

BRIEF REPORT ON THE INAUGURATION OF A POST-GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN ADDICTION SCIENCE AT THE NIGER DELTA UNIVERSITY, AMASSOMA, NIGERIA.

HOW IT ALL STARTED

It all started by the Chairman/Chief Executive of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency(NDLEA), Brig. Gen. Mohammed Buba Marwa (Rtd) during the inauguration ceremony of the International Society of Substance Use Professionals(ISSUP), the Nigerian chapter in Abuja in October, 2019. At this event, Brig. Gen. Marwa passionately called for concerted efforts for the introduction of drug addiction studies in Nigerian universities and other tertiary institutions in the country.

VISIT TO NIGER DELTA UNIVERSITY, AMASSOMA

Following the axiom that charity begins at home, a team of NDLEA officers in Bayelsa State Command paid a courtesy visit on 25th August, 2020 to the Niger Delta University(NDU) where they were received by the Vice Chancellor and his management team (See some pictures of the visit below)



Dr. Chia Francis delivering a speech during the visit



The Vice Chancellor and his management team listening to a speech delivered by Dr. Chia Francis during the visit.



The Registrar presenting gift to Dr. Chia Francis during the visit.



The Vice Chancellor in the middle with his deputies at the extreme ends after the visit.

During the visit, Dr. Chia Francis of NDLEA in his speech to the Vice Chancellor and the management team delivered the message of the NDLEA Chairman and Chief Executive Officer whereby Brig. Gen. Marwa urged Nigerian universities to establish program in addiction studies to raise professional addiction workforce needed to address the growing scourge of drug abuse in the country. The role of ICUDR in assisting universities globally in establishing addiction studies was also communicated to the VC and his team.

In response to the presentation, the Vice Chancellor of the university, Prof. Samuel Edoumiekumo immediately constituted a committee headed by the Deputy Vice

Chancellor Administration, Prof. Allen A. Agih to work hand and glove with the NDLEA team to speed up the process for the introduction of a drug addiction program in the university.

After a period of one week, the NDLEA team met together with the team set up by the Vice Chancellor at Aridolf Hotel, Yenagoa and several issues bothering on curriculum development, program accreditation, initial lecturers, market value of program graduates e.t.c were discussed (See pictures of some committee meeting below).



A committee meeting held at Aridolf Hotel



Members of the committee with the Committee Chairman, Prof. Allen Agih in the middle after a committee meeting at the University Senate Building, Amassoma.

Following series of meetings by the committee, the committee arrived at several decisions. Also, a curriculum for post-graduate diploma in addiction science was developed. Upon the presentation of the curriculum to the Senate, the Senate of the NDU in a unanimous decision approved the curriculum as well as the take-off of a post-graduate program in drug addiction science in the Niger-Delta University before the end of 2021.

Despite series of challenges faced in the process of kick-starting the drug addiction program in the university, the Vice Chancellor of the university kept to his words and a date for the inauguration of the PGD program was fixed on 29th June, 2021 which

came to pass in a grand style as the inauguration of the PGD program was performed by the NDLEA Chief Executive Officer (Brig. Gen. Buba Marwa), who was accompanied to the occasion by the UNODC Country Representative (Mr Oliver Stolpe).

The grandiosity of the inaugural event was further expanded by the cybernetic presence of the Executive Director of ICUDR, Prof. Kim Johnson who was ably represented at the occasion by the Deputy Executive Director of ICUDDR, Cary Hopkins Eyles. The wonderful speech delivered by the deputy executive director of ICUDDR apart from engendering the spirit of inexhaustible commitment and accomplishment, it certainly left no one in doubt that indeed the Niger Delta university has given birth to the first university-based addiction program in West Africa.

SOME FEW PICTURES DURING THE PGD INAUGURATION



1. The VC presenting a plaque to the NDLEA Representative



2. The VC presenting a plaque to the UNODC Country Representative



3. Opening speech by the Vice Chancellor



4. Representative of Brig. Gen. Marwa presenting inauguration speech.



5. Speech by UNODC Country Representative- Mr Oliver Stolpe



6. The Royal Father of the Day presenting his speech.



7. Speech by Prof. Helen Osinowo on behalf of the Guest lecturers for the PGD program



8. Dean of social sciences, Prof Jonah, A. giving an overview of the PGD program.



9. Theatre arts students presenting a play let on drug abuse.



10. High table members singing National and the University anthem.



11. Members of the high table with students to- be.



12. Group picture at the office of the Vice Chancellor.

THANK YOU
DR. CHIA FRANCIS