it was a great achievement for the state.

The facility, which has a four-month completion date, is to cost about 900 million naira, with UNICEF providing 85 per cent of the funds, while the state government is to come up with the rest as counterpart funding.

On May 6, 2024, the Katsina State Government established the state's first-ever Council on Health as part of efforts to improve healthcare access for its residents.



6 Dr. Saulawa moved to become the Executive Chairman of Katsina Local Government before serving as Senior Special Assistant to the Governor.

At the unveiling of the initiative during the council's inauguration ceremony, the commissioner said the State Council on Health would play a crucial role in the state's journey towards ensuring the well-being and health of its residents.

He also said that the council would create an environment where policies and standards set by the National Council on Health are effectively implemented, monitored, and aligned with the blueprint of the Radda-led administration.



FG EARMARKS N260BN TO REVITALISE PHCs

The Federal Government has earmarked the sum of N260bn to revitalise Primary Healthcare Centres (PHCs) across the country.

The Coordinating Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Prof. Ali Pate, in Abuja recently.

According to him, the revitalisation is in line with the president's directive and the fund is currently available at the state levels through International Development Association (IDA) financing and the Basic Health Care Provision Fund (BHCPF).

"We are now providing guidelines to assist the states in the implementation of the revitalisation projects, ensuring that the resources are used prudently for their intended purposes," he added

Pate also said that 1,400 PHCs were now able to provide skilled birth attendance, funded through the BHCPF.

He added that the first tranche of N35 million had been disbursed through the National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA) and National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA) to 8,300 facilities.

The minister also said that a condition was put forward to the states that would access it.

He added that they must comply with the fiduciary guidelines that would be provided which were in response to lapses that have been observed over the years.

"Thirty-three states have received those funds and the rest of the states are just about to complete and receive their own financing to channel through the PHCs."

He disclosed that a plan was outlined through NPHCDA in collaboration with the States, to revive 8,300 PHCs

across the nation to make them fully functional and to expand and upgrade to 17,000 PHCs over the next three years.

"The expansion is to refurbish the centres, equip them and make them fully functional to deliver essential services.

"To deliver essential services such as immunisation, reproductive, maternal, newborn, and child health services, treatment of non-communicable diseases, and to facilitate referrals to secondary facilities."

On workforce, he said that more than 2,400 health workers, doctors, nurses, midwives were recruited in facilities with many of them in rural areas to provide essential services to Nigerians.

According to him, the issue of health workforce has been a topical one and the Federal Government had doubled

the enrolment quota of medical schools, nursing schools and other health conventional schools from 28,000 a year to 64,000 a year.

"That is just the first step, the education sector and the schools will have a role too to play to improve the infrastructure and the training tools to produce more health workforce.

"This is because we have to produce even more health workforce so that we can serve the population of this country."

He said that in the last one year, in the federal hospitals the administration was able to complete 201 infrastructure projects, while 179 specific pieces of important medical equipment were procured.

He added that the medical equipment procured was also distributed by the federal government across the 36 states of the federation.

"Over the last nine months, in 33 of our federal tertiary hospitals, 4.5 million Nigerians were able to access outpatient services and 1.6 million Nigerians had inpatient admissions in those 33 facilities.

"So if you extrapolate from the 33 facilities, you would see that about 78 million Nigerians who were ill sought medical services from federal facilities, and about 2.5 million Nigerians who have had in patient admission in our facilities."

He also announced that plans were underway for the ground breaking ceremony of 10 healthcare infrastructure projects, through the National Sovereign Investment Authority (NSIA), across the six geopolitical zones, including diagnostic centres and oncology centres.

These developments, he said, were

6 Over the last nine months, in 33 of our federal tertiary hospitals, 4.5 million Nigerians were able to access outpatient services and 1.6 million Nigerians had inpatient admissions in those 33 facilities.

part of a broader initiative involving public-private partnerships.

For health insurance, Pate said that to expand affordability and financial protection, the federal government was repositioning NHIA to expand insurance coverage for all Nigerians, especially the poor and vulnerable, not excluding civil servants who need deepened coverage.

He added that 1.8 million Nigerians were covered through the Vulnerable Groups Fund at NHIA.

He added that reforms of the NHIA soon to be announced would address areas including expanding private health insurance for informal sector, and strengthening the Health Management Organisations.

With regards to unlocking the healthcare value chain, the minister said that a draft Executive Order had been produced and finalised and once signed by the President, would reduce barriers related to the import of raw materials and equipment for pharmaceuticals and medical devices.

"This policy change will enable Nigerians to produce essential items domestically, such as syringes, needles, generic pharmaceuticals, test kits, and long-lasting insecticide treated nets for malaria.

"We aim to shift the production of bed nets, currently manufactured abroad, to local production, fostering self-sufficiency and economic growth.

"This initiative will shape the pharmaceutical market to support local industries. The President's effective promotion of Nigeria as a business-friendly environment has already attracted several international investors and foreign direct investments.

"Notably, a Brazilian entity has committed 240 million dollars to establish a generic manufacturing plant in Nigeria. Additionally, three entities are set to produce test kits, with one already operational in Lagos and two more on the way."

He said that improving governance was crucial for advancing the health and welfare sector but that it required collaboration between the federal government, states, development partners, private sector and civil society.

He added that for the first time, development partners signed a compact governing the nation's joint operations with them.

"This also included the private sector and civil society. At that event, our partners pledged three billion dollars, reflecting their confidence in the president's agenda.

"Of this pledge, we have signed 932 million dollars grant with the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM), 200 million dollars with a philanthropic foundation.

"We are expecting additional 60 million dollars in grants, 150 million dollars announced by the Gavi Alliance, in addition to one billion dollars' facility governed by MOU signed with Afreximbank to unlock the healthcare value chains."



UNICEF TRAINS GIRLS IN 93 NORTH EAST SCHOOLS

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has trained 330 girls from 93 schools in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states on Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM).

The Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Manager, UNICEF Maiduguri Field Office, Ms. Mamita Thakkar, made this known on Thursday in Maiduguri during a media parley to commemorate the 2024 Menstrual Hygiene Day.

Thakkar said that 158 teachers in the affected schools were also trained on MHM to support adolescent girls in the schools.

"We also created adolescent groups to provide psychological support."

According to Thakkar, 321 women in various communities were also trained on MHM and how to make reusable pad and soap.

The WASH manager stressed the need for a holistic approach in addressing MHM pointing out that good menstrual hygiene remains crucial for the health, education and dignity of girls and women.

"To help girls and women manage their menstruation needs, UNICEF supports building knowledge and skills amongst girls and women.

"In collaboration with the Government in northeast Nigeria, local partners and donors such as the German Development Bank (BMZ) and the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), UNICEF provides training support to school girls to produce reusable pads.

"We are also ensuring adequate water supply in schools and communities and promoting the construction of gender segregated toilets in schools and communities, so that girls and women are provided with safe spaces to manage menstruation with dignity and safety," Thakkar said.

FG TO COMMENCE EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE PROGRAMME IN SOKOTO

The Federal Government on Monday announced its readiness to launch the National Emergency Medical Service and Ambulance System (NEMSAS) programme in Sokoto State.

Dr. Sa'idu Ahmed, NEMSAS National Programme Manager, made this statement while addressing journalists after a meeting with the State Commissioner for Health and its officials.

Ahmed said the programme was designed to address maternal mortality issues and ensure that no Nigerian dies due to the lack of funds for emergency medical services.

He said NEMSAS was a government organisation tasked with the responsibility of organising emergency medical services as well as pre-hospital and emergency care services in Nigeria.

"Previously, we imposed conditions on our initiatives, but the government has now adopted a new strategy to improve poor health indices.

"We have seen an increase in maternal mortality rates despite vertical and horizontal investments from both the government and donor partners.

"This prompted the government to establish NEMSAS to bring about the necessary change," he said.

Ahmed emphasised that the service needed to be well-coordinated to remain sustainable and effectively



Gov. Ahmed Aliyu

address the country's poor health indices.

"Currently, seven to eight states in the country have been on-boarded, with some fully operational and others in pilot phases.

"Sokoto State has shown commitment, and we are here to initiate the pilot operation, which will last for six months before full implementation," Ahmed explained.

He further disclosed that the system would cover emergency cases from homes to hospitals and pay all the patients' bills for up to 48 hours.

Ahmed assured that the programme was designed to save lives, particularly benefiting the poor and vulnerables who cannot afford medical services.

He also appreciated Gov. Ahmed Aliyu's commitment to ensuring a robust healthcare system in the state.

In her remarks, Hajiya Asabe Balarabe, the Commissioner for Health, praised the Federal Government's dedication to meeting societal needs, particularly for the less-privileged.

She promised the state's full cooperation and support to ensure the success of the programmes.



FG RAISES MEDICAL, NURSING SCHOOLS ENROLMENT TO 64,000

The enrolment quota for medical, nursing and other health schools has been increased from 28,000 to 64,000 in the last one year, Prof. Ali Pate, Minister of Health and Social Welfare, has disclosed.

According to Pate, health workers in Nigeria have continued to move abroad, citing inadequate equipment, insecurity, poor working conditions and low salaries.

Between 2019 and 2023, more than 1,000 medical consultants left the country. Further statistics show that more than 900 resident doctors moved to Europe in the first nine months of 2023.

To mitigate the situation, Pate said that government is addressing the issue by increasing the enrolment quotas to produce more healthcare workers.

He emphasised the need for the education sector and state governments to enhance infrastructure, training and tools to support this increase.

The minister said that 1,400 Primary Healthcare Centres (PHCs) now have

6 We shall create room to produce more and excess because globally, there is shortage of health manpower; the shortage is estimated at 18 million personnel.

skilled birth attendants, with more than 2,400 health workers recruited to serve in rural areas.

Pate said the government had disbursed N25bn from the Basic Health Care Provision Fund (BHCPF) to 23 states through the National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA), and the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA).

He said the remaining states were in the process of meeting the requirements to receive their allocations.

The Minister of State for Health, Dr. Tunji Alausa, had earlier disclosed that the Federal Government was putting in place plans and strategies to increase

the population of medical and dental doctors from 5,000 to 10,000.

This will commence from the next academic year with the increase in admissions into medical and dental institutions.

Alausa said the mass exodus of licensed doctors and other health professionals to more developed countries would be discouraged by making the healthcare environment more attractive.

"Equally, we will expand these opportunities to all other health professionals like pharmacists, nurses, physiotherapists, community health extension workers, radiographers and others. It will be in phases.

"We shall create room to produce more and excess because globally, there is shortage of health manpower; the shortage is estimated at 18 million personnel," he stated.

According to him, Nigeria produces just 3,000 doctors annually.

"This is grossly inadequate; we need to increase the rate of production of health workers," he said.



HAJIYA FATIMA LARAI
MOHAMMED BAGO:

THE 'WONDER WOMAN' OF
NIGER WHO KEEPS GIVING

HAIJIYA FATIMA LARAI MOHAMMED BAGO:

THE 'WONDER WOMAN' OF NIGER WHO KEEPS GIVING



Hajija Fatima Larai Mohammed Bago

Hajija Fatima Larai Mohammed Bago is the First Lady of Niger State and the wife of Governor Mohammed Umar Bago. Though born on October 20, 1982, in the ancient city of Bida, Hajija Bago is an indigene of Dikko in Edati Local Government Area of Niger State.

What many did not know about the First Lady of Niger State is that she has been at the forefront of humanitarian and social welfare programmes, as well as public awareness and gender advocacy even before she became first lady.

She has been at the forefront of humanitarian and social welfare programmes, as well as public awareness and gender advocacy even before she became first lady

Her Excellency is the Chairman of the BAGO Foundation, established in 2010, to help the needy and vulnerable. A lover of education and the power it possesses to bring

about change, especially for women Hajija Bago has been responsible for the emancipation of many vulnerable women and children through education and social empowerment.

On the occasion of the 2024 Children's Day, Hajija Fatima Bago used the opportunity to advocate life skills development programmes to empower children and set them up for success in life. She emphasised that the acquisition of life skills would allow children to explore their interests and passions, and discover their strengths while navigating through life.

She also noted that addressing skill gaps early on is crucial to preventing children from falling behind academically and socially. She assured of her commitment to investing in education and providing necessary resources and infrastructure for skills acquisition and entrepreneurship development, and to work with stakeholders to ensure the success and well-being of the children of the state.

Apart from being an expert in business development, and strategic planning and implementation, Hajija Bago is a social, political, and grassroots mobiliser par excellence. Even before becoming the first lady, she was already an active and strong member of the political party which brought her husband into power.

The first lady of Niger State began her educational pursuit at the Command Children School, Zaria, Kaduna State,



Her Excellency Hajija Fatima Mohammed Bago, wife of the Governor of Niger State, honored the 2024 Food Bazaar at El-Amin International School Minna with her presence

where she had her First School Leaving Certificate (FSLC) in 1995, before proceeding to Gray's International College, Kaduna to obtain Senior Secondary School Certificate (SSCE) in 2001.

She graduated from the Federal University of Technology Minna with a Bachelor of Technology in Estate Management (2007), before proceeding to earn a Master's Degree in Business Administration (MBA) from the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria in 2022.

She had her compulsory one-year National Youth Service Corps programme at the Alif Maintenance Solutions, Minna (2009 – 2010), and worked as Director at Bazzini and Bazzani Nigeria Limited for 10 years before she was appointed as a Senior Legislative Aide to the then Speaker of the House of Representatives, Rt. Hon. Yakubu Dogara between 2015 and 2019.

In recognition of her work and relentless efforts towards investing in the people, Hajija Bago was honoured with the prestigious award of the Most Outstanding First Lady of the Year by

the African Iconic Women Recognition Awards and Women Leadership Summit 2024.

The award recognised Her Excellency's tireless efforts and dedication to impacting the lives of women and children in Niger State. Her initiatives and programmes have focused on empowering women, promoting healthcare, and supporting education, among others.

Receiving the award, the first lady expressed her gratitude to the African Iconic Women Recognition Awards for this recognition, and graciously dedicated the award to her husband, Governor Mohammed Umaru Bago, fondly referred to as the 'Farmer Governor', in recognition of his unwavering dedication and commitment to serving the people of Niger State, especially women and the children, whom she has had the privilege to serve.

No doubt, the award has re-energised the First Lady to redouble her commitment to making a difference in the lives of others. And her husband, who she dedicated the award to, described his wife as "a rare gift from

Allah" during her 41st birthday in 2023.

In a congratulatory message, the governor acknowledged that Allah had indeed endowed his wife with virtues of love, patience, kindness and compassion from which so many people have benefitted. He also said her support for him and his family had helped them to weather so many storms together in life. He prayed to Allah to continue to fill her years with boundless blessings, happiness, good health and the fulfilment of all her dreams and aspirations.

Interestingly, the governor's fondness for the first lady of Niger State was corroborated by Amb. Dalhatu Abubakar Iya, who wrote: "The Farmer Governor knew the importance of women, thereby acclaiming the office of the First Lady to supporting him in transforming Niger State, with the help, love, zeal, energy, resilience, persistence and passion of Her Excellency, Hajija Fatima Mohammed Bago, whom many admirably refer to as 'Bago-the-Second' due to her unpredictable plans for the female gender and her passionate desire to tough lives."

EBONYI FIRST LADY SPONSORS FREE SCROTAL HERNIA OPERATION FOR 130 PATIENTS



The wife of the Ebonyi State governor, Mrs. Uzoamaka Nwifuru said that 130 scrotal hernia patients in Ebonyi would undergo medical surgery in the state this week.

Mrs. Nwifuru disclosed this at Onueke, the headquarters of Ezza South Local Government Area in the state during the flag off of her pet project, Better Health for Rural Women and Internally Displaced Persons Foundation (BERWO) in the local government.

She said that the surgery which will be free would be sponsored by the pet project in collaboration with a non-governmental organisation, adding that the profiling of the scrotal hernia patients in the state was still ongoing.

The Ebonyi First Lady also explained



Mrs. Uzoamaka Nwifuru

that the pet project, in conjunction with the state Primary Health Development Agency would also provide free camping and vaccination for sufferers of Human Papilloma Virus (HPV).

According to her, the free treatment

would be given to young girls between ages of 9 and 15, adding that HPV is a deadly disease that causes cervical cancer in women and cancer in men.

“BERWO foundation in conjunction with Ebonyi State Primary Health Development Agency is about to flag off important campaign against Human Papilloma Virus infection (HPV).

“This virus is the main causes of cervical cancer in females. The virus also causes cancer in males. The HPV vaccine is targeted to be given to young girls between the ages of 9-15 years.

“It is a deadly disease that affect the neck or the womb of the female but it is highly preventable through vaccination.



KEBBI FIRST LADY LAUNCHES RENEWED HOPE INITIATIVE (RHI) BOOKS DISTRIBUTION, FREE VISION SCREENING

The Wife of Kebbi State Governor, Hajia Zainab Nasare Nasir Idris, has yet spearheaded a groundbreaking initiative to provide free vision screening for public school students across the state.

This laudable effort marks a significant step towards ensuring that students and teachers are free from visual disturbances that could interfere with their learning process

The event took place at the Government Girls Unity College Birnin Kebbi, Hajia Zainab Nasare, in collaboration with the Nasara Foundation, facilitated eye tests for students and teachers, identifying those with blurred vision and equipping them with tailored eyeglasses. Whilst speaking at the event, Hajia Zainab Nasare also lunched the distribution of about 5000 Renewed Hope Initiative books donated by the first lady of the federal republic of Nigeria, Her Excellency Sen Oluremi Tinubu CON to facilitate their



learning process

The Commissioner for Basic and Secondary School Education, Dr. Halima Muhammad Bande, echoed these sentiments, commending the governor's wife for her visionary leadership and compassion towards students. Bande also emphasized the inseparable link between education and

vision, highlighting the transformative impact of initiatives such as free vision screenings on educational outcomes. Furthermore, the Principal of Unity College, Malama Murjanatu Attahiru Wala, expressed gratitude for the First Lady of the federal republic of Nigeria Sen Oluremi Tinubu and Hajia Zainab Nasare for their concerned and unwavering commitment to student welfare at large.

KWARA FIRST LADY FLAGS OFF HPV VACCINE ROLL-OUT, ...LAUNCHES GREENING OUR FUTURE INITIATIVE

The First Lady of Kwara State and Chairperson, Nigeria Governors Spouses Forum, Amb. Prof. Olufolake Abdulrazaq on Monday 27th of May flagged off the roll out of HPV vaccine and formally launched the greening our future initiative in Ilorin the Kwara State capital.

At the event which was held at the Queen Elizabeth School Ilorin, the First Lady commended the processes that culminated in the rollout of the vaccine urging critical stakeholders present at the event to educate, inform and dispel misconceptions surrounding the vaccine.

She also launched the green our future initiative enjoining participants to imbibe the green culture by planting gardens at home and in schools she further commended all development partners for the laudable initiatives.

Amb. Abdulrasaq applauded the over 800 students who were vaccinated at the event and in company of government functionaries revered traditional leaders and development partners planted a garden at the Queen Elizabeth School Ilorin and presented farm tools to schools across the state.

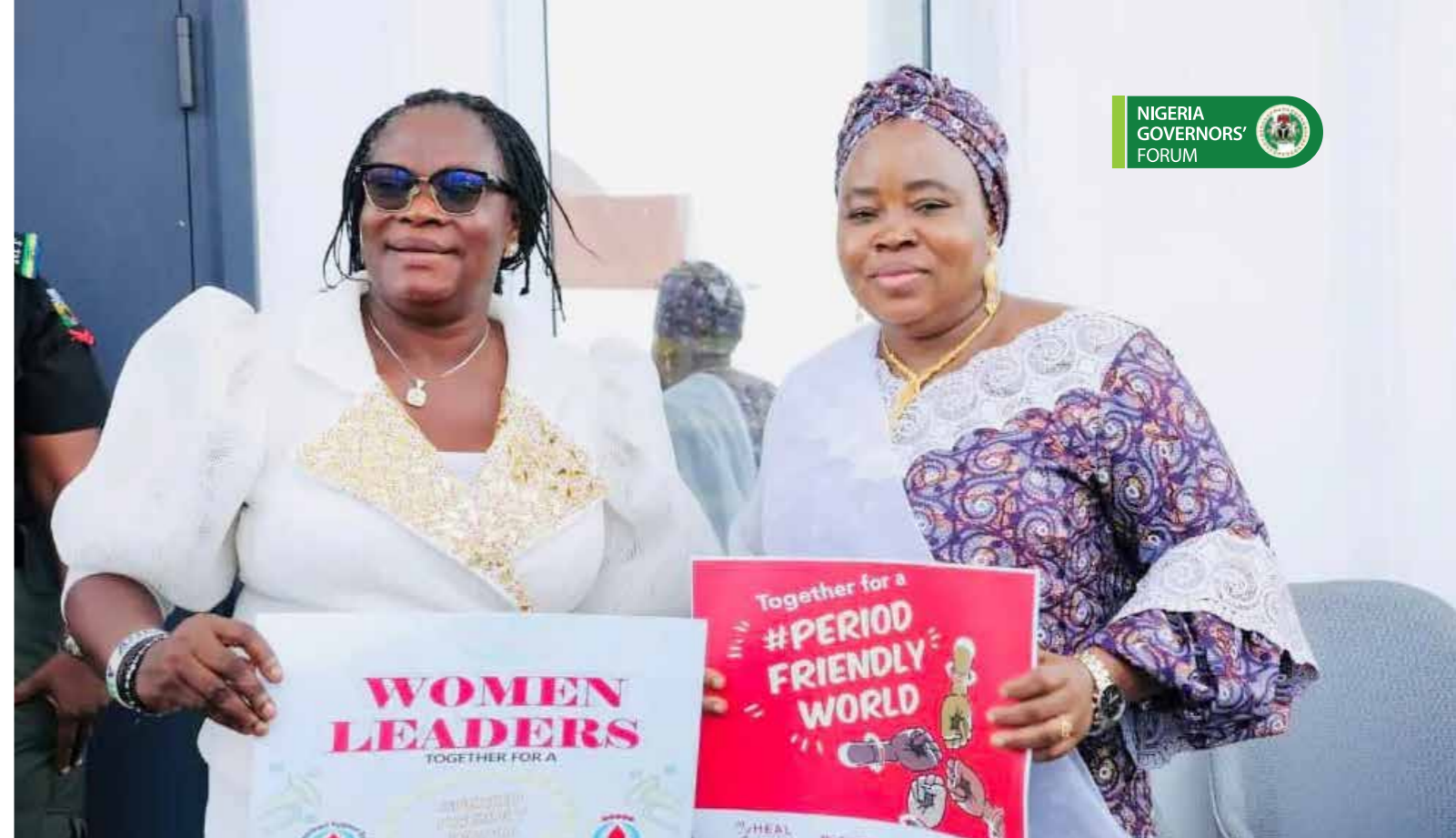
In their separate remarks the commissioner for health, Dr. Amina El-Imam and the executive secretary Kwara State primary Health Care Development Agency, Dr. Nusirat Elelu, commended the first lady and assured that the vaccine would get to every corner of the state.

Development partners present also applauded the drive of the



the First Lady commended the processes that culminated in the rollout of the vaccine urging critical stakeholders present at the event to educate, inform and dispel misconceptions surrounding the vaccine

state government for the roll out of the vaccine as a means to protect eligible girls from being susceptible to the deadly cervical cancer and the greening our future initiative for improved nutrition outcomes and a sustainable development.



KOGI GOVERNOR'S WIFE PLEDGES TO PROMOTE MENSTRUAL HYGIENE

The wife of Kogi Governor Hajia Sefinat Ododo, has pledged to promote menstrual hygiene among girls and women in the state.

Sefinat said this in Lokoja as part of activities to mark the 2024 Menstrual Hygiene Day, organised by Heal for Africa Initiative (HFAI), tagged: "#PeriodFriendlyWorld".

May 28 marked the 10th World Menstrual Hygiene Day, a global initiative dedicated to promoting awareness and education about menstrual hygiene.

She commended HFAI founder, Dr. Kelechi Okoro for her efforts in promoting menstrual hygiene in the state.

She pledged her unwavering support for the initiative and outlined her plans to improve menstrual hygiene and sexual and reproductive health services in the state. She emphasized the importance of breaking the silence and stigma surrounding menstruation.

"Menstruation should never be a barrier to education, health, or personal growth. As a mother and a leader, I am committed to ensuring that every girl and woman in Kogi can manage her menstruation with dignity and confidence," she said. She also admonished parents to prioritize menstrual hygiene education for their daughters. "Parents play a crucial role in their children's development. It is essential to provide your girl

child with accurate information and support about menstruation. "This helps them understand their bodies and manage their menstrual health effectively. Let us create an open and supportive environment where our daughters feel comfortable discussing their menstrual needs," she said. Sefinat encouraged young girls to know that menstruation remained a natural part of growing up.

"To every young girl, know that menstruation is a natural part of growing up. Do not let it hold you back from pursuing your dreams. "Educate yourself, take care of your health, and seek support when needed. My office is committed to advancing the health and rights of the girl child," she said.

CHILDREN'S DAY:

PLATEAU FIRST LADY VACCINATES 130 GIRLS AGAINST HPV



Mrs. Helen Mutfwang

To commemorate the 2024 Children's Day Mrs. Helen Mutfwang, wife of Plateau governor, has launched the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV), vaccination campaign, and administered same to 130 girls.

Mrs. Mutfwang, who launched the campaign on Monday in Jos, said the initiative was to rid Plateau of cervical cancer, fighting it from a woman's early stage.

"In commemoration of this joyous celebration, we are also launching the HPV vaccination programme, aimed at protecting our female children, between the ages of nine

and 14 years, from cervical cancer," she said.

The first lady explained further that when administered on the girls, the vaccine would protect them from contracting Cervical Cancer, caused by the HPV.

According to the governor's wife, Plateau State Government places great importance on the well-being and development of children, recognising that they are the bedrock upon which the society would continue to build and thrive.

She said that the celebration was a testament to the unwavering

commitment of the current administration's commitment to ensuring that every child was nurtured, educated, and protected.

Mrs. Mutfwang expressed worry over the World Health Organisation (WHO) report, which stated that Nigeria recorded 12,075 Cases of cervical cancer with 7,968 deaths in Nigeria in the year 2020.

She also noted with concern, the high burden of cervical cancer, caused by poor access to the HPV vaccine, low awareness, inadequate access to healthcare, especially in rural areas, among others.

She said it was in this light that the federal and state governments initiated the laudable HPV project to protect and save the lives of future mothers.

ENHANCING CLIMATE FINANCE ACCESS FOR NIGERIAN STATES: STRATEGIES AND INSIGHTS FROM THE NGF ROUNDTABLE



L-R; Daniel Yeo (UKNIAF), Alhaji Abdulateef Shittu DG Nigeria Governors Forum, Niger State delegate, Amina Sanusi (Niger State IPA), Frank Edozie (UKNIAF), Martine Sobey (FCDO) and Eghosa Omogui, Head, SDG and Stakeholder Relationship, NGF

In Nigeria, climate finance remains limited compared to its potential and the country's financial needs. Wider investment barriers and macroeconomic factors significantly influence investment and finance flows in Nigeria. To address this, the Nigeria Governors Forum (NGF), in collaboration with the United Kingdom Infrastructure Advisory Facility, organised a "Roundtable on State Access to Climate Finance." The workshop aimed to help States explore how climate finance can be a tool for achieving their development goals. It focused on navigating the political and financial viability of projects and initiatives to better access climate finance sources.

Additionally, the event provided a platform for States to share experiences and initiate inter-State collaboration with NGF's support. However, accessing this finance presents several challenges for States, including:

LACK OF BANKABLE PROJECTS

Many innovative projects in Nigeria do not progress to the primary finance stage because they are not perceived as bankable by investors. These projects often lack clear financial plans and feasibility documentation necessary to gain investors' confidence.

LACK OF FAMILIARITY WITH PRIVATE SECTOR INVESTORS

State governments and agencies need to engage more with the private sector. Private investors frequently cite a lack of available project-level information and awareness of climate-aligned investment opportunities.

COMPLEX FINANCING STRUCTURES TO SHARE RISKS

Developing blended financial structures is complex and requires extensive financial and non-financial support to bring projects to market.

CLIMATE FUND BARRIERS

Finally, accessing international public climate funds is complex and costly, often requiring specific policies that take time to develop and implement.

However, discussions from the workshop highlighted the ongoing activity and approaches at the subnational governments, that illustrate potential ways of accessing climate finance through the lens of development priorities. These include:

INNOVATIVE FINANCE

States are also beginning to explore state green bonds. Lagos state embarked upon the issuance of a N25 billion green bonds and Gombe State government plans to raise N30 billion green bond to invest in the State's agriculture and infrastructure development. These moves have been positive received by Nigerian capital market stakeholders and demonstrate the potential "crowding-in" effect of successful issuances.

In Jigawa, the Living Carbon Jigawa (LCJ) project uses regenerative agriculture techniques to reduce GHG emission, increase yields and improve smallholder livelihoods. There has also been interest in carbon market finance in Bayelsa (for gas flaring), Kano (for electric kekes) and Ekiti (for forestry projects) amongst other States.

ENERGY TRANSITION AND ELECTRICITY

The new Electricity Act has incited many states to actively pursue regulating electricity within their boundaries, yet few have enacted laws or set up regulatory structures to take advantage of the Act. The impact of this act on the existing market design, alongside other interventions, seeks to boost liquidity in the electricity supply industry with critical solvency challenges. This situation presents both opportunities and challenges for states seeking to expand electricity access leveraging clean or renewable energy sources. Clean energy finance is a valuable potential source of finance for responding to these opportunities.

Lagos state has been among the first to enact its own Electricity law, However, it has yet to conclude the studies and interventions required to establish its own electricity market design and regulatory framework under the new Electricity Act 2023. It has conducted energy audits and is determining its energy gap. Lagos has also sought advice on how to create virtual power plants redirecting excess power generation from solar installations to the distribution network. Katsina is currently in negotiations to procure power and is considering regulating electricity. Kano state has already engaged advisers to determine its energy gap and the mix required to fill that gap.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation Infrastructure and Mobility feature in every state government's policy priorities. Properly designed transport projects can attract carbon market finance and help avoid future emissions. Almost all state

budgets feature roadbuilding projects. However, wider mobility priorities vary - Niger state procured 200 buses powered by compressed natural gas (CNG), Lagos state inaugurated the light railway systems and Ekiti is focused on rural access roads. Taking a climate lens to these transport priorities could be one way to increase their bankability.

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

Agriculture and forestry are major sources of employment and livelihoods in Nigeria. Both sectors are exposed to climate risk and are contributors to GHG emissions - particularly non-CO2 emissions such as methane. There are opportunities to develop climate smart agriculture that improves livelihoods in a sustainable way.

Jigawa, Kaduna and Kano have piloted the System for Rice Intensification (SRI). SRI is a framing practice that uses less water, less seeds, has lower costs of production and leads to higher

productivity compared to paddy rice. It also has a positive benefit for GHG emissions and helps increase climate resilience -and is eligible for carbon market finance. This is a good example of how a development priority can have climate change benefits -and is more impactful than just a narrow focus on climate change.

Ekiti state provides an example of leadership in agricultural, and forestry having built up a substantial institutional capacity with technical support for agro-forestry, ecological and water management, where the state is currently piloting better control of logging, protected areas for biodiversity and watershed management. The state is also seeking funding from AFDB for a Special Agriculture Processing Zone which they seek to engineer as climate-smart intervention from the outset. The state's agricultural policy focus on export Crops cocoa and palm oil features deforestation free frameworks to ensure

eligibility for export to EU and other markets Multiple policy interventions within agriculture and forestry in Ekiti demonstrate the complex and intricate needs of states to align priorities to meet resource conditions of funders and donors.

The Climate change desk at the Nigeria Governors' Forum Secretariat will be a repository of all the materials and resources discussed at the workshop and will together with the UKNIAF partners be reviewing and appraising the priority development projects of the

states to ensure they meet the standards and requirements to access the pool of climate financing discussed at the workshop. The resource materials will be on the NGF website and accessible to all states Investment promotion and climate change offices.

EXPERT SHARES INSIGHTS WITH STATES ON ACCESSING CLIMATE FINANCE

DANIEL YEO is the Senior Climate Advisor at UKNIAF and Technical Analyst for Climate change and other global development programmes. Yeo, who was the major facilitator at the Roundtable on State Access to Climate Finance, gives further insight on State access to climate finance in an Interview with the NGF Media Team.



Daniel Yeo

Do you think States are ready?

States are at the forefront of taking credible climate action – and are key to increasing the amount of climate finance that Nigeria receives. Climate finance is an important additional source of finance for development needs – but to tap into it, we need to change the paradigm. Climate finance is not about financing climate projects, but instead about financing development projects.

How can partnership impact development priorities? Climate finance can be a source finance for existing development priorities that can have an impact on climate. So, it needs the engagement across MDAs – not just Ministry of Environment – it was critical to bring leaders from Finance, Budget and Planning and Investment into this conversation.

What is the progress rate for States so far?

Some States are already taking this approach – through this roundtable, Nigeria Governors' Forum and UKNIAF brought States together to share their experiences and identify what they can do to secure climate finance for their development needs. We will share all the material with other States that were unable to attend and hope to continue to the discussions between States – through the NGF.

What are the current challenges?

- Nigeria faces 5 key barriers to accessing climate finance
- Lack of bankable projects – projects need to have clear political support; a strong commercial or social return; and a risk profile that fairly shares risk between actors.
 - Lack of familiarity with private sector investors – Nigeria's current forex situation makes it even more challenging to

attract international climate finance – however, Nigeria is blessed with a vibrant domestic private capital market – which has a critical role to play in catalysing climate investment. Governments and project developers need to develop a better understanding of the drivers and constraints of domestic finance.

- High barriers to entry – international climate funds typically have a lot of processes and requirements to access them. These create friction and make it hard for countries like Nigeria to access directly.

- Experience needed to structure risk sharing – Financing development projects with a climate lens requires the blending of different sources of finance. These sources will have differing risk appetites – and this requires skilled intermediation to bring them together.

What channels are easier to get bankable projects?

There are three things that successful projects in Nigeria have in common:

- Political support – they have the right level of political and public support.
- Risk profile – they have the right risk profile, that fairly shares risk between actors and investors.
- Strategic case – they have a clear commercial or social return, and a solid financial model. Through what means can State access this finance?

There is a wide range of sources of climate finance that requires some support in navigating and matching to needs, including several UK FCDO supported instruments and programmes such as MOBILIST, FSD Africa and Propcom+.

Is there room for further assistance to States to help them achieve climate finance requirements?

The Nigeria Governors' Forum and UKNIAF will continue to accompany States in their journey – this event is only the start.

PARTICIPANTS' INSIGHTS

AKINYEMI AKINYUWA, Technical Adviser to the Governor of Ekiti State on Green Economy and Ecological Matters, emphasized the need to streamline development plans with climate goals to access available finance. He highlighted Ekiti State's readiness, citing extensive conversations with potential investors and partners. Akinyuwa stressed the need for a catalytic project to spur access to finance.

SHOLA AREBIAKE, Special Adviser and Deputy Director General for the Ogun State Investment Promotion and Facilitation Agency, stressed the importance of state-level preparation for climate change. Arebiake called for technical assistance to help states meet the necessary conditions to access funds. She rated Ogun State's readiness at 7/10, noting the need for expertise to meet fund requirements and highlighting the importance of incorporating climate change initiatives into development programs.

MIKE OBGUEKWE, Agriculture Adviser to the Enugu State Governor, emphasised that while the world is striving to maintain the ecosystem through various reforms, there are additional steps we can take to further mitigate the effects of climate change. He expressed concerns about Nigeria's reliance on funding from crude oil and gas, questioning the future state of the economy if the country transitions to green energy. He stressed the importance of developing a plan to prevent economic collapse during this transition. Obguekwe affirmed that Enugu State is ready for this change but highlighted the need for experts to help the state meet the requirements to access climate finance.



NGF, UNFF AND AFF COLLABORATE FOR SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT, DEVELOPMENT

The Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF), the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) and the African Forest Forum (AFF) have agreed to develop a pathway towards sustainable forest management.

UNFF Director, Dr. Juliette Biao Koudenoukpo, welcomed the governors to the roundtable meeting held on the sidelines of the UNFF19 on May 4, 2024, and highlighted the importance of driving sustainable forests in achieving the Global Forest Goals with the context of the SDGs.

The meeting also emphasized the management and development of peace and security, sustainable livelihoods, and resource assessment on the continent of Africa and the role Nigerian governors can play in forest sustainability.

She also said the UNFF implements its objectives through collaboration with the continent's forum, which in turn implements them at national levels.

AFF's Executive Secretary-CEO, Labode Popoola, in his remarks during the meeting, noted that forestry remained so low on the scale of national issues and that in most countries in Africa, it is not captured in national accounting which should be prioritised as a key to lifting citizens in African countries out of poverty.

"The AFF's purpose is to bring the continent at par with peers on global issues and achievement of the global forest goals, and expressed concern



L-R Taraba State Governor Agbu Kefas; Adamawa State Governor Umaru Fintiri; Edo State Governor, Godwin Obaseki; United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) Secretariat Director, Juliette Biao, Zamfara State Governor, Dauda Lawal and Cross river state Governor Hon Peter Odey during the 19th session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF19) in the United States.

about the state of Nigeria' Forests, which have now become ungoverned spaces in spite of their potential to contribute to the country's sustainable development. The Forum stated its readiness to work with Nigeria to reclaim its past glory in the forestry sector.

"The AFF reiterated the commitment of the UNFF Director, and that the AFF looks forward to working with the states," Popoola said.

In response to the state of forests, as presented by the subnational governments, the meeting noted that issues of deforestation, encroachment and response started over two decades ago. In view of the parlous state of the forestry sector in Nigeria, the meeting also proposed the need for a deliberate and thorough review, starting with Nigeria hosting

a Country-Led Initiative (CLI) that would address all the issues germane to working towards the achievement of sustainable forest management.

The meeting also agreed that there was a need for further deliberation with UNFF through AFF on which issues should be prioritised and taken forward.

The meeting was attended by Governor Abdulrazaq Abdulrahman of Kwara State and Chairman of NGF; Governor Godwin Obaseki of Edo State; Governor Dauda Lawal of Zamfara State; Governor Agbu Kefas of Taraba State; Governor Ahmadu Fintiri of Adamawa State and Governor Babagana Zulum of Borno State. Hon. Peter Odey, Deputy Governor of Cross River State, represented Governor Bassey Out at the meeting.



BAUCHI MAPS OUT STRATEGY TO TACKLE MALNUTRITION

Bauchi State Council on Nutrition is working on modalities for a comprehensive multi-sectoral strategy on nutrition that will help in tackling the problem of malnutrition in the state.

The Bauchi State deputy governor and chairman of the Council, Auwal Jatau stated this at the inaugural meeting of the State Council on Nutrition held recently in Bauchi.

Jatau said the council would take a closer look at the situation of nutrition in the state which will help in identifying challenges, and who are the key drivers to come up with an actionable plan.

"As a government we are determined to improve the nutrition and health outcomes of our people, Governor Bala Mohammed has made a firm commitment to strengthening nutrition policies and programs."

I assure you that the state government is fully committed to providing the financial resources and institutional support needed to implement nutrition strategies effectively

The Deputy Governor noted that the Bauchi State Council on Nutrition is to serve as the highest policy-making body on Nutrition and related activities in the state and

is to coordinate all efforts towards ensuring sustainable food security in line with the governor's agenda as contained in his "Bauchi Project" volume 2.0.

Jatau expressed the state government's appreciation to development partners for their continuous support and assistance towards addressing the issue of malnutrition in the state.

"I assure you that the state government is fully committed to providing the financial resources and institutional support needed to implement nutrition strategies effectively."

The state's development partners at the meeting include CARE International and UNFPA both of whom reiterated their support to the State Council on Nutrition.



KEBBI GOVT. APPROVES CONSTRUCTION OF 3KM WASAGU-TUDUN BICHI ROAD

The Kebbi State Governor, Comrade Dr. Nasir Idris has approved the construction of 3 kilometres road from Wasagu to Tudun Bichi village in Danko Wasagu Local Government Area of the state.

According to a statement the governor's Chief Press Secretary, Ahmed Idris, Governor Idris disclosed when he paid an official visit to the village to sympathise with the villagers over bandits' attack in the area recently.

The governor promised to ensure deployment of more security personnel to the area to beef up security of lives and property.

My administration will do everything possible to protect the lives and property of citizenry. As a government, we will not tolerate any form of criminality or breach of peace

"My administration will do everything possible to protect the lives and property of citizenry. As a government, we will not tolerate any form of criminality or breach of peace," he said.

While describing security as a responsibility of all, the governor urged the people to support the security operatives with credible intelligence to enable them effectively discharge their constitutional responsibility.

Responding, the Village Head of Tudun Bichi, Alhaji Muhammad Mika'ilu thanked the governor for the visit and assured total support to Kauran Gwandu led-administration.

"We are highly appreciative of your efforts in reducing the high rate of banditry in the area. However, we are still requesting for more deployment of security personnel to the area," he pleaded.



AFDB TO PARTNER OGUN GOVT ON SPECIAL AGRO INDUSTRIAL PROCESSING ZONE

The African Development Bank (AfDB) has described Ogun State as a powerful ally in its development programmes and project implementation.

The Special Adviser to the President of the Bank on Industrialisation, Professor Banji Oyelaran-Oyeyinka, made the assertion in a recent interview, after a meeting with Governor Dapo Abiodun at the Governor's Office, Oke-Mosan, Abeokuta.

He said the visit was to discuss on One Agenda, Item 18, that focuses on the development of the Special Agro-Industrial Processing Zone and to clarify the subsidiary loan agreement between the state and the Federal Government.

Today, we have clarity on how best to develop the hub, including the Agricultural Transformation Centre, to ensure that the significant Zone arrangements see the light of the day

"Today, we have clarity on how best to develop the hub, including the Agricultural Transformation Centre, to ensure that the significant Zone arrangements see the light of the day," the AfDB official said.

Meanwhile, Commissioner for Agriculture, Mr. Bolu Owotomo, said the state stands to gain from having many Agricultural Transformation Centres as they will feed the Special Agro-Industrial Processing Zone with raw materials.

He said his ministry is currently distributing inputs to farmers as the farming season approaches to enable them to have bountiful harvest and improve their livelihood.

Owotomo also revealed that capacity building is being intensify led by training Extension Officers to enlighten small holder farmers on how best to use the inputs given to them, calling on farmers to follow climate-smart farming to plant for good harvest.

JIGAWA STATE PARTNERS JOHN DEERE, TATA FOR AGRICULTURAL REVOLUTION



Governor Umar Namadi of Jigawa State has partnered with two global agricultural leaders, John Deere and Tata International, aimed at transforming agriculture in the state.

A statement by the governor's Spokesman, Hamisu Mohammed Gumel, stated that the initiative, took place during a strategic engagement held in Washington, D.C., between the Jigawa State's team of experts and leadership representatives of John Deere and Tata International.

He disclosed that the discussions focused on propelling farm mechanisation, fostering youth involvement in agriculture, and uplifting the livelihoods of farmers across the state.

According to him, a key outcome of this collaboration is the initiation of a pilot project that includes the

procurement of 300 John Deere tractors, slated for delivery to Jigawa State in the near future. This significant investment is poised to revolutionize agricultural practices by bolstering efficiency and productivity among smallholder farmers.

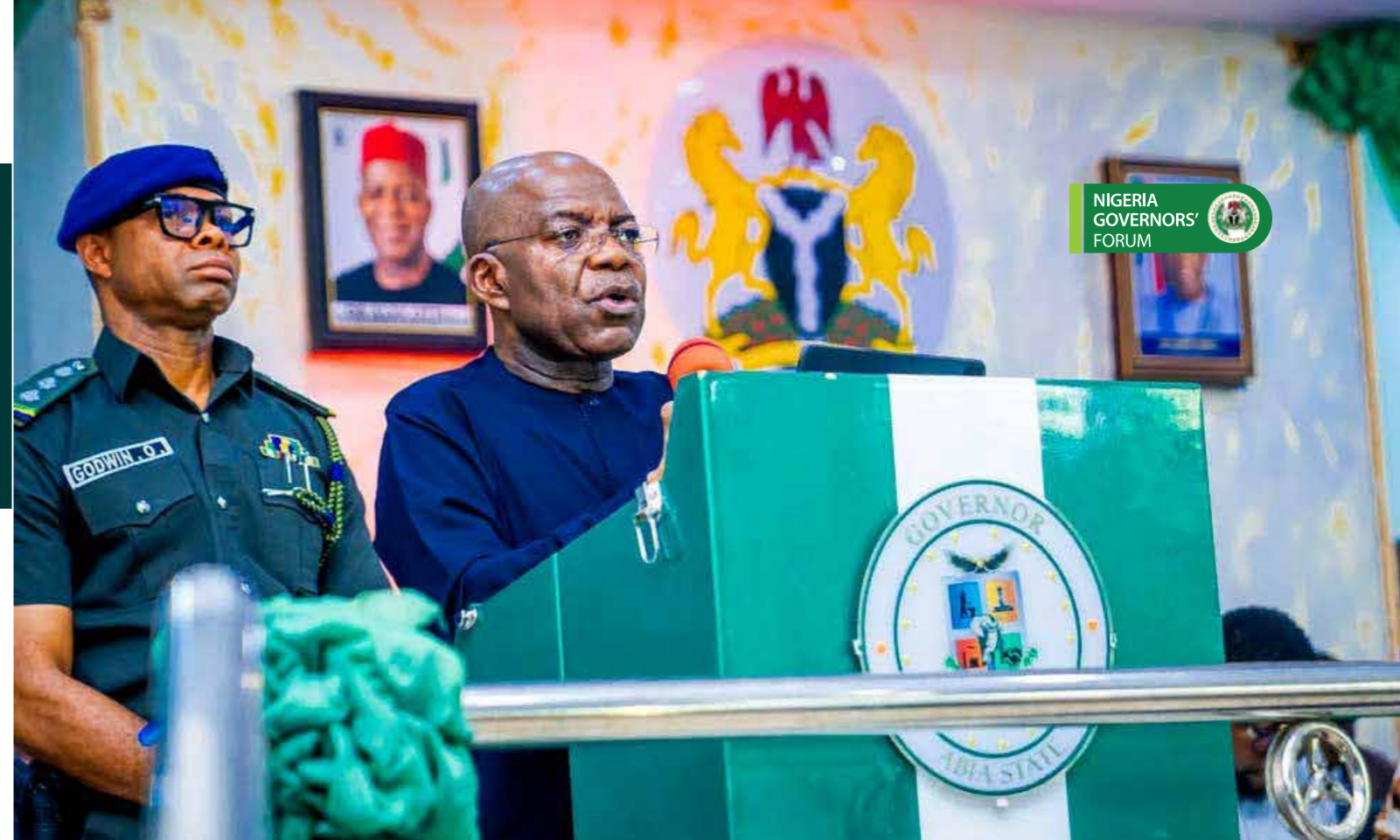
The programme is designed to equip more than 1,200 youths with essential skills in lease and hire business management, heavy-duty equipment operations, and technical maintenance, whereby the sole objective is advancing youth participation in agriculture, which holds the key to long-term prosperity and food security in Jigawa State.

He added that through this initiative, Governor Namadi's administration sought to create a sustainable ecosystem that nurtures entrepreneurship and innovation within the agricultural sector, as

encapsulated in his 12-point agenda for the development of the state.

Speaking about this transformative venture, Governor Namadi emphasized the importance of embracing modern technologies and engaging the younger generation to secure a vibrant future for agriculture in the state. He reiterated his administration's dedication to supporting farmers, particularly the youth, by providing them with the tools and knowledge necessary to thrive in this vital sector.

By collaborating with John Deere, a global leader renowned for its cutting-edge agricultural solutions, and its esteemed dealer, Tata International, Jigawa State is poised to embark on a sustainable agricultural revolution that promises to uplift communities and drive inclusive growth across rural landscapes.



NIGERIA GOVERNORS' FORUM

ABIA UNVEILS ROAD PROJECTS, ANNOUNCES FREE BUSINESS SUPPORT FOR SMES

Governor Alex Otti is set to launch the reconstruction of two key roads in Abia State.

The Commissioner for Information and Culture, Prince Okey Kanu, disclosed this recently during a news briefing.

The 3.5km Osisioma-Ekeakpara Road and the 2.5km Umuode-Bakassi Road in Aba are expected to play a vital role in revitalizing the state's industrial sector, particularly the Osisioma Industrial Complex.

"That road is a very important one because it has infrastructural facilities that will drive the Osisioma Industrial Complex which the state government has started rebuilding.

So, on Wednesday His Excellency will be at ABA to flag the road off," the Commissioner said.

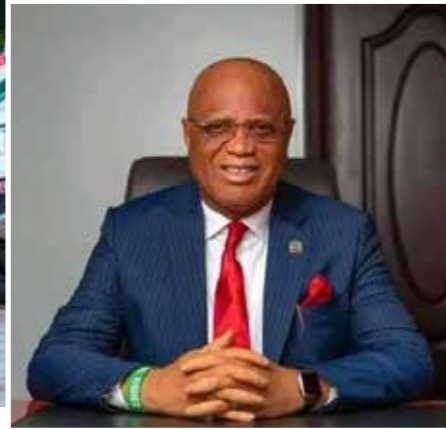
The Commissioner also announced a collaborative effort with the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC). He told newsmen that Professor Moji Adeyeye, Director-General of NAFDAC, will visit Abia on May 15th.

The Commissioner further disclosed, that during the visit, a combined total of 175 free Certificates of Accreditation for Business (CAC) registrations will be offered by both the state government and NAFDAC.

"More importantly, she will meet with stakeholders in the Micro Small and Medium Enterprises

sector particularly those involved in food, health supplements and the production is various medications. There's this drive towards ensuring that there's compliance with certain standards in all those fields to ensure that those who produce the things that people consume stick to certain standards to safeguard the lives of our people.

"During that engagement, the state government will provide about 150 free CAC registrations for Abians and that's through the Ministry of Digital Economy and SMEs. NAFDAC has promised that they would provide 25 free CAC registrations and certifications. The State government will complement that effort by providing 150 free CAC registrations for Abians," he added.



AKWA IBOM GOVT DONATES PATROL VANS TO SECURITY AGENCIES, DECLARES WAR ON CRIMINALS

The Akwa Ibom State Governor, Umo Eno has purchased and handed over Toyota Hilux trucks to security agencies in the state to boost their operations.

This is in addition to fourteen gunboats recently donated by the governor for the security of the waterways.

Presenting the vehicles to the State Commissioner of Police, Waheed Ayilara, Eno noted that it was part of the government's effort at ensuring that the State is rid of criminal elements and remains one of the most peaceful and safest for its citizenry and investors.

He noted that his administration would ensure that peace and security in the State are maintained.

Governor Eno explained further that the state was also setting up a Tactical Command Control Centre to enhance information sharing and synergy among the relevant agencies and thanked the service commanders for the robust relationship between the various security agencies and the state government.

He commended their diligence in managing changes in the command structure without allowing security gaps, adding, "We are determined because the primary duties of any government are to secure the lives and property of its citizenry and their welfare; we are determined to make sure we don't fail in that regard.

He said: "We'll do anything to ensure that criminals flee Akwa Ibom shores, whether it is by sea or land. We are

donating these vehicles towards the realization of those goals and objectives of the government and the benefit of our people.

"I had promised that I'll give whatever it takes to continue to improve security in this state. We had donated the boats, and we will make sure all 14 of them are put to use. We're going to support with land vehicles and other gadgets. We're setting up a Tactical Command Control Centre in Akwa Ibom so that all the services can work together."

The governor, however, cautioned that the vehicles were designated for security operations within Akwa Ibom State and not to be taken outside for other purposes that will thwart government's intentions for acquiring them.



MASS HOUSING, A PRIORITY IN BAYELSA - GOVERNOR DIRI

...APPROVES LAND FOR FG PROJECT, AS DENMARK BACKS UNODC COMMUNITY SECURITY, EMPOWERMENT INITIATIVE

Governor of Bayelsa State, Senator Douye Diri, has said affordable housing for people of the state will be accorded top priority in his second term.

Senator Diri disclosed this recently when the Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer of the Federal Housing Authority (FHA), Hon. Oyetunde Ojo, and the management team paid him a courtesy visit in Government House, Yenagoa.

The governor, who expressed his administration's commitment to collaborate with the Federal Government to attract more development in the housing sector, approved the provision of land for the FHA to actualise President Bola Tinubu's housing vision for people of the state.

He said: "In our first term, we focused more on infrastructure development to open up the state. We saw road construction as our number one priority. But, this time around, we are prioritising housing for our people. Our focal person in the sector will liaise with you to ensure that President Bola Tinubu's dream of providing housing for Nigerians is realised.

"We will acquire land and make it available to the FHA free of charge. We will collaborate with you so that we can build a new Bayelsa."

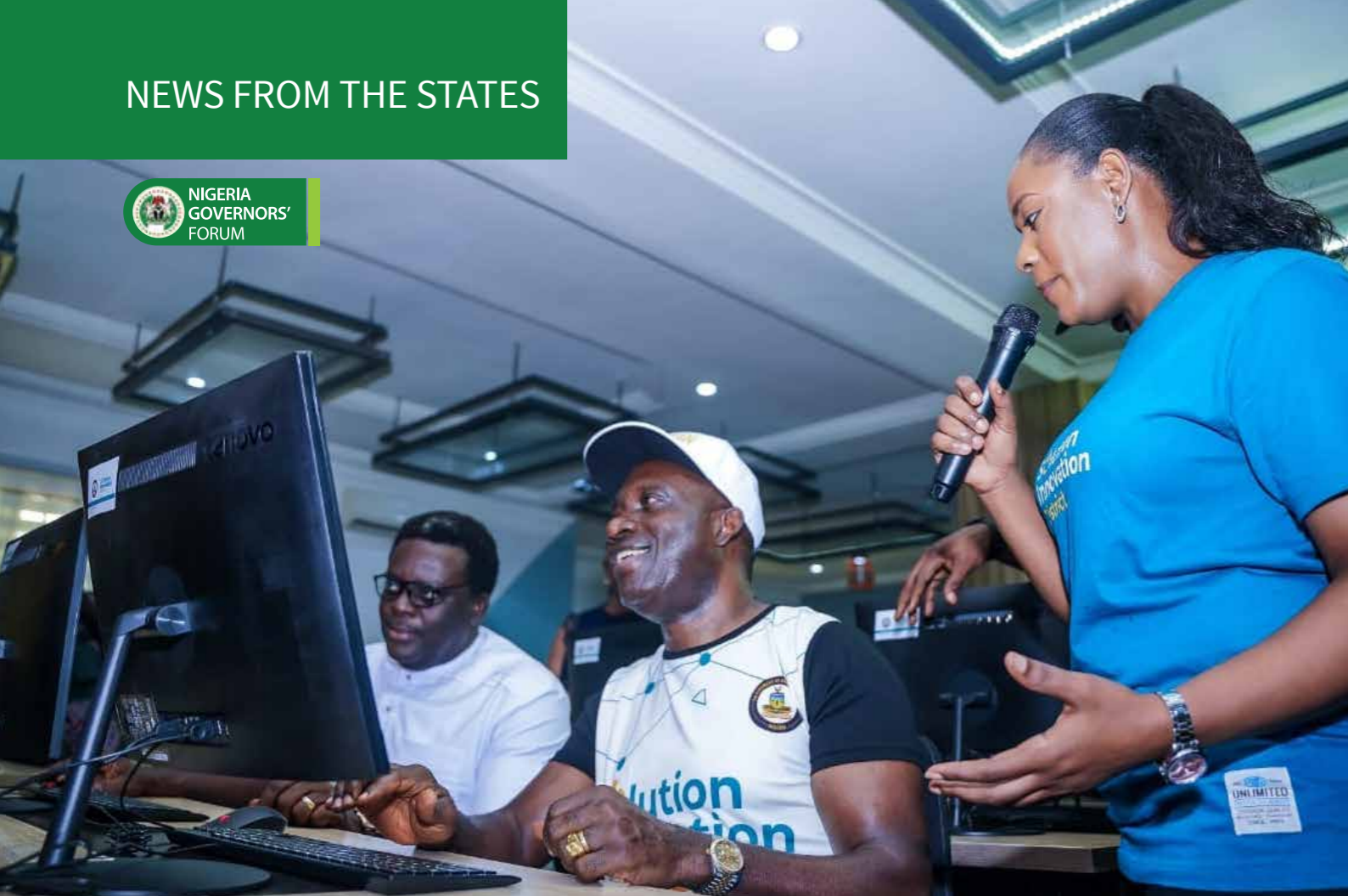
In a statement by Daniel Alabrah, Chief Press Secretary to the Bayelsa State Governor noted that while commending Ojo and his team for consulting with state governments on the Federal Government housing project, the governor urged other

federal appointees to also take into consideration the peculiarities of states and regions in the country in fashioning national policies.

"I commend you for coming to consult with us. Most officers of government stay back in Abuja and make decisions, some of which are inimical to the states. This should be the standard of every official."

Diri stressed the need to map out high and low density areas in the construction of federal housing estates just as he thanked President Tinubu for the ongoing construction of the Lagos-Calabar Coastal Highway.

He, however, advised the federal government to fast-track the project by also undertaking it from the Calabar end.



SOLUDO DIGITAL REVOLUTION AND FUTURE OF ICT IN ANAMBRA

Anambra State swept four awards recently during the ICT peer review session at the 11th National Council on Communication, Innovation and Digital Economy meeting held in Kano State.

At the meeting, chaired by the Minister of Communications, Innovation and Digital Economy, Dr. Bosun Tijani, and hosted by the Kano Governor, Engr. Abba Kabir Yusuf, Anambra won the Overall Best State in Digital Technology Development. In addition to that, Anambra also won the Best State in Digital Infrastructure Technology Development; became the First Runner-up in the category of e-Government Implementation

The Soludo-led administration's partnership with the Tony Blair Institute has given life to a Digital Delivery Dashboard which facilitates a real-time project monitoring for the state's five Solution Agenda

and also a First Runner-up in Digital Technology Human Capital Development.

These four awards were presented to the MD/CEO of the Anambra State

ICT Agency, Mr Chukwuemeka Fred Agbata, who stood in for his boss, Governor Chukwuma Soludo, at the event. Just a few days ago, a team of three Anambra schoolgirls from St. John Vianney Science College, Igbariam in Anambra East Local Government Area emerged winner of the National Girls in ICT Competition organised by the Federal Ministry of Communications, Innovation and Digital Economy.

Team Vianney, which had Immaculate Ebube Ikegwuonu, Camila Anyadike and Oluchi Nweke-Nonso, under the mentorship of Kodex Africa, developed their innovative M-Tag VR solution which they showcased at the event. This groundbreaking VR technology

gives users access to the rich Nigerian cultures, iconic landmarks and other attractions, offering them a unique and exciting learning experience.

These awards and victories not only spotlight Anambra's dedication to tech driven governance, but are also a testament to the state's commitment to excellence, innovation and progress in the digital space. Upon assumption of office on March 17, 2022, the professor of economics immediately commenced the implementation of his well-structured digitisation agenda targeted at moving the state from analogue ways of handling government's businesses to a digital one.

According to the governor, part of the idea was to get many people in the state, especially the young ones, trained in the field of ICT. That way, a generation of tech experts would be raised in the state within the shortest possible time. Already, the results are beginning to show. A series of groundbreaking achievements in the realm of e-government implementation have been recorded in the state.

Within the last two years, Soludo has been able to digitise the State

Executive Council processes, thereby eliminating the need for costly printing and making the process more efficient, cost-effective and sustainable. There's also the setting up of the government Infrastructure in the state according to the ICT Agency's boss, Mr Agbata.

This infrastructure, he said, has set the stage for a digital revolution in the state and that the procurement and distribution of state-of-the-art PCs and laptops by Soludo have advanced the objectives of digitization across the public sector. The recent government's partnership with the Internet Exchange Point of Nigeria (IXPN) and Internet Service Providers (ISPs) in the state is aimed at establishing an Internet Exchange Point focusing on improving interconnectivity and reducing internet access costs.

Today, the reported deployment of a Centralized e-GIS System by the Ministry of Lands has made land administration easier and simpler. In fact, those who operate in that sector describe it as a revolutionary move by Mr Governor. Again, the state-wide launch of the Unified Messaging Service (UMS) has facilitated an enhanced communication and collaboration among the Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) of

the government as @anambrastate.gov.ng email addresses have been assigned to them for seamless communication.

There's also the IT Project Standardisation programme in the state. The implementation of the ITPRS Portal ensures the digitalisation and standardisation of IT projects, and the issuance of certificates serves as a proof of compliance.

The Soludo-led administration's partnership with the Tony Blair Institute has given life to a Digital Delivery Dashboard which facilitates a real-time project monitoring for the state's five Solution Agenda. Currently, there is an all-inclusive draft of the state's ICT Policy document which represents the views of all relevant stakeholders in the tech industry.

This policy document aligns with Soludo's vision of "Everything Technology and Everywhere Technology." And it is hoped that the draft document, when activated, would add great value to the state IT ecosystem. These accomplishments, no doubt, underscore the commitment of Governor Soludo to harnessing technology in governance processes for the betterment of Ndi Anambra.





GOVERNOR YUSUF SIGNS PREMARITAL HEALTH SCREENING BILL

The Governor of Kano State, Alhaji Abba Kabir Yusuf, officially assented to the Kano State Premarital Health Screening Law, which mandates premarital health screening for all prospective couples.

The new law provides that no wedding will be permitted in Kano without the presentation of a health screening certificate for genotype, hepatitis B and C, HIV/AIDS, and other related illnesses.

According to a statement issued by the governor's spokesperson, Sunusi Bature Dawakin Tofa, the law was deemed necessary to reduce the likelihood of children being born with underlying health issues such as sickle cell anemia, HIV/AIDS, and hepatitis.

This initiative aligns with the Kano state governor's commitment to enhancing and providing a conducive environment for the healthcare sector, aiming to make Kano free from or significantly reduce health challenges.

The law also specifies that any individual found in violation of its provisions commits an offense and, upon conviction, may face a fine of up to five hundred thousand Naira, for a minimum of five years, or both.

The law necessitates mandatory testing for HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis, genotype, and other relevant examinations before marriage.

It also prohibits any discrimination or stigmatization against individuals living with HIV/AIDS, sickle cell anemia, hepatitis, and related conditions.

During the signing ceremony, Governor Abba Kabir Yusuf emphasised that the purpose of

implementing the law is to uphold the sanctity of marriages in Kano State and ensure the birth of healthy offspring, free from any preventable illnesses.

Upon approval by the State House of Assembly and endorsement by the governor, the law which was signed on May 6, 2024 becomes effective on May 13, 2024.

It is mandated by the law that any individual intending to marry must undergo testing for HIV, Hepatitis B and C, genotype, and any other relevant tests before marriage.

He added, "furthermore, the law prohibits the formalisation of any marriage contract for individuals planning to marry without presenting a test certificate from a government-approved health facility.

"The law also specifies that any individual found in violation of its provisions commits an offense and, upon conviction, may face a fine of up to five hundred thousand Naira, for a minimum of five years, or both."



NIGER GENERATES N7.03BN IGR IN Q1 2024

The Niger State Government says it generated more than N7.03 billion as Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) between January and March 2024.

Alhaji Mohammed Etsu, the Executive Chairman, Niger State Internal Revenue Service (NGSIRS), made the disclosure recently.

Etsu said that by that impressive collection in the first quarter of the year the service had recorded about 170 per cent growth in its 2024 IGR collection.

"We are glad to announce that the Niger State Internal Revenue Service (NGSIRS) has recorded a remarkable 170 per cent growth in its first quarter 2024 internally generated revenue collection.

"By the service's official report, a total of N7.03 billion was collected for the months of January, February, and March 2024,

This has significantly surpassed the N2.60 billion collected during the same period in 2023

"This has significantly surpassed the N2.60 billion collected during the same period in 2023.

"We strongly believe that with this feat, the service is on track to meet its 2024 budgetary IGR target of N5 billion per month.

"No doubt, we are putting all necessary mechanisms in place to achieve this goal," he assured.

The NSIRS chairman, however, attributed the substantial increase to the robust support received from the state Governor, Alh Mohammed Umaru-Bago, and the effective

strategies implemented by the service's management.

Etsu explained that it was the support of the new administration that resulted in the service's total collection of N21.67 billion in 2023.

According to him, the 2023 collection was a significant improvement from its N16.84 billion collected in 2022.

The executive chairman thanked the state government and the staff of the service for their unalloyed cooperation and support to the service.

He, however, called on tax payers not to relent in payment of the statutory duties in order not to incur the wrath of the law.

"This impressive growth in IGR collection is a testament to the effective leadership and strategic initiatives of the NGSIRS, which means well for the economic development and prosperity of Niger State," he said.

NGF GETS NEW DG



L-R Director General, Nigeria Governors Forum, Dr. Abdullateef Shittu; and the former DG during the farewell meeting at the NGF secretariat in May.

The Nigeria Governors Forum (NGF) has announced the appointment of Dr. Abdulateef Shittu as the Director-General, following the retirement of Mr. Asishana B. Okauru Esq.

Dr. Shittu was first appointed in acting capacity after the retirement of the immediate-past DG Okauru was accepted by the Chairman of the Forum, H.E Governor Abdulrahman AbdulRazaq of Kwara State, who expressed gratitude for Mr. Okauru's years of dedicated service to the NGF.

He was later confirmed as the substantive DG on May 29, 2024.

Until his appointment as the new DG, Dr. Shittu was the Executive Director, Strategy and Research the forum's secretariat. The statement said Shittu brings a wealth of experience and a proven track record of excellence in public administration and governance.

It also expressed confidence that Shittu would continue to drive the forum's strategic initiatives forward.

"As Acting Director-General, Dr. Abdulateef Shittu will lead the NGF with a clear focus on enhancing intergovernmental collaboration, fostering innovative solutions to everyday challenges, and ensuring

the effective implementation of policies that promote sustainable development across all states," the NGF had said in the statement announcing Dr. Shittu's appointment.

The forum also assured that it remained steadfast in its commitment to its mission and objectives, and was confident that the newly-appointed DG would provide the continuity and stability needed during his tenure.

The NGF thanked the former DG for his contributions to the forum's mission and wished him well in his future endeavors while looking forward to a new era of progress under the guidance of the new DG.

NGF RECEIVES POLICY BRIEFINGS ON MINING, HPV VACCINATION



Executive Governors deliberating on matters during the forum's meeting

Chairman, Nigeria Governors' Forum and Governor Kwara State; AbdulRahman AbdulRasaq addressing the Governors during the Forum's meeting in May 2024.

The Nigeria Governors' Forum has received briefings from the Honorable Minister of Solid Minerals Development, Dr. Oladele Alake and its Senior Health Adviser, Dr. Ahmad Abdulwahab, regarding policies and efforts on harnessing the mining potentials of the country and the roll-out of Phase II of the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination exercise in 21 States respectively.

In a communique issued after its meeting held on May 15, 2024, and signed by its Chairman, H.E Governor Abdulrahman AbdulRazaq of Kwara State, the NGF it was briefed by Alake on recent policies, institutional and operational reforms undertaken by

his ministry in harnessing the mining potentials of the country.

It also said the minister sought the cooperation of state governments in his drive to create an enabling business environment for investors, support artisanal and small-scale mining cooperatives, address illegal mining, and de-risk the sector.

The NGF said the minister encouraged state governments to form mining companies and apply for mining licenses.

The forum welcomed the reforms being carried out by the minister but advocated stronger intergovernmental relations in coordinating the sector's activities

from licensing, and surveillance to operational safeguards.

The NGF was also briefed by its Senior Health Adviser on states' progress with expanding health insurance coverage and their performance on nutrition as well as the Primary Healthcare (PHC) Leadership Challenge.

According to the communique, Dr Abdulwahab also informed NGF members about the roll-out of Phase II of the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination exercise in 21 States starting 27th May 2024.

The NGF expressed members' commitment to ramping up efforts at achieving the necessary improvements advocated.



FROM THE SECRETARIAT



Members of staff applauding the former Director General, Nigeria Governors Forum (NGF), Mr. A.B Okauru during his farewell meeting.



Former DG with the Secretariat staff



The Former DG addressing the staff.



Mr. Okauru with the HR Team.



Mr. Okauru with the Health Team.



Former DG with the Agric Desk Team



Former DG with the accounting team



DG, former DG and Executive Director, Alhaji Abubakar Jibia



Former DG with the Economics Desk Team



Mr. Okauru with the Media Team



Former DG with the Maintenance and Logistics team



FROM THE SECRETARIAT



L-R Ebonyi State Governor Francis Nwifuru exchanging pleasantries with Benue State Governor Hyacinth Alia during the 5th Governors Forum meeting in May.



L-R Delta State Governor, Sheriff Oborewori; Zamfara state Governor, Dauda Lawal and Governor of Ebonyi state converging during the Governors forum meeting.



Mr. Eghosa addressing the delegates and attendees at the conference



L-R; Daniel Yeo (UKNIAF), Sally Woolhouse (FCDO), Frank Edozie (UKNIAF), Eghosa Omogui and Martine Sobey (FCDO).



DG, Nigeria Governors Forum Alhaji Abdulateef Shittu giving his welcome address during the event.



Director General Nigeria Governors Forum Alhaji Abdulateef Shittu and Sally Woolhouse (FCDO) during the Roundtable on State Access to Climate Finance in May 2024.



Babalola El-Imam from London Professional Training Center teaching the NGF staff on how to respond to health emergencies.



NGF Staff and the training team.



NGF Staff member practising the techniques.



L-R United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) Secretariat Director, Juliette Biao and Borno State Governor, Prof. Babagana Zulum, having a chat during the 19th session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF19) in the United States.



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