

Science in Nigeria

The recent history of developed and developing countries around the world, has confirmed that Science and Technology is the organic link that connects all the various sectors of the national economies such as Agriculture, Health, Education, Commerce and Industry, Environment, etc. Undoubtedly, Science is the platform that drives the potentials within these sectors through research and development programmes, modern product techniques and process, development of pilot plants, commercialization of research results amongst others. It is therefore safe to conclude that the active integration of a national culture of Science, Engineering and Technology will facilitate an era of economic growth and development, driven by technological advancement.

For Nigeria, in spite of our overarching potentials in the availability of over 80 Research and Development Institutes and Centres, 70 functional Universities with Faculties of Science, Engineering and Technology and over 100 Polytechnics, Nigeria has not attained any appreciable capacity to translate the outcomes of its research and development into desirable outcomes.



Federal Ministry of Science and Tcehnology

It is in order to reverse this unwholesome trend and to integrate the nations scientific, engineering and other professional endeavor into national economic development process (as

Science and Technology is key to all other sectors) that the Federal Ministry of Science and Technology (FMST) has decided to come up with vision 2020 for Nigeria to be one of the leading top 20 economies in the World based on remarkable potentials: Population of 150million, median age of 18.63 years, proven resourceful people, 8th largest oil exporter, 6th largest producer of gas, 34 different minerals and rich arable land and friendly climate.



College of Science and Technology,
Covenant University (Private University)



University of Nigeria, Nsukka (Federal
University)

Here are the strategies put in place for the goal of 2020:

1. Build science-based workforce by: Building capacity for appropriate technologies merit-based system, train scientists, engineers etc., promote grass-roots inclusive innovation, develop technology transfer know how, strengthen capacity of local science institutions to conduct research.
2. Forge national innovation system encompassing existing and new STI institutions by; 5% of R&D patentable by 2015 (50,000 apps.) and 20% by 2020 (100,000 apps.), 30% of patentable R&D commercialized by 2015 and 50% by 2020 and expected increase in investments (public / private) in R&D activities to 1.6% by 2010
3. Engender culture of STI in society by Improve emoluments of S&T professionals Pre-1980 policy of enhanced scholarships to S&T students

4. Government. commitment through creation of National Foundation for Science, Innovation and Competitiveness, Also national awareness of S&T in populace Reinforce strong academic background

Other strategies are: Emerging technologies (biotech, nanotech), develop renewable energy sources, space capabilities for socio-econ purpose, promote value addition to agro, mineral and petroleum resources, optimize use of research facilities and humans, enhanced IT capability

Challenges against 2020 goals include:

Lack of political will, as a result of policy inconsistency, no Science supporting infrastructure, Underfunding of research (Education Trust Fund), Activities/scope of R&D institutions limited, no linkages between Research and development, & manufacturing

Conclusion

Wealth of nation is measured by inherent knowledge, research institutes and the challenges facing the nation to can be overcome through Science and technology.