

**NIGERIA  
GOVERNORS'  
FORUM**

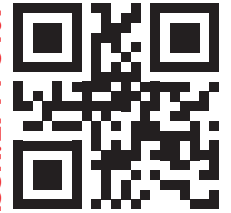


# **THE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**AN NGF MONTHLY PUBLICATION**

Vol.1. No. 34, November, 2021

ISSN: 2714-5107



# *Expanding* **NGF's Frontiers**



## NGF will continue to partner AfCTA on employment creation, capacity building - Fayemi

**Being a Keynote Address by H.E. Dr Kayode Fayemi, Governor of Ekiti State & Chairman, Nigeria Governors' Forum at the Subnational Strategy Workshop of the National Action Committee on African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement**

It is my pleasure to welcome you all to this Strategy Workshop put together by the National Action Committee on African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement in collaboration with the Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF). This workshop is designed with the aim of developing the plans to domesticate the Agreement which was signed in July 2019 for implementation at the subnational level.

The objective is to distil the agreements' significant opportunities for Nigeria that drive job creation and capacity building within the States. With the creation of a single liberalized market for trade in services for the continent, the AfCFTA enables both the trade in products and services as well as human capital to thrive with the elimination of "red tape" through the reduction of tariff and non-tariff barriers and the simplification of custom procedures.

According to the African Development Bank, the Nigerian economy is projected to grow by 2.9% in 2021. With industries such as energy, manufacturing, agriculture and mining contributing significantly to GDP, all of which are expected to grow exponentially with the increase in technology and investment, the country is well on its way to be-

come a multi-sector giant. However, this growth can be achieved better by availing the opportunities enshrined within the AfCFTA, with new and improved trade opportunities creating enhanced regional supply networks, domestic job opportunities, and capacity building. For Nigeria to benefit fully from these opportunities and positioned competitively, the subnational governments need to incorporate consideration for the agreement into their development plans.

In setting the context for this strategy workshop, I would like to focus on two (2) of these opportunities: Regional supply networks and Employment creation and Capacity Building.

### 1. Regional Supply Networks

One of the primary benefits initiated by the AfCFTA concerns regional supply chains of which the opportunities are multidimensional. Firstly, local Nigerian businesses have new opportunities regarding regional exports, with newly created supply chains made both efficient and sustainable through the agreement. However, by developing subnational strategic plans, and carefully implementing them, States can also leverage domestic markets of goods

and services and map to address domestic consumption first, and then subsequently to meet export requirements.

Progressive policies and simplified customs procedures make regional trade more enticing for domestic producers, and additionally increase foreign currency in the country. Secondly, established regional networks offer lucrative investment opportunities for both local and international financiers. Requiring capital injections in the distribution and logistics supply chain, as well as transportation infrastructure, the AfCFTA has created new business opportunities for multiple sectors while increasing direct investment in the economy. Finally, supply chains enable regional demand to be met, with Nigerian products and services utilized not only domestically but in neighbouring countries and across the continent. Nigeria is already utilizing regional trade opportunities, contributing approximately 76% of total trading volumes in the Economic Community of West African States region. The AfCFTA will only further enhance this trend, creating new opportunities and spurring economic and trade growth.

### 2. Employment Creation and Capacity Building

The AfCFTA has created significant opportunities for Nigeria to drive job creation and capacity building. With the creation of a single liberalized market for trade in services for the continent, the AfCFTA enables both the trade in products and services as well as human capital. Accordingly, Nigeria, with a high number of multi-sector professionals compared to other regional markets, will be able to expand knowledge and expertise cross-borders. Also, within the country, States can improve their capacity through the exploitation of State factor endowments and knowledge and skill transfers. Inter-state competitiveness can stimulate job creation in various multi-sectors through investment and implementation of development plans. The result is, therefore, beneficial, with the agreement serving as a foundation for continental, national and subnational human capital development.

In closing, domesticating the strategic plan will ensure that as a stakeholder, government will play her role and in the development of State programmes factor in the opportunities from the agreement- bringing the opportunities closer to local businesses and more importantly, where we can as a country expand economic participation and commercial activities to deliver more productive jobs for our population. We are aware of long-standing challenges that affect the ease of doing business, including issues around multiple taxation and regulations as well as infrastructure deficit, and these are being addressed.

This discussion is not just between State governments and the private sector; there are important roles for our regulatory and financial institutions who are central in providing a conducive environment for the AfCFTA agreements to work. There are conversations needed for specific sectors of the economy, especially those that drive the supply chain including the power sector, rail and aviation, mining and petroleum, roads, healthcare, and education.

The Forum will continue to partner with the National Action Committee on African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement towards the implementation of the subnational strategic plans developed at this workshop. In this spirit, I have directed the Secretariat to prioritize our partnership with the National Action Committee.

I thank you all for joining us here today.

**H.E. Dr. Kayode Fayemi**  
Governor of Ekiti State and  
Chairman, Nigeria Governors' Forum



# NGF'S *Expansion*

**I**t is amazing how December rushes in and sweeps everyone off their feet. People lose sleep planning how to round up their year. Most people did at the beginning of the year 2020. But the year came with a series of strange characteristics, chief of which was the new-normal. Some succeed, others don't, but no matter how the year ends, for many, the beat goes on.

I have heard of families who had planned to build a house and move in and others who planned to start a family business and grow it. Whether their dreams have come to fruition or not is another story. It is different strokes for different folks.

For the NGF, it is the stroke of a never-ending developing story. The Forum has commenced an interna-

tional foray that is bringing accolades to the country. This is because, like it or not, the issue of internally generated revenue at the subnational level has become central to national discourse. The Forum faced it head-on.

The World Bank acknowledged a few months ago when the FORUM visited it at its Washington Headquarters that it had done extremely well and it would be considering increasing its assistance to Nigeria to equal that of beneficiary countries like Brazil.

The Forum also recorded several feats in various sectors as well. It engaged fully in capacity building, training states' budget officials in zones and on other occasions tax officials.

Also, inside this edition is the emerging development that is

sweeping the NGF digital library, along with the promotion to the group of library ambassadors of its curator Naomi Tietie.

NGF went further by igniting a discussion on subnational competitiveness with AFCFTA, midwived by Egghosa Omoigui.

A most disturbing development that involved the Forum was when the HAGF flew off the handle by jettisoning his courts to seek redress in the court of public opinion. The matter involved the \$418m that 4 consultants tried to grab from the jaws of states in the Paris/ London refunds. These and many more shaped the NGF for the year 2021.

Despite the many daunting challenges, the Forum has come out stronger and looks forward to a better and more prosperous Nigeria at the subnational level in the coming year.



L-R: Former NGF Chairman, Abdulaziz Abubakar Yari; NGF Chairman, Kayode Fayemi and NGF Deputy Chairman, Aminu Tambuwal

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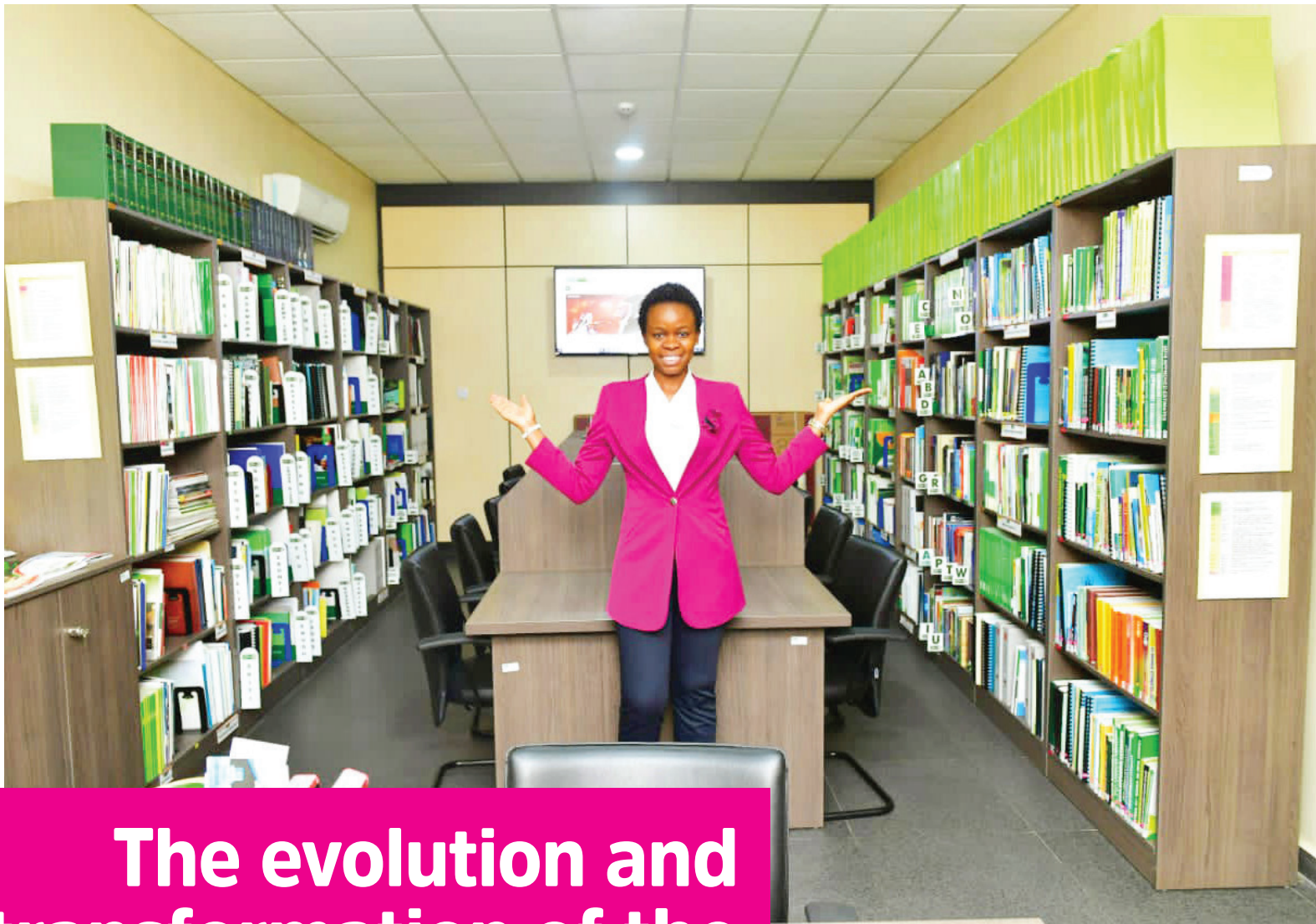
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## The evolution and transformation of the NGF Special Library

BY NAOMI TIETIE

**H**aving a library in an organization is not a luxury but a necessity. The importance of having a library in an organization cannot be overemphasized. Libraries in organizations help to collect, record, organize, store, and preserve information resources for easy retrieval

and accessibility.

And this is why the Nigeria Governors' Forum Secretariat commenced its Library in August 2018. The process of setting up the physical library involved sorting, and weeding of the library resources from a store, classifying, cataloguing, labelling and proper shelving of the library collections. Books and publications are displayed in open shelves with appropriate labels and shelve guides

which serves as a pointer to aid library patrons searching for books and information resources in the library have easy access and seamless retrieval of documents. There are closed shelves in the library which stores confidential and classified documents; library patrons can only access these documents if permission is granted. The library sections include, the reference desk, readers sections for ten readers, shelve section, and the new arrival section. Though the space was not too big, but it served its purpose of taking care of the relevant sections in a modern library.

The library catalogue contains rare and valuables resources and publications from the Nigeria Governors' Forum Secretariat, States, MDAs, Interna-



tional Development partners, and external individual and cooperate authors. Most of the publications in the library are purchased and some are given by the States, MDAs and Development Partners, a good number of the publications in the library are published by departments at the Nigeria Governors Forum Secretariat.

A sneak peak of our collections includes documents and publications such as the President and Governors' Inaugural Speeches dating back from 1999 till date, States Budgets, Auditor-General Reports, Accountant-General's Reports, NGF meeting, NGF Monthly Newsletter, NEC, FAAC, NGF Helpdesk, NGF Dashboard, State Peer Review Mechanism etc.

As soon as the physical library was up and running the automation and digitization of the library resources commenced in May 2019, two software (Koha Integrated Library Software and Dspace) was deployed and custom-

ized for the e-library (<https://ngflibrary.org.ng/>) and digital repository (<https://ngfrepository.org.ng:8443/jspui/>).

Setting up the special library has helped to position the Nigeria Governors' Forum Secretariat library as a one-stop information resource hub that collects, stores, preserves, and disseminates knowledge-based information resources in print and digital formats for patrons seeking information and knowledge on the core thematic areas of the Nigeria Governors' Forum.

The fifth law of library science by S.R Ranganathan states that "the library is a growing organism" which means that a library should be a continually changing institution, never static in its outlook, books, methods, and the physical library should be updated over time.

A library will grow in terms of documents, readers, and staff and the Nigeria Governors' Forum Secretariat library has exhibited this

law tremendously, in a space of three years the physical library has grown in rare and valuable collections, and this led to the transformation of the library.

The transformation process of the library began in the year 2020 with the need to move the library to a bigger space due to the daily growth of information resources of the library. The transformation process kicked off with the approval of the new space by the NGF's management and a concept note was developed by the librarian.

The new library space comprises of five sections – Reference, Readers, Shelve, Relaxation Lounge, Workstation, and New Arrival section. The new library will cater for the patron's need by providing computer systems to easily access the online public access catalogue (OPAC) of the NGFS library.

This new library space will go beyond in-house use, external users who are registered will be granted access to explore, read, research, and learn in the library.

A sneak-peek of the new library space can be seen in 3D image.

The physical library is open on Mondays to Fridays from 9am to 5pm daily, expect on public holidays. But the library is fully automated, and you can access the e-library and digital repository from anywhere in world. Just click on the links below.



**NGF Digital Repository:**  
<https://ngfrepository.org.ng:8443/jspui/>  
**NGF E-Library:** <https://ngflibrary.org.ng/>  
**Want to know more about the Nigeria Governors' Forum Secretariat library? Send a mail to the librarian on [ntietie@ngf.org.ng](mailto:ntietie@ngf.org.ng)**



# Heralding Sokoto state's world-class medical diagnostics centre



**A** multi-billion-naira advanced medical diagnostic centre built by the Sokoto State Government has been completed and ready for commissioning in the Sokoto.

The Governor of Delta State, Dr Ifeanyi Okowa, who will commissioning the centre on Wednesday, will be assisted by Governor Aminu Tambuwal of Sokoto State, other government dignitaries and officials of the Nigerian Medical Association (NMA).

Governor Okowa, who is a medical doctor, is visiting Sokoto to take part

in a meeting of the NMA holding in the state.

The Commissioner for Health in the state, Dr Mohammad Ali Inname, who disclosed this in a press statement in Sokoto, said the facility is world-class and a milestone in the history of medical diagnosis in Nigeria.

The facility, with state-of-the-art medical equipment, has a Radiology Unit, Laboratory Unit, Out-patient Clinics, Dental Unit, and ENT Unit. It will offer a variety of services, including Medical Investigations, Radiolog-

ical Investigations, and Laboratory Investigations.

It has provision for ECG, Stress ECG, Echocardiography, and Vascular Doppler, Gastrology, Endoscopy, Neurology, and EEG.

It also has extensive capacity for MRI, CT scan, Fluoroscopy, Digital X-ray, Mammography, Chemical Pathology, Histopathology, Microbiology, and Hematology.

Already, medical consultants, medical officers, laboratory scientists/technicians, nurses and other personnel required for the smooth run-



ning of the centre are being hired. For efficiency, the centre will be managed by Healthfield Medical Services Ltd, through a public-private partnership model.

The project was executed for approximately N3.2 billion, with about N824 million spent on construction and N2.4 billion expended on equipping the centre. Katuru & Partners Limited handled con-

struction while Minjiriya Medical Services Limited executed the supply and installation of diagnostic equipment.

Dr Inname said the centre will provide high-quality cutting edge medical diagnostics services for the people of Sokoto, other Nigerians and nationals of neighbouring countries.

"A staggering number of Ni-

gerians seek healthcare services abroad, it has been reported that 5,000 Nigerians travel overseas for medical treatment monthly, with an estimated bill of over \$1 billion annually. This has been as a result of non-availability of advanced healthcare technology in our health facilities," Dr Inname said.

"There are 860 public and private health facilities in Sokoto State. For this number of health facilities to provide effective services for a population of over 5 million in the state, they must adopt advanced technologies that are used globally.

"Because of this consideration, the Sokoto State Government under the leadership of Rt. Hon. Aminu Waziri Tambuwal designed, constructed and equipped this new Advanced Medical Diagnostics Centre to provide high-quality cutting edge medical diagnostics services comparable to any other place in the world.

"The overall objective here is to provide healthcare services for our people and make Sokoto a hub for medical tourism, so the services provided by the centre are designed in such a way that they are affordable to the people."

**THE OVERALL OBJECTIVE HERE IS TO PROVIDE HEALTHCARE SERVICES FOR OUR PEOPLE AND MAKE SOKOTO A HUB FOR MEDICAL TOURISM**





## NEWS FROM THE STATES

### Akwa Ibom car assembling plant for commissioning, May 2022

The MIMSHAC-MERKA-VIM Automobile Plant in Akwa Ibom State, will be ready for commissioning within the first half of 2022.

The automobile plant was one of the pioneer industries that the governor flagged off in 2015, and Governor Emmanuel is determined to ensure that the factory commences operations by May 29, 2021.

Mr. Emmanuel, accompanied by some members of his executive council, visited the vehicle Assembly Plant at Ikot Ukup, Itu Local Government Area, where he extracted commitment from the top Management of the Company handling the project, Mimshac Transportation Technologies, that the project will be completed in six months.

The Akwa Ibom State Commissioner for Economic Development and Ibom



Akwa Ibom car assembling plant

Deep Seaport, Mr. Akan Okon, who spoke to journalists following the Governor's visit, assured that arrangement was underway for not less than twenty youths from the state to embark on training in Israel for technology transfer.

The training of the student sent abroad will last for

6 weeks and they students would become experts in automobile assembling.

The Commissioner added that the project, when completed will draw a lot of economic developments to the state, in terms of job creation and revenue generation.

"The whole gamut of economic activities associated

with such industry will be experienced in the state."

The Managing Director, Valentino Okorie, explained that his company is waiting to take delivery of Complete Knock Down (CKD) and Semi Knock Down (SKD) components to facilitate the take off of the factory.

The Managing Director of

the company, Engr. Valentino Okorie assured that the last set of components for the factory will arrived before December, assuring that it will be the largest vehicle assembling plant in the country.

"The facility is at 90% completion, and it is the first car assembling plant in the South South region of Nigeria.

"Very soon, over 3000 direct staff would be employed and 25 sent abroad for a 6 weeks training in automobile assembling.

"The automobile plant has 6 production lines with a capacity to churn out 5 conventional vehicles, 18 cars/SUVs, 13 mini buses, 9 midi buses, 5 luxurious buses. A total production of 108 cars/SUVs, 56 buses in two weeks. 30 Luxurious buses and conventional vehicles in 1 month", Okorie concluded.

### Emmanuel breathes life into 117-year-old Akwa Ibom hospital

The dream of an improved health-care delivery system for the people of Ikot Ekpene local government in Akwa Ibom State has finally been realised with the unveiling of a state of the arts modern secondary hospital and referral center for the area.

The 117 years old Ikot Ekpene General Hospital which had suffered years of neglect and dilapidation, was an eyesore until Governor Emmanuel commenced intervention exercise last year.

At the inauguration ceremony which attracted former President Goodluck Jonathan, Governor Udom Emmanuel assured the people of the state of his commitment to the upgrading and reconstruction of healthcare facilities, security of lives

and property and manpower development.

He said his administration believes that these three fundamental elements determine and shape the social contract and have tackled these crucial areas with "messianic zeal and the results are there for any discerning or dispassionate mind and eye to see."

Governor Emmanuel, who was represented by his deputy, Mr Moses Ekpo, expressed gratitude to the former president for honouring his invite.

"We are grateful that President Jonathan, consented to helping commission the Phase 1 of our reconstructed General Hospital, Ikot Ekpene, which has facilities that are

comparable to any such center, anywhere in the world.

"The commissioning of this General Hospital is a fulfilment of a campaign promise I made, to establish world class secondary health care facilities (general hospitals) in all Ten Federal Constituencies in the State.

"With today's event, we have completed and commissioned to the glory of God, all but one, Ikot Abasi, which work is on-going", he added.

He further said that his goal is to build a future for a new Akwa Ibom State, where industrialisation, infrastructure, human capital development, healthcare and soft infrastructure will put the state on the spotlight as a reference point on how to utilize the resources available to

impact lives and create sustainable growth.

The former President of Nigeria, Dr Goodluck Jonathan in his speech lauded the governor for completely redesigning the hospital as part of measures towards providing adequate health care delivery to Akwa Ibomites.

"I'm glad to be here at this time, It's good we are partnering with NMA as the commence their health week.

"I commend the Governor for refurbishing this hospital and also the security aspect considering the state of security in the country today, the Covid-19 pandemic has also opened the eyes of people that health should not be taken for granted.





## NEWS FROM THE STATES

# We're working assiduously to strengthen socio-economic livelihood for Adamawa people, says Fintiri

Governor Ahmadu Umaru Fintiri has said that his administration is working continually to improving the lives of Adamawa indigene.

He said this recently when he received in audience the senior course forty four of Armed Forces Command and Staff, Jaji in Government House Yola, who were in Adamawa State on a Course Tour.

Governor Fintiri asserted that the present administration has been working continually to strengthen the Socio-Economic livelihood of the people in the State despite the insecurity condition in the country.

The Governor notified the Officers about the activities of Boko Haram, kidnapping,



Gov. Umaru Fintiri receives a plaque from Gen. M.T. Abdullahi

among others has never discouraged his government from carrying out meaningful development projects that will better the lives of the citizens.

He divulged that the combined efforts of the Military

and Hunters in the State have dwindled the issues of insecurity to a single-digit compared to what happened before the advent of the present Administration.

The Governor appreciated the squad for its show of

interest in Adamawa for the study tour and hoped that the State will benefit from their expertise which he noted is coming from a strategic institution in the country.

He urged them to make available to the State Gov-

ernment with the report of their study tour to help the Government strategize well and provide hope for the people and ensure Adamawa state prosperously.

In his remarks, the leader of the delegation, of course, Forty-Four and Director Joint Forces Armed Forces Command and Staff College Jaji Brigadier General M.T. Abdullahi, said his group is one of the Eight Teams currently on Study Tour to some selected States in the country.

Given the vote of thanks on behalf of the students of the Course Forty-Four, Squadron Leader P.C. Ichazu thanked the Governor for the warm reception given to them and gives an overview of their Tour.

## Mrs. Fintiri flags-off GBV club in Adamawa secondary schools

Her Excellency Hajiya Lami Fintiri recently flagged off ceremony of Fresh Air Gender-Based Violence Club in Secondary Schools in Adamawa State in collaboration with the pet project of Her Excellency, Fresh Air Pro-Life Empowerment Foundation and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) as supporting partner.

Delivering a speech on behalf of Her Excellency Hajiya Lami Fintiri, the Commissioner of Education and Human Capital Development, Hon. Wilbina Jackson expressed her happiness to the Governor, Rt. Hon. Ahmadu Umaru Fintiri for making education in Adamawa State a priority and one of his Administration's cardinal

points.

She stated that "Eliminating violence against women must be our collective and common effort and be our common achievement. This is an issue that concerns us all, involves us all, and requires concerted and urgent action. Achievements for gender equality and women's empowerment will be neutralized if we allow violence against women to continue."

Her Excellency, specially thanked UNFPA for being part and success of these flagged off ceremonies, and their contributions are so numerous and appreciate other technical and strategic support given to see the actualization that GBV Club is set up in Adamawa State

secondary education.

She saluted the participation and presence of Students from various secondary schools, NCWS, FOMWAN, CAN, IMWON, Jama'atul Nastril Islam, Spring of Hope, and any other groups who have the opportunity to witness this historical event, and pleaded with them to take campaign of violence against women in their respective organizations, communities, places of worship, and places of work.

She called on government, stakeholders, teachers, non-governmental organizations that sexual abuse or Gender-Based Violence damage the health, dignity, security, and autonomy of its victims, yet it

remains swathed in our culture of silence. Victims of the abuse can suffer sexual and reproductive health consequences, including forced and unwanted pregnancies, dangerous abortions, traumatic fistula, sexually transmitted infections including HIV, and sometimes death.

Hon. Wilbina Jackson, revealed that Her Excellency Hajiya Lami as a mother and champion of GBV in State, deem it fit and it is necessary to take the programme of GBV to secondary schools.

She further said the presence of such clubs in our schools is going to raise awareness and give the children adequate knowledge on the dangers of rape, sex education, gender vi-



Hajiya Lami Fintiri

olence, sexual assault among others and give them the privilege to voice out in case of any abuse or attack.

While unveiling the Fresh Air GBV Club, she charged parents, teachers, and stakeholders to rise to the challenge and ensure the rights of the young ones are protected.



# Creating Economically Viable Communities: The Subnational Strategy Workshop

**A**nation can only advance in as much as there is forward motion and progress amongst its people. For progress to take place, changes must be implemented from different sectors such as education, the economy, enterprise, innovation and trade.

Along the lines of trade, the National Action Committee on African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF) recently held a 3-Day Subnational Strategy Workshop at the Ministry of Finance to discuss trade solutions to drive Nigeria forward.

There were dignitaries in attendance which included His Excellency, Dr. Kayode Fayemi, the Chairman of the NGF,

Mr. Asishana B. Okauru, the Director General of the NGF, H.E. Muhammad Badaru Abubakar, the Executive Governor of Jigawa State and many others.

"The objective of this workshop is to distil significant opportunities for Nigeria that drive job creation and capacity building within the states with the creation of a single liberalized market for trading services for the continent," said the Chairman.

The Chairman of the NGF, Dr. Fayemi stated that the AfCFTA both enables the trading in products and services as well as human capital to thrive with the elimination of red tape through the reduction of tariff and non-tariff barriers and through the simplification of custom procedures.

He added that AfCFTA has created significant opportunities for Nigeria to drive job creation and capacity building. With the creation of a single liberalized market for trade in services for the continent, the AfCFTA enables both the trade in products and services as well as human capital.

"Also, within the country, States can improve their capacity through the exploitation of State factor endowments and knowledge and skill transfers. Inter-state competitiveness can stimulate job creation in various multi-sectors through investment and implementation of development plans. The result is, therefore, beneficial, with the agreement serving as a foundation for continental, national and subnational human capital development," said the Chairman.

The Director General of the NGF added that the Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement is the latest continental initiative to foster economic development in the continent.

In addition, he stated that the awareness of states on this in Nigeria is very low.

"That is the whole purpose of this meeting today. If this agreement is to succeed in Nigeria, it is important that we domesticate this at the state level and that is exactly what we are doing now," said Mr. Okauru.

Furthermore, Mr. Okauru said successful implementation of this agreement in Nigeria is dependent on supporting the sub-nationals to organise themselves into functional units.

The Governor of Jigawa State said he believes that Nigeria can succeed in trade.

"We need to invest more in local production and do what is necessary to penetrate the Africa Market," said Mr. Abubakar.

Mr. Abubakar placed emphasis on his state's growth. That the GDP has doubled in the last six years by targeting investments in Nigeria.

His Excellency said that the role of the subnations is to do more targeting. That the states must promote this around and seek for solutions.

"There must be opportunities where you can create jobs for our people. We will do this by strengthening regulations, improving the ease of doing business, harmonising policies, upscaling acquisition for micro enterprises and preventing distortions and





discrimination.”

The Governor said that at the State Level, they will do their best to enlighten people.

The Jigawa State Governor elaborated that there are several benefits this agreement presents to the Federal and State governments. These include:

1. At the Federal level, Nigeria is already utilizing regional trade opportunities, contributing approximately 76% of total trading volumes in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) region. We strongly believe this number can improve when sub-nationals participate actively in regional trade.

2. The increase of direct investment and creation of new business opportunities for multiple sectors within each sub-national’s economy (including the distribution and logistics supply chain, as well as transportation infrastructure) by putting in place progressive policies and simplified customs procedures, making sub-nationals and intra-Africa trade more enticing for domestic producers.

3. One of the primary benefits initiated by the agreement is the access to regional supply chains. Member countries and their sub-nationals can access new opportunities regarding intra-regional exports and can leverage domestic markets by creating supply chains that are both efficient and sustainable.

As part of the strategy workshop, Mr Eghosa M. Omoigui, the Head of Stakeholder Relationship discussed subnational competitiveness.

He said that achieving competitiveness is at the heart of the AFCFTA strategic objective. That Nigeria is becoming a less productive country.

He stated that Nigeria’s productivity in the economic index is declining from 102nd to 144th po-

**WE  
CAN BE COMPETITIVE  
THROUGH  
COLLABORATION. WE  
HAVE THE MARKET,  
AND WE HAVE  
TO REFINE TO BE  
COMPETITIVE**

sition.

Mr. Eghosa added that competitiveness is all about collaboration.

“If you wait for the season to be ripe, you won’t sow anything,” he said.

To ensure Nigeria maximizes AF-CFTA potentials, Mr Eghosa said we must rethink our subnational collaborations as a strategy for improving regional development.

Mr. Eghosa also placed emphasis on NGF’s partnership with the National Economic Summit Group (NESG) which provides research and policy support for states.

There are many programs in the works such as the Ready to Invest Pro-

gramme, the What Works Hub, the Subnational Data and Information System, the NES Subnational Recommendations Implementation Coordination.

“We can be competitive through collaboration. We have the market, and we have to refine to be competitive,” he said.

The workshop also included presentations from Mrs. Chinyere Almona, the Director General of the Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI).

Mrs. Chinyere stated that market access through language is key in this discussion.

“If enough people speak the same language, they will be able to communicate more easily,” she said.

She said that government has the capacity to change the population’s linguistic skills by implementing language policies that introduce a different language in the educational system.

Mrs. Chinyere also elaborated on market intelligence as a key challenge for exporters when it comes to the scarcity of reliable trade information on markets.

She said that international trade has a significant presence of risks and uncertainties, and market intelligence helps.

For countries and companies that want to establish trade partners to produce and sell their products in foreign countries, she said that what NGF and AFCFTA should do is to:

- Identify natural resources in your territories
- Explore the possibility of establishing special economic zones
- Develop an AFCTFTA strategy for the state
- Build Integrated Road and rail networks.



# Agribusiness: Lagos, Largest Market For Local Rice – Commissioner

**T**he Commissioner for Agriculture, Lagos State, M.s Bidola Olusanya, has said that the state is the largest market for local rice in Nigeria.

She stated that rice production dates as far back as 2008.

According to her, there is an increase in production levels for Lagos, however, there is need for coordinated efforts and constructive engagement to enable clarity and investment.

Olusanya stated this at Transforming Agribusiness Roundtable series on the Rice Value Chain on Monday, November 2nd, Nigeria Governors' Forum.

"We are putting out a call on partnerships with sister states where rice production is of a decent value."

The Rice value chain roundtable is part of a series of engagements being undertaken to enable the agribusiness sector in Nigeria to achieve its

potential in driving inclusive growth, creating jobs, reducing poverty, and improving food security and nutrition outcomes.

In Nigeria, several states have shown a high production in rice and opportunity for investments such as Kebbi, Benue, Ekiti and many other states.

Speaking at the event, Mr. Chakib Jeanne from the World Bank discussed how local rice has not yet met domestic needs.

He said there is a need for coordinated efforts and constructive engagement to enable clarity and investment.

"We need collaboration with the public and private actors, states and MDAs," he said.

Dr. Maigari Manzo of the Nigeria Agribusiness Group added that there needs to be more coordination amongst various tiers of the government.

That local governments are closer to the grassroots and have a key role to play.

"States are the most critical players when it comes to Agriculture and small hold farmers are under states. We are looking at states that will be competitive with rice production," he said.

In addition, Hon. Maigari Abdullahi Dakingari, Commissioner for Agriculture in Kebbi State said that Kebbi is a real success story when it comes to rice production. That the economy has transformed through production.

"Rice in Kebbi State has performed well. Our homegrown rice is accepted, and our economy has been transformed for the better as we went out of recession," he said.

Mr. Mghenyi from the World Bank made a presentation in which he compared Nigeria's Rice Value Chain to that of Vietnam, elaborating on how Vietnam was able to lift people out of





poverty.

He stated that it is aspirational for Nigerians if the right investments are made.

The presenter emphasized that for Vietnam to be successful in their rice production, they had decided to be self-sufficient.

Vietnam also had to focus on research and development.

Vietnam as of now has emerged as a global leader in agribusiness and a major exporter of several commodities and products that are important in Nigeria's agribusiness sector.

In the presentation, it stated that in 2019, Vietnam has generated exports of about U.S. 3 billion from rice and at least US 1 billion from each of the following commodities such as cassava, cashew nuts, fish, coffee, tea, black pepper, and rubber.

The access to remunerative export markets have been beneficial for Vietnam and led to increased returns to investments in agribusiness, jobs created in agribusiness value chains, raised income of farmers, and increased foreign exchange earnings and public revenues.

"The rise in agricultural wages and farmer incomes contributed to about

75 percent of the poverty reduction in rural areas between 2010 and 2018," said Mr. Mghenyi.

The robust performance of agricultural value chains in Vietnam has uplifted the rural economy as farm incomes have been invested in rural sectors and created job opportunities in the rural non-farm sector.

This contrasts with Nigeria's growth. Nigeria became self-sufficient around the 2000s, yet the yields have remained unchanged for 2-3 decades.

In Nigeria, rice has an enormous potential to create jobs, said the World Bank Representative.

Another aspect where Nigeria can seek to gain from rice production is in trade.

Data suggests that imports are typically low in Nigeria though production has gone up.

The production constrains for rice include the limited use of fertilizers. The demand for fertilizers exceeds available supplies.

There is also a weak delivery of extension and advisory services in addition to weak linkages to remunerative markets that can reward adoption of costly inputs.

If Nigeria improves the yields, the quality of rice will improve.

This can be achieved through research and development. In addition, farmers also must have access to rice qualities for them to upscale.

Mr. E. A. Olaleye of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development placed emphasis that there are productive efforts going on with the National Agriculture Seed Council.

He said that federal ministries along with the Central Bank have accomplished much through the Anchor Borrowers Program.

Though there is certainly room for improvement in rice production in Nigeria, there are achievements recorded being that in Lagos State, there was the training and sensitization of the farmer.

The upgrading from 2.5Metric ton/hr. Rice Mill to 32metric ton/hr. Rice Mill.

The 90% completion level of Modular Rice Mill, Storage, Boiler and Processes.

Lastly, under cultivation, there have been ongoing collaboration with other states for rice paddy which also encourages youth in the rice value chain.



# NEWS FROM THE STATES

## Ugwuanyi lists achievements in business investment, ICT innovation, Start-Ups Eco-system

Fulfilled by the remarkable feats his administration has recorded in business investment development, ICT innovation and creativity, start-ups, product acceleration and wealth creation for Enugu State youth, among others, Governor Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi, yesterday, said the state government has continued to play its leading role as a business and investment enabler.

Ugwuanyi disclosed his administration has been able to continue to play the role through provision of robust infrastructure; peaceful and secure operating environment for business and investment; consistent and favourable policies; and facilitation of all bureaucratic processes required for starting and doing business "through our One-Stop Investment-Centre (OSIC) under the Enugu State Investment Development Authority (ESIDA)".

The governor added that the role his administration has continued to play as a business and investment enabler was also achievable through "friendly tax regime and professional regulatory oversight as significant co-factors for investment inflow".

Speaking during the ground-breaking of the Godfrey Okoye (GO) University-European Business Park, Centre for Practical Skills and Start-Ups, Gov. Ugwuanyi described the outfit as "a public-private initiative with unique value proposition for economic expansion, skill infusion, job creation and wealth creation for our people".

He stressed that considering challenges of the younger generation which traverse un-

deremployment, unemployment and unemployability due to inadequacy of opportunities as well as poverty of skills because of non-functional education, the emerging digital economy governed by disruptive technologies including the Blockchain, makes the Godfrey Okoye University Business Park initiative both visionary and compelling.

On his administration's progress in investment development and innovation, Gov. Ugwuanyi revealed: "Our administration, mindful of the rapidly changing world order, organized the first-ever Enugu State Investment Summit in 2016 (Oganiru Enugu) wherein we opened up Enugu State to investors and showcased the investment opportunities in the state".

According to the governor, "we have birthed the Lion Business Park, a pioneering instance of an audacious public-private partnership project in the South East Zone that promises to transform the economy of the region.



Governor Ugwuanyi

## Ugwuanyi unveils action plan towards tackling water supply challenges

...Flags off Ingrace Water-on-Wheels Enterprise



Governor Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi of Enugu State has assured the people of the state that water supply challenges will become history as soon as the FDA (French Development Agency) supported water projects come fully on stream in a few months time.

Ugwuanyi's administration is participating in the FDA (French Development Agency) Support to 3rd National Urban Water Sector Reform Project, which will deliver end-to-end water supply solution in Enugu metropolis.

Speaking during the inauguration of the Water-on-Wheels enterprise, an initiative of Ingrace Group designed to deliver potable water to points of need through mobile application order and other ancillary services, to complement the remarkable efforts of the state government to ensure steady supply of potable water to Enugu people, Gov. Ugwuanyi disclosed that within the FDA implementation plan, the Detailed Engineering Design of works component of the project is in progress.

The governor, who highlighted the progress made by his administration in providing potable water to the people of the state in spite of the heavy challenges it met on

ground in the water sector, added that "the tender for rehabilitation of Oji and Ajali water schemes (including water treatment plants) and other works would commence by the end of this year".

According to him, "the dilapidated water pipeline networks in Enugu metropolis will be replaced with new ones while new estate developments and unserved neighbourhoods will be connected to the public water supply system".

Ugwuanyi, who stated that at inception, he met a heavily challenged water sector especially at the production end, revealed that "the Oji River and Ajali water schemes were decrepit with daily water production far below their installed capacities" and "the 9th Mile Crash Borehole Programme was comatose and its major installations had been vandalized occasioning grossly inadequate potable water supply to Enugu city".

On progress made by his administration in providing potable water to the people of Enugu State, the governor listed as follows: "Emergency rehabilitation of Oji and Ajali water schemes resulting in improved water supply to most parts of Enugu city including GRA, New Haven, Asata, some parts of

Independence Layout, Achara Layout, Trans-Ekulu and Coal Camp areas, etc.

"Construction of additional five (5) functional water boreholes in Nsukka and this has led to great improvement in water supply in Nsukka Urban; construction of water pipeline extensions in many streets and communities in Enugu Urban and Nsukka due to increased water supply; complete rehabilitation of 9th Mile Crash Borehole Programme that is fully powered by solar energy.

"Eight (8) water boreholes are already productive in this scheme and soon, with the imminent inauguration of this project, water supply to Enugu metropolis will receive a significant boost.

"Rejigging and retooling of Enugu State Water Corporation to ensure a competent, well-equipped and well-motivated workforce; bidding process for drilling of ten (10) new solar energy-powered water boreholes in Okwojo Ngwo is on course; and Enugu State government's participation in the FDA (French Development Agency) Support to 3rd National Urban Water Sector Reform Project will deliver end-to-end water supply solution to Enugu metropolis".



## NEWS FROM THE STATES

### World Sight Day: Kano to Establish Eye Clinics in all 44 LGs

In a bid to strengthen institutions and staffing to further support the health sector, Kano State Government is set to establish an Eye Clinic in the headquarters of all the 44 local government areas.

This was disclosed by governor Abdullahi Umar Ganduje during the closing ceremony of the World Sight Day, that took place at Dawakin Tofa Local Government area recently.

"That we intend to establish eye clinic in the headquarters of all the 44 local governments is not enough. We will continue to work very hard in this sector," he encouraged.

After commenting on the religious imperative in personal hygiene, he also advised people to always take advice from health experts, that "Even in Islam hygiene is absolutely important and necessary."



Ganduje (middle) inspecting an eye centre equipment

As every second Thursday of October each year is set aside and regarded as World Sight Day, governor Ganduje, before the closing ceremony, declared the day opened at Murtala Muhammad Specialist Hospital, Kano, in Kano Emirate, when 4,306 people were treated.

He declared the programme closed after commending all the health workers who participated in the exercise from beginning to end.

The event took place across all the five Emirates, in some selected local governments, in the state. In Bichi Emirate

2,904 people were treated, in Gaya Emirate 2,536 people were treated, in Karaye Emirate 2,426 people were treated and in Rano Emirate, 2,741 people were treated.

Representative of a global body Sight Boost, at the occasion, Dr Kamilu Sale acknowledged and appreci-

ated that, "Your Excellency we are aware how concerned you are with people's eyes. We are aware how Ganduje Foundation treated over 380,000 people concerning eyes problems."

He further disclosed that, "Since 2014 Ganduje Foundation has treated people with eye problem in six stages. Where 17,600 were treated with trachoma surgery, 264,000 were diagnosed and provided with prescriptions and 105,600 were provided with eye glasses."

All development partners, World Health Organisation (WHO) and Sight Boost commended governor Ganduje for his good intervention in the health sector. Urging people to always support the governor in making Kano healthier. Also, National Orientation Agency (NOA) representative commended the governor.

### Kano gets \$110m AfDB grant for rural roads, water, sanitation, agric, others

African Development Bank (AfDB) is set to spend the sum of One Hundred and Ten Million Dollar (\$110m) for rural roads, transport infrastructure, water and sanitation and agricultural productivity.

This was disclosed by the President of African Development Bank, Dr Akinwumi Adesina when he paid a condolence visit to the governor of Kano state, Dr Abdullahi Umar Ganduje, over the death of Sani Dangote, at Africa House, Government House, Kano, recently.

He said "We are using

\$110m to Kano for our programme on Special Agricultural Industrial Processing Zone. We are in all, having about \$563m that will be dedicated to that project in various states of Nigeria.

With this \$110m that will be used for Kano state just imagine what we could do. Investing in rural roads, investing in transport infrastructure, investing in water and sanitation and we also invest in agricultural productivity to raise production of food.

And we are processing adding value and lots of hundreds

of thousands of jobs because of that."

After commending the transformation of the state by Ganduje administration, Dr Adesina said he was pleased to discuss with the governor around the work of African Development Bank in the state.

Dr Adesina revealed further that, "With this programme of hundreds of US Dollars, will help develop consolidated infrastructure in rural areas.

That will allow private sector food and agribusiness companies to reduce the amount of

losses they have, create more competitive value chain, transform the rural areas from the zones of misery to the zone of economic prosperity. And to increase the amount of resources the state has."

In his response governor Ganduje thanked the AfDB President for the new development and assured his total support and cooperation for successful implementation of the project at all levels.

He said: "This is what we mean by genuine development, when institutions are strengthened and individuals

or collections of individuals are rightly directed."

Governor Ganduje also thanked the AfDB President for appreciating development in the state. That "We thank you for appreciating our modest development since we came into office 2015."

Explaining that "I was Commissioner for Works, Housing and Transport for six years during Military administration. So, I am conversant with the Master Plan of Kano. And I am conversant with the features of Mega Cities, Smart Cities.

# NIGERIA GOVERNORS' FORUM EMERGENCY MEETING HELD ON THE 15TH NOVEMBER 2021



NGF Chairman, Dr Kayode Fayemi and Deputy NGF Chairman, Hon Aminu Tambuwal exchange pleasantries during the meeting.



Cross-section of NGF members at the meeting



Gov Aminu Tambuwal and Kayode Fayemi discuss a point



Borno Governor, Babagana Zulum exchanges pleasantries with Kebbi Governor, Abubakar Bagudu



Govs Akeredolu, Ganduje and Lalong discuss a point during the meeting



Govs Akeredolu, Ganduje and Sanwo-Olu pose for a Photograph



Govs Babajide Sanwo-Olu, Aminu Tambuwal, Kayode Fayemi and Abubakar Badaru



L-R: Govs Umar Ganduje of Kano, Abdulahi Sule of Nasarawa and Babagana Zulum of Borno



L-R: Govs Abubakar, Abdullahi and Inuwa exchange banter during the meeting





# States, not FG, funding Nigerian Police, says Fayemi

Governor of Ekiti State and Chairman the Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF), Dr Kayode Fayemi, has revealed that it is the various state governments that are funding Nigerian police commands under their jurisdictions and not the Federal Government.

He also said if the South-West states have not come together to form Amotekun when they did, the insecurity situation in the region by now would have been very worse.

The governor gave this revelation recently in Lagos at the 6th Convocation Lecture of the Nigerian Institute of Journalism (NIJ) Ogba, where he was a guest lecturer.

He spoke on "The Media, Security and Nation-building."

According to him, it is a flimsy excuse that the Federal Government has enough burdens and therefore cannot fund the state

police as many of us have been canvassing a multi-level policing for the country.

He said, "I can tell you for free that, be as it may, state governors are the ones running the federal police institutions in their various states. They are the ones buying them vehicles; they are the ones giving them life insurance, giving them allowances, buying diesel and so forth for them.

"The only thing governors don't have is the control over them as they get permission to carry out even governor's instructions on security issues from their superior, who is the Inspector General of Police.

"That is why at times when the commissioner takes excuse out of politeness to get to the office after receiving security instruction from governors, they go no office other than to use the period to brief the IGP and get his consent.



Fayemi

"And you can only see them again on that issue if the IGP has given them permission, otherwise, you won't see them again if IGP is not in agreement to such instruction."

So, even though, the police are under your jurisdiction as a state governor, they are accountable to the IGP"

While re-emphasising the need for Nigeria to operate multi-level policing, which he said is not tantamount to the removal of the federal police, Fayemi said by that arrangement, the Federal police would be superintending over federal crimes such as trans-borders' crimes and terrorism irrespective of the states those crimes happen and so forth, while crimes that are local in nature should be referred to the state or local police that understand the tradition, culture and the mood of the people of a locality.

He, however, said no matter how long the delay may be, Nigeria would certainly create multi-level policing, adding that such is the best way to go.

He said the argument that the state governors would pocket the money of state police and also turn them to instruments of harassment of their political opponents are not

enough to reject the birth of the state police.

The governor said after all, the Federal Police are also harassing innocent people, using himself as a victim of their harassment even as a sitting governor in 2014 during the election and also the ENDSARS protest of last year, among others.

On the role of the media on security and nation-building, the governor charged the media and the practitioners to increase their tempo in ensuring that government and political leaders are held more accountable to the people.

He, however, commended the leadership of NIJ for producing another round of graduates and on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the institute, whilst congratulating the graduating students on their academic achievements and asking them to see themselves as positive change agents.

## ...When NGF Received a delegation from Amnesty International



NGF Director, Research and Strategy, Alh. Lateef Shittu (3rd right), receives a report from Amnesty International Nigeria Trustee, Auwal Musa Rafasanjani (3rd left), while NGF Head Legal, Barr Chuku Chijioke, (2nd right), Eghosa Omoigui (1st right) and other delegates from Amnesty International look on during the courtesy visit.



NGF's Lateef Shittu (right) and Chijioke Chuku



Alhaji Lateef Shittu receives the report from Amnesty International's Musa Rafanjani



A cross section of Amnesty International delegates to the NGF Secretariat



# NEWS FROM THE STATES



Lagos State Governor, Mr. Babajide Sanwo-Olu delivered and commissioned a 480-unit housing project in Ikorodu division

## Sanwo-olu delivers Ibeshe Lagoshoms Project, adds 480 homes to housing stock

Determined to bridge the housing deficit and create affordable accommodation for residents, Lagos State Governor, Mr. Babajide Sanwo-Olu recently delivered and commissioned a 480-unit housing project in Ikorodu division.

Sanwo-Olu named the LagosHOMS project built in Ibeshe after the late former President of the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) and Asiwaju of Ikorodu, Chief Babatunde Olusola Benson, SAN.

The Governor described the project as “a modern style” accommodation initiated to improve the residents’ comfort and wellbeing.

The project comprises 40 blocks of one-bedroom, two-bedroom and three bedrooms apartments, with fully-fitted kitchen, store and guest toilets. The estate also has ample space for parking, a water treatment plant, overhead water tanks, borehole, central sewage system, seven transformers, one injection station and two dumpsites, as well as buildings for generator house and central hall.

Sanwo-Olu reiterated his administration’s commit-

ment to prioritising development of housing projects that would enhance comfort and strengthen the aesthetic of the environment. The event, he said, was a testimony to the fulfillment of his electoral promises.

The Governor, who also performed groundbreaking of Ibeshe Scheme II, said that his administration had created 17,000 direct jobs and 18,000 indirect jobs through the construction of various housing schemes. He said the State’s housing projects had direct engagement of consultants, contractors and artisans in the State.

He said: “In the past two and half years, we have been earnestly addressing the huge housing deficit in Lagos. There is no doubt that this administration is passionate about building decent and durable homes for our people. Actually, the provision of more housing facilities is a major aspect in our transformational agenda tagged THEMES.

“Through our development blueprint, the State is focusing on the Built sector as a driving factor for economic development, social inclusion

and job creation. In deepening our activities in this sector, the economy of the State has been greatly revitalised. This is because building homes is a capital-intensive activity that positively affects every sector of the economy.

“We are here because every responsive government knows about the impact of good and decent homes on the welfare of the people. This has a ripple effect on other areas of life by adding meaning and essence to living. It is in acknowledgment of this fact that this administration considers housing development to be a priority on its agenda.”

Sanwo-Olu, while reiterating his administration commitment to affordable housing for Lagosians, said private sector involvement in housing development is vital to robust housing delivery.

The Governor said by the time of his administration’s third anniversary, a total of 7,000 homes would have been delivered by the State under his leadership, adding that the Government was embarking on a partnership with the private sector to provide more housing needs for the people.

## Lagos unveils ‘Eko Token’ cash rewards initiative

The Lagos State Government has launched a “first of its kind” Universal Patronage Cash Reward system, tagged the “Eko Token”. The initiative will reward customer loyalty to businesses that subscribe to the programme, through a weekly raffle draw, with winners taking home between N5,000 and N100million.

Speaking at the launch of the “Eko Token”, which is a partnership initiative with Cash Token Africa, the Lagos State Governor, Mr. Babajide Sanwo-Olu, said “it is a healthy innovation to complement other initiatives and measures that have been put in place by this administration to cushion the effects of COVID-19 pandemic on citizens and businesses in the State”.

Represented by the Commissioner for Women Affairs and Poverty Alleviation, Mrs. Cecilia Mobolaji Dada, the Governor expressed optimism that the initiative would be sustained because it is built on mutual benefits between businesses and the people, stressing that the unique partnership with the private sector will foster a robust and sustainable tripod relationship involving Businesses, Government and the Good People of Lagos.

Sanwo-Olu said the objective of “Eko Token” in the long term is to ensure that an average of 10 percent of consumer expenditure is offered back as rewards to Lagosians in a system that is profitable.

According to the Governor, it is anticipated that the concept will increase patronage of Lagos businesses from five to eight per cent; create about 10,000 direct and indirect job opportunities; and generate minimum cash reward from participating businesses across multiple industries.

He said customers who buy airtime, electricity bill tokens, transportation tickets, food, insurance, petrol, cinema tickets, financial services and fast-moving commodities, among others, will enjoy rewards for patronising businesses that subscribe to “Eko Token”, while the business owners would witness increased turnover from clients who undertake repeat purchases.

Also speaking at the occasion, Lagos State Commissioner for Wealth Creation and Employment, Mrs. Yetunde Arobieke, said the idea is timely for social inclusion and financial resources to cushion the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Arobieke pointed out that Governor Sanwo-Olu keyed into the initiative due to its ability to cushion the effects of the pandemic, saying “If a Lagosian goes to any store, he can get rewarded. This is why we see it as a good initiative and we have keyed into it. Mr. Governor has seen the relevance at a time like this and he has given approval for its implementation. It is sustainable because it’s a way for companies to say thank you to their customers for being part of their successes”.



Sanwo-olu



## Six states complete budget implementation workshop at NGF



The budget implementation review workshop kicked off at the Nigeria Governors' Forum Secretariat recently, with the first batch of states which includes Benue, Ekiti, Kebbi, Kwara, Niger and Zamfara State.

The aim of the workshop is to ensure that states meet up with the 2022 Budget in line with the National Chart of Accounts (NCOA).

The chart of Account is for all Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) of Government used in planning, budgeting, accounting, and reporting.

The objective of the toolkit is to provide States with a comprehensive and consistent set of instruments which will support upgrading the State Chart of Accounts (COA) to make them compatible with NCOA.

The standardisation of the COA will in turn be part of the overall effort



aimed at enhancing the attainment of minimum reporting requirement that is in line with international best practices which is a key result area under States, Fiscal, Transparency, Accountability and Sustainability Plan (SFTAS).

In preparing the budget, there are six segments that must be adhered to which includes Economic, Administration/Organization, Function, Fund, Geolocation and Program.

Through this workshop, NGF and states seek to ensure that they pluck all loopholes made by the Independent Verification Agent (IVA) or NGF itself.

Participants of the workshop lauded NGF for its efforts and said they achieved what they intended to do.

Dr. Nyam Aondowase, the Director of Budget for Benue State said that it's been a fantastic development and experience at NGF.

"What we have learned here has a lot to do with our budget. When we get back, we must put our budget in the right perspective," he said.

Furthermore, he stated that prior to the budget workshop, their structure, implementation and template was questioned by others.

The Permanent Secretary of Niger State, Haj. Ramatu Umar also praised NGF that the Budget Implementation workshop has been wonderful and they have learned a lot on how to prepare their budget in line with the National

Chart of Accounts.

"We have identified areas where we need to align our own budgets with the chart of accounts. We have also identified areas that were not properly updated. We had to review and align the codes and figures," she said.

Haj. Aishatu T. Usmau, the Director of Budget for Niger State Planning Commission said that going forward, they appeal to the NGF to get partners to support to make the process more seamless. They recommend a software that would make the process better.

Kogi State was also present at this workshop. They were represented by their Director Olajide Samuel O, the Director of Budget for Kogi State.

He said the training has been great and the modification of the Chart of Accounts was perfect.

"My colleagues were able to catch up with the new techniques fast. Within the first few days, we were able to complete the template" he said.

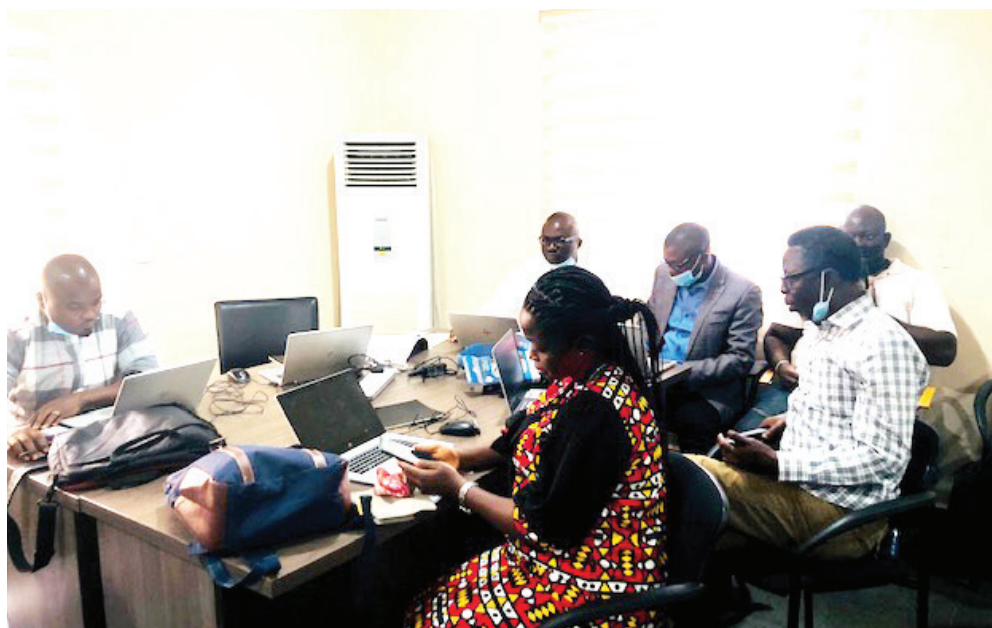
Mr. Olajide added that his team is fully compliant without any issue of doubt.

In agreement with Haj. Aishatu T. Usmau, he stated that NGF can further develop a template for financial reporting to make the process of Public Financial Management (PFM) perfect.

There will be four other physical budget workshops here at the secretariat. The first batch concluded on Friday, November 26th. The second Batch would take place from the 6th-10th of December. The 3rd Batch would be from the 13th- 17th of December. The 4th and 5th batch would commence in the new year from the 10th-14th of January and from the 17th- 21st of January.

At the end of the workshop, NGF seeks to ensure that all states in the federation should have the same template which would make it easier for comparison.

In addition, states should all know how much Nigeria is spending on different sectors in the country.





# NGF Spotlight: Barr Chijioke Chuku receives Abia Legal Personality of the Year Award

Barrister Chijioke Chuku serves as the Senior Legal Expert at Nigeria Governors' Forum Secretariat, (NGF) a post in which he has occupied for almost two decades. He was amongst the earliest team that built the NGF, and the legal sector has expanded under his watch. Recently, he was awarded the title of Abia's Legal Personality of the Year by the Abia Online Media Publishers. He was given this award to commemorate his achievements in the legal field as well as his philanthropic gestures through his Ogwuanyim Foundation to support his community and beyond. To discuss his achievements, philanthropic efforts, and his role as the Head of Legal at NGF, Mr Chuku sat down with the media at NGF to provide insight on his success, philanthropic efforts and what more he envisions for his career. The interview is below:

## How did you react to the Nomination?

My initial reaction was one of surprise. It was unexpected and I almost ignored it. Then the floodgate of calls, congratulatory messages and best wishes poured in, including several calls from well-placed personalities within the Abia State Government. And I then thought to myself, that perhaps this wasn't the usual run of the mill awards that we have come to know in the country. I enquired into the pedigree of the award presenters and



Barrister Chijioke

liked what I found. I became at once grateful and humbled. As far as I know, my life's work is yet to come, and is still unfolding. How was I to know that people appreciated the little we had done, especially people from my own State, my own kith and kin?

## How did the ceremony go?

I would like to think that the Ceremony was simple but impressive. With the calibre of award winners on that day, one did not expect any less. My thoughts on that day did not change much from what I had already stated above. I was grateful to God for this recognition. I also resolved to continue to do my best in the service of mankind.

## One of the reasons you were nominated is because of your philanthropic efforts with Ogwuanyim Foundation. What led you to start the foundation, and how is it touching Nigerians?

Ogwuanyim Foundation is largely inspired by my late dad, Dr Eliezer Chuku O. Chuku, in whose honour and memory we established

it. Ogwuanyim was his traditional title, and it literally means one who swims in an ocean or great waters. Metaphorically, Ogwuanyim means one who attains a height or achieves a feat despite the odds. It is a title that summarises my father's life and the ideals for which he lived. That title is also a name by which my little Community in Ozuitem, Bende Local Government Area of Abia State is known by. When we (my siblings and I) thought of the best way to immortalise our late dad, especially in the area of education which was his forte, we settled for a Foundation that bore his name. We provide succour to the less privileged in the areas of Education, Health, Medicine, Law and Agriculture. In the realisation that all work and no play makes Jack dull, we also made recreation through sports and have instituted an annual football tournament to create some fun during the Yuletide.

At the moment, Ogwuanyim's activities are limited to Abia State and particularly to Bende Local Government Area, where I come from. We hope that in future and as things evolve through the special grace of



God, we would extend our activities beyond our current locality. If at the end of the day, we are able to put a smile on the faces of the people who pass our way, we would have achieved in no small way some of the things that our father was known for. For me and for my siblings, that would mean a lot.

**As a legal luminary, what has been the highlight in your legal career, particularly in your role at the Nigeria Governors' Forum?**

Frankly, I don't focus on titles, tags and appellations. For me, the crux of that award was the recognition of whatever humble strides that struck them as worthwhile, and which formed the basis for their determination that we had earned that award.

In terms of the highlights of my career, I have spent the bulk of my adult life and career in the public service. Before joining the NGF, I had worked with highly placed public officials and that initial experience and exposure set the tone for what was to become a passion – service to mankind.

For almost two decades, I have been at the NGF where alongside colleagues and partners, we have all worked hard at building the Organisation that so many now reckon with. I was part of the earliest team that started this Organisation and I find it gratifying that the efforts have not been in vain. Specifically, the Legal Unit has grown steadily on my watch and we are an integral part of the custodianship of NGF's advancement over time. It has not been possible to keep the NGF entirely away from trouble.

You know it's almost herculean to not be in the eye of the storm when you are an amalgam of power, being the umbrella body of all the 36 Governors in the country.



Our greatest achievement as a Unit has been in ensuring that even though trouble may rear its head, we use our best endeavour in ensuring that the troubles are not enough to pull the Forum down.

In league with some of the best minds that this country has, we have been able to weather the storms and have remained afloat and strong as an organisation.

**What advice would you give those seeking a career in law?**

The Legal profession is one of the noblest professions in the world. For centuries, it has been this way. I am proud to count myself as one of its members. For as long as I can remember, I had always wanted to be a lawyer, so much so that I fought my dad whose plan for me was to become a doctor. I resisted that and fought until he gave in.

Initially, I wasn't sure why I felt the pull towards law but as I grew, I realised that I was born to serve man and the way I thought I could achieve this the most was by being a lawyer. We all have different aspirations and have our ideas and thoughts as to how to achieve these aspirations. I realised early in the day that my path to self-actualisation was via the legal profession.

The truth also is that certain bad eggs amongst this noblest of callings have continued to give a bad name to the profession and we all look forward to the day that the Nigerian Bar would rise above mundane considerations and fight to attain the height that is the natural preserve of our profession.

My advice to intending lawyers and young lawyers alike is to be patient. Success is not achieved in a day. With hard work, focus and determination, success surely awaits.





Ekiti State Governor, Dr Kayode Fayemi has been commended by his colleague governors for completing abandoned projects in the State, describing the act as a practical demonstration of leadership and good governance.

Governors Abubakar Bagudu of Kebbi State, Mohammed Badaru Abubakar of Jigawa State and Aminu Tambuwal of Sokoto State who spoke at different project commissioning events across the three senatorial districts of Ekiti State on Friday also commended Governor Fayemi for the high quality of projects executed and his prudent management of scarce resources.

The three governors, their host, Dr Fayemi, top government functionaries, traditional rulers and community leaders were part of the project commissioning which became a mini carnival as resi-

## Tambuwal, Badaru, Bagudu commend Fayemi on project quality, prudence

dents trooped out in large number to partake of the events.

The commissioning of the road projects came barely one month after the state government flagged off the construction/ rehabilitation of another set of road projects across the state as well as the state capital.

Governor Bagudu, who inaugurated the Ijan-Igbemo-Ire-Ilupeju

Road project, commended Governor Fayemi for sustaining the tenet of good governance and leading by example through the completion of projects and programmes that were initiated and abandoned by past administrations.

The Kebbi State Governor, added that he learnt from his Ekiti State counterpart's good deed that politics

was not "about abandoning predecessors' work but ensuring that the work got completed to ensure the tax payers get value for their money."

Also speaking while inaugurating the Oye-Ayede-Ikun Dairy farm-Kwara State Boundary Road project; which was first constructed by former Governor Niyi Adebayo,



Governor Abubakar Badaru of Jigawa State lauded Governor Fayemi for demonstrating prudence in expending the people's resources judiciously on life lifting projects.

The Jigawa State Governor said the quality of work done on the road and other road projects earlier visited when compared with the amount of money expended showed that there was value for the money spent on the project.

"When I look at the quality of these road projects and the amount Governor Fayemi spent on them, I know a lot of negotiation must have gone into it. This shows the Governor is committed to ensuring tax payers get maximum value for their money.

Governor Tambuwal who also inaugurated the Aramoko-Erinjiyan-Ikogosi Road, praised Governor Fayemi for living up to people's expectation by delivering quality road that would improve the standard of living of the people.

Tambuwal who is the Vice Chairman, Nigeria Governors' Forum, said his relationship with Governor Fayemi was far above partisan politics but hinged on good governance and delivery of public goods to the people.

Governor Fayemi, in his address to the benefiting communities said the Ire-Ilupeju-Igbemo-Ijan road was strategic as it connects the three senatorial districts together and houses the resuscitated Ire Brick Factory.

Dr Fayemi disclosed that the road project was initiated in 2014 before he left office and was subsequently abandoned by the last administration. He added that the road would be of great relief to commercial vehicles and other users of the road.

Speaking on Oye-Ayede-



Ikun Dairy Farm – Kwara Boundary Road, the Ekiti State Governor disclosed that the rehabilitation of the road would boost the operation of Ikun Dairy Farm by providing unhindered access to the farm and marketing of the product.

He added that the newly constructed 13.5-kilometre Aramoko-Erinjiyan-Ikogosi Road would boost tourism attraction and improve

access to the resuscitated Ikogosi Warm Spring.

He commended the contractors that handled the road projects for doing a quality job and delivering the project within the given time frame.

He said, "This is a very strategic road that connects the three senatorial districts and also houses the resuscitated Ire Clay Factory and its impact cuts across key com-

munities and services.

"As a responsible government, we decided to terminate the contract and re-awarded it as rehabilitation to the initial contractor. The rehabilitation of this road will undoubtedly be a great relief to motorists using the road which is in fulfilment of the Infrastructure and Industrial Development of the 5-point Agenda.

"Rehabilitation of Oye-

Ayede-Ikun Dairy Farm Road which extended to Kwara boundary would no doubt boost the agricultural activities of the communities along this axis and the lives of the residents will be transformed in and around the State. The State's Internally Generated Revenue will be enhanced because of the operation of Ikun Dairy Farm. This road will boost the operation of the company, facilitate easy access to the farm and marketing the products.

"I commend the contractor for delivering a quality job on schedule. You have demonstrated that you are serious minded contractor. This government will continue to patronize those contractors who are performing to specification, while the non-performing ones would be shown the way out."

Governor Fayemi appealed to the citizens of the state to work with the government in ensuring the longevity of the roads, stressing that indiscriminate dumping of waste in drains usually do incalculable damage to the roads.







# NGF Spotlight: Naomi Tietie Inducted Country Chief Data Officer Ambassador

*The role of a library can't be taken for granted as a library is an essential and sacred institution which contains periodicals and books. This information is accessed to inform and enlighten others. At the Nigeria Governors' Forum, Naomi Tietie helped build a state-of-the-art library from the ground up, creating a space for records, papers and publications that showcase the history of the Governors, from present to past, the achievements and activities of the forum. In addition to building the library, a physical space where individuals can locate many records, she also has an e-library where individuals from around the globe can access files and information about the secretariat digitally. Due to her dedication and efforts through her career, Naomi was nominated and recently inducted as the Country Chief Data Officer Ambassador from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In this interview, she discusses her recent achievement and her role as the Librarian for Nigeria Governors' Forum.*

## **What's the prerequisite for becoming a Chief Data Officer Ambassador (CDOA)?**

The benchmarks to become part of the Chief Data Officer Ambassador Programme (CCDOA) are majorly on career-path and the demonstration of your achievements, knowledge, commitment and leadership in data and information management within your organization.

## **Who are the partners/organisations involved with this program?**

The partners and organizations involved with this program include Massachusetts Institute of Technology Chief Data Officer and Information Quality (MIT CDOIQ) Ambassador program, the International Society of Chief Data Officers, and the CDO Magazine USA.

## **What was your reaction upon receiving this reward?**

I was super excited when I received the email notifying me of my conferment of a Chief Data Officer Amba-



sador; this made me feel a sense of fulfilment in my career as an Information Professional.

## **What does the role of the Chief Data Officer Ambassador entail?**

The role of a Chief Data Officer Ambassador entails being professional, dedicated, and competent in managing and administering data and information management in your organization.

## **What are the benefits to being in this program and how would it aid you in your role as a Librarian at the Nigeria Governors' Forum?**

The benefits of being in this program includes networking with information and data professionals, getting Resource Support from MIT USA, Complimentary/Highly Discounted Pass to MITs CDOIQ Symposium (USA & Worldwide), Access to CDO World-Wide Community, Programs/Conference Support, Stand up National Website List-



role as a Librarian at the Nigeria Governors' Forum to perform better and apply knowledge gained from networking with other CDO Ambassadors, conferences, Symposium to improve my daily task.

There is also room for collaborations with CDO Ambassadors in terms of resource sharing that can be beneficial to the patrons of the NGF Library.

**Is there additional information that you want to provide about this position or your role as the Librarian/Record Manager at the Nigeria Governors' Forum?**

The position of a Chief Data Officer Ambassador gives me an opportunity to gain expertise and advance my career as an Information Professional.

My role as the Librarian/Record Manager at the Nigeria Governors' Forum entails library development, record keeping and management of information which involves collection, recording, organization, storage, preservation, automation, digitization, and proper dissemination of information resources of the Nigeria Governors' Forum in print and digital format and to

ing as MIT Ambassador, World-Wide Recognition, CDO Ambassador Certificate, CDO Ambassador Frame, Discount on Institute of Information Management (IIM) Africa Membership/Programs, Opportunity for MITC-DOIQ Outstanding Contributor Award etc.

The benefits will aid my



**THE POSITION OF A CHIEF DATA OFFICER AMBASSADOR GIVES ME AN OPPORTUNITY TO GAIN EXPERTISE AND ADVANCE MY CAREER AS AN INFORMATION PROFESSIONAL**



ensure that staff and patrons of the Nigeria Governors' Forum library have easy access to documents and publications in a timely fashion.

Aside from ensuring the smooth running of the NGF library and ensuring documents and publications are catalogued, classified, and uploaded to the NGF e-library and digital repository.

Other tasks I perform includes reviewing of publications and ensuring copyright page is included, processing of International Standard Book Number, acquisition of publications for the NGF library and participating in the Nigeria Governors' Forum Secretariat programmes and activities.



BY ISMAILA UBA MISILLI

# Yahaya Recalibrates Gombe 10-Year Development Agenda With 'Budget Of Consolidation'

**T**raditionally and historically, presentation of budgets evolved from the premise of having to allow scrutiny of the resources raised by government and the uses to which these will be put. The publication or public presentation of a budget thus performs the role of generating accountability for the actions of government at various levels.

A budget presentation therefore should not be seen as a mere governmental annual ritual but rather as an avenue by the governed to have an insightful participation into the art of governance. A budgetary allocation has been developed as a framework within which complex decisions on the allocation of resources can be made more effectively.

The budget presentation is thus a compliance with section 121 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria which provides that the Governor shall cause to be prepared and laid before the House of Assembly at any time before the commencement of each financial year estimates of the revenues and expenditure of the state for the next following financial year.

In the light of the above, the recent presentation of Gombe State 2022 budget by Governor Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya is an attestation of the government of Gombe State's character to run an open and easy to follow administration.



Before the presentation to the State House of Assembly, a townhall meeting on budget preparation was held with traditional rulers, community leaders, trade unions and non-governmental organisations to harness their inputs in order to ensure an all-inclusive budgeting process. Also, the draft was subjected to further scrutiny by members of the state executive council at their sitting. These go to show that the Gombe 2022 budget is indeed the people's budget that targets to

consolidate the gains of the previous ones.

The overall budget performance of the last fiscal year as at 30th September, 2021 was 68.5%. This is to the credit of the fiscal exchequer of the state.

For the 2022 fiscal year, the sum of One Hundred and Fifty-Four Billion, Six Hundred and Ten Million, Six Hundred and Fourteen



Gombe State University Main Library

Thousand Naira (N154, 610,614,000.00) is proposed to be expended. The budget is made up of Sixty-Nine Billion, One Hundred and Seventeen Million, Two Hundred and Fourteen Thousand Naira (N69,117,214,000.00) for recurrent expenditure representing 44.7% of the total budget, and Eighty-Five Billion, Four Hundred and Ninety-Three Million, Four Hundred Thousand Naira (N85,493,400,000.00) for capital expenditure which represents 55.3% of the budget sum.

The 2022 budget draws heavily on the aspirations of the 10-year Development Agenda evolved by the Inuwa Yahaya's administration, the first of such in the 25-year history of the State. The development Agenda, DEVAGOM for short is anchored on five strategic pillars namely; Governance and Administration, Social development, Economic Development, Infrastructural Development and Sustainable Environment.

This budget is envisaged to be financed by an estimated recurrent revenue of Seventy-Three Billion, Six Hundred and Twenty-Six Million, Seven Hundred and Eighty-Nine Thousand Naira (N73,626,789,000.00) and capital receipts of Seventy-Nine Billion, Eight Hundred and Sixty-Five Million Naira (N79,865,000,000.00) and an estimated closing balance of Four Billion, Eight Hundred and Eighty-One Million, One Hundred and Seventy-Five Thousand Naira (N4,881,175,000.00)

The budget places emphasis on sectorial developments of catalytic areas that will rev up the 10-year Development Agenda of the State.

## THE 2022 BUDGET DRAWS HEAVILY ON THE ASPIRATIONS OF THE 10-YEAR DEVELOPMENT AGENDA EVOLVED BY THE INUWA YAHAYA'S ADMINISTRATION, THE FIRST OF SUCH IN THE 25-YEAR HISTORY OF THE STATE

Hence the 2022 fiscal year, places priority in strengthening the Agricultural value-chain by boosting Small, Medium and Large-Scale agricultural processing in the State. To fund activities in this sector with the sum of Two Billion, Seven Hundred and Twenty-Three Million Naira (N2, 723,000,000.00).

Since agriculture and Rural, Community Development and Cooperatives go hand in hand; a budgetary provision of interventions to improve the quality of life in rural communities in the sum of One Billion, Nine Hundred and Ninety-Five Million Naira (N1, 995,000,000.00) is earmarked for investment in this sub-sector.

One of the main drivers of industrialization of a state is the Trade, Industry and Tourism Sector. Gombe State is currently ranked number One in the Ease of Doing Business in Nigeria by the Presidential Enabling Business Environment Council, there is a need to consolidate the gains in that area. In this regard, the sum of Ten Billion, Nine Hundred and Thirty Million Naira (N10,930,000,000.00) is earmarked for investment in this sector

in order to deepen the efforts made so far.

Infrastructure no doubt, is a leading catalyst for growth as exemplified by the huge investments of the Muhammadu Buhari administration. Works and Infrastructure is a priority for Gombe State as well. For this, the sum of Twenty Billion, Nine Hundred and Ten Million Naira (N20, 910,000,000.00) is earmarked for this sub-sector. Governor Inuwa yahya has given a fresh icing on the cake of his 10-year development Agenda by giving approval for the preparation of a 30-year Gombe State Integrated Infrastructure Master Plan (GSIIP). The document will guide the infrastructure plans and implementation.

There is still an urgent need to tackle the dilapidation of the State's infrastructure stock and completion of abandoned projects. It is indeed noticeable by the administration's scorecard that most of these projects have either been completed or are at various stages of completion since Inuwa Yahaya took over the administration of the State.

Housing and Urban Development also got a good chunk. In line with the administration's vision to facilitate good urban planning and development in the state, the sum of Seven Billion, Four Million Naira (N7,004,000,000.00) is proposed for investment for the Housing and Urban Development sub-sector in the 2022 fiscal year.

Women Affairs and Social Development did not take a back seat. Inuwa Yahaya seeks to promote the relevance of women, children and other vulnerable groups in decision making and the implementation of relevant policies and programmes and has budgeted the sum of One Billion, Three Hundred and Thirty-Nine Million, Five Hundred Thousand Naira (N1,339,500,000.00) for investment in 2022 fiscal year.



## NEWS FROM THE STATES

### How we're winning war against crimes in Ogun – Abiodun

Ogun State Governor, Dapo Abiodun, has disclosed how the state under his watch has been tackling insecurity and making Ogun safe for investors.

According to the governor, his administration has been able to create a job portal meant to dimension the number of unemployed or under employed, and match them with employers, launch the anchor borrowers' scheme, FADAMA GUYS, among Others.

Abiodun, who spoke recently at the 2021 capacity building workshop for security agencies in Lagos and Ogun States, organised by the Nigeria Police Force, Zone II Headquarters, Onikan, Lagos, also said his administration reconstituted and inaugurated the state security trust fund, made it private-sector driven, which has provided logistic and equipment support for security agencies in the state.

Speaking further at the programme with the theme, "Internal security operations in a democratic dispensation", the governor who noted the nexus between pov-



Gov Dapo Abiodun (4th front row) with participants at the workshop

erty, literacy and insecurity, added that local vigilantes, community development associations and Amotekun have been mainstreamed into the state security architecture to achieve greater efficiency and effectiveness in policing Ogun, to ensure the welfare, wellbeing, and security of lives and property.

He, however, pointed out that the current insecurity in the country could be reduced to the barest minimum, if more jobs were created and more youths empowered.

"Fighting insecurity is not

just by arming the police and the military. there is a nexus between insecurity, poverty, education, drug abuse and all other socio-economics indices. as much as it is good to equip the police as we have done in Ogun State through the creation of the state security trust fund, it is important to ensure that we look at the various interventions on how to reduce unemployment."

"We have done that in Ogun State by creating the job portal, we have launched the anchor borrowers' scheme of the Central Bank

of Nigeria and we have the FADAMA GUYS. the more people you have employed, you see a direct proportion in decrease of insecurity", he Stated.

While noting that Ogun and Lagos States are like rivers that flow into each other, Abiodun, posited that the two states must continue to synergize, particularly in the area of security.

He said state-based security agencies have been created to deal with peculiar security challenges as the national police would not be able to

handle the enormous security issues in all parts of the country.

Abiodun, however, lauded the police authority for organising the workshop, especially after the experience of the EndSARS protest, describing the workshop as a practical step to ensure safety of lives and properties using collaboration.

According to him, the workshop would also allow all arms of security apparatus in Ogun and Lagos states to keep abreast with modern policing techniques as well as chart a course that would enable them work together as a team.

The governor, while enumerating the place of security in the development of the society, urged security operatives to be friendly with the populace, as they need the support of the people to succeed in their duties.

In his speech, Lagos State Governor, Babajide Sanwo-Olu, represented by the secretary to the State Government, Mrs. Folasade Jaji, stressed the need for cooperation between the people and civilians.

## Abiodun inspects road projects in four LGs

As part of his administration's efforts to improve road infrastructure in Ogun State, Governor Dapo Abiodun recently embarked on inspection of road projects across four local government areas of the state.

The governor, who toured Sagamu, Obafemi-Owode,

Abeokuta South and Abeokuta North LGs, however promised to construct the deplorable Siun-Owode Road in Obafemi Owode Local Government Area.

Speaking with newsmen after inspecting the new gateway city gate at the Sagamu interchange, Abiodun equally said the road from

Ofada to Mowe would soon receive his government's attention.

"We are rebranding this state to suite our status as the industrial capital Nigeria. we will continue to do more to attract investors to our state. the beautification of this gateway city gate is part of our efforts to pro-

vide the needed ambience for those who chose to reside and do business here", the governor noted.

He said 600 housing units are being constructed at Kobape as part of the 1,000 units constructed in less than two years of his administration.

On the Lafenwa-Roun-

da-Ayetoro Road, Abiodun attributed the slow pace of work to difficulty on some sections of the road and lack of fund, adding that it would be re-designed to six lanes from its initial 17 lanes.

He assured that the road would be delivered in the next six months.



# Jigawa is committed to implementing AfCFTA Strategic Plan - Abubakar

Keynote Address by H.E. Muhammadu Badaru Abubakar, Governor, Jigawa State at the Subnational Strategy Workshop of the National Action Committee on African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement on Wednesday 24th November 2021.

It is my pleasure to welcome you all to day 2 of the AfCFTA Subnational Strategy Workshop put together by the National Action Committee and the Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF).

The reasoning here is to deepen intra-Africa trade through the removal of barriers to trade and movement of goods and services in the continent. The IMF projects that with full implementation of this agreement, intra-African trade will rise from \$50 billion to \$70 billion by 2040.

As we know, Nigeria signed the AfCFTA in July 2019, while the Federal Executive Council (FEC) ratified the country's membership on the 11th of November 2020. For sub-nationals to benefit from the AfCFTA, they must be actively participating in the global value chain, and their operations must be characterized by several of the following:

- High industrial capacity
- Strong service sector (including innovation and technology)
- Stable policy environment
- A fair tax regime
- Reliable budgets and development plans.
- High-level of transparency and public disclosure of information.
- Availability of infrastructure including energy, roads, and rail.
- Access to ports, to mention a few.

#### What are the benefits of AfCFTA for Nigeria?

There are several benefits of the agreement to Nigeria.

1. It provides huge export opportunities for products manufactured in Nigeria including priority export products defined in the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP) and the Nigerian Industrial Revolution Plan (NIRP). It also supports the backward integration agenda. These opportunities will create jobs across skill levels

2. According to the Presidential Committee on the Impact and Readiness Assessment of AfCFTA, this could potentially complement Nigeria's national development agenda in addition to acting as a catalyst for economic diversification program. This offers Nigerian products and services, preferential access to the huge African market which currently sources over 85% of its products imports from outside the continent.

3. The agreement provides immense opportunities for Nigeria's service companies to expand to Africa, especially those in financial services, e-commerce and the digital economy. Nigerian companies have built critical capacity in these sectors and have long desired to expand to Africa but were constrained by trade barriers.

4. The agreement will liberalize education, health and transport services which are estimated at about \$13.2Bn net imports as at 2017.



Gov Abubakar Badaru (middle) and NGF Director General A. B. Okauru speak to member of the press at the event

#### What are the Expectations of Government?

A lot is expected from the Federal and State governments to make the agreement work. Some of these expectations are.

1. Encouraging structural transformation and value chain optimization including the development of industrial and agricultural processing zones.
2. Strengthening regulations and quality control of products produced in the country so that they are highly competitive by collaborating with agencies like NAFDAC and Standard Organisation of Nigeria (SON).
3. The early inclusion of Governors in the inception and design phase would provide sustainability in the long run. All stakeholders, especially the government must ensure the continuity of this policy irrespective of a change in administration.
4. Improving ease of doing business nationally and sub-nationally by harmonising policies, laws, and regulatory procedures to attract large-scale investment – e.g., increased access to credit, access to land, access to labour & skill, business registration, tax payment, etc.
5. Ramping up skills acquisition for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) to improve their readiness for sub-national participation in the competitive market emerging from the AfCFTA.
6. Preventing distortions and discrimination in trade and investment. Tax rights under the AfCFTA must be mutually beneficial, including cross-jurisdiction income or profit flows such as withholding taxes on payments to non-residents.

#### Immediate Benefits of AfCFTA

There are several benefits this agreement presents to the Federal and State governments. These include:

1. At the Federal level, Nigeria is already utilizing regional trade opportunities, contributing approximately 76% of total trading volumes in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) region. We strongly believe this number can improve when sub-nationals participate actively in regional trade.

2. The increase of direct investment and creation of new business opportunities for multiple sectors within each sub-national's economy (including the distribution and logistics supply chain, as well as transportation infrastructure) by putting in place progressive policies and simplified customs procedures, making sub-nationals and intra-Africa trade more enticing for domestic producers.

3. One of the primary benefits initiated by the agreement is the access to regional supply chains. Member countries and their sub-nationals can access new opportunities regarding intra-regional exports and can leverage domestic markets by creating supply chains that are both efficient and sustainable.

Finally, apart from speaking on behalf of my colleagues and underscoring the importance of having all states on board, I would like to put on record that my State, Jigawa, has fully keyed in to this and will remain committed to the successful implementation of the AfCFTA Strategic Plan.

I thank you all for joining us here today.

**H.E. Muhammadu Badaru Abubakar**  
Governor, Jigawa State & Chairman, National Economic Council Export Promotion Committee.

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WOODROW WILSON  
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Bi-partisan governors' team speaks to the world

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