

**NIGERIA  
GOVERNORS'  
FORUM**



# **THE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**AN NGF MONTHLY PUBLICATION**

Vol.1. No. 19, February, 2020



**TIDES  
OF THE  
TIMES**



# GOVERNORS @ DANGOTE'S

Not fewer than a dozen governors visited the much talked about \$12bn Dangote refinery, outside Lagos, which some call a gamble, but others see as a “kings-gambit”. When completed, the refinery will be the biggest in Africa. Not only that Alhaji Aliko Dangote President of the Dangote Group would have accomplished his patriotic dream of wholly indigenising the oil sector in Nigeria.

Tall order, you might say, but Dangote has a history of sound economic foresight that benefits Nigeria. His Faustian bargain with Obasanjo readily comes to mind, where cement exports became unattractive to the country after he invested heavily in cement. At the start of the Buhari administration he doubled his investment in agriculture, particularly in sugar, rice and tomatoes, the result of which is helping government to reduce food imports into the country.

The importance of this refinery when completed can therefore not be overemphasised. That is where the governors come in. For them to see, will make them believe that an economic revolution which will help propel economic recovery in this country is in the offing.

Among the governors that visited the refinery in December include the Chairman of the Nigeria Governors' Forum and Governor of Ekiti State Dr. John Kayode Fayemi, Governor Inuwa Yahya of Gombe State, Governor Simon Lalong of Plateau State, Kaduna's Governor Nasir el Rufai, and Edo State's Godwin Obaseki. Other Governors who toured the refinery include Borno's Governor Zullum, Kwara State's Governor Abdulrazaq, Abia State's Governor Victor Ikpeazu, Bauchi State Governor Bakla Mohammed Kaura and Ogun State's Governor Dapo Abiodun among many more. Lagos State Governor SanwoOlu and Governor Atiku Bagudu of Kebbi State were also at the tour. Some state governors who could not attend the tour delegated their Deputy Governors like Adamawa State's Crowther Seith, and Cross River State's Ivara Esut were also on the tour.

Speaking at the tour occasion which lasted the whole day, Chairman of the Nigeria Governors' Forum, Dr. John Kayode Fayemi said the project would contribute immensely to the economic growth of the nation and provide employment to thousands of Nigerians.

Fayemi described the initiative as “an inspirational initiative by the President of the Dangote Group, Mr Aliko Dangote. It demonstrates the possibility where the government provides the enabling environment with the way the Lagos State government has done for individuals that are serious-minded and have what it takes to excel.

“This is an individual that has put together a \$12 billion project that we have toured almost throughout the day and had to cut it short to be able to attend to other businesses.

“This is pride in Africa and not just to Nigeria. I don't know any-



where in Africa you will find a complex such as this. I don't think that there are many places in the world where you will find a complex as comprehensive and extensive as the one we have been privileged to tour. We are all looking forward to the products that will come out from this place; the plastics, the oil from the refinery and the fertilizers for our agriculture.”

Fayemi said state governments' investment in agriculture would be given a boost by the fertilizer plant which is the largest in Africa.

He urged governments to continue to create an enabling environment through the right incentives and policies, as well as provision of infrastructure needed to attract investors to their states.

Also speaking, Sanwo-Olu commended Dangote for deciding to put the strategic investment in Lagos, adding that the government would continue to do its best to support the smooth completion of the project.

Welcoming his guests, Dangote thanked the governors for the visit to the facilities and assured them that the group would continue to invest in Nigeria to create jobs and make all Nigerians proud. “We will continue to make sure that we are the ones that will lead and others will follow. We want to bring all our monies to Nigeria and invest where we belong to,” he said.

Dangote, however, urged the governors to focus on the areas of health, education and capital development, adding that these sectors should be part of their key responsibilities to their people.

Mr Devakumar Edwin, Executive Director, Strategy, Capital Projects and Portfolio Development, Dangote Group, said that the 650,000-barrels-per-day refinery could meet 100 per cent of Nigeria's requirement of all petroleum products and that there would be surplus for export. The refinery project will create 1,600 jobs and 100,000 indirect jobs and will save Nigeria about \$7.5 billion annually through import substitution.”



## THIS

**IS PRIDE IN  
AFRICA AND  
NOT JUST TO  
NIGERIA. I  
DON'T KNOW  
ANYWHERE IN  
AFRICA YOU  
WILL FIND A  
COMPLEX SUCH  
AS THIS...**



## GOVERNORS @ DANGOTE'S REFINERY



1. L-R: Governor, Babagana Zulum of Borno; Aliko Dangote; Kwara Gov, Abdulrazaq; Ekiti Gov and NGF Chairman, Kayode Fayemi; Kaduna Gov, Nasir el-Rufai; Abia Gov, Okezie Ikpeazu, Edo Gov, Godwin Obaseki and Bauchi Gov, Mohammed Bala, during a visit to the Dangote Refinery in Lagos.

2. NGF Chairman, Kayode Fayemi (left) listens to Dangote Refinery owner, Aliko Dangote (far right) while Gov el-Rufai of Kaduna (left) and Cross River Deputy Gov, Prof Ivara Esu (2nd right) look on.

3. Aliko Dangote (left) and NGF Chairman, Kayode Fayemi during the visit to the Refinery.

4. NGF Chairman, Kayode Fayemi and Aliko Dangote addressing the Press with their colleagues.

5. Aliko Dangote Fayemi receive a bouquet from a little girl.





Guaranty Trust Bank plc

# A little something for *you*

Dial **\*737\*1000#** to buy airtime for yourself between **9am-12noon** and **4pm-6pm** and we'll double your recharge within 24-hours.





# FAYEMI; OPTIMISING THE GRACE TO LEAD

## PUT PEOPLE FIRST, CLERGYMAN CHARGES POLITICIANS

Those who fail to do so will become liabilities and thrown into the dustbins of history”, he said

**T**he chairman of the Nigeria Governors' Forum and Governor of Ekiti State, Dr. John Kayode Fayemi on his 55th birthday said that when one has been given the grace to lead men, he should see himself as being challenged to make a difference in the lives of others, adding that he would continue to focus on the work of God in improving the situations of his society and the country.

“All of the challenges will not go away overnight but you should believe that God is the one that can always use those of us that have been given grace to lead, to be of service to all his children, we have no choice than to continue to commit ourselves to the Service of God.

Dr JKF promises to dedicate the rest of his life to the service of God and humanity, stressing that “a life without service to God and humanity is not a life worth living.”

The Governor who was full of gratitude to God, his wife, his family members and his allies, admonished his well-wishers to keep faith in God by trusting Him (God) to use those chosen to occupy leadership positions to tackle their challenges.

“I have been a beneficiary of God's generosity, because for me challenges are opportunities to make a difference in the lives of human beings, so if you allowed me, let us just focus on the work of God to improve the conditions of our society and Country.

In his remark at the occasion, Bishop of Oyo Diocese,



Most Revd Emmanuel Badejo called on political leaders in the country to put the people above party and personal interests in order to create a prosperous nation.

The Bishop made the call in Ado Ekiti at the thanksgiving mass for the 55th birthday of the Governor of Ekiti State, Dr Kayode Fayemi.

Badejo, who stated that God is calling on leaders to put people above party because the people come first, warned that those who fail to do so would “become liabilities and be thrown into the dustbin of history”.

The clergyman also urged Nigerians to roll up their sleeves to support leaders who want to create a better society.

He noted that the country was “wounded by injustice” and called on leaders to become lights to displace the darkness surrounding the nation.

“We must roll up our sleeves to support leaders and those who want to create a better society. The light of honesty is disappearing; the light is not going round enough. God is calling on leaders to put people above party, to put people above personal interests because the people come first and they are God's greatest legacy. Those who fail to do so will become liabilities and thrown into the dustbin of history”, he said.

While congratulating Fayemi on his 55th birthday, Bishop Badejo hailed the governor for spearheading various people-oriented programmes in the different capacities he had served the people.

The clergyman particularly commended the governor and other Southwest governors for coming up with the Western Nigeria Security Network popularly called Amotekun, saying that the governors have “demonstrated a superior understanding of what it means to prioritise the sanctity of human life”.

In a prophetic manner, the Catholic Bishop said Ekiti might be a small State but it had all it takes to lead Nigeria in the near future.

He prayed God to give Fayemi “good collaborators and trustworthy allies” as he continues to serve the people selflessly.

Other highlights of the birthday celebration which was attended by the crème la de crème from different parts of the country included a panel discussion and public presentation of a book that interrogated his first term in office.

In his goodwill message, Sokoto State Governor, Aminu Tambuwal described Fayemi as “a governor who is not partisan and has proven himself to be pan-Nigeria and had a relationship with everyone regardless of political affiliation”.

Tambuwal added that Fayemi is doing incredibly well as a very accommodating and patriotic Nigerian leader.



Among the dignitaries were State governors: Aminu Tambuwal (Sokoto), Jide Sanwo-Olu (Lagos), Rotimi Akeredolu (Ondo), Prince Dapo Abiodun (Ogun), Atiku Bagudu (Kebbi), Abubakar Badaru (Jigawa), and Dr Hadiza Balarabe, Deputy Governor of Kaduna State; Godwin Obaseki (Edo).

Also in attendance were former Governor of Ondo State, Olusegun Mimiko, former Deputy Governor of Osun State, Senator Iyiola Omosore, Ekiti State Deputy Governor, Otunba Bisi Egbeyemi; former Minister of State for Mines and Steel Development, Alhaji Bawa Bwari and Vice President Kings College, London, Prof Funmi Olonisakin who chaired the panel discussion.

Yoruba leaders include Prof Banji Akintoye and Afenifere leader, Pa Ayo Fasanmi as well as former deputy governors- Prof Modupe Adelabu; Abiodun Aluko were also in attendance.

Others are the Archbishop of Ondo Anglican Diocese, Bishop Christopher Omotunde, Bishop of Ekiti Catholic Diocese, Bishop Felix Ajakaiye, and traditional leaders in the State led by their chairman, Oba Ajibade Alabi.

For Fayemi, the birthday celebration had commenced two days earlier. On Friday, February 7th, a special jumat service had taken place at the Central Mosque, Ado Ekiti. Attended by friends, associates and family members of the celebrant, the entire Jumat service was devoted to thanking God for the Governor's life.

On Saturday, February 8th, a birthday luncheon was held with the informal sector in the state. This was followed and a novelty football match at the Oluyemi Kayode Stadium, Ado-Ekiti. The luncheon with the informal sector was attended by representatives of various associations, unions and communities of non-indigenes among others.

In their goodwill messages, Nigeria Union of Pensioners, Market Women Association, Igbo, Hausa and Ebirra communities among others appreciated the governor for touching the lives of everyone living in

the state as well as allowing peaceful co-existence among different communities.

In his message, the chairman of the Nigeria Union of Pensioners, Chief Ayo Kumapayi who spoke on behalf of the 17,000 pensioners in the state described Governor Fayemi as a promise keeper who has ensured prompt payment of pension allowances and approval of immediate increase in the monthly gratuity fund from 10million naira to 100 million naira monthly, which according to him was unprecedented in the history of the state.

Also the President-General of Ekiti state Market Women Association, Chief (Mrs) Waye Oso commended him for his support for women by appointing them to position of influence.

Mrs Oso urged him not to relent at ensuring that the rights of women and girl-child were protected in the state. She promised the continued support of women for his administration.

The chairman of the Igbo community in the state, Mr Uchenna Madugu described governor Fayemi as a father of the state adding that he had maintained relative peace and provided adequate security in the state for their businesses to thrive.

The novelty football match was organized by the Ekiti State Football Association between Ekiti State FA Under-16 and Southwest Nigeria Under-16.

The match which ended 1-1 draw saw the visitors opening scoring at the 16th minute while the equalizer came on the 23rd minute via an infringement. Shortly after the football match was the command performance of "Ifajuyigbe" at the Adetiloye Hall, Ado-Ekiti.

The play, which was written and directed by Prof Rasak Bakare centred round the heroic deed of the late Lt Col Adekunle Fajuyi, former military governor of the old Western State.

The play which featured some popular names in Nollywood set the tone for the main event of Sunday, February 9th.



Fayemi, Deputy & Spouse



# GOVERNORS, ROYALTY FETE EL-RUFAI @ 60

By Ibraheem Musa

**G**overnor Nasir El Rufai turned 60 on Sunday, 16th February 2020. To mark the milestone, a celebratory event was held on Monday, 17th February 2020 and it included the presentation of two volumes of *These Times*, a compilation of his writings and speeches.

Guests at the birthday celebration showered Malam Nasir El-Rufai with encomiums as family members, friends and associates honoured him at the private event held at Sir Kashim Ibrahim House, Kaduna.

The celebration which featured tributes, testimonies and a documentary, was attended by Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu of Lagos State, Mr Godwin Obaseki, the Edo State Governor and Mr Simon Lalong, Governor of Plateau State as well as Dr Kayode Fayemi, the Chairman of the Nigeria Governors' Forum and Ekiti State Governor. Senate President Ahmad Lawan, Minister of Transport, Mr Chibuike Amaechi and his Finance Ministry counterpart, Hajiya Zainab Ahmed, were also at the occasion.

The climax of the celebration, which was also witnessed by the Emir of Kano, His Royal Highness Muhammad Sanusi II, the Ooni of Ife, Oba Adeyeye Ogunwusi and Mr Adams Oshiomhole, the National Chairman of All Progressives Congress (APC) and other dignitaries, was the presentation of two books on El Rufai's selected writings and speeches, titled *These Times*.

In his birthday message, President Muhammadu Buhari said that "El-Rufai's foresight, wisdom and unusual capacity to mobilise people and resources to actualise dreams stand him out in leadership and administration." The president's statement issued by his Special Adviser on Media and Publicity, Mr Femi Adesina, noted that El-Rufai's entry into public service was truly accidental, but his contributions were deliberate, well-thought-out and long-lasting.

Similarly, the Progressives Governors Forum (PGF) commended the celebrant's leadership, vision and commitment to a united prosperous Nigeria, in a statement signed by Governor Atiku Bagudu of Kebbi State and chairman of the forum.

Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu noted that "whether as Director-General of the Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE), Minister of the Federal Capital Territory or Kaduna State Governor, you have served to the best of your abilities with unquestionable zeal and energy.

"Your reputation as a public servant, who is eager to confront challenges, is well-deserved. It is not surprising that this milestone birthday has come while you are still in active public service," he added.

The Emir of Kano, Muhammadu Sanusi II, commended Malam Nasir for improving education and healthcare in Kaduna State, adding that northern leaders should follow El Rufai's example by investing in those sectors. Oba Adeyeye Ogunwusi, the Ooni of Ife, said that Nigeria needs leaders like El-Rufai as he has "a massive engine capable of pulling anything to achieve result". He described



Kaduna State Governor as the man of the moment, just as he commended his courage in taking tough decisions towards achieve great results.

In her welcome address, Deputy Governor of Kaduna State, Dr Hadiza Balarabe described El-Rufai as an embodiment of the most revered virtues of selflessness and sacrifice.

According to her, the Governor is "promoting unity among the diverse people of Kaduna without bias, and equally empowering the have-nots and the vulnerable with opportunities, thereby overcoming the forces that had held Kaduna down and made important and lasting changes in gender, education, health and development through his relentless deployment of talent, unique style and vision."

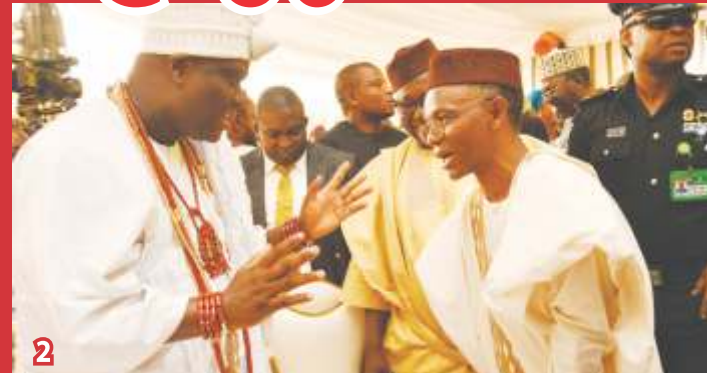
She recalled that in 2015, El Rufai set an example by taking a pay cut and reducing the number of ministries, and political appointees in order to save costs and return smiles to the people after years of absence of social services and infrastructural deficit.

Dr Balarabe said that the day's event was "the celebration of a man who championed the conduct of unarguably, Nigeria's freest and fairest Local government election in Kaduna State in 2018, where electronic voting was implemented for the first time in Nigeria."

In his response, El Rufai admitted that he was humbled by the tributes from his guests and revealed that in all his decisions as a governor, the most daring decision he ever took remains the selection of Dr. Balarabe as his running mate in the 2019 election. El-Rufai explained that his choice of Dr. Balarabe was done to expunge religion and ethnicity off the table in Kaduna State.



# NASIR EL-RUFAI @ 60



1. L-R: NGF Chairman, Dr Kayode Fayemi; fmr Zamfara State Gov, Abdul Aziz Yari Abubakar; Lagos State Gov, Babajide Sanwoolu and their Edo State counterpart, Godwin Obaseki

2. The Ooni of Ife, Oba Adeyeye Enitan Ogunwusi, Ojaja II and the celebrant, Mallam Nasir el-Rufai

3. Gov el - Rufai with guests at the occasion

4. The Emir of Kano, Muhammadu Sanusi II, Ooni of Ife and DG, NGF, AB Ukuru

5. L-R: Kaduna Deputy Gov, Hadiza Sabuwa Balarabe, Minister of Finance, Zainab Ahmed and fmr APC Chair, John Odigie Oyegun



6. Happy guests pose for a photograph

7. Invited guests cutting the cake



8. L-R: Lagos, Edo and Plateau gobs

9. Governors, old and new in a group photograph with the celebrant







# South East Governors' Forum A 2-year scorecard

By Michael Udah

Inaugurated August 2017, the South East Governors' Forum Secretariat in Enugu, has continued to impact positively on Ndigbo in particular and Nigeria in general.

In its first year (August 2017 – July 2018), it fashioned out its vision, mission, mandate and strategic goals, among other things. It should be noted that right from the outset, the organization had established a very cordial relationship with the Department for International Development (DFID) – PERL. As a matter of fact, it was DFID – PERL that drew up the blueprint for the establishment of SEGF and conducted interviews which resulted in the appointment of five Directors – one from Abia, another from Anambra, a third from Ebonyi, a fourth person from Enugu and the last but not the least from Imo State.

Given the history of DFID – its long years of involvement in Governmental, social and economic issues, and more importantly, its readiness to assist developing countries to shed the toga of ignorance and embrace international best practices in their conduct of affairs, it is not surprising that it has, within a relatively short time, helped SEGF to change its previous ways of doing things and embrace contemporary principles and practices which have helped to transform our hitherto not-so-impressive State.

During its first one year, therefore, the SEGF in partnership with PERL (Partnership to Engage, Reform and Learn), an arm of DFID, established rapport with several other partners – Bureau of Public Service Reform (BPSR), e – Health Africa, South East Region Economic Development Company (SEREDEC), Brenthurst Foundation of South Africa, Development Agenda for Western Nigeria (DAWN) Commission and Presidential Enabling Business Council (PEBEC) to mention but a few.

With the assistance of PERL-DFID, SEGF upon inauguration, quickly built a relationship with knowledge hubs in the South East Region of our country – a relationship which has remained mutually beneficial to both parties. This partnership has greatly improved evidence – based regional policy and decision – making in the South – East Region.

In the area of Ease of Doing Business (EoDB), SEGF Secretariat ably, supported by PERL, facilitated stakeholder consultation and input geared towards boosting business and investment across the South East Region.

Specifically within the first one-year of its existence, the South East Governors' Forum Secretariat undertook a two-day study to Development Agenda



for Western Nigeria (DAWN) Commission; hosted the South East Economic Summit (SEES) in November, 2017, just three months after the Secretariat was set up. Themed “Repositioning the South East for Rapid Economic Development”, that singular event had brought face-to-face Government and private sector players where they had to brainstorm to fashion out Action Plans for such thematic areas as Health, Agriculture, Power, Infrastructure, Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) and Media.

Other activities which occupied the attention of the SEGF from 2017 to 2018 include (but are by no means limited to) the conduct



SEGF in partnership with PERL (Partnership to Engage, Reform and Learn), an arm of DFID, established rapport with several other partners – Bureau of Public Service Reform (BPSR), e – Health Africa, South East Region Economic Development Company (SEREDEC), Brenthurst Foundation of South Africa, Development Agenda for Western Nigeria (DAWN) Commission and Presidential Enabling Business Council (PEBEC) to mention but a few



# ...A 2-year scorecard



of the South East Stakeholders Forum on Agriculture held in Abakaliki, Ebonyi State capital on 6th and 7th March, 2018; the Learning Alliance on Fiscal Sustainability Plan (FSP)/Open Government Partnership (OGP) and Budget Engagement; a retreat aimed at developing the SEGF Secretariat's Corporate Plan held in Awka on July 26, 2018 as well as the peer-learning event which showcased Anambra State's Community Charter of Demand, a Pre-Budgeting process which was shared among the four other States of the geo-political zone.

The SEGF has also gone into partnership with e-Health Africa. E-Health Africa is an international Health Intervention body which is interested in assisting Governments to provide requisite healthcare at a much-higher scale to citizens. The SEGF – e-Health Africa partnership has led the latter to second one of its staff to the SEGF at no cost. There were several other activities conducted by SEGF during the period under review.

As for the period August 2018 to July 2019, the South East Governors' Forum Secretariat inaugurated the South East Consultative Committee on Health. This body is made up of Commissioners of Health drawn from the five States of the region.

The regional body (SEGF Secretariat) also provided support to Brenthurst Foundation, a not-for-profit organization founded by the Oppenheimer family of South Africa and chaired by Nigeria's former President, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo.

A major action taken by the SEGF which effects reverberated severally in Abuja, was the review of the 2017 Federal Government Budget held in Enugu. That review revealed the not-too-good status of Federal Capital Budgets of 2017 in the South East in terms of implementation.

Media reports of this exercise literally forced the Federal to embark on a series of "defence measures". Several press conferences were addressed by relevant Ministers whose were responsible for the abandoned or uncompleted projects and/or those poorly concluded. The completion of the mausoleum of the first President of Nigeria, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe was effected partly because of the uproar raised at the Budget review exercise. The formal signing of the contract for the second Niger Bridge was also allegedly effected to assuage the "offended" people of the South East, a revelation which made the said budget review.

Then there was a workshop on the World Bank Report on Ease

of Doing Business 2018 – The South East Perspective. That workshop brought together both State and non-State actors where they examined the ramifications of EoDB with a view to better understanding it and thereby improving the business climate for the overall good of all parties. That was organized by the SEGF in Awka, Anambra State Capital in October, 2018.

Other activities which SEGF carried out between 2018 and 2019 included the development of SEED Model for benchmarking Good Governance in the South East; the electronic publication of e-newsletters (mail chimp weekly newsletters) for communicating SEGF activities and initiatives.

Of course, it (South East Secretariat) also produced a survey report on Education, Healthcare, SMEs and the Environment as well as the Report on Immigration and forceful deportation of Nigerians, especially those of South East extraction.

In conclusion, it will be recalled that the flagship project of a Ring road across the entire South East region is still on the cards. The Ring Road spans about 335km. The mention of that Ring Road in the last meeting of the Governors of the South East Region few weeks ago showed it is very dear to their hearts.

All in all, the inauguration of the South East Governors' Forum has, no doubt, enabled the States' five helmsmen to streamline their activities, become more focused and responsive to the yearnings of Ndigbo.

On the business front, SEGF Secretariat has helped to build synergies among various stakeholder groups – South East Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Organized Private Sector); South East Traditional Rulers Council, etc thereby fastracking the socio-economic and political development of Igbo land and by extension, Nigeria.

The serious attention being paid to the on-going rehabilitation of the Akanu Ibiam International Airport, Enugu is a result of the joint efforts of the South East Governors and the bonding facilitated by the SEGF Secretariat.

With the reforms recently introduced by our principals, the South East Governors, the sky will soon become the starting point of the South East region, their leaders and citizens alike.

–Udah is the Director, Media and Communication, SEGF Secretariat,



# GOV UDOM MERCHANTIZES LASTING PEACE

admire the strides of the man whose dad had departed to rest in peace. Though the state had been synonymous with the mantra of 'Uncommon Transformation' which was propagated by the former Governor, Godswill Akpabio, the current Governor, Udom Emmanuel, has no doubt taken the state to a whole new level of development with his mantra of 'Dakka Da' (Stand Up or Stand Tall) and 'Superlative Performances'.

From the calibre of guests that graced the occasion like Vice President Yemi Osinbajo, former president Olusegun Obasanjo, former Senate President, Bukola Saraki, Chairman of the Nigeria Governors' Forum and Ekiti State Governor, Dr Kayode Fayemi and a host of other high profile political gladiators from both sides of the divide, it was clear that Governor Udom Emmanuel had an agenda of merchandizing lasting peace in the state.

When Governor Udom came into office on May 29 2015, the state was rated amongst those with the highest income inequality, peaking at over 0.54 for the self-employed (predominantly farmers), and 0.44 for the employed-salary paid/wage earners, (UNDP, 2012).

Akwa Ibom was also mentioned as the third state with the highest poverty rate of 27.1% within the South-South zone after Cross River State (31.2%) and Bayelsa state (32.5%), (UNDP, 2012) Eugene (2012) and World Bank (2010).

The National Bureau of Statistics, in 2011, reported Akwa Ibom State to have the second highest unemployment rate of over 25.8% after Delta state in the South-South zone, but leads other states in the zone in terms of income generating opportunities.

Akwa Ibom State was also classified as a predominantly civil service state with the government being the major engine of growth. The main economic activities of the people are fishing (for riverine and coastal dwellers), farming (mostly for upland dwellers), trading, artisanship and white-collar services. The robust public sector employed a significant proportion of the states labour force, and a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of US\$11,179m pre-Udom era.

But in changing the narrative and setting the state towards economic prosperity, Governor Udom Emmanuel designed an economic



framework that would positively turnaround the realities of the state for growth through a well-structured industrialisation drive spread across all major sectors of the State's economy.

He made the promise on his inauguration when in his speech he said, "I have plans to transform the economy of our state through industrialisation and sustained public-private sector initiative, thereby opening up opportunities for growth and improved living standards".



## VISITORS

**TO THE BEAUTIFUL STATE OF AKWA IBOM, WERE WOWED BY THE INDUSTRIAL DRIVE AND REVOLUTION TAKING PLACE THERE. THEY SPOKE ABOUT THIS FEATURE IN HUSH TONES, DEVIATING FROM THE BUSINESS OF BURIAL**

**M**ourners who visited Akwa Ibom State to witness the final journey home of Pa Gabriel Emmanuel Nkanang, father of the Governor were treated to another aspect of the state which though hardly spoken, encapsulates the work that Udom Emmanuel has been sinking his teeth in; that is, building critical infrastructure to engender lasting peace.

The visitors to the beautiful state of Akwa Ibom, were wowed by the industrial drive and revolution taking place there. They spoke about this feature in hush tones, deviating from the business of burial to



# ...MERCHANDIZES LASTING PEACE

To get by with his commitment, Udom ensured the provision of the much-needed legal protections against political and regulatory risks through the state House of Assembly for investors and placed premium importance on peace and security; to keep investors' confidence high in the state as safe for investment.

In discussing industrialisation in Akwa Ibom, there are identifiable projects executed or ongoing towards the much talked about industrial revolution. There are some projects completed and operational; some are ongoing while some were refurbished/resuscitated and now operational. Indeed, a visit to Akwa Ibom State is embellished by, if one is fortunate to route his flight through Ibom Air, a smooth flight on the states carrier with flight attendants announcements in English and Ibibio.

The Electric Digital Metering Solutions Manufacturing Factory, Syringe Manufacturing Factory (Largest in Africa), and Pencil Factory & Toothpick factory are examples of projects under the industrialisation agenda which have been completed and are operating at optimal capacities.

It is worthy of note that the syringe company has the capacity to produce a billion a year. While the Electric Digital Metering Solutions Manufacturing Factory will ensure electricity companies bill Nigerians accurately. Recently, the Port Harcourt Power Holding Electricity Distribution (PHED) and some others in the Niger Delta region ordered over one million meters from the company.

The Flour Mills and Coconut Refinery, Ibom Deep Seaport, Ibom Industrial Park/ Jetty, Plastic Manufacturing Factory and Fertilizer Blending Factory, and construction of 33 Cassava Micro-processing mills are all ongoing projects in the economic diversification agenda of the Governor.

The resuscitation of Peacock Paint Industry and refurbishing of Cassava Processing Factories located at Ikot Okudom, Eket LGA; Nung Udoe, Ibesikpo/Asutan LGA and Ikot Ekang in Abak LGA which was leased to private operators for the production of high quality garri, odourless fufu and cassava flour are examples of revived factories which were once in a comatose state and made operational.

The expected impact of the industrialisation embarked upon by Udom Emmanuel is evident in every projected and present economic variable.

The National Bureau of Statistics rated Lagos, Akwa Ibom, Ogun, Oyo, Rivers states and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja as the most investors-friendly destinations in the country in the first quarter of 2017. The report also showed that Akwa Ibom, which is a major tourism hub of the country, attracted \$18.361m capital



# THE

**EXPECTED  
IMPACT OF THE  
INDUSTRIALISATION  
EMBARKED UPON BY  
UDOM EMMANUEL  
IS EVIDENT IN EVERY  
PROJECTED AND  
PRESENT ECONOMIC  
VARIABLE**

importation.

The bureau noted that this year's record showed a 27.75 per cent improvement over the country's achievements of previous years.

Akwa Ibom State is presently experiencing rapid economic transformation, much faster than the Nigerian average. The quality of life index has grown to more than 300 percent in only almost years.

Under the period in review, the state has transformed into a capital-intensive economy rather than a labour intensive one, as well as a knowledge driven economy for global competitiveness whilst becoming Nigeria's 3rd wealthiest State out of 36 in GDP— estimated at N 6,157 billion annually (approx. USD\$31bn) and a GDP per capita well above national average at US\$ 6,120 per head.

All in all, the state has witnessed developmental strides in Agriculture, Internally Generated Revenue, Aviation Development, Power Generation, Industrialisation, Good road network, Health Care Rejuvenation, Foreign Direct Investment and Social Welfare/Human Capital Development.

One of the guests at the funeral ceremony couldn't help but voice out that no doubt, Akwa Ibom is prepared for the post-oil era.



## GUESTS AT THE FUNERAL OF LATE PA GABRIEL EMMANUEL NKANANG



1. L-R: Adamawa State Gov, Ahmadu Umaru Fintiri; Sokoto State Gov, Aminu Tambuwal and fmr Sokoto State Gov, Attahiru Bafarawa.
2. L-R: Sokoto State Gov, Aminu Tambuwal; Attahiru Bafarawa & Sen Udoma Udo Udoma
3. Fmr Senate President, Bukola Saraki (left) with the DG NGF Asishana Okauru
4. Chairman NGF, Dr Kayode Fayemi (left) in a chat with Edo State Gov, Godwin Obaseki
5. Fmr Kano State Gov, Rabiu Kwankwaso (left) and fmr Gombe State Gov, Ibrahim Hassan Dankwambo
6. L-R: Sen President, Ahmed Lawan; Vice President Yemi Osinbajo; Gov Emmanuel Udom and fmr Sen President, Bukola Saraki
7. L-R: Bukola Saraki; fmr Gov Cross Rivers State, Donald Duke and PDP Chairman, Prince Uche Secondus
8. Mr and Mrs Okauru 9. Sen President Ahmed Lawan and VP Osinbajo 10. Sen Ike Ekweremadu (left) and Dr Kayode Fayemi



## THE STATES AT A GLANCE | Kano

### Power Generation: Gov Ganduje signs MoU with TCN

In a move to further strengthen the state economy with the needed industrial expansion and improved small scale businesses, Governor Abdullahi Umar Ganduje of Kano state has put a final touch towards getting more KVA in the power sector, by signing an MoU with the Transmission Company of Nigeria (TCN), at Governor's Lodge, Asokoro, Abuja, recently.

Ganduje assured that providing electricity to Kano was priority and he would do everything to make it a reality.

He said: "We are ready to accept all the requirements attached to this MoU. And you will see action immediately. Ours is to bring back the lost glory of the state, when industries were reigning."

The Governor further disclosed that, with this new MoU, Kano would be getting electricity from 3 to 4 directions.

"As a government, we have been doing our best to see that electricity problem becomes a thing of the past. Our effort in using our Dams to get more electricity has been a welcome development."

He added that the Hydro Electricity project the state embarked on, of which it is at completion stage, was of small scale due to the fact that the dams are also used for Irrigation farming and cannot be dedicated for the hydro project only.

The Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer of TCN, U. G. Mohammed, who led a powerful team to the governor, assured that with the new MoU and its implementation in place, the problem of electricity would substantially dealt with.

### Rights Protection: NHRC tags Kano human rights friendly



Governor of Kano State (middle) in a group photograph with NHRC staff in Kano, recently

Convinced by the records of human rights protection by the Kano state government under Dr Abdullahi Umar Ganduje, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has described the state as human rights-friendly, calling other states to follow suit.

The assessment was made by the Executive Secretary of

the Commission, Mr Tony Ojukwu when he led members of the NHRC Special Investigation Panel on Sexual and Gender Based Violence to pay a courtesy call to Governor Ganduje at his office.

"While we appreciate what the Kano State Public Complaints and Anti-Corruption Commission is doing, we commend the gov-

ernor, Dr Abdullahi Umar Ganduje for doing very well in human rights protection. The governor is doing extremely well in this all-important direction," Ojukwu said.

According to him, the choice of Kano for the sitting of the Special Investigation Panel of his Commission, was not by accident.

### Ganduje disburses N100m for Masters, PhD students in France

As fulfillment of the Kano/France Joint Scholarship Programme 2019/2020 academic session, Dr Abdullahi Umar Ganduje has approved the release and disbursement of the sum of One Hundred Million Naira (N100m) to France universities where Kano students are undergoing Masters and Doctoral Degree programmes.

Kano State government had entered the agreement with French Embassy in Nigeria, where lecturers from

tertiary institutions in the state are sent to further their studies to Masters and PhD levels. Some of them also proceeded to Doctorate Degrees after completing their Masters Degrees.

Lecturers come from state-owned universities and other institutions of higher learning in the state, like University of Science and Technology, Wudil (KUST), Yusuf Maitama Sule University, Kano State Polytechnic, among others.

### Kano seeks stronger ties with UK in Education, Health, Agric. Sectors

To further strengthen the sectors of education, health and agriculture in Kano state, Governor Abdullahi Umar Ganduje solicited for stronger synergy between the state and United Kingdom, hinting that policies around the sectors are deeply entrenched to have great impact on human development.

He disclosed this when he was receiving the British High Commissioner to Nigeria, Her Excellency Miss Catriona Liang, who paid

him a courtes call at Government House, Kano, assuring that the state is ready to always see that interventions that come to the it are supported and sustained.

In the education sector he made reference to the recently implemented free and compulsory primary and secondary schools education policy, explaining that, "Just recently we came up with this policy, which we know is a heavy loaded policy statement. Which needs all hands on deck."



## THE STATES AT A GLANCE | Ogun

### Gov Abiodun lifts embargo on LG accounts

In order to ensure effective administration of the third tier of government in Ogun State, the Governor, Prince Dapo Abiodun, has lifted the embargo placed on bank accounts of all the 20 Local Government Areas in the state.

The defreezing of accounts took effect from Monday February 17, 2020.

Governor Abiodun announced this at the Strategic Session for Transition Committee chairmen and members of all the Local Government Areas in the State.

The workshop with the theme, "Towards a New Local Government System in Ogun - Doing Things Differently", was held at the Executive Council Chambers, Governor's Office, Oke-Mosan Abeokuta.

Prince Abiodun who described local government as the closest to the people, said for the people to feel the impact of government, those at the helm of affairs at the council level must embark on masses' oriented projects and be fair in their dealings with them.

He said though they were not elected, the process of their appointment was consensus, as community and party leaders were involved in their selection as a corollary of the inclusive approach to governance in the state.

This, he noted, underscores his call that they must perform excellently to justify the confidence reposed in them.

"The process through which you were appointed was a consensus oriented one. I did not sit down here at Oke-Mosan and appoint anyone. I allowed your leaders and party faithful sit down in your various local government Councils and present to us those they consider best for them and the people.

"I am proud that the process was successful and that is why following your appointment, there was hardly, if any, complaints or rancour across the length and breadth of this State. From all intents and purposes, you are truly the representatives of the people of your various local governments and we will accord you that respect", he noted.

The Governor who explained the mantra of his government to the local government administrators, said the vision was to provide qualitative leadership that would create a conducive environment for public private partnership which was considered fundamental for economic growth and individual prosperity of the people. He urged them to key into this vision and replicate same in their various localities.



NULGE Nat Chairman, Ibrahim Khaleel

Governor Abiodun called on them to take advantage of the geographical location of the State by attracting investments to their local governments, however, charged them to be Inclusive and refrain from taking arbitrary decisions, but that which reflects the collective will and desires of the people.

"You are closest to the grassroots. Be focused and provide qualitative leadership. When you take decisions, consult your people. Take decisions that reflect the collective will and desires of your people and do not impose taxes and rates that are not known to our laws. It's extortion and I won't encourage that", he advised.

On security, the Governor enjoined them as the Chief Security Officers of their Local Governments, to ensure adequate security, as they would not achieve any meaningful development without security.

"No investor would invest in crime prone areas", Abiodun added.

He said his administration in the last seven months, had carried out lots of reforms, which include, setting up of the State Investment Promotion Agency (OGUNINVEST), and the State Public Private Partnership Office, aimed at attracting investors and improving ease of doing business in the State.

In the area of infrastructure, he said 38 roads had

been rehabilitated across the State, with two newly constructed ones ready for commissioning.

He further disclosed that contract for the construction of the Ijebu-Ode - Epe road which would be completed in twelve months time had also been awarded.

While urging the new LG administrators to replicate the programmes of the State in their respective areas, he informed that 5,000 units of houses would be built for low income and middle income earners at affordable cost in Abeokuta, Ila-ro, Ijebu-Ode and Sagamu.

He charged them to brace up for the challenges ahead as his administration continues to make strides in agriculture, education, health, human capital development, youth and empowerment generation as well as digitalization, among others.

Speaking earlier, the Commissioner for Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs, Hon. Afolabi Afuape, noted that the retreat was to get the members better informed of government programmes and policies and to expose them to local government administration's peculiar roles for better performance.

In his presentation, the guest speaker, a professor of Local Government and Development Studies at the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Prof. Mike Adeyeye, explained that local government was an important tier of government but was generally regarded as surbordinate in the development process.

He said though local government was endowed with great potentials which provides the best platform to take people out of poverty, it was however weighed down by weak mechanism of local accountability in terms of stewardship and social impact, low internal revenue base and near-dependence on Federal Allocation.

Prof. Adeyeye posited that to do things differently, local governments needed to engage in State-Local, Local-Local government collaborative governance, be fiscally and politically accountable, get people's inputs in project execution, adopt e-governance as well as citizens approach in running their councils.

Speaking in an interview, the Transition Committee Chairman, Odogbolu Local Government Area, Hon. Obafemi Onakoya said the retreat was a right step in the right direction as it would help them have good understanding of the State vision and make them more creative in approaching developmental projects in their various Council areas.



L-R: NGF Chairman and Ekiti State Gov, Dr Kayode FAYEMI; Osun Gov, Adegboyega Oyetola and Gov Rotimi Akeredolu of Ondo State, during the NGF January meeting



CEO EduMarshall's, Stella Blaize with Osun State Governor



Cross-section of Gobs at the meeting



Gov Ifeanyi Okowa, Aminu Tambuwal and Kayode Fayemi share a laugh during the meeting



A section of gobs at the meeting



Gobs exchanging views



# PHOTOSPEAK

MONTHLY PUBLICATION



Governor, Adegboyega Oyetola



Kaduna State Governor, Nasir el-Rufai with Minister of Communications and Digital Economy, Dr. Ali Pantami



During the meeting



Govs Mai Mala Buni of Yobe, Abdullahi Sule of Nasarawa and Simon Lalong of Plateau



Shaking pleasantries



NGF Chairman, Kayode Fayemi and his Deputy, Aminu Tambuwal in a discussion



# NGF AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

By Olatunde Akande

There is no gainsaying that agriculture is the mainstay of the Nigerian economy. It is considered a catalyst for the overall development of the nation and remains fundamental to its economic growth and development. The sector is estimated to employ about 70% of the country's labour force and contributes about 25% to the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP). It presents several unique opportunities to improve food and nutritional security. Thus, its development, especially at the sub-national level can't be overemphasized due to its critical importance for ensuring food security, employment generation, poverty reduction and for stimulating industrialization and overall economic diversification in the states.

It is essential that for the country to meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 1 & 2 of eradicating hunger and poverty by the year 2030 will require a profound transformation of the country's food and agricultural ecosystems. Research has shown that yield per hectare in Nigeria could be increased with improved agricultural input, mechanization and irrigation. This could translate to increased agricultural productivity per capita if substantial investment in agriculture rises to as high as 10% of the budget as stipulated in the Maputo Declaration of 2003, which the country signed on to.

Budgetary allocations at the national level since 2003 to date, have hovered from the lowest allocation of 0.9% in 2015 to the highest allocation of 5.41% achieved in 2008. While in the past five years, the national budgetary allocations to Agriculture have ranged from 2016 (1.25%), 2017 (1.82%), 2018 (2.01%), 2019 (1.5%) and 2020 (1.73%). It is clear that from the low level of national budgetary allocations to agriculture, a lot more is required to stimulate the sector for national growth.

Unfortunately, the budgetary allocations for agricultural interventions at the sub-national level have fared no better and have also been grossly inadequate. Analysis of states budgetary allocations for the past ten years, show that there is no silver lining on the horizon, with most states averaging between 1% to 3% of budgetary allocation to the agriculture sector.

In a bid to increase food productivity in the country, the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) launched the Anchor Borrowers' Program in November 2015 to support farmers across various competitive value chains with access

to finance, quality inputs, extension services and markets. To date, over N276 billion has been released to almost 1.5 million smallholder farmers. Additionally, the CBN also banned the official sale of foreign exchange for importation of agricultural items such as rice, palm kernel, vegetables, poultry and tomato products into the country.

In August 2019, the Federal Government also closed all land borders in a bid to tackle smuggling of food products especially rice, poultry, tomato and spur the growth of the domestic agricultural sector. The land borders remain closed as at today.

However, despite the courageous steps taken by the Federal Government and the CBN to stimulate agricultural production in the country, private sector investment to fully commercialise the sector has been few and far between and sadly the sector remains largely dominated by small holder farmers who practice subsistence farming and largely struggle to overcome significant obstacles such as limited access to patient finance, high quality agricultural inputs at the right price, post-harvest losses, weak market linkages and substandard commodity storage.

Despite the low budgetary allocations to the agricultural sector at the sub-national level, several state governments have started deploying strategies to unlock private sector investments in the agriculture sector with varying levels

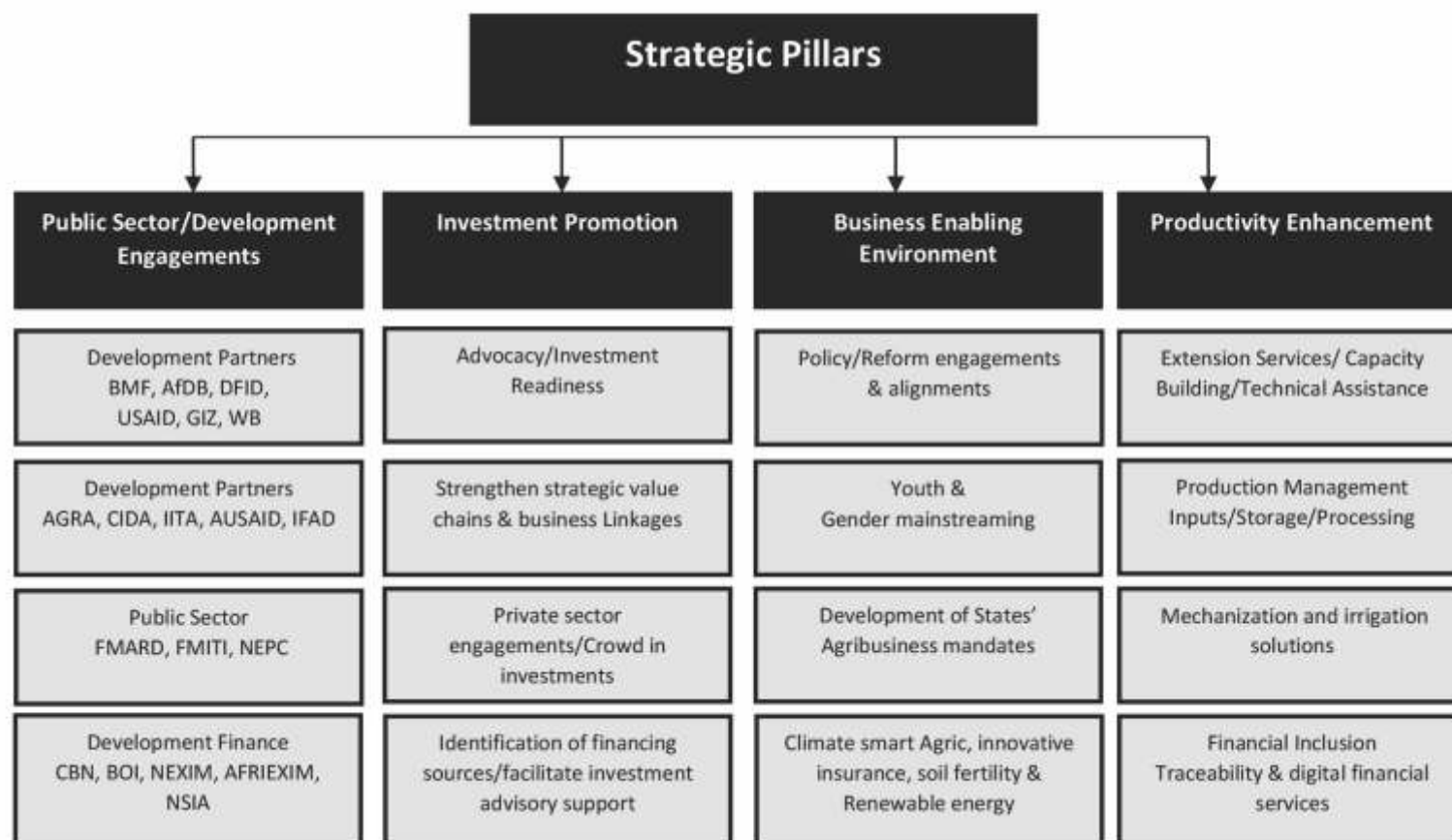
of success. Recent notable private sector investments at the sub-national level include the Tomato Jos processing plant and the Arla Foods Damau Milk Farm project, both domiciled in Kaduna state. Also worthy of mention is the partnership agreement between Ekiti state and Promasidor Nigeria Limited, to drive the company's backward integration initiative to utilize the facilities at Ikun Dairy Farm to improve local sourcing of materials for production of the company's Cowbell and Loya milk brands.

## DESPITE

**THE LOW BUDGETARY ALLOCATIONS TO THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR AT THE SUB-NATIONAL LEVEL, SEVERAL STATE GOVERNMENTS HAVE STARTED DEPLOYING STRATEGIES TO UNLOCK PRIVATE SECTOR INVESTMENTS IN THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR WITH VARYING LEVELS OF SUCCESS**



# NGF AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY



In order to increase private sector investments in agriculture at the sub-national level, state governments will need to prioritize agriculture by treating it as a long-term sustainable business and not just solely as a development agenda with social impacts. Efforts geared towards achieving this goal will require states to actively engage with development partners to develop Responsible Agricultural Investment Principles (RAIP) to create an ecosystem that will attract private investments into the sector.

The involvement of private sector investments at the sub-national level can't be overemphasized, as it will not only help commercialise agriculture in the states, more importantly, it will ensure small holder farmers have access to technology and inputs needed to boost productivity and household nutrition, increase participation in markets through a value chain approach and improve access to financial services.

In line with the strategic agenda to promote and increase investments into the agriculture sector especially at the sub-national level, the Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF) has revamped its agricultural unit to drive this strategy in close collaboration with state governments, development partners, Federal Government and other critical stakeholders.

In order to achieve this ambitious agenda, the NGF has designed an 'Agriculture Development Strategy - ADS' which aims to support the development of a vibrant and diversified agricultural econ-

omy at the sub-national level, which will collectively act as a powerful engine of economic growth and diversification in the states.

The overarching theme of the ADS will be commercialization of agriculture and promotion of agribusiness as these constitute the greatest opportunities for job creation and lifting people out of poverty.

In line with this, the main objective of the ADS will be to enhance food and nutrition security at the sub-national level. Other key objectives of the ADS will include inter alia;

1. Improve quality of engagements between State Governments and key sector stakeholders;
2. Strengthen the productivity and livelihoods of small holder farmers;
3. Facilitate value chains and linkages to create agribusiness opportunities;
4. Promote job creation at the sub-national level

As a consequence of these objectives, the ADS will focus on three key priorities namely:

1. Investment Promotion
2. Enabling Environment
3. Productivity Enhancement

It is anticipated that the attainment of these three priorities will be achieved through regular engagements and collaborations with



# ...AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

core development partners such as the AfDB, BMF, DFID, USAID, public sector partners such as FMARD, NEPC & FMITI and development finance institutions such as CBN, BOI, NEXIM, NSIA.

The continuous engagements with the development partners/public sector/development finance institutions in achieving the three agriculture priorities, make up the fulcrum of the ADS Strategic Pillars as shown in the Figure below.

## 1. Investment Promotion:

Empirical evidence has shown that many state governments have identified attracting private sector investments and economic diversification as two fundamental priorities to agricultural development at the sub-national level.

It has also been premised that increasing agricultural expenditure in line with the Maputo Declaration will multiply agricultural productivity over ten times over. Unfortunately, with the paucity of funds allocated to agriculture both at the national and sub-national levels, productivity yield has been suboptimal and will continue to be at that level. There is thus an urgent need to seek funding from the private sector to catalyze the sector.

Investing in agriculture, especially in Sub Sahara Africa, is one of the most effective ways of reducing hunger and poverty, promoting agricultural productivity and enhancing environmental sustainability. However, for any investment to have a positive impact on agricultural production and productivity, it must contribute to capital formation at the farm level and the competitive value chains to which it is linked.

In line with this, one of the main thrusts of the Investment Promotion Pillar of the ADS, will be for the NGF to proactively engage with collaborators to identify opportunities to facilitate private sector investment, to reinforce state governments' efforts to build a robust agricultural economy to support economic diversification away from an oil dominated economy.

NGF's core activities under the Investment Promotion Pillar will include inter alia:

- i. Advocacy/Investment Readiness;
- ii. Facilitate Value Chains and linkages to create agribusiness opportunities;
- iii. Private Sector engagements/Crowd in investments;
- iv. Identification of financing sources/facilitate investment advisory support

## 2. Enabling Environment:

Of an estimated 71 million hectares of cultivable land in the country, less than half is currently been used for arable farming. There is thus no gainsaying that there is tremendous potential to turn the

country into a food secure nation if the appropriate policies are in place and implemented.

Government policies, both at the national and sub-national level could better support the enabling environment for agricultural development by encouraging private sector investments in agriculture. Inadequate capacity among sector stakeholders also inhibits the development of strategic partnerships that would enable them to increase productivity, pursue and advocate economic reforms that will facilitate the development of the agriculture sector.

One of the key challenges in agricultural policy formulation and implementation is inadequate coordination between various Min-

istries, Departments & Agencies (MDAs) and state governments. As a consequence of this dilemma, the NGF will seek to actively bridge these gaps for a more efficient and effective policy coordination. In the same vein, the NGF will support policy engagements that will involve a wide variety of stakeholders, including the private sector, business associations and development partners to advocate for a better agribusiness enabling environment.

The enabling environment for making investments depends on essential public infrastructure which includes roads and electricity, which farmers and the private sector cannot be expected to provide. This requires State Government action and supportive policies and institutions. For enhancing the capacity of business to promote agro-industry investment, state governments will need to consider the following essential enablers:

- i. Land tenure and property rights;
- ii. Infrastructure development;
- iii. Establishment of Investment Promotion Agencies;
- iv. Ease of doing business initiatives;
- v. Development of Responsible Agricultural Invest

## ment Principles

NGF's core activities under the Enabling Environment Pillar will include inter alia:

- i. Policy/reform engagement and alignments;
- ii. Youth and Gender mainstreaming;
- iii. Development of States Agribusiness mandates;
- iv. Support enabling environment for sustainable Agric development

## 3. Productivity Enhancement:

According to the Agriculture Promotion Policy document (2016-2020) of the Federal Government, it was highlighted that overall yield per hectare for most crops grown in the country over the past decade have been attributable primarily to expansion of area under cultivation rather than yield improvements.

Farming in the country is dominated by small holder farmers,

## ONE OF THE KEY CHALLENGES IN AGRICULTURAL POLICY FORMULATION AND IMPLEMENTATION IS INADEQUATE COORDINATION BETWEEN VARIOUS MINISTRIES, DEPARTMENTS & AGENCIES (MDAS) AND STATE GOVERNMENTS



## ...AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

who largely practice crude farming techniques, with low productivity. Crop production is mainly rain fed, while farm power among small holder farmers in most parts of the country is largely human or animal driven, with heavy reliance on the use of hoe and other hand tools, thereby limiting the amount of land that can be cultivated and by extension, the productivity of individual farmers.

Increases in agricultural productivity, especially for small holder farmers will certainly lead to increase in growth and will help to alleviate poverty. To sustainably feed itself, the country must close the yield gap by using productivity enhancing technologies such as upgrading to mechanization, utilization of improved seed varieties, application of fertilizers and irrigation sources.

NGF's core activities under the Productivity Enhancement Pillar will include inter alia:

- i. Enhance productivity and livelihood of small holder farmers;
- ii. Extension Services/ Capacity Building/Technical Assistance;
- iii. Production Management (Inputs/Storage/Processing);
- iv. Mechanization and Irrigation solutions;
- v. Financial Inclusion (Traceability & Digital Financial Services)

**INCREASES IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY, ESPECIALLY FOR SMALL HOLDER FARMERS WILL CERTAINLY LEAD TO INCREASE IN GROWTH AND WILL HELP TO ALLEVIATE POVERTY**



## NGF GETS AGRIC ADVISOR



Olatunde Akande is a Development Finance practitioner with core experience working across sub Saharan Africa, in the promotion and development of MSMEs and a track record of working with Smallholder Farmers, Producer Organisations and Agro businesses in various countries across Africa.

He was until recently, the Director of Portfolio Management at the Africa Enterprise Challenge Fund (AECF), a subsidiary of the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) in Nairobi, Kenya, where he was responsible for providing strategic direction to the portfolio department. He also managed the organisation's investment portfolio Fund across 26 Sub-Saharan African countries.

Prior to joining the AECF, he served as the Special Assistant on Development Finance to the Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria. Whilst at the CBN, he successfully led the team that designed and rolled out the nationwide implementation of the Anchor Borrowers' Program, which since its launch in November 2015 has supported over 1.5 million smallholder farmers with access to finance, quality inputs, extension services and markets.

Before public service, he has also worked at the International Finance Corporation (IFC), African Capital Alliance (SME Manager) and First Funds Limited (First Bank of Nigeria Plc).

Olatunde has an MPhil in Development Finance from the University of Stellenbosch Business School, Cape Town, South Africa, where he graduated Cum Laude and top of his class. He also has an MBA from the Middlesex University Business School, England.

In December 2018, he and his team at the CBN were presented with 'Special Recognition' awards by His Excellency, President Muhammadu Buhari, GCON, for the design, implementation and success of the Anchor Borrowers' Program. He resumed at NGF February 2020



## THE STATES AT A GLANCE | Osun

### Sultan to Oyetola: 'You're a man of impeccable character'



The Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Muhammad Sa'ad Abubakar, has described Governor Adegboyega Oyetola of the State of Osun as a humble man with impeccable character worthy of emulation.

Abubakar, who was in Osun to join other royal

fathers at a one-day National Summit on Security organised by the Centre for Black Culture and International Understanding, revealed that he calls Oyetola "Mr. Humility".

The monarch urged other leaders in the country to emulate the Govern-

nor's humility and unique leadership style and also implored Osun citizens and residents to continue to support his administration. "Your Governor is a man of impeccable character, who would not let his people down," he added.

### Osun govt begins massive road construction across senatorial districts

The Osun State Government has disclosed its readiness to commence massive road construction across the three senatorial districts in the State.

The road network according to the government would help to decongest traffic within and outside the State

and make life easier for the residents, particularly the motorists.

This was disclosed by the Commissioner for Works and Transport, Mr Remi Omowaye, at a press conference jointly addressed by the Commissioner for Information and Civic Orienta-

tion, Mrs. Funke Egbemode, shortly after the weekly State Executive Council Meeting on Monday, at the EXCO Lounge, Governor's Office, Abere, Osogbo.

The roads totalling about 54.3km in length will cost the State a sum of N5,245,729,794.95.

### Cultural Day: Oyetola celebrates with workers, presents N1.2bn bonds to retirees

Governor Adegboyega Oyetola of the State recently celebrated the year 2020 Cultural Day with workers in the State, just as he presented bond certificates worth N1.2 billion to retirees enrolled under the Contributory Pension Scheme.

Presenting the bonds at the Olukemi Olufunke Kolawole Lake Resort, State Secretariat, Abere, Osogbo, Governor Oyetola, appreci-

ated the retired workers for their service to the State and their understanding and patience.

Oyetola, who described the retirees as elder citizens, said they have contributed significantly and meritoriously to the upliftment of the State. He reiterated his administration's commitment to the welfare of both active and retired workers' in the State.



### Osun partners WAEC on examination fraud

Governor Adegboyega Oyetola of Osun State has said his government is ready to work with the West African Examination Council to tackle examination malpractice in the state.

Speaking at a ceremony for the permanent office complex of the examination body in Osogbo, the state capital, Oyetola maintained that his administration was impressed by WAEC's various interventions and developmental programmes.

The governor, who described the examination body as a critical part of the educational profile of the state, which had played a huge role in tackling examination malpractice, protecting the integrity of its examinations, as well as steadily improving the quality of students, gave the assurance that his administration would provide the needed support to preserve the integrity of the Senior School Certificate Examination in Osun.



## THE STATES AT A GLANCE | Gombe

### Gov Inuwa releases N605m to scale up NSHIP across Gombe

Gombe State Governor, Alhaji Muhammadu Inuwa has approved the release of N605 million to the Nigeria State Health Investment Project (NSHIP), through the Gombe State Primary Healthcare Development Agency to enable it scale up its intervention of ensuring that at least one fully functional Primary healthcare facility in the five local government areas of Kaltungo, Nafada, Shongom, Funakaye and Kwami.

It would be recalled that NSHIP, in collaboration with Gombe State Government, successfully revitalised 85 PHCs in the other 6 LGAs of Akko, Balanga, Gombe, Billiri, Dukku and Yamaltu Deba through the Performance Based Financing (PBF) approach.

In a press release by the senior special assistant (Media and Publicity) to the Gombe State Governor, Mr Ismaila Uba Misilli, the focus of the intervention includes: renovation of the infrastructure, provision of basic equipment and drugs, enhanced health worker motivation through the payment of performance bonuses to the staff and strengthening institutional management at both health facilities and the Local Government Health Authorities.

“This intervention will ensure that every ward



has at least one fully functional Primary healthcare centre with all the necessary basic tools to provide the basic minimum package of care to the people 24 hours a day.”

The revitalization process is expected to be completed by end of June 2020. When completed, it will make Gombe to be the first in the country to successfully revitalize 1 PHC in every ward of its state inline with Mr President's desire.

“The approval of this counterpart funding for NSHIP is an unprecedented move, where a state is using domestic resources to fund a Performance Based Financing (PBF) programme,” the statement added.

The governor had earlier during a meeting with a World Bank delegation jointly led by task team leaders, Mr Gyuri Fritche and Fatima Abubakar Mustapha, pushed for the scaling up of the project

to the remaining 5 LGAs so that the entire populace will enjoy the benefit therein, following which the two parties agreed to escalate it on a 40%/ 60% basis with Gombe providing N605 Million while the World Bank provides the balance of 1.5m dollars from the International Development Association, IDA resources for the NSHIP project allocated to the state.

The Nigeria PBF pro-

gramme started in 2011 with 3 States of Adamawa, Ondo and Nasarawa. It was scaled up in 2015 to all the remaining 5 States of North East following the Boko Haram insurgency in the region. By the design of the additional Financing for the project, the states of Bauchi, Gombe and Taraba are to cover only 50% of their LGAs while Borno and Yobe cover 100% of their LGAs.

## THE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY TEAM

### Director-General

Asishana B **OKAURU**

### Executive Director (Fin & Admin)

Abubakar **JIBIA**

### Executive Director (Res & Str)

Abdullateef **SHITTU**

### Head Media Public Affairs

Abdulrazaque **BELLO-BARKINDO**

### Snr. Publications Officer

Halima S. **AHMED**

### NGF Health Advisor

Dr. Ahmad **ABDULWAHAB**

### Agric Economist

Bunmi **AKANBI**

### Researchers

Abdulaziz **OLORUNISHOLA**

### IT

Bassi **HEMAN**

Ubong **ESSIEN**

### Senior Economist

David **NABENA**

### Photography

Saeed **SANUSI**

**Legal Advise:** Chijiok **CHUKU**



# THE FORGOTTEN PRINCESS

## RACHAEL JOLADE OSHO (1910-2020)

By Bisi Adeleye-Fayemi

**O**n June 1st 2018, I was in a convoy from the Akure Airport to Ado-Ekiti. My husband DR Kayode Fayemi was being led back into Ekiti by excited party people and Ekiti citizens. As we got to the outskirts of Ikere-Ekiti, I saw two old women running besides our vehicles, waving brooms and shouting, 'Okò arugbo ti de ò', 'The husband of the aged is here'. One of the women looked like she was in her eighties, and my heart was in my mouth as she ran with the energy of someone three decades younger. The Social Security Scheme for the elderly known as Owo Arugbo, (money for the elderly) which was one of the key achievements of the JKF1 administration (2010-2014) was abruptly discarded when he left office. During the JKF1 period I also coordinated a Food Bank/Soup Kitchen project for the elderly and other vulnerable people. As we found our way into Ado-Ekiti that day, other elderly citizens joined in the excitement of running alongside the convoy for as long as they were able to. JKF had promised that he would revive the much-loved social security scheme that had enabled so many elderly citizens live lives of dignity and independence if he won the election. The sheer joy and excitement on the faces of these old people that day was a sight to behold.

In June 2019, the staff of my Ekiti Development Foundation started the process of compiling names and doing due diligence for 'Ounje Arugbo', ('Food for the elderly', a rebranded version of the previous Food Bank project) which we formally launched in September 2019. During the registration exercise, my staff came back from Ikere-Ekiti and told me that one of the old women they had documented there did not just need help from the Ounje Arugbo project. She would need a lot more. Mama Jolaade Osho's name had been given to the team as one of the beneficiaries to be registered, but she could not make it to the registration center because she was too frail. My staff decided to go to her home, where they knocked on Mama's door for over twenty minutes before she opened it for them. She was found living in such filth and squalor, they were shocked.



That is how Mama Jolaade Rachael Osho became my adopted mother. I got her a new place to stay near her family home, employed two carers who worked in shifts, and got a doctor to check on her regularly. She never lacked anything till she drew her last breath.

Rachael Jolaade Osho was one of the nine children of her mother, Mrs Abigail Oyebade Osho, and a father with several other wives, Mr Benson Osho of Apelua compound in Okeruku quarters of Ikere Ekiti over a century ago. In trying to determine Mama's age, we came up with a range from 105-115. Based on respected sources from the town, it has been determined that she was not less than 110 years old. Mama was a Princess, from one of the Ikere ruling families. According to the history she recounted, Mama Osho witnessed the installation of four Kings in Ikere kingdom during her lifetime. Even though Mama lacked material wealth, she was richly blessed with good health and a very long life. Mama Osho didn't receive any formal education. However, she was hard-working and ventured into weaving and sales of the popular cotton fabric known as

"KIJIPA." She spent most of her youth trading in fabrics and agricultural products such as cocoyam and palm kernels.

As was customary during her time, she was married off to her first husband known to her as 'Akowe Agba'. She did not know his real name. She was not happy in the marriage so it did not work out. Mama Osho got married again, this time to Mr Alakatakiti Sakiu who sadly died, leaving her alone in the world. She then moved back to her father's house in Apelua compound, Ikere. Mama lost all her children to untimely deaths thirty-forty years ago. This resulted in a life of agony, stigma and when she was no longer able to fend for herself, poverty.

Mama Osho was not the only elderly person in Ekiti State living under such circumstances. Since her case became public in July 2019, I have taken over the care of three other old women just like her. One





## THE FORGOTTEN PRINCESS

of them has children, but they are unable to fend for themselves not to talk of their mother.

In Yoruba communities, no woman is childless, every woman is a mother. Some women never have biological children. However, they join in raising the children around them, and when they pass on, those adopted children become part of her legacy. Sadly, these positive values have been eroded. Mama Osho had biological children of her own but they tragically pre-deceased her. Due to her age and lack of support, she slipped into grinding poverty. She was hounded, abused and abandoned by people who did not know any better. She was labelled a witch. Another lesson learnt from my relationship with Mama, is the issue of a lack of documentation and how we are allowing critical aspects of community memory to fade away. We discovered that there were no photographs of Mama Osho, except for the ones we started taking of her in July 2019. We have managed to piece an account of her life together using our interviews with her and various sources but it is still quite sketchy. I would love to see a documentation project that records the experiences of elderly citizens in our society before they pass on. There are still many Mama Oshos in our communities who live in isolation and penury, with only their fading memories for company. Memories no one is interested in, but which we so badly need as a society that is failing on so many levels. This is something that can be taken up by private foundations, faith based organisations or State Ministries of Arts, Culture and Tourism in collaboration with young researchers.

**IN YORUBA COMMUNITIES, NO WOMAN IS CHILDLESS, EVERY WOMAN IS A MOTHER. INCLUDING WOMEN WHO NEVER HAD BIOLOGICAL CHILDREN**

Mama Osho lived her last days in peace and dignity, as is the right of all people. On January 27th 2020, the day of her passing, Mama had breakfast and took a nap. When she woke up she requested for pounded yam, her favourite meal which she ate almost every day. She went to the back of her house to feed the two big chickens she had been rearing to give to me and JKF. When she was done, she went back in, placed her head on her chest and slipped away peacefully. She had no aches or pains and she was not ill. Her time was just up. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to play a role in Mama's life, albeit very briefly. If my team had not found Mama last year, and she had died alone in her room, she would have been buried immediately and unceremoniously, with hardly anyone to mourn her.

Mama kept telling everyone around her that I was her daughter who had left long ago and had come back. I am not sure if she meant it in the metaphorical sense or, due to her very old age, she truly believed it. In the end, what matters is that Mama died happy, knowing she



was loved and cared for. Time and people abandoned her, but God did not forget her. The first time I met Mama last year, I promised her that when she dies, people will know she has children. Tomorrow, we will bury Mama. She will lie in state with coral beads on her neck and on her wrists like the Princess she was. People will file past the remains of the frail, helpless old woman who was teased, taunted and declared worthless because she had no one to care for her. She will be buried like the valuable human being she was, and I am sure she has a place waiting for her in heaven.

I am humbled by the kind words of many people from around the country and beyond who have been touched by Mama's story and have sent messages of solidarity and support. Please remember, there are still many like her around. Let us seek them out and care for them. Rest in peace my dear mother. You have earned it. I will never forget you.



## Meeting of Health Commissioners



NGF Health Advisor in a conversation with State Health Commissioners



Registration at the occasion



NGFS Head of Legal Chuks Chijioko; the Minister of State, Ministry of Health, Sen Mamora and NHIS Ex Sec, Faysal applauding at the occasion



Minister of Health, Prof Osagie Emmanuel Ehanire; Minister of State, Sen Adeleke Mamora and Dr Faysal



Participants in a group photograph with the minister of health



Dr Ahmad Abdulwahab sharing views with participants



# GROW YOUR EXPORT BUSINESS WITH FIDELITY



We Are Fidelity. We Keep Our Word

Contact Us: +234 (1) 448-5252  
true.serve@fidelitybank.ng



Fidelity Bank Plc  
INC 103923

FOLLOW US:     

[www.fidelitybank.ng](http://www.fidelitybank.ng)



## THE STATES AT A GLANCE | Osun

# Insecurity: Oyetola calls for synergy with traditional institutions

Governor Adegboye-ga Oyetola has said the current scale of security challenges in the country requires a more cordial relationship and engagement between the government and the traditional rulers

for a more effective approach to security delivery.

Oyetola said this in Osogbo while speaking at a National Summit on Security organised by the Centre for Black Culture and International Under-

standing. The theme of the summit is 'Security and Insecurity in Nigeria; The Role of Traditional Institutions.'

According to him, the traditional institution is the closest body to the

grassroots and the custodian of the people's culture and tradition.

The governor therefore, advocated that government should regularly engage with traditional rulers while programmes such

as the security summit should also be consistently held at the state and national levels for optimum effect.

## Demotion: NULGE President, workers appreciate Oyetola for pardon

The president, Nigeria Union of Local Government Employees (NULGE), Osun State chapter, Comrade Adeyeye Jacob Adedeji, has appreciated Governor Adegboye-ga Oyetola for reversing the demotion of some local government workers who embarked on further studies without approval.

Adeyeye who expressed the Union's appreciation to the governor while fielding questions from journalists in Osogbo, said with the pardon, "Oyetola has proven that he belongs to the grassroots."

Similarly, some of the affected workers, whose demotion was reversed, thanked Governor Oyetola for pardoning them despite acting contrary to the civil service rule by embarking on further studies without approval and urged their colleagues to always go through the appropriate channel and procedures while seeking to upgrade themselves academically.



## Oyetola transmits Amotekun Bill to State Assembly for approval

Osun State Governor, Gboyega Oyetola has endorsed the draft bill for the establishment of Western Nigeria Security Network

codenamed "Amotekun".

The Chief Press Secretary to Governor, Mr Ismail Omipidan, confirmed the endorsement to news-

men in Osogbo.

He said that the decision was taken at an emergency meeting of the State Executive Council, adding that

the endorsed bill was immediately transmitted to the state House of Assembly for consideration and possible ratification.



## THE STATES AT A GLANCE | Kebbi

### Rigata Festival boosting Kebbi's economy through tourism

The Kebbi Rigata Festival has the potential of boosting the state's economy through the tourism sector.

The Kebbi State Commissioner of Information and Culture, Alhaji Mamuda Muhammad Warra stated this while delivering a key-

note address at the opening of cultural entertainment of the 2020 Yauri Rigata and Cultural Festival.

He also said that the riverine Festival of Yauri, whose history was traced to 200 years ago was full of riverine manoeuvres and water

sports, as well as other entertainment will now hold annually.

According to him, one of the cardinal essences of giving the festival a boost by the State Government is to have a multiplier effect in boosting the tourism sector, particu-

larly of the Yauri Emirate and the state at large.

He said there is a global paradigm shift and a boost in the tourism sector of the country that called for the modernization of the Rigata

festival of the Yauri people to meet present realities and attract tourist, which led to the adoption of Rigata by the state government to serve as one of the cultural events in the state.

### College of Surgeons treat 295 patients in Kebbi

The West African College of Surgeons (WACS) in collaboration with Kebbi Government have provided free medical treatment to 295 patients in the state.

The free medical outreach commenced targeted more than 200 patients from the 21 local government areas of the state.

The state Commissioner for Health, Alhaji Ja'afar Mohammed, made the disclosure at a brief closing ceremony to wrap-up the programme at the state Medical Centre, Kalgo on Sunday that many patients benefitted from the surgery.

He added that "from the onset of the outreach till date, over 295 patients have been treated successfully and

are receiving medications at their various domains."

Mohammed thanked Gov. Atiku Bagudu "for the concern and financial support toward providing free healthcare to people of the state."

The commissioner also commended the surgeons for considering the state as one of their areas for service to humanity.

The wife of the governor, Dr Zainab Shinkafi-Bagudu, who was represented by the Special Adviser on Women to the governor, Hajiya Zahra'u Wali, said that the exercise recorded significant impact, especially on the lower class of people who could not afford to pay the bills of their different operations.



### Maternal Mortality: Procter & Gamble partners Kebbi State Government

One Million Pampers have been donated by Procter & Gamble company to mothers in Kebbi State.

The diapers were distributed to support maternal and child healthcare at a ceremony held at Raha Primary Health Center (PHC), Bunza Local Government Area of Kebbi State.

Speaking about the partnership, the P&G Africa Director for Government Relations & Public Policy, Temitope Iluyemi said, "At P&G, we deliver our promise to make everyday life just a little bit better for our consumers. Our brands im-

prove the lives of people in the communities where we live and work.

"We believe in being a force for good and a force for growth wherever we operate. As such, our operations touch thousands of lives with economic prosperity and our citizenship efforts in Nigeria touch over 5 million people. We are grateful for this opportunity to lend our support to the promotion of maternal and child health through increased immunization and antenatal care programs in the state," Mrs. Iluyemi added.

She added that the com-

pany will support the Kebbi state government's efforts of reducing infant mortality rate in the state by increasing immunization in areas with low immunization rates.

In his remarks, the state Commissioner for Health, Alhaji Jafa'ar Mohammad, said that the intervention of the company would go a long way in improving the hygiene of babies and nursing mothers as well as improvement of quality healthcare in the state.

"In the same vein, it will stimulate the intake of immunisation and Antenatal Care (ANC) coverage.





## THE STATES AT A GLANCE | Sokoto

### Sokoto establishes micro-finance bank; disburses N1bn soft loan

Sokoto state government has disbursed an interest-free loan of N1 billion to traders and artisans in the state.

The disbursement of the loan was done at the flag-off of the state micro finance bank in its effort to improve the lives of the citizenry and accelerate socio-economic development.

Governor Aminu Waziri Tambuwal, who flagged off the operations of the Giginya Micro-Finance Bank in Sokoto, stated that “the loan is going to be revolving in nature and would be paid back on monthly instalments in two years for others to benefit.”

Giginya Micro-Finance Bank is the first indigenous

bank in Sokoto state licensed by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN).

Tambuwal also assured that the state government is poised to grow the financial base by sourcing for N2 billion from the CBN, “to support our traders and all those at the micro, small and medium level of the economy.

“Moreso, the bank is planning to grow its deposit base from major stakeholders- contractors, state government, parastatals, agencies and placement from individuals and corporate bodies,” Tambuwal added.

The bank, according to him, will also key into the Islamic banking window to provide various services of

Islamic Sharia allowable in banking transactions such as Mudaraba, Murabaha, Salam, Ijara and Istisna.

The governor emphasized that his administration, is “ready to continuously empower traders and artisans to make their lives easier through provision of non-interest soft loans for their various businesses.



Sokoto State governor, Aminu Tambuwal (2nd left) presenting a cheque to one of the loan beneficiaries



## THE STATES AT A GLANCE | Plateau

### Grazing Reserves: Plateau signs MoU to kick-start implementation

Plateau State has begun the process of implementing the National Livestock Transformation Program (NLTP) with the signing of a memorandum of understanding with two companies that will begin operations at the Wase and Kanam Grazing Reserves.

During the signing of the MoU at the Government House Rayfield-Jos, Plateau State Governor Simon Bako Lalong expressed delight that the initiative is gradually becoming a reality after the initial setbacks occasioned by misinformation, politicization and skepticism that drew unnecessary resistance.

He said through robust engagement, enlightenment and dialogue, the earlier fears were dispelled leading to the acceptance of the program by both farmers, pastoralists and businessmen.

He said “when the NLTP was initiated, it was erroneously misinterpreted by those who wanted to play politics and discredit it. I told my people that as their Governor, I can never bring anything that will cause them pain and poverty. Because I was in the NLTP Committee, I understood clearly that Plateau State will not only benefit from it but will use it to create jobs and address the farmer herder attacks which almost destroyed the peace of our people.



“After the engagement with stakeholders, people embraced it because it is business. It has nothing to do with ethnicity, religion or tribe. Those who had taken over and converted for personal use most of the grazing reserves of the State were behind the incitement and lies alleging that we wanted to sell the State to one group or the other. When I threatened to retrieve all the shared grazing lands from them, they kept quiet and retreated. Of the 7 grazing reserves, the only ones still available are the Kanam and Wase reserves which we are going to use for this pilot phase” he explained.

He said the State which

is among the five selected for the pilot phase will benefit from the 15 billion that has been earmarked, using a purely private sector led template.

Senior Special Assistant to the President on agriculture and coordinator of the NLTP Andrew Kwasari said the programme has a lot of benefits to the country as it is comprehensive enough to cover all those involved in the Livestock industry with value chain addition.

He commended the Governor of Plateau State for remaining focused despite distractions from various quarters, saying he will soon be praised and vindicated not only by his

people, but even his critics.

The Secretary to the Government of the State Prof. Danladi Abok Atu signed on behalf of the State Government while representatives of Sahel Consulting Agriculture and Nutrition Ltd. and Integrated Diaries signed for their companies.

The two companies are to develop infrastructure and facilitate the establishment of diary, meat, foliage and related companies that will cut across various livestock species. They will also facilitate human capacity development of the local citizens who are expected to drive the pro-

cess.

The event was attended by the Deputy Governor of Plateau State Prof. Sonni Tyoden who is the Chairman of the State Livestock Transformation Program (SLTP). A team of investors from Netherlands led by Klaas Struiksma, was also at the signing ceremony where they pledged to work with the government on strengthening the program and investing in the vast opportunities available in the Livestock sector. Prof. John Wade, Secretary of the SLTP later led the delegation on a visit to Kanam and Wase grazing reserves.

### Northern States Governors' Forum congratulates Fayemi @55

The Northern States Governor's Forum has joined the family, friends, associates and entire people of Ekiti State in rejoicing with Chairman of the Nigeria Governors' Forum, Governor John Olukayode Fayemi on the occasion of his 55th birthday.

A statement from the Chairman of the Northern States Governor's Forum and Governor of Plateau State, Simon Bako Lalong, described the celebrant as an accomplished gentleman, technocrat, administrator and politician who has demonstrated trust, competence and patriotism in all his assign-

ments.

Lalong said: “Governor Fayemi has given his best to the nation and Ekiti State in particular by deploying his vast academic and social activism endowments in addressing critical challenges”.

He said the Nigerian Governors Forum under the leadership of Governor Fayemi has been responsible and responsive to the stability of the country because he has galvanised the kind of confidence and support required by the Buhari-led administration to deliver on the mandate of Change.



# Zenith Bank **SME Facility**

Beauty | Confectionery | FitFam

Grow your business with a Zenith Bank SME Facility for the Beauty, Confectionery and FitFam industries, at only

**9%** per annum



*Terms and conditions apply*

Bank the Eazy way with **\*966#**  
EazyBanking



For enquiries and feedback, kindly contact **ZenithDirect**, our 24hr interactive Contact Centre:

+234 1 278 7000, +234 1 292 7000, 0700ZENITHBANK  
zenithdirect@zenithbank.com

[www.zenithbank.com](http://www.zenithbank.com)