



THE MAKING OF YAGEP RICE P17



FINDING LOVE THROUGH STEP/YAGEP P30

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NO. 5 JANUARY 2019

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on the occasion of the **JOB CREATION EXHIBITION**

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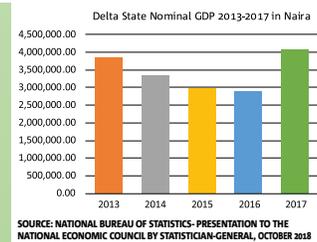
Fellow Deltans,

In 2015, I promised to erect meaningful peace building platforms to ensure political and social stability in the State. Today, that is a reality. Through the proactive and tireless efforts of the Delta State Peace Building and Advisory Council as well as the Peace Advocacy Committee Against Vandalisation of Oil and Gas Facilities, Delta is enjoying peace and security.

The result?

- **Delta is now Number 1 in oil production and export (as against No 4 in 2014);**
- **Kidnapping has been reduced to the barest minimum;**
- **There is great inter-ethnic harmony;**
- **Local and foreign investors are coming to Delta in droves; and**
- **Delta State recorded 40% growth in GDP in 2017 compared to -12% in 2014.**

YEAR	DELTA STATE NOMINAL GDP 2013-2017 IN NAIRA	DELTA STATE NOMINAL GDP 2013-2015 IN \$ @ N187 TO \$1 AND 2016-2017 @N360 TO \$1	GROWTH RATE
2013	3,858,826.38	20,635.44	
2014	3,366,371.05	18,001.98	-12.76
2015	2,961,702.75	15,837.98	-12.02
2016	2,895,425.26	8,042.85	-2.24
2017	4,057,812.28	11,271.70	40.15



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OKOWA
FOR DELTA STATE GOVERNOR**



Counting The Harvest of Job Creation

Today, we are witnessing an epic milestone in the storyline of Governor Okowa's job creation model for tackling youth unemployment, economic diversification and inclusive growth in Delta State. More than 4,200 youths are currently living testaments of the vision and commitment of His Excellency, Senator Dr. Ifeanyi Okowa to develop the productive potentials of youths through the entrepreneurship and engagement in gainful economic activities.

While the introduction of the Job Creation Scheme may have been attended by skepticism based on poor performance of previous youth empowerment programmes, the professionalism and transparency of implementation quickly elicited programme credibility and wide acceptance from the target audience and stakeholders. From inception to date, the story of the Job Creation Scheme has been a succession of milestones in the training, establishment and mentoring of unemployed youths in various skills and enterprises. The footprints of the flagship job creation programmes – Skills Training and Entrepreneurship Programme (STEP) and Youth Agricultural Entrepreneurs Programme (YAGEP) - are visible across the 25 Local Government Areas of the State as underscored by testimonies of the beneficiaries on their life-transforming experiences and success stories.

Since assuming office on the May 29, 2015, Governor Ifeanyi Okowa has, in keeping with his gubernatorial campaign manifesto encapsulated in the S.M.A.R.T agenda implemented the youth-oriented job creation programmes for the fourth straight cycle, one every year. Much more important is that the story has not just been about implementing the job creation programmes, but that over these years, there has been a succession of milestones since 2015. The harvest of milestones is evidenced by a variety of distinctive landmarks and impacts on the economic and social landscape of Delta State.

- There is a progressive mindset shift, among unemployed youths, from government (salaried) employment to private

by **Eric Eboh**
Chief Job Creation Officer



sector entrepreneurship-based self-employment. Delta youths are now imbibing the notion of finding gainful employment outside government or public service.

- Thousands of youths have been saved from unemployment, idleness, economic exclusion and frustrating perennial search for jobs. The engagement of youths in productive employment has helped to check youth restiveness and created favourable social environment for investments and businesses in the state.

- Previously unemployed youths are now productively engaged in skills-based enterprises across subsectors including building services, ICTs, personal services, agricultural production, agricultural processing, food packaging and hospitality services.

By their productive engagement and employment, they are producing goods and services and earning incomes contributing to the economy of the State and the country.

- Through its standard training and mentoring packages, the job creation programmes have enhanced the quality of youth entrepreneurship and business development in the State.
- Delta State has witnessed an accelerated growth of the services sector since 2015, occasioned by the incremental outputs from STEP, among other informal sector interventions. The average annual growth rate from 2013-2015 was 8.9% but growth accelerated at annual average of 13.2% from 2015-2017.
- Delta State has witnessed accelerated growth of the agricultural sector since 2015, occasioned by the incremental outputs from YAGEP, PPSP and other agricultural sector interventions. The agricultural sector grew by annual average of 8.6% from 2013-2015 but accelerated to annual average of 13.3% from 2015-2017.
- The YAGEP has accomplished landmark production of rice, known as YAGEP RICE. The rice was cultivated, processed and packaged with the participation of YAGEPreneurs.
- The Job Creation Scheme has achieved social inclusiveness. This is reflected by two vivid features. First, the existence

of a special programme window for the skills training and establishment of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) in choice enterprises. Second, the programme is characterised by gender balance, evidenced by the fact that female beneficiaries constitute forty seven (47%) of the total number of STEP and YAGEP beneficiaries since inception. In terms of educational status of the beneficiaries, graduates with BSc/ HND constitute 43% of the total number, followed by WASC/ SSCE 41% and OND/NCE 16%.

- Independent tracer study of the job creation programmes has shown that the success rates vary from 57% - 66% across respective enterprises. These success rates are satisfactory and will improve as programme implementation is progressively enhanced.
- The 25 YAGEP agricultural clusters which serve as co-location facilities for youth agricultural enterprises have become vital growth poles and demonstration yardsticks for the development of commodity value chains and transformation of the agricultural landscape in the State.
- The Job Creation Scheme has helped to achieve financial inclusion in the State. Through its mandatory non-cash payment system, the programme has caused the creation more than 4,000 new bank accounts belonging to its beneficiaries. These bank accounts have grown in numbers and volume as a result of growth of the businesses of job creation beneficiaries.
- Through its partnership and collaboration with private sector training centres, the Job Creation Scheme is also impacting positively on the growth and development of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MSMEs) sector in the State. As service providers to the job creation programmes in the form of training centres, facilitators and mentors, hundreds of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) have been stimulated and supported to upgrade their technical, entrepreneurial and managerial capacities, increase visibility and patronage and improve the quality of their services and achieve enterprise development.
- The Delta State job creation model earned partnership support from the World Bank European Union State Employment and Expenditure for Results (SEEFOR) and was executed through its funding of training and enterprise Starter Packs during the 2017-2018 programme cycle.
- The job creation programmes have also earned the partnership and support of private sector foundation, that is, The Tony Elumelu Foundation, regarding which an Endowment Fund has been established for the funding of STEP and YAGEP beneficiaries.

The harvests of STEP and YAGEP are indeed many and varied,

and still counting. Just as Governor Okowa's vision has been vindicated, the successes and achievements owe largely to his superb leadership and robust executive management capacities, skills and abilities. The creation of a Special Purpose Vehicle in the form of Office of the Chief Job Creation Officer is one vivid footprint of the foresight and leadership of the Governor.

In line with the vision and development goals of Governor Okowa, the Job Creation Scheme has been implemented based on three core values/principles – integrity, quality and discipline. These three values explain the high public confidence in the job creation programme and the attendant high demand that the programme enjoys across the State. Underpinning the programme's success story is the conducive institutional environment and exemplary governance standards which the Governor enunciated and has sustained since inception.

As we count and relish the harvests, we will however not lose sight of the need to consolidate on the gains and sustain the progress in using STEP/YAGEP to solve youth unemployment and promote economic diversification in the State. Efforts will be intensified to strengthen implementation and deepen the impacts of the job creation programmes through safeguard measures that ensure the sustainability of beneficiaries' enterprises/ businesses. Partnerships with private foundations, civil society organisations and international development partners will be increasingly leveraged to widen the outreach and upscale the impact of the

programme.

Overall, the job creation programme has impacted indelibly on the social and economic landscape of Delta State. The prospects for greater and wider impacts are bright. Therefore, it is incumbent on all stakeholders to work towards sustaining its implementation.

Against this backdrop, this edition of our Newsletter presents the journey and success story of the Job Creation Scheme. Beneficiaries (*STEPpreneurs* and *YAGEPpreneurs*) tell their success stories and insightful experiences in the programme. The present-day exhibition of products and services of *STEPpreneurs* and *YAGEPpreneurs* is ample evidence of the programme's successes. Furthermore, the Newsletter contains positive feedback and commendations from programme trainers, facilitators and resource persons in STEP and YAGEP and as well as from independent stakeholders.

In all, this edition makes a delightful reading in form, style and content. As you read and digest it, I am confident that you will be duly informed and enlightened about the achievements and impacts of the Job Creation Scheme.

Happy reading!

**“The Job Creation Scheme
has helped to achieve
financial inclusion in the
State.”**



STEP COORDINATOR, MR ONYEISI NKENCHOR (M), AND MRS MARVIS ONYEDUM, FLANKED BY THE GRADUATES

STEPpreneur Onyedum Trains 17 Unemployed Youths

The Delta State Government's enterprise development programme received a boost when one of the beneficiaries of the Skills Training and Entrepreneurship Programme (STEP), Mrs Marvis Onyedum, the CEO of Marvis Unique Catering Services, voluntarily trained 17 unemployed youths in Catering and Confectionery free of charge for one month.

Speaking at the Graduation Ceremony of the trainees in Effurun, the Chief Job Creation Officer, Prof. Eric Eboh, expressed happiness over the selfless contributions of Mrs Onyedum to society, describing her as an "amazing personality."

"It is obvious that she knows what she

is doing," Eboh enthused. "She needs to be encouraged. Training 17 persons without help deserves commendation. She has reduced unemployment in the State by taking 17 persons off the street. We have trained many persons and established them with Starter Packs, but what I am witnessing today is what I have never seen in the history of job creation. It is not easy to train 17 persons free of charge."

Represented by the Coordinator of STEP, Mr Onyeisi Nkenchor, Prof. Eboh advised the graduands to be focused, tenacious and visionary in order to achieve their goals.

Earlier, Mrs Onyedum said she volunteered to train 17 persons free of

charge to reciprocate the free training and financial support she received from the State Government. She was full of praise for the Job Creation Scheme. "An adage says that it is better to teach people how to fish rather than giving them fish," she remarked "His Excellency teaches you not only how to fish, but provides you with fishing materials. What an easy life he has made for us."

She appealed to the State Government to include the new graduates, equipped with knowledge of Catering and Confectionery, in its Brown STEP programme so that they can access Starter Packs to establish their own enterprises.



ED MEKWUYE

Business Clinic for STEPreneurs, YAGEPreneurs

As part of the State Government's commitment to the success of STEPreneurs and YAGEPreneurs, the Directorate of Youth Monitoring and Mentoring regularly organises Business Clinics for them. So far, these clinics have taken place in Warri, Ughelli, Sapele, Ozoro, Agbor and Asaba.

Resource persons were drawn from critical stakeholders in business start-up such as the Corporate Affairs Commission, Delta State Micro, Small and Medium

Scale Enterprises Development Agency and Delta State Chamber of Commerce.

The Executive Assistant to the Governor on Youth Monitoring and Mentoring, Mr Edward Mekwuye told reporters the clinics were designed to: "serve as a platform for training and learning for beneficiaries of the Delta State job creation programmes; serve as a platform for disseminating critical information to beneficiaries on the ease of doing business in Nigeria; and serve

as a forum for matching of mentees to mentors under our Business Mentorship programme."

Continuing, Mr Mekwuye said: "Studies have shown that majority of small businesses in Nigeria fail within the first 5 years. Most of these failures are due to the harsh economic environment that businesses have to contend with. Studies have also shown that the survival rates of new businesses increase when business start-up owners are mentored. This philosophy led to the creation of the Youth Monitoring and Mentoring Office by the Governor to sustain the successes recorded on the job creation programme."

STEPreneur Apodor Bags Bold Beauty Brand of the Year Award

A beneficiary of the Skills Training and Entrepreneurship Programme (STEP), Mrs. Bridget Apodor has won the award of Bold Beauty Brand of the Year.

Trained in the 2015/2016 cycle of STEP in Cosmetology, Mrs Apodor is the Chief Executive Officer of Chevonne Cosmetics, Lagos and has 14 beauty products to her credit. The competition organized by Sisliner Entertainment Agency was the second edition in the series which took place from September to December, 2018 in Lagos.

Mrs Apodor beat five other contestants to clinch the award. An excited Apodor told us: "It is a big deal for me and my brand. I am so excited about it and I believe more awards will follow after this by the grace of God. I want to use this opportunity to thank all those voted for me, especially my clients."



BRIDGET APODOR PRESENTS HER PRODUCTS- CHEVONNE COSMETICS



APODOR BRIDGET & HER APPRENTICES @ CHEVONNE COSMETICS

1,180 STEP/YAGEP Trainees for 2018/2019 Cycle

Delta State Government is to engage not less than 1,180 previously unemployed youths in its 2018/2019 Cycle of the Skills Training and Entrepreneurship Programme (STEP) and Youth Agricultural Entrepreneurs Programme (YAGEP). Prof Eboh, the Chief Job Creation Officer, disclosed this during a one-day workshop organised for STEP trainers.

According to Eboh, the Cycle, which is the 4th in the series, will consist of Brown STEP, Green STEP and Brown YAGEP. The Brown STEP initiative was conceived to assist those who have trained themselves through personal sponsorship, but require expert tutelage and financial assistance to be established in their chosen enterprises. The training is for this category of persons lasts for six weeks. Green STEP beneficiaries are those who do not have knowledge of the trade but are desirous of acquiring the requisite skills.

Prof Eboh commended the trainers for their contributions to the success of the programme and advised them to



A CROSS-SECTION OF THE TRAINEES

abide by the code of conduct guiding the programme at all times.

Meanwhile, the Beneficiaries have concluded the final round of training tagged, 'Entrepreneurship and Business Management Training' (EBMT) at Songhai Delta, Amukpe. The trainees had gone through the first stages of their training, which are Orientation

and Personal Effectiveness Training (OPET) and the Apprenticeship.

The beneficiaries included those in Brown STEP and in vocational skills such as Fashion Design and Tailoring, Hairdressing and Makeover, Tiling, Plaster of Paris (POP), Interlocking, Catering and Confectionary, Hairdressing and Makeover, Audio-Visual Technology, and Decoration and Event Management.

The EBMT featured lectures such as Starting Your STEP/YAGEP Enterprise Well, Roadmap for Business Success, How to Nurture a Baby Business, Business Start-Up Clinics, How to Develop Your Business Plan, Finding and Learning from Mentors for Business Start-up and Growth, How to find and Manage Money for your Business. Others were Principles of Keeping Basic Business Records and Accounts, Exercises in Keeping Basic Business Records and Accounts and Entrepreneurship.



A JOB CREATION RESOURCE PERSON, PST. AFOLABI ADUN, DELIVERS A LECTURE ON BUSINESS MANAGEMENT TO TRAINEES

Dame Okowa Charges STEPreneurs to be Diligent

The Delta State Government has distributed Starter Packs to STEP and YAGEP beneficiaries of the 2017/2018 Cycle.

The event was flagged-off by the wife of the Governor, Dame Edith Okowa who charged the beneficiaries to put their Starter Packs into good use with the goal of growing their enterprises into profitable ventures.

On his part, the Chief Job Creation Officer, Prof Eric Eboh, said “the Job Creation Scheme through the Skills Training and Entrepreneurship Programme (STEP) and the Youth Agricultural Entrepreneurs Programme (YAGEP) has engaged 4,253 youths who were previously unemployed.”

He affirmed that the programmes are transforming the lives of the beneficiaries, creating livelihoods, changing the landscape of youth empowerment and stimulating economic diversification of the State. The Chief Job Creation Officer informed



WIFE OF GOV, DAME EDITH OKOWA, INTERACTS WITH A BENEFICIARY DURING THE FLAG-OFF OF DISTRIBUTION OF STARTER PACKS

the gathering that that many States in the federation are now adopting the Delta State model of job creation for youth training and empowerment.

“The job creation programme,” he said, “is almost completing its third cycle and has a new introduction,

Brown STEP who are persons who have already undergone vocational skills training on their own volition, but were selected and enhanced through refresher skills training and entrepreneurship training to adequately qualify for Starter Packs to own and run their enterprises.”

Gov. Okowa Gives Succour to the Ibusa PwD Sisters

The all-inclusive leadership style of the Delta State Governor, Senator Ifeanyi Okowa, was once again brought to the fore with the empowerment of a family of five sisters living with disabilities through the State Government’s Skills Training and Entrepreneurship Programme (STEP).

Presenting Starter Packs to two members of the family, Chinedu Okolie and Amana Okolie on behalf of the State Government, the Coordinator-STEP, Mr Onyeisi Nkenchor, said their engagement in the STEP programme is a demonstration of Gov. Okowa’s commitment to running an all-inclusive

government. The ceremony took place at the family compound of the Okolies at

Ogbeowelle Quarters, Ibusa in Oshimili North Local Government Area.



COORDINATOR-STEP, MR ONYEISI NKENCHOR PRESENTING STARTER PACKS TO CHINEDU OKOLIE (PWD) TRAINED IN FASHION DESIGN & TAILORING

Encomiums Continue to Pour in for STEP/YAGEP

- As Nigerian Editors, Tony Elumelu and World Bank endorse DTSG Job Creation Model

The Nigerian Guild of Editors (NGE) has commended Governor Ifeanyi Okowa for tackling youth unemployment through the Skills Training and Entrepreneurship Programme (STEP) and Youth Agricultural Entrepreneurs Programme (YAGEP). The body gave the commendation during their national convention in Asaba in October 2018.

The President of the Guild, Mrs. Funke Egbemode, accompanied by other members of the group, including the Director of News, Jigawa Radio, Alhaji Bala Aji; the Editor, Triumph Newspaper, Kano, Aliyu Umar and the News Editor, Jigawa FM Radio, News World, Kwalau M. Hussain, visited the YAGEP Fish Farm Clusters at Egbokodo- Itsekiri in Warri South Local Government Area; Camp 24, Anwai in Oshimili South Local Government Area, the Delta Agricultural Rural Development Agency (DARDA), Ibusa in Oshimili North Local Government Area and Ugbokodo-Okpe in Okpe Local Government.

Speaking on behalf of the group, Mrs Egbemode expressed joy that thousands of previously unemployed youths were being trained and established with Starter Packs to start and run their enterprises.

Also Last year, the Founder of Tony Elumelu Foundation (TEF) and Chairman of United Bank for Africa (UBA), Mr. Tony Elumelu established an Endowment Fund to support the job creation programmes. Mr Elumelu, accompanied by 50 beneficiaries of the TEF Entrepreneurship Programme, made the announcement during a courtesy visit to Governor Ifeanyi Okowa,

“Your Excellency, on behalf of the Heirs Holdings Group, we will work with your office to put in place a new programme to support Delta State youths and I commit N500m to this purpose,” he declared. “Indeed, hearing about your commitment to our youths and the impressive work you have done in the State, I am proud to call you my Governor and it makes me even more proud of my State.”

Responding, Governor Okowa commended Mr. Elumelu for his generosity and large-heartedness. “You didn’t restrict the impact of your Foundation to Delta, or even to Nigeria; you have empowered 4,000 youths across Africa. What you are doing, my brother, is giving hope to others, who in turn will help to change the narrative of our country and continent. You are changing the narrative of giving – not just hand-outs, but giving skills and mentoring. In the next ten

years, the impact of the Tony Elumelu Foundation will be truly transformational; the multiplier effect will be huge. The whole country should support and think positively in this same direction.”

The Governor appealed to other similarly endowed Nigerians to emulate Elumelu’s example of giving back to the society. “It would be heart-warming if we can make this kind of positive impact we are seeing with the Tony Elumelu Foundation. It will help us reduce restiveness, and create employment so that we raise young people who are not just seekers of employment but creators of employment.”

It would be recalled that in December 2017, the World Bank/European Union through its State Employment and Expenditure for Results (SEEFOR) endorsed the job creation programmes for funding support. Speaking through its Senior Specialist in Education at the occasion, Dr Tunde Adekola, the global financial institution observed that “Delta State is the only State that has demonstrated its commitment to skills development in practical terms.”

“The World Bank will continue to support the Delta State Government in the areas of skills and technical development and will work with the Job Creation Office of the State Government to strengthen the labour market observatory system in order to make Governor Okowa’s dream of re-creating the middle class a reality.”



GOV OKOWA (IN RED CAP), FLANKED BY HIS DEPUTY OTUARO (LEFT) AND TONY ELUMELU (RIGHT) WITH OTHER TOP GOVERNMENT FUNCTIONARIES AND TEF BENEFICIARIES

Distinguished ALUMNI

The Job Creation Scheme has run three full cycles from August 2015 to date. During that period, a total of 4,253 persons, including People with Disabilities (PwDs), have been successfully trained and established in their choice enterprises. The following pages tell the story of how the Governor Ifeanyi Okowa administration is transforming the lives of Delta youths through its job creation programmes.

INTERVIEWS BY GERTRUDE ONYEKACHUKWU

NAME: **UGOH MICHAEL** (2015/2016 CYCLE)
ENTERPRISE: **DECORATION & EVENT MANAGEMENT**
LGA: **ISOKO NORTH**

Michael Ugo is a STEPreneur in Event Management and the CEO of Favour Michael Best Events. He attended the Delta State Polytechnic, Ozoro, where he obtained an OND in Business Management. He stands tall among his contemporaries in the business of Event Management and can best be described as an energetic, dynamic entrepreneur of many parts because of his landmark achievements three years after he commenced business.

So good! The journey has been wonderful. I have grown my enterprise. From 100 chairs and 10 tables, I now have 600 chairs, 80 tables, 4 canopies, 200 chair covers among other rental items. I have diversified into Cinematography by enrolling for further training in video coverage and photography to supplement my rental services. I cover the activities of the Directorate of Youth Monitoring and Mentoring.

I have expanded to two shops, one in Ozoro and another in Oleh. Out of the proceeds from my investments, I acquired two plots of land in Ozoro and in Oleh, the Local Government Headquarters of Isoko North and South respectively. I have trained 28 persons and currently have two employees.

I have not only used my Starter Pack and knowledge to build myself financially, but have also been able to use it to better the lives of my people, particularly the youth in my area. I have passion for youth development with



MICHAEL UGOH, AN EVENT MANAGER

special reference to the ones in Isoko North and South. I have a registered NGO called, "Delta Young Entrepreneurs", engaged in training programmes for unemployed youths in diverse vocational and entrepreneurship skills just as you have in job creation.

As part of my contribution to my corporate social responsibility, I registered 600 youths of Isoko extraction for entrepreneurship and vocational training, out of which 250 of them have been fully paid for and have completed their training in their choice vocational skills. I achieved this feat through personal sponsorship and help from Hon. Frank Ozue and through partnership with some *STEPpreneurs* and *YAGEPpreneurs* in the areas and by engaging other instructors.

Recently I organized a rally in Isoko North and South for the re-election of Governor Okowa because I need our youths to support him so that he can continue his job creation programmes.

NAME: **OMIZU BLESSING** (2015/2016 CYCLE)

LGA: **OKPE**

ENTERPRISE: **CATERING & CONFECTIONARY**

Blessing Omizu is the CEO of Mr Clark Foods, Asaba. He is a graduate of Mass Communication from the Delta State University, Abraka. His vision is to establish a bakery and be his own boss. He is basically into confectionery and has lost count of the number of jobs and supplies



BLESSING OMIZU, CEO OF MR CLARK'S FOODS

*he has done, even to multinational companies. He distinguished himself during the 2017 STEP and YAGEP Product Exhibition as the only baker among the league of *STEPpreneurs* in Catering and Confectionery.*

STEP is a success and has imparted my life positively. It is more money for me as the turnover has been good. I am working towards establishing my own bakery in a good location, but the major challenge is finance.

Because my focus is bread and cake baking, I am usually busy on weekends. Sometime ago, I got a job with a multinational company to supply 200 cakes as seasonal gifts to their customers.

I worked in partnership with someone to help him establish a bakery in Abuja. It afforded me the opportunity to practise what I was trained to do. I worked independently on a larger scale. Though rewarding, the cost of production in a big city as Abuja is higher than beginning in smaller towns as Asaba. At the expiration of the contract, I came back to Asaba to establish myself.

Since I began this business, I have procured more equipment in line with my vision. By God's grace, my life is better; my finances have improved. I am able to provide for myself and family. I am impressed with my progress. I have made more money. I organize monthly training programmes for interested persons. So far, I have trained 10 persons. I have not employed anyone because my business is still growing. It has to grow to some extent before I can engage the services of others.

Our youths should focus more on becoming their own bosses than searching for civil service appointment. There are so many opportunities out there. Think outside government and see how you can meet the needs of the government by becoming entrepreneurs and job creators. I want to use this medium to appreciate Governor Okowa for what he is doing in Delta State. Kudos to him!

NAME: **ERUTOR AKPEWE** (2015/2016 CYCLE)

ENTERPRISE: **COMPUTER HARDWARE MAINTENANCE & REPAIRS**

LGA: **ETHIOPE EAST**

Akpewe Erutor is a Deejay, the CEO of AKP Viewing Centre and a graduate of Geology from Delta State University, Abraka. He is one of the beneficiaries who converted the knowledge acquired and started a different business from what they were trained in.



AKPEWE ERUTOR, THE DJ AT WORK

Entrepreneurship is all about discovering oneself; that is exactly what Akpewe has done. He is registered with the Dee Jays Association of Nigeria and is doing great.

It was not easy at first. I faced lots of challenges. I depleted my ₦60,000.00 shop rent subsidy the first week it was given to me. I became broke and confused, but I had to think. Then I decided to use my Starter Pack to upgrade my knowledge of entertaining people with music at ceremonies as a Dee Jay. Today I am a registered DJ with the Dee Jay Association of Nigeria. I am a happy man.

I get invited to perform at all kinds of ceremonies, whether wedding, burial, birthday, house warming ceremonies and so on. I also render service at political gatherings and to government agencies. Recently I covered the PDP Inauguration of Task Force for Uvwie Local Government. I was able to save some money to open a viewing centre in Okwokokwo, Warri known as AKP Viewing Centre, where people watch football matches and video games.. I am planning to add sale of drinks and pepper soup to it so that my clients can drink and eat while watching matches. Recently, I organized an entertainment concert for my clients and I see the need to add drink and pepper soup to what I am doing. I ran a MerryBet business in my viewing centre, but it is on hold as I am working on switching over to BetNaija.

My business is still growing. I pay myself salary. The return is rewarding. I have three large screen TV sets in my viewing centre and have procured some equipment for my business as a DJ. I am still equipping my business as there

are still lots of equipment I need to perform optimally. I earn additional income by renting equipment sometimes for very large ceremonies. Despite this shortfall, I make bold to say I am successful.

I have also diversified into crop production. I inherited a large expanse of family land where I planted 600 suckers of plantain. I sell bunches of plantain as well as the suckers. I have three employees on my payroll and have trained four persons. Two years from now, I see myself exploding financially based on my investments.

NAME: **OLABIYI ANITA** (2015/2016 CYCLE)

LGA: **IKA NORTH EAST**

ENTERPRISE: **CATERING & CONFECTIONERY**

Anita Olabiyi is a Mass Communication graduate from Benson Idahosa University, Benin city and the CEO of Dakuvani Catering Services. With twenty-two employees on her payroll, Anita is undoubtedly a star performer and veritable STEP ambassador.

God has been faithful. I started with one chaffing dish, but three years later, I now have 31 chaffing dishes, 12 large cooking pots, nine industrial gas cookers, 1,000 plates and cutlery. I can conveniently host 1,000 guests. I have the capacity to cook for 5,000 guests.

Governor Okowa made me an employer of labour. I have 22 workers, which is an evidence of my business growth and expansion. Eleven of them are permanent staff while the other eleven are casual workers whom I engage regularly based on the number of clients and guests I am to cater for at any given time. I am engaged almost



OLABIYI ANITA AND HER WORKERS AT A FUNCTION

on all weekends. Sometimes, it could extend beyond the weekend. For example, I was engaged from 22nd to 31st December, 2018. So, I had to work with my team throughout that period.

Before now, I had little knowledge about catering. The passion was there, but I did not know how to go about it. It did not work out even when I tried in the past to start on a small scale. Fortunately when I keyed into STEP, the entrepreneurship ability in me came out. I make confectionery too. I bake cake, make small chops among others, but I focus more on food because it is more lucrative. It is very rewarding. I cook for clients in the private and public sectors, sometimes for top government functionaries and politicians. The charge varies, but one thing is sure; it is rewarding.

I have diversified and established a grocery shop in Asaba, around the General Hospital, managed by two of my employees. I do a lot of advertisement for my business in the social media using different platforms as Facebook Twitter, Instagram, and Whatsapp with my name, Olabiya Anita.

Youths should not neglect the days of humble beginnings. He who is faithful in little is faithful in much. Life is all about determination. Whatever you set your mind to do can be achieved through hard work and determination. The girl child should believe in herself. Though my husband works, yet he is amazed at what an enterprising wife I have become. He is so excited with what I am doing that he keeps saying to me, 'I am so happy I did not miss you'. This is because I have achieved a lot.

NAME: **UGOCHUKWU CHARLES** (2016/2017 CYCLE)

LGA: **BURUTU**

ENTERPRISE: **CROP PRODUCTION**

Charles Ugochukwu is the CEO of *Charl & Agro Farms International*. He obtained his BA in Linguistics and Communication Studies from the University of Port Harcourt. Charles was established in YAGEP Farm Cluster Songhai Delta, Amukpe. His tenacity and passion for agriculture are worthy of emulation. Where others saw challenges, he saw opportunities. This attitude has taken him steps ahead of his counterparts.

I have completed four crop production cycles at Songhai Delta YAGEP Cluster, but decided to leave the land to fallow for a while to regain its nutrients. At present, I am in partnership with a friend at Odovieh after Ughelli where



UGOCHUKWU CHARLES HARVESTING GARDEN EGG

we have a four-hectare land for mixed farming of long and short cycle crops. We have plantain, banana, potato, okra, cucumber, garden egg and pumpkin. In fact, I am an expert in garden egg production.

Two years after, my most cherished achievement is the knowledge acquired during training. The training was very useful. I might not be where I would have loved to be in terms of material wealth, but I am happy. I am now a consultant in Agriculture. I have a contract with a multinational company to train beneficiaries of Amnesty on crop production and agro-life. I have diversified into supply of seedlings, fertilizer, agro-chemicals, knapsack sprayer among others.

I remain grateful and indebted to the Okowa administration for the training I received. It is an eye opener and a life time opportunity. I was at the 2017 STEP/YAGEP Exhibition and will participate in the forthcoming Job Creation Exhibition where I intend to exhibit a yellow specie of okra, Technism, a product from France, and other farm produce.

Crop farming is lucrative, but challenging. Farming is timeliness; every variable such as rain, unfavourable weather conditions and attack by pests have to be put into consideration. Also, farm produce are under-priced by market women. Another major challenge is inadequate funds for expansion. Nevertheless, through crop production, I have been able to achieve a lot. I have scheduled my marriage to take place in March this year.



The Making of Delta YAGEP Rice

BY GERTRUDE ONYEKACHUKWU-UTEH

Rice is one of the priority agricultural commodities of the Youth Agricultural Entrepreneurs Programme (YAGEP). YAGEP was established to create decent and gainful youth employment through the agricultural value chain, boost agricultural productivity as well as diversify the economy of the State. This is one of the implementation strategies of Governor Ifeanyi Okowa's vision for job creation in fulfillment of his promise of prosperity for all Deltans. Under the YAGEP, a total of eight hundred and ninety three (893) previously unemployed youths have been trained, established in 25 farm clusters across the State over three successive years/cycles of implementation (2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/2018).

Like other priority agricultural commodities such as poultry,

cassava, aquaculture and vegetables, Delta has comparative advantage in rice farming and when fully harnessed will transform the agricultural value chain in the State. This is because rice is agro-ecologically suitable across the State and that many communities traditionally cultivate rice as a major crop in the agricultural system. The production of YAGEP rice has boosted the contribution of rice to the entire agricultural economy of the State as well as demonstrated the potentials for creating youth employment through the rice value chain. The rice production system adopted under YAGEP is a demonstration of best agricultural practices.

The YAGEP rice initiative started in 2017 with the cultivation of 74 hectares of land at Ugili-Amai in Ndokwa West Local Government Area. In 2018, there were cultivation of 96 hectares of rice farm-



RICE THRESHING AT MBIRI



WASHING OF PADDY RICE

42 hectares at Deghele, Sapele Local Government Area and 54 hectares at Mbiri, Ika North East Local Government Area. A total of 48 trainees were trained and established in these two rice farm clusters, 21 at Deghele and 27 at Mbiri. These 48 trainees worked under close tutorials, facilitation and guidance of the Office of the Chief Job Creation Officer through knowledgeable and experienced resource persons from within and outside the State.

The advantages of establishing youths in cluster farms

cannot be overemphasized. Some of the advantages include an improved programme targeting as a result of high concentration of many YAGEPreneurs in one location; enhancement in the operational efficiency of the programme in terms of value for money and value for efforts and enabling growth, collaboration, peer-learning and cooperation among the YAGEPreneurs and in the long run boost agricultural productivity and wealth creation.

It is worthy of note that the rice value chain initiative involved instructional and field-based training, farm enterprise incubation and establishment of youths through the entire process of rice production, processing, packaging, branding and marketing. The programme activities included soil testing and site selection, land preparation (clearing, ploughing and harrowing), seed treatment and planting, soil treatment, weeds prevention and control, fertilizer application, prevention and control of pests and diseases and birds scaring. Other operations were harvesting (cutting and packing), threshing, drying, winnowing, washing/parboiling, milling, destoning and packaging/bagging. The cultivation, harvesting, threshing, drying, parboiling,

milling, destoning and bagging operations were carried out with participation of the *YAGEPreneurs*. All the inputs, technologies and materials used in the rice production and processing and packaging operations were provided by the Office of the Chief Job Creation Officer.

The performance of the trainees in the two rice farm clusters in Deghele and Mbiri was exemplary. The *YAGEPreneurs* are expected to apply the knowledge and skills to continue production and maintain self-employment. According to the Chief Job Creation Officer, Prof Eric Eboh, "the trainees were programmed to acquire skills for practical knowledge,

"Many farmers have learnt new, improved rice production techniques and practices through the YAGEP rice production processes."

entrepreneurship and self-employment in the rice value chain, comprising rice farming, rice pre-processing, rice processing and rice marketing." He explained that the trainings were integrated in the rice production and processing activities in order to

achieve maximum impact and sustainability. The end game of the exercise is to have processed, packaged Delta YAGEP Rice.

"Market for Delta YAGEP Rice (packaged in 10-kg packs), is not expected to be a problem," Eboh stressed. "Beneficiaries will not have challenges

because the rice is of high quality. The whole quantity will be bought up before they get into the market. In Delta State, there is deficit in rice cultivation and we are supporting our *YAGEPreneurs* to bridge that gap".

One of the *YAGEPreneurs*, Beauty Adibeli was full of praise for the programme. "If given the opportunity," she said, "I will bring more youths into the field of agriculture, especially rice production." For Matthew Obriki, an NCE holder, "I studied Agricultural Education and graduated from College of Education, Warri where the Delta State Government through the Office of the Chief Job Creation Officer, compiled the names of best agricultural science graduates for the YAGEP programme. I was enrolled in 2016. We began rice production from Ugili-Amari in Ndokwa West Local Government Area. I want to appreciate the State Government for this opportunity."

Many farmers have learnt new, improved rice production techniques and practices through the YAGEP rice production processes and are poised to apply same in their respective farm

enterprises. In addition, the success of YAGEP has encouraged youths towards seeking self-employment through agricultural entrepreneurship. This is reflected by the increasing demand for admission into YAGEP.

Prof. Eboh disclosed that "statistics derived from recent economic data released by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) indicates that the agricultural sector in Delta State has grown at an annual average of 13.3% from 2015-2017, compared to 8.6% from 2013-2015. This accelerated growth of agriculture in the past three years (that is, since 2015) is a clear evidence of the positive impacts of YAGEP on the economy of the State."



BAGGED DELTA YAGEP RICE



CJCO, PROF. ERIC EBOH (M), FLANKED BY YAGEPRENEURS IN RICE PRODUCTION DURING THE OFFICIAL PRESENTATION OF DELTA YAGEP RICE

PHOTO *Splash*



GOV, IFEANYI OKOWA INDUCTS 2017-2018 STEP & YAGEP BENEFICIARIES



GOV OKOWA FLANKED BY PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AT THE INDUCTION CEREMONY FOR 2018 STEP & YAGEP IN ASABA



CHINEDU, RITA, AMANNAH AND LINDA OKOLIE AT THE INDUCTION CEREMONY FOR 2018 STEP & YAGEP



PwDs POSE WITH STARTER PACKS



COMMISSIONER FOR WOMEN AFFAIRS, MRS OMATSOLA WILLIAMS (CENTRE), HANDING OVER A STARTER PACK TO A STEPRENEUR



WIFE OF GOVERNOR, DAME EDITH OKOWA, FLAGS-OFF DISTRIBUTION OF STARTER PACKS WITH 2017-2018 BROWN STEP BENEFICIARIES



WIFE OF GOV, DAME EDITH OKOWA, INTERACTS WITH A BENEFICIARY DURING THE FLAG-OFF OF DISTRIBUTION OF STARTER PACKS



A CROSS SECTION OF STARTER PACKS FOR CATERING STEPRENEURS



A CROSS-SECTION OF STEPRENEURS IN WELDING & FABRICATION



A CROSS-SECTION OF STARTER PACKS FOR STEPRENEURS IN FASHION DESIGN



STEPRENEURS IN HAIRDRESSING & MAKEOVER IN A TRAINING CENTRE IN AGBOR



CJCO, PROF ERIC EBOH, (M) FLANKED BY STEPRENEURS GROWN INTO TRAINERS



INDOOR TARPULIN FISH PONDS AT ADP, IBUSA



A CROSS SECTION OF BROWN YAGEP BENEFICIARIES



A CROSS-SECTION OF TRAINEES AT THE ORIENTATION COURSE FOR 2017-2018 CYCLE OF STEP & YAGEP AT SONGHAI DELTA, AMUKPE



BENEFICIARIES AT A TECHNICAL SESSION DURING EBMT AT SONGHAI DELTA, AMUKPE



CHAIRMAN OF JOB CREATION STEERING COMMITTEE, DR. KINGSLEY EMU AND SOME COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN A MEETING



YAGEPRENEURS THRESHING RICE AT YAGEP RICE FARM CLUSTER AT DEGHELE



CROSS-SECTION OF DELTA YAGEP RICE



PRESENTATION OF PACKAGED DELTA GARRI TO THE SSG, BARR. FESTUS OVIE AGAS



YAGEP TRAINING SESSIONS AT UGBOKODO-OKPE YAGEP FISH FARM CLUSTER



GOV. OKOWA WITH 2015-2016 STEP & YAGEP BENEFICIARIES AT PASSING OUT CEREMONY



GOV. OKOWA IN A GROUP PHOTOGRAPH WITH YAGEPRENEURS IN UGBOKODO-OKPE YAGEP FISH CLUSTER



BRIEFING FOR BROWN STEP BENEFICIARIES



DISTRIBUTION OF JUVENILES TO YAGEPRENEURS IN FISHERY



INTERACTIVE SESSION AT OPET FOR 2016/2017 CYCLE



FLASHBACK

2017 PRODUCTS EXHIBITION AND BUSINESS FAIR

GOV. IFEANYI OKOWA, GOV. AMINU TAMBUWAL (2ND RIGHT), FORMER GOV. JAMES IBORI (2ND LEFT) AND OTHERS AT THE PRODUCTS EXHIBITION AND BUSINESS FAIR



2017 EXHIBITION CAKE



A YAGEPRENEUR IN POULTRY DISPLAYS HER EGGS



CATERING SERVICES

CATERING WORLD



CROP PRODUCTION



TOUR OF EXHIBITION STANDS



FASHION



HHAIRDRESSING AND MAKKEOVER



MARVIS UNIQUE CATERING SERVICES



MEGA ECO FASHION



MR CLARK'S FOODS



OMA EVENTS



PACKAGED CASSAVA PRODUCTS AND VEGETABLES



PACKAGED PROCESSED FISH



POULTRY PRODUCTS



PROCESSED FISH



SOFINA STEP SALON & SPA



STEPRENEURS IN COSMETOLOGY



YAGEPRENEURS IN CROP PRODUCTION AT THE EXHIBITION



YAGEPRENEURS IN PIGGERY MAKING PORK BARBEQUE

FROM TRAINEES TO TRAINERS

BY GERTRUDE ONYEKACHUKWU-UTEH AND ESE EBOTE-OGWU

CJO, PROF ERIC EBOH, (M) FLANKED BY
STEPRENEURS GROWN INTO TRAINERS

During the induction ceremony of the 2015/2016 Cycle of STEP and YAGEP, Governor Ifeanyi Okowa envisioned: "Within one year of your graduation from this scheme, it is my earnest prayer and desire to see some of you prospering in your businesses and making progress in your personal life. Your success is our success. In the not-too-distant future, I am confident that some of you will be back here as wealth and job creators and as resource persons for future phases of this Job and Wealth Creation Scheme."

That vision has become a reality. Eight outstanding beneficiaries of the administration's job creation programmes have grown their businesses to the extent that they have been selected as trainers.

Precious Uchenna Nwaise, an Asaba-

based fashion designer is one of them and tells us her incredible story. "I am into Fashion Design and Tailoring. I established my enterprise in May 2016 after my graduation from STEP. I have trained about one hundred persons; I have been able to buy a car and a land. I started with one manual sewing machine, one industrial sewing machine and one generator set. Now my story is different, because



PRECIOUS NWAISE AND SOME STEP TRAINEES



OMA CYNTHIA EHIRE AND HER STEP TRAINEES AT WORK

I have bought seven more industrial machines, 10 manual sewing machines and four generator sets. I sew clothes for people who live abroad; I have made clothes for Anioma people in the Netherlands. I have travelled to Kenya, Abuja and Lagos for exhibitions. I also sell fabrics and sewing accessories. To a large extent I have expanded. So I am qualified to train STEP trainees in my line of business. I was serious with what I was trained to do. Fashion design has lots of challenges; I have been able to overcome all that with my unique sewing pattern."

Oma Cynthia Ehire's view for the approval of her enterprise as a training centre for STEP trainees in Decoration and Event Management is not different from that of Precious.

"Since January 2016," she narrated, "I have been in the business of Decoration and Event Management. I have trained over forty persons in this line of trade. I have bought two cars, one for the business and one for my personal use. I am building a house and I have two shops in Sapele. I diversified into Catering and Confectionery. I sell cosmetics too. My application was approved because of my seriousness and ability to overcome a major challenge- request for confectionery. This I overcame by enrolling for further training which added colour to my business."

For Kingsley Mordi, a *STEPpreneur*/Trainer in Interlocking, his journey began in May 2016 when he graduated

from STEP. Kingsley has trained thirteen persons in the past and currently has four job creation trainees under him. From one hundred mould and twenty five kerbs, Kingsley has more than five thousand moulds and four hundred kerbs. He got married in December, 2017 without support from anyone. He owns four plots of land. He has diversified into Block Moulding and selling of cement. According to him, "God's favour and hard work made me a trainer for job creation office. Everything one does in life has its challenges; transportation is one of my major challenges, but I am pulling through by applying what I was taught during the Orientation Programme at Songhai Delta, Amukpe."



MOSIERE IJEOMA (M) FLANKED BY HER TRAINEES



FAITH VOKE EGWEDE TEACHING HER STEP TRAINEES

Ijeoma Mosiere's Food Republic in Boji Boji Agbor has also been approved as a training centre for STEP trainees in Catering and Confectionary. What is thrilling about her story is that she started business in March 2018, upon her graduation as a Brown STEP beneficiary. She came into the programme prepared and that was what earned her such approval. Ijeoma has trained five persons through STEP and presently has one private student.

Voke Faith Egwede, one of the new STEP graduates-turned-trainer shared the same success story as Mosiere. Her fashion business, Jazz Stitches in Ughelli, took off in July 2018, but has trained seven Brown STEPpreneurs and currently has four Green STEP trainees in less than seven months. "I was given a Starter Pack comprising two industrial machines, one set of generator, cutting table and iron," she reveals. "Today I have bought four manual sewing machines. I had an outstanding performance during my training and I am very dedicated to my work, hence my application to be a trainer was approved."

The same story applies to Onyedum Marvis of Catering and Confectionary in Effurun, Warri, who voluntarily trained 17 persons free of charge in support of the State Government's job creation programmes and in



SOPHIA EMORE TEACHING HER STEP TRAINEES

appreciation of what Governor Okowa did for her.

Sophia Emore, a cosmetologist and Solomon David Tam, a Fashion Designer shared the same view as their other counterparts.

The Co-ordinator of STEP in the Office of the Chief Job Creation Officer, Mr Onyeisi Nkechor, said the choice of a training centre for STEP is dependent on some critical factors namely; quality of training, availability of the trainer, access to training facilities and nearness of training centre to trainees. Also, since some vocational skills are in high demand more than others, there is need for more trainers. Customarily and as applicable to all STEP training centres

across the three senatorial districts of the state, the business premises of the STEPpreneurs turned job creation trainers were duly inspected before they were approved to have met the criteria of providing satisfactory training.

According to Nkechor, "there are graduate assistant lecturers in every higher institution. These are persons who did exceptionally well and, therefore, qualify to teach others. Firstly, to encourage our products who best understand the State Government's programme. Secondly, because they are qualified to do so and thirdly, because there are vacancies that need to be filled and outstanding STEP beneficiaries are available to fill the gap."



MARVIS ONYEDUM AND STEP TRAINEES



What STEP/YAGEP Has

Joined Together.....

BY GERTRUDE ONYEKACHUKWU-UTEH

I know what you are thinking. What has love and romance got to do with a magazine like OkowaPlus? Well, life happens. Whether by sheer coincidence or divine orchestration the Skills Training and Entrepreneurship Programme (STEP) and Youth Agricultural Entrepreneurs Programme (YAGEP) have turned out to be good match makers.

In this section, we profile some STEPreneurs and YAGEPreneurs who began their remarkable journey to holy matrimony through these programmes. Their stories are enough reasons for you to pay serious attention to whatever a leader says. It might just turn out to be a prophecy. During the inauguration ceremony of the 2016/2017 cycle at Songhai Delta, Amukpe, Governor Okowa observed that "so many of our youths have attained the age of marriage, but they cannot get married because they do not have jobs. This is very worrisome. The more the number of youths that have skills and go into agriculture, the more we can have families."

It does appear that many of the participants took the Governor's advice to heart as you will see from the following stories of love and romance. Happy reading.

Mr and Mrs Ezekiel Eromedoghene

For 34 year-old Ezekiel Eromedoghene, a *YAGEPreneur* in fish production, meeting and getting married to 31 year-old former Miss Blessing Omosigho, a *YAGEPreneur* in rice production was made possible because of YAGEP. Ezekiel proposed on the 18th of February, 2018, and Blessing accepted. They walked down the aisle on the 10th of November, 2018.

Ezekiel: “God did it for me. He used Governor Ifeanyi Okowa to bring us together. I would not have been able to get married without a job. I was unemployed for six years. I now earn my livelihood through fish production and have achieved a lot through it.”

Blessing: “We met in Asaba on the 5th of August, 2016, during job creation screening / interview for the 2016/2017 cycle and became friends. Things got heated up when we got to Songhai Delta for Orientation and Personal Effectiveness Training (OPET). On the 19th of September, 2016, we started dating, which lasted for two years. We help each other by managing our enterprises together.”



MR & MRS EZEKIEL EROMEDOGHENE

Authentic Ojuwa

This is a case of a *STEPpreneur* in ICT Services getting married to a former trainee in Fashion Design and Tailoring, Florentina Olise, whom he met in Songhai Delta during OPET for the 2015/2016 Cycle. They lost contact when she left the programme for Lagos, but as fate would have it they reconnected on Facebook where they renewed their friendship.

Authentic: “I proposed to her in July, 2018. Before then, I invited her to Obiaruku, but she was sceptical. She had

to contact her aunt in Umutu whom I met and who later convinced her that I was for real. Six months later, we had our traditional marriage while the wedding took place on the 29th of December, 2018. Indeed, being a beneficiary of STEP to a great extent facilitated my ability to take the bold decision to take a wife.”

MR & MRS AUTHENTIC OJUWA

Authentic is 32 years old while Florentina is 26.

Mr and Mrs Chiweike Nwankwo

Chiweike Nwankwo’s life before YAGEP was one of despair and discouragement. Marriage was not on the cards for him but all that changed after he was established with a robust Starter Pack.

Chiweike: “After establishment, the vision was clear that I have to get married. I would not have been able to look at a woman not to talk of getting married without YAGEP. I met my wife, Florence, during my three months internship in

Delta State University, Anwai Campus in 2016. She was an undergraduate studying fishery. Meeting her was divinely orchestrated as I was looking at how we could collaborate to manage a farm. I proposed to her and we got married in 2017. I want to say that YAGEP was divinely packaged for me and I remain grateful to Governor Ifeanyi Okowa for this lifetime opportunity.”



MR & MRS CHIWEIKE NWANKWO

Mr and Mrs Gbayafador Aguamah

The love story between Gbayafador and Ufuoma (nee



MR & MRS GBAYAFADOR AGUMAMAH

Ikefe) dates back to their three months internship at Hon. Raymos Guanah Farms at Ugili-Amai as trainees in rice production in the 2016/2017 cycle.

Their preparation for marriage was remarkable for two reasons. Firstly, they wore YAGEP t-shirts for their pre-wedding photographs. Secondly, their wedding reception was at Songhai Delta, Amukpe, the official training centre.

Gbayafador: “I proposed to her seven months after I met her, precisely on my birthday in August, 2017, but she did not give me a yes till October. Fortunately, we made it to the altar last year, precisely December 15, 2018,”

Ufuoma: “The programme is good. I did not know I was going to date a guy during the programme, let alone meeting my husband there. While we were there planting and farming, we met and fell in love. He proposed and I accepted. Here we are as husband and wife.”

Gbayafador and Ufuoma are aged 32 and 30 respectfully.



MR & MRS JERRY OKONEDO

Mr and Mrs Jerry Okonedo

This is a peculiar case of a union between a YAGEPpreneur and a member of staff of the Office of the Chief Job Creation Officer. Ijeoma Okonedo (nee Ezech) is a 28 year old

YAGEPpreneur in fish production from the 2016/2017 cycle.

Ijeoma: “We met at Songhai Delta, Amukpe in September, 2016 during registration for OPET. Jerry, being a staff, was part of the advance team handling the registration of beneficiaries as they arrived at camp. In his usual manner of assisting trainees, he directed me to fill fish production in a blank space. After that, he jokingly asked me to be his official girlfriend and I laughed. I was amused! A week later, we were asked to collect our YAGEP work kits. Guess who was giving out the work kits? Jerry!

“In the course of our early morning training, I noticed that he gave me a wink and as much as it registered, I did not want to think about it because I was of the opinion that all staff in the camp were married. Eventually, we became friends and kept in touch on phone. He kept encouraging me to concentrate on the programme and our friendship grew stronger. Few months later, we tied the nuptial knot in 2017. I am a fulfilled wife and mother of his baby. I am grateful to God and my Governor, Senator Ifeanyi Okowa, who through YAGEP brought more than my dream husband my way.”

Mr and Mrs Lawrence Ajuebon

For 34 year-old Priscillia Ajuebon (nee Okonye), it was a completely different scenario. It is marriage between a female STEPpreneur and a non-beneficiary. She met Lawrence in a church programme in Ogwashi-Uku on the 12th of August, 2017. It was love at first sight. They courted for a year and sealed their union in holy matrimony on the 11th of August, 2018.



MR & MRS LAWRENCE AJUEGBON

Priscilla: “My skill in catering and confectionery actually prepared me for marriage. In our contemporary world, every man wants an industrious woman as wife especially as unemployment is on the increase. The STEP programme has really helped me to contribute my quota to the welfare of my home and my husband is happy with what I do.”

OkowaPlus wishes them a happy, fruitful and fulfilling marriage.

Testimonials



OKPOCHILI EVE AT WORK

OKPOCHINI EVE (2015/2016 CYCLE)

LGA: UKWUANI

ENTERPRISE: FASHION & TAILORING

Eleven years after graduation, I was unemployed till I got engaged through Governor Okowa's Skills Acquisition and Entrepreneurship Programme (STEP). I was trained and established in Fashion Design. Ever since I became a beneficiary of the programme, it has been a source of fulfilment and has given me a sense of direction, knowing

that I have something to contribute not only to my family, but to the society at large.

Economically, I now contribute to the wellbeing of family; my husband is no longer shouldering the responsibility alone. I have not only acquired a skill, but have trained and met a lot of people. Actually, I have gone beyond tailoring; I have gone into fashion and designing. Apart from the physical trainees, I have online trainees who cut across the nations of the world. I also sell fabrics. By way of giving back to society and as promotion for my enterprise, I did a random selection of people and made free clothes for them.

I have trained three persons and presently have eight apprentices. This is the best programme any government can initiate for the youth. Crafts and trade are important for the development of Delta State. Skill is for life; nobody can take it away. A job can be terminated, but a skill is permanent as money keeps rolling in for life. Most employees

lack job satisfaction, but he who is educated and goes ahead to acquire a skill is wise.

OMEIFE ISIOMA (2016/2017 CYCLE)

LGA: ANIOCHA SOUTH

ENTERPRISE: FISH PRODUCTION

Since establishment, I have successfully completed three production cycles. I have grown from having the initial



ISIOMA OMEIFE HARVESTING HER FISH

two ponds and 2,000 fishes to having four ponds and 4,000 fishes.

Through this programme, I have completed my PGD in Agricultural Extension and am already making plans to proceed for a master's programme. I now assist my parents as the first child of the family. I have gone into fish processing with the aid of the fish smoking kiln given to my cluster by the State Government. I also have a fruit shop where I sell packaged processed fish and watermelon harvested from my crop farm. My business is registered and I will not quit.

YAGEP has been of immense benefit to me and my family. May God continue to protect Governor Okowa to do more for the youth. I have ensured that my entire family is registered and armed with their voter's card to vote Okowa again.

OGBIYE AYORUNME SIMON (2016/2017 CYCLE)

LGA: ISOKO SOUTH

ENTERPRISE: FISH PRODUCTION

Ogbiye Ayoronume Simon YAGEPpreneur is the CEO of Omorovie Fish Farm located at YAGEP Fish Cluster Farm Egbokodo-Itsekiri in Warri South Local Government Area.

"By God's grace, I am a graduate of Agricultural Extension and Management from Delta State Polytechnic, Ozoro (2013). I was one of the few privileged Agricultural Science Graduates whose names were compiled from our higher institutions of learning in fulfilment of Governor Ifeanyi Okowa's campaign promise.

The quest for work began even before I completed my National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) in Imo State 2015. I applied to different agencies within Imo State but I could not secure any job apart from teaching but the pay was not commensurate

with the service. After I returned to my State, I stayed with my friend who is a banker with First Bank of Nigeria Plc, in Ughelli. I applied for teaching job within Ughelli and its environs but it was a fruitless effort because of the poor offer. Thereafter, I worked as the Manager of a farm in Aro Town in Ughelli till I was suddenly invited for interview by the Office of the Chief Job Creation Officer, Asaba. This was the turning point in my life.

After the compulsory completion of a three months internship/training which added another feather to my cap, I was invited to YAGEP Fish Farm Cluster at Egbokodo-Itsekiri for the allotment of two fish ponds with 2,000 post fingerlings with sufficient fish feed to grow them to table size (1kg). I was equally given ₦50,000.00 and placed on monthly stipend of ₦15,000.00 for six months, which make up the production cycle.

After harvest, I was able to purchase 100ft x 50ft piece of land in that same fish farm cluster for expansion purposes with five fish ponds dug on it. Presently I have seven fish ponds with 5,000 fish. I have successfully run three production cycles and I am on the fourth production cycle. There was a time I had about 10,000 fishes which I have sold off. I also engage in the following services- brood stock of fish from fingerlings, post-juvenile to table size (1kg); fish processing (smoking and baking); agent service; consultation and organizes seminars and workshops within and outside the state.

Despite the challenges of inadequate funds, I look forward to practising integrated agriculture. In the next 10 years, I want to be among the first 20 successful fish farmers in this country. My candid advice to my fellow *STEPreneurs* and *YAGEPpreneurs* is to dream, be dedicated, disciplined and be driven to succeed.



OGBIYE AYORUNUME SIMON



JENNIFER OKOCHA AT WORK

JENNIFER CHINASIAOKWU OKOCHA (2016/2017 CYCLE)

LGA: ANIOCHA SOUTH

ENTERPRISE: AUDIO-VISUAL TECHNOLOGY

Jennifer Chinasiaokwu Okocha is the CEO of JennyChi Studios, Asaba. Jennifer attended Delta State Polytechnic, Ogwashi-Uku where she obtained her OND in Business Administration. Despite being in a male dominated vocation, she stands tall in affirmation of the saying that what a man can do, a woman can do better as she makes waves in video editing, photography and set designs. To her, "Still in business is my first achievement. Secondly, I can boost of taking care of my needs and those of my parents." She has trained one person and has clients both in the private and public sector.

TERRY OGOLOR (2015/2017 CYCLE)

LGA: UDU

ENTERPRISE: FISH PRODUCTION

Terry Ogolor attended College of Education, Agbor where he studied Biology/Chemistry.

"I want to share my life testimony of how the S.M.A.R.T agenda of Governor Ifeanyi Okowa transformed my life and liberated me from being a job seeker and made me an entrepreneur.

Upon graduation in 2009, I was unemployed. Initially, I taught in a private school, but discovered that the ₦10,000 I was paid was nothing to write home about. Thereafter, I started hustling on the streets, but the street was not friendly. One day, a friend told me about job creation form. Though I applied, I was not shortlisted. The second time, I reluctantly applied; I thought it was one of those

government programmes. To my greatest surprise, I was invited to attend the interview after which I did not hear from job creation for a while. I became frustrated and concluded it was a scam and gave up.

On the streets, to feed was a problem. So, my friends and I decided to go into crime to survive. We planned towards executing a crime. While we were planning it, the list of successful applicants was published by the Office of the Job Creation Officer and those who saw my name informed me I was invited to camp. At the camp, I had three square meals daily throughout the week. For the first time in my life, it was unbelievable I could have three

meals daily. After three days at the camp, my friends called to inform it was time to execute the planned crime, but I called it off telling them I had travelled. I was no longer interested in crime because I was comfortable with life at the Orientation Camp. In fact, I had a rethink and decided to get serious with my life after the Orientation and Personal Effectiveness Training (OPET).

Thereafter, I had a three-month internship, where I became well grounded in fish production. My trainer was good. Shortly after that, I was given 2,000 juveniles, 150 bags of fish feed, a monthly stipend of ₦15,000 for six months, two earthen ponds and other items. My assessment of my Starter Pack excluding the ponds was over a million naira. I was shocked and I began to shed tears. I then pledged that I am indebted to the State Government and that the only way I could pay back was to ensure that I succeed in my enterprise.



TERRY OGOLOR FEEDING HIS FISH AT UGBOKODO OKPE

Apart from fish farming, I am into transportation. I was able to use some of the proceeds from my fish farm after harvest to buy a tricycle (*keke*.) My colleagues at the farm pay me to transport their feeds for them from the point of purchase to the cluster. Also, I use the *keke* to supply feeds to various farms on behalf of feed sellers and I am well paid. My daily routine is work at the farm in the morning, resume transportation and return to the farm by 5pm. I rejected a ₦75,000.00 job to work as a scaffolder in Port Harcourt.

Today, I am a happy fish farm owner at YAGEP Fish Farm Cluster, Ugbokodo-Okpe. I can fend for myself, family and friends because of what Sen. Dr. Okowa did for me. I am into the sixth production cycle now. I have grown my fish from 2,000 to over 4,000 in four ponds. I set up fish farms for people; I am into consultancy by experience. I help those with challenges in their fish farms and the pay is good. Thanks to the vision of His Excellency, the Executive Governor of Delta State, for making me a consultant in fish production.

EGBRI BELIEVE MARK (2016/2017 CYCLE)

LGA: ETHIOPE EAST

ENTERPRISE: FISH PRODUCTION



EGBRI BELIEVE MARK FEEDING HIS FISH

Believe Mark Egbri is the CEO of Believer’s Global Service Enterprise.

“I attended Delta State Polytechnic, Ozoro where I obtained a National Diploma in Business Administration and Management. I was trained and established at YAGEP Fish Farm Cluster, Ugbokodo-Okpe. The experience I acquired from my trainer and on the

job experience from the various cycles I have executed have improved my practice in fish production, in terms of feeding, water quality management and death rate mortality control.

My business has grown. From two fish ponds and 2,000 fishes, I now have five fish ponds stocked with 5,000 post fingerlings; I have three workers. Individuals and schools come for training and excursion. I have a plot of land which I plan to develop for hatchery unit that will employ more youths and reduce the rate of unemployment in society. My life has been transformed from being in the state of unemployment to that of an employer of labour. I thank the Governor for his Youth Agricultural Entrepreneurs Programme (YAGEP).



SMART SHEDRACK OGHENEROMESUO AT WORK

SMART SHEDRACK OGHENEROMESUO (2015/2016 CYCLE)

LGA: ISOKO SOUTH

ENTERPRISE: TILING

Smart Shedrack Ogheneromesuo is the CEO of Smartos Tiling Nig. Limited and has an OND in Secretarial Administration from Delta State Polytechnic, Ozoro.

Based on referrals and networking, my customer base has increased. Through tiling, I have been able to get married, provide for my family and register my children in school. In addition, I bought more tools for my business and have acquired a plot of land, measuring 50 x 100 ft. I look forward to obtaining a loan and grant from the Government to enable me diversify into the sale of tiles.

I appreciate Governor Ifeanyi Okowa for this opportunity.

OMOVIE OGHENEVWAIRE (2015/2016 CYCLE)**LGA: ETHIOPE EAST****ENTERPRISE: FASHION DESIGN & TAILORING**

Oghenevwaire Omovie is a graduate from Delta State University, where she studied Pharmacology.

"I am the CEO of V.Tre's Design located in Warri and Port Harcourt. After I graduated in 2014, there was no job, but delivered from joblessness through STEP. I was trained for six months and paid ₦10,000 naira per month for the six months for my transport fare to my training centre. I was established with an industrial weaving machine, a manual sewing machine, an ironing table, a pressing iron, a generator, ₦60,000 for shop rent, ₦30,000 cash gift, and 10,000 stipend for three months.

I really did not have anything or money to buy the items or to learn the skills. Today, I am a boss of my own, have trained more than 10 persons, have a branch in Port-Harcourt and I am so comfortable now. I want to say a very big thank you to our Governor for making my life worth living, for making me a boss of my own. He has been so good to Delta youths. May God Almighty continue to bless him.



OMOVIE OGHENEVWAIRE

ENONU YA HENRY (2015/2016 CYCLE)**LGA: WARRI NORTH****ENTERPRISE: FASHION DESIGN & TAILORING**

Henry Enonuya is the CEO of Gizzo Clothings. In line with his course of study, Fine & Applied Arts, at the Delta State University, Abraka, Henry has carved a cliché for himself in the fashion world by diversifying from the conventional men and female wears to designing of customized shirts, t-shirts, face caps, native wears etc. He has procured more equipment, attended several exhibitions and recently got married to another *STEP*preneur in Hairdressing and Makeover.

Hear him, "My line of business has been that of innovation, creativity and diversification. I went into production of customized wears because they are trendy and more lucrative. I sell most of my products online. I have acquired more equipment, a machine for branding at ₦600,000.00 and an industrial pressing iron for printing designs on fabrics at ₦300,000.00. I am working hard to acquire more. I have two apprentices and a paid secretary. It was challenging at first, but the passion for what I do kept me focused. I have gone for several exhibitions. I score Governor Ifeanyi Okowa 80% for his job creation initiative through entrepreneurship and for his commitment to curbing unemployment among youths."



HENRY ENONU YA IN HIS CUSTOMIZED T-SHIRT AT AN EVENT

EROMEDOGHENE EZEKIEL (2016/2017 CYCLE)**LGA: ISOKO NORTH****ENTERPRISE: FISH PRODUCTION**

Ezekiel Eromedoghene is the CEO of Ezekiel-Voh Agro Ventures and has a BSC from the Delta State University.



EROMEDOGHENE EZEKIEL FEEDING HIS FISH

"I could remember in 2016 when I was called to report for an interview at job creation office, Asaba. The questions I asked were how, why and when did I apply? I then realised that the Governor being a transparent man had directed that names of best Agricultural Science graduates in higher institutions across Delta State be enrolled in YAGEP.

Since then, my life turned around. Having graduated since 2012, I was unemployed till God used Governor Okowa to change my story to a testimony. I am here to testify because if I am to convert my Starter Pack to cash, it would cost me ₦1.5m. My friends in other states do not have such testimony. When my set suffered from flood after establishment, Governor Okowa re-established us with the same quantity and quality of Starter Packs. We are, indeed, grateful.

The achievements are awesome. I now live and am able to pay house rent in Asaba because I was established in YAGEP Fish Farm Cluster in Anwai. From two ponds and 2,000 fishes, I now have four ponds and 4,000 fishes. At some point, I had 6,000 fishes and have completed three production cycles. In addition, I am almost done with my MSC in Agricultural Extension from Delta State University; I am able to take good care of myself and my family. Interestingly, YAGEP gave me a wife, a YAGEPpreneur in rice production.

However, it has not been easy. I faced lots of challenges, but I overcame. Governor Okowa has been a caring and capable father through constant monitoring and mentoring.

AGBEDTSE SALWA (2017/2018 CYCLE)

LGA: SAPELE

ENTERPRISE: CATERING & CONFECTIONARY

Salwa Agbedetse is a Brown STEP beneficiary. In less

than a year, Salwa has been able to establish her business comfortably at Olorogun Felix Ibru Secretariat, Asaba.

"I was into catering before now, but not on this scale because I needed to build on it and that was the reason I applied for Brown STEP. It was a wise decision for me because of the hands-on-training, the Orientation and Personal Effectiveness Training and the Entrepreneurship and Business Management Training. These courses changed my perception about how to manage myself and my business generally. The greatest lesson learnt is how to control my temperament and how to treat customers.

The money is rolling in with lots of referrals; it is financially positive. I no longer have any reason to be broke. I love being my own boss. I have the opportunity to travel to work for people and get paid for it. Youths should embrace entrepreneurship to break loose from joblessness.



AGBEDTSE SALWA SERVING HER CLIENTS

ETERIGHO ONANEFE JOSHUA (2015/2016 CYCLE)

LGA: ISOKO SOUTH

ENTERPRISE: HAIRDRESSING & MAKEOVER

Joshua Onanefe Eterigho is the CEO of Adept Spring Unisex Salon, Azagba Ogwashi. Though he has a HND in Graphic Design from Ogwashi-Uku Polytechnic, he is a Hairdresser.

"My passion for Hairdressing led me into this. I diversified into barbing out of experience. My greatest



ETERIGHO ONANEFE JOSHUA WORKING ON A CLIENT'S HAIR

achievement is the ability to build a team, who represent me anytime, anywhere. I have trained five persons and I have two employees. I have acquired a plot of land and have been able to sponsor myself back to school for HND in Graphic Designs. My family and dependants now have better livelihood. I also trained my younger brother to be very skilled in Hairdressing and Makeover.

I plan to expand to Asaba in order to raise my capital base. Delta youths should develop the passion to embrace entrepreneurship and vocational skills. Skills give independence and the opportunity of being one's own boss.

MOSIERE IJEOMA (2017/2018 CYCLE)

LGA: IKA SOUTH

ENTERPRISE: CATERING & CONFECTIONERY

Ijeoma Mosiere is the CEO of Republic Foods, Catering & Confectionery. She is a Chartered Marketer with a HND from Federal Polytechnic, Edo-Ekiti and an MSC in Banking & Finance from Delta State University, Abraka.



IJEOMA MOSIERE INSTRUCTING HER STEP TRAINEES

"I was marketing bread for bakeries before now, but the quest and passion to have my own catering outfit motivated me to enroll in STEP. Five months after I was established with a Starter Pack, I am now a business owner and a trainer. During training, every money paid to me was invested into acquiring equipment. I started baking and making supplies and building my contacts. With knowledge in marketing, I started taking my products to banks and corporate organizations. What I produce is consumed on daily basis because of its quality. I get contracts for catering services at ceremonies.

My major interest is bread production, owning a bakery; I have gone ahead to acquire skills in bread making. I am sure of five recipes and at the right time, I shall establish a bakery. At present I have five trainees from the Job Creation Office, an apprentice and one employee.

ABIGHE AARON OBARO (2015/2016 CYCLE)

LGA: ISOKO NORTH

ENTERPRISE: BLOCK MOULDING

Aaron Obaro Abighe is the CEO of Obarson & Sons Block Production Enterprises.

"Though I started small, the business has grown. I am a building contractor by experience. Most times, I mould at sites, but only supply to clients who purchase directly from my office. There are lots of competitors. I have done more than 10 major contracts and I do not have regrets.

From the proceeds of my business, I am building a three self-contained room and parlour apartments. I am about to roof it. I am grateful to Governor Okowa for his job creation programmes.



ABIGHE AARON OBARO



FAITH VOKE EGWEDE TEACHING HER STEP TRAINEES

EGWEDE VOKE FAITH (2017/2018 CYCLE)

LGA: UGHELLI NORTH

ENTERPRISE: FASHION DESIGN & TAILORING

Faith Voke Egwe is the CEO of Jazz Stitches and a Brown STEP beneficiary who became a job creation trainer five months after establishment with Starter Pack.

“Before I enrolled for Brown STEP, I was sewing at home with one machine and I did not have many clients. Fortunately, I was successful in job creation physical verification and proficiency test and thereafter sent for refresher course and established immediately with the following: a cutting table; a pressing iron; a big generator; two industrial machines (weaving and sewing); ₦50,000.00 shop rent subsidy and ₦8,000.00 for transport. As soon as I got to Ughelli, I knew I would no longer use my home.

Now I have a large fashion shop with the help of my husband and Governor Okowa’s shop rent subsidy. I have lots of clients, sell fabrics, and have become a job creation trainer. As I speak, I have acquired four machines from the business. I have eight STEP trainees as my students and three

ATANO OCHUKO KELVIN



apprentices. God bless Governor Okowa because he made it possible.”

ATANO OCHUKO KELVIN

(2017/2018 CYCLE)

LGA: UGHELLI NORTH

**ENTERPRISE: ELECTRICAL
INSTALLATION & REPAIR**

Kelvin Ochuko Atano is the Co-CEO of JK Science & Tech Innovative Company LTD, a company known for the production of inverters, car trackers, household alarm devices, security devices etc. Kelvin has a BSC in Accounting and a PGD in Business Management from Obafemi Awolowo University, Ife. He is an innovative, inquisitive and a determined entrepreneur with the passion for excellence. Since establishment, he has recorded immense growth in capacity and patronage which has helped him procure some equipment and take care of his family needs. He is an employer of labour and a trainer of IT students from tertiary institutions.

“I knew little about electrical works, but had passion to produce electrical devices like ‘alarm device’. I had to form an alliance with a partner who studied Electrical and Electronics Engineering who is knowledgeable in computer programming. Along the line, I heard about STEP and because I needed a platform where I could learn

more, I immediately took advantage of the opportunity. I needed the training for a complete package, and to develop my interest which is production.

I have had funny feelings about empowerment programmes, but Governor Okowa's job creation programme is so real and well thought out. One is trained and established on a platter of gold. Whoever does not take full advantage of it is not serious-minded. I identified my dream and followed it. The sky is the limit. I really appreciate the Government of Delta State. I have more than 20 products, but only three with my inscription JK. I am appealing for patent for them and for a machine that can mass produce my products. I participated in a product exhibition recently at Osubi Trade Fair Complex."

NIKORO WILSON (2015/2016 CYCLE)

LGA UVWIE

ENTERPRISE: PIGGERY

Wilson Nikoro's Piggery Farm is located at Okoribi by the PHCN high tension Line Okoribi, Effurun.

"I was established with a bumper Starter Pack of a building with thirteen pens and eight in-pigs and one boar, with the sum of ₦192,000.00 for feeding and medication for the first month and another ₦162,000.00 for the 2nd and 3rd month.



NIKORO WILSON

I have risen from that small scale farming to medium-scale farming with additional two buildings of pens with twenty pens in each building. I have trained seven persons and currently employ two persons. Members of my family work with me too. I have an average production capacity of 100-150 piglets per annum.

UMUKORO NAPOLEON (2015/2016 CYCLE)

L.G.A: UGHELLI NORTH

ENTERPRISE: PIGGERY

I have a BSC in Agric. Economics from the Delta State University, Abraka. Before I got engaged by YAGEP, I was a teacher in a private school. The pay was poor, but I was fortunate to be one of the beneficiaries of the YAGEP programme. Upon establishment, I was asked to provide a land for my pen in my village, Orogun. Thereafter, I was given eight in-pigs (pregnant pigs) and two boars (male pigs). Money was provided for me to feed them for six months.

I have recorded lots of achievements. I have been able to employ two workers, a cleaner and a security man; become a consultant in pig production; trained two persons; carry out treatment for other pig farmers in different farms in my area and supply in-pigs and piglets to fresh pig farmers in my area. I have also bought a land close to my farm, which I intend to develop soon to diversify into fish production and I was able to establish my wife with a provision store to assist me financially. I achieved all these because of Governor Okowa's job creation initiative.

To crown it all, I will marry my wife formally on December 29, 2018. All is from my pig farms. The standard of living for my two children has improved. I no longer beg for money from my family and friends. I am grateful for this opportunity given to me by my governor.

NAPOLEON UMUKORO AT WORK



EMMANUEL EKENE UCHE (2016/2017 CYCLE)**LGA: ANIOCHA NORTH****ENTERPRISE: ELECTRICAL INSTALLATION & REPAIRS**

Emmanuel Uche is the CEO of Charima Electrical Store, Issele-Uku and holds a BSc in Medical Biochemistry from the University of Benin. He is efficient and knowledgeable in his line of enterprise. He has installed electricity in over 40 buildings.

"I have trained one person and engaged 4-8 persons on adhoc basis to execute my contracts. I have featured in a number exhibitions, and was part of the team of electricians that installed electricity in the venue for the 2017 Job Creation Product Exhibition."



UCHE EKENE EMMANUEL

ESIENAKERIEN MERCY OMA (2017/2018 CYCLE)**LGA: UVWIE****ENTERPRISE: CATERING & CONFECTIONERY**

Mercy Oma Esienakkerien is the CEO of Classic Empire. She is only five months old in business, but is already making significant impact in the food business.

"Before now, I was unemployed and I was helpless as a single mother of two. I begged for everything I needed. All long, I had passion for catering services, but did not know how to bring my dream to reality till I met a STEP trainee who enlightened me on how to obtain a form. The rest is history as I was posted to a training centre for three months after which I was established with a Starter Pack.



ESIENAKERIEN MERCY OMA

I was shocked when I got to Asaba for my Starter Pack. Neither my parents nor I would have been able to afford it. I worked at home for two months before I rented this shop and it has been from glory to glory. I earn enough money that I no longer depend on anyone for the upkeep of myself and my family. My family now depends on me.

The opportunities are endless. I was recently nominated by the Office of the Chief Job Creation Officer to participate at the DACIMMA/Ministry of Commerce and Industry Trade Fair at Osubi. I want to use this opportunity to appreciate Dr Okowa for allowing himself to be used by God to help people like me."

OMAJUWA DINA PORTIA (2015/2016 CYCLE)**LGA: WARRI SOUTH WEST****ENTERPRISE: HAIRDRESSING & MAKEOVER**

Omajuwa Dina Portia is a graduate of Mass Communications (BSc). Portia keyed into the job creation programme immediately she heard about it and was fortunate to be successful in the extended interviews. Since establishment after training, she has trained lots of persons and procured more equipment.



OMAJUWA DINA PORTIA

"I want to appreciate the Governor for I now have my own Salon where I make people beautiful and earn my daily bread. I have trained 20 persons and I have one employee. I have expanded my business in terms of procurement of additional equipment; I rented a bigger shop and have also participated in a trade fair in Lagos. I carry out a lot of on-line marketing and get my customers through referrals.

EKARIKO ANNABEL (2015/2016 CYCLE)

LGA: PATANI

ENTERPRISE: PIGGERY

Annabel Ekariko attended the University of Port-Harcourt where she obtained BSC in Physical and Health Education.

"I was established with a building with 14 pens, eight in-pigs and two boars with an amount of money to feed them to table size in six months. The experience has been awesome. Sometimes, I have more than enough. I am into partnership with my husband.

At present, I have 44 pigs because I sold some recently and I have an employee.



EKARIKO ANNABEL

EFE IRORAKPOR (2015/2016 CYCLE)

LGA: SAPELE

ENTERPRISE: POULTRY

Efe Irorakpor is the CEO of Irorakpor Farms. He has an OND in Accounting from Delta State Polytechnic, Ozoro. Located in YAGEP Farm Cluster, Sapele, Efe is two years in business.

"The job creation programme of the Governor Okowa-led government is one of the best policies of our time. It was initially very challenging in terms of the location



EFE IRORAKPOR

of the cluster and cost of bird feed. In spite of all these, the achievements outweigh the shortfalls. Firstly, the knowledge is unquantifiable; I can expand as soon as I am financially stable. I have trained so many persons and have successfully completed three cycles of broilers and layers. I currently have 400 layers and 300 day-old brooding.

MADU NGOZI (2015/2016 CYCLE)

LGA: NON-INDIGENE

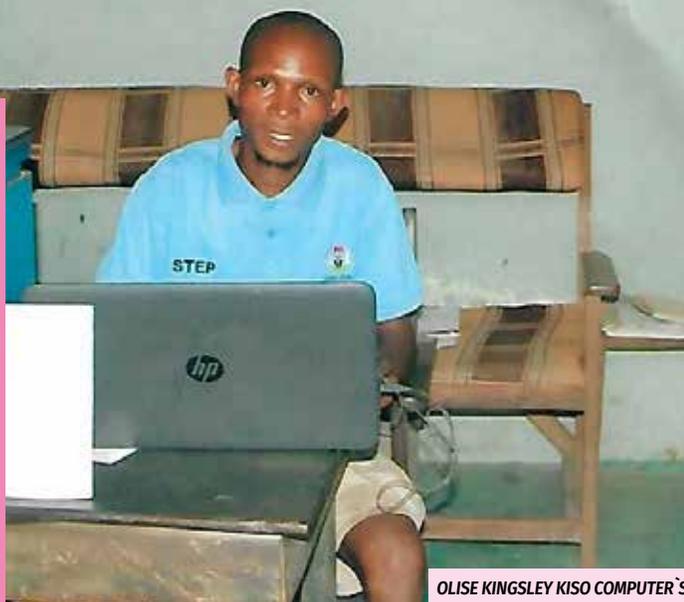
ENTERPRISE: POULTRY

Ngozi Madu has a B.Sc in Psychology from Imo State University. From a Starter Pack of poultry pen, 200 broilers, 400 points of lay birds, 150 bags of feed to grow them to table size, Ngozi has 600 layers. I recently sold my broilers and am planning to restock. It is a unique thing to be in the poultry business. My profit is majorly from the sale of eggs. I now meet my daily needs.

The fact that I am still in business shows that the programme is successful. I am optimistic that that my enterprise will grow beyond this level. I appeal to the Governor to engage more youths in poultry in order to meet the high demand for poultry products.



NGOZI MADU



OLISE KINGSLEY KISSO COMPUTER'S

OLISE KINGSLEY (2015/2016 CYCLE)

LGA: NDOKWA WEST

ENTERPRISE: COMPUTER INSTALLATION & HARDWARE REPAIRS

Olise Kingsley has HND in Accounting. He is the CEO of Kisso Computers. He acquired more knowledge in printing and also diversified into sales of motor cycle spare parts to generate more income for himself. At present, he has trained over 30 persons in the business for free in his locality. Through the business centre, he became a publisher and has authored two books. "Working as an ICT Technologist has helped me to care for the needs of my family adequately and I want to thank Governor Okowa for the job creation initiative"

KELVIN EJENAVI IDEDEVBO (2016/2017 CYCLE)

LGA: UWWIE

ENTERPRISE: WELDING & FABRICATION

Kelvin Ejenavi Idedevbo is the MD of Ejenavi Construction Company, Ugborikoko, Warri. He has HND in Welding



KELVIN EJENAVI IDEDEVBO

and Fabrication from the Petroleum Training Institute, Effurun. Since establishing his enterprise, he has been able to procure more equipment, render services to the public, and feature in exhibitions. As one who is practising what he studied at higher school, he is a square peg in a square hole. He is passionate about what he does. He has five trainees under him.

ECHAZOLEM STEPHEN ROLAND (2015/2016 CYCLE)

LGA: IKA NORTH EAST

ENTERPRISE: COMPUTER INSTALLATION & REPAIRS

Stephen Roland Echezolem is a Computer Technologist and the CEO of Onestevo Fast Link Technology & Computer Schools, located at College of Education, Agbor.

"The greatest achievement from the STEP programme is knowledge; it is rewarding. I have four employees and have trained over 30 students in computer repairs, installation and application software as well as Microsoft Word, Word Excel, Power Point, Corel Draw etc. I have also diversified into the repairs of mobile phones and have bought more laptops for my computer school. Since I found this opportunity, STEP, my life has become a blessing as I have been able to provide for myself and for my family."



STEPHEN ROLAND ECHEZOLEM

EVAH HELEN (2017/2018 CYCLE)

ENTERPRISE: FISH PRODUCTION

LGA: UKWUANI

Helen Evah, a graduate of Fishery and Aquaculture from the Delta State University, is the CEO of Begeg Farms. She was unemployed for seven years till she enrolled in the YAGEP programme. Only six months in business, Helen has made impressive achievements having acquired a



FAITH EVAH FILLING HER FISH TANK WITH WATER

smoking kiln for fish processing and has diversified into Poultry.

“After the extensive training and establishment with Starter Pack at YAGEP Fish Farm Cluster at Delta State Agricultural and Rural Development Agency (DARDA), Ibusa, my life and that of my family changed. I was given three in-door tarpaulin fish tanks, 2,000 juveniles, 150 bags of fish feeds in tranches, a scale and ₦15,000 monthly stipends for six months. Other support packages for the cluster included provision of generator, security, rest room and water. The experience is good. In the past, farmers were regarded as dirty, but I am not dirty because Governor Ifeanyi Okowa made it easy for us; he has made my life change for good.

I have gone ahead and diversified into poultry because after feeding my fish in the morning, I use the rest of the day to tend my birds. I am busy, fully engaged. My fish has grown to table size and the money is coming in. I am never broke. I procured a smoking kiln with which I have been able to go into fish processing for value addition. I have done two cycles of broilers. I reared 200 broilers at the cost of N200, 000.00 in each cycle, but sold them for N400, 000.00, which is 100% profit. I am already planning to restock for Easter. For fish production, I have begun the second cycle too.

IMODJE LUCY IRIKEFE (2016/2017)

LGA:

ENTERPRISE: POULTRY

LGA: ETHIOPE EAST

Irikefe Lucky Imodje has HND in Mechanical Engineering from Petroleum Training Institute (PTI). He was established at YAGEP Farm Cluster at Ekpan-Ovu in Ethioppe East Local Government Area. He has in the past three years successfully run his enterprise, initiating innovations to keep his birds healthy and big. He has grown his business, bought a car and recently got married.

“I have successfully done three cycles of layers. I have 700 layers presently laying eggs, another 700 chicks in my brooding pen; altogether, I have 1,400 birds. I have been able to buy myself and the business a car. I also got married last month. Being part of YAGEP has put lots of smiles on my face.”



IMODJE IRIKEFE FEEDING HIS BIRDS

SENGE PERE (2016/2017 CYCLE)

LGA: PATANI

ENTERPRISE: DECORARION & EVENT MANAGEMENT

Pere Senge is the CEO of Senge Concept in Patani. In less than one and half years after establishment, the business has grown remarkably. He has acquired additional equipment to boost his enterprise such as a giant bridal canopy, 100 chair covers, more fabrics, ornamented designs and floral. He is basically into rental services and decoration.

“I have covered lots of ceremonies and usually engage casual workers to execute such jobs. Being a beneficiary of STEP has improved my finances by 100% because I know where I am coming from. I have learnt that one



SENGE PERE

needs patience to grow a business. Everyone needs a skill and it is rewarding if one persists. I appreciate Governor Okowa for taking me off the street; now I can fend for myself and for my family.”

FORUKPO SETH (2016/2017 CYCLE)

LGA: BURUTU

ENTERPRISE: WELDING & FABRICATION

Seth Forukpo began his entrepreneurship journey in welding and fabrication a year ago in Ayakoromo. Ever since, Seth has had several contracts to fabricate burglary proofs and other metal works. To increase his financial base, he diversified into Tiling.

“I am happy with my choice vocation. My experience so far has been that of success, as my family and I now enjoy better livelihood. I have also diversified into Tiling to increase my income. I am grateful to Governor Okowa for this lifetime opportunity”.

FORUKPO SETH



OGIRIH ONORIODE DAVIDSON INSTRUCTING HIS TRAINEES

OGRIH ONORIODE DAVIDSON (2016/2017 CYCLE)

LGA: ISOKO NORTH

ENTERPRISE: ICT SERVICES

Ogrih Onoriode Davidson is a BSC holder in Mechanical and Production Engineering from the Delta State University. Though he registered and trained in Welding and Fabrication, Onoriode decided to invest in ICT Services. According to him, he has lost count of the number of jobs he has executed. He has expanded and procured more equipment and computers. From the proceeds of his enterprise, he was able to marry a wife. He has become a job creator and a trainer.

“The past two years has been very successful. Target has been set; I have a vision and I working hard to meet it. I have two workers on my payroll and five trainees. I also want the State Government to patronize my enterprise.”

PINNICK OGBIRE (2017/2018 CYCLE)

LGA: WARRI NORTH

ENTERPRISE: WELDING & FABRICATION

Ogbire Pinnick is the CEO of AOD Engineering, Asaba and has a BSC in Geology from the Delta State University. With just three months in Welding and Fabrication, Ogbire is full of ideas, innovation and will go places in the world of entrepreneurship. He said his choice of Welding and Fabrication was based on his love for research, adding that STEP helped him to acquire both the theoretical knowledge as well as the practical. He has a shop that he is developing to metal work industry and engineering company.

“I already have lots of clients because I specialise in the fabrication of giant barbeque grill, industrial gas, burglary proof, iron gates and many others. Though I was trained as a general metal work technician, my specialty is building large industrial works. I want a company not a road side shop; I want a workshop for mass production, an office and a showroom. I am working on that by ploughing back my profits. I have one trainee and regularly engage expert



PINNICK OGBIRE

workers on casual basis. I am very optimistic because there is good market for metal works in Asaba.”

UMUHEHHE OBUKWHO (2015/2016 CYCLE)

LGA: ETHIOPE EAST

ENTERPRISE: DECORATION & EVENT MANAGEMENT

Obukwho Umuhehe has an OND in Business Management from the Delta State Polytechnic, Ozoro. He has grown from having 100 chairs to 200 chairs, 20 tables to 50 tables, 10 double canopies, ornamental decorative items and has employed two persons.

“I am basically into rental services and I network with other event managers to satisfy the needs of my customers. Currently, I have two staff and six trainees.”



UMUHEHHE OBUKWHO



LUWURU TAMARATUEMI FEEDING HER BIRDS

LUWURU TAMARATUEMI (2015/2016 CYCLE)

LGA: WARRI NORTH

ENTERPRISE: POULTRY

Tamaratuemi Luwuru is the CEO of Tamara God’s Own Farm located in YAGEP Farm Cluster, Koko in Warri North Local Government Area. With HND in Computer Science from Federal Polytechnic, Auchi, Tamara rather preferred poultry. According to her, poultry afforded her the opportunity to practise something else other than her course of study.

“I have done three cycles of layers and at present have 600 layers which lay 15 crates of eggs daily. I sold off my broilers at Christmas and I am about to restock for Easter celebration. I brood my birds from day old and the profit margin has been rewarding. I am still investing and planning to diversify into fish production. I have an employee.”

IDOGHO DANIEL, EDOJA HENRY AND EDUKE NIGERIA (2015/2016 CYCLE)

LGA: ISOKO NORTH

ENTERPRISE: BLOCKING MOULDING

Daniel Idogho, Henry Edoja and Nigeria Eduke are partners in Block Moulding and the Co-CEOs of Henning Block Production Enterprise. Consistent with one of the objectives of the Job Creation Scheme to support like-minded entrepreneurs to partner among themselves the trio came together and decided to pool resources together to start the business.

Collectively, they have sunk a borehole in the business premises, procured more equipment and have diversified



IDOGHO DANIEL, EDOJA HENRY AND EDUKE NIGERIA

into other businesses of their own. While Daniel diversified into plumbing, Henry and Nigeria are into event management. Speaking collectively, they had this to say, "That Henning Block Production Enterprise has survived three years is our major testimony. Through the business we have been able to provide for ourselves and to meet the needs of our individual families."

ALAWURU SYLVIA EFEAWARE (2016/2017 CYCLE)

LGA: UDU

ENTERPRISE: CROP PRODUCTION

Sylvia Efeaware Alawuru has a BSC in Biology Technology from the University of Jos. Since establishment in YAGEP Farm Cluster, Songhai Delta, Amukpe, she has completed lots of production cycles.

"This programme is good and timely as it has given me a decent means of livelihood. Today, I am proud to be a farmer and there is dignity in labour. Every year, I achieve three cycles of planting because I cultivate three months



ALAWURU SYLVIA EFEAWARE HARVESTING TOMATOES

crops. I plant cucumber, watermelon, groundnut, okra and tomatoes. Through these, I have been able to meet my needs. The challenge of the business is inappropriate pricing by market women and the perishable nature of vegetables."

REGINA OSSAI (2016/2017 CYCLE)

LGA: IKA NORTH EAST

ENTERPRISE: BEAD MAKING

I graduated from College of Education, Agbor, in 2009, where I obtained my NCE. Prior to my being empowered by Governor Ifeanyi Okowa in bead making, I was actually not engaged in any venture. It was my husband who got the form for me. I applied and was fortunate to be selected.

After the one week orientation at Songhai Delta, Amukpe, Sapele, I was sent to one Miss Evelyn Okoh, who has her shop at Odozi Street, Agbor, Ika South local Government Area, for apprenticeship in bead making. The training lasted three months, after which I was given a Starter Pack to set up my own business. Part of the empowerment was money to rent a shop. Lest I forget, during the duration



REGINA OSSAI, BEAD MAKER

of the training I was given ₦10,000 (ten thousand naira) every month as support for transport and feeding

It had always been my desire to be a bead maker, and now God used Governor Okowa to make the dream a reality. I cannot thank the Governor enough. He is a life saver. I am really very happy. And from the depth of my heart I say a big thank you to Governor Okowa. He is indeed a leader who cares about the people.

GLADYS OKOLO (2015/2016 CYCLE)

LGA: UKWUANI

ENTERPRISE: FASHION AND DESIGN

"I was so ecstatic when I was called to proceed to Songhai Delta Amukpe for the orientation. After my stay at Songhai I was posted to Obiaruku at Nkem Fashion Home, to undergo practical training, which lasted six months. During the period of the training, I was given ten thousand naira every month as support for transportation and feeding. After I completed my training I was given Starter Pack of sewing machine, industrial weaving machine, big gasoline generator, table, electric pressing iron and ninety thousand naira to rent a shop, with which I was able to establish my business. Today, I can confidently say I am doing well. Thanks to Governor Ifeanyi Okowa, whom God used to change my life. I am really grateful to him. May God continue to bless and uplift him.



GLADYS OKOLO



ISHIOMA MONYE

ISHIOMA MONYE (2016/2017 CYCLE)

LGA: IKA NORTH EAST

ENTERPRISE: DECORATION

I want to sincerely appreciate Governor Ifeanyi Okowa for the bold initiative on job creation and youth empowerment. It has taken a lot of people out of poverty. For me, this job creation is one of the best policies of the current administration.

Having obtained a degree in Chemistry from the Delta State University, in 2015, I was determined to acquire a skill. And the opportunity came through STEP.

Immediately after I completed my training I was given a Starter Pack of fabrics, ladder, pins, chairs, canopy, rug, and ₦50,000 (fifty thousand naira) to rent a shop. And as you can see, I am doing very well. I am happy with the progress I am making. I can now take good care of myself, and also support my family and other persons. My prayer is that God will continue to protect and bless Governor Okowa. He is truly a blessing to Delta State.

COMFORT OJUGBOH (2015/2016 CYCLE)

LGA: IKA SOUTH

ENTERPRISE: BEAD AND HAT MAKING

First of all I think it is most appropriate and deserving that I appreciate and thank our loving and amiable Governor for the wonderful opportunity he created for the youths in Delta State to be gainfully employed through his job creation Initiative. I was jobless for many years, after obtaining HND in Environmental Health from Delta State School of Health Technology, Ofuma, Ughelli in 2010.



COMFORT OJUGBOH

I was even given ₦10,000 monthly for the entire duration of my training to support me. After completion of my training, I was given a Starter Pack to start my business. I have successfully trained two persons in the last two years of being in business. You cannot imagine the joy I feel knowing that I am a business owner, and also being in a position to train others.

I no longer depend on people to survive. In fact, I now assist others in my own little capacity. I am happy I now have where I go to every day to get my daily bread. I am truly grateful to Governor Okowa for this. May God continue to empower him to do more for Deltans. I always pray for him because he is a caring leader.

KATE OKWUWE (2017/2018 CYCLE)

LGA: IKA NORTH EAST

ENTERPRISE: FASHION AND DESIGN

I got to know about the Skills Training and Entrepreneurship Programme (STEP) through one of my uncles based in Asaba. He was the one that brought the form for me. I applied and was successful in the screening exercise. I went for the mandatory one month orientation at the Songhai Delta, Amukpe, and was later sent to acquire practical training at Dakuku Fashion Home, situated at Osamor/Okobi Street, Boji Boji Owa.

During the period of the training that lasted several months I was given ₦10,000 (ten thousand naira) every month. That stipend helped me a great deal especially in the area of transport and feeding at my work place. I will remain forever grateful to Governor Okowa. He is a life saver.

After my training the Government gave me industrial sewing machine, industrial weaving machine, generator,



KATE JOY OKWUWE

pressing iron and fifty thousand naira, which went a long way in assisting me to set up my business in Owa-Alero, known as Kate Fashion Design Shop.

I want to admonish the youths especially the unemployed ones to take advantage of this programme to improve their lives. I want them to know that skill acquisition is the way to go now. The Governor is really changing lives. And I pray God to bless him the more, as I pray for his victory in next year's polls.

RITA UCHE NGAJU (2017/2018 CYCLE)

LGA: IKA NORTH EAST

ENTERPRISE: FASHION AND DESIGN

I graduated from Delta State University, Abraka, where I obtained a Bsc in Maths Education in 2003. Before I got the opportunity to benefit from Governor Okowa's STEP, I had taught at different private schools. Life was not easy for me at all. I want to say that I was pleasantly surprised and at the same time exhilarated when I discovered that I was among the successful applicants having applied earlier for training as a *STEPpreneur*.

We were taken to Songhai Delta, Amukpe, Sapele, for our orientation exercise and, thereafter, I was posted to Abigail Fashion House, along Baleke Street, Agbor, for practical training. In February 2018 to be precise, I was given an industrial sewing machine, industrial weaving machine, big electricity generator, electric pressing iron and a cash of ₦100,000 (one hundred thousand naira) which helped me in no small measure to set up my own



RITA UCHE NGAJU

fashion business. During the period of my training I was given ₦10,000 (ten thousand naira) every month for my sustenance.

I want to use this opportunity to call on our youths to key into Governor Okowa's skills acquisition programmes. It has taken a lot of youths out of poverty. Today, I am happy to say that I am doing very well. And I thank Governor Okowa immensely for this.

RITA STEPHEN (2017/2018 CYCLE)

LGA: IKA SOUTH

ENTERPRISE: FASHION AND DESIGN

I was trained and empowered in fashion design by the Delta State Government through the Job Creation Office.



RITA STEPHEN

I was among the first set to be empowered in 2016. I had my orientation at Songhai Delta, Amukpe, Sapele, before being sent to Signature Secret Fashion Home, Asaba, where I was trained for six months. For that duration I was given ten thousand naira every month for transport and feeding. I must confess that I had a pleasant experience during my training.

I was later empowered with a Starter Pack, which I used in setting up my own shop at Agbor. I am happy to say that I am doing very well. I am really happy to be a beneficiary of the Skills Training and Entrepreneurship Programme. I am grateful to the governor for the kind gesture. I feel good being a business owner, courtesy of Governor Okowa.

OSAWETA WILLIAM GIFT (2017/2018 CYCLE)

LGA: NDOKWA EAST

ENTERPRISE: POP

Gift William Osaweta is the CEO of O.G Williams Design Enterprise and a beneficiary of Brown STEP. Gift was in the business of POP design before he enrolled in the programme. Through Brown STEP he acquired other skills in paint production and painting.

"I am now a painter and a paint manufacturer. I produce different kinds of paint which I sell and use for my clients. This has exposed me and taken me to different locations around the State. I have acquired



some necessary equipment and lots of paint buckets for paint production. I am no longer broke as there is regular flow of income.

I advise youths to work hard, be committed and to obey instructions from their trainers. They should be dutiful so that their trainers will willingly disclose their business secrets to them. I also want to use this opportunity to thank Governor Okowa for turning my life around. I am a strong advocate of his re-election so that more Delta youths can benefit from his job creation programmes.

TRAINERS

SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES

Our correspondent **Ifeoma Nwayimiga – Nkemachor** interviewed some trainers on their experiences in the job creation programme of the State Government.

A CROSS-SECTION OF STEP TRAINERS

Robert Alerubo is the proprietor of Alerubo Welding and Fabrication in, Effurun.

For one year now, he has been engaged by the Office of the Chief Job Creation Officer as a trainer.

"I was invited alongside other trainers to Asaba and I was given some number of boys to train. Since then I have trained

many others. So far more than 30 persons have been trained in welding and fabrication in my workshop.

STEP is a very nice initiative. When I got involved with this programme I was very impressed. Before then I did not even know that the State Government was training youths. Many of them do not even have people who can sponsor them to go and learn a trade. With this initiative, a number of youths now see the need to learn a trade. I am aware and have seen also when these youths have finished their training programme the State Government goes to buy them equipment and also give them money that enable them set up their own personal business. With this great initiative these youths will no longer be found in the streets and crime will reduce in Delta State.

Pele Okoro – Nduka, CEO, Neo- Pele Fashion Design, Warri.

The first batch the State Government sent to me was about 10 to 15. I trained them for about six months. Some of them are doing very well now as they now have their own businesses. The State Government later introduced what is



ROBERT ALERUBO OF ALERUBO WELDING AND FABRICATION POSING WITH TRAINEES AT HIS WORKSHOP



PELE OKORO - NDUKA DURING TRAINING AT HIS WORKSHOP



called Brown STEP. These are beneficiaries with some knowledge and experience. Their training is just for a month and then the Government will give them their Starter Packs to set up their own business.

Currently, I have four trainees which they sent to me in December 2018. One thing I know is that every person including trainees from the Delta State Government that passes through this Neo-Pele fashion design training school must be very sound fashion wise. A lot of them are generally doing very well.

Mrs Otalekor Lucky, CEO, Cakes and Pastries, Warri

I have been a trainer under the job creation programme since 2015. So far, I have trained 25 persons and still have a wonderful relationship with my trainees. Some of the trainees call me every day and I also take time to call them to find out how they are doing. When they also have challenges, I give them advice. One



MRS OTALEKOR LUCKY, CEO, CAKES AND PASTRIES, WARRI WATCHING A TRAINEE AT WORK



of my trainees is the owner of Classic Emperor. She is doing so well and I am so proud of her. She is a true reflection of what the State Government has done through STEP. She is doing so well for herself.

I can say that Governor Okowa has done so well for the youth.



MIKE OKOTIE, CEO, MANNES FARMS EKPAN (R) WITH TRAINEE



He has taken a lot of them off the street and they now have food on their tables and shelter over their heads. This initiative is an eye opener for other State Governors to

emulate because right now many youths are off the streets; they are no longer begging. As those trained become established in their businesses, they employ other people thereby reducing unemployment.

Mike Okotie, CEO, Mannes Farms Ekpan.

I came in contact with this programme at a time they were looking for a place where those trained at Songhai Delta could undertake their industrial training. So they brought us a good number of trainees. There is also another programme, which we have keyed into; that is the Delta State piggery multiplication programme. The idea behind this piggery multiplication programme is to provide employment for the youth. With what the Governor has done, once these trainees are commissioned they can also train others. It is a programme I strongly believe will continue because of the Governor's determination to provide employment for the teeming youth.

Ellen Emmanuel, CEO, Eden Global Service, Warri.

I became a trainer in the programme in 2015 after officials from the ministry came in and inspected my premises as a pre-qualification exercise. So far, I have trained three sets of STEpreneurs. The decoration done during the 2018 yuletide celebration in this office and premises were done by the trainees among other decorations they did.

Some persons are still hoping to have this opportunity while some do not have the money to pay for self-training. We are praying for the continuity of Governor Okowa so that more youths can become skilful, self-reliant and employers of labour.



ELLEN EMMANUEL, CEO, EDEN GLOBAL SERVICE, WARRI WITH TRAINEE PUTTING UP FLORAL ARRANGEMENT



I will advise the Government to properly scrutinise applicants into the programme to weed out those who are only interested in the money. I think the State Government is doing well in that area now because the last group of trainees that I got were actually more serious and focused. They knew what they wanted and were ready to go and open up their businesses.

Ode to Ifeanyichukwu

I have been passing a road for years
 It looked desolate and in want
 Of something which seemed broad
 I worried till I became wearied
 If only someone, somewhere, somehow,
 Something would replace the worrisome weariness
 I saw the youth with worn out clothes
 And shoes that have thorns that looked like hoes
 With certificates turned brown
 By the scorching sun and over handling
 And I said to myself
 A desolate land filled with desolate youths
 I refused to become refuse
 For the fuse already created must be doused
 So as not to rouse anger in the house
 I passed the land the other day
 And saw it was lush and green
 In my rush I thought it bush
 On a closer look the desolate land
 Is sprouting with crops about to ripen
 The other side with goats bleating,
 Pigs oinking, chicks cackling and fishes swimming
 What happened I asked?
 Is this magical or myth,
 Is green everywhere or a magician with "feeling touch?"
 Or a visionary with a mission
 To feed the land and revitalize the people
 That they can live in the land of the living
 With smiles and joy.
 A visionary called Ifeanyichukwu
 I went to tell them about what I saw
 And found another group
 Filled with loud sounds
 And I screeched 'stop that noise'
 Only to behold youths baking, beading, barbing and tilling
 The designers are measuring and event managers planning
 And I say to myself it is a new dawn
 A visionary called Ifeanyichukwu

- **NKECHI MADUEMEZIA**



PROMISE MADE. PROMISE KEPT.

**357 ROADS... AND STILL
COUNTING**

Fellow Deltans,

In 2015, I promised to embark on massive infrastructural development for the purposes of urban renewal and rural-urban integration. We have surpassed even our expectations in this regard. As at December 31, 2018, my administration has embarked on **357 road projects** (comprising **1,056.15 kms of roads** and **352.78 kms of drains**).



Obotobo I-Obotobo II-Sokebolou-Yokri-Ogulaha Road, Burutu LGA



Dualised Access Road to Jesse Town, Ethiope West LGA



Okpare-Umolo-Ovwodokpokpor- Kiagbodo Road, Ughelli South/Bomadi LGAs



Old Lagos-Asaba Road, Boji Boji, Ika North East/Ika South LGAs

A vote for me is a vote for the good work to continue.

**VOTE FOR A
STRONGER DELTA**

**VOTE SEN. DR IFEANYI
OKOWA
FOR DELTA STATE GOVERNOR**





ONE GOOD TERM DESERVES ANOTHER



357

road projects
(1,056.15kms
of roads +
352.78kms of
drains) ...and still counting



Delta is first State to launch
**Universal Health
Coverage**

A total of
485,140

persons are already
enrolled into the scheme



20,334

persons trained and
established in their
choice enterprises



Owner-Occupier housing
scheme at very affordable rates for
junior staff

Prompt payment of staff
salaries

10,350

teaching & non-teaching staff
promoted since May 29, 2015



4,738

classrooms renovated/constructed...
and still counting

Six

Technical Colleges
rehabilitated and
equipped to produce
graduates with
entrepreneurial and
employability skills.



Agric sector transformed through
Cluster Farming



Delta ranked **No 1** out of the 36
States and the FCT in **Human Capital
Development** index by the National
Competitiveness Council of Nigeria

World Bank endorsed **Delta State Job
Creation Scheme** for funding support

Governor Ifeanyi Okowa voted as
Man of the Year 2017
by *Daily Independent* newspaper



Over

100,000

private sector jobs created
through programmes and
activities of MDAs.

VOTE FOR PROVEN TRACK RECORD OF PERFORMANCE
VOTE FOR UNITY
VOTE FOR A STRONGER DELTA

Vote Sen. Dr Ifeanyi Okowa
FOR DELTA STATE GOVERNOR



THIS MESSAGE IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE DELTA STATE PDP CAMPAIGN ORGANISATION

