

In Focus: The Petroleum Technology Development Fund (PTDF)



Nigeria's economy is deeply rooted and dependent on the petroleum sector; approximately 90 percent of Nigeria's foreign exchange earnings and approximately 80 percent of Nigeria's GDP are derived from the petroleum industry. Nigeria ranks 11th place in a list of top petroleum producing countries.

Because the gas and oil and solid minerals economic sector is of such strategic importance for Nigeria, decree 25 established the Petroleum Technology Development Fund (PTDF) in 1973. Seventeen years later, in 1990, the decree was amended as the PTDF Act. Finally, in September 2000, PTDF became fully operational through the set-up of the PTDF Management Committee. In the time phase between the PTDF's foundation and the creation of the management committee, its administering committee was located in Nigeria's Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR).

Before PTDF was established, the Nigerian petroleum industry could only function through the importation of specialised technology, equipment and labour. PTDF's objective is to make the country independent of such constraints: The fund's main purpose is the development of a highly-qualified and sector-specialised Nigerian labour force that will help advance the nation's petroleum business, making it self-sufficient and autonomous from imported petroleum specialists and technology.

With an approximated total world petroleum production/consumption of about 85 million barrels per day, petroleum is a so-called primary energy source. It is used to produce fuel oil, as well as many chemicals and plastics. The revenue that is obtained through the production and trade with petroleum can be ascribed back to the Nigerian economy and people through indigenous manpower that will be created through PTDF. Hence, Nigeria's abundant petroleum resources can be used, developed and exploited to a much greater potential, returning more awards to the Nigerian people.

PTDF aims at furnishing Nigerians with the technological and professional expertise to compete profitably in this sector and to reap the fruit they sowed themselves. How does the fund achieve its goal to build up a highly-educated Nigerian labour force? Nigerians are being trained in Nigeria and other countries to qualify as students, graduates, professionals, technicians and craftsmen in the areas of geology, science, engineering and management in the oil, gas and solid minerals economy. PTDF employs many approaches to accomplish its objective:

- It provides scholarships and grants to Nigerians who attend institutions of higher learning in the fields relevant to the PTDF's motives
- It makes appropriate educational material available to the above mentioned institutions
- It makes endowments to the above mentioned institutions approved by the fund
- It sponsors visits to oil and gas fields and extraction sites
- It supports seminars, workshops, conferences and skill acquisition programmes that will improve employment and technological development in the field of interest
- It designs and implements indigenous research and development capacities
- It more closely cooperates and coordinates efforts with existing Nigerian research centres in order to advance and adapt technological innovations
- It uses human resources development facilities for the field of the oil and gas industry
- It harmonises human resources development programmes of Nigerian oil and gas companies
- It evaluates the sector's performance regarding indigenous employment and skills periodically
- It improves the industry's infrastructure
- It already established and is still sustaining many strategic alliances, e.g. with the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), the DPR, the Petroleum Training Institute (PTI), Effurun, universities, oil producers, professional bodies, technological innovation and environmental biotechnological companies

Alhaji Adamu Maina Waziri is PTDF's new executive secretary, who will go to any lengths to fulfil his mandate in a transparent manner.

PTDF's Executive Secretary: Alhaji Adamu Maina Waziri