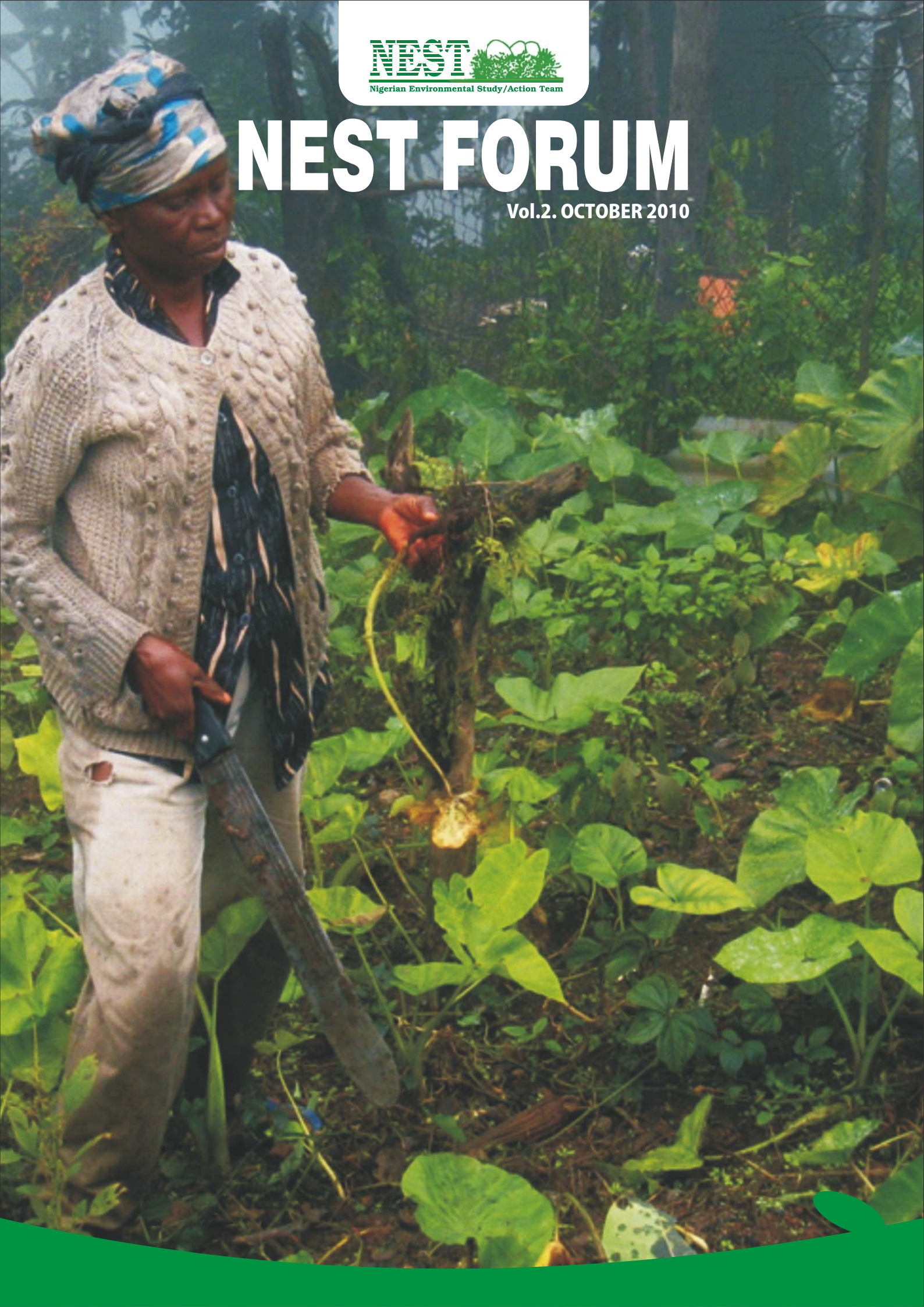



NEST FORUM

Vol.2. OCTOBER 2010





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Cover photo: Mrs. Lydia Kedang a woman farmer in her cocoyam farm in Apejili village, Beecheve, Cross River State. She told the NEST FORUM Communication crew how climate change has affected their cocoyam.

Cover photograph: Sam. Ogallah

NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Jubilee greetings from NEST to Nigerians and Friends of Nigeria.

As we mark the 50th Independence Anniversary of our dear nation this month, the recent flood disaster in Sokoto, Jigawa, Kebbi and other parts of Nigeria is of prime national attention. Natural as well as management issues were at play. Thousands of people were rendered homeless and forced to migrate, properties worth millions of naira destroyed, and livelihood adversely affected. These further attest that Nigeria is very vulnerable to the adverse impact of climate change. Better management of the nation's water and irrigation resources as well as strengthening the capacity for disaster management and emergencies is required.

Nigeria at 50 should by now had in place strategies to adapt to the various challenges posed by climate change. The National Assembly still has the crucial task of harmonizing the National Climate Change Commission (NCCC) bill currently before it. The bill if harmonized and passed would not only help Nigeria develop adaptation strategies and capacity but also place the country in the league of countries that are proactively addressing climate change issues.

In this newsletter, Professor Kingsley Ologe in his interview with NEST FORUM talks about the effort that is currently being made to have a National Adaptation Strategy and Plan of Action (NASPA) for Nigeria. Sam Ogallah also put forward in his article "much ado about climate change" the issue of climate change and migration. The quotes also reflect the voices of the voiceless in communities across Nigeria and other several issues raised in this edition.

I encourage you to read through carefully and I bet you will not regret you did.
Read on!

Professor Chinedum Nwajiuba

Executive Director, NEST

NEST INSIDE-OUT:

SENFORTH:

May 25, and September 15, 2010 may have come and gone but It was a day NEST staff will not forget in a hurry. This day typify the biblical description of events in Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 at NEST House, Ibadan Nigeria. Having put in their best in service to humanity through NEST, Dr. Ibidun Adelekan (Research/Gender Officer, NEST) and Sarah O'keefe (Canadian Volunteer with NEST) on May 25, 2010 took a bow out of NEST to take on other responsibilities in their various endeavors.



Prof. Okali presenting NEST's parting gift to Sarah



Prof. Okali presenting NEST's parting gift to Dr. Adelekan

On Tuesday, September 15, 2010 it was the turn of Adesina Fatai (NEST Programme Officer) and Mr. Christopher Onyeozirila (Security man A.K.A Baba). While Adesina left to pursue further study in the State, Baba retired after many years of active service. At all the two separate event, the Chairman, NEST, Prof. David Okali and the Executive Director, NEST, Prof. Chinedum Nwajiuba both thanked the staff that are leaving NEST for their invaluable contributions towards the attainment of the organization's objectives and wished them well in their future pursuits. Responding on behalf of the celebrants, Dr. Adelekan and Baba all thanked NEST for given them the opportunity to serve humanity through NEST activities.

APPOINTMENTS:

Three new staff joined the NEST team between July and August 2010. There are:

Robert U. Onyeneke – Programme Officer, Research
Robert holds Master of Science, Agricultural Economics' from Imo State University, Owerri, Nigeria)

Hassana H. Pindar – Programme Officer, Gender
(Hassana holds Post Graduate Diploma from Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi, Nigeria)

Okom O. Denis - Security man

BIRTHDAYS:

NEST staff in spite of their work demands took few minutes off to celebrate with those that celebrates. The following staff marked their birthdays in the period under review:

- Chinedum Nwajiuba -July 20th
- Hassana Pindar – August 26th
- Karen Shaw - September 21st
- David Okali –September 25th

We wish you all more rewarding years ahead. May your light never grow dim. Happy birthday to you from all of us at NEST.

Meanwhile, NEST in its usual custom has started counting down to the following staff birth days this year:

- Samson, Samuel Ogallah – November 10th
- Idowu-Taylor Oyinpreye – December 1st
- John Ajigo – December 4th
- Isaac Oloogunebi – December 6th

NEST wish you all happy birthday in advance.

PROJECT UPDATES

BNRCC : NEST project, Building Nigeria's Response to Climate Change (BNRCC) entered into its next phase following the approval of its 4th Year Annual Workplan by the Project Steering Committee (PSC) in July 2010. The PSC meeting was held at Topview Hotel, Abuja and had in attendance 19 members of the PSC. Meanwhile, all the components of the project – Research, Pilot, Policy/NASPA, Communication, Outreach and Networking continue to record success in their implementations. Visit www.nigeriaclimatechange.org for updates.

STORIES FROM THE FIELD

Stabilizing Dunes in Sansan

Some people wouldn't give a second thought to a small, clay-lined depression in the landscape. However, to the Kanuri and Fulani people of Sansan village, Damasak Local Government, Borno State, this feature is key to their livelihoods. The small community of 500 people, located in the Sahel, just south of the border that Nigeria shares with its neighbor, Niger, depends heavily on these small depressions that capture water during the rainy season. This small but vital reservoir is critical for their upland farms, to ensure a longer growing season once the rains have ceased.



Sansan community

The people of Sansan are now faced with two threats to this vital aspect of the landscape they depend upon. The shorter rainy season, something attributed to climate change, means the depression will not fill up with as much water as it did in the past. With the second threat being the encroaching sand dunes. Over the years, wind dispersed sands have formed a large dune that is advancing and covering farmlands and threatening the existence of this fundamental depression in the landscape – a feature that is key to a successful growing season for the community.

Ellen Woodley

WHO SAYS WHAT

Much Ado About Climate Change

Understanding climate change is a challenge for people around the world. One reason is that we talk about climate change as a science – rainfall patterns, sea-level rising, models, scenarios. Big words for a big global phenomenon.

Even for those part of the educated and academic members of society it is important to remember that climate change can be understood best when you see its impacts. Many of us have heard the terms erosion, flooding, drought or desertification. The waters are rising, temperatures are higher, ice-caps are melting, more storms etc. But what does that mean in terms of the threat to human and animal lives? , that threatens wildlife and humans, but what does that look like when you think of human impact? In the last 10 years 90% of Nigeria's forests have been destroyed. But what does that mean? For every cause there is an action and the chain of events surrounding climate change or simple human impact on our even environment is causing massive effects globally and nationally in Nigeria.

If you consider that more than 60% of Nigerians are living off of the land – rain-fed agriculture- the impacts of climate change may become more severe, more real, and more immediate. Lack of rainfall, means some farmers and villagers are forced to migrate out of their villages, leaving their homes and families to search for jobs in the city. Mal. Modu Ali Mai told the Building Nigeria's Response to Climate Change (BNRCC) project team that visited Maiduguri recently “if I had my way, in the wake of the persistent heat being experiencing in this place, I will migrate to Jos with my family to stay”.

Some communities have been completely buried by the encroaching desert and sand dunes in the North – communities that have existed for centuries and built upon history and tradition. Farmers may have to migrate in search of more fertile ground in the middle belt. In this type of situation, what readily comes to mind is question of whether there a virgin land anywhere in Nigeria. How does this then affect the rest of Nigeria? It already has, with land, identity and resource-based conflicts increasing in Nigeria.

This scenario can lead to future communal violent conflicts across the country. And as more people move to the cities, overcrowding, pollution, etc will become more common problems to deal with. According to a study from the University of California, United States, researchers first combined historical data of civil wars in sub-Saharan Africa with rainfall and temperature records across the continent. They found that between 1980 and 2002, civil wars were significantly more likely in warmer-than-average years, with 1-degree Celsius increase in temperature in a given year raising the incidence of conflict around the continent by nearly 50 per cent (The Punch Monday, February 22, 2010. Pg 3)

While some scientists continue to debate climate change, BNRCC is actively helping some of the most vulnerable people in Nigeria cope with the impacts of Climate Change (CC). Nanre Namfe lives in the Kwaikong Community in Plateau State. On average she walks about 6m a day to find and fetch water. Sometimes when there has been a more severe that distance may be greater. The water she retrieves for her family is from a reservoir so dry that the water is very dirty, causing more disease due to water-borne illnesses than in previous years. While health issues have not yet been directly linked to CC, many communities that BNRCC is working with are experiencing and reporting increased incidences of cholera, meningitis, skin diseases etc

BNRCC is funded by Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and being implemented by Nigerian NGO, Nigerian Environmental Study/Action Team (NEST). In addition to funding research projects in 13 states that are collecting necessary data regarding CC, including statistics on socio-economic implication of CC on Nigerians as well as CC scenario

modelling for Nigeria. Eight community-based Pilot projects across 9 States are being implemented with the focus to study adaptation strategies for Nigeria's most vulnerable populations. The youth/outreach component of the project also covers 3 states in Nigeria.

These projects are helping people find ways to adapt with increasing and more severe climate weather patterns. In Gorori community, rainfall patterns have long since changed from those days. Many villagers are complaining of rains coming late and for shorter periods. Harvests of farm products have drastically reduced. Many people in this community have been migrating out to cities, such as Lagos for petty trading in search of other means of livelihood. While most of the time it is the men that are migrating, in this particular community, a female village elder indicated that up until this last year, she had been travelling to Lagos during the dry season in order to sell baked goods on the streets there. The money earned from these sales went to support herself, her son, daughter and grandchildren. Her son in the past tried to convince her to stay in the village, but without her husband around, she needed to find an alternative livelihood, and source of food when harvests were low.



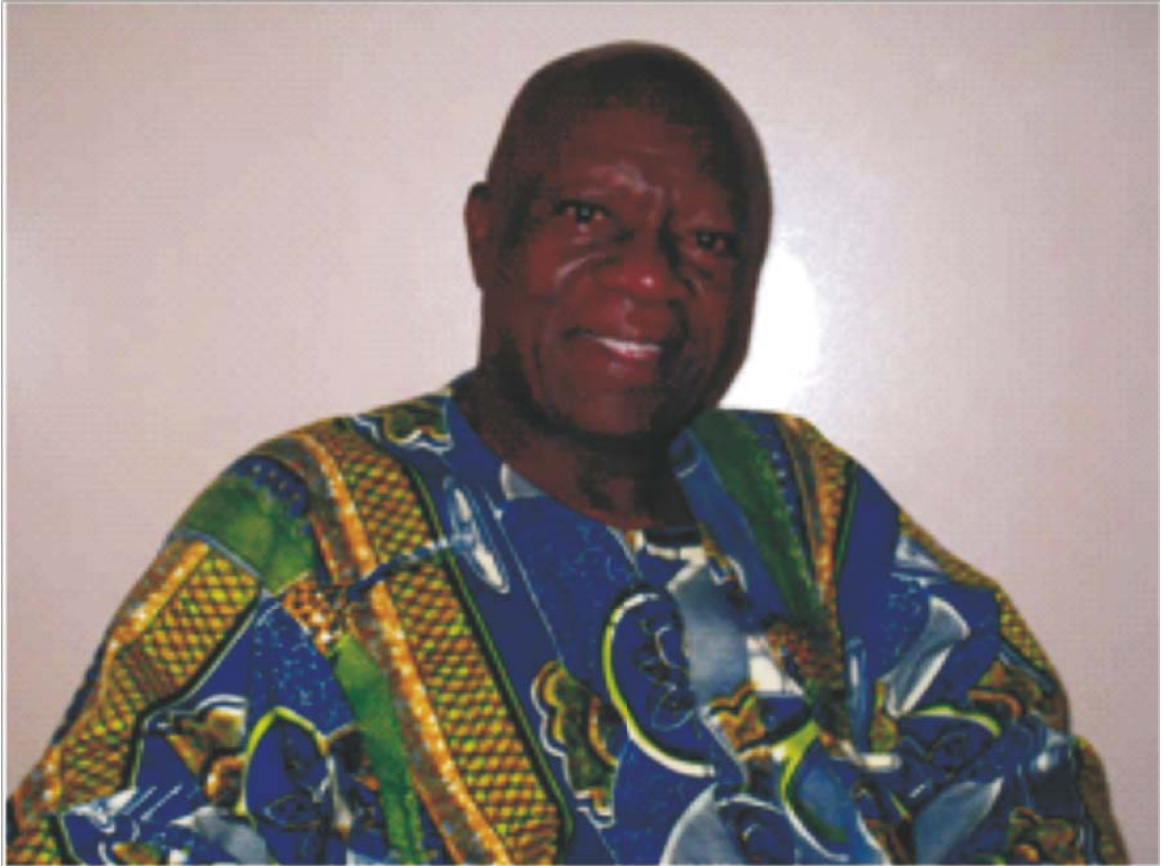
bird nests on baobab tree

Adaptation options such as weather forecasting tools and the fuel-efficient stove are being used in villages like Gorori. These tools help farmers determine the best time to plant their seeds. While the men handle the device, it is obvious the women enjoy its benefits too. During one of the village meetings with BNRCC pilot project partners, ATBU, one Fulani villager laughed and said the forecaster tells her whether she should cook inside or outside today.

Participation in this project is high in Gorori where Fulani and Kunari families, Christians and Muslims live a blended, peaceful existence.

Community in Billeri is struggling with their wells. Most of the day men and children are stationed at the village well which dives down to a depth as deep as 150metres. Twelve-year-old Aisha spends her mornings guiding the steers that pull the ropes that in turn pull the buckets full of water up to the surface. Brown, murky water is revealed when the buckets rise to the top and it is from this source and only this source that the village feeds, nourishes and bathes both people and livestock. With longer dry seasons the well continues to deplete with little or no relief for the struggling community.

GUEST CORNER



Professor Kingsley Ologe (K.O) is the Chair of the Multi-stakeholders' Forum (MF) established by NASPA (National Adaptation Strategy and Plan of Action).

There is an urgent need for a multi-sector approach to the integration – or mainstreaming - of climate change policies into sectors such as water and other natural resources, agriculture, health and infrastructure. The NASPA will enable federal, state and local governments, civil society, the private sector, and various agencies and institutions, to effectively integrate climate change adaptation concerns into their development policies and programs.

NASPA will give priority to community-level input as an important source of information, recognizing that grassroots communities are key stakeholders and providing a voice to the most vulnerable (including women and youth) will ensure that everyone is represented in the Plan.

The MF has the responsibility of overseeing the development of the NASPA process with the support of the secretariat and other Lead Partners.

NEST FORUM: Who is Professor Kingsley Ologe?

K.O. I was born in 1943 at Iyah-Gdedde, Ijumu LGA of K.O.:gi State. I had my primary school education in Iyah_Gbedde and secondary education at the Provincial Secondary School, Okene. I proceeded to Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria where I obtained my first degree in geography in 1967. I then left for the University of Liverpool for my Masters and Doctorate programme in the Physical Geography of the Tropics and Gully Erosion, respectively. From 1971-1990 I was a Lecturer at ABU and between 1990 and 2002 when I retired voluntarily, I taught at the University of Abuja. In 2002 I was given the National Honour Officer of the Order of the Niger (OON). I'm happily married with four children and six grandchildren (including a set of twins!).

NEST FORUM: What informed your interest in environmental issues?

K.O. Firstly, I grew up in a village environment where my father was a farmer and I have always enjoyed a rural setting where there are trees, rivers and wildlife. In secondary school, I and my friends loved exploring the rocky hills around our school.

Secondly, as a physical geographer, I'm interested in landscapes in different parts of the world and in the process of remolding the world's landscape.

NEST FORUM: In your role as Chair of the MF for NASPA, what is your greatest challenge?

K.O. I see the whole issue of climate change as the biggest single challenge facing mankind today. There are many challenges such as poverty, conflict etc., but I think the biggest is climate change.

When I was called to take this assignment, I realized I was taking on a big challenge, and that is the very reason why I accepted. Wherever I have worked, I have always wanted to leave behind an impact. I believe this task offers me that opportunity. Incidentally, my inaugural address at the University of Abuja was titled "Our Environment, Our Future". In that address, I made a statement that "our continuous existence as species is very closely tied to the environment and the way we relate to it". In accepting to chair the MF, I was living up to this statement.

NEST FORUM: Thus far, what are the achievements recorded by NASPA?

K.O. Firstly, bringing together people from a broad spectrum of stakeholder groups to constitute the forum.

Secondly, the formation of Multi-stakeholders Working Groups (MSWG) made up of knowledgeable persons. And thirdly, drawing up a framework that outlined our objectives, approach and work plan. The latter was presented at a National Stakeholders Workshop in Abuja, in March 2010. This is noteworthy because once you know what you want to do, how to do it, the people to do it, and the financial resources, you are on your way to achieving success.

NEST FORUM: How does the current political situation in Nigeria affect the final buy-in and adoption of the NASPA by Federal government?

K.O. The political situation of any country affects any such document either positively or negatively. The problem in Nigeria is the lack of continuity in government policies and programs. I think this is probably the biggest challenge the country faces not only with climate change but with other major issues.

In 1986, I delivered a lecture to the Rotary club of Zaria titled "One step forward, two steps backward and three steps into the bush: the wanderings of a wasted generation." When you have a destination, you endeavour to walk straight towards it. But in most cases in Nigeria it seems as if we take one step towards our destination, take two retrogressive steps and then wander off into the wilderness. The remarkable thing is that somehow we often find ourselves back to where we started. This has become a reoccurring feature of our national life. A good example of this is our constitution that has undergone several changes and yet without really resolving the key issues militating against our national development.

Look at the Vision 2010 that was drawn up by the Abacha government. It was never implemented. President Obasanjo drew up his NEEDS agenda. President Yar'Adua came along with his 7-Point-Agenda and Vision 20:20:20. And now President Jonathan is thinking of reviewing or revising the 7-point Agenda. All

these within a thirteen-year time span! For goodness sake, we need only one national agenda. Let us settle for one, no matter how imperfect it may be, and pursue it religiously even after we might have changed the government that introduced it. This is what Singapore did and this is what the other Asian Tigers are doing. My fear is that even if we draw up another development agenda today, there is no guarantee that the next President will adopt it? The same applies to our various sectoral agendas. So, to go back to your question, my greatest fear with respect to NASPA is whether there will be continuity in its implementation.

NEST FORUM: What do you think is the way forward?

K.O. So long as we are without a leader with a vision and a passion to pursue it which those who come after him or her will find it difficult to shove aside, we will not move anywhere. This is the difference between some of the leaders that we had in the First Republic and many of those that we have today. For example, Chief Obafemi Awolowo sat down with his team of technocrats and drew up a vision for the Western Region of Nigeria.

He pursued this laudable vision so effectively that its positive impacts are still visible today many decades afterwards. It is up to us, the electorate, to put only people with a vision for this nation in power. Until we put forward leaders like Governors Fashola in Lagos, Danjuma Goje in Gombe, Amaechi in Rivers and Akpabio in Akwa Ibom, who have a vision which they pursue such that you can readily see the impact, our progress as a nation will continue to be lethargic. To my mind that is really the solution. As the Bible says: Where there is no vision, the people perish.

NEST FORUM: How has the partnership between the Lead Partners helped in the NASPA process?

K.O. It is a beautiful arrangement because you have an agency like UNDP through the Federal Ministry of Environment working with two NGOs – NEST FORUM (Nigerian Environmental Study Action Team), and NigeriaCAN - alongside bilateral agencies like the Heinrich Boll Foundation and CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency). It is a good arrangement not just from a funding perspective, but from that of cross-fertilization of ideas. The Partners work quite well together. We have had challenges, but we have been able to put them behind us, and that is why we are where we are today.

NEST FORUM: After handing over the document to the Federal Government, what can Nigerians expect?

K.O. The next thing will be getting all Nigerians to buy into it. For that to happen we are embarking on an aggressive awareness campaign similar to the one being used for HIV/AIDS. Hopefully, this will promote implementation of the strategy and plan by all and sundry. I am hoping that the NASPA document itself will not be the end of work on climate change in Nigeria. In fact it should be the beginning because we see it as a living document. We should always be making it better and better. There will be a need to revise it based on better knowledge of the changing climate and its impact and new knowledge about how to adapt to it.

NEST FORUM: How are gender issues being addressed in the NASPA process?

K.O. The NASPA process is giving quite a lot of attention to gender issues, since the impacts of climate change affect men, women and children differently. Gender is a cross-cutting issue. Therefore, all the Multi-stakeholder Working Groups (MSWGs) have a mandate to pay particular attention to gender in their work. Moreover, we have a gender specialist working with us to help make sure we mainstream gender into the entire NASPA process.

NEST FORUM: What is the current level of buy-in into NASPA, by all stakeholders, Government, NGOs, CBOs?

K.O. So far so good. The membership of the working groups will ensure broad stakeholder participation in its preparation. The Federal Ministry of Environment regards the NASPA as a key component of what they are doing in the area of climate change. We have people from the Association of Local Government of Nigeria (ALGON) as members and we will continue to reach out to the Governors Forum and individual Governors, particularly those that are already active on climate change issues, like those in Lagos, Niger, Delta, and Cross River. We will use them to leverage others.

NEST FORUM, along with NigeriaCAN, continues to assist greatly by reaching out to their broader networks, including other members of civil society, NGO's, and even some of the more vulnerable communities in the rural parts of Nigeria. When the draft document is ready we will subject it to regional workshops to make final inputs.

NEST FORUM: What message do you have for Nigerians on this critical issue of climate change?

K.O. Let us face it, climate change is real. It is a threat to everybody and everyone has a role to play in combating it. We all must take action because climate change is a life-and-death issue, literally speaking. All you need to do is ask those who have been forced to migrate from around Lake Chad because the Lake on which they depended for their livelihood has practically dried up; or talk to people whose houses have been washed away due to Atlantic Ocean surges along the coast; or simply go to the extreme Northern part of the country to witness the ravages of desert encroachment.

Foremost environmentalist, Lester R. Brown, published a book recently titled: Plan 4:0 Mobilizing to Save Civilization. In it he says that there are four areas where mankind must take action now in order to save himself: Stabilizing population, Eradicating poverty, Restoring the earth's natural support systems, and Stabilizing climate. He is absolutely right and Nigerians and Nigeria must gear up now to take decisive action in all four areas.

TAKING ACTION IS WHAT WE ALL NEED!
NASPA is a partnership between 4 Lead Partner organizations, BNRCC, NigeriaCAN, Heinrich Boll, and Special Climate Change Unit of the Federal Ministry of Environment. The NASPA process is supported by CIDA and UNDP.

For more information please visit: www.naspanigeria.org

BNRCC (Building Nigeria's Response to Climate Change) is a partnership between Marbek Consultants, CUSO-VSO, implemented by NEST FORUM in Nigeria and supported by CIDA. For more information please visit: www.nigeriaclimatechange.org and www.nestinteractive.org

Interview conducted by *Sam. Ogallah*

QUOTES

“Amount of rainfall has reduced drastically and when it rains it becomes so heavy that it is causing flooding and erosion .For instance a few days back it rained heavily and erosion has washed away our farm lands including the crops..Traditionally farmers prepare cross ridging, planting of grasses on slopes to prevent erosion.”

Sakina, a female farmer from Giwa LGA of Kano state

“Every year we celebrate our new yam festival with funfair, joy and happiness. This year the month for the celebration is near, we thought it will be like before when we do have enough yams but our joy is cut short by what we are seeing now. Excessive heat and unpredictable flood this year has destroyed our yams. We have never seen this type of a problem before even the usual homage with yam my subjects pay before, I longer get yams from them as they all cry out that their yams has either rotten or the yield this year is very poor. “

His Highness, Chief Emmanuel Nwanmuo, The Okakwu, Ezenyili of Oko-Amakon, Oshimili South, Delta State.



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YOUR FEED BACK IS WELCOME

The NEST e-newsletter (NEST FORUM) invites correspondence and contributions from interested stakeholders.

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