

## NUC Holds 2018 Management Retreat in Owerri



Executive Secretary, NUC, Prof. Abubakar Adamu Rasheed mni, MFR, FNAL, (middle); DES 1, Prof. Chiedu Mafiana (2nd left); (L-R) Directors: DRI&IT, Dr. Suleiman Ramon-Yusuf; DMSS, Barr. Victor Onuha and DFA, Mr. Sam Onazi

The Management of the National Universities Commission (NUC) last week (Feb. 11th-15th) held its week long annual retreat at the Oxygen Holiday Resort, Owerri to review its activities over the past year and outline activities to carry out in the current year and map out strategies to effectively achieve its mandate.

In his opening remarks, the Executive Secretary, National Universities Commission (NUC), Prof. Abubakar Adamu Rasheed, mni, MFR, FNAL informed Management members that the Retreat was scheduled to reflect deeply towards examining NUC's mandates and functions.

He mentioned that the retreat was

a stocktaking scheduled to address a number of salient issues bothering the commission and the University System. "The Retreat will afford every member the opportunity to have a deeper understanding of NUC's mandate, functions and strategies towards achieving the commission's objectives".

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NUC Directors (L-R): DODE, Dr. Olamide E. Adesina; DEPU, Alh. Abdullahi Hamza; DCC, Ibrahim Usman Yakasai and DAP, Dr. Gidado Bello Kumo

According to him the retreat was convened to create an avenue for better appreciation of what we do and what should be done, adding that the country and indeed the world recorded unprecedented changes in recent times and NUC could not remain in its comfort zone.

He emphasized that “the commission could not survive if we continue to rely on what we have been doing ten or more years ago”.

He informed the management that the desired change must be embraced if NUC wished to remain relevant in the 21st century, stressing that the NUC must keep up to the changing needs of the society in order to regulate and supervise Nigerian University System (NUS) to compete favourably in the global arena and to salvage the nation by confronting myriad of challenges facing the country.

The Executive Secretary stated that “NUC is not a settled commission where things must

be done without reappraisal and review”. It was no more the traditional regulatory agency that could not be challenged by stakeholders saying NUC’s activities should not be restricted to Nigeria alone.

He posited that the changing roles of the commission informed his decision to inaugurate a powerful committee called: NUC Strategic Advisory Committee to advise the commission on such

issues capable of repositioning the commission and delivering its mandate efficiently.

Professor Rasheed appreciated the progress made so far by the committee and urged it to maintain the tempo indicating that at the end of “such worthwhile exercise” another retreat of NUC Management would be held in Abuja to validate the report.

He also disclosed that as part of a Strategy to have a holistic approach to deliver higher education especially university education, another one day meeting with vice chancellors to look at the report would be slated. The Executive Secretary emphasized the need to understand the enormous functions of the commission and chart a better as well as viable direction for the Commission and NUS “regardless of other people’s opinions and preferences.”

He then called for greater unity, understanding and harmony among staff with a view to foster cordial working relationships and



Cross section of other NUC Management at the Retreat







appealed to members to take all the presentations seriously and do away with all distractions that might hamper appreciation of the Retreat.

He urged everyone to make qualitative contribution and encouraged members to speak up as a means of taking the commission and the system to greater height.

In his comments, the Chairman, organising Committee of the 2018 NUC Strategic Retreat Committee, Owerri, and Deputy Executive Secretary 1, Professor Chiedu Felix Mafiana thanked the Executive Secretary, NUC for the opportunity given to him to chair the Strategic Retreat at Owerri.

He told members that since the inception of the current leadership two other retreats were held and this was the third retreat, stating that the second retreat held at Rockview was to reposition the commission while the current retreat was targeted to strategically streamlining its mandate and functions toward facing the challenges of the nation and catching up with



Other members of the Retreat

global trend in higher education.

The LOC Chairman outlined the programme of events thus:

- i. Presentation of mandates and functions of each directorate by its director, to be followed by discussion, appraisals, questions and contributions.
- ii. The discussion and contributions would address:
  - a. The envisaged overlapping of functions;
  - b. Issues arising from the recent manning exercise
  - c. Grievances arising from the presentations
- iii. At the end, the Retreat

would come up with ways and means the commission could act rightly;

iv. Proffer solutions capable of building a University System that could guaranty growth and development.

v. Finally, a strategic plan for the commission to be presented, discussed, reviewed and agreed upon.

vi. In conclusion, the Retreat would take far reaching decisions for implementation and the decisions reached to be appropriately assigned and monitored.



Group photograph of NUC Management at the Retreat in Owerri





## *Images of NUC Management Retreat, Owerri*







# Adamu Adamu Flag-off Nigerian Skills Qualifications Framework



Mal. Adamu Adamu  
Honourable Minister of Education

The Honourable Minister of Education, Malam Adamu Adamu last Thursday flagged-off the Nigerian Qualifications Framework (NSQF) at the NUC Auditorium.

Flagging off the scheme, the Honourable Minister said it was done in order to meet some of the key issues of the current government's positive change agenda.

He said that the Federal Ministry of Education would play a key role in the realization of government's agenda, by strategically placing technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in proper perspective to ensure that the products of TVET institutions perform their roles and meet the aspirations of the Nigerian

economy.

The minister said that his ministry had determined the skills gap in the Nigerian educational system in its strategic plan; stressing that the gap made Nigerians graduates non-competitive in the global market, adding that in order to make progress, Nigeria must produce a workforce that was efficiently skilled, highly mobile, adaptable and innovative.

He added that in order to do that his ministry had elected to promote demand driven TVET instruction, provide increased access and ensure the participation by all stakeholders in both formal and informal sector.

Malam Adamu Adamu explained that in response to the 21st

century worldwide trends and demand for functional competencies, the ministry planned to exploit the TVET potential in order to reduce unemployment, poverty, social vices, improve the quality of life as well as promote peace and democracy in the country.

He said further that, the desire of the present administration was to produce craftsmen, master craftsmen, technicians, technologists and professionals "who do not only possess the required skills and competencies but also thoroughly know and understand" the complexities of scientific and technological world.

He advocated for the structuring of the nation's technical training and assessment processes to meet the emerging aspirations of a highly competitive changing global economy. "There was also the need to incorporate the concept of currency in our qualifications and the disintegration of qualification into new and more functional", he stressed.

In the same vein, the minister, charged the NBTE to look into, identify, classify and provide a model for ensuring quality assurance and standardisation of unbranded trades in Nigeria.

Malam Adamu Adamu also said that the policy direction of the ministry was to identify, and look closely into all challenges facing





(Front row, 2nd - 5th left): Executive Secretary, NUC, Prof. Abubakar A. Rasheed; Hon. Suleiman Fagge; Hon. Minister of State for Education, Prof. Anthony Anwukah; Hon. Minister of Education, Mal. Adamu Adamu and DG. NBTE, Dr. Mas'ud Kazaure

TVET in Nigeria and develop ways and means of overcoming them.

Speaking on the qualifications framework, Malam Adamu Adamu said that the ministry would through the office of the Head of Service of the Federation, incorporate the qualifications from the NSQF into the scheme of service for the federation.

“Towards this end, the ministry will re-kit and reposition NBTE and all other technical and technological institutions to squarely face the challenges of the future”, he assured.

The Executive Secretary, National Board for Technical Education, NBTE, Dr. Mas'ud Kazaure in his speech said, the nation's skills development challenges started immediately after the third National Development Plan, “when emphasis was shifted from competency to paper qualifications.”

This resulted in a disconnection of industries with academic programmes where assessment and evaluation processes remain largely “theoretical” and the concept of dignity of labour disappeared and society looked-down upon people running blue collar jobs.

He said that the training provided at the non-formal setting with positive contribution to the economy, was not coordinated, standardised or regulated and had brought about large skills gaps and mismatch of curricula.

Dr. Kazaure said that it was for the above reasons and many others that NBTE in partnerships with stakeholder commenced the drive for the institutionalisation of Nigeria Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF).

He described NSQF as a system for the development, classification, and recognition of skills, knowledge and competencies acquired by individuals, irrespective of location, mode or type of training.

The system gives a clear statement of what the learner must know or be able to do whether learning took place in classroom, on the job or less formerly.

The framework indicates the comparability of different qualification and how one can progress from one level to another. The system recognises skills and competencies and places them from lower to higher levels, in order of hierarchical complexity.

He said the framework was the structure within which the National Skills Qualification NSQs operated, adding that it aimed at promoting lifelong learning and provided quality assurance and recognition for competencies acquired in the formal, non-formal and informal sectors of the economy.

According to the Executive Secretary, the objective to be achieved by establishing the framework were to provide policy







Mal. Adamu Adamu flanked by Dr. Kazaure issuing a Licence to Operate as an Awarding Body to the members Nigerian Institute of Welding (NIW)

guidelines on organizing skills training to improve product quality, productivity and competitiveness in both the formal and informal sectors. “The other objective is to provide a coherent structure for vocational qualifications which are based on employment- led standards of competence,” he said.

Dr. Kazaure gave some of the key components to be pursued as provision of a system for the recognition of competencies acquired in the non-formal and formal sectors of our economy; increase industry ownership of the trainee-ship system which enhances stakeholder input to major decisions; expansion of training opportunities so that they could be evenly spread across the workforce meeting the needs of all enterprises more equitably; facilitation of access to, mobility and progression within educational training and career paths; and the provision of a policy framework for flexible curricula based on National Occupational Standard

(NOS) dictated by the industry.

Others are the determination of the level of award, which enable clear routes of progression, and appropriate awards, which relate to employment; determination of convenient systems for recognition of prior learning and expand access to education particularly lifelong learning; provision of a system for up skilling and re-skilling of Nigerian youth and working adult; and introduction of a

system of competency-based assessment thereby reducing examination malpractice and certificate racketeering.

He further explained that the Training should be industry –focused, through partnership (link) between the training providers, the industries and enterprises they served and that training should be provided where it was needed, whether on the job, at home or in a formal training institution. “Curriculum should be flexible and delivered in a range of settings, presented in a modular form so as to provide close direction to the learner and trainer/facilitator.”

He also added that training should be competency-based so that employers could have good understanding on what prospective employees could do and there should be a consistent system of certification which guaranteed quality, as well as transportability of skills that would eliminate or reduces unemployment.



Mal. Adamu Adamu flanked by issuing a Licence to Operate as an Awarding Body to the members of National Institute for Hospitality and Tourism (NIHOTOUR)





Goodwill messages were delivered at the occasion by the Honourable water resources, Engineer Sulaiman Adamu Kazaure, Hon. Sulaiman Fagge,

Chairman House Committee on Tertiary Education and Tetfund, NACCIMA, Ministry of Information, NABTEB, Committee of Chairmen of heads

of polytechnic, special assistant to Mr. President on SDG and attended by ES/NUC Prof. Abubakar A. Rasheed among order dignitaries.

## PUMS gets N500m grant, 500 students from RVSG

The Executive Governor of Rivers State, Nyeson Ezenwo Wike, CON has assured a grant of 500 million Naira to support the development of the new PAMO University of Medical Sciences which is the first Private University in the State.

Speaking at the installation of Gen. Abdusalami Abubakar GCFR, as the 1st Chancellor of the University recently, the governor also disclosed that the state government would enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with PUMS “where we will be committed to sponsoring 100 Rivers State students in the University annually for the next five years.”

According to Governor Wike, “today's event there given us the opportunity to express our leader, Dr. Peter Odili, CON, GSSR for completing the rituals for the take off of this unique institution and making yet another invaluable contribution in his life's time to an important player in the tertiary education system of our nation.”

Speaking earlier, the Executive Secretary, National Universities Commission, Prof. Abubakar Adamu Rasheed said that with very limited space in Medical education in Nigerian Universities and with very high demands and competition for



Executive Secretary NUC, Prof Abubakar A. Rasheed in a handshake with the Hon. Minister of State for Education, Prof. Anthony Anwukah

those limited spaces, “it is a strategic move by the FEC late last year to approve the establishment of six new private Universities including two private medical universities in Nigeria – the PAMO University of Medical Sciences, Port Harcourt and the EKO university of medical sciences, Lagos.”

Prof. Rasheed said that “we at the NUC salute the commitment and Vision of President Muhammadu Buhari and the Hon. Minister of Education Mal. Adamu Adamu for taking the necessary measures to provide more qualitative and accessible education in Nigeria as encapsulated in the Ministerial Strategic Plan 2016-

2019.

He said that one of the pillars of the Ministerial Action Plan was the encouragement of private investment in higher education, particularly University education, adding that “this explains why there are today total of 161 universities in Nigeria, 74 of which are privately owned, including two specialised universities of medicine, the first of which is the PAMO University of Medical Sciences.”

The NUC Scribe said that the Commission was very happy with seriousness of the father and founder of PAMO University. “We are happy that from its







Governor, Nyeson Wike decorating the first vice chancellor of the university while Profs. Rasheed and Anwukah watches

conception to its delivery, PAMO University took less than one year.”

In his speech, former Head of State and pioneer Chancellor of the University, Gen. Abdulsalami Abubakar, GCFR, expressed appreciation for the role of private universities in providing access to quality university education for teeming Nigerian youths who aspire to attain such education.

He noted that over the last decades, Nigeria had witnessed a phenomenal growth of private universities due to the inability of public universities to cater for the high demand for university education, most especially in the Medical Sciences.

He further disclosed that recent reports indicated that less than 5% of qualified candidates were able to gain admission into Medical programmes in Nigerian universities, which had led to the out flux of many students to neighbouring African countries to seek for such education.

He said that the challenge of

access had contributed to inadequate number of medical practitioners in Nigeria, pointing out that the recent Medical and Dental Council of Nigeria Examination witnessed a mass failure of foreign trained medical practitioners.

He however noted that poor quality medical education had been the topmost reason for the rising cases of medical tourism among Nigerians, adding that billions of naira were spent annually in foreign countries to treat ailments which could have been easily treated in Nigeria if there were to be adequately

qualified medical doctors in the country.

He said that the university was set to produce graduates in different medical fields that would not only be competent in their professions but also be entrepreneurial, ICT driven and worthy in character and learning.

Gen Abububakar also emphasised the role of education to the socio-economic and political development of the nation, stressing that the inevitable contributions of the private sector cannot be overemphasised.

He then called on the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund), to work out modalities of extending support to privately owned educational institutions as part of its responsibility in financing education in Nigeria.

He further noted that with the revolutionary trend in ICT, the world had witnessed a tremendous development in the mode of delivery of education and learning at all levels. He therefore, called on the National



Gen. Abdulsalami (rt) being decorated by Gov. Wike





Prof. Nimi Briggs and Abubakar Rasheed

Universities Commission to as a matter of urgency, review the requirements for the establishment of private universities considering the nature of mono-discipline and city-based institutions like PAMO University of Medical Sciences. He also enjoined other states of the federation including the host Rivers state and other stakeholders, to support the university in achieving its goals.

Delivering his address, the founder and pro-chancellor of the University and former Governor of Rivers State, Dr. Peter Odili, expressed delight that the University had set the pace as the first private medical university in Nigeria.

He said that the university came as painstaking efforts from humble beginning and would continue to strive towards ensuring that the products of the institution stood out in achieving excellence in medical practice and service to humanity. He reiterated that inadequate number of medical and health practitioners in the country was

part of the reasons that necessitated the established of the specialised university.

The founder said that the main goal of the university was to provide a platform that would contribute towards ensuring quality medical education and health care delivery in Nigeria and the West African sub region.

He stressed that the University would promote hardwork with the provision of annual scholarship for six qualified indigent students and orphans from any part of Nigeria and also

promote linkages with Nigerian experts and academics in the diaspora.

He also explained that the University would ensure that all admissions were based on merit and strict adherence to discipline and moral standards.

He said that the licensing of the university and its eventual take off called for the appointment of reputable and distinguished Nigerians into key positions, which had led to the appointment of Gen. Abubakar as the Chancellor, due to his antecedents as an elder statesman.

Dr. Odili also expressed appreciation to the Honourable Minister of Education, Mal. Adamu Adamu and the Executive Secretary, National Universities Commission, Prof. Abubakar A. Rasheed for their invaluable support and guidance towards achieving such a laudable goal. He also expressed appreciation to other stakeholders who had in one way or the other, contributed to the successful commencement of the University.



The founder of the University, Dr. Odili and members of the NUC Management; L-R: Ibrahim Usman Yakasai, Osendiah, ES, NUC, Prof. Rasheed, DAP, Dr. Kumo and DCLS, Mrs. Constance Goddy-Nnaddi

