



negative) affecting you as a member of that family?

NDDC has impacted many communities in so many ways so you are seen as one who can help contribute to the development of your environment.

•What will you advice Management to do to help Staff transit from service to retirement?

- Provide training opportunities to educate Staff on preparation towards retirement, and
- Strengthen the NDDC Multipurpose Co-operative Society to assist Staff.

Is there any way NDDC can help retirees in pursuing their different life endeavors?

- Through training
- Strengthening the NDDC Cooperative Society;
- Payment of all retirement benefits as at when due and to allow deserving Staff to serve as adhoc staff in the Commission;
- They can serve as Advisers to the Board, and on programmes and projects where they can contribute their wealth of experience to the development of the region.

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

Changes are taking place in the world on daily basis and I find myself having to adjust to the change which is difficult to cope with at times but interesting enough to be a part of. In addition, God's mercies are abundant enough to carry me on always.

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

The trainings attended enhanced the management of my business professionally and financially.

How has your social life changed since retirement?

I have more time for my family, friends and church activities. My remark and advice to serving colleagues is that they should have goals for what they want to achieve or invest in for retirement. The goals should be SMART goals which are specific and the investment should be in the area of their passion. Staff should work towards the goals quarterly or yearly. The goals must be achievable, realistic and time bound so that as they retire, they walk into their retirement with ease.

Above all, staff should never overlook or under estimate the God factor; they should make sure that whatever they are involved with, are acceptable in the sight of God.

retirement by:

- Identifying my passion;
- Investing on the passion through personal savings and bank loans to achieve my dreams/goals.

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

Give us a sense of your day's activities now.

Well, I am still busy with a lot of activities. When I wake up, I have my personal and family quiet time prayers. I do some work in my office. Then I go for my lectures for the programme that I am running currently. Also, I go to Church to serve my God in the evenings.

Did your work at NDDC in any way prepare you for the new roles you are playing now?

Yes, for one, the discipline of waking up and going to the Office by 8:00am. In addition, the work experience garnered from Planning, Budgeting, Project Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation and all the trainings acquired during Public Service life, prepared me for all present roles and even anticipated ones in the future.

How is the corporate image of NDDC (Positive or

Determination to Succeed Is My Driving Force

-Dr. Akwagaga Lelegima Enyia

Tell us briefly about yourself, your last position and the Directorate you retired from?

My name is Dr. (Mrs) Akwagaga Lelegima Enyia. I possess a Ph.D in Marine Biology (1998); Ph.D, Educational Psychology (2023) – in view. I am a Fellow, Nigeria Institute of Oil & Gas Research and Hydrocarbon Studies (FIOG); Member, Fisheries Society of Nigeria (MFISON); Member, Environmental Society of Nigeria (MESN); and Member, Society of Petroleum Engineers (MSPE) International.

I started my career as a Class Room Tutor in 1986, worked with Rivers State Agricultural Development Programme (ADP), 1988 - 1993 and OMPADEC (1993 - 2000). In NDDC, I was Ag. Head, Environmental Protection and Control (EPC) Directorate 2001 - 2003; Director, Agriculture and Fisheries 2010; Director, Rivers State Office 2014; Director, Information Technology 2016; Director, Edo State Office, Acting MD/CEO NDDC 2019 and retired as Director, Edo State Office.

How did you prepare yourself for retirement?

- Considering what Public Servants face when they retire, I had to plan for my



A NEW DAWN is Here



New Thinking. New Frontiers. New Partnerships.

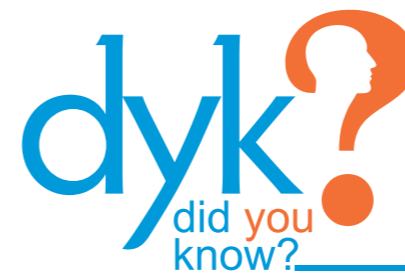
At the Niger Delta Development Commission, NDDC, we see new possibilities: An exciting new phase of growth and prosperity for the Niger Delta and its resourceful people. Thanks to a supportive government, focused leadership and an extensive partnership that support our radical change agenda, we are making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



NDDC
NIGER DELTA DEVELOPMENT
COMMISSION



...making a difference



Interesting facts about the Niger Delta. Got some? Then contact The Editor at nddcnews@nddc.gov.ng

Iweala Breaks Medical Record in the USA



Dr Uchechi Iweala the Son of Dr. Okonjo Iweala, breaks medical record In USA

Dr Uchechi Iweala has become the first to perform a robotic spinal surgery in Maryland, USA. The Abia born surgeon, who hails from Ohuhu in Umuahia North LGA, is the son Dr Okonjo Iweala. By this feat he has broken medical record in faraway United States. Dr Uchechi Iweala, successfully performed a navigated lumbar spinal fusion using a robot, the first in the history of mankind in USA
Credit: News Gazette

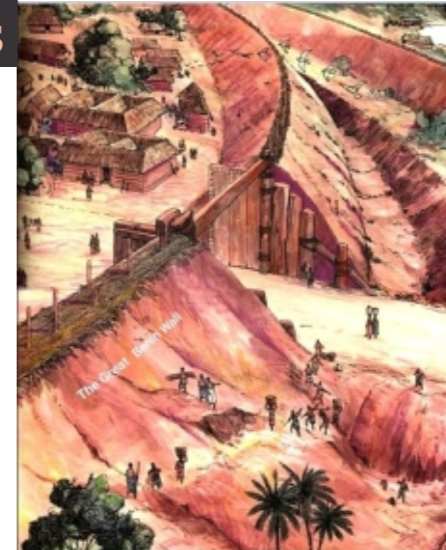


Hero of Aba Women Riot

The person you are viewing on your screen is Nnete Okorie-Egbe of Akwete. She was the fearless leader of the Aba women riot in 1929, protesting unfair taxation of women. She was imprisoned by the British Colonial Administration for two years in Port Harcourt. Later released to a hero's welcome as the British Colonial Administration backed down and reversed itself, by abolishing the taxation on women. She died at the age of 102 years in 1968.

Benin Great Walls

The scale of Benin construction was so large that it is in the Guinness Book of Records. The Guinness Book of Records, 1974, says the following: "The largest earthworks in the world carried out prior to the mechanical era were the linear boundaries of the Benin Empire." Back then it was thought that the walling totalled 5,000 to 8,000 miles. That figure was sufficient to get it into the Guinness Book of Records. The true figure, however, is that Benin City contains a total of 10,000 miles worth of walling!
Robin Walker, "If you want to learn Early African History START HERE"



The Youngest King Dein of Agbor



The youngest King and up till today Dein of Agbor, Delta State Obi Benjamin Ikenchukwu Keagborekuzi, He was crowned at the age of 2years and 4 months in 1979 after the unexpected

death of his father same year. He's was taken away immediately to study abroad before coming back to begin ruling at an advance age. He returned in 2000 at age 22.

Brief History Of Agbor/Ika.

Geographically, the Ika speaking people are found in the north west of Delta State. They share borders in the west with the Edo speakers, in the north with the Ishan speakers, in the East with the Aniocha language speakers and in the south with the Ukwuani speakers. Politically, Ika speakers are mainly found

in two local government areas, Ika North East and Ika South local government areas, both created in 1991 from a single Ika Local Government Area, in Delta State. Ika South and Ika North East local government areas, occupy a land area of 117.45 square kilometres (Delta State Government website, 1999) with a total population of about 240,000 people. There are other Ika speaking people that are political outside the Ika North east and Ika South Local Government Areas. Agbor is an Igbo kingdom in Ika South, Delta State, Nigeria. The indigenes of Agbor town are Ika.



Ibitoye Abosedede, Ph.D, Director Corporate Affairs Department marked his birthday in a grand style



Psaro Tarnwi Yornamue (L) Deputy Director, Communication/Publications Unit, Corporate Affairs who just retired bags his Ph.D in Mass Communication, Imo State University, Owerri



L-R: Nwelu, Kelechi Newton, Director 2, Agriculture and Fisheries; Dr.(Mrs.) Chukwudifu Awele Angela, Deputy Director, Fin&Adm. and Orukain, Ineye Michael, Principal Manager, C.I.D., Bayelsa State Office during their investiture as Fellows, NIM at Muson Centre, Lagos



Lawrence Ekpebu, AD, Fisheries and Aquaculture buried his father, Amb. Prof. B. Ekpebu, Rtd., Ex-Chairman, NDDC Presidential Monitoring Committee at Okoloba, Bayelsa State



Mrs Mary Nwaeke, Asst Director/Head, Media Relations Unit, Corporate Affairs Department marked her birthday in a grand style



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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

CONSULTANT:
Clearpoint Communications Ltd.
Team: Utibe Uko, Grace Okoroafor, Florence Imeh, Emmanuel Igbigbi (Design)

Editor-In-chief's Take

Dear Colleagues,

The arrival of the new Governing Board heralds the dawn of a new era for our Commission and indeed, the Niger Delta region.

Our Managing Director, Dr. Samuel Ogbuku, captures the essence of the new dispensation as follows: "The people of the Niger Delta region should be hopeful that better days are ahead of us because we have resolved that we are going to make a difference."

This edition comes at a significant signpost for the Commission; the inauguration of a new Board and the organisation of a three-day Management Retreat in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

These two events provide the bulk of the content of this edition. This is understandable because the whole idea of charting a new course revolves around the new helmsmen and ideas they have placed on the table for the discussion at the retreat.

At the retreat, the Minister of Niger Delta Affairs, Obong Umana Okon Umana, set the tone for the renewal and repositioning of the NDDC. He re-stated his position on pushing for excellence in the execution of the mandate of the Commission.

According to him: "The retreat is meant to establish a template for effective take off in the task of making a positive impact on the lives of the people of the Niger Delta region."

The views of the experts who presented papers at the occasion were captured in the communique issued at the end of the retreat and the details are here in this rich package.

The event, hosted in the serene ambience of the Ibom Icon Hotels and Golf Resort, had all the newly inaugurated board members, directors and management staff of the NDDC, in attendance. In a way, the luxurious surroundings blended with the message captured by the theme of the retreat: "Making a Difference."

After exciting and engaging brainstorming sessions, there seemed to be a consensus on the need for the NDDC to do things differently. This is in tandem with the views expressed by the Chairman of the Board, Lauretta Onochie, shortly after assuming office.

She declared: "We are here to do things differently. We have to work with new ideas to be able to achieve the objective of fast-tracking the development of the Niger Delta region."

The Chairman urged Niger Deltans to

support the efforts geared towards turning things around for good, noting that it was imperative that all stakeholders in the region, including the staff of the Commission, support the vision of the new leadership.

We have put together what I can proudly call a collectors' item. I say this because we have lined up the profiles of all the Board members, from the Chairman, Mrs. Lauretta Onochie, the MD/CEO, Dr. Samuel Ogbuku, the EDFA, Maj-Gen. Charles Airhiavbere (Rtd), the EDP, Mr. Charles Ogunmola, to the state representatives.

In our regular sections, our "Feminine Angle" features Barr. Lyna Okara, who encourages women to shun artificial limitations in their careers, noting that "women can break the glass ceiling by not conforming to stereotypes."

We have another interview with the Director, Youth, Women and Sports, Mr. Ofiong Ephraim, who believes that youths in the Niger Delta should channel their energies into developing marketable skills rather than being bugged down in restiveness.

In our health column, the Head of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, University of Port Harcourt Teaching Hospital, UPTH, Professor Rosemary Ogu, takes us on how to beat breast cancer.

The "NDDC Alumni Class" is featuring a one-time Acting MD/CEO, Dr Akwagaga Enyia, who takes us through her routine in retirement. The *Did You Know?* page is, as usual, a rich throve of historical facts.

Indeed, this edition is loaded with a template for the new beginning that was very robustly canvassed at the retreat.



Ibitoye Abosedede
- Ibitoye Abosedede, Ph.D



A NEW DAWN is Here

The Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer of the Niger Delta Development Commission, NDDC, Dr. Samuel Ogbuku, has assured the Niger Deltans that the era of impactful development is here.

Speaking in a news interview, Ogbuku said that the new leadership

at the NDDC is going to make a difference in the lives of the people. He declared: "As an interventionist agency, we are going to be executing projects that connect states in the region, to impact the lives of the people. We will focus on legacy projects.

"We will interface with the state



Right now, we have the forensic audit report. We have requested for a copy which we will study and incorporate into our vision.



governments and I can assure you that we will only carry out projects that will positively affect the lives of the people of the Niger Delta region."

Reacting to what he described as "the perceived failure of the NDDC," Ogbuku urged Niger Delta region stakeholders to give the new board time to unfold its agenda. He stated: "We have a team that means business. We are all going to integrate our visions to ensure that whatever we are doing is for the development of the Niger Delta region.

"Right now, we have the forensic audit report. We have requested for a copy which we will study and incorporate into our vision. It makes things easier for us because we already have something to work with. The

MD Promises Quarterly Sports Competitions



The MD/CEO, Dr Samuel Ogbuku, has promised that the Commission will be organising quarterly sports competitions to harness the talents of the youths of the Niger Delta region.

Ogbuku, announced this at the closing ceremonies of the "MD/CEO Cup" competition, for male and female staff of the Commission at the Samson Siasia Stadium in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State,

He said that the scope of the football competition will be expanded to include other sports to give more opportunities for talented youths to be discovered.

The NDDC Chief Executive Officer said that the football tournament provided an opportunity for the Commission's staff to come together,

compete among themselves and unite as one family.

He remarked: "In this competition everybody is a winner. I am sure that you have all enjoyed each other's company while the tournament lasted."

He said that the objective of the tournament was to create amity among the staff, encourage physical training, as well as promote harmony and peaceful co-existence.

Presenting trophies to the winning teams, the NDDC Chief Executive Officer applauded the sportsmanship displayed by the players and noted that the tournament achieved its objective of providing a platform for healthy competition outside the work environment.

Ogbuku expressed satisfaction with the conduct of the players during the tournament and thanked the Local Organising Committee, LOC, for putting up a good performance and ensuring a hitch-free competition.

In the final match of the competition, the MD's team defeated the Akwa /Cross team, the defending champions, to win this year's edition of the NDDC, MD/CEO Cup for men.

The trophy for the female teams was won by the Chairman's Team, after defeating CEPP Team in a keenly contested game.

The Captain of the winning male team, Mr Ajumo Oloko, said the football contest was an opportunity for the staff the enjoy comradeship. He appealed to the Managing Director to ensure that the competition was sustained to ensure a healthy workforce for the NDDC.

Oloko said that winning the trophy was exciting for the players and observed that the tournament came with numerous health benefits, which included an opportunity for staff to exercise themselves and boost their health.





'We Are Looking Ahead' - Coop President

The NDDC Port Harcourt Staff Cooperative Investment & Credit Society recently commissioned a water Bottling factory, Paul Emerhana, the president in his address sets out the path to the future. Excerpts:

We are perfecting plans to explore the advantages and opportunities of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) initiative to export our products to other African countries. To be able to compete with other water bottling companies locally and internationally, we have in place an excellent and motivated team.

To drive this future growth, we will be investing in fully automated production machines, sustain quality matrix, logistics vehicles for distribution and warehouses to help expand our market reach across the Niger Delta region.

To achieve this, the Cooperative will seek financing via Private Placement of the Shares of the Snow Blue Bottling Company Nigeria Limited.

Supplemental to the above stated objectives, we are confident this will improve Cooperate Governance and ownership structure of the factory.

Another investment portfolio to be unveiled is the COOP-ND APP. The 5th Management Committee is proud to inform Co-operators that the COOP-ND App is now live and operational with top-notch security features. This App is available on Google Play store and IOS. It was developed by the 5th Management to harness the business opportunities in the core and agency banking needs of members and the public. The advantage of using this app is that for every transaction carried out, users are paid commission directly real time.

The app allows users to carry

transactions such as purchase of airtime, data subscription, pay utility bills, loans, savings, deposit, bet collections etc. The strategy is for every co-operator to begin usage of app instead of the traditional bank apps. IT IS OUR BUSINESS!

Our major achievements in the real estate space for the last 18 months include:

1. ORIENTAL PALMS ESTATE, OFOROLA, OWERRI.

The Management Committee is pleased to inform the Co-operators that it has registered the Power of Attorney with the Imo State Ministry of Land thus securing the title of the Cooperative over the Oriental Palms Estate, Oforola, Owerri, Imo State. We are also pleased to inform Co-operators that the IA/CEO has graciously awarded the contract for the construction of the access and internal road of the Oriental Palms Estate. As we speak, of the 92 plots of land in that estate, there are only 9 plots left.

2. IBOM PALMS ESTATE, ANUA, UYO CAPITAL CITY.

We have acquired 10.2 hectares of Land at Anua Community in the Uyo Capital City. The property is presently being fenced and secured. The application for Certificate of Occupancy is underway, and Management Committee intends to seek a Real Estate Joint Venture (JV) partnership with investors. The 170 plot Ibom Palm Estate will be our signature investment in that real estate space.

3. HERITAGE VILLA, CALABAR

The Heritage Villa, Calabar is a project in partnership with PWAN; 45 Plots were secured for members of the Co-operators. This property is located at the Rt. Hon. Chibuike Rotimi Amaechi Drive, off Tinapa Road, Calabar. It is a fast-developing area of the Calabar municipality.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

1. What is Coop-ND?

Coop-ND is a brand name of NDDC Staff Co-operative, Port Harcourt. It means 'Cooperative Niger Delta' which was carved out from our registered name with CAC.

2. What can COOP-ND be used for?

Coop-ND is a core banking automated software which is used for the management of loans, savings, and other cooperative activities. It is also used to process payments (bills payments, utility, airtime, insurance, HMO, bank account opening, cash transfers, deposits, and withdrawals).

3. Who are the official owners of this App?

This is 100% the property of NDDC Staff Cooperative. The Cooperative employed the services of a renowned Technology Company, FIGTEC CONCEPTS LIMITED to develop and exclusively assist in managing this application.

4. How secure is this application?

The Application is 99.9% secure from Cyber Criminals and attackers. Our Technology Partners (FIGTEC CONCEPTS LIMITED) are experts in preventing cyber fraud. Their management team has over 16 years of experience in the technology industry. They have ensured that Coop-ND meets all Modern Technology Standards, as well as Regulatory Requirements. They have also written several codes/software to protect all the users of our App and the entire system from people who are not permitted to login, and they are still working on daily basis to do more on security.

5. What are the Security Features currently on the app?

These include:

1. Company Security
2. Server Security
3. User Security

Minister of Niger Delta Affairs has also charged us to do a number of things. We will put all these together and come up with a comprehensive vision for the people of the Niger Delta region."

The NDDC Chief Executive Officer said that stakeholders from different ethnic groups in the Niger Delta region would have nothing to worry about, as their interests would be accommodated in the activities of the Commission.

He stated: "We are going to work with our people. Every ethnic nationality in the Niger Delta region will be part of our activities. Nobody should be afraid of being left out. Whichever nationality you come from, we are all Niger Deltans, we are all united by underdevelopment and exploitation. The Ijaw man, the Itsekiri man, the Urhobo man, we have common environmental issues. So, we have to look out for everybody."

Addressing the issue of budgeting, Ogbuku said that the board would review the process to ensure that funds were properly and adequately provided for projects and programmes. He observed: "One of the problems of the NDDC comes from budgeting. For instance, you cannot budget for a project of ten billion naira and provide only one billion in the budget cycle. Where that is the case, it will take ten years to complete the project. We want to correct that, such that we can start a project and finish it within one year."

The NDDC boss also spoke on the determination of the Commission to resist political pressures in the award of contracts. "I can assure you, we have the capacity to say no, where and when necessary," he said.

Ogbuku stressed that henceforth, the would only engage companies that have the capacity to deliver quality jobs. He remarked, however, that Niger Deltans with the capacity to meet the Commission's standards would not be neglected, adding: "We don't want the Niger Delta people to be spectators in the development process."

"As much as we want to develop, we must insist on competence. We do not want to patronise portfolio contractors."



FG Inaugurates NDDC Board

The Federal Government, on Wednesday, January 4, 2023, inaugurated the new Governing Board of the Commission.

The Senate had on December 20, 2022, confirmed the nominations of the Chairman and Board Members of the Commission after President Muhammadu Buhari sent their names in accordance with the NDDC (Establishment) Act, 2000.

Speaking during the inauguration, Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Boss

Mustapha, urged the members of the board to be above board, adding that they should work towards policies that would contribute to the coordinated development of the Niger Delta.

He said, "It is the expectation of government, that development of the Niger Delta will henceforth not be haphazard. It will now be full-time and full-blown such that Nigerians within that part of the country will benefit from the institution, Niger-Delta Development Commission.

"We also expect that the board

members inaugurated would bring their experience to bear and ensure an equitable development within the different states of the Niger Delta

"We, therefore, urge you to ensure compliance with government regulations, procedures, processes, and extant rules and regulations.

"We also expect the management to take into consideration and enable the full procedures in the Public Procurement Act, the Public Service Rules, and the financial regulations in ensuring that they give good governance and give an accountable leadership within the time of the governing board of the Niger Delta commission."

In the same vein, the Minister of Niger-Delta Affairs, Chief Umana

Okon Umana, said the tasks before the new Board include a faithful implementation of the recommendations of the report of the NDDC Forensic Audit.

Also, the Minister of State, Niger-Delta Affairs, Mrs. Sharon Ikeazu, urged the new board to work towards restoring hope to the people of the region.

“Whichever nationality you come from, we are all Niger Deltans, we are all united by underdevelopment and exploitation.”



Lauretta Ifeanyi Onochie is coming as the seventh Chairman of the Governing Board of the Niger Delta Development Commission, NDDC. Significantly, she is the first woman to be so appointed. She is thus a trailblazer, in a history signposted by many remarkable achievements and firsts. An amazon of the Niger Delta region, she is an administrator par excellence, and renowned publicist with a passion for good governance and accountability.

Born on July 9, 1959, she hails from Onicha-Olona in Aniocha North Local Government Area of Delta State and spent most of her formative years in the city of Calabar in Cross River State where her parents were raised. She is proficient in both her mother tongue and the language of the area where she grew up, attributes which have helped make her a pan Niger Deltan for which there are no boundaries.

She started her educational pursuits at St. Mary's Catholic Primary School, Onicha-Olona. She attended St. Martin De Porres Girls' Grammar School, Onicha-Olona, where she obtained the West African School Certificate (WASC) in 1977. She proceeded to University of Benin (Institute of Education) and obtained National Certificate of Education in 1982. She further proceeded to University of Calabar and got a Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) in 1998. She also holds a Post Graduate Certificate in Education (Post Compulsory Education and Training in 2005) from University of Greenwich, in London and Kent, United Kingdom.

Her childhood days included trips that took her from one state to another in the country. During her training,

Lauretta Onochie was able to connect with very competent educationists with whom she maintained strong relationships. These included her lecturers and professors, who had a role in assisting her to become well-known in the professional world.

Lauretta Onochie has many

Onochie Lauretta

CHAIRMAN, NDDC GOVERNING BOARD

academic credentials, including degrees in Elementary Education, Business Education, and Post Compulsory Education and Training (PCET). In addition, she has certificates from Harvard University's brief programmes in Humanitarian Response to Conflict and Disaster and the Health Effects of Climate Change.

She began her working career at the defunct Savannah Bank of Nigeria and occupied several important career and leadership positions.

Before her appointment as NDDC Chairman, Lauretta Onochie served as the Personal Assistant to President Muhammadu Buhari on Social Media, from 2016, building a daunting profile of remarkable achievements and global fame. In this role, she showed commitment to sanitizing the new media in the country and establishing a new idiom for its practice in the Nigerian space. She is indeed a beacon in the uncharted territory of the social media landscape.

A woman and professional of abiding commitment to ideals, she is well known for her years of unwavering loyalty to President Buhari's cause to promote integrity, quality service delivery and gender equity especially in the political spectrum. More notably, she is known for her unflinching support for the President's Niger Delta agenda, which is to facilitate a new Niger Delta of which all would be proud.

Lauretta Onochie's pedigree and appointment as Chairman of the NDDC have therefore revived the hopes of the people of the oil-rich region that the lost glory of the Commission will be restored under her watch.

She is married with children and grandchildren.



Engineer Theophilous Allagoa

Making The Real Difference In The Work Place

Engineer Allagoa, Director, Bayelsa State Office stresses on the need to strengthen the state offices for optimal service delivery, while admonishing staff to brace up for the challenges of lifting the Commission to greater heights.

sanctioned, while diligence will be compensated. Generally, staff will be motivated.

Modern technologies are employed in present day administration. Google meetings and zoom applications are common place now, not to talk of other applications that are in competition for our use in the virtual world.

How do you deal with the challenges of monitoring projects, especially in the riverine communities?

We shall be proactive, ensuring that necessary work tools are readily available, environmental caution applied by all parties and ensuring continual assessment of the very difficult Niger Delta terrain. This is in order to avoid both human, equipment/material casualties, failures and losses respectively.

The Commission used to have a policy which allowed state offices to exercise authority over certain operational matters. How does this work in practice?

The MD/CEO has already made policy statements towards structuring state offices rightly in the scheme of things of the Commission, with his vast knowledge in policy execution, project actualization etc., the critical untapped roles of state offices will be relied upon. State offices are closer to the people and will save us time and other resources and reduce under performance when used to originate our programs and projects. State offices no longer lack in capacity.

I have also traversed the Niger Delta region, haven acquired a wide knowledge of the nine states and haven served as Director, Rivers and Cross River State. Adequate funding for State offices however, remain a sine qua non for them to function properly.

Tell us about your challenges in the state office.

Lack of a conducive working environment is among our greatest challenges. The 2022 flood devastated the state office as the whole complex was destroyed. Aside from this, many of our staff were rendered homeless.

While I request for a safer and conducive office accommodation, the plight of the staff should be cushioned by the approval and supply of palliatives to the affected staff members.

How do you ensure that staff are fully engaged, given that not many activities take place in the state offices?

Like I said earlier, the bulk of the Commission's activities take place in the states, thereby mounting pressure on the state offices. We will toe the side line of progress which is in tandem with international best practices.

Human capacity building will be encouraged among staff, weekly progress reports will be required of staff. Result oriented tasks will be given to staff as obtainable in NLG, the IOCs etc.

How can we gainfully engage the youths of the niger delta in order to address the challenge of militancy?

I recommend the establishment of vocational training centres by the Commission to engage the youths. Artisans such as plumbers, electricians, mechanics etc, were not affected by the COVID-19 scourge. The Togolese and Beninise have right of first refusal in masonry, carpentry, tiling etc. Our youths can do well in artisanal refineries if encouraged, trained and licensed by government to do so, this will increase the economic value chain.



How To Beat Breast Cancer

– Prof Ogu

Professor Rosemary Ogu, Head of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, University of Port Harcourt Teaching Hospital, UPTH, has declared that with a monthly check on the breasts, no one can die of cancer.

This she said is possible because such checks would lead to prevention, early detection, treatment, and recovery from cancer.

Ogu made the declaration during a cancer awareness program held for staff of the NDDC at the Commissions headquarters. She advised everyone, especially women to choose a specific day of the month after their menstrual period to do the checks.

Speaking on the theme: Lifestyle Modification for Prevention of Breast Cancer, the President-elect Medical Women Association urged women 40

years and above to have a mammogram done once every year.

She regretted that about 40 women die of cancer on daily basis in Nigeria saying “cancer diagnosis is no longer a death sentence and adding that the death rate is declining because of early detection and early treatment.

According to her, the awareness program was powered by Diamond Helix Medical Assistance Limited, a leading Medical Consultancy firm in Nigeria in line with the breast cancer awareness month done in October of every year.

She attributed the high daily mortality rate of cancer among women to increase awareness which has made more women go out for diagnosis. “Not that it wasn’t like that before but because the awareness program is now bringing out the results to show how

bad it is. It is a big problem”, she stated.

She added: “You know like a t e r n a l mortality, we say that 200 pregnant women will die daily in Nigeria, 40 women die every day from breast cancer in Nigeria. These are statistics that don’t need to be so, that the

government can do something about, that you the individual should do something about. If you know then, then you know what you can do. If you know prevention, if you know early detection, we can reduce the number of people dying”.

She advised that as part of prevention people should consume more low-fat, high-fiber diets. “What I mean by that is eat natural things. Then do exercise every day. Take a brisk walk, 30 minutes every day, that will help you to reduce hormonal levels, to reduce stress levels, to reduce cancer-causing agents in the body.

“Then the other thing is reducing alcohol level. Reduce stress, improve sleep, all those things can prevent cancer from happening to the body”, she advised.

Also speaking at the occasion, a Director in Health and Social Services Directorate, Dr. George Uzonwanne, urged the staff to imbibe healthy personal habits to reduce the risk of breast cancer in the country.

He cautioned against unhealthy habits which increase the risk of breast cancer and encouraged staff of the Commission to eat organic food as much as possible, as well as exercise regularly.

He advised women who are forty years old and above to go for breast cancer screening at designated wellness centers periodically.



Dr Ogbuku SAMUEL

MD/CEO, NDDC

Dr Samuel Ogbuku, the Managing Director of the Niger Delta Development Commission, NDDC, comes fully equipped to make a difference at the interventionist agency,

Born on August 19, 1975, he boasts an impressive leadership profile spanning more than twenty years of experience and expertise in crisis management and capacity building, built across diverse fields.

A native of Ayakoro in Ogbia Local Government Area of Bayelsa State, Dr. Ogbuku started his basic education at Christ the King School, Oromineke, D/Line in Port Harcourt, in Rivers State, where he obtained his First School Leaving Certificate (FSLC) in 1987. He proceeded to Government Secondary School, Borokiri, Port Harcourt, obtaining the West African School Certificate (WASC) in 1993. His passion for transforming the Niger Delta was formed early in his school days.

Little wonder, therefore, that the young Samuel Ogbuku proceeded to University of Port Harcourt to study Political and Administrative Studies, graduating in 2000 with a Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.). He also obtained a Post Graduate Diploma (PGD) in Sociology, Industrial Relations and Personnel Management in 2002, a Master of Science (M.Sc.) degree in Political and Administrative Studies, Development Studies in 2013 and a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Political and Administrative Studies, Development Studies in 2021.

In a storied career of many remarkable accomplishments, Dr Ogbuku has occupied several important leadership/development and management positions. These include serving as Personal Assistant to the Special Assistant to the Minister of State, Petroleum from 2005 to 2007, Chief of Staff, Government House, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, from May 2007 to January 2012, as well as the Managing Director/CEO of Fulfilled Farms Nigeria Limited, from February 2012 – 2019.

A product of the Niger Delta struggle, a student union activist and one-time Public Relations Officer of Ijaw Youths Council (IYC), Central Zone, Dr. Ogbuku has always shown deep concern about the plight of the Niger Delta region. Hence, the Ogbia-born strategist and administrator is well-armed with deep knowledge and insight in conflict resolution, youth leadership development, as well as personnel management in both the private and public sectors of the Nigerian economy.

As a humanist, he has continually demonstrated the zeal to positively affect the lives of his people, evidenced when he served as Chief of Staff under the Chief Timipre Sylva administration in Bayelsa State between 2007 and 2012. A passionately focused and self-motivated entrepreneur, he takes investment in agriculture very seriously. Already, there is growing hope that his tenure will bring important divestments towards improving agriculture and aquaculture in the region, in ways that will positively impact the traditional livelihoods of the people.

An ally of the Minister of State for Petroleum Resources, Chief Timipre Sylva, working with him in many capacities, Dr. Ogbuku often says that his long years of service and tutelage have broadened the sphere of his experience and deepened his understanding on what it takes to improve the living conditions of the people of the Niger Delta. With his good and practical knowledge of the region, he believes that engagement of youths in dialogue, useful activities and education will go a long way in addressing the challenge of youth restiveness.

Until his appointment as Managing Director/CEO of the NDDC, he served as Senior Special Assistant on Niger Delta Affairs to the Deputy President of the Senate, Obarisi Ovie Omo-Agege. He is also a Traditional Ruler (Deputy Paramount Ruler) of Ayakoro Town, Ogbia LGA, Bayelsa State and continues to be a bridge builder across communities in the state and the region.

Dr Ogbuku looks forward to utilizing his vast intellectual resources to strengthen the Commission and execute its mandate in ways that will be remarkably and fundamentally different.



Airhiavbere Major Gen. Charles (rtd.)

EDFA

Major General Charles Airhiavbere (rtd.) has an undisputed record of service to the nation and the people. He stands tall and impeccable in an institution known for its discipline, professional integrity, and adeptness at shaping officers and men of character.

A native of Ekiadolor, Benin City, in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State, Major General Airhiavbere was born on October 11, 1954.

He determined to arm himself with a quality education while refining his passion for service. Major General Airhiavbere chose to serve the country by joining the Nigerian Army, where he served for three decades.

He began his formal education at St. Peter's Anglican

School, Benin City, where he obtained the Primary School Leaving Certificate in 1967. He proceeded to the Nigerian Military School (NMS), Zaria, graduating in 1973 with the West African School Certificate (WASC), and to the Auchi Polytechnic, where he obtained the Higher National Diploma (HND) in Accountancy in 1980.

After that, he attended the Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna, for the Direct Short Service Course 7, emerging with the prestigious award of the Best All-Round Cadet. He was commissioned a Lieutenant in seniority on June 1, 1980, and was posted to the Nigerian Army Finance Corps. His professional competence shone through in the Nigerian Army Finance Corps, enabling him to build a distinguished career.

Major General Airhiavbere did not rest on his oars. He obtained a Master's Degree in Business Administration specializing in Finance from the University of Ibadan in 1987. He was awarded an Honorary Doctorate Degree, Doctor of Management Science (DMSc), by Wellspring University, Benin City, Edo State, in 2021.

By 1987 his competence and commitment had caught the attention of military commanders and his superiors as a man molded for and headed to great things. It, therefore, came as little surprise that at different points of his career in the Nigerian Army, he bagged several awards for his brilliance, character, mindfulness, and incorruptibility. In all the years he spent managing the finance of the Nigerian Army, Major General Airhiavbere was never found wanting.

Major General Charles Airhiavbere is a member of several professional bodies. In his over three decades of service in the Nigerian Army, he attended the following professional Courses and Seminars in Nigeria and abroad:

1. Young Officers Course in Finance;
2. Leadership Seminar for top executives in Manchester Business School, Manchester University, United Kingdom and
3. National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies, Kuru, Jos.

He has many medals and epaulets to his honour. And as Executive Director, Finance of the NDDC, he embodies the values and virtues needed at the Commission to build a system of integrity, due process, financial discipline, and a workforce committed to ensuring the core mandate of facilitating sustainable regional development is finally realized.



says you are 'learned'. The truth of the matter is that as a Lawyer, if you are serious with your practice, you will have a broad view on so many things, professions, and careers.

If you work as a lawyer in the legal senses, you will interface with a lot of Departments/Directorates, so you are able to get a fairer idea of whatever is being done by those departments through preparation of partnership and consultancy agreements.

It helps when you are moved to those departments, it would be quite easy to fall into place because you already have a background knowledge of the objectives of the department.

How do you juggle your responsibilities in the office with that of your family?

Yes, I had to. I was kind of forced to, since the ladies are the custodians of the family and the children. When my children were younger, I had to do school runs and had to substitute my lunch breaks for that. I would hurry back to the office and finish what I needed to do for the day. The negative part is that I had to work late sometimes to cover the grounds. Now they are all grown up, so I don't have to do much, I sympathize with those who have to.

If you have an understanding partner - it is easier to find a balance. My husband, although retired, was a professional. He had his own pressure, so we were able to work some things out. I had to give up a part of my social life to be able to be available.

Any advice for women on how to effectively function in management positions?

Do not take offence when you feel someone is stepping on your rights. Be strategic and look for opportunities to assert yourself. Yes, people will push you around as a woman. It has happened even here in NDDC but always make sure you assert yourself. Be tolerant, yet firm and try not to compromise.

Do you think sexual harassment is a barrier in the career growth of female staff in NDDC, if yes what advice do you have for female staff in the commission?

Not particularly in NDDC, but we hear stories outside. We hear rumours of things, but we have not heard of any outright incidents about sexual harassment being the reason someone was unable to attain or achieve her goals.

It has always been the issue of women feeling inadequate or not having the drive to take the challenges

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confronting them; they would rather take the safer route. To the best of my knowledge, there is no case that would be an impediment to anyone's career growth.

Who are your female role models?

Chimamanda Adichie, although younger than me, is one of my role models. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala is also one of them. There is also a lawyer who is a Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN), quite elderly.

I have a mentor, a professor, who has been my role model for quite some time. She's worked with the United Nations for at least ten years. It is difficult to pin her down because of her tight schedule but she still finds time to manage her home.

There is also a very close friend of the family who retired from Shell but currently works there as a consultant. These people have influenced me to take hard decisions. When I see something is going south, I always seek advice from them. I draw lessons from their personal experiences; they have lost family members; they have been in challenging jobs, but they have been able to pull through. It motivates me and helps me learn more. The more I learn, the more I get exposed and make positive impact.

It is very important to have a role model and a mentor, regardless of your gender. You need people that will make you think twice and critically on decisions that have to do with your career, your job, your business, investments, family and even faith. You need to have them around you.

How do you make out time for leisure?

I do have hobbies. I love music, I love to read novels. I travel, when I can. It gives me room to create a work-life balance and unwind. I like knowing new things, innovations; I enjoy being part of teams that tackle challenges. It might look like a job, but it is a hobby to me.

What are your likes, favourite colour, food and music?

I like soft, calm music, mostly gospel music. I do not like music with too much immoral lyrics and that is what we are facing today. For food, I like seafood, okra, onunu and pepper soup, banga and starch, dodo, and proper English breakfast if I find it.

I love peach, violet, blue and yellow, in specific shades.



Breaking Glass Ceiling: We Must Not Conform To Stereotypes

-Barr. Lyna Okara

Tell us a little about yourself and your career path?

I have been a Lawyer for 33 years. I used to be an advocate and worked in a media house briefly before I came to NDDC. I have been recognized internationally for advocacy done in the past. Coming to NDDC was an additional stepping-stone to what I had done. However, public service, private practice and advocacy do not seem to go together, they are separate.

I am married with children. I have been in legal services for years; I was in Bayelsa State office for a year then eventually ended up in Women and Culture.

In an organization like ours which is male dominated, how can women break the glass ceiling?

Women can break the glass ceiling by not conforming to stereotypes. Society stereotypes women as having limitations but when people went to school, everyone chose a career path, and it did not matter the gender or its disparity in the class. Life happens but we should not be subject to what it throws at us.

Always remember why you are here, ensuring that you are one of the best, be indispensable and never stop

learning. You cannot blame anyone for trying to limit women in the Commission, everyone is desperate to be at the top, so most times it does not matter who they push down. Ensure you are part of the numbers counted and do not give excuses when you are given tasks to perform. Find a way to ensure efficient delivery of results.

Do you think there are limitations to women rising to the highest level in NDDC?

It depends. We have had several directors who are women. I think it depends on the dictate of whoever is the Chief Executive. If the Chief Executive has the disposition to work with only one gender, you find that the fem

ale gender is always affected. If you have somebody who is more objective and accommodating, you will find that there will be a balance.

It is also a reflection of the country. If the people in power do not favour women in participation and governance, you will find that the women will have a ceiling which might be difficult to go beyond.

The women we had in leadership in NDDC were focused on extant rules, committed to doing what was right, justiciable, and sane. They, however, did not stay long enough to make sufficient impact. They were in phases of serving for few months, but they surely performed well.

What are your challenges in your office, especially as a woman?

It depends on the Executive Management, if they have the tendency not give room for growth, you may have challenges but if the Executive Management allows room for women in NDDC, you will not talk about limitations.

How has your training as a legal practitioner helped you in discharging your duties as a deputy director?

As a legal practitioner, everyone

If the people in power do not favour women in participation and governance, you will find that the women will have a ceiling which might be difficult to go beyond.



Ogunmola Charles

EDP

Charles B. Ogunmola, the Executive Director, Projects of the Niger Delta Development Commission, NDDC, is a top-notch technocrat with the requisite skills and capacities to provide quality service.

Significantly, this is the first time an indigene of Ondo state will serve as an Executive Director on the NDDC Board since its establishment in 2,000, beyond the statutory nomination of one person as a state representative from the Commission's mandate states.

Ogunmola's prodigious capacity for quality service delivery and experiential knowledge, garnered over the years in the private sector, especially in the Information

Communication Technology, ICT world, sets him apart as the man to supervise the development projects being executed by the NDDC as an interventionist agency.

The Executive Director, who hails from Owo in Owo Local Government Area of Ondo State was born on April 26, 1964. He is imbued with the virtue of integrity anchored on competence and professionalism.

He attended the Methodist High School, Ibadan where he obtained the General Certificate of Education (GCE O'LEVEL) in 1982 and proceeded to Bendel State University Ekpoma, where he obtained Bachelor of Arts Degree (History) in 1987.

He obtained his post graduate certification in Management from Kingston University (Business School), United Kingdom and a post graduate diploma in Management Studies (C.I.M) in 1991.

In 1995 he obtained a Masters in Marketing Management & Strategy (MBA Marketing) from Middlesex University, UK. He also has post graduate qualifications in Technology, Management & Strategy and several other trainings and certifications.

Ogunmola is a highly resourceful ICT operations and business support systems executive, who combines Master's Level Management Education with twenty-six years hands-on ICT/Telecoms/Financial Services/Management experience.

He started his career with British Telecom Plc as a Commercial Officer & Manager and thereafter he worked in other organisations including AT& T Europe, First Telecom, Sanderton Airport Services Limited, Globacom (GLO), and Chief Technology Officer of IEI Investments Limited, a Special Purpose Vehicle setup for the takeover, recalibration and re-launch of Societe Generale Bank Nigeria Ltd, now known as Heritage Bank Limited.

Ogunmola joined UBA Plc as Chief Technology Officer overseeing UBA's Group ICT infrastructure. He was also the Group Head, ATM & POS Services; Divisional Head, E-Solutions (South Nigeria), Director, Group E-Banking Services.

He later was appointed MD/CEO of Afri-Pay Limited (UBA Mobile money) an investee company of UBA Plc. Until recently, he was the MD/CEO of TechShop Limited, a position he has occupied since 2014.

He has a very strong record in implementing and managing Core Banking Systems, Electronic Payments, Payment Card Systems, Switching and Mediation Platforms, Fraud, Anti-Money Laundering, WAN's, LAN, Network Devices, ERP Systems and Processes, HR/Payroll Systems and Vendor Selection/Management.

The historian, turned technical expert, is grounded on the challenges of developing Nigeria's oil-rich region. His deep understanding of the plight of the people of the region, places him in good stead to make an impact from the platform of a development agency.



HON DIMGBA ERUBA
Abia State Representative

Hon. Eruba was born on 24th August, 1970. He is from Umuaka (Asa-South Autonomous Community) in Ukwa West Local Government Area of Abia State.

He started his educational pursuit at Umuaka Primary School and Owaza Secondary School both in Ukwa West LGA, Abia State where he obtained his First School Leaving Certificate (FSLC) in 1982 and West African School Certificate (WASC) in 1988, respectively. He then proceeded to Federal Polytechnic, Nekede, Owerri, Imo State where he obtained a Higher National Diploma (HND) in Microbiology in 1995. He had his Post Graduate Diploma (PGD) in Agricultural Economics from the Rivers State University of Science and Technology in 2010.

He has worked and served in various capacities as Laboratory Technician and Medical Laboratory Scientist in Pabod Breweries Limited, Port Harcourt; Shell Petroleum Development Company Ltd, Port Harcourt and Abia State Hospital Management Board (Shell Cottage Hospital Owaza). The nominee is currently a Director in Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), Abia State where he has worked from 2004 till date.

Eruba is a member of the following professional bodies: Nigerian Institute of Management (NIM) and Institute of Public Management Nigeria.

He has good knowledge of the workings of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) and of the Niger Delta region.



DR EMEM WILCOX WILLS
Akwa Ibom State Representative

He was born on 20th December, 1970. He is from Usung Inyang Village, Eket Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State. He attended St. Gregory Primary School, Eket, Akwa Ibom State from 1976 to 1982 where he obtained his First School Leaving Certificate (FSLC); and Junior Secondary School Certificate from Government Secondary School, Eket, Akwa Ibom State in 1985. He got his Senior Secondary School Certificate (SSCE) from Qua Iboe Senior Science School, Ndon Eyo, Onna, Akwa Ibom State in 1988. He then attended University of Calabar, Cross River State from 1989 to 1997 where he obtained Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery (M.B.B.Ch) Degree.

He has worked and served in various capacities including Internship (House Officer) at Federal Medical Centre, Makurdi, Benue State from 1997 to 1998; Primary Health Centre, Eket; 1998 to 2001; Akwa Ibom State World Bank, Assisted HIV/AIDS Programs from 2002 to 2010. He served as the Hon. Commissioner, Ministry of Special Duties, Akwa Ibom State from 2007 to 2008; Hon. Commissioner, Ministry of Commerce and Industries, Akwa Ibom State from 2008 to 2011.

He also served as Secretary, Special Duties Committee/Member, Akwa Ibom State Campaign Council for 2019 All Progressives Congress (APC) Presidential/Governorship Election, 2018 to 2019. Presently, he is the Medical Director, Wills Memorial Hospital, Eket, Akwa Ibom State and Member, Governing Board, Federal Medical Centre, Umuahia, Abia State.

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Shell to Reconcile Accounts with NDDC



The Managing Director of Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria Limited, SPDC, and Country Chair, Shell Companies in Nigeria, Mr. Osagie Okunbor, has pledged to work with officials of the Niger Delta Development Commission, NDDC, to reconcile the statutory financial contributions of the oil company to the Commission.

Okunbor made the promise when a delegation from the NDDC, led by the Managing Director, Dr. Samuel Ogbuku, paid him a courtesy visit at the Shell Industrial Area in Port Harcourt. The NDDC team included the Executive Director Finance and Administration, Maj-Gen. Charles Airhiavbere (rtd), the Executive Director, Projects, Mr. Charles Ogunmola and other directors.

The Shell Country Chair said that

despite funding challenges, the oil firm had tried to ensure that its financial contributions to NDDC were paid on time, assuring that they would continue to keep up the practice.

He stated: “NDDC is an important interventionist agency and we look forward to providing all the support we can towards the execution of your mandate.

“It is in Shell’s interest that NDDC succeeds. You make our work easier when you succeed in achieving your mandate. On the issue of statutory contributions to NDDC, we are willing to reconcile the figures.”

In his remarks, the NDDC Chief Executive Officer underlined the need for SPDC to reconcile its contributions to the

Commission. He stated: “When we assumed office, we met a situation where your contributions to NDDC were being collected by the EFCC. Recently, they wrote to us, stating details of how much they have received so far. We needed to reconcile those collections because we don’t have records of the contributions.”

The NDDC boss observed that there was a trust deficit between the Commission and the International Oil Companies, IOC’s, over time, which gave the companies the impression that their contributions were not being well utilized.

He promised that, going forward, the NDDC was going to work with stakeholders, particularly members of the Oil Producers Trade Section, OPTS, in its budget processes.

Ijaw Leaders Honour Their Son, Ogbuku

Ijaw leaders and Niger Delta stakeholders have honoured the MD/CEO, Dr Samuel Ogbuku, describing him as a lion.

The Ijaw leaders, who were on a courtesy visit at the NDDC headquarters in Port Harcourt, presented a plaque to the NDDC boss with the inscription: “Dr Samuel Ogbuku, Soar like an Eagle and

Roar like a Lion.”

Speaking on behalf of the leaders, Chief Timi Ogoriba, urged the Federal Government and oil companies to release all withheld allocations and funds accruable to the NDDC to enable it to actualise its mandate.

The Ijaw leaders said that they were “delighted because this is the first time an

active participant in the contemporary struggle for the liberation or emancipation of the Ijaw Nation and the Niger Delta region from economic and political servitude has been appointed as Head and Chief Accounting Officer of this strategic interventionist Commission.”

He declared: “We want the world to know that Ijaw people have gone beyond street agitation; we are now involved in intellectual engagements. The time for agitation is over, this is the time for development. We sacrificed a lot during the struggle for the emancipation of the Niger Delta region. This is the time to turn that struggle into development.”

The NDDC Chief Executive Officer thanked the Ijaw leaders for coming to show solidarity with him and the new leadership in the Commission, stating that the mandate of fast-tracking the development of the Niger Delta region must not be compromised.

Ogbuku said: “The NDDC Board is confronted with a big challenge and we cannot afford to fail.”

“NDDC is meant for all ethnic groups in the Niger Delta region.” We are one people and it’s best that we are united even in our diversity. We must watch each other’s back.”



The MD, Dr. Samuel Ogbuku, (middle) receiving a plaque during a courtesy visit by Ijaw leaders and stakeholders of the Niger Delta region at the NDDC headquarters in Port Harcourt. First left is a Niger Delta Activist and Elder Statesman, Chief Anabs Sara-Igbe, while on the right is a woman leader, Madam Primerose Kpokposei Oringeriya.

Akwa Ibom State To Collaborate With NDDC

The Governor of Akwa Ibom State, Mr. Udom Emmanuel, has promised to collaborate with the Niger Delta Development Commission, NDDC, in addressing the challenges of developing the Niger Delta region. Speaking during a courtesy call at the Government House, Uyo, by the members of the NDDC Governing Board, Governor Emmanuel said that the state government was willing to work with the Commission to bring development to “our region, which produces the oil resources of the nation.” The Governor, who was represented by the Deputy Governor, Mr. Moses Ekpo, commended the members of the Board for seeking to partner with the Government of Akwa Ibom State, noting that cooperation and collaboration was the way to go.

The NDDC team was led by its Chairman, Mrs. Laretta Onochie and accompanied by the Managing Director, Chief Dr. Samuel Ogbuku; Executive Director, Finance & Administration, Maj-Gen. Charles Airhiavbere (Rtd); Executive Director, Projects, Mr. Charles Ogunmola, as well as other Directors of the Commission.

The Governor told the visiting NDDC delegation that: "We expect collaboration and not confrontation from the new board. It is soothing to see you here, we will work with you and support the NDDC Governing Board. We appreciate your coming here today. The NDDC is, perhaps, the messiah that has come to erase the shame of the Federal Government which has no presence, in terms of projects, in Akwa Ibom State. "Leading the NDDC is a big challenge. I, therefore, expect members of the board to step up to tackle the challenges and change the narrative in the region."

He charged the NDDC leadership to effectively support the states of the Niger Delta region in their development efforts,

The Akwa Ibom State Deputy Governor, Mr. Moses Ekpo, received members of the NDDC Governing Board who paid a courtesy visit at the Government House, Uyo. Tthe NDDC delegation was led by the Chairman, Mrs. Laretta Onochie.

regretting that this had not been the case in the past.

Earlier in her remarks, the NDDC Chairman, Mrs. Onochie, said that the Commission was determined to partner with the governors of the Niger Delta region to ensure that the oil-producing states enjoyed sustainable development.

Onochie said that the current NDDC Board was set to do things differently and would operate according to the Act setting up the NDDC for the good of the people of the Niger Delta region.

She stressed: "We are here to seek your support. It is noteworthy that the State Governor is a member of the NDDC Advisory Board. We will always come to seek your advice. We plead with all stakeholders to refrain from putting pressure on us to do the wrong things."



SEN. DIMARO DENYANBOFA
Bayelsa State Representative

Born on 7th August, 1955, Senator Dimaro is a native of Peretorugbene Town in Ekeremor Local Government Area of Bayelsa State.

He attended Local Authority Primary School, Peretorugbene, Bayelsa State where he obtained his First School Leaving Certificate (FSLC) in 1969; and Osi Central School, Osi, Kwara State where he got his West African School Certificate (WASC) in 1975. He then proceeded to Rivers State University of Science and Technology, Port Harcourt where he obtained a Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) Business Education – Management in 1985. He also has a Master of Education (M.Ed., Education Psychology – Measurement and Evaluation) which he obtained from University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State in 2005.

He has worked and served in various capacities including: Supervisory Councillor for Health and Education – Sagbama Local Government Council, Old Rivers State from 1987 to 1989; First Executive Chairman, Ekeremor Local Government Council, Old Rivers State from 1991 to 1993. He was the Senator-Elect, Bayelsa West Senatorial District in 1998. He also served as Special Adviser on Federal Government Projects, NDDC & Niger Delta Matters; Special Adviser on State Capital Territory Development and Special Adviser on Political Matters to the Government of Bayelsa State in 2001, 2003 and 2005 respectively.

He has legislative and executive experiences as well as personal zeal to ensure the development of the Niger Delta Region.



HON OROK DUKE
Cross River State Representative

Hon. Duke was born on 24th July, 1961. He is a native of Duke House, Calabar South Local Government Area of Cross River State.

He attended Hope Waddell Training Institute, Calabar and Saint Patrick's College, Calabar where he obtained his West African School Certificate (WASC) in 1977 and GCE (A Level) in 1980 respectively. He holds a Bachelor of Arts (B.A. Honours) Degree in Theatre Arts and a Master of Arts Degree in Media and Performing Arts which he obtained from University of Calabar in 1986 and 1998 respectively. He is currently pursuing a Doctorate Degree Programme of the Department of Theatre Arts in the Faculty of Arts, University of Calabar.

He belongs to several professional bodies and has held several Legislative positions which include: Member, Cross River State House of Assembly representing Calabar I State Constituency from 1992 to 1993 and 1999 to 2011. He was also the Deputy Speaker of Cross River State House of Assembly in 1992 and 1999 to 2003 and a Member of the National Constitutional Conference, Abuja, 2014 (representing the Niger Delta Zone).

Apart from Legislative positions, he has also held several executive appointments and assignments.



HON OLUGBENGA EDEMA
Ondo State Representative

Hon. Olugbenga Omogbemi Edema was born on 15th November, 1966. He is a native of Ogororo, Ilaje Local Government Area of Ondo State. He attended Urban Community School, Abakaliki, Ebonyi State and Erinje Grammar School, Ode Erinje and obtained his First School Leaving Certificate (FSLC) in 1978. He also attended Doherty Memorial Grammar School, Ijero-Ekiti where he obtained the West African School Certificate (WASC) in 1982; University of Ibadan Extra-Mural Classes, Ibadan from 1983 to 1984 where he got G.C.E. A/Level.

He further proceeded to Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria from 1985 to 1990 where he obtained a Bachelor of Science (B.Sc. Hons) in Social Sciences (Geography); LL.B (Hons) from the University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria 1992 to 1999 and attended Nigerian Law School, Bwari, Abuja from 1999 to 2000 where he was called to Nigerian Bar.

He has worked and served in various capacities including: Personal Assistant to the Honourable Commissioner representing Ondo State, Niger Delta Development Commission, Igbokodo, Ondo State; General Manager (Operations) Takei International Investments Limited, Akure from 1992 to 1993. He was the Legal Adviser, TAKEI International Limited and also a Principal Partner, Olugbenga Edema and Co.

He has a good knowledge of the Niger Delta region and the zeal to ensure the development of the region.



ENGR ELEKWACHI DIMKPA
Rivers State Representative

Born on 1st October, 1975 Elekwachi is a native of Adanta-Isiokpo in Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State.

He attended University Demonstration Secondary School, Port Harcourt where he got his Senior School Certificate in 1991. He proceeded to University of Port Harcourt where he obtained a Bachelor of Engineering (B.Eng.) in Electrical/Electronic Engineering in 1998. He further proceeded to London Graduate School where he obtained a Master Class Certificate in Business Management and Leadership in 2017. He also holds a Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) in Real Estate Management (Honoris Causa) from the Commonwealth University in 2017.

He has worked and served in various capacities including: Security Supervisor – United Geophysical (Nig.) Limited from Feb 2000 to Sept 2002; Non-Executive Director, Platform Petroleum Limited Jan 2013 to July 2016; Ag. Managing Director, Rivers State Signage and Advertising Agency (RISAA) from July 2016 to April 2018.

Dimkpa belongs to several professional bodies including Council for the Regulation of Engineering in Nigeria (COREN).

He has a flair for community service, youth empowerment and mentorship and has been bestowed with several awards in this regard.

We Need Safety Measures in NDDC -AUPCTRE Chairman

The chairman of Amalgamated Union of Public Corporations, Civil Service Technical and Recreational Services Employees (AUPCTRE) NDDC Chapter, Mr. Anthony Gbendo, has appealed to the management of the Commission to improve the security measures at the gate of its headquarters complex.

His appeal came on the heels of an accident at the NDDC gate, involving the AUPCTRE bus and another bus belonging to the Anglican Church on Thursday, October 6, 2022.

The Union Chairman said that the accident was avoidable if the NDDC Management had put in place some basic safety measures. He wondered why, the



NDDC complex which has two gates for entry and exit should be using only one access point.

Gbendo said that the accident occurred because vehicles coming out from the NDDC premises were not properly guided by safety signs, slogans or even personnel to direct traffic.

He gave an instance of what obtains in other big organizations such as the NLNG, where proper safety signs are placed at the entrance and exit points.

Mr. Gbendo who sustained what he described as “slight injuries” from the

accident called on the NDDC management to take urgent measures to set up speed breakers both at the major high way and the exit from the NDDC premises.

He expressed surprise that the NDDC management had not taken actions in this regards several months after the new headquarters was commissioned, noting: “The union can only raise concern where necessary but it was up to the management to take action.”

‘Public Private Partnership Committee, Way To Go’

The MD/CEO, Dr. Samuel Ogbuku, has stressed the importance of partnerships in initiating and executing legacy projects in the Niger Delta region.

Speaking during the inauguration of the Committee on Public, Private Partnership, PPP, in Port Harcourt, Ogbuku charged the committee to explore sustainable relationships which will impact positively on the people of the region.

He stated that the Commission was interested in using partnerships to drive its vision of fast-tracking the development of the Niger Delta region, noting that PPP Committee was expected to review all the Commission's existing partnerships as well as explore new partnerships that will result in enduring regional projects.

In his own remarks, the NDDC Executive Director, Projects, Mr. Charles Ogunmola, re-stated the need for collaboration with key partners to ensure that the Commission was fully equipped to make a difference in the lives of the people of the Niger Delta region.

He declared: “We are charting a new trajectory that will emphasise partnerships.”

Presenting the Committee members for inauguration, the NDDC Director, Legal Services, Dr. Steve

Ighomuaye, said that their terms of reference included “to Identify, process and secure partnerships for development for the Commission in line with the NDDC Establishment Act.

The Committee was also expected to “identify, pursue and secure alternative sources of funding for the Commission's projects and

programmes,” as well as “draw up and adopt projects and programmes funding templates.”

Ighomuaye said that the 12-member Committee will be supervised by both the NDDC Executive Director Finance and Administration, Maj-Gen. Charles Airhiavbere (Rtd) and the Executive Director, Projects, Mr. Ogunmola.

We Will Work With Civil Society Groups – Dr Ogbuku

The MD/CEO, Dr. Samuel Ogbuku, has emphasized the need for collaboration with Civil Society Organisations, CSOs, in the task of developing the Niger Delta region.

Speaking when the executives of the National Civil Society Council of Nigeria paid a courtesy call on him at the NDDC headquarters in Port Harcourt, the Dr. Ogbuku noted that the NDDC and Civil Society Organisations, CSOs share similar concerns about the Nigerian society and pledged that the Commission would explore the possibility of quarterly engagements with Civil Society Organisations.

“The need for collaboration with CSOs cannot be overemphasized. NDDC needs to collaborate with CSOs. We face common problems, so we must collaborate on how to solve these

problems. We are here to serve the people of the Niger Delta and our doors are open for collaboration.”

Speaking earlier, Ambassador Blessing Akinlositu, Executive Director, National Civil Societies Council of Nigeria noted that the responsibility of CSOs is to monitor public governance and ensure that Government does what is right for the people.

He commended the NDDC for its interventions in the Niger Delta region stating that the NDDC has done quite well through the years but insisted that more can still be done. “We seek a viable partnership with the NDDC. We seek a close relationship with the NDDC. There is a need to have an NDDC-CSO forum. It may be Quarterly or bi-monthly. What is needed is collaboration with CSOs.”

Gov Wike Wants Focus On Regional Projects

The Rivers State Governor, Chief Nyesom Wike, has advised members of the Governing Board of the Niger Delta Development Commission, NDDC, to focus on regional projects in order to make more impact in developing the Niger Delta region.

Wike spoke at the Rivers State Government House, Port Harcourt, during a courtesy visit by the members of the NDDC Governing Board led by its Chairman, Mrs. Laretta Onochie, accompanied by the Managing Director, Chief Dr. Samuel Ogbuku, the two Executive Directors of Finance and Administration and Projects, as well as Directors of the Commission.

Governor Wike stated that such big-ticket projects would impact positively on the lives of people in the region and charged NDDC to effectively support the states of the Niger Delta region in their development efforts.

He noted that it was important that the states were aware of projects and programmes NDDC was planning to implement in the states in order check duplication of projects.

Wike congratulated members of the Board on their appointment but remarked: "I want to believe that you are sincere in your declaration that you will do things differently

henceforth."

He lamented that the amount of money that had passed through the NDDC was not commensurate with the development on the ground. He advised: "NDDC must avoid awarding contracts to politicians who lack the capacity to execute quality projects."

The Governor stressed the importance of collaboration and deplored a situation where the NDDC embarks on projects and programmes, without liaising with the state governments for harmonisation. He remarked: "Let us know when you want to execute projects in the state. We have to avoid duplication of projects."

Wike advised the Board members to resist pressures from politicians who would want them to dance to their selfish tunes, urging Niger Deltans to resist those trying to use them to work against the interest of the people.

Earlier in her remarks, the NDDC Chairman, Mrs. Onochie, said that the Commission was determined to partner with the governors of the Niger Delta region.

Onochie said that the new Board under her leadership would emulate the outstanding performance of the Rivers State Government.

The Rivers State Governor, Chief Nyesom Wike, received members of the NDDC Governing Board, led by its Chairman, Mrs. Laretta Onochie, on a courtesy visit to the Rivers State Government House, Port Harcourt.



ALHAJI MUHAMMAD KABIR
North Central Zonal Representative

He was born on 8th July, 1956. He is from Keffi Local Government Area of Nasarawa State. Alh. Muhammad attended Ahmadu Maikwato Primary School, Keffi where he obtained his First School Leaving Certificate in 1970 and Mu'azu Ibrahim Commercial Secondary School, Kontagora where he obtained the West African School Certificate (WASC) in 1976.

He also attended the School of Basic Studies, A.B.U. and Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria where he obtained the Interim Joint Matriculation Board (I.J.M.B.E.) Certificate and Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) degree in Political Science in 1978 and 1981 respectively.

He started work as a Reporter and Writer in Triumph Publishing Company, Kano in 1981 and proceeded as a News Editor, Producer and Director in NTA News, Lagos from 1982 to 1989. He also held Managerial positions in several branches of the Bank of the North Limited (BON) from 1992 to 2001.

He has served as a Commissioner in Nasarawa State in various Departments such as Works, Finance, Lands, Survey and Town Planning, Housing, Environment and Urban Development from Sept. 2001 to 2008.

He was also the Chairman of the Nasarawa State Committee on Public - Private Partnership (PPP) from February, 2008 to April, 2009 and the Executive Director (Loans Production) Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria (FMBN) Abuja from April, 2009 to September, 2010.



ALHAJI SULE-IKO SANI SAMI
North West Zonal Representative

Alh. Sani was born on 1st November, 1974 and hails from Dabai District of Zuru Local Government Area of Kebbi State.

He obtained a Certificate in School of Basic Studies of General and Remedial Studies, in 1992 to 1993. Thereafter, he was admitted into School of Pharmacy from 1993 to 1998 and obtained a Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) Degree in Industrial Biochemistry in 2003 from Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

He also obtained a Post Graduate Diploma (PGD) in Public Administration in 2016 from the National Open University of Nigeria; Executive MBA in 2017 and a Masters Degree in Project Management in 2018 from the United Kingdom Metropolitan School of Business and Management.

Alh. Sule-Iko attended Nile University of Nigeria, Abuja, where he obtained Master of Business Administration (MBA) Degree in International Business in 2019 and Master of Philosophy in (MPhil Management /PhD (In view).

Alh. Sule-Iko is a Fellow and Member of several professional bodies and a recipient of several awards and honours.



PROF TAHIR MAMMAN, OON, SAN
North East Zonal Representative

Professor Tahir Mamman, OON, SAN was born on 7th July, 1954. He hails from Michika Local Government Area of Adamawa State.

He attended Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, where he obtained Bachelor of Laws (LL. B) in 1983; Nigerian Law School, Lagos (B.L), 1984; University of Warwick, U.K., Masters Degree in Law (LL.M), 1987; University of Warwick, U.K. Doctorate Degree in Law (Ph.D), 1991 and he is a Professor of Law. He worked at the Adamawa State Judiciary from 1974 to 1984; the University of Maiduguri from 1985 to 2001; Council of Legal Education/Nigerian Law School: Deputy Director-General, Kano Campus, 2001 to 2005; Director General, Nigerian Law School, 2005 to 2013.

He also worked in the University of Maiduguri, 1991 – 1997 as Head of Department of Common Law; Dean of Law at various times; Dean, Students Affairs Division and Vice Chancellor from 1997 to 2000.

The nominee has served in various academic and political bodies as a Member, Committee on All Nigerian Laws Project, Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, Lagos; Federal Government Technical Committee on Privatization (Transport Sector) 2000 to 2001; Co-ordinator of Parliamentary Study Project, 1992 to 2001; Patron (University branch) Youth Federation of Nigeria etc.

He was appointed by the President / APC NEC as a Member, National Caretaker/Extraordinary National Convention Committee of All Progressives Congress (APC) as Interim National Vice Chairman, North East Zone (six States) from 2020 to March 2022. He is currently the Vice-Chancellor, Baze University, Abuja.

He was awarded the Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN) in July, 2015; Scholar of Nuffield Foundation in 1992 and a Fellow of the Institute of Advanced legal Studies, London. In recognition of his contributions to his community and the state, he was awarded the following traditional titles: Dokaji Mubi – Mubi Emirate Adamawa State; Dan Ruwata Adamawa – Adamawa State Emirate.

Sapele Celebrates NDDC Roads

The people of Sapele in Sapele Local Government Area of Delta State have celebrated the inauguration of two roads built by the NDDC in their area.

The roads inaugurated are; 4 kilometres Akporjevughe Road, Doyanbi Lane, Alfred Jonah School Road, Omoire Ojigwo Road and 2.5 kilometres Oghene Road all in Sapele metropolis.

Inaugurating the projects, the Member representing Uvwie/Sapele/Okpe Federal constituency in the House of Representatives, Chief Efe Afe, thanked NDDC for the completion of the projects.

Afe rejoiced with the newly appointed Acting Managing Director of the Commission, Engr Emmanuel Audu Ohwavorua, the staff of the Commission and the contractor for delivering the projects.

While thanking President Muhammadu Buhari for appointing Engr. Emmanuel Audu-Ohwavorua as Acting Managing Director of the NDDC, he appealed to residents of the area to always clear drainages in their area.

Speaking during the inauguration ceremony, the Acting Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer of the NDDC, Engr. Emmanuel Audu-Ohwavorua said; “In line with our mandate as an interventionist agency, the contract for the construction of Akporjevughe Road and environs was awarded on the 30th day of June 2018 to Messrs Solid FFLO Asphalt Company Nigeria Limited”.

Audu-Ohwavorua who was represented by Engr. Steve Ogheneare, said; “Before the award of the project, Akporjevughe Road, Doyanbi Lane, Alfred Jonah School Road, Omoire Ojigwo Road were swampy and in an unbelievably bad state, prone to perennial flooding and therefore unmotorable throughout the year.

“The road cuts across eight major roads/streets with a total length of 4km. Similarly contract for the construction of Oghene Road was awarded on the 30th of March, 2019 also to Messrs Solid FFLO Asphalt Company Nig. Ltd.

“The road which was also in a very bad state prior to the award has a cumulative length of 2.5km made up of Oghene Road which is the main alignment and nine other spurs. With the completion of the projects, the story has changed for the better for residents and commuters as they now ply the roads with ease and take a noticeably brief time to get to their destinations.

“There is indeed considerable savings in time and money as the people ply these roads. The socio-economic importance of these roads is enormous. In addition to improved socio-economic activities of the people who use the roads on daily basis, the drains and culverts also helped to channel storm waters to the nearby river, thus preventing flooding which was a usual occurrence in most parts of Ogorode’s new road area.



Engr. Steve Ogheneare, Chief Efe Afe and others during the inauguration ceremony.

this programme is held yearly.

What are the challenges for your Directorate in putting this programme together?

The challenges have always been on the budgetary level in terms of insufficient budget provisions. Logistics was also a challenge because we had to move round the grassroots in the nine states to get raw talents from the different categories.

In the area of sports, the NDDC organized a football competition for staff last year. During the competition, the Interim Administrator promised that it would be an annual event. Are there plans to organize the competition for this year?

The process is ongoing at the moment. The Interim Administrator insists on due processes and Procurement Department is working towards that. Subject to the availability of funds, this will be set up in record



time towards September and October.

The Fitness Walk organized by the Commission last year was very beneficial to staff. Are we to expecting a similar thing this year?

This is also ongoing at the moment as the Interim Administrator promised that would be done annually. A lot of staff turned out for the previous, the IA

was in attendance. This year, we would ensure that there is more publicity for better turnout.

What other programmes are you planning for the youths in the Niger Delta region?

The Directorate runs a Volunteer Scheme where youths are exposed to menial jobs as a way of giving them hands-on volunteer experience of which they are given stipends at the end of the scheme. The proposal for this is currently with the IA.

We also plan to train our youths on income-generating skills. There is also a partnership with Innoson Motors and skill acquisition for people living with disabilities. There is the Joint 7, in partnership with the NLNG, to train Niger Delta youth; the proposal has been sent and a lot of our Niger Delta youths would benefit from this. We have these plans and many more for the youths in the Niger Delta region.

What advice, as Director of Youth and Sports, do you have for the youths in the region?

Our youths need to shun violence; rather than embrace violence and restiveness, they can express their grievances through dialogue. There is the pervasive issue of pipeline vandalization, we need to put an end to it as a region.

It is election period; our youth need to arm themselves with their PVCs and knowledge of the processes. They should not compromise, cast their votes wisely in a bid to secure the country and their future. If these are adhered to, I believe the Niger Delta region and the country at large would flourish.

We also plan to train our youths on income-generating skills. There is also a partnership with Innoson Motors and skill acquisition for people living with disabilities.





Talent Hunt, Flagship of Our Youth Programmes

-Mr Ofiong Ephraim, Director YWSC

Efiong Ephraim has served the Commission in many Directorates, including Special Duties and Head, Abuja Liaison office

Your Directorate organised the Niger Delta Talent Hunt (NIDETH), which ended in September, 2022. Can you tell us more about this programme?

First and foremost, I would like to thank the Minister of Niger Delta Affairs and the Interim Administrator, Niger Delta Development Commission, NDDC, for approving the commencement of the Niger Delta Talent Hunt, NIDETH. It is one of the laudable programmes of the Commission. It is a development initiative aimed at discovering and harnessing talents and potentials in the entertainment industry in the Niger Delta region, with a focus on youths. NIDETH is a flagship programme of the Commission; it is a first of its kind.

Apart from crude oil and the foreign exchange derived thereof, we have come to realize that brainpower and thinking out of the box, creating knowledge to make wealth would sustain the nation. We believe that if we discover and harness talents in the region, we can nurture them to an international standard, which in turn can yield foreign exchange. These potentials abound within us, this is the first time we are moving out to see how we can harness them.

The competition started about three weeks ago. The first audition was held in Edo State; subsequent auditions took place in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State and Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. Ten finalists emerged from these auditions and the grand finale is slated to hold on Thursday, September 1, 2022.

What impact would the talent hunt

have on the Youths of the Niger Delta region?

The youths of the region have been touted for indulging in restiveness and agitations, however, we still have people that can make us proud through their inherent talents. We believe that, at the end of the day, this programme will showcase talents that are embedded in the region. It will also promote the rich cultural heritage that we have in the region, hence, changing the perception of Niger Delta youths.

“ We believe that if we discover and harness talents in the region, we can nurture them to an international standard, which in turn can yield foreign exchange. ”

Is the talent hunt going to be a one-off programme?

We are aiming for sustainability, continuity, and partnership with other departments and stakeholders to ensure that

VOX-POP

Commission's HMO Service Providers

Staff recount their experiences and expectations in their dealings with the Commission's Health Management Organisation, HMO, service providers.



Chief Ene Okpo Ene-ita



Fregene Adesuwa Jane



Olumide Olorunlana



Mrs. Dinipre Young-Torunarigh

Chief Ene Okpo Ene-ita, State Director, NDDC Cross River State office

Regenix is my HMO and I'm registered with the Nigerian Navy Reference Hospital, Calabar.

My experience with them has been pleasant even though from time to time there's a little bit of delay, here and there, and their time management is okay. Some of their services and charges are however, high and one pays extra if the cost is above five thousand naira. Before now, it wasn't so, NDDC paid for everything. Navy Hospital said the package had been reduced. But generally, my experience with them has been satisfactory.

On a scale of 100%, I'll give them 75%. I'll not give them a 100% because I expected them to let us know if they had challenges with payment even before we got there.

I'll suggest first to the office - let the office enlighten us of our entitlement. Let them tell us that we'll have to pay a particular percentage, so as we're going to the hospital, we'll have that in mind. This is because our service provider tells us that the service we get depends on the package they have with NDDC.

I'll suggest NDDC should step up their contribution to the HMO and then let us know to what extent we are to enjoy this facility, and if there's a certain percentage we have to pay.

On their part, the HMO should be more proactive, they should know that we don't need to call them to get there. The HMO should have a very good relationship with

the service providers, like the Navy Hospital where I am. They should know us, immediately we enter, they should be able to treat us.

Secondly, because I am the Director, they seem to take care of me faster than they do with other staff, so this segregation should not be there. The same degree of speed in delivery to me should be accorded every other person.

Fregene Adesuwa Jane (Mrs), Assistant Director, PMS, Edo State

The NDDC-approved Health Management Organisation (HMO) - Regenix, was introduced to us few years back with the aim of giving us health insurance where staff of the Commission can access any health facility of their choice. The coming of the HMO gave us as staff respite as it concerns our health issues.

However, as we began accessing this health insurance policy, we discovered that it only covers primary healthcare issues as secondary health issues were not included. Additionally, the services for the primary care were selective with low quality drugs prescription, long waiting time for services from the health facility due to delay in getting approval from the HMO.

In my opinion, the HMO has performed far below our expectation as this has dowsed staff morale in accessing the health policy.

On the way forward, I think the Commission should furnish staff with the

complete package of health coverage policy with the approved HMOs so as to make claim or report back to the Commission whenever they are not properly served by the health service providers.

The Commission should endeavour to pay the HMO on time to reduce embarrassment staff suffer from health providers (hospitals) - staff are sometimes turned away when trying to access the policy due to non-payment by the Commission.

The HMO and their various health providers should be advised to pay regular visit and have interactive sessions with staff in order to get feedback as regards their service delivery.

A healthy staff is an asset to the Commission; therefore, it is my hope that issues raised here will be addressed and that my recommendations will be duly considered to boost staff confidence.

Olumide Olorunlana, Principal Manager, CRD, Ondo State Office

I have not used the REGENIX HMO CARD given to me some years back. The only time I tried to use it was at Akure in an NHIS registered private hospital it was rejected after I made several calls to our HMO without answering. Reports show that only few of our staff make use of their REGENIX HMO CARD. I will rate them very low.

I think the HMO needs to engage our staff to further showcase the importance of health insurance scheme and to ensure feedback mechanisms are put in place.



Mr Eke Ignatius



Mrs Martha Emmanuel



James Altimibowei



Patience Akpan

Mrs. Dinipre Young-Torunarigha, PM Human Resource, Bayelsa State.

I thanked the Commission for the beautiful project like this and for giving staff the opportunity to access such free medical. Regenix has been good and their services wonderful. Also that the clinic she attends which is Tobi's Clinic has made a special floor for people under Regenix to go to, which saves staff a lot of waiting time as delays are reduced to a very low level. A patient sees the Doctor early, gets prescribed drugs from the pharmacy with minimal delay. There is however need for improvement as human beings will always ask for more.

Mr. Eke Ignatius Oluchukwu, Assistant Security, Imo State office

The HMO has impacted enormously in my life. The Umezurike Hospital has been good to me. I don't have any problem with the hospital. They have saved lives. I rate their services 70 per cent, even though I feel they need to improve more in their services. They need to give staff special attention when needed, because the environment is always crowded.

Mrs Martha Emmanuel Ubi, Servicem

HMO are meant to provide quality health service to the patients, but it seems like the reverse is the case, and I believe this is due to poor funding. My experiences are numerous, but the one I hated the most is the substandard medication given to me for malaria treatment, I will have to go and buy a better anti-malaria tablet for proper treatment.



Engr Ezeifedi Nnamdi



Erhiawaye Ete Emmanuel

Moreso, when I was about to be admitted, I was asked to pay extra to get a decent room that the HMO only covers a small amount. it also took hours before they would respond to emails for treatment to commence. I will rate them below average, 3%. Ways to improve: Proper funding and timely payment of the health providers is necessary. This is to enable staff access the facilities, and also curb the rate of death in the Commission. Also, quick response to mail is advised.

Mr. James Altimibowei, Transport Department, Driver 2, Bayelsa State

They are doing well and would rate them as good and okay. The service providers should consider the fact that different persons respond differently to treatment routines and procedures and should act accordingly. I respond better to treatment of malaria and typhoid fever when given injections as against taking tablets. Services will be improved if the opinions of staff are considered while being treated, that though the services they should also work with complains and suggestion of staff on their peculiar response individually to the treatment methods, procedures and routines.

Patience Akpan, Officer I, CRD, Cross River State.

I have received health services from the Commission through Regemix as the HMO for over a year, and I must say its effective but few things should be added to the HMO scheme to achieve effective service delivery.

The Health service delivery rendered by Regimix HMO, from my assessment and experience is above the 50 per cent mark, although the HMO scheme only encompasses minor health issue like (Typhoid and Malaria), the low quality and substandard drugs

administered to subscribers for treatment of ailments.

The HMO should improve on the aspect of drug quality administered to staff of the Commission.

The HMO scheme should improve on including major health issues like (Scan and test for Major Health Ailments) in their package for a better HMO service delivery to staff of the Commission.

Engr. Ezeifedi Nnamdi. (Manager UIDW, Imo State office)

My HMO is Umezurike Hospital, in Umezurike Hospital their services are like normal hospital services. There is no preferential treatment in their services. We don't need to stay whole day in the hospital.

On a scale of 0-10, I will rate them 6. In terms of medical doctors, they have professional and caring doctors. The hospital should improve on the time they attend to the staff. I don't need to stay in the hospital the whole day.

The hospital is always crowded. They should be a preferential treatment to staff of NDDC whenever we go to the hospital.

The environment is poor and there is need to improve in the general sanitation.

Erhiawaye Ete Emmanuel, Officer I, CAD Edo State Office

My experience is that whenever one goes to the accredited hospital for treatment or checkup and required an approval from the HMO, it takes more than the necessary time before they respond most time I'll have to call the HMO before they will, I also discover the hospital don't give patients branded drugs when I asked they said the HMO does not cover for branded drugs at the end of the day I pay for the branded drugs.

On improvement and way forward, they should have interactive section with staff of the commission quarterly to enable them carry out better services. They should be more responsive in dealing with staff to mitigate complications and enhance effective health care delivery' Good work.



The M.D, Dr. Samuel Ogbuku, exchanging pleasantries with the Chairman of the Presidential Implementation Committee on Technology Transfer, Dr. Dahiru Muhammed. First left is the EDP, Mr. Charles Ogunmola, while the EDFA, Maj-Gen. Charles Airhiavbere (rtd) is first right.

Presidential Committee Partners on Capacity Building

The Presidential Implementation Committee on Technology Transfer is partnering with NDDC to build the capacity of Niger Delta people in agriculture and other sustainable development programmes.

The MD/CEO, Dr. Samuel Ogbuku, who spoke during a courtesy visit by members of the Presidential Committee at the Commission's headquarters in Port Harcourt, stated that the sustainable development of the Niger Delta region would be achieved through collaboration.

He remarked that the NDDC had recently inaugurated a Committee on

Public, Private Partnership, PPP, to drive its partnerships efforts.

Ogbuku assured that the NDDC would continue to engage development partners to bring prosperity to the Niger Delta region because a peaceful Niger Delta region would translate to a peaceful Nigeria.

He declared: "The Niger Delta is very important to Nigeria. Once there is peace in the Niger Delta, Nigeria will be peaceful. If the region prospers, Nigeria will also prosper."

"I assure you that the NDDC is prepared to do whatever is necessary to ensure that our programmes impact the Niger Delta region positively especially the youths of the

region. As it is, most of your programmes will bring growth to the Niger Delta region."

The NDDC boss said that the new management was committed to partnering with agencies that would contribute to the development of the Niger Delta.

He said: "We have to fashion out the PPP model of expanding the development of the Niger Delta. As you can see some of the programmes you have are international projects that will bring funds to the Niger Delta. Most of these programmes will impact on our youths and I can tell you that we are very much prepared to utilize this opportunity." Speaking earlier, the Chairman of the Presidential Committee, Dr. Dahiru Muhammed, observed that the Committee's programmes were centered around agriculture and capacity building.

He said: "Through our training and capacity building programmes, we can help the SMEIs in the Niger Delta region with transfer of technology and funding. We can partner with the NDDC in the area of training out-of-school children in different vocations.

“Through our training and capacity building programmes, we can help the SMEIs in the Niger Delta region with transfer of technology and funding.”



The Minister of Niger Delta Affairs, Obong Umana Okon Umana, posing with members of the NDDC governing board during the retreat.

Stakeholders Chart New Course for Niger Delta Development

Stakeholders in Nigeria's oil-bearing Niger Delta region have resolved to chart a new course for the sustainable development of the region.

As part of this effort, they agreed to revisit and review the Niger Delta Regional Development Master Plan, which expired in 2020, to provide sustainable focus for the region.

They also resolved that the NDDC should prioritise key sectors that would have huge impact on the standard of living of the people of the Niger Delta region, especially in infrastructure, education, health and agriculture.

The resolutions are contained in a communique issued at the end of the recent three-day Board/ Management Retreat held at the Ibom Icon Hotels and Golf Resort in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

In the communique issued by members of the NDDC Governing Board, and made available to journalists, the stakeholders equally resolved that the Commission should

consider implementing legacy projects that have the potential to benefit the people of the region, reduce poverty and improve the conditions of living of the people.

The stakeholders further resolved: "That the NDDC in its determination to take the region to greater heights shall engage in Public Private partnership arrangements with State Governments, International Oil Companies (IOCs) as well as International Donor Agencies with a view to executing mega projects for the region."

According to the communique, the presentations, group discussions at the retreat, addressed critical issues meant to ensure that the Board was abreast of the imperatives of its role, its relationship with the Ministry and Public Service Provisions in handling Government business in addition to repositioning the Commission for effective service delivery.

The communique posited that the Presidency should initiate the process of amending the NDDC (Establishment etc) Act 2000 to bring it in line with current challenges and realities.

It noted: "There should be a clear definition of roles and responsibilities according to the Establishment Act of both the Ministry and the Commission.

"There should be effective, strategic, timely communication and feedback between the Ministry and Commission."

There should be due adherence to all extant Rules and Regulations, especially the NDDC Act and other Government Circulars as applicable to MDAs.

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the Board.

“There should be due adherence to all extant Rules and Regulations, especially the NDDC Act and other Government Circulars as applicable to MDAs.”

According to the communique, the stakeholders stressed that the NDDC should pay particular attention to the security of lives and property and the protection of the poor and weak in the society, adding that the Commission should improve its youths and women empowerment programmes.

The communique stated: “Statutory thresholds and due process requirements regarding Procurement processes should be strictly complied with, to ensure improvement in the Commission’s procurement process.

“That Board, Management and Ministry relationship requires effective and intentional stakeholder engagement to eliminate suspicion and grey areas.”

“The Board should prioritize transparency and accountability in the activities of the Commission by

publishing regular reports on the Commission’s activities as well as being open to public scrutiny.”

The communique also urged that proper NEEDS assessment to be carried out through consultation with relevant stakeholders to reflect the real and actual needs of the communities.

It said: “There is a need for strategic stakeholder Management, effective communication and Conflict Management Plan respectively to facilitate the required

stakeholder collaboration and synergy imperative for sustainable development of the region.

The stakeholders charged the NDDC to put in place a system that ensures that statutory revenues due to the NDDC in accordance with the Act are collected.

They advised the NDDC to strengthen monitoring and evaluation of its projects to ensure programme effectiveness and efficiency.



1 L-R: The EDP, Mr. Charles Ogunmola, the EDFA, Maj-Gen. Charles Airhiavbere (Rtd); the MD, Chief Dr. Samuel Ogbuku during a three-day NDDC Board and Management Retreat at the Ibom Icon Hotels and Golf Resort in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

2 The Minister of Niger Delta Affairs, Obong Umana Okon Umana, making his remarks during the retreat.

3 The NDDC Chairman, Mrs. Lauretta Onochie, making her remarks during the retreat.

4 Members of the board at the retreat.

5 Members of the board at the retreat.

6 The MD, Dr. Samuel Ogbuku, delivering his welcome address at the retreat.

7 The executive management compare notes with the Director of Corporate Affairs, Dr Ibitoye Abosede (standing).

8 Hon. Obong Umana Okon Umana, being welcomed by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry, Engr. Adebisi Olufunso. In the middle is Dr. Samuel Ogbuku.

9 One of the resource persons making her presentation during the retreat.

10 Hon. Obong Umana Okon Umana and the NDDC Chairman, Mrs. Lauretta Onochie during the retreat.

11 L-R: The NDDC EDP, Mr. Charles Ogunmola, the EDFA, Maj-Gen. Charles Airhiavbere (Rtd); the MD, Dr. Samuel Ogbuku and the Chairman, Mrs. Lauretta Onochie, during the retreat.

12 NDDC Directors at the retreat