

**management on ways to help staff transit from service to retirement?**

Management should focus more on specialized business skills training. Management should partner with organizations like Songai farms for retirees interested in agribusiness to do hands on training. Management is indeed doing well for staff in transition to retirement, but they can do more by paying terminal benefits timely too.

Retirees should be given consideration when beneficial programs are available in CID, Agric and others which can boost their businesses. They can benefit from loans too.

**What are your challenges now and how are you addressing them?**

The major challenge is the rising cost of seedlings, labor, farm tools and fertilizer. It is difficult to break even these days. I address these challenges by managing the scarce resources at my disposal very carefully and sometimes taking Agric loans from the bank.

**How did the retirement training you attended help you cope with your challenges?**

The training was helpful in clarifying my vision. It was also handy in providing some rudimentary accounting knowledge.

**How has your social life changed since retirement?**

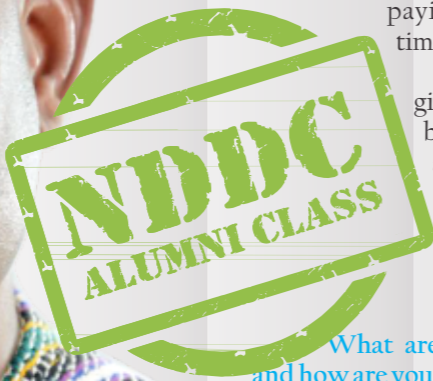
I have more time now for leisure that when I was in service to socialize. I am now able to honor more invitations to weddings, birthday celebrations and burials.

**What is your advice to those still in service?**

I will advise them to make hay while the sun is shining. Retirement creeps in on you before you know it. Do not plan to start a new business upon retirement. Start now.

I would advise them to put in their best to ensure that the commission performs better and achieve its mandate. This way, their own future will be secured.

Finally, I will advise them to be careful with their benefits when they retire. Smart people are waiting for your money.



# My Farm Feeds Me Now – Vulasi

**M**r. Barinem Vulasi, a graduate of Sociology from the University of Lagos, married with three daughters, retired as a Director and Head of the Transport and Logistics Department of the Administration Directorate.

workers. I am also a full-time Law student at the Rivers State University. I am reading for my PhD in the Imo State University. No dull moments for me.

**How did you prepare for your retirement?**

I knew that I would retire into farming and so I gradually acquired land for that purpose. I started poultry business long before my retirement with the intention of scaling up when I retire. Today, I concentrate on rearing broilers for sale. I am also into cassava, corn, plantain and yam farming. I do not buy yams, garri and vegetables any more.

**Did your work in NDDC in any way prepare you for this role you are playing?**

I will say yes. During my time there I was given the opportunity to attend many trainings which I benefitted from. I adapted them to suit my needs and purposes.

**How have you settled into your new life outside the office environment?**

Firstly, I will say that God has been very faithful in guiding my footsteps. I go to the farm every day to supervise my

**How would you compare leadership in a workplace to that in a community?**

Leadership in the workplace is more tasking because the orientation is to galvanize subordinates towards productive ends. But in the community the challenge of leadership is to build consensus and clarify issues for development of the community.

**What will be your advice to**

# Akwa: Building an Enduring Legacy





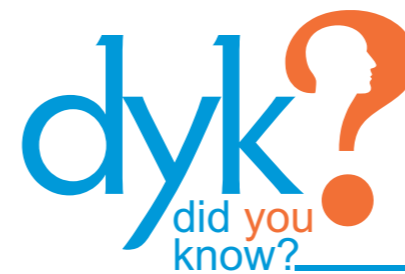
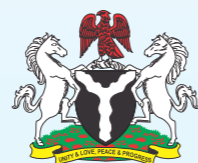
## New Thinking. New Frontiers. New Partnerships.

At the Niger Delta Development Commission, NDDC, we see new possibilities: An exciting new phase of growth and prosperity for the Niger Delta and its resourceful people. Thanks to a supportive government, focused leadership and an extensive partnership that support our radical change agenda, we are making right investments in tomorrow's prosperity and joy for the region and its people.



**NDDC**  
NIGER DELTA DEVELOPMENT  
COMMISSION

*Determined to make a difference*



Interesting facts about the Niger Delta. Got some? Then contact The Editor at [nddcnews@nddc.gov.ng](mailto:nddcnews@nddc.gov.ng)



### The Two Crown King

Calabar king who wore two crowns, King Duke IX of Calabar was the Nigerian monarch who wore two crowns to show that his enthronement was endorsed by the British as well as the Efrik people who he ruled over.

### Niger Delta Girl Shines in US Varsity

A 20-year-old Ijaw student from Rivers State, Miss Alaba Ann Tam Danagogo, is the 2021 overall best scholar at the Syracuse University in New York, the United States of America (U.S.A). Graduating with distinctions in Biology Major and Minor in English and Textual Studies, among other academic accomplishments, Alaba was also awarded the prestigious 1870 scholarship by the university for another four-year Medical Studies. The university's Dean of the School of Arts and Science, Prof. Karin Ruhlandt, said among Alaba's academic accomplishments are the Dean's List Honors, Distinction in Biology and the highest recognised 1870 Syracuse University scholarship offered by the Office of Admission of the university. Alaba was Students' Speaker (valedictorian) for 2021 and she was selected as a Senior Class Marshall of



Miss Tam Danagogo

the university, recognised as a Distinguished Syracuse University Scholar, having graduated summa cum laude with a 3.97 CGPA in a four-point system. Ruhlandt said: "Alaba's study in Biology also includes independent research related to the development of the brain's neocortex which will eventually help scientists understand certain new developmental disorders.

### The First Aeronautic Engineer

The Niger Delta region produced the first Aeronautic Engineer in Nigeria. He was no other than HRM, Eze Sunday Nkemdinim Andrew Uzor, CRD, JP+ the Nze-Obi of Egbema. He was born on October 8, 1931 at Abachike, Egbema, Imo State in the Old Eastern Region of Nigeria.

He was married to Odozhiaku Cecilia Nwakiriocha Uzor (late) and Ugoeze Jane Nwanyimma Uzor. He attended Government Primary School, Lagos; Yaba College of Technology, 1948-1953; BOAC Technical Training Centre, London (Engineer's Licences on VC 10, Forker F2, D.C-3 and Boeing 707 Aircrafts); Professional Aircraft Engineer and Member, Society of Licensed Aircraft Engineers (MSLAE), 1962; Aviation Superintendent, Lagos Airport Operations, BP Nigeria Ltd., 1967-1970; General Manager, Rivers State Transport Corporation, 1970-1973; MD/CEO, Egbema Enterprises Ltd.; MD/CEO, M-El Khalel Transport, Lagos; MD/CEO, Delta

Air Charter; MD/CEO, Sangor Nigeria Ltd.; MD/CEO, Italdomus Ltd.; MD/CEO, Sanzor Industries Ltd, on hardware manufacturing company enlisted by the Stock exchange, MD/CEO, Zenith Dredging Company Ltd.; MD/CEO, Transking Nigeria Ltd. etc. He was Director, Pan African Bank Ltd.; Nigeria Technical Company Ltd.; Chairman, Delta Maritime and Aeronautic Services Ltd.

He was the former Imo State Chairman, Traditional Rulers of Oil Mineral Producing Communities of Nigeria (TROMPCON); National Vice Chairman, TROMPCON; First Executive Chairman/CEO, Imo State Oil Mineral Producing Areas Development Commission (ISOPADEC). He reigned as the Nze-Obi of Egbema between 1976 and 1999 (23years).

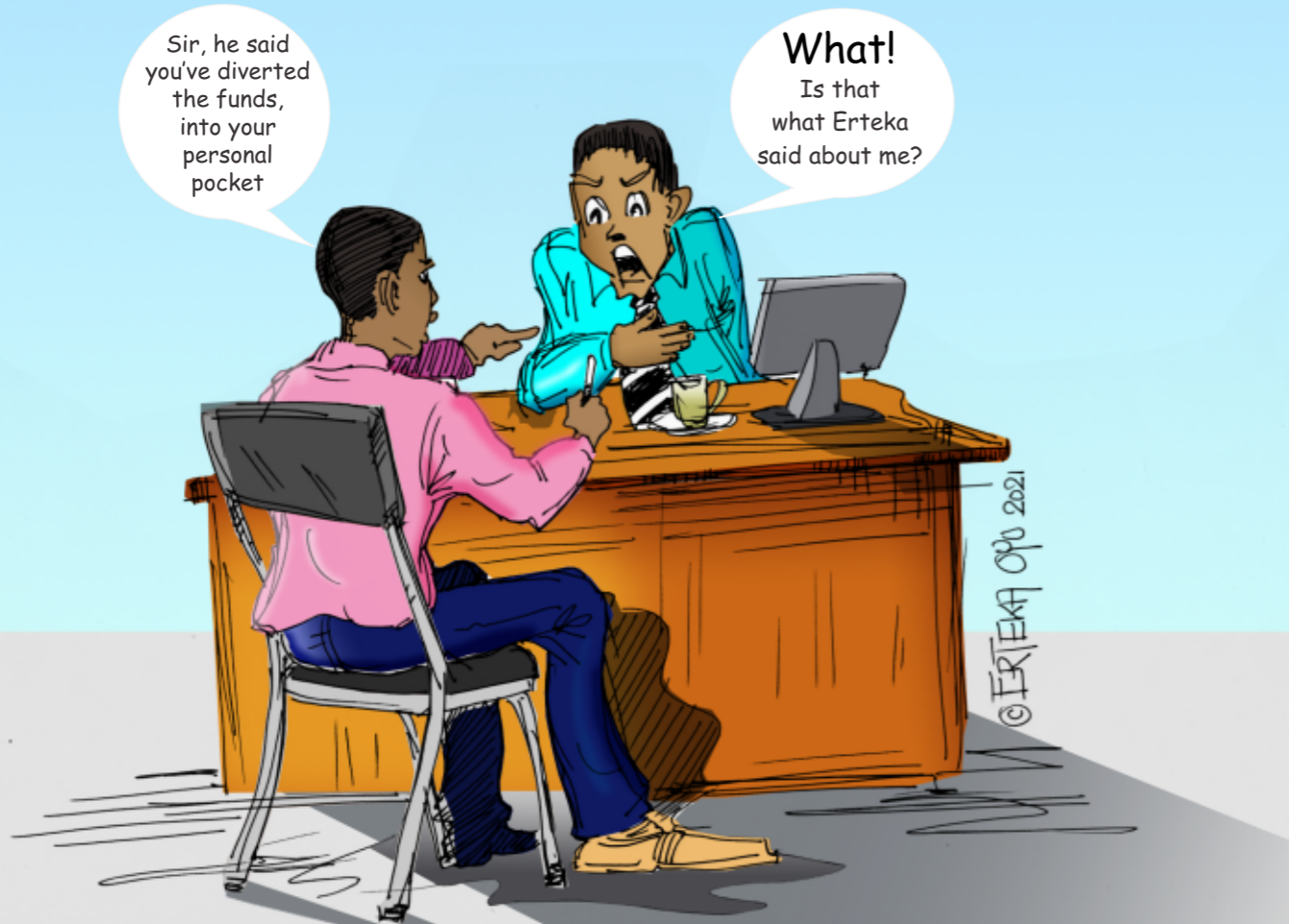
Source: Africa Who's Who, 2nd Edition, 1991, Publisher: Ralp Uwechue



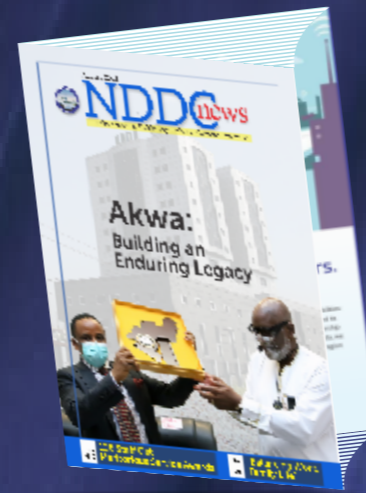
HRM, Eze Sunday Nkemdinim Andrew Uzor

# Message from the SERVICOM DESK

For effective service delivery, desist from Character Assassination, rumour mongering and outright gossiping



**Desist from Selling Official/ Confidential Information to outsiders**



**Editor-In-Chief:**  
Ibitoye Abosedo, Ph.D

**Editor:**  
Tony Omah

**Contributors:**

- Chuks Osuji
- Lucas Olajugbagbe
- Mary Nwaeke
- Emmanuel Udonte
- Elizabeth Osuji- Imo
- Sam Chukwu
- Ifeatu Agbu
- Ogboka Searchlight
- Magnus Isaac
- Anderson Ukeh - Abia
- David Omosayo - Ondo
- Margaret Orusede - Delta
- Abasiandikan Nkono - Akwa Ibom
- Emmanuel Erhiawaye - Edo State
- Victory Tamuno
- Clement Pronen
- Jasmine Osai
- Bibian Akparanta
- Damiete Bobmanuel
- Christy Kpadobi

**Vision**

To offer a lasting solution to the Socio-economic difficulties of the Niger Delta region.

**Our Mission**

To facilitate the rapid, even and sustainable development of the Niger Delta into a region that is economically prosperous, socially stable, ecologically regenerative and politically peaceful

**Guest Cartoonist**  
ERTEKA E. OYO

**CONSULTANT:**

Clearpoint Communications Ltd.  
Utibe Uko Grace Okoroafor, Florence Imeh  
Emmanuel L. Igbigbi - Design

## Editor-in-Chief's Take

Dear Colleagues,

I am delighted to present to you this loaded edition that is richly spiced with some landmark achievements recorded by our Commission in the recent past.

In many ways, the year 2021 could be said to be epochal in the annals of the Commission. We had the honour and privilege of getting Presidential endorsements for some of the Commission's projects. First on cue was the commissioning of our 13-floor permanent headquarters by President Muhammadu Buhari on Thursday, March 11, 2021.

This was followed by the inauguration of the Nigeria Police Barracks, Special Protection Unit, SPU, Base 6 at Omagwa, Rivers State, by the Vice President, Professor Yemi Osinbajo, on September 28, 2021. Then, on December 30, 2021, President Buhari commissioned the 1,050-bed-space ultra-modern Hostel at the University of Uyo in Akwa Ibom State.

These achievements formed the highlight of our interview with the Director of Project Monitoring and Supervision, Engr. Abraham Onduku, who expressed delight that within a short period, NDDC was able to complete and commission projects which were virtually abandoned for many years.

According to him: "These projects are as monumental as they are giant achievements by the present administration."

Onduku also talked about the completion and commissioning of many roads and other projects, including the 3.2-kilometre rigid pavement Chief Ambakederemo Road in Kiagbodo, Burutu Local Government Area of Delta State.

The interview also brings out the fact that the people living in over 2,000 communities spread across five Local Government Areas of Ondo State, will "see the light" very soon, as the 132/33kv sub-station funded by the Commission in Okitipupa would soon be commissioned.

The Corporate Affairs Department, under my leadership, has the privilege to showcase these five-star projects to the world.

This edition, also focuses on security and safety at the new headquarters at the Eastern By-pass, with an incisive interview with the former Director of Administration, Dr Charles Akpan.

The interview covers a wide range of issues bordering on security and safety of staff and stakeholders within the headquarters complex.

Akpan stated that the Commission has set up an elaborate Health, Safety and Environment, HSE, unit managed by a competent consultant. He shared some good news for Staff in the area of maintenance of facilities in the offices and welfare of members of the NDDC family.

Our cover story dwells on the achievements of the Interim Administration and the contribution of Dr. Efiog Akwa to the success story.

Another interesting interview in this edition is the one with the Director of Health and Social Services, Engr. Ukeme Nkamare, who made a case for the popular Free Medical Outreach. He promised to push for the return of the programme, which he described as "a strategy to increase access to health care in rural areas."

It is not all about interviews. Of course, our regular sections, such as Sports, Health and Did You Know? are not left out.

I invite you to enjoy this pleasurable and interesting edition.



*Ibitoye Abosedo*  
- Ibitoye Abosedo, Ph.D

# Building an Enduring Legacy

Efiong Akwa, banker, accountant and lawyer, was appointed Interim Administrator of NDDC in December, 2020. He is repositioning the Commission in service delivery



The 1050-beds Student Hostel at the University of Uyo in Akwa Ibom State was abandoned for more than 18 years before the present administration revived and completed the project.

Etched on the plaque in front of the new twin tower headquarters of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) in Port Harcourt are the following words from the Interim Administrator of the Niger Delta Development Commission, NDDC, Dr. Efiong Akwa: 'This NDDC Headquarters Complex stands as a monument to what we are as a people; strong, beautiful and grand, in outlook, in sophistication and dream. This is a triumph of will over adversity; a metaphor of what we can achieve, as a region and as a people, when we put our minds to it.'

Akwa, who bestrides the Legal and Banking professions, was first appointed the acting Executive Director Finance and Administration in August 2020. On that occasion, the Federal Government also named a group of Auditors led by Ernst & Young to do a thorough forensic audit of the NDDC. Soon after, on December 12, 2020, President Muhammadu Buhari dissolved the Interim Management Committee and named Akwa Interim Administrator with a mandate to facilitate the conclusion of the audit process before a Governing

Board was to take over.

As the Chief Executive Officer, Akwa has recorded a sterling performance in the last year, despite the fact that he was confronted with enormous challenges, some of which had festered since the inception of the NDDC in 2001.

Instead of being deterred by the daunting challenges he met, Akwa, apparently driven by a commitment to bring change to the NDDC, saw them as spark to motivate and make a difference. He exhibited an inmate

tendency for going for big targets, grabbing opportunities and building bridges among stakeholders, and in his focused drive for results, he has successfully left his footprints on the sands of the NDDC.

A Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants and a Solicitor of the Supreme Court of Nigeria, Akwa has ensured the successful conclusion of the forensic audit and submission of the report to President Buhari.

When the recommendations of the



Nigeria Police Special Protection Unit (SPU), Omagwa, Rivers State



Dr. Henry Idorenyin Effiong of the Directorate of Finance recently tied the Traditional (Okurukaka) nuptial knot with his beloved wife, Felicia Henry Effiong on June 19, 2021 at Kala, Abuloma, Okrika L.G.A., Rivers State. They are flanked by Directors and staff of the Commission, friends and well wishers



Mr Felix Ehiroho of CID mark his birthday recently with staff of the Commission, friends and well wishers



Christopher Davis of CRD recently celebrated his birthday with staff of the Commission, friends and well wishers



Mrs. Harriet Okoya of Bayelsa State Office with staff during the burial ceremony of her father, High Chief Felix Pere Kaiama at Agbere, Sagbama LGA, Bayelsa State on May 22, 2021



Mr. Searchlight Ogboka of CAD and members of staff of NDDC during the burial ceremony of his mother, Mrs. Victoria Christopher Ogboka at Ahoada, Rivers State.



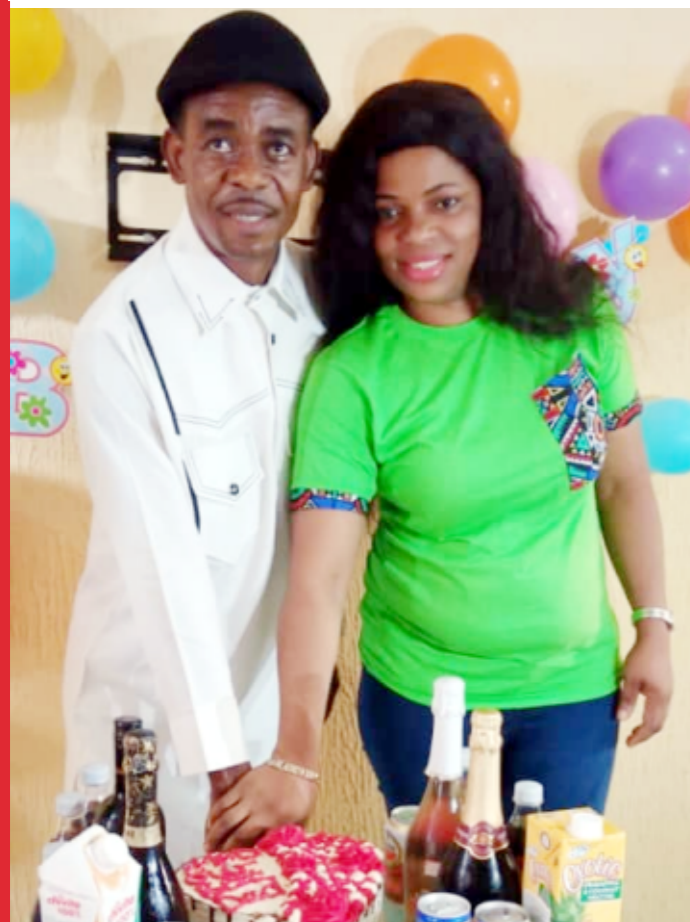
The celebrant, Charles Obi Odili and his beloved wife, Mrs. Juliet Charles Odili, during the send forth ceremony. Standing 3rd(L) is Dr. Abosede, the Director of CAD along with other staff and well wishers.



Dr. Abosede, presenting a souvenir to Mr Charles Obi Odili on behalf the the Corporate Affairs Department



Mr. Femi Owoseni of Procurement Department and his wife, Mrs. Sekemi Owoseni, during their daughter, Miss Oluwafemi Iremide Owoseni's dedication at The Redeemed Christian Church of God, True Vine Parish, Rumuigbo, PH.



Hon. Tony Omah of CAD poses with his beautiful wife, Deaconess Princess Esther Omah as he added another year.



Mr. Lucas Olajugbagbe of CAD and his wife, Mrs. Helen Olajugbagbe during their daughter, Miss Oluwafemi Olajugbagbe's Matriculation at Afe Babalola University recently.



Akwa meets with Sen. Ifeanyi Okowa, Delta State Governor

forensic audit are implemented, Niger Deltans will heave a sigh of relief because a new template for development would have emerged; a model that will make NDDC dependable and able to access international loan facilities for development purposes.

The forensic investigation is already yielding good results, as many contractors who abandoned their projects were laterally smoked out and forced to return to their various sites to complete the projects.

From all indications, the audit report will help in repositioning the NDDC to be more productive, in order to meet the yearnings of the people of the Niger Delta region. It is expected that henceforth, the commission will be more concerned with executing projects that will have direct economic benefits for the people.

Today, the Commission is doing things differently and a new NDDC is emerging by the day. Akwa's strategy was to improve delivery of projects and services by shoring up the transparency of the Commission's processes.

Akwa initiated widespread consultations with stakeholders to gain

their support and partnership, required to fast-track development in the region. In quick succession, he visited the Governors of Rivers, Akwa Ibom, Delta, Imo and Ondo States and hosted committee members from both chambers of the National Assembly.

The engagement with members of the National Assembly was principally to get approval for the 2020 budget of the NDDC, which was delayed on account of the frosty relationship between the lawmakers and previous NDDC management.

Akwa put his leadership skills to good use by ending the feud between the NDDC and members of the National Assembly.

This was confirmed by Olubunmi Tunji-Ojo, Chairman, House of Representatives Committee on NDDC, who commended Akwa for the progress the Commission has recorded so far.

Similarly, the chairman of the Senate Committee on NDDC, Peter Nwaoboshi, commended the NDDC's interim administration for realizing the need for cooperation between the National Assembly and the Commission.

Recounting his encounter with the nation's legislators, Akwa said he was pleasantly surprised when he got a soft landing at the Green Chambers of the National Assembly.

He said: 'It was a miracle, especially as the legislators were on recess when I was invited to the chambers. God showed NDDC mercy, because we couldn't continue operating without a budget. In a very short time, our budget was passed, allowing us to go back to delivering on our mandate of developing this great region of ours.'

When the House of Representatives Committee on NDDC visited the Commission for the first time in over two years, to resume its oversight function, Tunji-Ojo assured: 'We are here to engage with you to enhance your service delivery, ascertain your challenges if any, and explore ways of mitigating them. You have the assurance of this committee to support you in every way possible, including through legislative instruments.'

He said further: 'The committee is willing and ready to work with the NDDC in terms of drafting legislation that will ensure that the Commission is more efficient and delivers on its mandate.'

Akwa has also reached out to other key stakeholders from the region, such as traditional rulers, civil society organizations and youth groups from the Niger Delta.

One of such engagements was a three-day Strategic Capacity Building Workshop/Retreat at Ibom Icon Hotels and Golf Resort in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, where the Minister of Niger Delta Affairs, Senator Godswill Akpabio, affirmed that the efforts of the NDDC to restore collaboration among stakeholders will help in fashioning a common roadmap for the development of the Niger Delta region.

The NDDC interim administrator said the retreat was held in furtherance of the ongoing consultations with stakeholders of the Commission to distil commonalities.

'The NDDC is born again. Contrary to its distasteful past ways, the core of our new personae is continual consultations and collaboration with stakeholders to create commonalities for effective development of the Niger Delta.'

Speaking in the same vein, Senator Nwaoboshi said that there was need for all stakeholders to work together to ensure that the Niger Delta moves forward. He commended Akwa for



## cover story

recognizing the need for cooperation between the National Assembly and the commission. He added: 'In the past we had assisted the NDDC, to get the oil and gas companies to meet their statutory obligations to the commission. We amended the law and today the NLNG is paying their dues to NDDC. We must always work towards cooperation and discussion for the good of everyone.'

The successes achieved by the Akwaled NDDC was corroborated by the chairman of the Abia State Traditional Rulers Council, Eze Joseph Nwabeke, and Benjamin Tamiararebi, National President of Host Communities Organization in Nigeria (HOSTCOM). They commended the NDDC for organizing the stakeholders' engagement.

No doubt, some outstanding milestones have been recorded since Akwa mounted the saddle at the NDDC. Of course, the completion and commissioning of the NDDC headquarters in Port Harcourt stands out among the star projects.

Under Akwa's watch, several project sites of the commission were reactivated to step up development of infrastructure.

The inauguration of the new NDDC headquarters attracted presidential endorsement, with President Buhari stating that it marks an important milestone in his administration's effort to reposition the commission for the overall development of the Niger Delta region.

The 13-floor edifice, which took many years to complete, was something to celebrate for the president, who poured encomiums on Akpabio and Akwa for providing the required leadership that saw to the completion of the office complex at the Marine Base in Port Harcourt.

Buhari said: 'I commend the management and staff of the NDDC for staying on course and keying into the development agenda of my administration. I am particularly pleased to note the cordial relationship between the NDDC and the National Assembly and hope that this relationship will be strengthened for the benefits of the people of the Niger Delta region.'

On September 28, Vice President Yemi Osinbajo inaugurated Base 6 of the Nigeria Police Barracks, Special Protection Unit, which was built by the NDDC at Omagwa, Port Harcourt. The facility consisted of the 66-flat residential quarters and administrative block for security personnel in Rivers State.

Akwa's administration also witnessed the completion and commissioning of



Akwa meets with Udom, Governor of Akwa Ibom State

numerous roads and projects, including the two-mile (3.2 km) Chief Ambakederemo Road in Kiagbodo, Delta State.

In the area of Health, Akwa distributed vaccines and other medical equipment to all the nine states of the Niger Delta, stressing the importance of ensuring good healthcare for communities in the region.

Akwa stated that in pursuit of its mandate, the Commission had continued to support the Niger Delta states in their drive to address the health concerns and interests of the people of the region.

He added: 'The Commission is distributing vaccines that are relevant in addressing vaccines-preventable diseases of public health importance in the region such as the Hepatitis B and Typhoid vaccines.'

For the people living in over 2,000 communities spread across five Local Government Areas of Ondo State, Akwa has given them hope of 'seeing the light.'

The NDDC Interim Administrator has virtually completed the 132/33kv sub-station being constructed by the Commission in Okitipupa.

Akwa said: 'This project is very important because it will serve five local government areas in the oil production belt of Ondo State. When you provide light to a people, you have provided life. So, we are committed to providing life to the people.'

An elated Governor of Ondo State, Oluwarotimi Akeredolu, thanked the NDDC and the Interim Administrator for making efforts to facilitate the completion of the project.

He said: 'I appreciate the NDDC under the watch of Efiang Akwa. This is a new era in the Commission and our people in the five Local Government Areas in the southern part of the State will forever be grateful to the NDDC for making efforts to give us light.'

Akeredolu is not alone in eulogizing

Akwa. The Vice Chancellor of the University of Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, Nyakudo Ndaeyo, described the Interim Administrator as a promise keeper who ensured that the long abandoned 1,000-bed NDDC hostel in the University was revived and completed.

The Vice Chancellor disclosed that he had extracted the promise from the NDDC boss to complete the project shortly after his appointment as head of the interventionist agency.

Akwa's performance also attracted testimonials from eminent Niger Delta stakeholders.

From the Ijaw National leader, Chief Edwin Clark, to Akwa Ibom State Governor Udom Emmanuel, and Rivers State Governor Nyesom Wike, the stakeholders lined up behind Akwa to strengthen his hands in the arduous task of fast-tracking development of Nigeria's oil-rich region.

Edwin Clark gave kudos to the NDDC Interim Administrator, describing him as a shining light in the Niger Delta. He appealed to the youth and other stakeholders of the Niger Delta region to give him a chance to execute the mandate thrust on him.

Governor Emmanuel remarked that Akwa's 'private sector experience' is making a difference quickly and opening up new vistas of opportunities for collaboration on the Niger Delta project.

Today, NDDC is at the dawn of a new era; an epoch already insured with the legacies of a committed Interim Administration piloted by Akwa.

Clearly, Akwa is leaving behind an interventionist agency that is more effective and more efficient in service delivery to the peoples of the Niger Delta. He is bequeathing a commission whose processes have been streamlined and whose vision is focused.

## NDDC Celebrates as Akwa Bags Doctorate Degree in Law

The management and staff of the Niger Delta Development Commission, NDDC, were on hand on Friday, March 18 at the convocation arena of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, to celebrate with the Commission's Interim Administrator, Dr. Efiang Akwa, as he bagged a Doctorate Degree in Law from the university.

The event, which took place at the main campus of the university, witnessed the influx of personalities from all works of life from different parts of the country.

Expressing his appreciation to God Almighty for seeing him through the stress of academic activities in the last six years, Dr. Efiang Akwa commended the management of the University for being trustworthy with the responsibilities reposed on them.

I am elated, Dr. Akwa, stated further: 'The last six years were not easy for me because I had to combine my academic activities with other pursuits. And you know the kind of institution UNIZIK is; if you don't study extremely well, there's no



The Vice Chancellor of UNIZIK, Prof. Charles Esimone (l) congratulates Dr. Akwa (m) during the Convocation Ceremony.

way you can achieve the expected results. So, I had to put in my best, and today, I have been awarded with a Doctorate Degree and I give all thanks to God Almighty.'

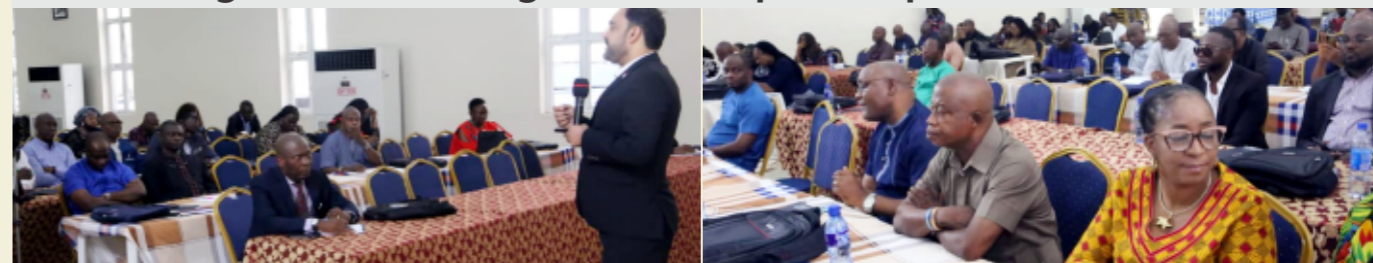
He noted that with the calibre of students produced by the university, UNIZIK may soon compete with other

world class universities and pleaded with ASUU to see the need to return to the negotiating table with Federal Government with a view to finding a lasting solution to the lingering strike, which, he said, is affecting the standard of education in the country.



Dr. Akwa (L) with Dr. Charles Akpan at the Convocation Ceremony.

## Management Training 'Leadership & Corporate Governance'



## Staff Capacity Building for Drivers, Security and Technical Staff.



## Stanbic IBTC Pension Sensitization Exercise.



# Corporate Affairs Visits Media Organisations

Staff of the Media Relations Unit in the Corporate Affairs Department recently embarked on familiarization visits of some media organisations in Port Harcourt as part of a training programme aimed at broadening their knowledge of media operations.

The team, led by the Manager Media Relations, Mr. Ifeatu Agbu, visited the Port Harcourt offices of Channels TV and the Punch Newspaper in Port Harcourt, the Nigerian Television Authority and Treasure FM.

At the Obiri-Ikwerre office of Channels TV, the NDDC delegation was received by Channels TV staff led by the Station Manager, Channels TV

Port Harcourt, Mr. Paul Are.

Are welcomed the NDDC delegation and called for more cooperation between Channels TV and the NDDC while noting that the Port Harcourt office is still in transition and not fully functional in terms of transmitting local content to the Channels TV network.

A radio station, Are stated is part of the Port Harcourt office's future plans. Are informed the visitors that Channels TV Port Harcourt office offers training programmes for professionals in the broadcast media business.

Such training, he stated, can be done onsite and off-site. The delegation was conducted around the premises. They were shown the News Room, the

Station Lounge, the Studio, the Master Control Room and the section for the proposed Radio station.

At the Trans Amadi office of Punch Newspaper, Port Harcourt, the State Correspondent, Mr. Dennis Nnaku welcomed the NDDC delegation.

Mr. Mike Aina, Print Superintendent, Punch Newspaper, Port Harcourt conducted the NDDC delegation on a guided tour of the printing press, explaining how newspapers are printed. Mr. Dennis Nnaku, a State Correspondent thereafter explained the editorial focus of the Punch Newspaper and the news gathering protocols to the NDDC team.



## We Set up New SECURITY ARCHITECTURE -Dr. Akpan

Dr. Charles Akpan is the former Director of Administration. He holds a B.Ed. degree in History and MPA in Public Administration as well as M.Sc. in Political and Administrative Studies. He however, crowned his academic laurels with a Ph.D in Political Science(Politics &

project manager gave us a time frame to bring in our properties.

*Tell us about some of the advantages that this place has over the accommodation in Aba Road.*

You can see that the space and the ambience is different. Although structurally, this office was built for OMPADEC and recall that the staff strength then was not much. However, we are still able to manage the space properly. Do you know there are still new offices we are creating? The contractor in charge of partitioning and furnishing the offices has not done that because he has not been paid. However, we are doing the little we can as the Directorate of Administration to ensure that the office space is conducive, no matter how temporary so that staff can settle

down.

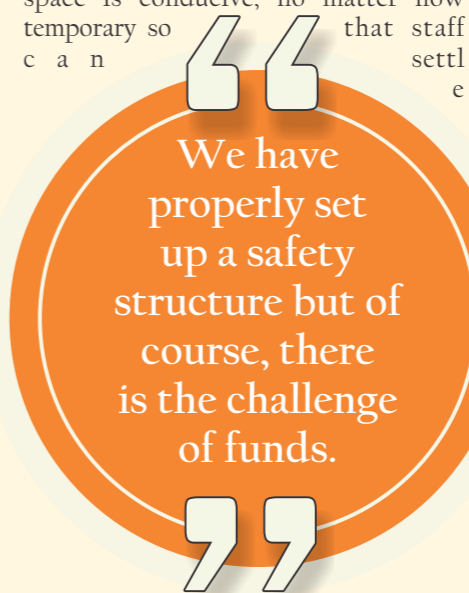
*At Aba Road, we had issues with not connecting to the National Grid, has it been addressed in this new place?*

The Commission was owing NEPA, as they were called then, over ninety million naira. We requested severally for payment but they were not paid.

Right here, the task of connecting this place to a powerhouse has been handed over to a contractor. The last update from him was that he has completed all the logistics involved and it was going to cost him some money and we are ensuring that it is done so that we can reduce our dependence on diesel.

*You had earlier mentioned that the partitioning has been contracted out. How soon will work on the partitioning be completed?*

The contractor was picked because he was ready to put in his money and the Honourable Minister of Niger Delta Affairs wanted this place to be ready. So, whoever was ready to put in money was awarded the contract. The contractor has agreed to partition the place as part of the negotiation. But we know that lack of funds has a role to play. You know contractors, they have to ensure they have funds but he is really trying. We are very hopeful that the work will be completed in due time.



At Channels Television



The Printing Press in Punch Office



At Treasure FM



At NTA Port Harcourt

“  
It is strategic that we move that ATM for the safety of staff and stakeholders.  
What is important is your money and not the location of the ATM.”



*What are some of the measures put in place to address safety issues, considering that the new office complex is massive?*

That is an interesting one. Back then as an Assistant Director in Administration, I started effectively the HSE unit. Recall that government organisations in Nigeria do not seem to realize the importance of safety. Having been a Special Assistant to a General Manager in Shell, I know a lot about the importance of safety. So, I put it together and got the then MD to approve. We got a consultant to handle safety. You see them around in their uniforms; they are here to identify and forestall safety challenges.

Staff will not be able to work and attend to safety issues; some staff do not even know how to attend to fire or the rigours of safety practices like in some multinational companies.

We need standard fire trucks; we have done proposals for that. Having a high-rise building, we need a truck that can throw water to higher floors in case of a fire incident. Take note that we have a helipad, provision was made for it although it has not been completed. The intent is that, in case of a fire incident, those on the higher floors can go up and join a helicopter.

*Can you tell us about maintenance? What arrangements has management made for maintaining this structure?*

In line with international best practices in safety and facility management, we are to allow the defect liability period elapse before we hire a facility manager. Because of the nature of our movement into this place, we needed to allow the contractor remain as the facility manager for a while. You can see what is happening here now, some of these facilities we brought in have faults and to amend them, we need someone who is well familiar with the structure of the

place. Also note that it is a one-year period for defect liability period to elapse. Management is considering keeping him because he knows where it bites, he is the right person to fix it.

*We have provision for a banking hall but we have not seen any bank move in. What is causing the delay?*

This is yet another interesting one. Because of the security challenges in the region, I personally advised against having a Bank within our premises. What we need is a cash center and not a Bank. If we bring a Bank here, we cannot control who and who has access to the facility. We would have to open the Bank to the public otherwise the Bank will not be able to break even. The idea of a Bank will be high-risk for us.

As for the ATM, I want to relocate it to the back. I have intelligence report that most times, people monitor those withdrawing money from the ATM. It is strategic that we move that ATM for the safety of staff and stakeholders. What is important is your money and not the location of the ATM. The location will be known by staff and stakeholders. After all, at Aba Road, it was inside the building.

*Our staff are conscious of the circular asking staff not to eat in the office. Are there any plans on ground to fast track completion of the canteen?*

Yes, if you go to the canteen, it is fully functional. We have sections for junior staff, senior staff and management staff. The meals are splendid, we set up a committee for quality testing. We also asked the Staff Union to go in there and monitor them. It is not their responsibility to determine who comes; that is an administrative function. It is their responsibility to check if the food is good or not; a feedback from them will determine necessary steps to be taken. We have tried as much as possible to accommodate the

people who were with us at Aba Road. We could not bring everybody, there must be some control, if not, the people at the canteen would not be able to meet up. I tell you again, that it is in the best interest of the Commission to disallow staff from eating in the offices. When I took over as Director, Administration, we killed two reptiles – one on fifth floor and the other at the basement. These reptiles pursue rats that feed on food and other particles and this puts the lives of staff in danger.

We should discourage ourselves from eating in the offices. It might interest you to know that the moment that circular went out, I got calls from over six staff commending me for the prohibition because according to them, sometimes they enter offices and the place would be all choked up with the smell of food.

Another directive we gave with respect to eating is that if you are a Director or management staff and you insist on eating in the office and we get to know, we will redeploy you to work from the porter cabin. The memo applies to ALL staff, irrespective of cadre.

*The car park appears to be insufficient for staff, are there any plans to extend it?*

The IA has approved the extension of the car park. In Admin, we are very proactive because this place must function. We have the approval but we cannot get any contractor to take it up because they are afraid of putting their money. What we did was to get payment through staff and get people to do it through direct labour.

*The lifts in the main building and the ancillary building are having issues, can you tell us what is being done about this?*

Lifts are not things you pick up over the counter; they are ordered to your specifications. Recall that these lifts are about seventeen years old as they were ordered many years ago. The life span of a lift is about sixteen years. Management has given directive to the contractor to install new lifts and they have placed necessary orders. The plan is to have specific lifts for management staff, general staff, and then, contractors and the public. The members of the Board also have a lift in the basement for security reasons.

*Judging from the distance between the ancillary and main building, what provision is being made in terms of shade for movement of staff between both buildings?*

There is a proposal that is waiting for the Interim Administrator's approval. What we have proposed is that the walkway would be made electronically to make movement faster; it will also have a feature to move manually but because of costs, the latter might be a better option.

a mother pays greater attention, love and care on that young star who pulled her off the line for some time.

Motherhood also comes with additional responsibilities which include preparing the children for school, taking care of their meals, uniforms, character modelling, godliness and other values. It also involves pointing to them the future and guiding them through. These may seem endless, but yet in no time, they are grown to your delight if only you have made the right sacrifices. You may not have it all exactly the way you would have wanted it. Some areas may lag behind where you would someday say if not for the job, may be your son would have been a medical

doctor, engineer or other professions.

In the present economic environment, salary and earnings from one parent may not be adequate to cater for the needs of the family. Both parents must be gainfully engaged.

As a career and professional woman, you must know your bit and appreciate your responsibility in the discharge of your duties. The issues of being a wife and a mother must not interfere with your professional career. Your boss may not be ready to entertain all such as excuses for not delivering on your responsibilities. You must find a way to balance your family and your career, pay attention to children's needs and the demands

of the husband. These must not be done at the expense of yourself.

On social life; we don't really have social life anymore. It has become such a luxury and it is very rare too. It is important to interact with the social environment and perhaps to tap into its numerous benefits, such as; information availability, education, opportunities and professional interactions.

The security set back and harsh economic environment, to a large extent, have obstructed and denied us the benefits of the social interaction and exposure.

The size of the family may also impair our ability to engage in social life. A female parent with a large family may find it more tasking to go through the demands of her job, husband, family, religion and still make out time to participate in social interactions.

In my own case, social life is narrowed to having moments with my children. Exposing them to the realities of the time and modern trends through travelling in and out of the country. When they were younger, I sat with them to watch cartoons.

In all, I have learnt to space life to fit into my day and create space for my family, career and other demands.

As a person, always draw near to God. Religion and spiritual life are mandatory to every living soul. You have got to commune with your creator for guidance and inspiration. This is paramount for sound moral upbringing of your children, and in every aspect of your relationship.

I used to travel to Calabar every Saturday to attend church services on Sundays. I try everyday to improve on my Christian life.



*In my own case, social life is narrowed to having moments with my children. Exposing them to the realities of the time and modern trends*

- John D. Rockefeller



## Balancing Work, Family Life Idara Akpabio's Perspective

Idara Akpabio is a delight to talk with, especially on the contemporary feminine issues as they affect career women in modern economic environment. She is always ready to give the depth, the details and the gist in every line.

Ms Akpabio, a Deputy Director, Education, was very explicit when she gave a breakdown on how a career woman could effectively combine her roles as; a woman, a wife, a mother, a professional, a social and religious person.

Here are her detailed suggestions and submissions on the subject matter. Nature has already destined roles for

women. And every woman has to learn how to redefine it to fit her time and career. Yes, you are a woman, you are a wife, you are a mother, you must contribute either professionally or in your own way to support and enhance the family incomes. You must not neglect your social and religious life.

As a woman, you are the embodiment of all virtues. You know your responsibility to your parents, your husband, children, and relatives, as well as your career and society. Though it is often said 'self last', you must not neglect yourself.

You must appear good and gorgeous to your husband; firm to your children and smart in your

profession, social life and religion. You must wear that badge of confidence in every situation.

Marriage may be a choice, but nature has already saddled women with same responsibilities. Marriage comes with a lot of demands on your time, career and profession, and even self-care. But you are equipped to handle these successfully when you have first learnt how to locate time and space to fit into every situation.

The man must be comfortable. He must be taken care of, after all, he is like your child too. His food, his dress, shoes and relationship should be the woman's priority. If these are neglected and he goes out unkempt, the woman shares in the shame. Every woman wants her man to be upright and outstanding in all he does.

It is often said, 'motherhood is in you'. Child care is inherent in every mother, and as a mother, you have to be patient, caring and attentive: tendering the child to grow, to learn, to walk and to talk. Of course, after nine months of a near disfigurement of your cherished shape, some disruption in your career, social life and all, it is only a natural instinct that

*Marriage may be a choice, but nature has already saddled women with some responsibilities. Marriage comes with a lot of demands on your time, career and profession, and even self-care.*



## MOVEMENT TO NEW HEADQUARTERS

Reactions of staff working in the new office environment and how it has enhanced their service delivery.

**BARRECUAH BASSEY,**  
Assistant Director, Legal Services

The new office environment is beautiful and spacious as our colleagues are all in the same place. The Legal Directorate always needs to gather information to defend cases and as such requires information from other directorates that were in the Rivers State Office like the Project Monitoring Department, thereby making officers to run around.

The new office environment has enhanced our work but there is need for partitioning the office to enable staff settle down properly.



Bassey

**MR. ALADETAN OLUMIDE,**  
Assistant Director, Finance/Account Payable

We thank God for giving us the opportunity to come to this our new place which is ours compared to a rented place. The youths that normally disturb are no longer here to disturb as there is adequate provision for parking space. So, I thank the IA/CEO for making it possible for us to move to this new place.

Working in a good place enables one to think and assimilate properly. The environment is conducive here and the era when people come to disturb is no longer happening due to the presence of adequate security. In Finance now, every



Olumide



Uloma

person coming to check their documents comes into the office in orderly manner and the office is no longer crowded as before.

**MISS ULOMA ROSE,**  
Assistant Manager, Finance/account

The new office complex has given us an atmosphere needed in a work place with good ambience. The office has made work to be more efficient and productive.

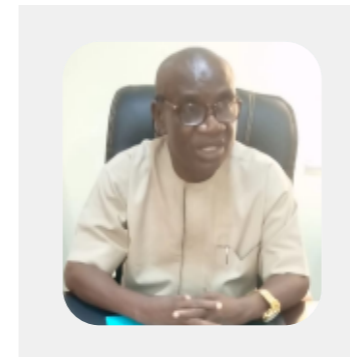
**MRS. LINDA IRONBAR,**  
Principal Manager, EHSS

Working here is good because of the conducive environment. The challenges



Ironbar

# We Need to Strengthen PMS - Imo State Director



Engr Anthony Okanne

The Director Imo State Office, Engr Anthony Okanne, has stressed the importance of working tools, especially in the area of project monitoring, in facilitating the achievement of the goals of the NDDC in the nine states of the Niger Delta region.

Okanne, who spoke in an interview in his office, appealed to the Interim Administrator, Dr. Efiog Akwa, to assist the Project Monitoring and Supervision Directorate to address the challenges hampering the regular visit to project sites in the various communities.

He commended the Interim Administrator for introducing many changes aimed at repositioning the Commission, noting that particular attention needed to be paid to PMS, as well as Utilities Infrastructure Development and Waterways, UIDW and Environmental Control, EPC.

Okanne said: "First challenge is in the area of vehicles. As an Engineer and Director, we don't have; (1) Vehicles for inspection of works. The state offices are more of project oriented. The PMS department don't have vehicles to carry out their work effectively. Even the EHSS, CRD, Corporate Affairs lack vehicles. In fact, we need vehicles for these Directorates.

"Our office is not enough to accommodate the staff. We have new staff now and our office complex is not enough to accommodate the numerous staff, we find it difficult to accommodate them."

The Director, who was newly transferred from Ondo State to Imo state office, lamented that the irregular flow of imprest was affecting the operations of the Commission in the state offices.

He asked: "How do we run the office without imprest? How do we pay our light bills, buy diesel for our generator and pay other bills?"

Okanne, expressed dissatisfaction with the performance of some contractors, whom he described as dubious because of poor performance. "What we do is to ensure that their work should be tested when they do road projects. We have stages of test, if you pass it, we put you in evaluation. It is now compulsory to subject them to test," he said.

Speaking in a similar vein, a Senior Manager in PMS, Imo State Office, Engr. Kingsley Okofofor, affirmed that the NDDC engineers usually had problems interacting with contractors.

Okofofor said that the engineers usually battle with many challenges, stating: "We try as much as we can to work in synergy with the contractors but some of them are very difficult to work with. Most of them will tell you they have Abraham as their father, they know this person and that person.

"Some will even threaten you. But we are used to such threats and the engineers working with me always stand firm despite the threats to do the right thing they are supposed to do. Some contractors are equally good, when you give them site instruction, they will do what you asked

them to do. Some, when you ask them to make some necessary corrections, they will obey."

Okofofor said further: "We have some challenges facing us in PMS, especially in the area of inadequate working tools. For example, we don't have vehicles for project monitoring. We don't have digital cameras and we are expected to take pictures when we go to sites. This is raining period and we don't have raincoats and safety boots. We don't have printers and the photocopying machine we are using is for the whole of the State office. We don't have enough chairs and tables to work with in the office.

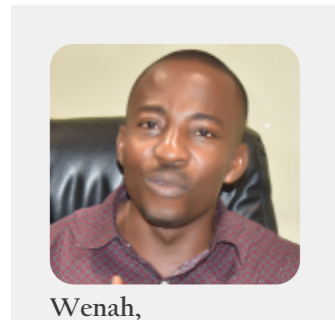
"We have requested for these things and we are hoping that with the new man at the helm of affairs, most of these things would be provided.

"It's very funny, sometimes you have to go the main road to wait for taxi to take you to site. When you wait for the contractor to bring his vehicle to take you to site, assuming you refuse to do his bidding, he might decide to drop you there and leave you. It's either you agree to do what he told you or he drops you and you will be trekking alone.

"These things are what we need urgently for effective monitoring and supervision of our projects here in Imo State."



The Governor of Imo State, Senator Hope Uzodinma, (left) and the NDDC Interim Administrator, Dr. Efiog Akwa (right) sign an MOU for the completion of three major roads in the state at the Imo State Government House, Owerri. In the middle is the Secretary to the Imo State Government, Chief Cosmas Iwu.



Wenah,

are working tools and sometimes the lift is not working and staff are forced to use the staircase. There is nothing as good as moving into your own personal property/office complex because everything is provided for like enough parking space.

**MR. WENAH, CHIMA,**  
Assistant Manager, Human Resources

Working in a very spacious environment creates room for innovation and result-oriented achievements which is taking place now. The new office complex has improved my function through procurement and updating our working equipment like computers, etc. A serene environment is a major factor that enhances working condition which is currently seen in this work place.

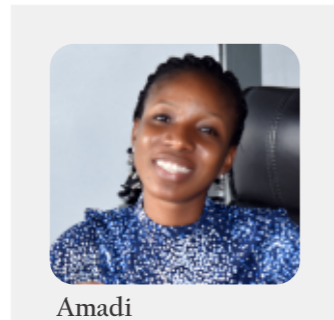
**AMADI, PRINCESS URIEL,**  
Officer II, Youth & Sports Department

Working under a conducive environment has enhance my productivity and efficiency as a staff.

The new office complex has boosted my work in reducing work place accident and injuries. It has increased creative thinking. It has also improved smooth business operations in the work place.

**OLUWAFEMI OWOSENI**  
Officer I, Procurement

The new office environment is very spacious, providing adequately for parking space, security, etc. This new



Amadi

environment has enhanced my productivity because it's conducive enough for me to concentrate on my job.

**MR. DOUBRA OPUOFENI,**  
Admin/ Assistant, Human Resources

It has been a pleasant experience working in this new headquarters. It has positively affected our dress code and other work ethics.

The new office really lifted my morale, it makes me to enjoy my work and gets me excited to come to work regularly.

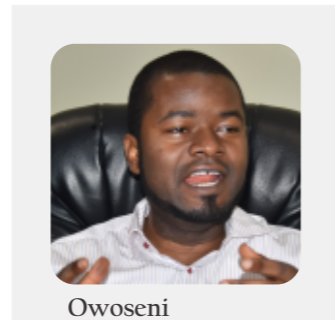
**JOY JAMES,**  
Administrative Assistant, Skill Development and Empowerment Dept.

The new office environment has made me to know so many things I didn't know existed in the office. It has enabled me to do things I felt I could not do and to have a good working relationship with other staff.

The new office complex has really improved my work ethics. It motivates me to come to work punctually and also inspires me to work assiduously.

**ELIZABETH INYANG**  
Security Supervisor, Security Department

My view on the new working environment is that it is conducive. It is not crowded like Aba Road Office where



Owoseni

visitors walk around with little or no hindrance.

The new office complex has improved my work immensely, it is easier to detect a non-staff compared to Aba Road office.

**TOSA-WILLIAMS EBITIMI**  
Senior Manager, PMD

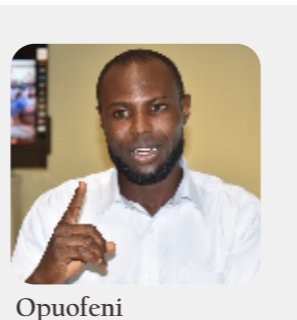
It offers a conducive office layout, adequate workspace which is a catalyst for productivity unlike our old office which did not avail us the opportunity to work efficiently.

The new office environment also provides enough parking space for both staff and visitors thereby eliminating the risk involved in having our cars parked along the road.

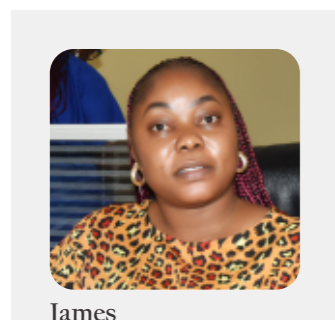
Our new office environment exhibits a world class office standard ranging from the central air conditioning systems, automatic escalators and lift and backup electricity generators. Also the architectural edifice is next to top of the shelf which reflects our images as a development commission.

Given the serenity of our new work environment, I would say it has increased creativity and focus. The safety features are world class with easy accessibility to the monster points and fire hydrants located at strategic points.

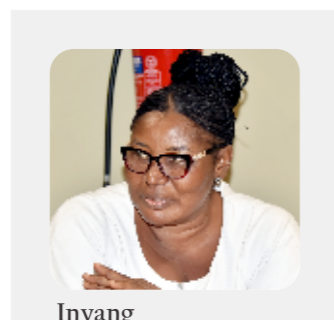
**IQUO EKEWEDAYE**  
Senior Manager, Admin Directorate



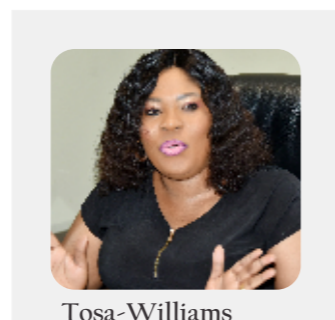
Opuofeni



James



Inyang



Tosa-Williams



Ekewedaye

# 12 Health Benefits of Vegetables and Fruits



Blueberries are naturally an anti-inflammatory. Eating this yummy fruit will protect the skin from the sun and extend the life of the skin cells.



Want a softer skin? Have a grapefruit for breakfast! They contain lycopene & Vitamin C, which builds collagen, protects the skin from the sun and fight wrinkles.



Beta carotene is highly present in carrots, which absorbs the harmful sun rays. Eating carrots will give your skin the healthy glow you long for.



Looking to detox your skin? Start eating more kale. The large amounts of Vitamin C in kale plays a huge part in anti-aging.



Pumpkin seeds are a great way to tighten up your skin. They have tons of omega 3 fatty acids that build collagen, keeping the skin firm.



Chocolate in it's purest form **Cocoa** is full of antioxidants known as flavonoids. Flavonoids fight the aging of skin.



**Salmon** is chock full of good fats, which will form and maintain healthy skin cells. Salmon will help your skin retain water, thus keeping it hydrated.



Scared of getting wrinkles? Simply eat more **Papaya**. This fruit has tons of antioxidants which will prevent your skin from pesky wrinkles.



**Coconut Water** is extremely hydrating, not only for the body, but for the skin too. Drinking coconut water hydrates and plumps up your skin.



**Raspberries** aren't only delicious, but they help repair and refresh damaged skin cells.



The **Skin** of a **Cucumber** contains tons of silica. Silica is helpful in maintaining a clear complexion, and getting shiny hair.



Want a face lift without the surgery? Start eating more **Tofu** and you will soon see improvement in your skins texture & tone

## EXERCISE LIGHT

Practicing aerobic exercise will improve the body's metabolisms and energy-generating process. It reduces levels of stress hormones and increase endorphins, which help the body feel better. Engaging in breathing exercises also minimizes stress and can be done at any place or time.

### TRY THIS:

Taking a walk around a neighbourhood for 20 minutes can clear the mind and reduces stress.

## SLEEP TIGHT

Having a good night's sleep will increase brain function and attentiveness. Cram studying during the daytime to sleep more at night and stay away from taking naps.

### TRY THIS:

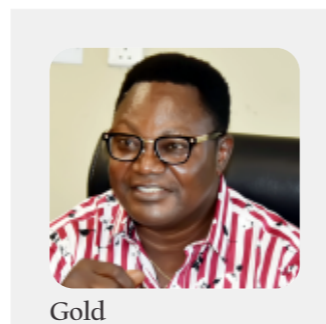
Drinking decaffeinated tea or warm milk before bed will help the body to relax and fall asleep faster.

## EAT RIGHT

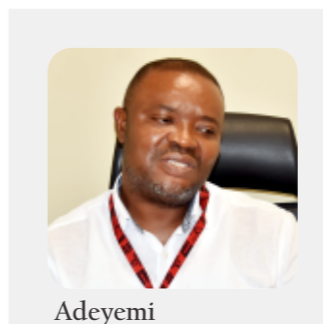
The day of the test it is essential to have a healthy, nutritious breakfast. Protein and carbohydrates, help the brain stay alert, concentrated and prevent feelings of hunger. Stay away from caffeinated drinks which could make you anxious and jittery.

### TRY THIS

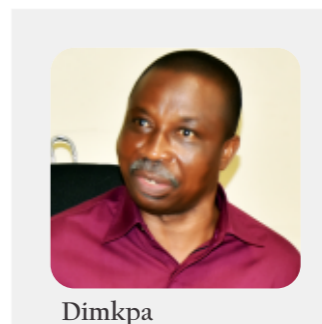
One egg, one slice of whole wheat bread with peanut butter, and a small bowl of almonds.



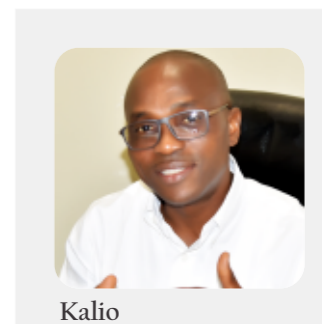
Gold



Adeyemi



Dimkpa



Kalio

Working in this new office environment gives me a different attitude towards work. I'm motivated, confident and inspired because the place is more conducive and I'm more relaxed.

It has reduced stress level and established positive work environment. No more touts running after my car abusing you for not giving them money. It has reduced workplace accidents and injuries because it's more spacious.

**MR. MICHAEL O. GOLD,**  
Assistant Director, CRD

It has been very challenging. This is because, we vacated our old office, Aba road in an impromptu manner and as result most office equipment, like furniture and desk which were already old were still the same thing we are using. To compound the situation, some offices are not yet partitioned. I should say that the working environment has not be conducive and this is a plea to Management to address it urgently for staff to settle down for work. However, it must be placed on record that the IA in conjunction with the Hon. Minister of Niger Delta Affairs has done well in moving staff to the new office.

**'This new environment has enhanced my productivity because it's conducive enough for me to concentrate on my job'**

**ADEYEMI ADEWALE**  
Security Supervisor,  
Security Department

The new office provides a more relaxing ambience to work in. It looks more corporate and a nice place to work in as far as I am concerned.

The new office complex has not really done much because from day one, I have always been in office where I have to put in my best. So, it has not really done much because we still have challenges with office space.

**DR. GOODHOPE DIMKPA**  
Senior Manager, CRD

It's a fantastic experience working from such an awesome working environment. Indeed, it is motivating working in the new office building. It enhances work attitude for those who actually love their work.

I feel proud being part of staff that work from this office. I must confess throughout my years of service, it's now that I enjoy the working environment and condition.

**HOPE KALIO**  
Assistant Manager, Security Department

My experience working the new office environment has been beneficial. It provides a better working space with so much ease of accessing the various floors and their offices. The environment offers a more relaxed atmosphere. The

landscape and the greenery provides some level of serenity. I feel more organised and productive in my duties as Head of Operations, Security.

The new office complex has many advantages which include; more office space; proximity of the car park to security office and staff canteen within the complex.

Nevertheless, a few things which should enhance the performance of the security operations are yet to be put in place, e.g. CCTV Cameras, access control facilities etc.

**OJUM MARTIN EBERE**  
Senior Manager, Education

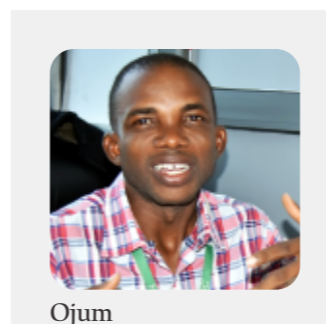
The new office environment has provided a conducive working atmosphere for staff, providing good office space and eliminating distractions which was the order of the day at Aba Road office.

**FEMI MATHEW**  
Officer II, Human Resources Department

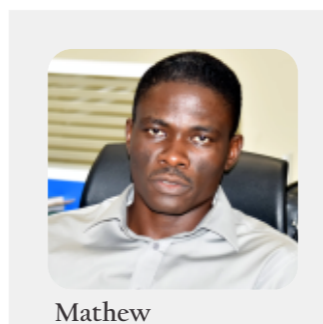
My experience here has been great and very interesting. The movement from the old office to the new office environment can be likened to the movement of the Israelites from Egypt to the promised land. Working in a new office environment has given me a lot of opportunities.

It has boosted my ego as a staff and I always look forward to resuming work just because of the new office.

One thing that is critical in any working environment is space. For instance, I am privileged to work in the DHR office, my experience in the old site before we moved to the new office was that, sometimes there was lack of space in the office. This made it difficult to carry out my duty but now, the space provided has significantly enhanced my work.



Ojum



Mathew



# PMS WILL NOT COMPROMISE ON STANDARDS

## – Engr. Onduku

*NDDC omitted some legacy projects. Tell us about these projects and how they would impact positively on the lives of the people of the Niger Delta Region?*

Yes, the Commission had lots of commissioned projects last year. There were lots of high-profile projects so commissioned, among which are the NDDC new headquarters complex at Marine Base. Awarded 21 years ago, this project is both an imposing land mark as well as it is outstandingly esthetic. Others are the Muhammadu Buhari Nigeria Police Special Protection Unit Base 6, Omagwa [the SPU]; the University of Uyo Hostel block etc. These projects are as monumental as they are giant achievements by the present administration. The SPU project commissioned in the last quarter of 2021 is a full administrative complex with befitting accommodation complements for about 100 Police Officers.

The SPU has impacted positively on the lives of Omagwa people and the environ through the economic value chain. There is influx of business opportunities in the area, coupled with high security presence as businesses flourish without fear of molestation by

criminals. This project remains a big plus for Ikwerre Local Government Area, just as the nearby Port Harcourt International Airport has keyed into the benefits of the SPU.

The UNIUYO hostel project is also a high-profile edifice that has reduced the accommodation problems of the students' population. Many students that are unable to pay for accommodation due to high rent now

have their worries reduced due to this project now built and commissioned by NDDC. It has also enhanced business activities in the area, thereby reducing extraneous movements by students and non-students in search of their varying needs in the night that remained a daunting security challenge.

The Kiagbodo concrete road project, remains a permanent relief to the benefitting communities as movement to and from any part thereof, has been made easy.

The people have heaved a sigh of relief, having suffered bad road network due to the difficult terrain. Economic activities have blossomed with other plural multiplier effects.

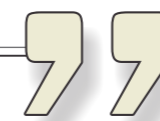
*A number of other projects have been completed but are yet to be commissioned. Can you tell us about them?*

Talking about projects being completed but not commissioned, I must say this with emphasis, there are some that do not require elaborate publicity. What do we do in this situation? We just handover such completed projects to the communities or people involved in a

“  
The  
Kiagbodo  
concrete road  
project,  
remains a  
permanent relief  
to the benefitting  
communities  
as movement  
to and from any  
part thereof, has been  
made easy.”



I often tell my officers to act as “Managers”, not “Messengers”



*Cont. from pg 22*

health care in remote and rural areas. The introduction of this noble programme by the Commission brought succor to the people of the Niger Delta Region (NDR), as the sick in the nooks and crannies of the NDR were reached out to; putting smiles on the faces of the people. This programme was well embraced by the people of the NDR.

Health outreach programmes play a critical role in improving and extending the reach of health care through activities such as Health Education, Case Management, Basic Health Screening, and facilitating access to services. These activities can directly and indirectly improve health outcomes of individuals and communities.

With the absence of Community-based Health Insurance Scheme (to actualize Universal Health Coverage) in the Niger Delta Region, it is my desire to push for the return of this impactful “Free Medical Outreach Programme” as soon as the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions are lifted by the Federal Government.

**What are your Challenges?**

To the glory of God Almighty, I assumed the leadership mantle in the

Department of Health & Social Services on January 11, 2021.

Starting work in a new Department, one will definitely experience challenges especially in a highly specialized field like Health. Well, thankfully with the cooperation of staff who have diligently rendered their services; I am surmounting the new tasks I am faced with. The major challenges being experienced includes but not limited to the following: Inability to execute projects due to budgetary constraints in an economic recession; delay in disbursement of funds for the projects create difficulties with scheduled conduct of activities as well as efficient monitoring and evaluation.

Others are perception of the Special Referral Programme as an “Empowerment Scheme” with threats to personal safety & security issued to staff when applications are not successful. This is because in the past, false claims had displaced genuine cases of persons with ailments requiring assistance. Sanitizing this trend has been met with serious resistance and threats.

Fresh applications for medical assistance are being received daily from sick indigent patients from the Niger



Delta Region, coupled with thousands of pending requests for medical assistance with paucity/dearth of funds to adequately finance this programme.

**How do you think the ongoing Forensic Audit of the Commission can help improve the mandate of your Department?**

The people of the Niger Delta Region will remain wholeheartedly grateful to President Muhammadu Buhari for the immense goodwill he has shown to the people of the region through the various programmes and projects aimed at developing the region. Also, worth mentioning is the President's move to reposition the NDDC through the institution of a Forensic Audit of the Commission which is presently ongoing.

There are so many stalled and completed (but nonfunctional/yet to be equipped) health projects spread across the nine states of the Niger Delta Region. Presently, Contractors who have abandoned these laudable projects are being mobilized to the various project sites due to the ongoing Forensic Audit. Other dividends of the Forensic Audit with respect to the Department of Health and Social Services as part of the commission are: performance evaluation of the commission from 1999 to date; Accountability on the part of staff and service providers; review of organizational structure and processes with a view for quality and improved performance.

It also includes recovery of lost/misappropriated funds and advice on the way forward.

**Do you have any words for Staff of the Commission?**

NDDC is 'Our Farm' since we earn our living from this Commission. Thus, we must do everything humanly possible to protect and promote it for success. These are trying times for the whole country. You only need to speak to persons who have lost their job or means of livelihood to understand what you have. Also, NDDC is a Commission and not a mainstream ministry, created to fast tract development; so our mindset should be that of; Proactiveness, Creativity, Commitment and Dedication, as well as Sacrifice, Honesty, Transparency and Mentorship.

I often tell my officers to act as “Managers,” not “Messengers”.

# I Will Push for Return of FREE MEDICAL OUTREACH

Ukeme Nkamare

**Ukeme Nkamare (PMP)**  
-Director, Health & Social Services



*With your recent posting as the Director of Health, could you avail us of your Achieved Milestones, so far?*

Some of the notable events that have taken place so far (within 4 months) are: distribution of Walk-In Vaccine Cold Rooms to the nine (9) states of the Niger Delta Region; distribution of Solar Direct Drive Refrigerators to the nine (9) states of the Niger Delta Region. (The two above are for storage of vaccines including COVID 19 vaccines); distribution of Medical Incinerators to the nine (9) states of the Niger Delta Region. (Medical Waste Incinerators destroy all wastes from health care facilities that have the risk of being infected without polluting the environment. They safely destroy all hazardous waste efficiently and economically).

Others are distribution of Hepatitis B and Typhoid vaccines to the Primary Healthcare Centres in the nine (9) states of the Niger Delta Region; continuation of the distribution and administration of cholera vaccines in some selected flood impacted communities in Bayelsa, Rivers and Delta states of the Niger Delta

Region; COVID-19 Sensitization and vaccination exercise for the Commission's workforce starting with the Head Quarters.

Applications for medical assistance from economically less privileged patients across the nine (9) Niger Delta States under the NDDC Special Medical Referral Programme are being processed for payment - It is a programme whereby the Commission assists sick indigent people to receive treatment in the Government owned tertiary health institutions in the Niger Delta Region.

All staff-related health

“  
Medical outreach is a strategy to increase access to health care in remote and rural areas.  
”

matters have been processed for payment.

### What is your Vision for the Department?

My vision for the Department is to develop and implement a sustainable, coordinated, integrated and comprehensive health system in the Niger Delta Region based on the Primary Health Care approach, to ensure universal access to healthcare. Worthy to mention here is that, 'Good health is essential to sustained economic and social development and poverty reduction'. Access to needed health services is crucial for maintaining and improving health.

### The Commission has achieved a lot in the area of free Medical Outreach before now. How do you intend to continue with this success story?

Truly speaking, the NDDC Free Medical Outreach Programme in the past brought health benefits to millions of people in the Niger Delta Region. Medical outreach is a strategy to increase access to

keeping with our schedule.

Interestingly, some of these completed projects are already in use to the admiration and testimony of the communities. While these beneficiaries are encouraged to buy into the NDDC largesse by protecting the projects located in their communities, they are also advised to maintain same after commissioning so as to elongate their life span as utilitarian projects.

Most of the completed but not commissioned projects will however, be commissioned this year, as the exercise is a continuous one. Other projects such as the Ondo electricity and others in Rivers, Akwa Ibom etc., will soon be at the verge of completion and commissioning.

*How is Project Monitoring and Supervision responding to the need to provide data on the various NDDC projects spread across the Niger Delta Region?*

Access to data is not an issue. We provide data to the relevant units that require them. Data are readily available. We do not horde data from those officially and legally entitled to them. It is our duty to ensure that every project is well scoped and documented.

*The NDDC has had to grapple with many uncompleted projects. How is the Commission addressing these challenges?*

Yes, the present administration on inception inherited many uncompleted or abandoned projects.

Following the Interim Administrator's directive for the completion of all abandoned or uncompleted projects, efforts are in top gear as many have been completed and many are in various stages of completion. Some of them in this category include the Amasoma Shore Protection, the Agbere Project etc.

On the way forward, while some of

the abandoned projects are being determined and re-awarded, defaulting contractors will be prosecuted.

Notably, some contractors have peculiar challenges that also need attention in order for them to deliver. These challenges are being addressed too. Some of these challenges include budgetary issues/funding, difficult terrain of the region, insecurity as presently seen in the South East Region.

*In view of the many uncompleted projects, what do you think should be NDDC's strategy to avoid repeat?*

Adherence to due diligence should be the needful approach.

*How do you ensure that NDDC engineers discharge their duties diligently without compromising standards?*

Our engineers must be made to adhere to house rules and standards.

“  
The IA/CEO has given assurances on prompt project delivery as engineering is about field work, mainly. Over 10,000 Projects are currently covered and basic standards apply.  
”

No staff of PMS will compromise standards under my watch. Standard measures will among others include:

- Training and retraining and other capacity building programmes, especially with the newly engaged staff. Motivation of staff should be taken seriously as hard work will be commended and compensated while appropriate sanctions await failures and indiscipline. There was a case of infraction in 2020 concerning a staff to whom appropriate disciplinary measures were meted accordingly. There is no delay of files beyond 48 hours.

*Does NDDC have a specified standard for projects?*

Several factors including terrain, design, specification etc., affect project standard. There are available check lists such as Bill of Engineering Measurements and Evaluation (BEME), design, Bill of Quantities (BOQ's) etc. At all times, standards must be maintained, for instance, road failures arise from challenges traced to unforeseen factors - lack of logistics etc.

The IA/CEO has given assurances on prompt project delivery as engineering is about field work, mainly. Over 10,000 Projects are currently covered and basic standards apply.

*Do you have measures that will help you to hold contractors accountable?*

Such measures abound. First of all, contractors should be treated with the level of respect they deserve. Hard working ones will be commended while those compromising on standard will be sanctioned. These measures comprise of contract agreements with the Legal Services Directorate, design documents, BEME, BOQs etc.

Many contractors are being asked to go back to site due to poor performance with undertakings entered by them as a deterrent. The commission applies the big stick where applicable as defaults will soon be a thing of the past in the Commission.

*How do you motivate staff to support the*

*Interim Management to successfully carry out its mandate?*

As stated earlier, motivation windows for deserving staff include commendations, awards etc. that may be

“Our engineers must be made to adhere to house rules and standards. No staff of PMS will compromise standards under my watch.”

appropriately applied.

*What are your challenges in Project Monitoring and Supervision?*

Our challenges are legion. Chief among them is poor funding. Adequate funding is necessary for effective project monitoring. Other logistics are also lacking. These include vehicles, personal protective equipment [PPEs] such as rain capes, safety boots etc. Site vehicles are hardly available.

Contractors will not be made to shoulder movement of staff on inspection duties, other exigencies etc.

PMS requires Special Imprest as the directorate has peculiar challenges. These problems are applicable to the state offices, as well.

Graciously, the IA/CEO is looking into our presentations.

## There is need for us to harmonize our activities with all stakeholders.

*Cont. from pg 18*

These are Performance Indexes we have set for ourselves. While we will score ourselves high, there is still room for improvement and we are working on that.

**How does your Directorate ensure compliance to due diligence by Contractors, considering the Commission's omnibus mandate and the terrain of the region?**

Thank you very much. This question allows me to speak very widely on some of our activities here. I may not narrow it to following due process but you would agree that in any system where people need to go into contractual agreement, where obligations flow between people, disputes are bound to arise and our situation is no different.

At the moment, we have awarded in excess of 15,000 contracts since inception. That means, dealing with 15,000 different entities and all shades of disputes arise from all angles. We follow them as they come, we settle them as they come.

I need to also steer us towards the stakeholders in the region. The stakeholders are numerous and diverse; you have the contractors on the one hand, who only pursue the Commission's obligations to them and you have the Governments of the States

we operate in, the community leaders, the Local Governments, the National Assembly, the anti-corruption agencies, the Bureau of Public Procurement, all of those regulating the affairs of the Commission on the other. In the middle of them all is Legal Services. When it comes to regulatory functions and compliance, Legal Services is the engine room. We try our best to manage such matters.

Recently, a State Government got judgement against us to ensure that before we embark on any project, we must harmonize it with the State Government. The thing with that sort of judgement and why we will not appeal it is that, in truth, to avoid duplication of projects or failure of synchronization between the Commission and the stakeholders, it is important that we do not site a project where another stakeholder, in this case the State or Local Government, is planning a similar project for the community or region. There needs to be some synergy between us and that is why we did not appeal the judgement. There is need for us to harmonize our activities with all stakeholders.

**What are some of the challenges you have encountered as the Director Legal Services and how have you been**

**able to address them?**

The challenges are quite many and they come in different shades too. We have deficit of skill which we address by working out training schedules. We have deficit in manpower; in the number of staff we require. We have the barrage of issues coming from the regulatory agencies that we have to attend to. We have deficiencies in the NDDC (Establishment, etc) Act itself in meeting requirements and mandate of the Commission, as conceived.

There are quite a number of them but we try to manage them as they come. This Directorate is also saddled with the responsibility of compliance with the NDDC Act which is the law that guides the operations of the Commission; it is what prescribes the portfolio of the Commission and contributes to the funding of the Commission.

Another challenge is that this Act is not being complied with. The Federal Government owes the Commission in excess of N2trillion just by not complying with the Act. The Oil Companies have also taken the hint and also do not comply. These challenges are there and the Directorate is saddled with the responsibility of battling with them.

**How do you motivate Staff to support the Management to successfully deliver efficient services to the people of the Niger Delta region?**

My style of management is inclusive. I believe that the seat I occupy is a musical chair and that I could leave it tomorrow, even if temporarily. I believe that the staff I work with should be able to fill in the gap whenever I am not available. So, you see that the way we operate here, if I am not on this seat, my deputy will be able to do everything I am in a position to do. If he is not there, the next person in command should be able to stand in for him and so on, till the last person in Management in the Directorate.

Unlike the perception that other Directorate Heads do not allow authority to flow down, we are quite open here. If I am not around, I can tell you that this Directorate will run as efficiently as it would run in my presence.

I believe that inclusiveness also assists in buoying the support of the Staff because they know they are part of everything we do here. I enjoy the full support of the Staff of the Directorate. I do not see anybody working against the interest or the methods we employ here to do our work.

## ONDO ELECTRICITY PROJECT: Over 2, 000 Communities to Benefit



Akwa (2nd right) and Gov. Akeredolu (1st right) at the electricity substation

The Interim Administrator, Dr. Efiong Akwa, says that the 132/33kv sub-station being constructed by the Commission in Okitipupa will provide electricity for over 2,000 communities spread across five local government areas of Ondo State.

Akwa spoke during an inspection of the project in the company of the Governor of Ondo State, Oluwarotimi Akeredolu, and the Minister of State in

the Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs, Senator Omotayo Alasoadura, as well as the Chairman of the House of Representatives Committee on NDDC, Hon. Olubunmi Tunji-Ojo.

The NDDC Chief Executive Officer said he was glad that the commission was constructing a huge power station in the oil-producing areas of Ondo State, noting that both President Muhammadu Buhari and the Minister of Niger Delta Affairs, Senator Godswill

Akpaio were interested in seeing to the completion of the project.

“This project is very important because it will serve five local government areas in the oil production belt of Ondo state. When you provide light to a people, you have provided life. So we are committed to providing life to the people.

In his remarks, Governor Akeredolu praised the NDDC and the Interim Administrator for making efforts to release the necessary funds that would facilitate the completion of the project.

He said: “I appreciate the NDDC under the watch of Efiong Akwa. This is a new era in the Commission and our people in the five local government areas in the southern part of the state will forever be grateful to the NDDC for making efforts to give us light.

The governor said that numerous oil-producing communities spread across five local government areas of Ilaje, Ese-Odo, Okitipupa, Odigbo and Irele, all in Ondo South Senatorial District, would benefit from the sub-station.

Giving details of the electricity project, Engr. Benson Obayelu, the contractor handling the project, said the scope of the contract included the evacuation of light from Omotosho with a step-down at Ireje through a 132KV double circuit line with two 30/40MVA transformers at Okitipupa.



Cont. from pg 15

2001 as a Senior Manager, I rose to the position of Principal Manager, Assistant Director, Deputy Director and then eventually, Director. It was a matter of time for me to ascend the seat of Director. So, it did not come to me as a surprise. All those years prepared me for the position.

As you said, you had worked in Dispute and Conflict Resolution Unit. How would you compare your previous assignments to your duties now in Legal Services?

At the moment, we have awarded in excess of 15,000 contracts since inception. That means, dealing with 15,000 different entities and all shades of disputes arise from all angles.

I left Legal Services to kick-start the Dispute and Conflict Resolution Unit. From the name of the Unit, you would realize that there is really no difference with what we do in Legal Services; it is only the method that would be different. In Dispute and Conflict Resolution, we tried to adopt methods of dispute resolution other than litigation. There is mediation, negotiation and arbitration, much of which were done in Legal Services. So, when that unit was created, Legal Services had to cede some of those functions to that unit.

Moving there, it was like doing what I do every day. However, since it was a new Directorate, I had to put it in focus. I had to get new staff to assume new roles, set up new templates on how things are to be done; it was like setting up a new organization. I am glad when I handed it over to my successor, he hit the ground running because we had already put things in place.

How have you improved on what you met at the Legal Services Directorate since you took over the mantle of leadership?

My background is in Litigation. When I was called to Bar, I set up a Litigation and Corporate Practice Law firm in partnership. Over the years, I have worked in various units like Contract Management, Board and Management Secretariat and I also worked as Head of Litigation.



Since assuming the Directorship of Legal Services, I have tried to streamline these three functions of the Directorate and set up Unit Heads for them. We now have a Head of Litigation who focuses on just Litigation. I have someone who heads Contract Administration and also someone who heads the Secretariat for Board and Management. We also have a new unit we call Partnerships and External Relations; that is the unit that deals with the regulatory agencies because what we do in Legal Services is Regulatory and Compliance. The Unit liaises with ICPC, EFCC, Code of Conduct Bureau and all external regulatory and anti-corruption agencies.

We have streamlined our work here and this makes it easier. We are working in a period of turbulence when there is no Board. We are working with an Interim Administration and things have to be done in a certain manner now, we

are doing our best and definitely making headway. The Directorate is not as we met it. I do believe that if an external appraisal is done, we would get some good points.

Tell us about some of the achievements you have recorded in the Directorate so far?

It would be a bit difficult to benchmark our achievements with what we think our outstanding achievements are. There is always room for improvement and we have set some key performance indexes for ourselves.

For example, we want to see our Litigation portfolio reduced to the barest minimum; we want to see the number of cases we have settled grow; we want to see improvements in the efficiency of the type of Minutes of Meetings we churn out.

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# We Want to Reduce Our Litigation Portfolio - Ighomuaye



Tell us about yourself, with emphasis on your background in the legal profession.

My name is Stephen Ighomuaye. I am the Director of Legal Services. I am a Lawyer, called to the Nigerian Bar in 1995. I hold a Bachelor of Law Degree from the Bendel State University (now Ambrose Alli University), I also hold a Master's Degree from the University of Lagos and a Doctorate Degree from the Rivers State University, all in Law. My Ph.D. is in Maritime/Environmental Law.

I have been Director, Legal Services

since January 2021. I have worked with the Commission for 21 years, I started as a pioneer staff. My entire career in NDDC has been in the Directorate of Legal Services, except for a brief stint in a new unit called Dispute and Conflict Resolution. I worked there for just about a year as the pioneer Director.

Can you give us a sense of your typical day at work?

Typical day stems from my regular work schedule. If you recognize that my duties here cover litigation, contract administration and management of the

Board and Management Secretariats,, then you can picture what my typical day looks like. It varies according to what schedule I am pursuing from the beginning, which one I am pursuing at the middle of the day and which one I decide to close the day with. I run around these three activities and of course, like they say in the service, any other duties assigned to the desk.

I resume at 8am as expected. On Mondays, we hold a Directorate meeting where we assign roles and responsibilities for the week. If there are special litigation matters that we are handling or we need to be in court with our external solicitors, we take care of them. If it is the week that has a Management or a Board Meeting, you would see us running around sending notices, tidying up minutes, etc.

What was your reaction when you were redeployed to serve as the Director of Legal Services?

I have always known that in the Directorate of Legal Services, there is a succession plan. I started work here in

Cont. on pg 18

# 126 Staff Get Meritorious Service Awards

Deserving 126 staff, 35 of whom have served the Commission for 25 years, have received Meritorious Service Awards from management.

Speaking at the ceremony which took place at the headquarters, the NDDC Interim Administrator, Dr. Efiong Akwa, commended the recipients, noting that the award was the result of hard work and commitment to duty.

Akwa, who was represented by the Director of Administration, Dr. Charles Akpan, said that the management was committed to staff welfare, assuring

that all outstanding allowances due to staff would be settled promptly.

He noted that the ongoing redeployment of the Commission's staff is part of the Commission's career building processes. "You are not learning anything if you have been in a particular Directorate for eighteen years."

The NDDC boss noted that the management does not compromise on staff development and growth. To this end, he said, great strides had been made, despite the various challenges experienced in recent years, to sustain the annual meritorious service award

to deserving staff.

In his opening remarks, the Director, Human Resources, Barr. Silas Anyanwu, commended the Interim Administrator for his passion and commitment towards staff welfare.

Anyanwu assured staff who were due for promotion to be patient as the Interim Administrator had approved the promotion for 2021 and 2022.

Responding on behalf of the Awardees, a Deputy Director in Administration, Mrs. Chinyere Umeh, thanked the Management for the award, stating: "I thank NDDC for recognizing our contributions and dedication to service."



The Director Admin, Dr. Charles Akpan, (r) speaking at the award ceremony. From left is the Director Finance, Mr Eno Ubi, Barr. Silas Anyanwu, Director HR,



Dr. Charles Akpan, hands-over plaque to Mr. Patrick Ekarde

Barr. Silas Anyanwu hands-over plaque to Mr. Lucky Isokpehi



The Director Human Resources, Barr. Silas Anyanwu hands-over plaque to Mrs Chinyere Umeh

Dr. Charles Akpan Director, Admin hands-over plaque to Dr. George Uzonwanne



Mr. Davies Okarevu, director Planning, Research & Statistics hands-over plaque to Ebe Ekpenyong

Engr. Abraham Onduku, Director, Project Monitoring & Supervision hands-over plaque to Okey Rufus Tonia



Mr. Eno Ubi, Director Finance, hands-over plaque to Augustine Ejeh

Dr. George Uzonwanne, Health & Social Services hands-over plaque to Anthony Gbendu Kuro



Engr. Abraham Onduku, Director, Project Monitoring & Supervision hands-over plaque to Angela Diema

Mr. Gondon Okeya, Former Head, Internal Security hands-over plaque to Dango Matthew Asime