

PANORAMA

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**TETFUND WINS 2024
ANTHOLOGY
VISIONARY AWARD**

**BENEFICIARY INSTITUTIONS TO
GIVE ACCOUNT OF TETFUND
DISBURSEMENTS – TETFUND
COMMITTEE CHAIR**

**ECHONO EMERGES
CHAMPION NEWSPAPERS'
"OUTSTANDING PUBLIC
SERVANT OF THE YEAR"**

**TETFUND EXEMPLIFIES
LEADERSHIP
COMMITMENT TO
EDUCATION – AFRICAN
LEADERSHIP
MAGAZINE**

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EDITOR'S NOTE

APRIL - JULY 2024



Like the golden fish, which has no hiding place, the Executive Secretary of Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund), Arc. Sonny S.T. Echono has continued to shine even in the face of unfounded allegations of financial misappropriation on execution of programmes from some disgruntled cartels who felt slighted by the sweeping reforms he introduced on assumption of duty at the agency. Internationally and also at the national levels, awards and recognitions are pouring in for the Chief Executive per excellence, whose transformative landmarks, especially in the Education sector has projected the Fund and the country into global prominence. His ingenuity in piloting the affairs of the Agency has not gone unnoticed given the torrents of partnerships and Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) requests from various institutions of global repute.

The awards include the '2024 Anthology Visionary Award' in Orlando World Center, United States of America, which Arc. Echono received on behalf of the Fund. The Executive Secretary was also decorated with the African Leadership Excellence Award in Educational Development by the Africa Leadership Magazine at the House of Lords, United Kingdom, Champion Newspapers' "Outstanding Public Servant of the Year" in Lagos and the National Association of Academic Technologists' (NAAT) Award of Excellence for exemplary leadership in the education sector, quality assurance and service to humanity at the University of Abuja recently. The second quarter edition of the TETFund Panorama brings you these awards in pictorial and news content for your reading delight.

Other notable and exciting news in this edition include the award of a grant of \$250,000 to 18 Nigerian university lecturers trained under the Fund's Research for Impact (R4i) initiative organized in partnership with Innov8 Hub by the Science Granting Council Initiative (SGCI), and the ground-breaking ceremony of a 1600 capacity students' hostel in Akwa Ibom State University, Uyo aimed at ameliorating accommodation problems on campuses.

It would also be a cheering news to Nigerians and taxpayers in particular to learn that TETFund has since inception in 2011 funded a total of 5,525 physical infrastructure in its Beneficiary Institutions, thereby bridging infrastructure gaps in the institutions.

The House of Representatives' Committee on TETFund and Other Services has stated that Beneficiary Institutions are to give accounts of Funds received to the committee for greater accountability

In a bid to boost research and innovation in the country, Minister of Education, Prof. Tahir Mamman also inaugurated the reconstituted TETFund National Research Fund Screening and Monitoring Committee (NRFS&MC) as well as the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) set up by the Fund.

The Fund continued to receive visitors from various sectors for fruitful collaborations aimed at improving the already acclaimed success stories. These and other pictorial events are for the readers' delight.

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TETFund Wins 2024 Anthology Visionary Award

BY ISHOWO OLUWATOSIN

Following the Tertiary Education Trust Fund's (TETFund) efforts to drive the infusion of technology into curriculum and instructional delivery process in Nigerian public tertiary institutions, the Intervention Agency has emerged as winner of the 2024 Anthology Visionary Award for Leadership in transforming education through technology.

The event which took place in Orlando World Centre in United States before a global audience of over 2000 participants drawn from the Academia witnessed the Executive Secretary of TETFund, Arc. Sonny Echono receiving the award on behalf of the Agency.

In his acceptance speech, the Executive Secretary highlighted that the initiative of the Fund are in line with the Renewed Hope Agenda of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu who aims to reposition the education sector in the country, and ensure all graduates of tertiary institutions attain digital literacy before graduation.

Recall that the Federal Ministry of Education under the leadership of Prof. Tahir Mamman unveiled the Tertiary Education Research and Application Systems (TERAS) and Beneficiaries Identity Management System (BIMS) on 17th of October, 2023 at the Federal Ministry of Education Auditorium, Abuja. The Initiative which was driven by TETFund in partnership with Anthology and Blackboard team aims to promote a more inclusive ecosystem in tertiary institutions and provide wide range services to researchers, students and further enhance teaching and learning process in tertiary institutions.

According to Echono "In today's digital world, proficiency in digital literacy is not just beneficial; it is essential for academic success and employability. Many countries have successfully integrated digital literacy into their educational systems, reaping the benefits of improved teaching and learning outcomes and accelerated economic growth. With our large youth population and emerging technology industry, Nigeria is uniquely positioned to benefit from similar initiatives.

"However, our curriculum does not adequately address the digital skills required for modern workplaces and everyday life. Some of the identified gaps include: lack of comprehensive digital literacy components in our existing curricula, which results in unprepared graduates who are unprepared for technology-driven job markets; educators are as well not sufficiently trained or resourced to teach critical digital skills; infrastructure such as computers and reliable internet access is inadequate, as many tertiary institutions are either unserved or under served.



“

We do not have a digital literacy index to measure and benchmark our standards, and there is significant disparity in digital literacy and access between urban and rural areas, exacerbating educational and economic inequalities.”

To bridge this gap, TETFund as an Intervention Agency is supporting over 280 public tertiary institutions and has laid a strategic plan which will enable all students attain digital literacy before leaving the tertiary education system. The TETFund Boss disclosed at the event that the Agency has designed a phased integration plan across educational levels and equipping educators in the country with necessary digital skills, facilitating critical partnerships with global bodies, and have established National Center of Excellence for Development of Digital Literacy and Emerging Skills.

At the event, over 2000 participants were intimated with the activities and ambitious plans of TETFund, and efforts that have been made to domesticate learning management systems, and better managed student’s information by deploying information systems.



PHOTO SPEAKS



**PRESENTATION OF THE AFRICAN
LEADERSHIP AWARD TO THE
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY**

**AWARD PRESENTATION TO ARC.
ECHONO BY CHAMPION
NEWSPAPERS**



Education and Entrepreneurship are Africa's Pathways to Greatness – Echono

BY ISHOWO OLUWATOSIN

The Executive Secretary of Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund), Arc. Sonny Echono has stated that education and entrepreneurship linkage are Africa's pathways to unleashing its greatness. He stated this during the 9th Africa Leadership Magazine Summit in London, United Kingdom.

Echono, who received the Africa Leadership Excellence Award in Educational Development from the Prime Minister of the Bahamas, HE. Philip Davis, also delivered a Keynote address in line with the theme of the Summit titled "Africa Unleashed: Navigating Disruptions, Enhancing Opportunities," described the event as a clarion call to galvanize policymakers, political and business leaders, diplomats, civil society and leaders of thought, along with other key stakeholders from across Africa, United Kingdom, and the rest of the globe to explore diverse pathways for sustainable socio-economic development in Africa. He emphasized that Africa has commenced its journey towards repositioning itself in global affairs, and advocated that policies and blueprints that would help the continent in navigating the identified obstacles and optimize opportunities for its greatness must be considered as paramount.

Sonny Echono who served as Permanent Secretary of the Federal Ministry of Education, Nigeria with wide range experience in different layers of education and its importance in nation building registered that unlocking Africa's immense potential requires a multi-layered approach and should feature a convergence of different pathways in ensuring the continent attains the desired greatness.

Speaking on the importance of leadership, the Executive Secretary intimated that "First, Africa must address its leadership crisis by adopting genuine democratic principles and values, promoting good governance and culture of transparency and accountability to achieve political stability and ensure lasting peace and security on the continent. Next, it must efficiently harness available funding sources (WB, AFDB, China-Exim, and other bilateral loans etc.) and channel same towards massive infrastructural projects, with particular focus on energy, transportation networks, and modern communication systems, to facilitate economic development."

On deepening and strengthening regional integration, Echono stated that Africa must intra-trade and collaborate to benefit from the economic scale and leverage Africa's collective potential, while also promoting the need to revive a common identity and cultural renaissance that will assist the continent to preserve, celebrate, share and exports its rich heritage of customs and traditions in arts and culture, music and dance, fashion and cuisines, movies and athletic abilities through sport. He added that it will provide a more equitable basis to build strategic partnerships with global players to access new markets, adopt new technologies and exploit investment policies. According to him, Africa must also partake in vast opportunities presented by environmental sustainability and climate action, protect its natural resources, adopt conservation and renewable energy, to promote eco-friendly lifestyles and practices to guarantee a sustainable future.



“When Africa prioritizes its human capital by investing in health care, poverty reduction, social welfare, and education, it will build a healthy, skilled and productive population. Indeed, empowering Africa’s young and growing population will yield bountiful benefits and enable the continent to leverage its competitive advantage in natural resources and human capital. It will birth an era of rapid economic growth and a boom in innovation and entrepreneurship,” Sonny Echono stated.

On the role of entrepreneurship education, Echono pointed that “Entrepreneurship education seeks to provide students with the knowledge, skills and motivation to encourage entrepreneurial success. It is the handshake between education and entrepreneurship, through which entrepreneurial attributes are imbibed. However, the education system of many African states no longer meet the requirements of the modern-day competitive world. There is a disconnect between the curriculum offerings and the needs of society and this is reflected in the entrepreneurial development in the continent. Entrepreneurship education will develop students to think in a creative and critical manner, to recognize and pursue opportunities, to establish and operate new ventures. Currently, our educational systems are producing graduates that will be dependent on others for their livelihood as opposed to those who can create jobs and generate wealth.”



On how TETFund has assisted in bridging gaps in Nigeria, the largest nation in the continent, the Executive Secretary disclosed that the Agency has funded many innovative initiatives such as Research for Impact (R4i) and TETFund Alliance for Innovative Research (TETFAIR) targeted at deepening impactful research and uptake of research outcomes with potentials for commercialization, while adding that in 2023, over 600 lecturers from Nigeria’s public tertiary institutions have benefited from the R4i programme and have developed 95 prototypes from the initiative.

Announcing the progress made on the TETFAIR, Echono said 44 teams of 176 researchers have been trained from tertiary institutions from the six geo-political zones, and the first cohorts have designed 16 prototypes, one of them being a hearing aid that is self-programmable, affordable and more suitable for African market. “The team responsible for the design participated in the ARC Centre for Digital Innovation Entrepreneurship programme at the Sheba Hospital in Israel, where they presented their innovation at the international community. Interestingly, all prototypes under TETFAIR have been tested and we are receiving positive feedbacks from potential investors,” Echono disclosed.

He revealed further that the Agency is sponsoring establishment of four regional multipurpose research laboratories, twelve innovation hubs and twelve entrepreneurship centres in tertiary institutions across the country under the 2023/2024 interventions, in order to provide an enabling environment for conducting ground-breaking research and development of innovative technologies to enhance entrepreneurship, innovation and employability in line with global best practice.



“

WE ARE HUMBLLED AND HONOURED ON THIS RECOGNITION. WE ARE COMMITTED TO THE VISION OF THE PRESIDENT, TO ADDRESS THE GROWING NEEDS IN QUALITY MANPOWER THAT NEEDS TO BE FILLED IN THE COUNTRY. WE REMAIN RESOLUTE IN OUR DRIVE TO PROMOTE CRITICAL THINKING, AND TO PRODUCE GRADUATES WHO WILL ADDRESS THE LOCAL CHALLENGES THAT WE CURRENTLY HAVE.

”

TETFund Exemplifies Leadership Commitment to Education – African Leadership Magazine

BY ISHOWO OLUWATOSIN

The African Leadership Magazine has affirmed that the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) exemplifies leadership commitment to education in Nigeria.

The publisher of the magazine, Dr. Ken Giani gave the affirmation recently at the Fund's Headquarters in Abuja while on a courtesy visit to the Executive Secretary of TETFund, Arc. Sonny Echono.

Speaking during the visit, Dr. Giani stated that the magazine which has over 580,000 audience consisting of investors, policy makers and multilateral agencies has been following TETFund reforms and key policy framework that distinguish it in Africa.

“Our Magazine brings the best of Africa to a global audience, telling the African story from an African perspective, how solutions are developed to peculiar challenges in the continent, we promote innovation, entrepreneurship and development in Africa that assures growth and development and moves us from being a potential to greatness,” he stated.

Dr. Giani informed the Executive Secretary that the Editorial Board of the magazine was organizing a summit at the Hilton London Metropole and House of Lords in London where he was expected to speak on the sub-theme: “Education and entrepreneurial linkages: Africa’s pathway to unleashing its greatness”.

He noted that Board’s selection of Arc. Echono was a testament to his transformational leadership in improving infrastructure, promoting research and development, enhancing academic staff training, ICT and digital learning among others.

The publisher revealed that the House of Lords was expecting the Executive Secretary at the event to further discuss collaboration between UK Universities and TETFund.

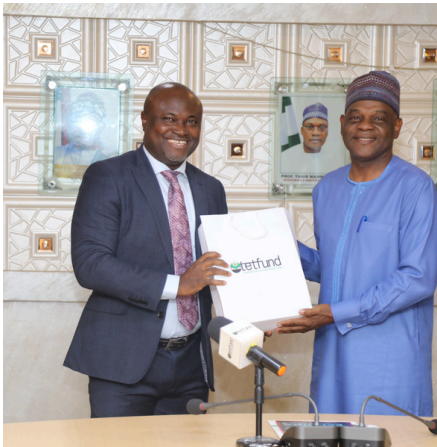
In his remarks, the Executive Secretary expressed the Fund’s excitement and appreciation to the Magazine for finding it worthy of attention.



“We are humbled and honoured on this recognition. We are committed to the vision of the President, to address the growing needs in quality manpower that needs to be filled in the country. We remain resolute in our drive to promote critical thinking, and to produce graduates who will address the local challenges that we currently have.

“Nigerians do so well wherever they are, especially with the right facilities, equipment and environment. So, we want to ensure we do things that promote our shared prosperity at home, which is the most feasible way of fighting the vicious poverty in the country and accompany Nigeria to an independent economy. The science and policy instruments that we need are all available. With platforms as yours, we will be able to create the needed awareness,” he said.

PHOTOSPEAKS



**PRESENTATION BY THE AFRICAN
LEADERSHIP MAGAZINE**

**AWARD PRESENTATION TO ARC.
ECHONO BY THE CHAMPION
NEWSPAPERS**





“

YOU HAVE SHOWN STRONG AND EFFECTIVE PROFESSIONAL CHARACTER IN YOUR LEADERSHIP OF TETFUND IN A WAY THAT HAS IMPACTED TREMENDOUSLY ON THE OVERALL WELL-BEING OF OUR UNIVERSITIES IN NIGERIA TODAY,” BRIG. GEN. MOHAMMED BUBA MARWA.

ECHONO EMERGES CHAMPION NEWSPAPERS' "OUTSTANDING PUBLIC SERVANT OF THE YEAR"

...Speaks on Reforms at TETFund

By Amos Anetekhai

The efforts of Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) at revamping the tertiary education sub-sector through its intervention activities are still being acknowledged by various stakeholders as the Executive Secretary of the Fund, Arc. Sonny Echono was recently in Lagos unveiled as Champion Newspapers' "Outstanding Public Servant of the Year".

The award was presented to the Executive Secretary on behalf of the organizers by the Chairman and CEO of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), Brig. Gen. Mohammed Buba Marwa Rtd., who was the Chairman of the occasion.

In his acceptance remarks, Arc. Echono expressed appreciation to Champion Newspapers for the recognition, even as he acknowledged the support of the management and staff of the Fund. He noted that the award would only spur him and his team to work harder and make the Fund reach greater heights.

In a statement by the organizers, the award is in recognition of the Executive Secretary's efforts at making TETFund an outstanding public service institution focused on upgrading the strategic status of tertiary institutions in Nigeria

"The award, a product of the painstaking selection process of our board of Editors, is our modest way of recognizing you and other top leaders in the public and private sectors of the economy of this country as well as politicians/political office holders and other leaders of democracy and the economy of Nigeria who have made great sacrifices in ensuring that the objectives and ideals of our Nationhood are sustained and improved upon on the road to promoting good corporate governance and leadership in Nigeria."



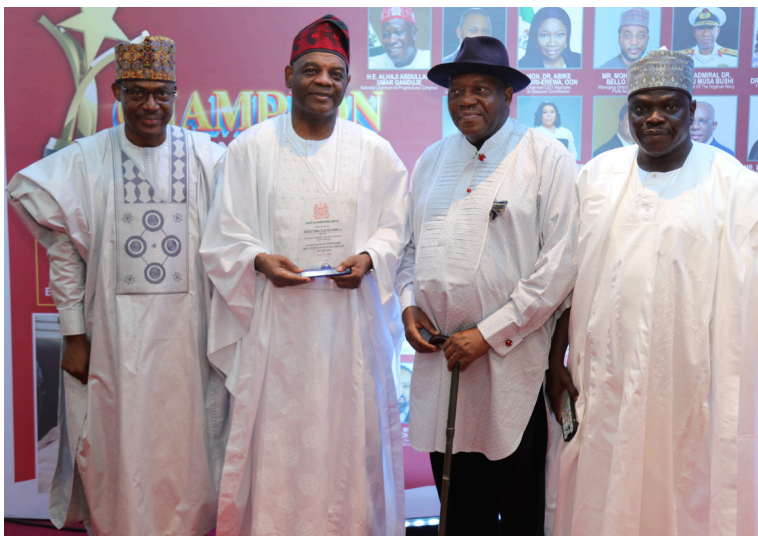
"On all scores of good positive leadership indices, our findings, largely corroborated by that of our independent assessors, confirm that You, Arc. Sonny Echono, in line with your vision of making TETFund an outstanding public service institution focused on upgrading the strategic status of our Universities in Nigeria have indeed sustained determined efforts in restoring hope, vibrancy and effective funding of our Universities in a way that empowers them to be able to respond to the strategic challenges of University education in Nigeria.

"You have shown strong and effective professional character in your leadership of TETFund in a way that has impacted tremendously on the overall well-being of our Universities in Nigeria today," the statement read in part.

Speaking while fielding questions from journalists after the event, Arc. Echono stated that due to the critical role of the Fund in bridging funding gap and providing critical infrastructure among others, it must not be allowed to become a victim of mismanagement.

This, he said, has been the reason for the various reforms instituted at the Fund for more effective service delivery.

"Since we came on board, we have embarked on a number of reforms to further make the agency work better and deliver on its mandate to the good people of Nigeria. We are aware of the role TETFund plays in the provision of infrastructure and critical facilities in our higher institutions, as well as the training of academic and non-academic staff.



"We are glad that testimonies from beneficiaries, are positive and encouraging. However, because it is an agency that is known to be achieving a lot, and one that is responding to things in positive manner, we attract the attention of a lot of people.

"Of course, the magnitude of and the nature of reforms that have been implemented are also going to affect some people adversely. We expect that such people would not feel comfortable. But as a public servant, one requires to know that one must develop thick skin to baseless issues and move on and do the best you can," he said.



EXEMPLARY LEADERSHIP: NAAT HONOURS ECHONO WITH AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

BY AMOS ANETEKHAI



Accolades have continued to pour in for the Executive Secretary of Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund), Arc. Sonny Echono in recognition of the exemplary leadership he has brought to bear at the Fund, as well as sweeping reforms which have resulted in elimination of corruption and improved service delivery to Beneficiary Institutions.

The latest of such recognition recently came from the National Association of Academic Technologists (NAAT) which conferred an Award of Excellence on the Executive Secretary for exemplary leadership in the education sector, quality assurance and service to humanity at its 5th National Delegates' Conference held at the University of Abuja recently.

Speaking during the award ceremony, the National President of NAAT, Comrade Ibeji Nwokoma commended the Executive Secretary for his contributions to the education sector and particularly the tertiary education sub-sector where he oversees the affairs of TETFund.

He noted that his interventions in tertiary education as it relates to academic technologists has resulted in the establishment of modern laboratories and upgrade of existing ones in public tertiary educational institutions in the country, as well as scholarships for members of the association.

Speaking after receiving the award, the Executive Secretary expressed appreciation to the President and members of NAAT for the recognition, noting that the award would further stimulate the Fund's management to greater productivity.

While acknowledging the central role being played by the association in the management of workshops and laboratories in various academic institutions, Arc. Echono assured that the Fund would continue to provide support for acquisition of relevant equipment and infrastructure, noting that President Bola Ahmed Tinubu has approved an intervention for the purpose.



PHOTOSPEAKS



**PRESENTATION OF AWARD TO THE
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY BY THE
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
ACADEMIC TECHNOLOGISTS (NAAT)**

**PRESENTATION OF REPORTS OF THE TETFUND AD HOC
COMMITTEES ON ASSESSMENT/REVIEW OF TETFUND
CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE AND THAT OF THE
OPERATIONALIZATION OF SKILLS DEVELOPMENT SPECIAL
INTERVENTION**



MINISTER OF EDUCATION RECEIVES TETFUND AD- HOC COMMITTEES' REPORTS

*...Says Govt Will Stop Funding of
Non-Performing Centres of
Excellence*

BY ISHOWO OLUWATOSIN

The Minister of Education, Prof. Tahir Mamman has received the reports of the TETFund ad hoc Committees on Assessment/Review of TETFund Centres of Excellence and that of the Operationalization of Skills Development Special Intervention, warning that Government will stop the funding of Centres of Excellence that do not meet expectations.

While stating that productivity was key if the centres desired continuous funding from Government, Prof. Mamman assured that those that have performed well would be encouraged to expand the scope of their activities or get all needed support in specializing their operations.

“The Government is encouraging our scholars to simply rise to the occasion and deliver their scholarship as world class scholars should do, we are not going to reward indolence. We cannot be giving free money to institutions that are not doing what they are supposed to do.

“We are really committed to doing things differently, we also want to raise the equipment level in our tertiary institutions so that they can provide all the skill sets needed in Nigeria in the highest quality that can service the country locally and internationally,” he said.



According to Prof. Tomori “For the future selection of TETFund Centres of Excellence, the Agency should identify the areas needing technological advancement and capacity building for national development, and call for proposal that will be subjected to competitive bidding and selection process. In the same vein, TETFund should organize regular and annual project review meetings with the Centres.

“The idea was to incubate, to have one Centre, the right equipment, the right tools and the right faculty and experts that will lead our efforts in research, promotion of scholarship in order to inspire other centres,” he said.

“There should also be training and retraining programme for Centre Directors and the head of the units domiciled in the Centre. Since most Centres did not utilize their first seed grant of N150 million for the initial infrastructures required in the Centres, TETFund should provide some bail out funds to the Centres to enable proper take-off of the Centres”.

For the Advisory Committee on Operationalization of TETFund Skills Development Special Intervention, the Chairman of the Committee, Prof. Idris Bugaje who was represented by a member of the committee, Prof. Nuhu Yakubu recommended that polytechnics for the 2024 Special Intervention of TETFund be selected based on geo-political zones.



Recall that TETFund constituted three advisory committees in March to assess the status of its Centres of Excellence, equipment in laboratories and workshops of tertiary institutions and recommend operationalization of the Skills Development Special Intervention programme of TETFund.

Beneficiary Institutions to Give Account of TETFund Disbursements – TETFund Committee Chair

By Ishowo Oluwatosin

...PRESIDENT APPROVED N3.8 BILLION AS BAILOUT TO STRANDED SCHOLARS – ECHONO



As part of the oversight functions of the National Assembly, the Chairperson of the House of Representatives Committee on TETFund and Other Services, Hon. Mrs. Marian Onuoha has revealed that Beneficiary Institutions of the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) are to give accounts of funds received to the Committee for greater transparency and accountability.

This development is coming even as the Executive Secretary of TETFund informed the Committee that the Fund had expended the sum of N3.8 billion as bailout fund to some stranded Nigerian scholars abroad, in line with the approval of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu.

Speaking recently at the TETFund Headquarters in Abuja during an oversight visit of the Committee to the Fund, Hon. Onuoha said: “We are here to formally receive detailed submissions of interventions to tertiary institutions for 2020-2023 to enable us to effectively perform our oversight, and also understand the funding gaps. Our oversight will cut across the six geo-political zones, and heads of beneficiary institutions will give account of funds received so far by their respective institutions”.

Hon. Onuoha also intimated the Fund on the petitions received by the National Assembly from stranded scholars in various institutions across the globe, while also expressing concern on the inability of some institutions to access their intervention funds.

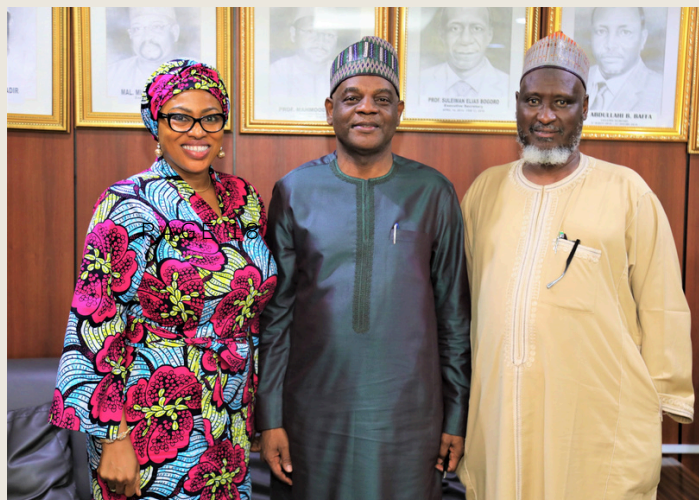


Reacting to inquiry on the stranded scholars, Arc. Echono stated that the President approved bailout for the scholars, totalling N3.8 billion for 1500 scholars.

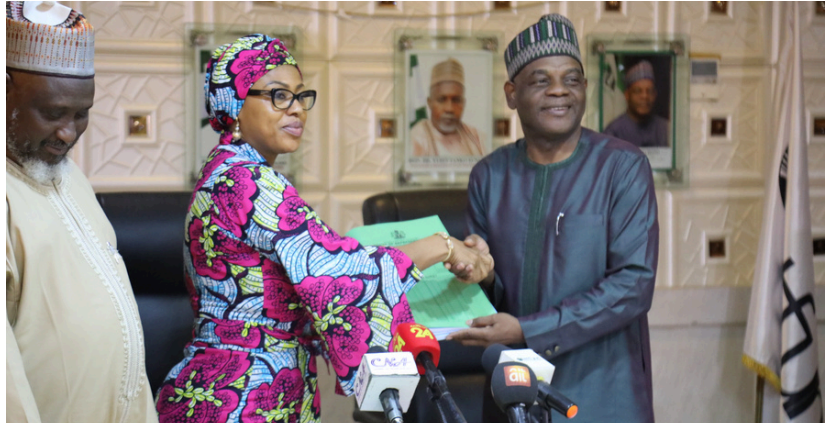
On the failure of some institutions accessing their intervention funds, the TETFund Boss disclosed that most institutions delay accessing their yearly allocations until May or June. To solve this, he stated that the Fund had made attempts to promote early execution of projects by partnering the Bureau of Public Procurement on how Institutions could meet requirements and deadlines. He noted that the issue was more prevalent in state tertiary institutions, but the Fund allows them to merge outstanding allocations for mega projects.

Reacting to the Executive Secretary's presentation, Hon. Princess Mary Onuaha commended the Executive Secretary for his efforts saying: "You have demonstrated a very good understanding in conduct and execution of your mandate, I commend TETFund and charge government across all levels to use their instrumentality for compliance, especially state institutions."

The Executive Secretary commended the committee for its support to the Fund including its intervention in the payment of education tax by commercial banks.



PHOTOSPEAKS



**COMMITTEE ON TETFUND AND
OTHER SERVICES PAYS OVERSIGHT
VISIT TO THE FUND**

**THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY AT THE NATIONAL
CONFERENCE AND WORKSHOP OF THE COLLEGES
OF EDUCATION ACADEMIC STAFF UNION (COEASU)**



ECHONO CALLS FOR INCREASED ONBOARDING OF STUDENTS ON TERAS PLATFORM

By Michael Agu

The Executive Secretary of Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund), Arc. Sonny Echono has urged students and lecturers in Colleges of Education in Nigeria to take advantage of the Fund's Tertiary Education, Research and Application Services (TERAS) platform for global competitiveness.

Arc. Echono made the call recently in Abuja during the National Conference and Workshop on Digital Pedagogy and Fundable Research Proposal Writings organized by the Colleges of Education Academic Staff Union (COEASU) in collaboration with the Committee of Provosts of Colleges of Education.



While speaking at the event, the Executive Secretary stated that TERAS was designed by the Fund for public tertiary institutions in the country and comprises IT Infrastructure and services structured into separate but interconnected modules. He noted that the platform would assist institutional libraries in providing support for publication and learning needs of students.

“We have created a platform called TERAS, where you are expected to onboard all students and your staff because there are so many digital resources there. They are access to over 400 libraries complete with all the index books you can think of on TERAS” he said.

Acknowledging the importance of the College of Education system in the country, Arc. Echono noted that the tier of the tertiary education sub-sector continues to play a critical role in preparing teachers for the foundational level of the educational tree; and the basic education system could crumble if the fundamentals were not properly established.

He, therefore, expressed reservations over the growing penchant of converting public colleges of education to universities noting that the change was uncalled for due to the existence of Faculties of Education in some conventional universities.

“This penchant to want to convert colleges of education to universities; frankly I see no need for it. Universities already have faculties of education and many of the conventional universities have this. Why don't we produce enough for the basic level first?” he said.

Also speaking at the conference, the President of the Colleges of Education Academic Staff Union, Dr Smart Olugbeko commended TETFund for its numerous interventions in the teacher training institutes especially in ICT Development.

He lauded the inclusive leadership style of the Executive Secretary and expressed appreciation to the Fund for keeping the sub-sector relevant through continuous programmes and interventions that is improving basic education teacher training.



Minister of Education, Prof. Tahir Mamman has inaugurated the reconstituted TETFund National Research Fund Screening and Monitoring Committee (NRFS&MC) and Technical Advisory Group (TAG) - with a call on the leadership and members of the two standing committees to sustain and enhance the credibility of their processes to guarantee the integrity of the intervention programmes.

Speaking during the inauguration of the two newly reconstituted committees held at the Ministry of Education Headquarters in Abuja, Prof. Mamman expressed gratitude to the committee members for their patriotism and service to Nigeria. He also commended TETFund for taking up the role of salvaging the worrisome state of tertiary institutions through innovative research and book publication.

“Globally, innovative research and its commercialization has been recognized as the main driver of economic growth and prosperity in the contemporary world. All forms of economic development in modern era depends on increased productivity arising from purposeful and problem-solving research,” he said.

The Minister stressed that promoting effective applied research that could feed industries to generate employment and facilitate economic growth was only possible through adequate funding for research and development, while reiterating the pivotal role of R&D as a key prerequisite for accelerated development and global competitiveness.



EDUCATION MINISTER INAUGURATES RECONSTITUTED TETFUND'S NATIONAL RESEARCH FUND SCREENING AND MONITORING COMMITTEE (NRF&MC), TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP (TAG)

**...RECEIVES REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON
EQUIPMENT UPGRADE**

BY MARIA JOSEPH

He announced that President Bola Ahmed Tinubu had approved the sum of N5 billion for NRF, N8 billion for provision of Central Multipurpose Laboratories in some universities across the country; among other ground-breaking projects under the 2024 intervention budget to drive research activities in the institutions for national development.

Mamman also revealed that the Fund has awarded a total of 912 research grants to researchers from public tertiary institutions at the cost of over N24billion in different thematic groups since the inception of NRF intervention,



Prof. Mammam also noted that TETFund has continued to provide sponsorship for institution-based research (IBR) to facilitate the revival of quality research among the lecturers in tertiary institutions and assist them to build capacity for higher research.

“To strengthen and deepen the impact of IBR, I have approved an upward review of the Funding ceiling per IBR project from N2million to N5million for Science-based research and N4million for humanities and social science research in line with current realities”, the Minister stated.

Speaking on the efforts of TETFund to boost production of indigenous higher education textbooks, the Minister decried the worrisome quality of most academic publications in the country; noting that over time. Institutions in Nigeria depended on books published outside the country with the attendant consequences of the pressure on the demand for foreign exchange. Therefore, he commended TETFund initiative on the Higher education book development project intervention to address the problem.

“GLOBALLY, INNOVATIVE RESEARCH AND ITS COMMERCIALIZATION HAS BEEN RECOGNIZED AS THE MAIN DRIVER OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND PROSPERITY IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD. ALL FORMS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE MODERN ERA DEPENDS ON INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY ARISING FROM PURPOSEFUL AND PROBLEM-SOLVING RESEARCH,” PROF MAMMAN.

In his remarks, the Executive Secretary of TETFund, Arc. Sonny Echono noted that scarcity of textbooks in tertiary educational institutions in Nigeria years back had reached a crisis proportion. This, he said, resulted in the establishment of TETFund Higher Education Book Development Project.



He added that to ensure successful implementation of the Higher Education Book Development project, the Board of Trustees set up the Technical Advisory Group (TAG).

He also noted that 80 manuscripts had passed through rigorous review processes and successfully published as textbooks with 60 of the books published between 2022 and 2023, and 20 ready for public presentation.

Speaking on the role of innovative research for national development, Arc Echono stated that research output has been the main criterion for ranking world-class universities and quantitative and measurable means by which academics contribute to new knowledge, economic and social prerogatives.

Echono said to actualize the objective of the NRF, the Board of Trustees also set up the screening and monitoring committee charged with the responsibility for implementing and administering the NRF intervention

He reechoed that “just as our focus on R&D underpinned by the acknowledgement of its pivotal role for today’s competitive global knowledge economy, we are equally sensitive to the importance of reviving the reading culture for the pursuit of academic excellence as a tool for attaining a critical mass of enlightened citizenry”.

We Support Implementation of Learning Management System, Central Data Challenging – Varsity Registrars

The Association of Registrars of Nigerian Universities (ARNU) has thrown its weight behind the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) drive to domesticate Learning Management Systems in tertiary educational institutions across the country, just as it revealed that record management in institutions has been challenging.

The Chairman ARNU, Mr. Ife Oluwole conveyed the Association's support when he led members of his Executive on a courtesy visit to the Executive Secretary of TETFund, Arc. Sonny Echono at the Fund's Headquarters in Abuja recently.

Speaking during the visit, the Chairman commended TETFund for its intervention efforts in public tertiary educational institutions in the country, noting that the Fund has become the support pillar of the institutions.

"Registrars of Nigerian Universities are integral stakeholders in the Nigerian University system, and indeed Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) should be appreciated for its commendable efforts in various interventions in Nigerian tertiary educational institutions. Of course, TETFund is beyond a mere intervention agency; it is the backbone of financing and developing our tertiary institutions"

"It is equally remarkable that TETFund is currently developing for Nigerian tertiary institutions, Student Information System and the Blackboard Learn, which is the number one learning management platform in the world. This intervention will give Nigerian tertiary educational institutions a better teaching and learning environment and will lead to better record keeping for the system.

"This initiative represents a significant stride towards positively impacting the lives of students and alumni who have been affected by the recklessness, misdemeanors, and incompetence of some university staff. Furthermore, it will help alleviate the challenges associated with record management for all parties in the tertiary education ecosystem," he said.

In his remarks, the Executive Secretary of TETFund, Arc. Sonny Echono expressed appreciation to the Association for its support for the Learning Management System initiative, adding that the Tertiary Education Research and Application Services (TERAS) and Beneficiary Identity Management System (BIMS) could reshape the landscape within the ecosystem of tertiary education.

Speaking on the importance of the Learning Management System, Echono said: "You made reference to Blackboard Learning Management System, and it is a coincidence that you raised it as it is part of the issues that I wanted to raise; especially driving its implementation and ensuring it serves the purpose it was initiated.

"As you are aware, the world is rapidly changing, and technology has significant influence. Therefore, there is need for us to modernize to meet the needs and target of our growing youth population. The role of technology in governance and administration is something we must embrace for better productivity," he said.

BY ISHOWO OLUWATOSIN



The Executive Secretary also revealed that with the launch of the "Learn to Earn Initiative" on the pipeline, a programme of the Federal Ministry of Education in partnership with Federal Ministry of Communication and Digital Economy, there was the need to infuse flexibility into academic and curriculum delivery process of the country to accommodate the students.

SGCI Grants 18 TETFund Researchers \$250,000 for Prototype Development

BY ISHOWO OLUWATOSIN

The Science Granting Council Initiative (SGCI) has awarded a grant of \$250,000 to 18 Nigerian University lecturers trained under the Fund's Research for Impact (R4i) initiative organized in partnership with Innov8 Hub.

The 18 lecturers who are divided into four groups are expected to use the grant to promote four innovative products developed at the R4i programme into commercially viable products

Speaking at the SGCI award presentation in Abuja recently, Deputy General Manager of Innov8 Hub, Mr. Deji Ige described the development as a testament of TETFund's investments in Research

"It is a testament to the power of foresight, the power of commitment and collaboration. On the mandate of TETFund, a journey began about three years ago called the Research for Impact-R4i Initiative, and TETFund Alliance for Innovative Research (TETFAIR). These two initiatives have tremendously instigated a paradigm shift in the Nigerian academia, where lecturers are now researching for solution, innovation, venture creation and impact, as against the previous culture of researching for publication and promotion.

"It may interest you to know that the 18 participants (grouped to 4 teams) in the R4i Initiative were selected as recipient of R&D grant from the Science Granting Council Initiative. These 18 members of the Nigerian academia will use the grant to advance their innovations already developed at Innova8 Hub during their R4i programme," he said.



In his remarks, the Executive Secretary of TETFund, Arc. Sonny Echono who was represented by the Director of Research, Development and Innovations, Dr. Salihu Girei Bakari described the grant as a dream come true for Nigerian researchers, noting that it could not have been achieved without collaboration.

He further noted that though Nigeria joined the SGCI in 2020, five years after the programme's inception, the impact of the collaboration is now evident.



At the event were the representative of National Universities Commission (NUC), National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), and National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE), Association of African Universities (AAU) who all reiterated support and collaboration for TETFund and commended its foresight in driving research in the country.





As part of efforts towards easing the accommodation challenges of students in public tertiary institutions in Nigeria, the Federal Government through the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) has performed the groundbreaking ceremony of a 1600 capacity students' hostel in Akwa Ibom State University, Uyo.

Speaking at the ceremony, the Minister of Finance and Coordinating Minister for the Economy, Mr. Olawale Edun disclosed that Federal Government in collaboration with states and private sector would build 24 housing facilities across 24 institutions in the country, each with 1,600 bed spaces.

Represented by the Ministry's Permanent Secretary Special Duties, Mr. Okokon Ekanem Udo, the Minister expressed delight that the efforts would address accommodation deficits of students and further enhance students' performance, well-being and improve local capital markets.

He noted that the groundbreaking ceremony demonstrates the private sector's willingness and capacity to partner with the government to deliver critical infrastructure projects across all geo-political zones to reduce housing deficits.

In his remarks, the Executive Secretary of TETFund, Arc. Sonny Echono described the development as a significant milestone, while advocating that other institutions embrace the Public Private Partnership (PPP) initiative as solution to students' accommodation deficiency across institutions.

He expressed TETFund's desire to sustain the development in subsequent years of intervention, noting that students' well-being would be greatly enhanced and Nigerian tertiary institutions more globally competitive.

While acknowledging persistent issues of students' accommodation which included overcrowding in existing dormitories, and many having to live off-campus.

FG PERFORMS GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY OF 1600- CAPACITY STUDENT HOSTEL AT AKWA- IBOM STATE UNIVERSITY

BY ADEBAYO PHILLIPS

He highlighted long-standing Government efforts to build student hostels nationwide and the necessity of involving the Public- Private Partnership (PPP) model to address the challenges effectively.

In his message at the occasion, Governor of Akwa-Ibom State, Pastor Umo Eno, represented by the Commissioner of Education, Mrs. Idongesit Etiebet commended the efforts of TETFund and the Federal Government in addressing accommodation deficits in Akwa Ibom State University.

Also speaking, the Vice-Chancellor of the University, Professor Nse Essien also thanked TETFund for its sustained commitment in ensuring tertiary institutions are globally competitive.

UI Inaugurates Board for TETFund Centre of Excellence for Diaspora Studies

By Amos Anetekhai



The collaboration between the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) and Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NIDCOM) towards promoting domestication of modern research and innovation techniques has taken a further step with the inauguration of a Management Board for the TETFund Centre of Excellence for Diaspora Studies sited at the University of Ibadan.

The inauguration ceremony was performed recently at the University campus by the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Kayode Adebawale who admonished members of the Board to be forthright to ensure actualization of the goals of the Centre.

The Vice-Chancellor who was represented by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Administration, Professor Peter Olapegba recalled the visit of the Chairman/CEO of NIDCOM, Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa to the University for the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding which culminated in the establishment of the Centre in 2023.

The Board will be chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research, Innovation and Strategic Partnerships of the University, Prof. Oluyemisi Bamgbose (SAN) and is charged with the oversight role of policy approval and ratification for implementation by the management of the Centre.

It would be recalled that the Executive Secretary of TETFund, Arc. Sonny Echono had during a visit by Hon. Abike Dabiri-Erewa to the Fund in 2022 disclosed plans to partner with NIDCOM on promoting the domestication of modern research and innovation techniques with the establishment of a Centre of Excellence for Diaspora Studies at the University of Ibadan. This was followed up with the allocation of the sum of 1 billion Naira by TETFund for the establishment of the Centre.



TETFund Has Given Life to Nigerian Institutions – University Bursars

BY SAADATU SAHILU

The Association of Bursars of Nigerian Universities has applauded the efforts of Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) for its role in transforming the landscape of public tertiary educational institutions in Nigeria.

The applaud came recently during a courtesy call by the leadership of the Association to the Executive Secretary of TETFund, Arc. Sonny Echono at the Fund's Headquarters in Abuja.

Speaking during the visit, the Chairperson of the Association, Mrs. Hadiza Goje expressed appreciation to the Executive Secretary and Management of the Fund for their efforts in achieving the mandate of the Fund, noting that there was ample evidence of TETFund's intervention efforts in all public tertiary institutions in the country.



“Without TETFund’s interventions, most of our institutions would be dry land. We want to use this opportunity to thank TETFund for all the support to tertiary institutions,” she said.

While stating that the primary purpose of the visit was to discuss ways of further easing the Fund’s disbursements to institutions, she also appealed for the inclusion of non-teaching staff in the training interventions of the Fund.

In his remarks, the Executive Secretary of TETFund Arc. Sonny Echono commended the Association for the efficient management and use of resources disbursed to institutions.

He assured that the Fund would ensure provision of more detailed information on all disbursements for easier monitoring and prevention of funds misapplication.



"WITHOUT TETFUND'S INTERVENTIONS, MOST OF OUR INSTITUTIONS WOULD BE DRY LAND. WE WANT TO USE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO THANK TETFUND FOR ALL THE SUPPORT TO TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS," -MRS HADIZA GOJE.

TETFUND HAS FUNDED 5,525 PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN BENEFICIARY INSTITUTIONS - ECHONO

BY MARIA JOSEPH

The Executive Secretary of Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund), Arc. Sonny Echono has disclosed that the Fund has since inception in 2011, funded a total of 5,525 physical infrastructure in its Beneficiary Institutions, thereby bridging infrastructure gaps in the institutions.

The Executive Secretary made this known recently while speaking at the 26th Seminar of the Nigeria Academy of Education held in Abuja where he delivered a lecture titled “Funding of Tertiary Education in Nigeria”.

Speaking on TETFund’s response to the funding of public tertiary institutions in Nigeria, Arc. Echono stated that in fulfilment of its mandate of providing intervention support towards the rehabilitation, restoration and consolidation of tertiary education in Nigeria, the Fund has also provided funding for 188 equipment fabrication and 576 faculty/departmental libraries in tertiary institutions across the country.

“In addition, the Fund has awarded grants of 19,297 Institutional Based Research (IBR) projects and 912 research projects under the National Research Fund (NRF) which is designed to support impactful research which will contribute to national developmental efforts as well tackle global challenges.

“The fund has also sponsored and supported several research and innovation initiatives such as Research for impact (R4i), TETFund Alliance for Innovation Research (TETFAIR), and the Innovation Fellowship for Aspiring Inventors and Researchers (i-FAIR) programmes targeted at deepening impactful research and uptake of research outcomes with potentials for commercialization as panacea to solving societal problems,” he said.

Speaking on capacity building of staff of Beneficiary Institutions, the Executive Secretary stated that the Fund has sponsored 23,271 academic staff of public tertiary educational institutions in Nigeria for Ph.D programmes, while 15,977 academic staff have been sponsored for Master’s degrees to date.

While noting the importance of tertiary education to sustainable development, Arc. Echono stated the need to sustain the funding of tertiary education in the country.

“Sustainable financing of tertiary education requires predictable and guaranteed funding. Hence, the future lies in sustainable funding, which is clearly rooted in sharing costs, diversifying income sources, creating new sources of income, building partnerships at home and abroad, and creating wealth beyond teaching and research.

“The funding challenges for tertiary education system inevitably impacts on the individual institutions. The inability of Government to solely and fully finance tertiary education necessitates that the institutions be given the leverage to explore alternative sources of funding to become more efficient and effective in line with new vistas,” he said.

Accordingly, the Executive Secretary recommended that funding models such as cost-sharing, students loans, scholarships and bursary, R&D, partnerships among others, could be explored as workable options for sustainable funding.





MICHAEL OKPARA UNIVERSITY AGRIBUSINESS INCUBATION CENTRE TO BOOST EMPLOYMENT AND WEALTH CREATION - VC

The Vice-Chancellor of Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike, Prof. Maduebibisi Ofo Iwe has disclosed that its newly established Agribusiness Incubation Centre has the capacity to boost employment, create wealth and reduce poverty in the country.

This disclosure was made when the Vice-Chancellor paid a visit to the Executive Secretary of Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund), Arc. Sonny Echono in Abuja recently.

However, to actualize optimal operations at the Centre, Prof. Iwe requested for assistance from the Fund to equip the facility which is one among the six approved by President Bola Ahmed Tinubu under his Renewed Hope Agenda.

Commending the Fund, the Vice Chancellor stated “Let me place on record my heartfelt appreciation to TETFund for the tremendous work you have done, you are doing and will continue doing for the sustenance of our education sector, especially at the tertiary level. It is on record across the various institutions of higher learning in Nigeria, your imprimatur is everywhere.

“The infrastructural transformation is evident in many of these institutions. There wouldn’t have been a single lecture hall or laboratory without the intervention of TETFund. I thank you especially for the recent Special Intervention on the establishment of Research Laboratory and Demonstration Farms Year 2023/2024 (merged) which we are about to realise.”

Speaking further, he said “I am primarily here with my management team to, among other things, intimate you on the operations of the university’s Agribusiness Incubation Centre (ABIC) which took off recently. As you are aware, ours is among the six approved by Mr. President under his Renewed Hope Agenda. Our basic function is to serve as a hub for Agribusiness value chain development to support food security and training by our experts. We do that by enhancing local and rural economic opportunities for youths and women, among other areas of our core mandate, so as to boost employment, create wealth and reduce poverty.”

Speaking on the challenges faced by the Centre, he stated that the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security built the Centre but was not equipped. This, he said, has hindered the opportunity to operate optimally as there are no necessary tools required for training prospective trainees in agribusiness and other related sectors.



He said “In the course of responding to the need of our immediate environment, we have visited the Ehime Mbano, Imo State, Study Centre of National Open University of Nigeria. The Incubation and Biotechnology laboratory are top notch, again the imprimatur of TETFund. The facilities you donated there under the 2019 Special High Impact projects require a university with experience such as ABIC MOUAU to manage it. Under our proposed partnership programme, we can actualize the goal of the centre. Our collaboration will certainly lead to several economic opportunities and enhance the livelihood options among the youths of Southeast, Southsouth and beyond, which constitute the catchment areas.”

Responding, the Executive Secretary of TETFund, Arc. Sonny Echono expressed delight at the progress of the university, noting that Agriculture is critical to any economy.

The TETFund Boss commended the vision to establish the Agribusiness Incubation Centre and emphasized that the Centre had enormous capacity and potential to nurse profitable ideas that would greatly benefit the country.

“Agriculture requires modernization and commercialization, and I believe that is the direction of this administration, and even the rest of the work. Such critical infrastructure is important in promoting Agripreneurs. Recently, we assessed the functionality of Workshops, Centres of Excellence and Laboratories in our tertiary institutions, with the goal of upgrading, equipping and upscaling where necessary. Thus, we will make a case for this Centre, as it aligns with the vision of the Fund” he said.



PHOTO SPEAKS



**A DELEGATION FROM MICHAEL OKPARA
UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE, UMUDIKE
VISITED THE FUND**



**GOVERNOR LAWAL OF ZAMFARA
STATE PAID A WORKING VISIT**



ZAMFARA STATE SEEKS MORE TETFUND SUPPORT

By Maria Joseph

Governor Dauda Lawal of Zamfara State has appealed to the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) for more support to complete some uncompleted projects in the state institutions

Governor Lawal made the appeal when he paid a courtesy visit to the Executive Secretary of TETFund, Arc Sonny Echono at the Fund's Headquarters in Abuja.

While commending the Fund for its impact in the development of tertiary education in the state, the Governor called on TETFund for more intervention in completing some state-sponsored projects that have been abandoned in some of its tertiary educational institutions.

“During my visit to Talata Mafara Local Government Area two weeks ago, I saw the projects carried out by TETFund at Zamfara State University. Unfortunately, there are numerous abandoned projects from the previous governments in the state. We're experiencing issues with accreditations at Abdu Gusau Polytechnic and we need your support to resolve this,” he requested.

In response, the Executive Secretary of TETFund, Arc. Sonny Echono commended Governor Lawal for his achievements over the past one year in office.

“I want to congratulate you on your one year in office and appreciate the work you are doing in government offices, institutions, hospitals, and other areas. We will review this request and do everything possible. Your diligence in addressing state issues is commendable and shows a high level of seriousness,” he stated.



BY SAADATU SALIHU

CORRUPTION ALLEGATIONS AGAINST TETFUND UNFOUNDED – ECHONO

Amid reports of allegations of misappropriation and award of contract amounting to N7.6 billion by the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund), the Executive Secretary of the Fund, Arc. Sonny Echono has described such reports as totally untrue, stating that the introduction of some sweeping reforms at the Fund has not gone down well with some cartels.

The Executive Secretary gave insights into the development while answering questions from journalists at the sidelines of the Second Registrars' Workshop and 75th Business Meeting of Association of Registrars of Nigerian Universities (ARNU) held in Abuja in April.

Arc. Echono explained that since his assumption of office at the Fund, sweeping reforms geared towards repositioning the agency for better service delivery and cutting of waste have been embarked upon with adherence to due process.

"There were some types of cartels that were in charge of TETFund projects, and they also felt that all manners of political leaders could come to TETFund, collect what they call special intervention. There was no form of system or processes in place. I invited ICPC to come and inspect the systems and they did. They have come back for the second time," he said.

"The initial impression that TETFund is a cesspool of corruption was an exaggerated one. I can confirm that from my experience. It was an exaggeration of what was happening.

Speaking on the engagement of Fides Et Ratio Academy and Pole Global Marketing for capacity-building courses and learning management systems, the TETFund boss affirmed that there were no irregularities in the entire process as erroneously reported by some media outfits.

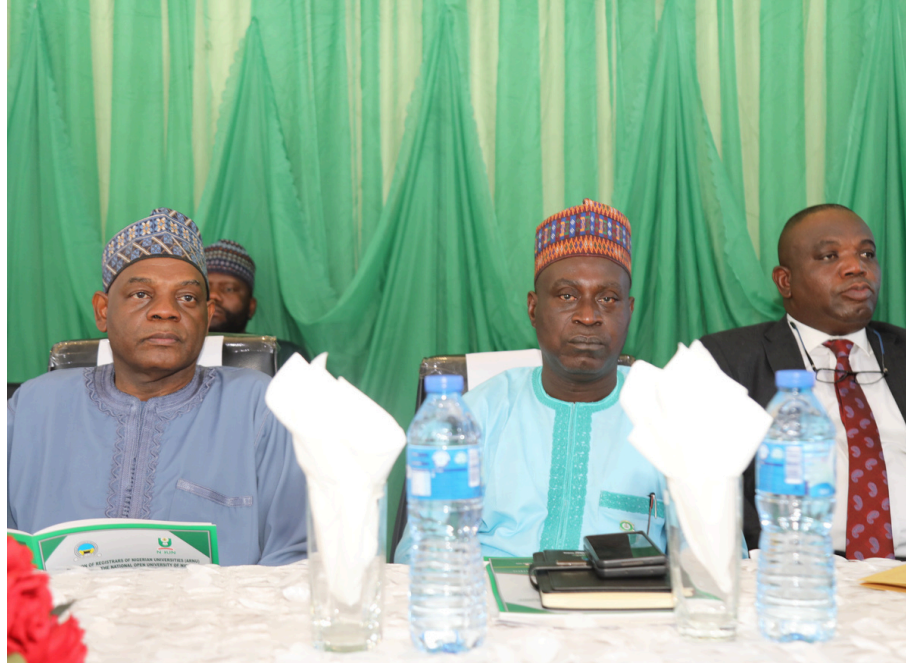
"We use Memorandum of Understandings (MoUS) generally for training programmes, and I inherited about nine of them when I resumed office. What we had (with the company) was an MoU, not a contract. However, we follow due process while awarding contracts and we have four projects that are going to the Federal Executive Council," he stated.

He noted that the Fund has in the past signed a number of MoUs and this has translated into training of more lecturers, expansion of ICT infrastructure in many Beneficiary Institutions across Nigeria, among others.

He stated that part of the reforms put in place at the Fund have resulted in more judicious utilization of Government resources, noting that the Agency remains committed to ensuring value for money.

While expressing the Fund's resolve to recover monies collected by some lecturers in Nigerian institutions for foreign trainings not attended, Arc. Echono revealed that the Fund was collaborating with the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) to identify defaulters and recover the funds.

"We have resolved the issue of lecturers who get trained and abscond. There are lecturers who collect money for workshops and conferences but do not attend. We are recovering money and prosecuting them.



"The ones that have absconded, we also have a programme through our embassies and those of the countries where they are. That is where our Memorandum of Understanding is coming in again. When we sign an MoU with you, you must repatriate the student to us. It is your responsibility. We didn't have that before. That was why they could jump their bond. We've done a lot of reforms," he said.

PHOTOSPEAKS



**ARC. ECHONO AT THE WORKSHOP OF THE
ASSOCIATION OF REGISTRARS OF NIGERIAN
UNIVERSITIES (ARNU)**

**TETFund MEETS WITH HEADS OF
BENEFICIARY INSTITUTIONS**



TETFund Meets with Heads of Beneficiary Institutions to Address Emerging Areas of Students' Needs

...ALLOCATES N1 BILLION EACH TO 12 INSTITUTIONS FOR HOSTELS

BY MARIA JOSEPH

In line with the consultative tradition of the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund), an interactive meeting was recently held between the Management of the Fund and heads of public tertiary educational institutions in the country to address emerging areas of students' needs such as teaching practice, Beneficiary Identity Management Service (BIMS) and hostel development.

This is coming just as the Fund has earmarked N1 billion each for the construction of hostels accommodation in 12 institutions across the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria.

The meeting, which held at the National Universities Commission (NUC) Auditorium in Abuja also served as an opportunity to review policies and intervention programmes, and also receive feedback on implementation of the various interventions of the Fund.

Speaking at the meeting, the Executive Secretary of TETFund, Arc. Sonny Echono stated that 12 institutions have been identified to benefit from the N1billion allocation that would be utilized as equity contribution in partnership with private developers to construct hostels in the selected institutions.



The Executive Secretary revealed that the partnership between Akwa Ibom State University and Africa Plus Partners would kickstart the Public -Private Partnership (PPP) arrangement with the launch of the construction of a 1,600-capacity students' hostel through TETFund, which he said is a significant development. He, therefore, urged other institutions to follow suit to provide a conducive learning and living environment for their students.



Speaking on the importance of career service centres, the Executive Secretary stated that the centres were necessary for career development and employability strength of students.

He said: "the career service centres were introduced to complement other programmes in tertiary institutions and will provide information for students on trends in the job market, opportunities, and requisite skills as well as linkages with the employment industries and alumni of the institutions".

“The Centres will provide students with tools for self-assessment to identify their area of interest, strength, weaknesses and prospect, as well as offer counselling, guidance, and support to all students, help organize, facilitate education programmes, workshop, seminar, and other similar programs to equip students with relevant employability skills to assist in job search” he added’.

Speaking further, Arc. Sonny Echono stated that another area of concern to the Fund was the repositioning of the teaching profession, noting that the Fund was working towards enhancing its Teaching Practice Intervention to achieve this.



He disclosed that the Fund recently received a presidential directive through the Ministry of Education regarding the support of the scheme and the recommendation of the National Salaries, Incomes and Wages Commission on teaching practice allowance with the inclusion of faculties of education in universities.

“THE CENTRES WILL PROVIDE STUDENTS WITH TOOLS FOR SELF-ASSESSMENT TO IDENTIFY THEIR AREA OF INTEREST, STRENGTH, WEAKNESSES AND PROSPECT, AS WELL AS OFFER COUNSELLING, GUIDANCE, AND SUPPORT TO ALL STUDENTS, HELP ORGANIZE, FACILITATE EDUCATION PROGRAMMES, WORKSHOP, SEMINAR, AND OTHER SIMILAR PROGRAMS TO EQUIP STUDENTS WITH RELEVANT EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS TO ASSIST IN JOB SEARCH” HE ADDED’-ES TETFUND.

Also speaking at the workshop, the President of Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), Prof. Emmanuel Osodeke called for an upward review of the Education Tax 3% to 10%, noting that it was worrisome that Nigeria was ranked as having the lowest education budget in West Africa.

Present at the meeting were the Acting Executive Secretary of National Universities Commission (NUC), Dr. Chris Maiyaki; Executive Secretary, National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), Prof. Idris Bugaje; Executive Secretary, National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE), Prof. Paulinus Okwelle among others.

STAKEHOLDERS COLUMN



FROM RESEARCH TO SOLUTION: THE POWER OF COLLABORATION

Steve Jobs famously declared, "Innovation is the spark that ignites progress." Across Africa, this spark is waiting to erupt, fueled by a wellspring of brilliant ideas.

In Nigeria, academia stands as a powerhouse of such ideas, pregnant with potential to drive societal development and nation building. Yet, bridging the gap between theoretical research and practical application remains a crucial hurdle. This is where the power of collaboration becomes paramount.

Innov8 Hub operates with a clear mission: to ignite economic growth and nation-building by empowering Nigerians through innovation, creativity, and entrepreneurship. We go beyond simply sparking ideas. We actively foster a culture of innovation, aiming to enhance socio-economic growth and human capital development throughout the nation. Our approach centers on fostering innovation, creativity, entrepreneurship, capacity building, and venture creation.

A cornerstone of our strategy is exemplified by our impactful collaboration with TETFund. Through this, over 200 academics and researchers across Nigerian tertiary institutions have been equipped with the necessary skills through TETFund's initiatives: Research for Impact (R4i) and TETFund Alliance for Innovative Research (TETFAIR). These programs provide the crucial support and resources needed to bridge the gap between theoretical research from the Nigerian Academia and innovative solutions provision.

The results have been truly inspiring. Armed with newfound skills and resources, participants are tackling real-world challenges by developing innovative solutions and transforming them into functional prototypes. This has opened doors to exciting opportunities, such as the Science Grants Councils Initiative (SGCI) grant.

Four teams, nurtured through the R4i cohorts, received a grant of \$250,000 from the SGCI. These grants allow them to further refine their ideas and translate them into tangible solutions and ventures that can directly benefit communities.

This journey from research to solution exemplifies the transformative power of collaboration. By equipping minds and nurturing innovation, TETFund through collaboration, is laying the groundwork for a brighter future; one where research and development endeavors instigate a wave of impactful solutions developed by some of academia's brightest minds. This future is built on the foundation of research and propelled by the boundless potential of human ingenuity.

HOW INNOVATION AND STARTUPS CAN FUEL NIGERIA'S RISE

Nigeria, a nation of undeniable youthful energy and human capital potential, stands poised for a socio-economic paradigm shift. We are a land blessed with abundant resources, yet the path to sustainable progress demands fresh perspectives. Here's where the power couple of innovation and venture creation steps in - the architects of a new Nigerian dawn.

Innovation is the lifeblood of any thriving nation. It is the ability to challenge the conventional, breathe new life into the old, and birth impactful solutions. TETFund, through its unflinching commitment is leading the charge for innovation within Nigerian tertiary institutions. However, it doesn't stop at innovation alone, the Fund has also created a pathway to venture creation with potential for national development. This translates to a constant stream of ingenious ideas, from advancements in agriculture to life-saving healthcare solutions.

TETFund, through its engagement with academics from government-owned tertiary institutions in Nigeria, is building a sustainable future. This isn't a utopian fantasy; it is the very potential that TETFund's investment in innovation unlocks.

"NIGERIA'S FUTURE IS NOT JUST ABOUT OIL, IT'S ABOUT THE BRILLIANCE BUBBLING BENEATH THE SURFACE. YOUNG INNOVATORS AND STARTUPS ARE THE SPARK THAT WILL IGNITE OUR RISE. LET'S EMPOWER THEM AND WATCH AFRICA'S GIANT SOAR." - UNKNOWN

But innovation alone isn't enough, Nigeria needs a fertile ground to nurture these ideas into enterprise. This is where venture creation comes in. By supporting the creation of start-ups, the critical launchpad for these innovations to take flight is set in motion.

These startups become the engines that propel economic growth. They create jobs, attract investment, and empower the emerging generation of Nigerians to become the architects of their own destinies. Imagine a thriving ecosystem where young entrepreneurs tackle challenges from waste management to financial inclusion. This is the transformative power of venture creation.

TETFund, through its collaboration with Innov8 Hub, plays a pivotal role in this exciting narrative. By providing funding, mentorship, and access to crucial resources, TETFund empowers academics, not just through prototype development, but also by bridging the gap between remarkable ideas, innovative solutions and venture creation.

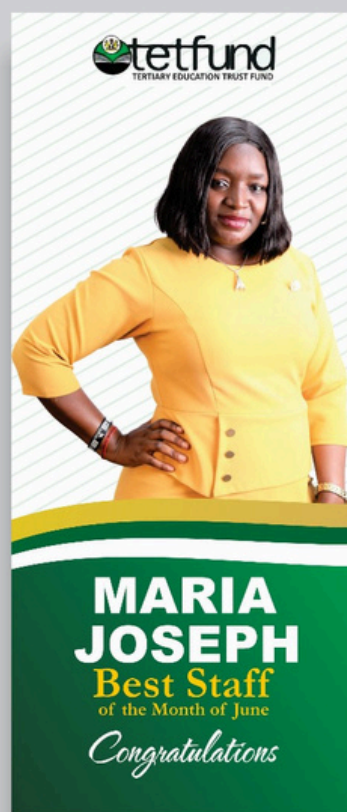
The journey towards a Nigeria powered by innovation and startups has just begun. Through the Triple Helix Synergy among the Government, Academia and Industry, we can cultivate a culture that celebrates creativity, embraces risk-taking, and prioritizes problem-solving. This, in turn, will lead to a future where Nigeria isn't just a nation with immense potential, but a land that thrives on its ingenuity and entrepreneurial spirit.

Innov8 Hub is a leading innovation hub at the forefront of this exciting movement. We serve as a catalyst, connecting the ingenuity of Nigerian minds with the resources and guidance needed to translate ideas into high-growth ventures. By fostering a collaborative environment that sparks creativity, empowers entrepreneurs, and bridges the Triple Helix Synergy, Innov8 Hub is a key player in propelling Nigeria's rise as a global innovation leader.

STAFF OF THE MONTH



MAY 2024



JUNE 2024

READ THE CLUES AT THE SIDE TO FIGURE OUT THE ANSWERS

C	O	M	M	I	S	S	I	O	N	T	T	M	E	N	E	I	E
R	I	P	D	O	L	L	M	E	N	P	T	M	D	N	Y	I	X
O	E	F	D	I	A	B	I	D	D	S	U	P	U	O	G	N	P
J	R	D	E	R	V	B	N	E	R	E	T	O	C	E	O	I	A
E	A	S	T	A	T	E	I	V	A	G	A	A	A	O	L	G	N
C	C	U	I	C	O	N	S	L	S	M	Y	E	T	M	O	E	S
T	Y	F	N	L	S	T	T	S	L	E	G	Y	I	F	N	R	I
S	A	L	U	T	E	S	E	R	R	A	L	A	O	K	H	I	O
O	A	V	W	T	I	R	R	T	S	V	T	K	N	N	T	A	N
U	N	I	T	Z	G	E	K	B	F	H	T	T	A	A	E	T	H
Y	I	U	S	O	B	D	A	N	Y	U	I	A	E	T	T	T	E
R	G	N	R	E	S	E	A	R	C	H	N	L	S	R	I	O	S
A	I	P	L	A	N	S	Y	H	H	N	I	D	R	W	A	N	E
R	D	N	X	A	E	E	O	H	A	B	D	C	E	N	R	L	R

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TEASER

1. I AM TALL WHEN I AM YOUNG, AND SHORT WHEN I AM OLD. WHAT AM I?
2. WHAT IS AS BIG AS YOU ARE AND YET DOES NOT WEIGH ANYTHING?



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