

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Nigeria which is believed to be the most populous black African nation has been turned to a dumping ground for substandard products. This posed a great danger to the socio-political and economic development of the country. This has placed the country's socio-economic life under the siege of substandard products, and thus posed great challenge to the government, regulatory institutions, consumers and the entire public. The international media is awash with news of harmful and substandard products in Nigerian markets. Thus, consumers are faced with about 80 percent changes of buying fake products in a market where second hand goods are preferred as original. These products pose grievous threats to both survival of local industries and the health of consumers.

Standard Organization of Nigeria is a full – fledged statutory agency of the Federal Government of Nigeria responsible for standardization, quality assurance and metrology in Nigeria (Decree 18 of 1990). In this connection, it is expected to prepare standards for products, and ensure compliance with Federal Government policy on standards and quality of products for both locally manufactured and imported goods. It is expected equally to undertake investigations as necessary into the quality of products in Nigeria and establish a quality assurance system including certification of factories, products, laboratories and service. The organization is mandated to maintain reference standard for calibrations and verification of measures and measuring instruments and to co-operate with corresponding national and international organizations with view to ensuring uniformity in standard specifications (SON Catalogue 2005). For effectiveness and efficiency in the implementation of the above mandate as a public bureaucracy, SON is empowered legally to apply penalty when necessary. This is in the form of seizure, confiscation and destruction of substandard goods and services, or seal up factories and premises, which do not show compliance to standard requirements. Although in implementing these penalties, the onus is shared among SON, the Police and Courts (SON Act 2004 Cap 59 LFN). Above all, the organization is mandated to develop and implement established national standards, through routine factory inspections and surveillance certification, ports inspection, consumer complaints and investigations, laboratory services, market survey enforcement, joint activities with government agencies and international standardization. (SON Act 2004 Cap 59 LFN).

Unfortunately despite these elaborate mandate evidence abound of importation and domestic production of substandard, adulterated and counterfeit products in Nigeria, thereby indicting the organization. The birth of fourth republic in 1999, with the attendant neoliberal reforms, increased influx of foreign direct investment, which in turn stimulated domestic

production. Such reforms equally stimulated massive importation of goods into the country. However to facilitate goods clearance and eliminate ports congestion, SON was ejected from Nigeria Sea and Air ports in 2001 by Chief Olusegun Obasanjo's regime. The ejection of the organization from major entrance routes expanded her scope of mandate thereby necessitating additional and commensurate funding. Unfortunately evidence generated indicated that available fund at the disposal of the organization do not match her responsibilities, thereby inhibiting implementation of her statutory mandate.

The study is divided into seven chapters namely: Chapter one, the Introduction, Chapter Two, Standard Organisation before the formation of SON in 1971: Chapter three, Evolution, Structure and functions of Standard Organisation of Nigeria, 1971-1990: Chapter four, SON and Standardisation of products in Nigeria, 1990-2001: Chapter five, SON and Standardisation of Products, Food Safety/Security in Nigeria, 2002-2015: Chapter Six, Effects of Standard Organisation of Nigerian to Socio-Politico cum Economic Growth of Nigeria and the Challenges of the Organisation and Chapter Seven, Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation. The thesis recommended solutions on how best to surmount those challenges to enable the organization perform to its optimum. Part of the recommendations is for government to equip and establish more laboratories, offices and procure more utility vehicles for efficient and effective implementation of its duties.

Before the end of colonial Administration in Nigeria in 1960, the economy of the nation was an appendage of the economy of the colonial masters, Britain. Indeed, because the colonial masters had no intention to industrialize the economy, they established no manufacturing industries, nor did they leave behind much infrastructure, such as roads, water supply, and electricity.

In consequence, the nation was solely dependent on the colonizing nation for modern industrial products. Besides, Nigerian raw materials were shipped overseas for manufacturing goods, which were then imported into the country at unfair prices. These negatively affected the socio-political and economic growth of Nigeria.

However, even with flag of independence since 1960, the nation's state of economic and socio-political backwardness, which is as a result of lack of industrialization, has for the most part remained unchanged under a succession of indigenous governments, civilian and military alike. The inability of successive governments to tackle the issues of youth unemployment through industrialization has led to the rise of so many criminal activities like yahoo-yahoo boys, kidnappings, ritual murders, stealing of female pants for ritual purposes, terrorism and other socio-political challenges in the country today.

The situation of this country can be said to be one of the worst cases of industrial growth in the whole world today. And the reasons are extremely noticeable. The country

certainly has a vast potential for industrialization, which has remained unharnessed, yet billions of dollars in revenue continue to accrue to the Treasury from sale of crude oil. The country is also one of the countries of the world most endowed with natural resources and solid minerals. So, Nigerians need at this stage to take a hard look at the history of their nation, in order to discover what went wrong and how to repair the faults in both their psyche and their actions.

Looking back, just after independence in the sixties, there was a failed attempts at industrialization. Industries were established which, because they were run by bureaucrats that lacked skilled management and were characterized by financial malpractices, over- reliance on government funds, and lack of commitment to profit-making. In any case, the discipline of quality control, which SON now provides, was then not available. Though SON was established by a decree in 1971, it was only in 1984 that it really began to be effective on the ground.

The oil boom of the seventies and eighties contributed in no small measure to the dumping of substandard products in Nigerian territory due to lack of manufacturing industries undertaking by Nigerians. The little industrialization efforts was led by the government who turned out to be the main force in the effort to industrialize the national economy. To that end, gigantic plans were put forth and elephantine projects, such as the Ajaokuta Steel Complex, were launched. Billions of Naira was sunk into those projects, but to this day the results have been unimpressive resulting to the persistence of Nigeria's socio-political and economic problems.

For years the nation has earned billions of dollars in revenue from crude oil sales, yet not even in creation of employments for the nations teeming youths and school leavers and the provision of infrastructure, such as electricity or roads, has there been considerable progress. And with regard to industrialization proper, local industries are still too few to supply the needs of the populace for machine-made goods thereby resulting in the local manufacturing and importation of substandard products into the country.

It is in these circumstances that the present policy of government, which aims to enhance private sector participation in industrialization, has been making progress, under the watchful eyes of the Standards Organization of Nigeria (SON).

Standardization is not a modern invention. *It* is as old as man himself. It has existed through the ages in one form or another. The idea of standardization arose as a result of man trying to maximize compatibility, safety, intolerability, quality or repeatability. Standardization also facilitates commoditization of formerly custom processes. It is the solution for the social Scientists especially economists for a coordination of problems that will result to the mutual gains of all parties by making mutually consistent decisions.

Faking and counterfeiting of products is a global phenomenon but some countries are more affected than others, especially African countries. The problems may not be publicized in some of these countries, as they are in Nigeria, because of weak or non-existence of strong regulatory authorities. There have been several reports of deaths from fake, counterfeit and substandard products. The high incidence of fake and counterfeit products has, for decades, been a matter of concern, given the number of lives lost and the impact on the economy which suffered losses through mass unemployment as a result of low capacity utilization in industries, capital flight, divestment and decline in trans-border and international trade. As a result of this, Standard Organization of Nigeria was established in 1971.

Standardisation of products is a worldwide industrial practice aimed at ensuring product quality. Governments have institutions whose duty is to formulate product quality standards and see to their enforcement. Companies that flouted industrial standards may be sanctioned or sued for infringement of regulations.

There is no country anywhere in the world that leaves the production of goods and services without rules and regulations for quality assurance and public safety. Without standardization, greedy and unscrupulous companies would embark on the production of goods and services that lack quality. Only the monetary consideration would be the overriding factor. The negative impacts of the products on consumers would not be considered.

General Yakubu Gowon's administration meant well for Nigeria when his government established Standard Organization of Nigeria (SON) through Act 56 in 1971; it was then called the Nigerian Standards Organization (NSO). The Act establishing the body witnessed a number of amendments by different military regimes of General Olusegun Obasanjo in 1976, in 1984 by Major General Muhammadu Buhari and in 1990 by the regime of General Ibrahim Babangida respectively.

Standard Organisation of Nigeria was statutorily vested with the responsibility of standardizing and regulating the quality of all products in Nigeria for the strict enforcement of powers of seizure, confiscation and destruction of substandard products, including powers to seal up premises where defective products are manufactured or stored. Severe penalties for offending manufacturers, importers and sellers of substandard products are also provided for, in the amended Act.

Also the organization has set to itself under law the goal to provide Nigerian industries with up-to-date information on standardization and its benefits, to encourage participation of the Organized Private Sector (OPS) in standardization and review as to ensure improved competitiveness of Nigerian goods at home and abroad by encouraging quality assurance practices. Apart from what has been mentioned previously SON is also meant to provide information, advice and assistance to industries on quality management for improved cost

effectiveness. To ensure adequate technical support for Nigerian industries to match the quality required for competitiveness in global trade, and to motivate the workforce through steady investment in human resource development for acquisition of skills in line with technological advancement. Other goals are to collaborate with regional and international organizations in the areas of metrology, standards, testing and quality assurance for the enhancement of skills and the encouragement of free trade and capacity building.

Statement of Problem

Standardization activities represent a very faithful reflection of man's social, economic, cultural, technological and political concerns. Nigeria which is believed to be the most populous black African nation has been turned into a dumping ground for substandard products and services by corrupt manufacturers (both local and foreign), importers and service providers. This has placed the country's economic, socio-political, and cultural life under the siege of substandard products, and thus posed great challenge to government, survival of local industries and the health of consumers, hence the establishment of Standard Organisation of Nigeria in 1971 to monitor the production, distribution and importation of products and services into the country. The Organisation also formulates standards for the country. Since its establishment, no detailed academic studies has been made about the history, activities, achievements and challenges, this is what this dissertation tries to address.

This research work is aimed at unraveling the history of standard Organisation of Nigeria, its aims, contributions, implementations of standards in Nigeria and the benefits of standardizations. It is also aimed at unraveling the challenges and achievements of standard organizations of Nigeria which before now is not known to the public hence the need to elucidate the operations of Standard Organization of Nigeria in overcoming her challenges.

The challenges posed by substandard products in Nigeria and the challenges faced by the various Director-General of the organization between 1971-2015 in their efforts to rid Nigeria of fake, adulterated and substandard products were enormous. Nobody has researched on these challenges, hence this research work. Again, the achievement of these Director-Generals of Standard Organisation of Nigeria (S.O.N) has not been chronicled; hence this research work.

It is pertinent to mention that countries without efficient and effective standard organization control cannot adequately shield their citizens from substandard, defective and poor quality products. Without effective and efficient standard regulatory agency for products used, produced and imported into the country, Nigeria is sure to experience economic loses, high unemployment rate, societal vices, and health hazards, because the leadership cannot protect the national economy from the dumping of low quality and inferior goods. Consequent upon this, Nigerian government has, through the Standard Organization of Nigeria, enacted and applied laws to ensure the safety and quality of products with the objective of guaranteeing

consumer safety and satisfaction. How far the law and the activities of the organization and her Director Generals, has gone in tackling this problem, is yet to be documented in order to assess how far they has succeeded or failed to achieve success in that regard. Information on these issues is yet to be properly researched and documented. That is what constitutes a key problem this work is meant to solve.

Purpose of Study

The main objectives of this study are to look into some vital issues surrounding the production, importation, and distribution of substandard products in Nigeria and efforts of Standard Organization of Nigeria under their various Director Generals, that served the organization from 1999-2015, in tackling the evil monster called substandard products.

This research work will among other issues look into the activities of wicked and sometimes ignorant manufacturers, importers and marketers that produce and bring in substandard products into the country. Local manufacturers also manufacture substandard products and capitalize on the ignorance of consumers of the products. This research work will address these issues and show the way forward out of this deplorable condition.

The study also looks into the motivations, achievements, innovations and problems of the various Director Generals since 1971-2015 to combat the scourge of fake drugs in Nigeria. This research will try to show that with the right attitudes to work, by public office holders appreciable positive impact will be made in one's chosen career.

The research goes to show that the personalities, motivations and drive of the Director Generals of Standard Organisation of Nigeria (SON) were key factors to their being successful in their chosen career in life. The research also brings to the fore the achievements recorded by SON during the said period and the programmes they successfully completed as SON Director-Generals, as well as other issues. These and other related matters are what this research work has set out to answer. This research work is also geared at unveiling the strategies by SON in combating the monster called substandard product from 1971-2015.

The Significance of the Study

Nigeria is widely and generally known as a business-oriented country. She is also widely referred to as a big dumping ground for substandard goods. The influx of fake and substandard products into the country and the easy flow of these products into various Nigerian markets are increasing daily hence the need for the Federal Government to checkmate it. Again, many industries in Nigeria produce substandard products. The producers of these substandard products who have little or no regard for human live are giving the country a bad name. Nigeria a growing nation and human beings constitute the backbone of the economy of any country. If a country must grow economically, the inhabitants must first of all have sound health for it is only a healthy body that can think and be productive.

This research goes a long way to help in enlightening the general public on the dangers of substandard products. This is very essential for the healthy growth of the entire country. In the past, there had been stipulated policies made by different organization and the Federal government to combat the influx of substandard products into the country. Through this study, the general public will understand the negative effects of substandard products into the country. The efforts of the Federal government, through SON, in combating substandard products in Nigeria will also be highlighted. The gravity of fake, adulterated, counterfeit and substandard products is well explained. By so doing, manufacturers, sellers and distributors of these products in Nigeria will be avoided and regarded as criminals and murderers. The study will also add to scholarly knowledge on the issue and invariably aid the eradication of substandard products in Nigeria.

Scope and Limitations of Study

The time frame of this research work is from the establishment of Standard Organisation of Nigeria (SON) in 1971-2015 during the regime of President Goodluck Ebere Jonathan. The study period terminates in 2015 when President Goodluck Jonathan tenure in office as President expired.

The Methodology and Sources

This research adopts an inter-disciplinary approach method in the examination of issues under discussion. The research work relies on the (oral) primary and (written) secondary source of information, for its documentation. Information from personal interviews with individuals and stakeholders including the former Director Generals of Standard Organization of Nigeria and others as well as, newspapers reports were used. Data from textbooks, magazines and materials obtained from Standard Organization of Nigeria headquarters and NAFDAC headquarters all in Abuja and information from internet sources were equally made use of. This work is based on theoretical frame work or theoretical construct and actual interpretation of data and material collections.

Organization of Study

This research work is divided into Seven Chapters. Chapter one is the introduction which discusses the background of the study, the statement of Problem, the purpose of Study, the significance of the study, the Scope and limitations of the Study, the Methodology, sources, Organization of the Study and the Review of literature. Chapter Two takes a hard look at Standard and Standardisation before the formation of Standards Organisation of Nigeria (SON). It took a general overview of standardization, meaning, intent, aims, attributes and problems of Standard Organisation of Nigeria before 1971. Chapter three looked into the evolution, structure and functions of Standard Organisation of Nigeria (SON), 1971- 1990. Establishment, origin and structure of Standard Organisation of Nigeria was discussed. The

effects of substandard products in Nigeria were also discussed. Chapter Four, Discussed the Internal Dynamisms, Modus Operandi, and working Operations of Standards Organisation of Nigeria from 1990-2001. Chapter Five discussed Standard Organisation of Nigeria (SON) and Standardisation of products and Food safety/Security in Nigeria, 2002-2015. It discussed the personalities, backgrounds and idiosyncracies of former Director-Generals of the organizations, people like Prof. John Ndanusa Akanya the Director-General of Standard Organisation of Nigeria from 1999 to 2011. The roles he played as former Director-General of the organisation in the effectiveness or otherwise of Standard Organisation of Nigeria. The personality of Dr. Joseph Ikemefuna Odumodu as former Director-General of Standard Organisation of Nigeria from 2011 to 2015 was critically examined also. The challenges which the former Director-Generals faced in the discharge of their duties as SON Director-Generals, the measures put in place to tackle these challenges and the achievements they recorded are examined and highlighted. In Chapter Six, the standard organization of Nigeria building coalitions and partnerships, Company, standardization in Nigeria, types of Standards in Nigeria, building coalitions and partnerships with Local and international Organizations such as:- World health Organization, International Standard Organizations Manufactures Association of Nigeria etc. and political Importance of Standards was discussed. Also discussed were innovations in Standard Organization of Nigeria, achievement of Standard Organization of Nigeria, Standard and technical barriers, implementation of Standards in Nigeria, information Sources on Standards, Standard Organization of Nigeria and Consumer Protection Council of Nigeria, Government Policies and Standard Organization of Nigeria, Standard Organization of Nigeria and Nigerian Economy etc. In Chapter Seven, Appraisal of the Research work, summary, Conclusion and Recommendation.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study is in the “Theory of Consumer Protection” as expounded by John E. Kushman University of Delaware, USA in 1999. He propounded this consumer protection theory with regards to health care. The theory uses the neoclassical economic principles to articulate the theory of Consumer Protection in health care. The theory assumed that consumers maximize perceived expected utility, which is a function of price and quality of their product and service ¹.

Consumers that purchase health care products and services ultimately buy quality, effectiveness and efficiency. Thus, theory of consumer protection holds “that quality is the probability that a service or product will be safe and effective” ². Consumers are marketed when the trade-off they made in purchase of health services and products offer effectiveness for their money.

Consumers either perceive the price quality trade-offs offered by sellers accurately (“accurate”) or they perceive those trade-offs inaccurately (“inaccurate”) or they perceive the product worth, that when the perceived quality of services intandem with price(s) paid for such services, the consumer must have been accurate in his or her evaluations of such services and is therefore protected as he/she obtains consumerate quality for price(s) paid for services. Whereas he or she who fails to accurately evaluate the quality of services, he/she becomes susceptible to exploitations paying more than the service and product worth.

The theory of consumer protection has two categories or class of sellers: Class I or Class II with differing attitudes and relationships with potential consumers. According to Kushman 91,999 sellers are either in class I or class II. In an unregulated market, inaccurate patronize class II sellers; because they unaccurately perceive this class as offering a high expected utility. Consumers who perceive price – quality trade-offs accurately always patronize class I sellers. Class I sellers offer the better price-quality trade-off to all consumers. Regulation removes class II sellers from the market, so that inaccurate must patronize class 1 sellers. This increases the expected utility of inaccurate must patronize class 1 sellers.³

The implications of the theory of consumer protection with regards to Substandard products and her consumers/customers is that because the former operates in a de-regulated, inefficient and ineffective re-regulated market, it acts in line with the culture of class II sellers thereby causing consumers to perceive price-quality trade-offs inaccurately and as a result are highly exploited through poor products and services offerings.

The assumption of the theory is that consumers maximize perceived expected utility which is a function of price and quality of their service ⁴. Consumers are therefore, protected when the trade-offs they made in purchase of products and services offer effectiveness or value of their money. The strength of the theory lies on the fact that consumers that accurately perceive price-quality trade-offs, always get the best satisfaction and are protected.

The weakness lies on the fact that those who could not perceive pricequality trade-offs accurately suffer exploitation. Be it as it may, theory of consumer protection sees the consumers buying as efficiently enough because it increases their satisfaction. The study recommended that the Federal government should revisit the Laws esterblishing Standard Organisation of Nigeria in the country with the view to enacting a more comprehensive legal framework in consumer protection. The Standard Organisation of Nigeria should on her own embark on intensive sensitization and education of consumers on their rights and how to enforce them, including what they stand to lose if they fail to protect their rights.

It is generally believed that the ability to enforce the laws relating to consumer protection by the Standard Organisation of Nigeria, National Agency for Food Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) and other regulatory agencies and the consumers

themselves, would provide the necessary tonic and impetus for safeguarding the rights and safety of consumers and their properties.

Literature Review

The need for a review of relevant literature is to provide a deep and general understanding by various authors on the areas covered by this research. The review of literature enables the researcher to note what scholars have already done on the topic under discussion with particular interest to the inadequacies of the information derived there from and the gaps that are needed to be filled by the current study.

Unfortunately, no book has been written about the issues under discussion. However, related literature on the matter abounds. Literatures from Newspaper publications, Acticles, Journals, Magazines etc. Although, these sources of information abound, what remains yet to be done is compiling a compendium of academic literature that speaks specifically to the core subject matter.

Felleke Zawdu, in his article “*Ethiopian Standard, institutes (ESI): Its Tasks and Areas for Technical Assistance*”, noted that Ethiopian standards institutes owe it as a duty to train officials of the Ethiopian Standard body for efficiency and effectiveness and also to give a technical assistance to the body. But fails to explain what standardization is. This research work will elucidate in details what standardization is and what it is not.⁵

F. J. Ichany in his article “*Standards laboratories Assistance to developing industry*” explained that standard laboratories assistance helps developing industries achieve maximum capacity production but fails to elucidate in details the roles of standard bodies to the development of the social and economic growth of a country. This research work will go a long way in explaining the political socio – cultural and economic importance of a standard organization importance of a standard organizational body especially standard organization of Nigeria.⁶

Phi Minh Tam and Niel C. Beck in their article “*Extension productivity service via a developing country standard institutes*” posited that standard institutes in a developing country helps in the extension of productivity services, which culminates into customer satisfaction. African countries just like every other developing country needed standard institutes to evolve their own standard for total economic growth, but did not show what should be the programs of the institutes to enhance development. This research work will unveil the programs of standard organization of Nigeria in her efforts to ride the country of substandard products.⁷

Edwards Condons in his article titled “*The Economic role of metrology capabilities*” Noted roles of metrology capability in economic growth of any country, According to him, metrology enhances the standard of goods sold in any country; but fails to point out what

standardization means . This research work will clear every ambiguity associated to the meaning and roles of a standard organization body in the country.⁹

Jerry L Hayes opined in his article *“Needs for measurement control in developing nations”* That there is need for measurement control in developing nations which invariably means that there is need for standardization body in developing nations like Nigeria . Since standardization has to do with measures, controls, weight and scales etc, developing nations has to key into it to be at par with the rest of the world. But the article fails to address the political, economic and socio-cultural implications of a standard organization body in a country. This is what this research work is set to address.¹⁰

Harry Tabor and Leonard Farkas in their article *“Problems in Establishing accurate measurements in industrializing Economics; a Case – Study of Basic Standards Activities in the Israel NPL and some possible lessons to be learned”* observed that the basic standard activities in Israel has helped in the establishment of accurate measurements in industrializing economics. It noted that the growth of Israel economy is anchored on the strict application of standard measures which had helped in no small measures in addressing the basic problems associated with the establishment of a strong standard organization in a country.¹¹

Paul Carli in his article *“Need for Standard Reference Material for Calibrations and Quality Control”* opined that there is a need for standard reference material in other to have a better calibrations and quality control if any country can have economic, and socio – cultural growth. The standard reference point will aid a better and more efficient quality control which is capable of advancing the fight against substandard products in the society, but fails to elucidate what substandard product in any society. This research work will elucidate what substandard product is and ways of eradicating it from any giving society.¹²

Luiz Cintra do Prado in his article *“instrument problems in the developing Economy”* bemoaned the lack of proper standard instrument in the developing economics in establishing proper standards. This lack of instruments in developing economy has result in not having a proper standard mechanism in advancing the fight against substandard products in a country. But he failed to give the history of standard organization of Nigeria. This research work will add to knowledge by giving the full history of standard organization of Nigeria.¹³

Elvis Onah noted in her book, *Substandard products in Earliest Times*, noted that substandard products have been in existence as far back as the earliest times when man searched for implements to conquer his environments and herbs, roots leaves and other natural substances to relieve pain and help control diseases. Even though one will agree with her it is also noteworthy that the practice has increased in contemporary times and has been turned into a global phenomenon. In Nigeria, the issue of substandard products has to do with the

materialist tendencies of some corrupt Nigerians and the foreigners who import and manufacture these substandard products for selfish gains.¹³

Nduka Obele in his book, *“The Scourge of Substandard products in Nigeria”* observed that more people die as a result of complications arising from the use of substandard products than the disease itself. He explained further that most of the products in Nigerian markets are fake and substandard leading to loss of life, economic loss with its attendant social, cultural and political implications. Customers’ satisfaction is not guaranteed and their demands are not met. In pharmaceutical products, the case is worst because of the inability of the drugs to satisfy the customers and cure the ailments they are meant to cure. He did not, however, provide a solution to it. This study highlights the efforts of the government of Nigeria to check-mate substandard products in Nigeria including fake and substandard drugs.¹⁴

Chris Milton noted in his work, the *Global Trends of products*, that the scourge of substandard products is a global problem and not a problem of a single nation. He explained that it would take a global effort to eradicate this ugly monster. The book does not indicate any effort by the Nigerian government in the eradication of substandard products. This study goes to show the efforts of Nigeria, through Standard Organisation of Nigeria in the fight against substandard products in the country.¹⁵

Adekunle Ajayi, in his book, *The Scourge of Substandard products in the Third World Countries*, noted that the distribution of substandard products in the underdeveloped countries of the world is enhanced by the level of poverty in those countries. The demand for cheaper products resulted in the manufacture, importation and distribution of substandard products by unscrupulous elements to deceive the unsuspecting consumers. These cheap products are imported into the country to make quick gains by unscrupulous importers.¹⁶

Building a Substandard Product Free Society by Dickson Odita is a book that examines the evils of substandard products in a society. Hilton states that substandard product free society promotes a healthy economy of a nation. A healthy human and material resource of a nation is a boost to economic growth than a sickness ridden society with substandard products. This study is on the activities of standard organization of Nigeria in the eradication of substandard products in Nigeria. SON fearlessly and successfully waged wars against substandard products in Nigeria from 1999-2015.¹⁷

Ndu Okoye in his book, *the Menace of Substandard Products in Africa*, explained that the smugglers of substandard products into Nigeria are responsible for the over 30% of substandard products circulating in the country’s market. Even though substandard products are smuggled into Nigeria, many of the fake products circulating today in the Nigerian market are imported. The importers deceive the security and regulatory bodies by mislabeling the said counterfeit and substandard products. This was made possible due to the unavailability of

standard equipped laboratories to test products. This study shows how standard organization was reorganized and reequipped for better efficiency, especially the establishment of modern laboratories across the country.¹⁸

Obi Okeke in his book, *Substandard Products and Corruption in Africa*, asserts that the problem of substandard products in Nigeria is an extension of the corruption that has permeated every sector of the Nigerian economy. Therefore, for substandard products to be eradicated from the Nigerian market, the issue of corruption must be addressed. He, however, did not provide a clue to how this corruption would be tackled.¹⁹

John Okoye in his book, *Substandard Products and The Way Forward*, noted that the regulatory bodies have aided in no small measure the importation and distribution of fake, counterfeit and substandard products in Nigeria. This is due to the fact that the regulatory officials are not exposed to modern trends in product regulations. Laboratory equipments needed to test if particular product conforms to international acceptable standard are not available. The Director Generals of Standard Organisation of Nigeria in the period under review made sure that the agency is exposed to modern trends in products regulations. This study shows how SON modernized the laboratories to international standards.²⁰

Simeon Effiong explained in his book, *The Realities of Substandard Products in Nigeria*, that Nigeria product consumers are mostly illiterates. They therefore could not protect themselves from fake, counterfeit and substandard products, hence the need for government intervention. But it never elucidated the efforts of the Nigerian government, through Standard Organisation of Nigeria in her sensitization of the Nigerian public about the dangers of fake products. This study addresses this problem.²¹

Tom Bricks lamented in his book, *Infant Mortality and Fake products: The Way Forward* that fake products have in no small measure affected the Third World economy and immortality negatively. He goes on to discuss how infant and adult mortality, the quality of the workforce/labour and the extent to which these products have done damages to the economy of the third world countries. But he could not show how these issues have affected the Nigerian people.²²

Silver Moon noted in his book, *Fake Products and Man*, that if the activities of fakers of products are not checkmated, mankind will be at the risk of being annihilated from the face of the earth. The book did not elucidate in details what fake product is, how it is affecting Nigeria and the efforts of standard organization of Nigeria in the eradication of fake and substandard products in Nigeria. This study is on how standard organization of Nigeria is fighting fake and substandard products to save Nigerians and her economy from total annihilation and collapse.²³

David Windle in his book, *The Efficacy of Drug*, noted that the use of drugs is as old as mankind. He explained that even the foods we eat are drugs. He stressed that it was very important that we took good care of our health by taking the right drugs. But he did not show the effects of fake and counterfeit drugs that have been ravaging the health of unsuspecting drug consumers, nor did he show the efforts of NAFDAC and standard organization of Nigeria in its fight against fake drugs. This study will show how standard organization of Nigeria and Nafdac fought relentlessly to rid the Nigerian Market of fake, adulterated, counterfeit and substandard products.²⁴

END NOTES

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2. *Chris, Milton*” The Global Trends of Substandard Products” Mcdonalds Publishers(New York: 1990), p. 15
3. *David Windle*, “The Efficacy of Drug” NAFDAC CONSUMER SAFETY Bulletin, A publication of NAFDAC. Vol. 3, No. 3 October, 2004, p4.
4. *Edwards Condons* in his article titled “The Economic role of metrology capabilities” National Bureau of Standards, Washington D.C .in National Bureau of Standards Special Publication 359 (Washington USA: 1971) p.290
5. *Elvis Onah*, Substandard products in Earliest Times, Standardization in Earliest Times Delta Publications,(Warri: 1980), p.31
6. *F. J. Ichany* in his article “ Standards laboratories Assistance to developing industry 3” in National Bureau of Standards, Washington D.C .in National Bureau of Standards Special Publication 59(Washington USA:1971) p.290
7. *Felleke Zawdu* “Ethiopian Standard, institutes (ESI): Its Tasks and Areas for Technical Assistance” National Bureau of Standards, Washington D. C. in National Bureau of Standards Special Publication 359(Washington USA: 1971) p.390
8. *Harry Tabor and Leonard Farkas* in their article “Problems in Establishing accurate measurements in industrializing Economics; a Case – Study of Basic Standards Activities in the Israel NPL and some possible lessons to be learned” National Bureau of Standards, Washington D.C .in National Bureau of Standards Special Publication 359 (Washington USA: 1971) p.490
9. *Hilton, Dickson,*” Building a Substandard product Free Society”Arthur Books publishers Ltd (New York: 1980), p 80.
10. J.E. Kushman, “The Economic Theory of Consumers Protection in Health Care Products and Services”. Consumer Interest Annual Report (New York:Villard Books,1999) p.45
11. J.E. Kushman, “The Economic Theory of Consumers Protection in Health Care Products and Service”-----p.43
12. J.E. Kushman, “The Economic Theory of Consumers Protection in Health Care Products and Service”-----p.44

13. J.E. Kushman, "The Economic Theory of Consumers Protection in Health Care Products and Service"-----p.45
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CHAPTER TWO

STANDARD AND STANDARDIZATION BEFORE THE FORMATION OF SON IN 1971

It is difficult to state with certainty when the first standards institutions came into existence. However, it is certain that standardization activities represent a very faithful reflection of social, economic, cultural, technological and political concerns at a particular moment in time. According to Monye:

-----Standardization is synonymous with human life. Most human activities involve the form of standardization or another such that many a time, standards are applied unknowingly. For instance, a housewife who carefully selects her ingredients and determines the quantity of each of them may not know that she is applying a standard¹

During the Stone Age era, Stone Age implements are similar both in form and shape. The materials excavated at various sites scattered across Africa, Asia and Europe proves this. For instance, the excavations in the ancient regions of Mesopotamia, Sumer, Babylon and Egypt are evidences of prehistoric Standardization. At these locations, pre-Christian civilizations were found to use much kind of Standards in their daily activities. Around five to six thousand years ago, the Mohenjo-Daro, or Harappa civilizations of the Indus Valley use standardization in their town planning, house building, water supply, drainages, weights and measures. Standard Unites for the measurement of volumes, money and weight were further developed around the world.²

Modern Standardization began with the emergences of standard weights and measures as used in industries in the wake of industrial revolution in Europe. To buttress this point the more, it is worthy to note that in construction measurements, and angular measurement, the technical standardization enabled gauging to be effectively used. The industrialization and their weight and measures reached central Asia and Persia where it was further modified. The excavated weights unearthed from the Indus Civilization were well described by Shigeo Iwata.³

At Mohenjo-Daro, and Harappa excavation sights, about 558 weights were excavated. There was no statistically significant deference between weights that were excavated from five different layers, each measuring about 1.5m in depth, proving that strong control existed for at least 500 Year period. The invention of cotton Gin in 1793, a machine for cleaning up cotton

fiber by Eli Whitney pioneered the development of Standardization as an engineering activity in industries. Whitney followed it up with the introduction of his other inventions which was the production of interchangeable components for the manufacture of guns.⁴

What then is standards?

The term standardization has been defined by the International Standards Organisation (ISO)

*----as a process, of formulating and applying rules for an orderly approach to a specific activity for the benefit and with the cooperation of all concerned and in particular, for the promotion of optimum overall economy taking due account of functional conditions and safety requirements*⁵

Xie Zongjie et al in their book “Standardization Efforts: The Relationship between Knowledge Dimensions, Research Processes and Innovation Outcome” defined Standardisation or Standardization as “*the process of implementing and developing technical Standards based on the consensus of different parties that include firms, users, interest groups, standard organizations and governments.*”⁶

For Prof. John Akanya, “*Standardisation is concerned with formulation and application of norms in an orderly approach to a specific activity (even socio-cultural and political)*”⁷

For Pollit, “*It also means a conscious effort of man to simplify things, reduce unwanted variety and create order.*”⁸ Monye described “*standardization as a system of control of the method of production as well as product standards or composition with the aim of ensuring that only good quality and safe products are put in the market.*”⁹

Standardization can be defined as the process of implementing and developing technical standard based on the consensus of different parties that includes firms, users, interest groups, and standard organizations. The idea of standardization arose as a result of man trying to maximize compatibility, safety, interoperability, quality or repeatability.

The World Trade Organisation(WTO) /Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) agreement defines “standard as documents established by consensus, approved by a recognized body providing common and repeated use, rules, guidelines, technical specifications and definitions of characteristics to ensure that materials, products, processes and services achieve optimum degree of order in a given context or for the desired purpose.”¹⁰ Standards are therefore expectations of the stakeholders/consumers defined/published through standardization procedures.

A “standard” whether for product or service defines the quality criteria (specifications) and the means or methods by which these expectations of the consumer can be guaranteed and/or evaluated. Product standards whether company, national, or international in scope or application have the following objectives:

- Define the quality criteria for the respective products/services by harmonizing the divergent expectations of the various consumers;
- Enable producers to understand and hence, produce and deliver to consumer’s expectation;
- Provide level-playing fields for all operators/players in the industry;
- Ensure fair trade practices;
- Provide the basic means of evaluating performance and compliance with expectations and/or laws;hmn
- Provide consumers with equal levels of protection;
- Provide verifiable and accessible information to all stakeholders;
- Facilitate overall economic development.¹¹

Standards and Quality

Standardization, in simple terms is the process of fulfilling the economic requirements of Quality Management. Through this, standardization improves production techniques, promotes fair trade practices and provides the best means of using goods and services.

By definition, it is the activity concerned with formulating and applying rules for an orderly approach to a specific activity for the benefit and cooperation of all concerned and in particular for the promotion of optimum overall economy, taking account of functional and safety requirements. The benefits derivable from standardization and quality control are numerous and diverse, all pointing to the direction of growth for the enterprises involved and strength for the economy that has the aggregate effect. Standardization enables the establishment of common units of measurement in communicating requirements, thereby facilitating interchangeability, interoperability and eliminating technical barriers to trade.¹²

Sustainable industrial development cannot be done without standards. In Nigeria, for instance, people are using sub-standards products when standards exist.

Aims of Standardization

According to UNIDO, standard is a document which is meant to provide equipments, guidelines and rules for process, services and products. These requirements are sometimes completed by a description of the process, service and products.¹³

Since standards are the result of a consensus, it must be approved by a recognized body. Standards aimed at achieving the optimum degree of order in a given context. Therefore, the process of formulating, issuing and implementing standards is called standardization.

The Primary Aims Of Standardization Are As Follows.

- 1. Fitness for Purpose:** This is the abilities of the process, service and product to fulfill a given defined purpose under specific conditions. The end purpose of any product, process and service is to meet the needs of the users or consumers. The expectation of consumers or users may not always be met by a product, process and services or may be at variance with the actual purpose of the product, process and services, that is where standardization is required. Again, it is difficult for users or consumers to always spell out the desirable quality of a process, product and services. Standard help by identifying and determining optimum parameters for the performance of a process, services and product. For instant, product standard which is a method of evaluating product conformity (such as test method standard and quality control standard) can only be gotten through standardization. Standards also lays down the conditions for using products, process and services as otherwise any failure of the process, product and services due to improper use may be attributed by the consumers to a deficiency or lack of quality of the process, product or services.
- 2. Interchangeability:** To fulfill relevant requirements, Interchangeability is the suitability of one process, product and services to be used in place of another. It is possible to make products, process and services interchangeable through a deliberate standardization process even if they are created in different countries. For instance, injection needles of different sizes and brands may be designed to fit the same hypodermic syringe to be used in one country can be used in different countries.
- 3. Compatibility:** If there is no parallel development of products, processes or services which are required to be used in combination, then that will pose a very serious problems if they are not compatible. One of the basic aims of standardization is the compatibility of all products, services and processes. These compatibilities include suitability of processes, products and services to beted together under given or specific conditions to fulfill the relevant equipments without causing unnecessary interactions. For instance, information has to be coded for storage, transmission and retrieval in the form of electronic pulses in an electronic data processing. To effectively establish compatibility between various machines or sub-systems and permits expansion features and information exchange amongst different systems, such standardization is necessary.

4. **Environmental Project:** Standardizations helps to protect the environment. It helps to preserve nature from damages that may be caused during the manufacture of a product or during the use or disposal after use of such products. For instance, the domestic use of such products like electric stove should only generate minimum of pollutions.
5. **Better Utilization of Resources:** The efficient utilization of resources such as capital and materials including human capital to achieve maximum results is one of the core aims of standardization. To reduce wastes in manufacturing this aspect of standardization of materials, components and production methods is very crucial in carrying out production in an economic way. For instance, the use of appropriate quantities of cement and steel to achieve a required strength are recommended in building standards and codes of practices in construction and civil engineering.
6. **Transfer of Technology:** Technology can easily be transferred through standardization process. This is because standards incorporate the results of advances, improvements, new discoveries in sciences, technology and experiences. They reflect the state of art in technical developments. Standards as a dynamic process are updated as new technologies are developed.
7. **Variety Reduction:** One of the basic aims of standardization is to reduce varieties in services, products and processes. Notwithstanding those varieties is the spice of life because it enables the consumers select the most appropriate products, services and processes from the large number of varieties available, it also placed manufacturers in a tensed position to keep producing. These large numbers of varieties requires large inventories resulting in large costs to manufacturers. Standardization for selection helps to reduce varieties for optimum number of sizes, ratings, grades, compositions and practices to meet prevailing needs. For the best interest of manufacturers and consumers, it is better to balance between too many and too few varieties.
8. **Protecting The Health Of Consumers:** Standardization protects the health of consumers. Where the process product and services may pose a threat to the life and safety of consumers, standardization becomes a measure to checkmate it. Safety of the process product and services is a great importance if under certain conditions, the use of the product, services and process poses a threat to human life or property. One of the vital requirements of standardization is the identification of the process, product and services and safety parameters, not only under normal use but under possible misuse. Items for human consumption should be free from harmful and poisonous substances – For instance, if food colours are used in products like sweets and bubblegum, they should be free from harmful and poisonous substances like lead or arsenic. Manufactured electric appliances should be well insulated to be free from electric

hazards. Fridges, electric boilers, electric stoves, pressing irons etc. should be designed in such a way so to guard their users against electrical shock from any part of the appliances. Safety standards also broadly cover the requirements to ensure the safety of equipments which includes a dust free enclosure of equipments, and that of people. Even the environment like a flame proof enclosure for equipment used in mines.

9. **Better Communication and Understanding:** Standard spell out what means of communications are to be used between different parties whenever the transfer of goods and services is involved. In a large variety of settings, standards contain information that is recorded in a precise and documented form which contributes towards a better understanding and communication. In airports, railways stations highways standardized signs play a crucial role.
10. **Removal of Trade Barriers:** Standardization removes non-tariff barriers of trade such as the introduction of restriction on the export of processes products and services such as technical barriers to trade like arbitrary products requirements are been viewed with great concern. Standardization harmonizes requirements in such a manner that promotes fair competitions. Consumers and purchasers alike can be convinced about the quality level of a product that has been manufactured according to a recognized standard.¹⁴

Benefits of Standardization

Standardization is aimed at achieving maximum overall economics in different sectors in the society.

❖ Manufacturers:

1. Standardization rationalizes the manufacturing process.
2. Standardization eliminates or reduces wasteful materials or labour.
3. It reduces inventories of both raw materials and finished products.
4. It reduces the cost of the manufacture.

❖ CUSTOMERS OR CONSUMERS:

1. Standardization assures the quality of goods purchased and services received.
2. It provides better value for money.
3. It is convenient for settling disputes, if any, with suppliers.

❖ Traders:

1. Standardization provides basis for the rejection and acceptance of goods or consequential disputes, if any.

2. It minimizes delays, correspondence, etc. resulting from accurate or incomplete specification of materials or products.¹⁵

❖ **Technologists:**

Standardization provides starting point for research and development for further improvement of goods and services.

Attributes of A Standard

Standard generally has three attributes.

Level: Such as the company, national or international levels.

Subjects: Such as engineering, food, textile or management.

Aspect: Such as specification, testing and analysis, packing and labeling (more than one aspect may be covered in a single standard. A standard may include items such as the product, its sampling and inspection, related tests and analysis, packing and labeling).¹⁶

For instance, the term “British standard specification of Biscuits” means that the standard is a national standard (level), in the food area (subject) and provides specification (aspect) for the biscuits.

Dr. Lal. C. Verman, founder and director general of the Bureau of Indian Standards, the national standards body of India created a standardization diagram that refers to the level, subject and aspect of standards.¹⁷

Levels of Standardization

Standardization has four levels, they are:

- a. Company standardization
- b. Association standardization (Industry)
- c. National standardization
- d. International standardization¹⁸

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CHAPTER THREE

EVOLUTION, STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS OF STANDARD ORGANIZATION OF NIGERIA, 1971-1990

The Inter dependence of life is reflected in the politico-socio- cultural and economic inter connectivity of nations through international trade and the linkage between various sectors of human endeavors. The above reality resulted to societies determined that standards should govern humans and nations. The core on which real valuable living is assured is on the maintenance of standard, and therefore essential to human existence.

Standard serves as a bench mark for global trade and commerce which aids human existence, or else life will be crude, brutish, short and cruel to the extreme.

Today life is worth living more than centuries ago due to a better Standard. The growth of international trade beyond the wildest imagination of our forefathers has played a key role in it. Africa's share in international trade is very low due to non adherence to Standard and which should be central to the policy of African governments to boost development in many African countries. The future for man and nations must be based on standards. For the world not to crash, Standard pedestals must be raised or secured. That means that our individual, national and collective fortunes depend on Standards.¹

No society or economy can attain its full potentials without adherence to global Standards. As the world is turning into global village, standards are becoming universal. The realization, practice and adherence to international trade regulation have become increasingly vital for success and survival in every individual and national socio- politico cum, economic activities of man. The vital roles played by the Standard bodies of a country cannot be over emphasized.²

Following the colonial era in Asia, Africa and Latin America, factors such as excess demand over supply, low purchasing power and problem with adherence to foreign standard led to the establishment of National Standard Bodies (NSBs) by the industrialized nations. In developing countries that have gained their independence, the aim of these standard bodies was to formulate national standard to suit local technologies, materials and consumption patterns. Organized standardization has now become an important element of infrastructure needed for the healthy growth of industry and commerce in all countries of the world.³

Industrial standardization has been most recently recognized as an important field of activity for technological, political and socio-cultural progress. There is the need for African nations to develop a Political Will to enhance their standardization process towards economic and socio-cultural growth. Since standards reflect the latest achievements in science and technology, it is most reasonable to assume that the rate of standardization characterizes the level of industrialization in a country and the rate of consumer satisfaction also leads to

societal harmony. Industrialization came late to so many African countries and so is the need for national standardization policy and structure which is also relatively recent in the region. This is due to the fact that, the metropolitan colonial nations impose their own different national standards on these African countries which were their former colonies purposely for their economic, industrial, and socio-cultural developments leading to a serious societal disharmony, alienation from ones (African) culture, and dumping of sub-standard products in these African countries by the developed former colonial nations.⁴

Establishment of Standard Organisation of Nigeria

After her independence in 1960, Nigeria was faced with the challenges of setting up her own standard organization so as to protect her nascent industries and prevent her territory from being turned into a dumping ground for substandard industrial products by the industrialized nations. There was also the need of deepening non- oil exports, and other key areas with accompanying policy changes and the need to sustained economic, socio- cultural and political growth through a strong Standard Organizational body, hence the establishment of Standard Organization of Nigeria as a standard body in 1971 known as Act No 56 Cap 412 Laws of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1971 with a commencement date of 1970 by the administration of General Yakubu Gowon.

According to Section 1 Subsection 1 and 2 of SON Act 2004, the Organisation has two arms through which it operates - a Council which is the governing body of the organization called the Standards Council of Nigeria and the Organization itself.

The Function of Son

The statutory functions of Standards Organization of Nigeria as stated in Section 3, subsection 1 of Act No.56 Cap 412, 1971 Laws of the Federal Republic of Nigeria are as follows:

- A. To organize test and do everything necessary to ensure compliance standards designated and approved by the council;
- B. To undertake investigations as necessary into quality of facilities, materials and products in Nigeria, and establish a quality assurance system including certification of factories, products and laboratories;
- C. To ensure reference standard for calibration and verification of measures and measuring instruments;
- D. To compile an inventory of products required standardization;
- E. To compile Nigeria industrial standards;
- F. To foster interest in the recommendation and maintenance of acceptable standards by industry and the general public;

- G. To develop methods for testing of materials, supplies and equipment including items purchased for use of department of government of the federation pr state and private establishments;
- H. Register and regular standard marks and specification;
- I. To establish preparation and distribution of standard samples;
- J. To establish and maintain such number of laboratories and institutions as may be necessary for the performance of its functions under this act;
- K. To compile and publish general scientific or other data:
 - (i) Resulting from performance of its functions under this act, or
 - (ii) From other sources when such data are of importance to scientific manufacturing interest or to go the general public and area not available
- L. To advise department of government of the federation or states on specific problems relating to standards;
- M. To sponsor such national and international conferences as it may consider appropriate;
- N. To co-ordinate all activities relative to its functions throughout Nigeria and to co-operate with corresponding national or international organizations in such fields of activity as it considers necessary with a view to securing uniformity in standards specification and
- O. To undertake any other activity likely to assist in the performance of the functions imposed on it under this Act.
- P. Organization shall undertake such research as may be necessary for the performance of its functions under this Act. And for that purpose it shall have power to make use of research facilities, whether public or private upon such terms and conditions as may be agreed upon between the Organization and the institution concerned.⁵

Establishment and Membership of the SON Governing Council

The Act No. 56, section 2, sub-section of 1971 provided for the constitution of the Nigeria Standards Council.

- (a) Members of the council are appointed by the Federal Government on the recommendation of the Minister of Industry with the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Industry as Chairman;
- (b) The members are drawn from other public and the private sectors. Members shall hold office for a term of four years from the effective date of their appointment.

- (c) The Council sees to the running of the organization through the formulation of policies in accordance with the intent of the formation of the organization while the organization implements such policies.
- (d) According to Section I subsection 1-3 Schedule SON Act 2004, the organization is made up of a Director-General (DG) of Standards, the Directors, Secretary and other support staff to help in the running of the organization. The “Council” which is the policy making body of the organization is made up of a seventeen member panel with the chairman who shall be the Director- General of the Federal Ministry of Industry, the Director General of Standards Organisation of Nigeria and representatives from each of these bodies and fields of activities: the Federal Ministry of Industries, Agriculture and Rural Development, Health, Defence, Commerce, Transport, Works and Housing, University education and Research, Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Mines, Engineering and Engineering Consultancy Services, Processing and Manufacturing Industry, Construction Industry, Employers Association, Consumers Association and one person who appears to the Minister to represent interests or fields of activity not already represented. However, the President reserves the right to increase, reduce or vary this composition of the Council.
- (e) The SON'S governing body is known as the Standards Council of Nigeria (hereinafter called the "Council"). This is the policy-making body for supervising the administration and financial management of SON. The Council is responsible for among other things, advising the Federal Government of Nigeria generally on the national policy on standards, standards specifications, quality control and metrology; designating, establishing and approving standards, and determining the overall policy of SON. The Director-General of SON is the Chief Executive, whose responsibilities revolve around the day-to-day administration of the organisation within the broad guidelines formulated by the Council.⁶

Appointment and Term of Service

As was provided for in Section 1, 4, 5 and 24 (1) SON Act 2004, the establishing Act empowers the President to appoint the Director-General based on the recommendation of the Ministers of Industries. The enabling Laws provides that the appointment, remuneration and other conditions of service for other Directors and the support staff are determined or prescribed by the Council in consultation with the Federal Civil Service Commission. This presupposes that the Council takes care of their appointments. Apart from the Chairman and the D.G, the Minister appoints other members of the Council.

Sections 2, 3 and 4 schedule to the SON Act 2004 stipulates that the members of the Council are to hold office for a period of four years from the date of their appointment or the instrument of such appointment. The appointment is renewable. Any member of the Council can resign his appointment, the notice of which shall be in writing, signed by the member and served on the Minister of Industries. Any member can be removed from office by the appointing authority, which is, the President, for the *D.G.* and probably the Chairman, but just as the Chairman of the Council because the person still retains his port folio as the Director General in the Federal Ministry of Industries from where he took up the position and others by the Minister. In line with Section 1 Subsection 1 and 3 and Section 3 Schedule to the SON Act 2004), the President has the overriding power in this issue of membership of the Council as he can increase or decrease the composition of the Council.

The other staffs of the organization have their conditions of service under the control of the Council. This, it is given, also includes the tenure of their employment as the Act is mute on this. It is arguable that since the Council oversees these staff, after consulting with the Federal Civil Service Commission, the conditions of service of Federal Public Servant apply to them as well and so, the mode of resignation and removal including pensionability of their appointments should also be as is obtainable under the federal public service.

Functions of the Council and the Organisation

The functions of the Council and the organization as stated in Sections 4 and 5, of SON Act 2004 are numerous and diverse. The aim is to ensure that the products pushed into the market by producers are of the required quality and the process of production of the acceptable standard. These include *inter alia* to:

- a. Advise the Federal Government generally on the national policy on standards, standard specifications, quality control and metrology;
- b. Designate, establish and approve standards in metrology, materials, commodities, structures and processes for the certification of production in commerce and industry;
- c. Provide the necessary measures for quality control of raw materials and products in conformity with the standard specification:
- d. Organise tests and do everything necessary to ensure compliance with approved standards;
- e. Undertake investigations as necessary into the quality of facilities, materials and products in Nigeria and establish a quality assurance system including:
- f. Certification of factories, products and laboratories, and ensure reference standards for calibration and verification of measures and measurinu instruments.

- g. (d) To determine the overall policy of the organization in particular with regard to the financial, operational and administrative programmes and to ensure the implementation of the said policy.
- h. (e) To determine appointment, remuneration and other conditions of service of Directors, secretary and staff of the organization;
- i. (f) To carry out the function imposed on it under this Act or any other written law.

In order to accomplish these lofty goals, the organization is empowered through the D.G. if he is not satisfied with the quality, purity or potency of any product because such a good is detrimental or hazardous to life and property, apply to a magistrate court within jurisdiction for an order of the court so as to seize, destroy or prohibit any person from selling any such product. It can seal up the premises where such product is stored or manufactured and can direct the producer/manufacturer to rectify the deficiency in the case of low product, if the deficiency is capable of correction.⁷

Nigerian Industrial Standards

A Nigerian Industrial Standard (NIS) is a precise and authoritative document established and approved by the Nigerian Standards Council prescribing necessary criteria that a material, product or procedure is fit for the purpose for which it is for. Nigerian Industrial Standards fall into categories, namely, Terminology Dimensional Standards, Performance Standards, Testing Standards, Product Codes of Practice, Process Standards, Service Standards and Measurement Standards.

Nigerian Industrial Standards are formulated in line with international best practices by Technical Committees. The Technical Committees are constituted from groups of relevant experts and other stakeholders in the private and public sectors - representatives of Government Agencies, Testing laboratories, Consumer Associations and Academia/Research Institutions - and from International, Governmental and Non-Governmental Organisations.

The experts work in honorary capacity and evolve Nigerian Industrial Standards (NIS) through consensus of opinions based on scientific and technical data. SON, through the Standards Directorate, acts as the Secretariat of the Committees that are involved in the development of Nigerian Standards, commonly referred to as the Nigerian Industrial Standards (NIS).

Benefits of Implementing Nigerian Industrial Standards

There are benefits to be derived from implementing the Standards:

- Standards serve as a guide for meeting minimum specifications in production of goods and services

- They provide useful tools in quality assurance, safety assurance, waste management and cost reduction, and
- Standards provide the basis for trade transactions.

SON provides technical advice to industries on quality management and quality systems to facilitate efficient implementation of standards. With the vision 'To improve life through standardization and quality assurance', SON'S defined mission 'To promote consumer confidence and global competitiveness of Nigerian products and services through standardization and quality assurance' places Standards and standardization activities as key drivers of business across all sectors of the economy.

In establishing the Organisation immediately after Nigerian Civil War in 1970, General Yakubu Gowon proved that he meant well for Nigeria. SON was charged with the responsibility of developing and enforcing product and processing Standards. The Organization has remained the fulcrum of methodology, Standardization, Testing and Quality Control (MSTQ) activities at the national and international levels in Nigeria's

To that effect, Mr. D.O. Ogun was appointed the pioneer Director General of the Organization.

DAVID O. OGUN AS DIRECTOR GENERAL OF S.O.N (1971-1985)

The pioneer and first Director of Nigerian Standard Organization (as the organization was then known) was Late Mr. David O. Ogun, a Chemistry lecturer from University of Jos, Plateau State. He was the first Director of the Organisation as a distinct entity from the Federal Ministry of Industry and Commerce where the Organisation was carved out from. He assisted the Government to establish the Organisation as an entity of its own. He led the Organisation from 1971- 1985. The Organisations Head Quarters was moved to Enugu even though it was still an integral part of Federal Ministry of Commerce and Industry with Head Quarters in Lagos.

Under his watch, the Act establishing the Organisation was amended in 1976, which was Decree No 20 of 1976, by the Regime of Former Head of State, General Olusegun Obasanjo. He helped the Federal Government to establish the Organisation as an entity, nurtured and placed it on a firm footing between 1971 and 1985. He commenced the construction of the Enugu Engineering Lab Complex when he transferred the national Head Quarters of SON to Enugu, South Eastern Nigeria. It was during his time that Nigeria changed from left hand drive to right hand drive. Even the matrix was done under his leadership. They have to be formulated to standard before it can be implemented by the nation.⁸

The Organization which was under the supervision of the Federal Ministry of Commerce and Industry has had the law establishing it went through so many amendments.

The first amendment was Act. 20 of 1976 which conferred on the Honourable Minister of Commerce and Industry with powers to prescribe Mandatory Standards in respect of products or processes recommended by the Nigerian Standards Council by the Regime of Former military Head of State, General Olusegun Obasanjo

The second amendment was effected vide Act No. 32 of 1984 which changed the name of the Organization from Nigeria Standards Organization (NSO) to the Standards Organization of Nigeria (SON) to avoid confusing the agency with the Security Agency of the Federal Government of Nigeria then popularly known as the Nigeria Security Organization also abbreviated as NSO. He retired in 1985.⁹

The third amendment was effected vide Act Cap 59 of 2004. SON is the custodian of international and national standards in Nigeria. In the first enabling law, the organization was charged with the responsibility of developing standards for commodities, projects and services for industries and to implement the Federal Governments programmes on standardization and quality assurance including metrology for both locally manufactured goods and imported products throughout the country. The organization was under the supervision of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.¹⁰

The last Amendment was done vide Act No.14, 2015 by the regime of President Olusegun Obassanjo. The last amendment was made to give more power to the organisation to penalize offenders and also add more functions to the work of the organisation.

BRIGADIER GENERAL ANTHONY ETUKUDO AS DIRECTOR GENERAL OF S.O.N (1985-1990)

Brigadier General Anthony Etukudo, OON (Rtd) was appointed to succeed Mr. David Ogun. Etukudo became the second Director of the establishment and served the organization from 1985 to 1990. Etukudo improved the staffing level of SON substantially, because he brought in many competent staff into the organisation. He continued the Enugu Engineering Complex project which was started by Mr. D.O Ogun. He commenced the Nigerian Industrial Standard Award Nite (NIS) presentation to companies whose products have been certified and found to meet the requirements of SON. He also commenced the establishment of the Kaduna Textile/Leather Laboratory in collaboration with United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO). He established three (3) additional SON Zonal Offices in Enugu, Kaduna and Uyo. He got the SON Enabling Act Act No. 18 of 1990, approved by General Ibrahim Badamosi Babagida, which was the third amendment. The Act excised the Organization from being an integral part of the Federal Ministry of Industry and granted the Organization the status of a body corporate with perpetual succession and common seal, which may sue and be sued in the Corporate Name.

He moved the Organisation back to Lagos from Enugu. He later moved the Lagos office from a rented apartment at Ikorodu road Lagos to Federal Secretariat Ikoyi, Lagos South West Nigeria. He also got the former National Data Bank Building at Victoria Island to be converted to SON Food Chemistry Laboratory. As an integral part of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry the Organization was bedeviled with the usual bureaucratic bottle neck that has been the bane of government establishments in Nigeria.¹¹

COLONEL R.G.POLLIT AS DIRECTOR GENERAL OF S.O.N (1990)

Colonel R. G. Pollit took over from Brigadier General Anthony Etukudo in 1990. He only spent less than eight months at the helm of affairs of SON. He birthed the newly approved SON Enabling Act No 18 of 1990 and commenced its implementation. He regularized the status of the staff employed by Etukudo. Most of the Graduates employed by Etukudo as junior staff were regularized by Colonel Pollit as they were converted as graduate staff. The annual NIS Award Night presentation was revived by Pollit. He restructured SON compliance activities by getting manufacturers, importers etc to comply with the organisation's standard specifications.

PROFESSOR JOSEPH AHMADU ABALAKA (1990-2000)

Col. R.G. Pollit served briefly as the Chief Executive of the Organization in 1990 before he was succeeded by Professor Joseph Ahmadu Abalaka who served the Organization as the Director General from 1990 to 2000. He served all through the administrations of Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida,(27th August 1985 to 26th August 1993) Chief Ernest Shonekan (26th August to 17th November 1993), Gen. Sani Abacha (17th November 1993 to 8 June 1998), General Abdulsalami Abubakar (June 8,1998 to May 29,1999) and part of President Olusegun Obasanjo's administration between 1999 to 2000. Joseph Abalaka was a Professor of Chemistry from Federal University of Technology Minna. He increased SON Zonal offices and established SON independence in line with the Enabling Act. Substantially, he increased SON staffing level by employing more competent staff. He built a new structure for the Enugu Engineering Laboratory in addition to the existing ones enabling SON Enugu office to now house Enugu Zonal Office, Enugu state office and Enugu Engineering Laboratory complex. He substantially increased SON corporate visibility by making sure that SON activities are better known to the public. He commenced the SON Management Systems Training and Certificate Schemes which is known today as ISO training scheme. He also improved substantially on SON/UNIDO collaboration for equipping Enugu, Kaduna and Lagos Laboratories and training of Staff on the equipment. The collaboration between SON and UNIDO led to a lot of donation, supply and installation of state of the art and latest equipments used by other developed countries in standardization and calibration by the United Nations Organisation. He introduced the use of Computers into SON operations even though at a lower level.

PROFESSOR TSEAA SHAMBE CCHEMN (2000-2001)

Professor Tseaa Shambe Cchemn, a Professor of Chemistry from University of Jos, Plateau State Nigeria. The same bureaucratic bottle neck affected the efficiency of the Organization during the tenure of Prof. Tseaa Shambe Cchemn when he took over as the Director General of Standard Organisation of Nigeria from Prof. Joseph Ahmadu Abalaka in the year 2000. He led SON from 2000 to 2001. He carried out an elaborate restructuring exercise of the organization which includes substantially increasing the staffing level of the organization especially from the private sector. He established more SON Zonal offices of the organization. He established the Product Registration and Consumer Complaints as well as upgraded the Planning, Research and Information Management Systems Department such that Data processing is now the other of day. He Improved the SON Computerisation process started by Professor Abalaka and took it to a greater height. His highest achievement was the procurement of a large expanse of Land at the Ogba Industrial Estate for SON Laboratory Project that now houses about thirty-six Laboratories. He Procured the Jos office Complex, commenced the upgrading of the SON Technical Library and the elaborate visibility of SON.¹²

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CHAPTER FOUR

INTERNAL DYNAMISMS, MODUS OPERANDI AND WORKING OPERATIONS OF STANDARD ORGANISATION OF NIGERIA (SON) 1990-2001

Standard Organization of Nigeria is a full – fledged statutory agency of the Federal Government of Nigeria responsible for standardization, quality assurance and metrology in Nigeria. In this connection, it is expected to prepare standards for products, and ensure compliance with Federal Government policy on standards and quality of products for both locally manufactured and imported goods. It is expected equally to undertake investigations as necessary into the quality of products in Nigeria and establish a quality assurance system including certification of factories, products, laboratories and service. The organization is mandated to maintain reference standard for calibrations and verification of measures and measuring instruments and to co-operate with corresponding national and international organizations with view to ensuring uniformity in standard specifications. For effectiveness and efficiency in the implementation of the above mandate as a public bureaucracy, Standard Organisation of Nigeria is empowered legally to apply penalty when necessary. This is in the form of seizure, confiscation and destruction of substandard goods and services, or seal up factories and premises, which do not show compliance to standard requirements. Although in implementing these penalties, the onus is shared among SON, the Police and Courts. Above all, the organization is mandated to develop and implement established national standards, through routine factory inspections and surveillance certification, ports inspection, consumer complaints and investigations, laboratory services, market survey enforcement, joint activities with government agencies and international standardization.

Unfortunately despite these elaborate mandates, evidences abound of importation and domestic production of substandard, adulterated and counterfeit products in Nigeria, thereby indicting the organization. The birth of fourth republic in 1999, with the attendant neoliberal reforms, increased influx of foreign direct investment, which in turn stimulated domestic production. Such reforms equally stimulated massive importation of goods into the country. ²

Nigeria which is acclaimed to be the most populous black African nation has been turned to a dumping ground for substandard products. These developments posed a great danger to the social, political, cultural and economic development of the country. This has placed the country's socio-economic life under the siege of substandard products, and thus posed great challenge to the government, regulatory institutions, consumers and the entire public. The international media is awash with news of harmful and substandard products in Nigerian

markets. Thus, consumers are faced with about 80 percent chances of buying fake products in a market where second hand goods are preferred as original. These products pose grievous threats to both survival of local industries and the health of consumers.³

Standard Organisation of Nigeria (SON) is the apex body in charge of standardization in Nigeria. Standardization is the process of developing and implementing of technical standards based on the agreement of different entities that include governments, standard organisations, firms, interest groups, and users. They are in charge of all the products, processes and scientific study of measurement standards in Nigeria.

Decree No 18 of 1990, the third in the amendments partially excised the organization from being an integral part of the Federal Ministry of Industry and granted the organization the status of a body corporate with perpetual succession and common seal which may sue and be sued in the co-operate name. Notwithstanding the 1990 amendment, the political backing from the government for the Organisation to function according to the dictates of the law that set it up was lacking.

Since 1990, SON became a body corporate to sue and be sued with the following six departments with each headed by a Director; STANDARDS; QAULITY ASSURANCE; LABORATORY SERVICES; METROLOGY; PLANNING/RESEARCH AND STATISTICS, FINANCE AND SUPPLIES AND PERSONEL MANAGEMENT. The following represent the high points of Acts No. 18 of 1990:

- a. The elevation of the Chief Executive from Director to that of Director General.
- b. Provision for the positions Directors, Secretary/Legal Adviser and such other staff as May required assisting the Director General in the performance of the duties of the organization under the act.
- c. The appointment, remuneration and other condition of service of the Directors and staff of the organization shall be determined or prescribed by the council after consultation with the federal civil service commission.
- d. The appointment of the Chief Executive shall be by the president and commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces of Nigeria on the recommendation of Honorable Minister of Industry.
- e. The Director General shall be the Chief Executive of the Organization and is subject to the council's directive on financial, operational, and Administrative programs. He shall be free to manage the organization in accordance with this act. The council shall not interfere with his methods or manner in which he employs the materials and human resources of the organization in order to obtain results.

- f. This amendment also provides for the strict enforcement of power of seizure, confiscation and destruction of sub-standards products including power to seals up premises for offending manufactures, importers and seller of sub-standards products were also provide for in the Decree.⁴

The enabling Laws that established SON made it a peculiar organization that must enjoy the co-operation of government and the private sector if it must make an impact and function effectively. As it tries to respond to the socio- political and technological changes in a world that is fast becoming a global village. It must be allowed to perform its statutory functions. SON is headed by the Standards Council of Nigeria. The daily management and administration of the body are carried out by the Director-General of SON.

The need to reposition the organization so that it can cope with the global challenges and changes led to the appointment of Dr. John Ndanusa Akanya as the Director General of the Organization in 2001. He served the Organization from 2001 to 2011 and totally transformed it from a moribund organization to an organization ready to face global challenges.⁵

To that effect, SON endeavored to keep abreast through maintenance of regular contacts with National standards bodies of other Countries, International Organization for Standardization (ISO), Commission (IEC), The African Regional organization on standardization (ARSO) Codex Alimentarius commission and all the relevant UN Agencies involved with standardization; quality Assurance and metrology. As a science based organization with a strong research component, SON needs a laboratory to function properly, hence the establishment of an engineering laboratory at Enugu the only laboratory owned by the organization as of 2001. The organization was bedeviled with bureaucratic bottle neck and was never so relevant to the industrial and technological need of the nation due to the fact that it was a department in the Federal Ministry of Commerce and Industries.⁶

Notwithstanding these limitations, the SON Laboratories that also render services to the public at minimal cost placed SON strategically in carrying out the mandates of Standards Development, Quality Assurance and Metrology which is vital and significant in its work as it takes the initiatives of Product Quality Certification through the award of Nigerian Industrial Standards (NIS). The success story of NIS is that the logo, once displayed on a product, confirms quality on manufactured Nigeria goods and makes them competitive worldwide. Today, NIS award has become a prestigious mark among all Nigerian Manufactures. When Prof. John Ndanusa Akanya took over the mantle of leadership of the Organization, he discovered that in-spite of the contribution of his predecessors, there was much room for improvement in order to re-engineer SON for the greater challenges of the 21st Century. In order to redirect the Organization, he took stock of what was on the ground and established a new focus and strategies for moving SON forward. Here, he counted on the full co-operation

of the work force and support of the Federal Government. He was lucky in both ways hence, his far reaching achievements that was recorded. Much is being done to give SON the necessary managerial man power needed. Much is being done to give SON the necessary management potency, being the ultimate fulcrum for standardization, regulation of products quality and for metrology. The contributions of SON to the socio-economic cum political growths of Nigeria include among others, the following.

- a. Two sets of products were reviewed in line with the established practice in response to dynamic changes that are on- going features in science. First, seventeen (17) was reviewed and another forty – five (45) products standards bringing the total to sixty – two (62) in order to provide standard to guide manufacturers which was approved by the Honourable Minister of Industry, Mr. Steven Ibn Akiga on the 10th August, 2000 when he signed into law 62 products standards.
- b. Products Market Survey and Registration have been introduced to enhance operations in this crucial aspect of SON Mandate. This is to ensure conformity with product standards and quality. In line with this intention, members of the public must know that, they can report cases of substandard/ poor quality products to SON. On receipt of such reports, SON will take appropriate steps to investigate, reprimand erring parties and ensures compliance in the public interest.
- c. SON has over time observed increasing cases of collapsed buildings in Nigeria with huge loses of property and lives. Buildings in Nigeria are contracted and constructed with substandard and poor quality materials, particularly the blocks and the steel bars. SON have therefore, embarked on initiatives of setting standards for all the building materials in Nigeria. Once the standards are set, moves were made to ensure full compliance. In addition, work is at an advanced stage of setting standards for all forms of transport and water crafts as well as aircrafts to ensure comfort and safety in these sectors;
- d. In order to increase and strengthen the presence of SON at the grass-root, it was discovered that the zonal structure was rather limited. In that sense, the presence of SON was not being felt at every corner and nook of Nigeria. In order to check this, for now, two zones were created with capitals at Yola and Benin. The ultimate expectation was that SON shall have an office in each State of the Federation.
- e. In order to ensure conformity and compliance with acceptable standards and quality of products, SON established an Enforcement Unit. This applies particularly at the ports where loopholes have been detected;
- f. Standard Organization of Nigeria placed great premium on man power Development through local and overseas staff training. Moreover, the management of the

Organization is working towards attractive conditions of service to forestall any labour unrest. SON recognizes that her greatest asset is her work force on whose performance lays the success of the Organization. This was what necessitated the setting up of Manpower Development Committee to address the issues bordering on human resources development and training for local and overseas programmes. This Committee was also to review the conditions of service and programme out career paths for each staff.

- g. In order to successfully carry out her programmes, SON have introduced collective decision making strategies. The teamwork approach is manifested in the Committee System that has been established. Each Committee is headed by a suitable Executive of the Organization. For example, the Appropriation Committee.⁷

When Dr. John Ndanusa Akanya took the mantle of leadership of the organization, he discovered that in spite of the contribution of his predecessors; there was much room for improvement in order to re-engineer SON for the greater challenges of the 21st century. In order to direct and establish a clearer focus and strategies for moving SON forward, he relied on the full co-operation of the work force and support of the federal government. SON was lucky in both ways hence, the cost achievement that she is recording. Much is being done to give SON the necessary management potency, being the ultimate fulcrum for standardization, regulation of products quality and for metrology.

Operations of Standards Organization of Nigeria

The intense competition in the global market continually poses the challenge for industrial growth, technological development, and the increasing quality demands of consumers, trade and exchange at domestic and international levels. This is at the core of SON's desire to assist industries to engage and up-grade standards to achieve quality and reliability. In the process, SON ensured that standardization strategies serve to eliminate rather than create technical barriers to trade.⁸

To reach levels of industrial capability comparable to the developed world, national strategies are needed to focus on acquiring world class technology, competence and achieving a good understanding of technical requirements that govern trade in the global market. In both ways, the knowledge of standardization and its application can bring inherent benefits to Nigeria's domestic manufacturing enterprise that would lead to economic, political, and socio-cultural growth. This would also create the foundation for regional and international trade and exchange of products, already, this type of symbiotic co-habitation is the focus of the ECOWAS countries (like the Ghana-Nigeria Standards Harmonization Committee) since inception of the democratic Administration in Nigeria.⁹

Again, in the emerging realities, the Administration of President Olusegun Obasanjo noted early enough that where national standardization infrastructures are weak or not in

existence, it is difficult to maintain reliable quality levels in manufacturing practices, ensure quality imports and exports, maintain a better standard of living for her citizens and maintain a peaceful political and societal harmony in the country. It is even difficult to sustain a growing enthusiasm and the quality culture of local companies.¹⁰

These factors informed the need to create additional Zonal Offices in Benin and Yola. Now therefore, SON has 13 operational bases including corporate Headquarters' at Abuja and the Operational Headquarter in Lagos.

SON also established operational offices at the airports and local border posts to augment the existing sea operations. This significant development helps to checkmate the influx of fake and sub-standards products through such areas at the expense of our local industries.¹¹

The existing food, Engineering and Textile/leather laboratories at Lagos, Enugu and Kaduna respectively need expansion and adequate funding. There is also an approval, subject to government funding to establish a metrology-testing laboratory in Abuja. SON also needs to build a food, Beverage and Cosmetic laboratory in Lagos.¹²

The Dr. John Ndanusa Akanya led SON came with dynamism and has since refocused the organization. Without good leadership, the resource of production remains dormant. Dr. John Ndanusa Akanya has therefore made deliberate effort in re-orientating the entire focus of SON.

The introduction of a democratic administrative system has already provided a solid foundation and constructive direction for administering the affairs of SON. Major deliberations and decision are considered through committees. This has led to objectivity, self-control, proper structure of jobs, creation of right spirit and teamwork, and allowing for up-ward movement in the SON hierarchy flow.¹³

Objectives of Son

The resolve of SON is to be a reference point in matters of standardization, quality and technical competence required to launch Nigerian products into competitive global market. This resolve is predicated on the following objectives.

- a. To provide industries with up-to-date information on standardization, its benefits and to encourage participation of the organized private sector (OPS) in standardization and review.
- b. To ensure improved competitiveness of Nigerian goods at home and abroad by encouraging quality assurance practices;
- c. To provide information, advice and assistance to industries on quality management for improved cost effectiveness;

- d. The Organization would ensure adequate technical support for our industries as the reposition to match the quality required for competitiveness in global trade and proper economic growth,
- e. To motivate the workforce through steady investment in human resource development for acquisition of skills in tune with technological advancement
- f. To collaborate with regional and international organizations in the areas of Metrology, Standards, Testing & Quality Assurance (MSTQ) for enhancement of skills and encouragement of free trade and building of capabilities.¹⁴

Internal Administrative Operations

The Honorable Minister of Industry is at apex of Organizational chart of SON. The Standards Council is responsible to the Honorable Minister. The Director General who is also a member of the Standards Council is the Executive and is responsible to the Honorable Minister of Commerce and Industry through the Council.

Standards Organization of Nigeria is organized into functional departments under the Director-General.

Chief Executive:

According to the Acts setting up Standards Organization of Nigeria, the Director-General advises the Federal Government through the Council on national policies on standards, standards specifications, quality control, product certification and metrology. He, through the Council, is designated to establish and approve standards in respect of metrology, materials, commodities, structures, and processes for the certification of products in commerce and industry throughout Nigeria. He also, through the Council, determines the overall policy of the organization, in particular with regard to the financial, operational and administrative programmes of the organization and ensures the implementation of policies. He shall, through the Council carry out other functions imposed on him under the Enabling Act and the amendment decree or any written law of the Federal Government. The Director-General is subject to the Council's general directives on financial, operational and administrative programmes. He is, however, free to manage the organization and the Council shall not interfere with his method or with the manner in which he employs the materials and human resources of the organization in order to obtain results in accordance with the laws establishing the organization.

The organizational structure fashions the system into directorates, units, departments and sections, depending upon the nature of the activities. Because of the nature of functions of SON, zonal offices was established nation-wide to ensure that services are brought close to all stakeholders and interested parties.

The Head Offices of SON

Currently, SON has an Operational Head Office in Lagos and Corporate Head Office at Abuja. The reason for this is to ensure that its activities are readily available to all the stakeholders, especially in Lagos with a dense population of its customers.

Standards Organization of Nigeria is organized into functional Departments under the Director-General. The Organization has a Secretary/Legal Adviser. All the Directorates are headed by Directors including the newly established Zonal Directorates.

The Audit, Finance, Library, Planning/Management information System that are directly responsible to Director General are manned by Assistant-Directors or Deputy Directors as maximum limit.

All zonal Offices are headed by Assistant Directors or equivalent to Deputy Directors as the maximum limit. Very vital Organizational units include all the technical operations such as Standardization, Quality Assurance, Training, Zonal Offices, Physical Testing, Food Testing, Leather/Textile Testing, and Engineering Testing Laboratories. They are headed by Directors or equivalent of Deputy Directors as upper limit.

Committee System:

The leadership of SON carries out decision making through Committees. The philosophy of the leadership is to involve essential staff in decisions taken at Committees, which are approved by the Management Committee, for which the Director-General is the Chairman. It is believed that once a person is part of a decision, implementation is easier. The Committees with their functions are as follows:

Administrative Committee:

This highest policy making committee is headed by the Director-General. Members include the following heads of departments: Training, Personnel, Finance, Audit, Library, and Ports Operations as a decision making body to guide the operations of the Organization. It meets once every week to approve all the major proposals.

Technical Committee.

This is also an expanded decision making body made up of administrative and technical staff. The membership comprises heads of departments that deliberate on issues relating to various operations of SON including technical operations both at the national headquarters and the Zonal level. It is headed by the Director-General and meets once every month. The Committee makes proposal for approval of the Administrative Committee.

Appropriation Committee.

This is a Committee chaired by the Head of Finance which collate all the expected expense of the organization for the week, appropriated and recommends such for approval of the Administrative Committee at its weekly meetings.

Manpower Development Committee:

Due to the high premium the leadership of SON places on its work force, it established this Committee and oversea its training development. It is Headed by a principal standards Engineer, the committee presents its recommendation to the Administrative Committee for ratification and implementation.¹⁵

Directorates/Departmental Functions:

Budget and Expenditure Control: This unit prepares all budget estimates of the organization and keeps records of all approved payments to ensure that expenditures are made in accordance to budget/estimates.

Loans and Advances -This section records all Advances and Loans granted by the organization. It also maintains the Loans and Advances Ledger and also prepares retirement/clearance vouchers when such advances are retired.

Salaries and Wages -All salaries paid to staff both at the headquarters and zonal offices are prepared by this section to staff on the payroll and the activities are summarized as an input in the Final Account.

Treasury Management -Records of all revenue/income of the organization are maintained in this section. All disbursement of funds is also carried out in this section. No doubt this is a very strategic unit in the directorate since movements of funds are involved.

Final Accounts -The section collates all financial information from the source documents and prepares a Final Account for the organization. At the end of every month the Bank Accounts of the organization are reconciled and a Trial Balance is also extracted to test the arithmetical accuracy of the figures. It is part of the SON requirements that delays in fund disbursement are removed. Payments for satisfactorily executed transaction are therefore effected within 24 hours after audit certification. Salaries are paid promptly and clearance certificates are issued for all retirements of advances. Above all, proper records of daily transactions are maintained.

Store Management -The directorate maintains a Stationery Store where all stationery are received, stored and issued out on demand after due approval by the Head of the Directorate. Proper records of the stationery are kept by the officer in charge.¹⁶

Personnel Management

The department provides support services to the Technical Departments. It deals with human resources management development and the effective utilization and motivation of the work force. Generally, its functions cover recruitment, promotion, discipline, training, security, welfare and retirements and in many cases the providing of secretariats for committees.

It handles and interprets the SON Conditions of Service and Federal Government Circulars.

On ad hoc basis, it is involved in matters affecting gratuity and pensions, transport, protocol and consultations with the other departments on matters cutting across the organization as the needs arise.

The achievements of the Personnel Management Department are evident in the maintenance and sustenance of peace, security and discipline in the organization. The creation by a well managed enabling environment has been the bedrock of the successes recorded by the organization so far. The department is resolutely poised to ensure that the system will continue to function effectively and efficiently.¹⁷

Manpower Development

The planning/information management unit along with the Internal Training Coordination Section are jointly responsible for identifying training needs of all staff, and for proposing nominations and recommendations for training workshops/seminars as are relevant to the objectives of SON.

It is only through a well articulated manpower development strategy that SON can create a pool of experts, provide staff with equal opportunities for career expectations, and subsequently meet the needs and expectations of stake-holders and interested parties. According to Adebola Fashina, the management of Standard Organisation of Nigeria is aware that only competent staff can satisfy the expectations of its clients, hence the focus of the Organisation on training and re-training of staff and their continual participation in workshops and such programmes in order to keep them abreast of developments in their various fields of specialization.¹⁸

Such machineries include the internal finances and personnel financial activities.

This will be briefly discussed under two headings: Personnel and Finance.

Finance

The internal Audit is charged with the responsibility of investigating and appraising financial transactions of the SON to ensure: verifying procedures and operations and the resulting financial statements in order to determine that the system is operated with accuracy, efficiency and effectiveness.

The unit ensures that the operations and reports satisfy the requirement of law, rules and regulation of government.

Personnel

The Internal Audit also carries out staff Audit. Results of Audits provide management with relevant and vital information as may be necessary and needed for the day to day running of the organization.

Legal Department

The legal department is attached to the office of the Director-General/Chief Executive.

The duties/functions of the legal department include, among others:

- * Providing advisory opinion to the DG/CE and other departments in the organization
- * Conducting searches and making inquiries as it concerns the organization
- * Interpreting legal documents
- * Liaising with legal retainers to ensure that assignments given to them are effectively executed.

Public Relation's Unit

The Public Relations Unit is under the office of the Director-General / Chief Executive and its objective is to develop and project a good public image of the organization.

The Function of the PR Unit include among others:

- *Public Information/Enlightenment
- * Media Relations
- *Protocol
- *Services Publicity/Advertising
- * Documentation (Video and Photographic)
- * Publications.

Planning/Information Management

This unit is set up under the office of the Director-General. It is responsible for all matters of Planning and evaluation of programmes and it provides the secretariat with budgeting, planning and information management.

*** Specifically, the functions of the Directorate are as follows:**

- * Collection, processing and banking of data information relating to the operations of the organization.
- * Data Bank/Sectoral Statistics
- * Internal Statistics and Computer Services

- * Records.
- * Development Plans
- * Setting and monitoring of performance efficiency targets for the various sub-divisions and the organization.

Maintenance Section

Maintenance, which is a vital section, is responsible for the upkeep and repair of all the fixed SON (vehicles, furniture/office equipment built by the organization).

The units under the Maintenance Section

transport unit

- civil/building maintenance unit computer hardware/software and office equipment maintenance unit.

- a workshop unit which is manned by qualified personnel, who is responsible for all the maintenance needs of the Organisation.¹⁹

Core Directorates of Standards Organization of Nigeria

Standards Directorate

i. Development of National Standards

This is the main organ of the Standards Organization of Nigeria. This organ is responsible for defining product specification in elaborated standards for ensuring that quality of products is in harmony with established standards. In order to be effective, National Standards Directorate defines products and lays down quality assurance procedures for ensuring that their quality production is in harmony with established standards. SON has continued to make substantial progress in elaboration of national standards by diversifying into many non-conventional areas such as petroleum science/technology, agriculture and environmental issues such as petroleum products, agricultural products, and environmental issues. The specific fields existing in Standards Organization of Nigeria are as follows:

- (a) Chemical Technology
- (b) Civil Engineering
- (c) Electrical Engineering
- (d) Mechanical Engineering
- (e) Food Technology
- (f) Textile and Leather Technology

ii. Standards preparation Procedure

The procedure for preparation of standards is carried out by the relevant Technical Committee constituted by the Nigeria Standards Council. The Technical Committee which vary in sizes

derive their membership such as Universities, Research bodies and general interest groups or stakeholders such as a minimum of 33 main Technical Committees although sub Technical Committees are formed out of the main ones to deal with specific issues. The wide composition of the various Technical Committees usually creates a forum wherein the various experts are harnessed in the preparation and subsequent review of standards.

Traditionally, a draft standard is usually by SON Technical Officers in the Organization depending upon the priority or work programme of the directorate and on the need or demand from the public. The officers, thereafter collect relevant scientific data related to the draft standard under consideration from other technical groups. The relevant Technical Committee then meets to consider, review and adopt the draft standard for public comments. The comments when received are further evaluated until all quality parameters being prescribed in the standards are considered adequate for approval by the Standards Council.

iii. **Approval of Standards**

The responsibility of authorization of product standards as per the Act establishing SON is vested in the Organization's Governing Council. In recent times however, there has not been such a Council in place. In such circumstance therefore, the Federal Minister of Commerce and Industry whose Ministry supervises SON is empowered to carry out such statutory duties. Therefore, in the absence of the SON Council, the Honourable Minister of industry has the responsibility to approve a standard for use.

iv. **Review of standards**

Apart from elaboration of new standards, the Organization revises or reviews the existing standards that are out-dated to match-up with the current industrial quality control practices. The procedure for review of standards is the same with that of drafting of new ones.

v. **Utilization of Approved Standards** is subsequently used by manufacturers as a guide in production. This helps in promoting quality at both domestic and international trade.

The standards are also utilized by the Quality Assurances Unit of SON in monitoring the quality of products and as basis for adjudging products for the award of the NIS Certificate of Compliance.

Standards can be reviewed after a period of three years if there is a new technological development in the field concerned or where inadequacies are observed.²⁰

Quality Assurance Directorate

A. Quality Control

The quality Assurance Directorate that carries out quality control activities of SON and ensures implementation of Standards essentially through inspection of good at various points

of manufacture and at points of entry of imports. The aim inspection is to evaluate and enforce product conformity with the relevant standard.

In pursuance of this, the Directorate of Quality Assurance is modeled into six subject areas covering the following product Units:

- i. Chemical Technology;
- ii. Food/Codex;
- iii. Mechanical Engineering
- iv. Electrical/Electronics
- v. Civil /Building Engineering
- vi. Textiles/Leather

i. Factory Inspection And Surveillance

Factory inspection as an aspect of integrated approach to standardization objective of SON is usually carried out to promote the quality control practice in the manufacturing sector. Quality control Inspection visits are made to factories in order to evaluate the company's compliance with the various established quality control practices as well as to obtain samples from production lines which are subjected to laboratory testing. This is to determine the degree of the production conformity with the Parameters/Specifications in the already established standard, although the ultimate aim of inspection is to ascertain the degree of quality control. Nonetheless, such visits, depend on the nature of the task, and are usually routine quality assessment , certification of products seeking NIS certificates, pre- shipment export inspection, manufacturing-in-bond, input-output coefficient schedule, computation for use in the duty drawback scheme, consumer complaints and import inspections.

In order to realize effectively the gains of the Federal Government's policy on standardization and quality control among the industries, the organization vigorously stepped up its factory inspection programme. The task of reached these companies spread all over the Federation is being made easier by increasing SON's offices nation-wide. Over 500 factories all over the country are regularly inspected various departments of SON. ²¹

Field Experience

Greater improvements are being recorded in the manufacturing sectors as far as the level of quality control consciousness is concerned. Apart from the fact that many companies need the assistance of the organization in the area of setting up of quality control laboratories out fit, the directives of the organization with respect to correction of products whose quality

parameters were found grossly deficient made significant impact on the quality of products from these companies. The relationship between small and medium scale industrialists and SON is improving considerably. The wrong opinion of SON as a big weapon of government to close down factories indiscriminately gradually is being replaced. Now there is better understanding of SON toward achieving higher quality products and overall technological advancement of the nation. Consequently, a number of small and medium scale industries are tapping the expertise of SON in one way or the other. In addition, this is having a considerable impact on their personnel and quality of their products thereby aiding the wellbeing of the society.

The Director General undertakes tours to zones and visits manufacturers in these areas. Such visits that are always reported in the media usually have positive impact on the companies visited. It also offers opportunities for on-the-spot assessment and practical discussions between the two parties at the end of which a better understanding of SON's activities and quality control practices develop.

Increasingly being observed is the problem of activities of unscrupulous "manufactures" that produce substandard goods that SON discovers in many small and medium scale industries. This is in an attempt to keep afloat in the face of scarce raw materials and diminishing purchasing power is used for producing sub-standard goods. A significant number of inspections are used for detection of such- sub-standard goods. In some cases detection are made during follow-up of consumer complaints. This has led to instances where the seal-up of "counterfeit" companies became inevitable.

Any reported cases of quality abuse are thoroughly investigated and drastic actions taken to forestall the damaging of the good image of SON.²²

Product Certification for Quality Award

One important aspect of the quality control activity of the Organization is the annual certification exercise of products from companies for quality award known as the NIS Award. This mark is given to manufacturers as a symbol of quality and could be displayed on their products for the year it was won. It is an annual exercise whereby interested companies apply direct to SON for the use of its NIS quality mark on their product for the year. The procedure for earning the NIS mark is described below.

I. Procedure For The NIS Certification Mark

The procedure for certification of product for Quality Award has been the same over the years. It involves three important steps being taken by the Organization following the receipt of application from interested companies. They are:

- a. A series of systematic inspection of and the product factory is undertaken to determine whether the product conforms to relevant NIS specifications. Laboratory tests are then carried out on the product to verify their conformity with the relevant SON established parameters. Once these processes have been carried out and the quality of the product is certified to have met the approved mark, which is put on its product for the year.
- b. More procedural inspections are carried out on factories and laboratory tests conducted on products samples during a follow-up action. The monitor is to ensure that the subsequent quality of the product manufactured is in accordance with the relevant approved NIS specifications.
- c. Though each NIS quality certificate award is only for duration of one year, it is renewable on yearly basis as long as the relevant standards parameters are met. The certification can also be withdrawn if the company is found to have grossly defaulted after the award.

i. About The Display Of NIS Mark On Products

The public may wish to note the display of NIS quality mark on any indigenously manufactured product is an indication that the product conforms to relevant specified standards parameters established by SON. It is therefore an offence for manufacture to display the NIS quality mark on his product without winning the award. It is also an offence for imported products to carry the NIS

Logo.

ii. Types Of NIS Quality Award

There are categories of NIS quality awards. They are gold, silver and ordinary certificates. Companies, which have consistently won the award for ten years and above are categorised under “Gold NIS certificate winners. While those that have consistently won the award for a period of five to nine, years are given “NIS Silver certificate” Both Gold and Silver NIS certificates winners are also given Gold and Silver plaques respectively with NIS Mark and the year of award boldly inscribed on them and made suitable for display. The plaque is however updated every year if the manufacture’s product is revalidated. The third type of certificate, Ordinary Certificate, is awarded to those companies, which have consistently won the award for a period of one to four years.

The certification exercise has been witnessing increases in demand for the award because of increased consumer awareness. The NIS award mark thus is becoming prestigious in the manufacturing circle.

Perhaps it is worthy to note that fourth Award which is highest is the Diamond Award that is reserved for the outstanding quality award winners for twenty five years and above.²³

Import Inspections

As part of standardization and quality control activities, SON is actively involved in import inspection of goods and quality assessment at the ports. The importance of this exercise cannot be over emphasized considering its economic and health/safety implications to the country. With the Federal Government trade liberalization and privatization policies, the Organization is vigorously pursuing the import and quality inspection programme in order to ensure that only goods that meet the Prescribed National standards parameters are allowed into the country. The gains of the past years are also being consolidated.

The port operation scheme was continuously reviewed and modified appropriately to enable SON meet the various challenges that crop up from time to time. SON has established her presence in virtually all the seaports and personnel are being increased to cope with the increasing expansion in volume of imported goods. Arising from consumer complaints/market surveys, a few items were added to the list of products under SON inspection schedule. Notable improvements are being recorded in coverage, intensity vis-à-vis the total volume of imported items under SON inspection schedule.

ii. Poor Quality products Reprimand

Although greater percentage of imported products samples occasionally tested by SON largely conforms to the relevant NIS specifications, there are occasions when the quality specifications of some imported products are found to be below the minimum limit of the prescribed relevant NIS specifications. Consequently, in such circumstances, the organization adopts three ways of dealing with such substandard or poor quality goods. These are based on the level of deviation of the tested parameters from relevant specifications or parameter prescribed in the Nigerian industrial Standard that may include the following:

(iii) Cases of Seizure and Destruction

In cases, where the deviation from the prescribed relevant standard specifications are wide enough to constitute health hazards or create harmful effects on the socio-economic life of the citizens, the defective consignments/containers shall be confiscated and destroyed at a date in the presence of all parties concerned. However, such destruction shall never be embarked upon until reliable proof of the product's extreme poor quality is established and verified by laboratory analysis and where rectification or otherwise corrective active is not possible.²⁴

Ports/Border Operation Scheme

The role of SON at the Nigerian Ports/Border is aimed at controlling the influx of substandard products into the Nigeria market.

It was in pursuit of this statutory function that a presidential directive was issued to SON in 1988 directing it to man the Nigerian Ports and Border posts Nation-wide. Sequel to this directive, SON in 1989 established port operation scheme and our presence in the ports inspection scheme nation-wide had led to regular monitoring of the quality of imported products to ensure that they conform to relevant NIS requirement.

The Federal Government trades liberalization policy, and the deregulation of economy has influenced the influx of goods into the Nigeria market, but with some problems such as increased importation of substandard and fake products. The SON's role at the Port/Border operations scheme over the years has, yielded positive results in checking the indiscriminate dumping of poor quality products into the Country.

i. Procedure

The port/border inspection scheme involves the inspection, examination, sampling and the laboratory analysis of imported goods. It is pertinent to mention that, despite its numerous constraints and problems, SON has continued to make its presence felt in virtually all the ports in monitoring the quality of imported goods. While progress is being made to completely cover Airports and Borders, efforts are equally afloat to improve communication and operational facilities for effective performance of duties.

With the introduction of 48 hours clearance directive from the Federal Government of Nigeria in 1999, which is aimed at expediting clearance of cargo at the Port Terminals and bonded Warehouses, Conditional Release Notes are now being given to the importers directly by our officers at the Port immediately after examination/inspection as against the former practice when same document was issued from the SON Head Office.

ii. Problems

Nevertheless there are many problems encountered at the ports. Among them are the increased activities of smugglers bringing poor quality products into the country through routes not manned by SON (Illegal routes at border posts) the smuggling activities continued to puncture the effective impact the Organization's operation would have had on the socio-economic life of the people. Other obstacles being encountered are evasion of SON inspection by importers/clearing agents, shortage of manpower and funds to purchase operational vehicles and sophisticated laboratory testing equipment. However, it is being hoped that with continued and increasing assistance of other government agents, and the general public, SON will continue to exert greater impact on the quality of imports into the country.²⁵

Consumer Complaints and Investigations

In line with SON enabling Act in Section 5(1) (a), SON has been pursuing vigorously cases of consumer complaints brought to its attention. In order to actualize this, SON is involved in consumer protection activities. The activity is a system whereby officers of the Organization carry out investigation on complaints in respect of products received from the consumers who purchased the products. Therefore, the Organisation has put in place Consumer Protection/Collaboration and Enforcement Unit which ensures that substandard products (both locally manufactured or imported) are apprehended or impounded particularly where the quality of the products deviat from the prescribed relevant specifications or may constitute health hazard or cause harm to life and property. As the only statutory organization in charge of standardization and quality control, the essence of the activity is towards ensuring compliance with the various established standards and quality control practices in the National Standards. The exercise is carried out on a two-fold premise. Firstly, for consumers who purchase such substandard products to seek redress against the manufacturer through the Organization.

Secondly, the exercises is assist SON to identify producers of poor quality products, detect manufacturing defects and thereafter offer practical suggestions that would help manufacturers to correct such defects. Thus, SON acts as a forum or intermediary judge between the particular consumer with evidence of the purchase and the manufacturer. When the genuineness of the complaints is established, an inspection is made to the manufacture fro investigation. In all cases, SON ensures that privilege is not abused by the complaint and fair judgment is meted out to the manufacturer based on empirical evidence before it and further corroborated by laboratory findings where relevant.²⁶

Quality System Certification

Quality System Certification is the confirmation to a client that a quality management system is in place which will ensure that product (or service) is delivered consistently based on stated terms. This was first introduced in Nigeria as part of the UNIDO/SON project that will ensure fair competition in the International Market. As a member of ISO and recognizing the emerging importance of the ISO 900 series of quality management standard in international trade, SON in 1994 adopted ISO 9000 standards for use in Nigeria. In an intensive train-the-trainers course run by BSI, forty SON staff qualified as Assessors for the first time and the best twenty went on to quality as Lead Assessors.

In 1994, the Quality System Certifications was set up to certify systems that meet the requirements of any of the International contractual standards (ISO 9001, 9002 or 9003)

- i. Objectives Since the establishment of the National certification scheme. In 1994 about 50 companies, nation-wide have obtained registration of their quality system to the different contractual standards.
- ii. Benefits Of Certification To The Client
 - a. Provides the means for the staff to perform their tasks right the first time, thereby reducing waste both materially and time-wise.
 - b. Provides basis for identifying the tasks and specifying them in way that will yield the right results.
 - c. Serves as means for documenting the Client's experience in a structured manner and thus establishing a basis for educating and training staff and the systematic improvement of performance.
 - d. Provides objective evidence that can demonstrate that quality of products or services meet specified requirements. In addition, its operations are under control to assessors' representatives and stakeholders.
 - e. Reduces ad-hoc or "Fire brigade" approach to solving problems and thus frees management from having to intervene constantly in business operations.
 - f. Maintains consistency in the quality of products and services.
 - g. Brings clarity and transparency to duties and responsibilities.
 - h. Enhances tractability, thereby wining both internal and external customers' confidence.
 - i. Promotes competitiveness in trade.²⁷

Environmental Management System (Iso 14000) Certification

The entire World has shown a great concern over the impact of Socio-economic activities on both world vegetation and climate. It is in line with this that several campaigns were launched at international level. Among which were the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the ozone Layer; Montreal Protocol on Substances that deplete the Ozone layer and the Rio De Janeiro World Trade Organization Agreement on Export and Multilateral Trade. Nigeria endorsed all of these Agreements that emanate from these. For compliance within specified time frame as basis for international trade and social cooperation among countries Nigeria through SON domesticate the campaign.

The ISO 14000 series standards were approved for use in 1996 for Environmental Management System. They serve as international documents, which prescribe measures for compliance to specified requirements By Assessment Bodies when dealing with topics including the following:

- a. Environment Management Systems (EMS)

- b. Environmental Auditing (EA)
- c. Life Cycle Assessment (LCA)
- d. Environmental Performance Evaluation (EPE)

In order to fit into the global trend in these environment issues, Nigeria through SON, and under the Technical Co-operation Assistance, UNDP Programmes embarked on the training of SON staff in 1998 in collaboration with British Standards Institution (BSI). In addition, SON in collaboration with ISO Central Secretariat and the Swiss Government conducted an awareness lecture session to Stakeholders from all works of life in Nigeria, in September 1998. The awareness session, which brought an ISO Central Secretariat Staff and other international Consultants to Nigeria, attracted participants from neighboring countries of the ECOWAS Sub region including Senegal, Cote d' Lvoire, Guinea, Cameroon and Liberia. The ground became set for the take-off of the ISO 14000 Training and Certification Scheme in Nigeria through SON.²⁸

Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG)

Recently it became expedient that SON should be responsible for ensuring that any unfired pressure vessel or cylinder is certified before use. This means that the container of LPG or any other gaseous medium, either imported or fabricated in Nigeria must satisfy the requirements of the applicable standards. This is to ensure safety of live and property as a step towards protecting Nigerians against the frequent accidents caused by failure or explosions of substandard LPG cylinders and vessels.

The certification of LPG vessels by SON became necessary when, in 1996 the Department of Petroleum Resource (DPR) discovered the proliferation of LPG vessels in Nigeria. At this point, it became mandatory for LPG pressure vessel to be certified by SON before DRP issues a license to operate.

ii. Method of Operation

Vessels and cylinder fabricated in Nigeria are tested and certified in manufacture workshop before delivery to the purchaser. The imported vessels and cylinder are first subjected to usual inspection. If the vessel or cylinder passes the inspection criteria, it is released to the importer.

iii. Test Facilities

SON has a well-equipped mobile laboratory and trained engineers for the testing of vessels and cylinders. This mobile laboratory can be used in any part of the country where the vessels and cylinders are located. The mobile laboratory operations carry out the following tests.

1. Pneumatic And Hydrostatic Pressure Tests

The Mobile pressure equipment can attain a pneumatic pressure of 34 hydrostatic pressure of 200 bar in any test sample. Vessels and cylinder pressure tested for strength;

2. Ultrasonic testing Equipment: (Non-Destructive Testing-NDT) Weld joints of Vessels and cylinders are examined using the Ultrasonic which the ordinary eyes can not see. It also gives the thickness of any metallic material;
3. Inspection of inner part of cylinders and vessels, all instructions and equipment necessary for the inspection of inner part of cylinders and vessels are available in SON and used during inspection.²⁹

Laboratory Services Directorate

Central to the entire work of Standards Organization of Nigeria is the network of its laboratories that are managed under a directorate. Over time however, SON have operated with only laboratories that need increased funding. Increasingly therefore, it has been difficult to cope with the volume. It therefore became necessary to establish laboratory at Abuja and a food/beverage and cosmetics laboratory at Lagos.

The laboratories offer services that investigate the conformity to standards of both locally manufactured and imported products; it also undertakes analysis of products' from companies for the purpose of certification. Furthermore, the directorate provides analytical information on consumer's complaints.

Generally, SON have achieved appreciable increase in the laboratory testing activities compare to the past. The feedback report from the various laboratory tests have helped to alert our local manufacturers on their shortcoming and have revealed those imported goods found to be of poor quality. After these, corrective measures are always enforced by SON on such product. Such importers are warned against importation of such products. The parameters examined in SON laboratory include physical appearance, odour, dimensions, particle sizes, the chemical composition of product such as alcohol, sucrose, minerals and other nutrients; and microbiological tests on foods to determine the degree of bacterial contamination.

Laboratory Set-Up across Nigeria

The activities briefly set out above are undertaken at the following three principal laboratories;

- a. The food and chemical laboratory, Ikoyi, Lagos
- b. The engineering laboratory, Emene, Enugu
- c. The textile and leather laboratory, Kawo, Kaduna

A fourth laboratory, the metrology laboratory planned for Abuja will serve reference centre for weighing, calibration of equipments and other associated activities of metrology.

It is also projected that eventually, mini' laboratory will be set up in all the eleven (11) zones of the organization. This will enable SON scientist carry out simple chemical analysis at the zones. In the regard therefore, only the specialized complex' analysis will be sent to the appropriate laboratories at Enugu, Lagos, Kaduna and Abuja as the case may be. Hereunder are briefs on the specialize laboratory.

This laboratory was planned under the UNDP/SON technical assistance program both due to inadequate recourse, the program has not taken off although it is in the UNIO/FGN country framework.

The metrology laboratories are designed to provide calibration services in both scientific and physical measurements, such as temperature, time frequency, mass length, radiometry, photometry, pressure, density, viscosity, etc.

The laboratories are necessary to further improve confidence on the technical assessment of the various products from Nigeria and for export products in the particular in order to ensure satisfaction for the Nigerian consumer. Upon completion, the laboratories will render services to the following sectors:- Aviation, military, research institutions, universities, navigation, automobile, oil and gas, manufacturing, legal, metrology (measurements in commerce and trade), etc. Nigerian National 1k and 1m primary standards will be calibrated in this laboratory, instead of the current practice of sending them to France for calibration.

The laboratory complex, when operational, will contribute immensely in placating Nigerian products on the same level of assessments with those available in international markets. The facilities of the laboratory are to complement SON effort in establishing the conformity of its quality system, especial, with requirement of ISO 900 and 1400 international standards the areas of measurements, tests and calibration. The laboratory complex is also to serve as basis for establishment of a National Physical Laboratory for Nigerian which can then serve as basis to establish an enduring and much needed calibrate system to the West African sub-region.³⁰

Food/Chemical Laboratory, Ikoyi Lagos

The food and chemical laboratory functions as a general-purpose laboratory. It is principally involved in carrying out third party conformity assessment of product (good) using statutory approved quality control Standards such as pre-qualification tests which form the basis for the Nigerian industrial standard award.

The food and chemical laboratory performs various types of tests covering the following areas:

1. Physical tests: which involves measurement in product quality parameter e.g. matches, plastics, syringes;

2. Chemical tests to determine the chemical composition of products like salts, biscuits, milks, soft drinks, etc.
3. Microbiological tests: to determine the degree of contamination in food products, syringes, sanitary pads etc especially the level of pathogenic organisms.
4. Products received for analysis in the food and chemical laboratory are mainly from the following activities.

Factory Inspection Activities:

For the purpose of quality assurance and as a support services for product for certification, tests are normally carried out on routine basis to support SON certification activities and to ensure that manufacturers meet the relevant NIS requirements of all times. Testing is indeed the backbone of certification. This is because of the implementation characteristics.³¹

Port Inspection Activities:

The service primarily aims at monitoring and ascertaining the quality of imported/exported goods in order to control the dumping of goods or product that constitute health hazard to consumers in Nigeria.

Products Assessment Activities

Occasionally manufacturers of new products investigate their conformance to NIS specifications before marketing such products. Tests are carried out to ascertain manufacturing procedures.

Consumers Complaint:

From time to time, the laboratory carries out investigative testing activities whenever complaints are made or problems are suspected. Such investigations are useful as source of information that helps the company to identify areas of particular concern and most industries pay particular attention to these complaints.

Market Survey:

The laboratory carries out independent analysis and assessment of products quality irrespective of what the product manufacturer may have indicated on the products. This is crucial especially when considering decisions that would lead to commendations for the certificate of a product. Samples for the kind of investigations are obtained from the open markets.

Verification of Tests Recommended In Draft Standards:

In support of standards elaboration, the laboratory also carries verification tests proposed tests methods for incorporation in standards specification, this is necessary to ensure each test method is both authentic and practicable.

Engineering Laboratory, Emene, Enugu

The importance of testing of material used for engineering construction, especially as it affects the Nigerian socio-political cum economic development, cannot be over emphasized. It is for that purpose that the Standards Organization of Nigeria established the engineering laboratory for the testing of a wide range of engineering materials, Standard 17025 is used.

The following tests are carried out in the areas of mechanical and civil engineering at affordable charges.

1. Mechanical Tests:

- (a) Tensile tests
- (b) Impact tests
- (c) Complete Metallographic
- (d) Macro Structure tests
- (e) All hardness tests
- (f) Micro structure tests
- (g) Chemicals analysis of metals
- (h) Bend tests

2. *Civil Engineering Tests*

Strength and compressive tests are carried out on the following:

- (a) Concrete cube
- (b) Mortar cube
- (c) Fiber ceiling & roofing sheets
- (d) Comprehensive tests on cement
- (e) Non destructive tests
- (f) Tests on wood
- (g) Tests on Masonry units

3. *Equipment Calibration Services*

- (a) Tensile Testing Machine
- (b) Impact Testing Machine
- (c) Meter Rule
- (d) Roofing Rings for Tensile machine
- (e) Thermometer
- (f) Micrometer
- (g) Venire Caliper
- (h) Weight Measurement Devices
- (I) Weights

Textile and Leather Laboratory Kaduna

The textile and leather laboratory situated at Kaduna was established with the sole aim of analyzing product samples textiles and leather, for the main purposes of the NIS Certification and Revalidation. It also serves as a consultancy outfit. The laboratory, which is

now two sections, viz: Textile and leather can effectively tests wide range of products as shown below:-

S/N	PRODUCTS	TESTS AVAILBLE
A.	fibred	fiber length, fineness, maturity of cotton Trash contents of cotton fibers etc.
B.	Yam	Tensile strength, twist, crump, regularity Density, tax, elongation at break, dry cleaning Washing, light fastness, etc.
C.	Fabrics/Heavy, Fabrics/prints	for testing fastness properties, shrinkage, dries Cleaning, picks and ends per cm. finishes, Abrasion, crease recovery, water permeability, Flame retardency, tearing strength, dynamic And static loading, perspiration, rubbing Fastnesses, pile heights, pile density, etc.
D.	All categories Leather products	Flex resistance, tensile strength, shrinkage water absorbency and permeability, fastness Properties and other chemical and physical Tests associated with leather products. ³²

Inter Ministerial Cooperations

Anchored firmly in the Office of the Director General/Chief Executive, the organization's cooperation with other governmental agencies involved in one form of regulations/standardization or the other continues to wax stronger. Among the ministries and agencies SON interacts with regularly outside the Federal Ministry of Industry are the Food and Drugs Administration and Control of the Federal Ministry of Health, Social Service and the Manufacturers Association of Nigerian. Others are The Nigerian Customs Services on joint operations at the ports and boarders, the Nigerian Export Promotion Council in the computation of input-output coefficient for Duty Drawback scheme, the Central Bank of Nigeria on the comprehensive Import Supervision Scheme and the Manufacture-in Bond Scheme, Federal Industrial Research Institute, Oshodi; Federal Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Defense, UNDP/UNIDO and Nigeria Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industries, and Agriculture (NACCIMA), Nigeria Society of Engineers, the Federal Environmental Protection Agency, the Quality Control Society of Nigeria, the Raw Materials Research and Development Council; the Federal Ministry of Finance on Manufacture-in-bond,

the Federal Road Safety Commission on Standards for driving schools and general standards on vehicles as well as the Nigeria Police for security and Monitoring towards enforcement.

SON is conveniently carrying out a number of activities with some agencies mentioned above. Some of such activities deserve special mention. These include export-pre-shipment inspection, duty drawback scheme, and sectors group meeting with Manufactures Associated of Nigeria.

ii. *Export Pre-shipment Inspection*

Another vital aspect of the organization's standardization and quality control function is the export Pre-shipment inspection of products manufactured locally for exports. The organization's role is significant in the export drive and is aimed at ensuring that made in Nigeria products meet the required quality parameter of the National standards of receiving countries or other acceptable standards before leaving the country.

The certification of quality guarantees that the products have the national prescribed quality specification of the country. Among the major benefits of the scheme is the assurance given to overseas buyer of the high quality of products being exported and an easy break through for Nigeria products in the overseas market. Moreover, the encouragement/image boosting being given to exporting companies with regard to the quality of such products attests to the efficiency of SON. Work is progressing successfully in this sector as made in Nigeria goods continue to move in quality and attract foreign patronage.

iii. *Duty-Draw Back Inspection Scheme for Exporters*

Another significant inter-ministerial activity of SON involves Duty Draw Back Scheme jointly operated with the Nigeria Export Promotion Council, Customs and Excise, Central Bank OF Nigeria and SON. The scheme involves granting the importer of raw materials 100% of the production of goods which are earmarked only for export by scheme through the computation of input/output coefficient schedule for export products.

IV. *Manufacture-In-Bond Scheme*

Consequent upon the introduction of duty-draw-back scheme by the Federal Government, another dimension was added to the list of SON's activities in standardization and quality control when they were introduced by the Central Bank of Nigeria. The duty drawback schemes aimed at relieving manufacturer of taxes and duties paid on the materials (raw material, machinery & equipment) imported for the manufacture of export products. While the duty drawback involves the reimbursement of such taxes and duties ex-post, the manufacture-in-bond involves non-levy of such taxes and duties. The scheme had greatly attracted manufactures in view of its inherent advantages. The scheme is further designed to encourage domestic producers to produce and export products in which Nigeria has comparative

advantage. Thus, the scheme enables manufactures to import duty –free raw materials for the production of exportable goods that are backed by a bond is discharged after evidence of exportation and repatriation of forging exchanged earnings to the country. Although, it was a new activity during the 1990s the organization’s performance was quite commendable. These are part of government incentives to encourage non-oil exports.³³

SON Training Programmes

(Quality Assurance Training)

Based on the extent of its competence and control of laboratory complex, SON provides Quality Assurance Trainings on international ISO 9000 series of standard in line with the needs of desiring customers.

(ii) Rationale:

The trading programmer are designed to train operators of business and manufacturing firms on how to provide quality services to the economy in order to maintain sustainable growth and social satisfaction for the consumers. The courses are meant for those wishing to stay afloat in the competitive markets by assuring themselves and their customers that they can deliver quality goods and reliable services. The courses are also directed at accreditation scheme for testing, calibration laboratories and for organizations preparing for quality system certification.

In general, the programmer are meant to create keen competition, establish reliable quality assurance and quality management systems on a continuous basis, efficient customer services and reliable production of quality products to the ever-growing globalised economy.

Support Directorates of Standard Organization of Nigeria

Finance and Supplies

(I) This directorate is the life-wire of the organization. It has the onerous task of servicing the financial needs of all other directorates even at short notice to ensure performance and achievement of the organisation’s goal. While this is being done, accountability, accuracy and probity are our watchwords.

(ii) Functions

The directorate is saddled with the following responsibilities:-

- a. Management of financial resource of the organization;
- b. Preparations of Annual budget estimate for submission to government and participating in the Defense;
- c. keeping records of all financial transactions of the organization;
- d. Reporting regularly to management on the state of finance;

e. Provide professional advice to management on the matters affecting finance;

(iii) Scope of work

The scope of the SON work is board based. To enhance full implementation therefore the departmental work schedules have been designed as follows:

- a. **Budget and expenditure control-** This unit prepares all budget estimates for the organization and keeps records of all payment to ensure that expenditures are made according to budget/estimates
 - b. **Loans and Advances-** This section records all advance and loans granted by the organization. It also maintains the loan and advances ledger and prepares retirement/clearance vouchers when such advances are retired.
 - c. **Salaries and Wages-**All salaries paid to staff both at the headquarters and zonal offices are prepared by this section monthly with the use of payroll vouchers which are summarized monthly as an input in the final account.
 - D. **Treasury Management-** Records of all revenue/income of the organization is maintained in this section. All disbursement of funds is also carried out in this section.
 - e. **Final Account-** The section collates all financial information from the source documents and prepared a final account for the organisation. At the end of every month, the bank account of the organization is reconciled and a trial balance is also extracted to test the arithmetical accuracy of figures.
 - f. **Store Management-** The directorate maintains a stationary store where all stationeries are received, stored and issued out on demand after due approval by the Head of the directorate. Proper records of the stationeries are kept by the officer in- charge.
- iii. Generally, the directorate has a positive impact on the operations of the organization, since an efficient system established to ensure that there are no delays in funds disbursement. Hence, payments are now effected within 24 hours after audit certification.³⁴

2. Personal Management

(i) The department provides support services to the technical department

As in every organization it deals with mainly human resource- employment, the effective utilization and motivation of work force. Generally its functions cover recruitment, promotion, discipline, training, security, and welfare and retirement. It handles and interprets the SON conditions of service and federal government circulars.

On AD HOC basis at present, it is involved in matters affecting gratuity and pension, transport, protocol and consultations with the other departments on matters across the boards as the need arises.

The achievements of the personal management department are evident in the maintenance and sustenance of the peace, security and discipline in the organization. The enabling environment thus brought is the bedrock of the successes recorded by the organization so far. The department is resolutely poised to ensuring that the system will continue to function effectively and efficiently

(ii) Manpower Development:

In the past, staff matters including salary structure promotions and career development were tied to the civil service. Though such a set up is functional, SON management observed that the kind of manpower development strategies for continuous improvement of SON staff at meeting her peculiar challenges were lacking.

This therefore informed the establishment of Manpower Development Unit under the office of the Director General/Chief Executive.

The Committee was charged with the responsibility of identifying training needs of all staff, nomination and to come out with recommendations for either training in Nigeria and Overseas.

SON believed that only through a well articulated Manpower development strategy can she create a pool of experts, provide staff with equal opportunities for career expectation of satisfaction in the end, and achieve the desired goals of SON.

SON Standard Library

The SON library was established by act 56, section 5 of 1971. The library has responsibility to assemble and maintain a collection of books, publications and such other material as it consider appropriate for a standard library facilities which are made available to its customers and stakeholders.

(ii) Acquisition

The library is the standards reference point for national and international standards, normative documents, technical regulations and catalogue. There are large stocks of such documents from SON, BSI, JIS, BIS, ARSO, ISO, IEC, WTO etc.

The library serves as research and reference point for staff, Government Agencies, Business entrepreneurs and consumers including the international community in response to inquires, sales of standards, bulletins etc are also provide for interested groups. There are also plans by the Management presently to acquire more relevant textbooks and reference

materials to support academic and research work in order to meet the increasing demands of advances in science and technology.

Communication section is being planned for the library so as provide internet/e-mail service to maximize information generation in order to ensure efficient and effective delivery of request/inquiries to clientele. This would strengthen the library capability to link up with other major sources of information with ease, speed and reliability in and outside Nigeria.

(iii) Operational Consideration

For operation consideration, the library has the following section:

- (1) Technical Operations (2) Standards Services
- (3) Book/Periodical Reference (4) Communication
- (5) Publication Brokerage/ Sales (6) Circulation Desk

With improved facilities SON library would in future be able to partially commercial its operations and maintains standard services to our target groups.

4. Internal Audit

The internal Audit is a unit directly responsible to the Director-General/Chief Executive of the Organization.

The unit has the internal Auditor as the head of the unit with a compliment of subordinate staff working in the unit.

The main function of the unit is to ensure that all machinery put in place Management to safeguard the assets and liability of the organization are working effectively.

Saucy machinery includes the following internal finance and personal control system. This will be briefly discussed under two heading: Finance and personnel.

1. Finance

The internal Audit is charged with the responsibility of investigation and appraising financial transactions of the organization, verifying the procedures, operations and the resulting financial statements to determine:

- a. The accuracy
- b. Authenticity, and to ensure
- c. Fairness of the financial records and statements.

The unit ensures that the operations and reports satisfy the requirement of law, rules and regulation.

2. Personnel

The internal Audit also carries out staff Audit. This is done in conjunction with the personnel Department with a view of ensuring accuracy. It feeds the management with relevant and vital information as may be necessary and needed for the day-to-day running of the organization.

Legal Department

The secretariat/legal department is directly under the office of the Director General/ Chief Executive.

(ii) Functions

The duties and functions of this Department include, among others, the following:

- (a) Acting as secretary to the Governing Council and the Director General/Chief
- (b) Legal advisory service to the Governing council, Directors General and all Departments of the Standards Organisation of Nigeria;
- (c) Vetting, investigation and approval/recommendation of all legal documents effecting or touching on the interest of standards organisation of Nigeria.
- (d) Assisting standards officers in the legal drafting of approval standards for publication for public compliance;
- (e) Ensuring the compliance or legal enforcement of the published standards and redress of their infringement as the case may be;
- (f) Interpretation and censor of legal documents affecting the standards organization of Nigeria
- (g) Appointment and liaison with legal retainers to protect and advance the interest of SON when briefed.³⁵

Planning And Management Information System (PMS) Directorate

Planning and management information system (PMS) of Standards Organisation of Nigeria is a new Department responsible to the Director General on its day-to-day activities. It is responsible for all matters relating to planning and evaluation of programmers' and projects. It provides the secretariat of the Department Tenders Boards.

ii. Specifically, the functions of the directorates are as follows:

- a. Collection, processing and banking of date and information relating to the following operations of the oragnisation:
 - Development of Database of standards for both local and international standards and sectors statistics
 - Internal Statistics and Computer services and
 - Records.

- b. Development plans (rolling, medium and perspective) for which various projects have to be planned, executive monitored and evaluated
- c. Setting and monitoring of performance efficiency targets for the various sub-divisions and staff of the organization.

As expected, SON has constantly responded to the challenges that originate from the Nigeria and International environments with the full backing of the Federal Government, relevant International Agencies and other nations Standards Bodies.

It is believed that the challenges shall intensity in years ahead in the light of Nigeria economic liberalization and privatization policies amidst the crisis of globalization in the convex of trade and technological revolutions. SON is expanding its logistics to be effective at manufacturing point and all the border posts so as to ensure compliance with standards and products quality and forestall any poor and substandard imports. The deserving quality products are rewarded with SON's prestigious quality system certification, and national product certification scheme (THE NIS AWARD)

Meanwhile SON steeped up its Manpower and human resource development based on its realization that quality workforce is the greatest asset of any organization.

Finally, this an opportunity to serve the country by any SON staff and they should appreciate the Government's support with a hope that it shall be maintained to enable SON continue to be a virile player in the Nigeria socio-political cum economic settings.

SON Certification Marking Scheme

To bring the advantages of standardization within the reach of all consumers, SON operates Certification Schemes to promote global competitiveness among domestic manufacturers and organizations through compliance with the requirements of the relevant Nigerian Industrial Standards or equivalent international standards.³⁶

Product Certification

SON's Product Certification schemes are third party assessments of products and processes to confirm conformance to requirements of the relevant specifications or standards. There are four main product certification schemes operated by the Organization through the Product Certification Directorate. These are:

- Mandatory Conformity Assessment Programme (MANCAP)
- Voluntary Product Certification Scheme (NIS Mark of Quality)
- Nigerian Quality Award Scheme (NQA), and
- Product-Type Certification for Exports.

Mandatory Conformity Assessment Programme (MANCAP)

The Mandatory Conformity Assessment Programme (MANCAP) is a mandatory product certification scheme put in place by SON to ensure that all locally manufactured products in the country conform to the relevant Nigerian Industrial Standards (NIS) before such products are presented for sale in the market or exported.

The programme started in 2006 and ensures compliance of Made-in-Nigeria products to the minimum requirements of the Nigerian Industrial Standards (NIS) or Code of practice, thereby promoting fair competition at both domestic and international markets, as well as safeguarding the safety and health of consumers, thus promoting economic and industrial development of Nigeria.

MANCAP Compliance Procedures

The procedures for MANCAP certification involve inspection of the production processes, sampling and testing of the products against the relevant Nigerian Industrial Standards (NIS) to confirm compliance through conformity assessment processes. Reports of inspections and test results are compiled by State Offices and forwarded to Product Certification Directorate for evaluation and recommendation for SON Management's approval for certification.

If the product meets the requirement of the relevant Nigerian Industrial Standard, MANCAP certificate and MANCAP logo, which bears a unique number for that product, are issued for the product upon payment of applicable administrative charges. A MANCAP certificate is valid for three years after which the product must undergo re-certification.

The MANCAP logo is to be fixed on the smallest unit pack of the product after which the product can be introduced into the market for sale. The product is monitored by SON officials through periodic factory inspections and testing to ensure consistent compliance to the Nigerian Industrial Standard.

MANCAP is in the process of automation for online application and processing through the SON website. A new MANCAP logo was introduced with effect from September 2015.

Voluntary Product Certification Scheme (NIS Quality Mark)

This is a voluntary product certification scheme to reward excellent product performance through consistent compliance to the requirements of the relevant Nigerian Industrial Standards at the point of production, and on the market. It is also to encourage manufacturing industries to continually improve the quality of their products and production processes. The voluntary certification scheme requires the manufacturer to have in-plant laboratory facilities for monitoring consistent conformance of the products to quality

requirements. Products that meet the requirements of the scheme are issued with the licence/permit to display the NIS Quality Mark on the product approved by the SON Governing Council.

The Nigerian Quality Award (NQA)

The Nigerian Quality Award (the outcome of re-positioning and re-branding of the NIS Product Quality Award that was suspended in 2012) is a voluntary Award scheme to recognize and reward exceptional product performance through compliance with specific criteria and established Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) approved by the SON Governing Council.

The Award criteria are based on a combination of analysis of factory samples, market samples, sector based index analysis and quality management process analysis using the following KPIs:

- Leadership intent towards quality
- Operating environment & Best Practice adoption
- Training
- Consumer awareness .
- Information analysis

Products that meet the requirements will be honoured at a grand ceremony with presentation of certificates and plaques. The manufacturer will be issued with licence to use the prestigious Award logo on promotional and communications materials, which confers the following additional benefits for the product:

- Special marketing advantage
- Access to international markets with improved global competitiveness.
- Free promotional adverts on SON website.
- Concessionary charges for SONCAP permit for importation of raw materials for the product.

Product Certification for Exports

This involves activities relating to issuance of Certificates of Conformance (CoC) to applicable standards or contractual documents for products to facilitate export trade. It applies to specific consignments meant for export by the applicant. The main objective is to ensure that locally manufactured products meant for export conform to the relevant Nigerian industrial standards, as well as the quality requirements of the importing countries.

SON Conformity Assessment Programme (SONCAP)

As part of continuous efforts to protect Nigerian consumers from unsafe and/or substandard products, SON introduced an off-shore Conformity Assessment Programme (SONCAP) in September 2005. The Programme is to ensure that regulated imports comply

with the approved technical and other specifications acceptable in Nigeria. However, limited success was achieved in stemming the tide of fake/substandard products in Nigerian markets.

The programme was further reviewed in February 2013 to tighten identified loopholes, and ensure inspection of goods at the point of sealing the containers before shipment from the exporting country.

The conformity assessment elements undertaken through the SONCAP programme include but are not limited to physical inspection prior to shipment, sampling, analysis in accredited laboratories, audit of product processes and systems, documentary check of conformity with regulations, and overall assessment of conformity to standards, i.e. the applicable Nigeria Industrial Standards (NIS) and/or other approved International Standards. Imported products which meet the requirements of the standards can be affixed with the following logo:

The SONCAP Certificate is a mandatory customs clearance document in Nigeria and Regulated Products arriving without this document will be subject to delays and possibly, denial of entry. All products imported into Nigeria are regulated by SONCAP except for the following: Food products, drugs (medicines), medicals other than equipment and machines, chemicals used as raw materials by bona fide manufacturers, military wares & equipment goods classified as contraband by the Federal Government of Nigeria, and used products other than automobiles.

Bona fide manufacturers, who intend to import machinery or related spare parts as well as chemicals and raw materials for their manufacturing activities, are advised to apply for the SONCAP Import Permit as a prerequisite for importation. However, such manufacturers must be members of the organized private sector such as Manufacturers' Association of Nigeria (MAN).

Managementsystems Certification

SON Management Systems Certification (MSC) Directorate administers the certification scheme for quality, environment, food safety, occupational health and safety management. This entails third party certification services to organizations that establish, implement and maintain a management system that conforms to the requirements of the applicable management system standard. SON ensures that the personnel performing work related to the certification, including Auditors and persons making certification decisions, are competent and experienced in line with international best practice.

The mandates of the SON MSC Directorate are to:

- Offer reliable certification services to management systems standards to the public.

- Deploy competent Management System Auditors for the audit of Client-organizations from its pool of over 360 Auditors/Lead Auditors covering the different management systems.
- Monitor and ensure that personnel, including Auditors, used in all certification activities are competent using its Auditors Evaluation and Management Unit.
- Execute all activities in line with applicable International Accreditation Standards, thereby ensuring that the integrity of the certification is maintained at all times through a stringent performance tracking function under the Quality Coordination Unit.
- Maintaining updated information on certified Client-Organizations.

The Directorate has certified over 500 Organizations spread all over the country to the under listed Management system standards:

- ISO 9001 (Quality Management System)
- ISO 14001 (Environmental Management System)
- OHSAS 18001 (Occupational Health and Safety Assessment Series)
- ISO 22000 (Food Safety Management system)
- Integrated Management system

SON MSC ensures that the certification processes are performed in line with requirements of ISO/IEC 17021 standard (for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems) with strict confidentiality and in an impartial manner. All persons that perform certification duties (management and administrative personnel, auditors, technical expert, external auditors and observers) sign a independence requirements. The certifications are in the process of achieving accreditation to ISO/IEC 17021.

Product Registration

As part of our zero-tolerance to substandard products, SON undertakes registration of imported products. The programme is primarily designed to provide data or inventory of products and their specified quality parameters. It also provides information about the manufacturer or importer and therefore affords traceability of the product, especially when considering specific quality requirements and consumer advocacy/protection. This function is undertaken by the Product Registration department of SON.

The registration process is electronic (e-Product registration), which makes it convenient for the manufacturer/importer. It can be done on-line anytime and anywhere with ease. Other benefits of the programme for the manufacturer/importer include:

- It helps SON detect imitation of products.
- It improves public confidence in registered products.

- Saves the manufacturer/importer unwarranted expenses on product liabilities.
- Helps grow business

Key Steps of the Process include:

- Application: Client applies online and attaches necessary documentation.
- Verification: SON officials verify that appropriate documents are attached and that products are properly categorized.
- Inspection/Sampling: Inspection will be carried out by SON officers in the applicant's warehouse/store upon confirmation of payment.
- Laboratory Tests: Samples are analysed in the laboratory. Complete laboratory results are generally released within two weeks from the day of sampling.
- Processing of Certificate: Where a product meets all required specifications above, the certificate will be printed and issued within one month from the day of sampling.
- Handling of Failed Products: Applicants with failed products will be notified. Fresh payment will be made by the client for another test to be carried out on fresh samples. Products that fail laboratory tests three consecutive times will be confiscated.
- Renewal: The above steps also apply to renewal of certificates except for document attachments (only needed where prior attached documents have expired), with payment of 50% of the original service charge. Full details of the e-Product Registration process are available on the SON website (www.son.gov.ng).³⁷

Laboratory Services

Testing services are the core activity of the Directorate of Laboratory Services. The Directorate provides testing facilities to enable the effective performance of quality assurance activities during the implementation of standards. The tests carried out are mainly third party conformity assessment of products using the relevant Nigerian Industrial Standards or any other applicable international standards.

Presently the Organization has five principal laboratories located in the country:

Food Technology Laboratories, Lekki, Lagos:

The Laboratories perform Physico-Chemical and Microbiological tests on food samples in the following sub-laboratories:

- Food Microbiology Testing Laboratory
- Food Physico-Chemical Testing Laboratory

- Micronutrients Laboratory
- Mycotoxin Laboratory

The Physico-Chemical Testing and Microbiology laboratories have been accredited within the scope of the following parameters:

Biological field (Microbiology)

- Aerobic Plate Count
- Coliforms
- EscherichiaColi
- Staphylococcus Aureus
- Yeast and Mould
- Salmonella spp.
- Listeria monocytogenes

Chemical Field (Physico-Chemical Testing)

Ash in Foods

Carbohydrate

Crude Fibre in Animal Feed

Fat content in Flourand Dried Milk

Moisture in Foods

Protein in Milkand Flour

Heavy Metals Analysis in Foods (Cd)

The Micronutrients Laboratory is also in the process of getting accredited on the following parameters:

- Vitamin A in flour products, vegetable oil and sugar
- Iron inflourandflourproducts
- Folic acid in flour and flour products
- Zinc in flour and flour products
- Iodine in food and flour products

In order to ensure that locally manufactured food products meet both local and international quality requirements, the SON accredited laboratories carry out analysis for both accredited and non-accredited parameters under the same accredited environment to ensure generation of technically valid data.

1.1 Chemical Technology Laboratories, Lekki, Lagos.

Physico-chemical characteristics of products are determined in this group of laboratories comprising:

- Pesticides/Insecticides/Fertilizer Testing Laboratory
- Petroleum & Petrochemical Testing Laboratory
- Paints Testing Laboratory
- Soap & Detergent Testing Laboratory
- Cosmetic Testing Laboratory
- Packaging Testing Laboratory
- Colour Chemistry Testing Laboratory
- Explosives/Matches/Candle Testing Laboratory
- Cigarette Testing Laboratory
- Radioactive Materials testing

There is a Microbiology unit that services the microbiological needs of the different laboratories under the Chemical Technology group of laboratories.

Electrical/Electronic Laboratory, Lekki, Lagos:

The Electrical/Electronic laboratory checks compliance and safety of imported electrical/electronic equipment/devices, as well as those manufactured locally. The laboratory is in the process of accrediting the testing of the following products:

- Cables
- Refrigerators
- Lighting products.

Engineering Laboratory, Emene, Enugu:

The Laboratory carries out engineering tests in the following areas:

- Mechanical Engineering Tests: Tensile, impact, complete metallographic, chemical analysis of metals, tensile tests etc.
- Civil Engineering Tests: Comprehensive test for cement, wood and masonry units etc. The Cement Testing Laboratory is in the process of getting accredited in the testing of cement.
- Electrical Engineering Tests: A wide range of tests for domestic electrical appliances are carried out in the Laboratory in line with the relevant NIS and other applicable international standards.

Textile & Leather Laboratory, Kaduna:

The Textile and Leather Laboratory is equipped to carry out comprehensive analysis of Textile and Leather products. Parameters tested in products include:

- Textile - Colour fastness, span length, fibre maturity, ash contents of cotton fibre, tensile strength, texture, crump, regularity, density, elongation at break point, dry cleaning, washing, light fastness, perspiration, pile heights, tearing strength etc. (Fibre, Yarn and Fabric/Heavy, Fabrics/Prints)
- Leather - Flex resistance, tensile strength, shrinkage, water absorbency and permeability, chemical and physical tests associated with leather products (all categories of leather products).

Samples tested in our laboratories include those obtained from routine inspections, enforcement activities, product registration and consumer complaints, samples submitted by customers who want to ascertain the quality of their products, or those obtained at various ports/borders during inspections, among others.

All aspects of Laboratory Services conform to the requirements of the International Standard ISO 17025 (general requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories) and Internal laboratory manuals.

In furtherance of SON mandate To establish and maintain such number of laboratories or other institutions as 'may be necessary for the performance of its functions...' and to achieve global relevance with world-class infrastructure and certified systems in place, a new and ultra-modern 4-storey laboratory complex is nearing completion at Ogba, Lagos State. In addition to 12 Electrical/Electronic laboratories, 11 Food Technology laboratories, 13 Chemical Technology laboratories and 1 Mechanical laboratory, the complex will also house training rooms, administrative offices, research faculty offices, conference rooms and facilities for support staff.

Metrology and Instrumentation

The SON is the custodian of the National Primary Measurement Standards in the country and has been officially designated as the National Metrology Institute (NMI) of Nigeria. Calibration services are presently offered to industries, government agencies, research institutions, testing laboratories in various fields of metrology namely; mass, length, temperature and pressure. The laboratories are undergoing the process of accreditation, and this has been facilitated by the recent renovation work and upgrade of the infrastructure at Lekki, Lagos. State-of-the-art equipment was purchased and personnel trained in renowned NMIs across the globe.

SON performed the ground breaking ceremony of the new National Metrology Institute on the 12th of May, 2015, The new National Metrology Institute is the custodian of the

National Primary Measurement Standards with the highest measurement reference in the country through traceability to the SI units.

The NMI in SON is responsible for Scientific Metrology while the Weights & Measures Department (WMD) of the Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade & Investment (FMITI) oversees the formulation and implementation of policies for Legal Metrology. The WMD, Metrology laboratories, industries and all institutions in the country derives traceability from the NMI.

Some of the functions of the NMI include:

- Custody, development and maintenance of the National Measurement Standards.
- Declaration of the country's Calibration and Measurement Capability (CMC) at the BIPM (International Bureau for Weights and Measures)
- Guarantee of traceability of National Primary Standards to SI units and transferring the traceability from the National Primary Standards to the Calibration and Testing laboratories, as well as industry and other end users.
- Participation in international inter-comparisons and organising the national comparisons.
- Development of metrology in the country by means of training, education and updating of staff of the NMI and other calibration bodies to innovations in Metrology.
- Awareness creation and sensitization about metrology by means of calibration and education services for customers, mainly for Calibration laboratories.
- Building-up the metrological hierarchy in the country and creation of metrology workgroups.
- Promotion and representation of the country in international and regional organizations and fora (e.g. Metre Convention, CIPM-MRA, BIPM, AFRIMET, etc.), as well as active participation in international Technical Committees.

The NMI when fully established will ensure accuracy and traceability of measurements in the country and will play a major role in the ECOWAS sub- region.

Scope of the NMI

- Small & Big Mass (with Density)
- Temperature (with Humidity)
- Pressure
- Length & Dimension
- Small & Big Volume
- Force
- Flow

- Viscosity
- Density
- Torque
- Acoustic
- Electrical
- Time & Frequency
- Hardness
- Vibration
- Radiometry
- Photometry
- Metrology in Chemistry

The 1st phase of the NMI project will be completed in 2017. Installation of equipment will commence before end year

Library Services

The SON Library operates under the SON Act, which provided for the Standards Library "to assemble and maintain a collection of books, publications (standards) and other such materials as it considers appropriate for a (National) standards library of the highest standing for Nigeria".³⁸

The library and online electronic resource system holds about 3,000 Nigerian Industrial Standards and related publications, with over 100,000 foreign national, regional and international standards from relevant standards bodies of the World Standards Services Network (WSSN) . WSSN has over 160 memberships of both national and international standard bodies such as SON, ARSO, ISO, IEC, ITU, CODEX, EU, etc.

The main objectives of SON Library Services on issues of standards, standardization and related matters is to generate, promote access, sales and use of standards information to support national socio-political and economic development. The Library also by membership of ISONET (ISO Information Network), promotes the flow of global information on standards, technical regulations and related documents. Each national member body will be responsible for information on all relevant documents valid within its territory, which invariably falls within the scope of ISO NET.

The annual catalogue of standards, including updates by the Library, is the medium of exchange of standards information, bibliographic details among members via the ISO/IEC Information Centre in Geneva.

The Library Services principally facilitate the standards generation for reference, research and application by the users at relative defined terms and conditions for SON Management, Technical staff, MDAs, Business entrepreneurs, industrialists and consumers.

The system remains the resource base of WTO/TBT enquiry point in Nigeria with major links with the relevant regional and international affiliate bodies on standards related matters. Access to information on standardisation issues is critical to the national economic performance. SON, through the Library Services, remains the interface and platform with which all the relevant stakeholders on standards information interact and source their needs.³⁹

Inspectorate And Compliance Directorate

As part of our consumer protection activities, SON's Inspectorate and Compliance Directorate (ICD) is key in ensuring that substandard products (both locally manufactured and imported) are apprehended, particularly where the quality of the products deviate from the prescribed relevant specifications or may constitute health hazard or cause harm to life and property. In some cases, the defective consignments are confiscated and publicly destroyed to serve as a deterrent.

This Directorate oversees SON's activities at the borders, airports and seaports where imported products are intercepted, inspected and released/seized in line with the organization's import procedures. It ensures that proactive measures are taken to prevent the circulation of substandard products in the country through surveillance and compliance monitoring of factories, warehouses and shops.

When the quality of the products is below the prescribed NIS requirements but does not constitute health hazards or pose harm to the consumer, the suppliers or importers concerned are requested to carry out corrective actions under the supervision of SON.

Operations Directorate

To keep close liaison with and render effective service to industry, trade and commerce throughout the country, SON has 36 state offices covering the 36 states of Nigeria and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). The activities of the State offices are supervised and coordinated by 6 Regional Coordinators, whose territories are aligned to the 6 geopolitical zones of the country.

The Operations Directorate has the responsibility of ensuring proper functioning of SON's activities in the states through direct supervision of the regional structure, and ensuring that all operational technical activities of the states and regional offices in the area of Quality Assurance (Factory inspections, Market surveys. Consumer complaints and others) are properly carried out, and continually improved upon in line with the mandate of the organization.

Through the regional structure, the effectiveness and implementation of organizational objectives and policies at the state level is improving, and greater success is being recorded in our Zero Tolerance to Substandard Products drive.⁴⁰

Customer Feedback and Collaboration Department

The Customer Feedback & Collaboration unit handles all forms of feedback covering enquiries, complaints, and customer perception of SON service delivery to enhance customer satisfaction.

SON also investigates consumer complaints and gives assistance in resolving them in collaboration with the manufacturers. Consumer complaints provide feedback on product performance and help to provide information on different aspects of standards implementation.

In offering these services to customers, SON works closely with other bodies such as Consumer Protection Council (CPC), National Agency for Food, Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC), Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR) and other various governmental agencies, to ensure that accurate information is obtained for the adjudication of each case.

The Department also monitors consumer feedback from the media programmes deployed by SON. In addition, it undertakes an annual Customer Satisfaction Survey through which SON receives valuable inputs on possible gaps in its service delivery to customers.⁴¹

Training and Technical Advisory Services.

SON under its nationwide training scheme organizes seminars, workshops, conferences and training in areas of Quality Assurance and various Management Systems for commercial, industrial (Importers, Manufacturers, and Exporters etc.) and public institutions. SON conducts training to support organizations in the understanding and use of standards to enable them access the benefits for their organization or sector. In-house programmes, particularly on Quality Management and Environmental Management Systems, are organized upon request by interested stakeholders.

The Organization through its various directorates offers technical advice to manufacturers, exporters, importers and other interested parties in the following fields:

- Quality Management/Environmental Management/Food Safety Management Systems.
- In addition, training in NIS ISO 9000, NIS ISO 14000 and NIS ISO 22000 are tailored for both industry and service organizations to meet individual process demands in the production of Internal and Lead Auditors.
- Formulation of company standards
- Calibration services and training in ISO/IEC17025 - General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories.

- Calibration services and training in ISO/IEC 15189 - Particular requirements for medical laboratories
- Health and Safety in industry.
- Technical assistance to customers in relation to applicable standards of quality in exports/imports.
- Training in quality control activities.
- Occupational Health and Safety Assessment series: OHSASBS 18001 -2007.
- Any other quality related activities as may be desired by clients.⁴²

SON and Its External Constituencies

The local manufacturers in the formal and informal sectors form the majority of SON stakeholders. Through the Manufacturers' Association of Nigeria (MAN), regular consultations are held with local manufacturers in order to promote cordial and mutual understanding between SON and the formal industrial sector.

SON also reaches out to other groups of interested parties through organs such as the Nigerian Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture (NACCIMA), trade groups and associations, and by direct surveillance activities under the routine factory/business premises inspection programmes. Mutually beneficial programmes are usually embarked upon to promote standardization at all levels of stakeholders' interest.

SON's relationship with other government bodies and non-governmental agencies involved in regulatory activities continues to provide quality goods and services to the population. SON interacts with the following agencies: National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC), Consumer Protection Council (CPC), Nigerian Customs Services, Nigeria Ports Pic. And the Nigerian Police, among others.⁴³

Ports and Borders Activities

The SON quality inspection of regulated products is carried out at the ports and other points of entry into the country based on risk assessment, i.e. for regulated products selected for physical examination (Red lane). Imported manufactured goods and materials are allowed into the country upon meeting specific standards and a letter of release issued by SON. Imports that do not comply with requirements of the relevant standards are not allowed to enter the Nigerian market. Corrective actions/penalties are prescribed for products that fail to meet requirements.

Export inspections are carried out upon request by the exporter. This exercise is to ensure that goods leaving the country meet the requirements of destination countries. In some cases, they are carried out for certification purposes when specifically demanded by the

customer. The recent accreditation of SON laboratories will further widen the scope of certification of export goods.

The activities of the Ports Operations unit include the following:

- Monitoring and control of importation of regulated products to ensure compliance with applicable NIS or approved equivalent international standards, and technical regulations.
- Scrutinizing importation documents for completeness (including Product Registration and SONCAP Certificates), and ensuring that the applicable inspection and testing fees are computed and paid for each consignment before provisional release.
- Participation at joint inspection of imported regulated products with other regulatory agencies to confirm compliance to documentation at the ports of entry before release.
- Identification of suspected substandard regulated products, and those imported without SONCAP certificates, for follow-up action by SON Compliance Unit. Obtaining samples for laboratory analysis and confirmation of compliance to specification to ascertain the quality and safety of products. Post clearance activities at importers' warehouses.⁴⁴

E-Clearance

In order to facilitate trade through seamless operations with relevant Government Agencies in the clearance of goods, SON participates actively on the Nigeria Integrated Customs Information System (NICIS) and has developed e-clearance processes on the interactive page of the National Trade Portal (www.trade.gov.nq/son) to be used by importers/agents.

- The trade portal has been programmed to provide the following e-Services:
- The list of documents and requirements to be satisfied before the consignment can be cleared for release by SON (Certificates/permits list).
- Viewing of Product Certificate (e-PC) and SONCAP Certificate (e-SC) by importers/agents (Search Certificates).
- The applicable Inspection Fee depending on the type of products being imported (Simulate SON Transaction).
- SON Regulated Products List(ECOWASCET2015) Ver. 5.1.0.
- Importers/agents to activate e-Product Certificate as part of requirements for Form M and SONCAP Certificate for PAAR (Activate SONCAP/Product Certificate).
- Help Desk Contact.

Reducing hurdles inherent in the clearance of goods through Nigerian Ports will facilitate trade and enhance customer satisfaction. SON, through e-services, is working towards a future where consignments will be cleared and released without the need for the consignee to visit any SON location.⁴⁵

Life Endangering Items

Life endangering products are those products that are non-conforming to required specifications, pose potential danger to life and property, and therefore must not be allowed to reach the consumer unless they have been tested and confirmed suitable (e.g. motor vehicles and other types of tyres, food products, electrical appliances and products such as bulbs, switches/gears, cables etc.).

Provisional Release for Special/Life Endangering Items

As a result of the lead-time in obtaining test results from the laboratories, provisional release is granted to some life endangering/special products listed above. The provisional release allows the consignment to leave the ports almost immediately (within 48 hours). The provisional release is granted upon submission of an application by the importer to the Director-General of SON, and subject to understanding that the goods will not be disposed of in any manner pending the outcome of the test results. In order to facilitate speedy clearance, the importers are required to submit certain documents to SON prior to examination, inspection and sampling.

The importer may submit the required documents through any SON offices located near various ports for convenience or may be submitted directly to the Director-General/Chief Executive's office at Plot 13/14 Victoria Arobieke Street, Lekki Phase 1, Lagos. To avoid unnecessary delay, importers are strongly advised to ensure strict compliance with the above requirements.

In line with the Federal Government directive and subsequent Guidelines for Imports into Nigeria, SON will endeavour to release consignments of imported goods to importers' warehouses after inspection and sampling within the Government stipulated period (48 hours). The issuance of provisional release letter signed by the DG/CE or his authorized officer will depend on the submission of/compliance with the above requirements.

Steps Taken on Non-Conforming Products

The following steps are taken once it is established with evidence that a product is non-conforming to specified requirements.

- a) Issuance of Seizure Notice: Temporary seizure may be issued when it is established that an importer or his agent is avoiding or obstructing the inspection of any consignment under SON's jurisdiction, or when the product is suspected to be substandard during inspection examination. This is equivalent to DETENTION.
- b) Issuance of Letter of Seizure; A critically non-conforming consignment becomes impounded through a letter of seizure. If the non-conformity falls into the minor category, the importer or his agent is notified. Corrective action to be taken and time

frame for rectification are outlined in a warning letter based on which conditional release is granted to the exporter. Thereafter, the importer must demonstrate to SON/provide evidence of having undertaken corrective action.

- c) Disposal of Non-Conforming Products: In the event of a major non-conforming or critical failure necessitating the seizure and destruction of products, all concerned parties are notified of the nature of the non-conformity and its adverse impact. In the absence of any litigation, SON invites the Nigeria Police Force, mass media and other relevant Government agencies, e.g. the Nigeria Customs Service, Nigerian Ports Pic., Nigerian Navy etc. to witness the destruction of the items. Thereafter, a certificate of destruction is issued to the importer.⁴⁶

Trade Development

The challenge posed by globalization and innovations make the application of standards crucial for competitiveness in a rapidly changing world. Trade development activities therefore focus on strengthening the link between standardization activities and industry by ensuring synergy with policy direction of government.

The conformity assessment services of SON are deployed to aid market access and trade facilitation and this is being communicated to trade delegations, market associations, chambers of commerce, manufacturers and research institutions at various fora. This is managed by the Business Support Services department to ensure synergy with other agencies of government, appropriate communication with the organized private sector and other interested parties.

The core activities of the department focus on Trade facilitation (regional and multilateral), managing the TBT Enquiry point and Trade Promotion (bi-lateral national and Fairs/Expos). It also focuses on programmes designed to promote non-oil exports.

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CHAPTER FIVE

STANDARDS ORGANISATION OF NIGERIA AND STANDARDIZATION OF PRODUCTS, FOOD SAFTY/SECURITY IN NIGERIA, 2002-2015

In 2001 after Prof. John Akanya assumed duty as the Acting Director General of Standards Organization of Nigeria (SON), he drew the attention of consumers in the country to the increasing wave of substandard products in the Nigerian market. He made the disclosure during a press conference in Lagos and added that the consumers alert had become imperative in view of the situations at the ports. The SON boss displayed some of the poor quality and substandard products which included batteries, table salt, electrical cables and tyres to the public. According to him "though Nigeria produces some of the best cables in the world, the rate at which substandard cables are flooding our markets is alarming."¹ He disclosed that the cables did not satisfy all the critical parameters for good cables and have been found to be far below standard. He further stated that "For example, the conductor diameters were far below Nigerian Industrial Standards (NIS) requirement, the conductor resistance were far higher, the insulation resistant were zero as the insulation melted during high voltage test,"² He listed 27 brands of cables in the market which were of poor and substandard quality to include Union England, Nigermetal Wire and Cable, Umonkable Nigeria, SKC, Bauchi, Hope PVC Insulated Wire and Cable and Cable Industry among others.³

Other electrical materials in the market, which were being faked, he added included Flash brand of R20 batteries, Nulec brand of R20 batteries, Temby plugs and sockets, Osram bulbs, Tungstram bulbs and electric heater, amongst others. According to him:

I considered it necessary to revisit the issue of industrial salt consumed as table salt in some parts of Nigeria. Industrial salt is not fit for human consumption and is usually written as such on the packaging bags. Some unscrupulous Nigerians have however capitalised on the ignorance of their fellow Nigerians, especially at Rijau in Niger State regrind industrial salt and market same as table salt .⁴

He concluded by saying that "It is also pertinent to advise consumers to beware of dangerous tyres. You need to check very well the sidewall of any tyre you are purchasing".⁵ SON warned

He developed so many innovations in SON, including the construction and installation of Engineering and Food Test Laboratories, Metrology Systems, development of Quality Assurance Systems and Certifications and Training Scheme for SON in ISO 900 and 14000 Series of Standards and indeed, these outputs are nationally acclaimed and are a pride to Nigeria and beyond. Between years 2001 -2006 SON witnessed very tremendous leap in the following areas:

On 6th August 2002, Prof. John Ndanusa Akanya was appointed Director General of Standard Organisation of Nigeria having worked with the organisation since 1991 under the United Nations Technical Agreement with the Federal Government.

STRATEGIES ADOPTED BY JOHN NDANUSA AKANYA AS SON DIRECTOR GENERAL

STRATEGY I: Restructuring and Reorganising Of SON

When SON was first established by Decree No. 56 of 1971 as Nigerian Standards Organization (first as a Department of the Federal Ministry of Industry) it later metamorphosed into a fully fledged body corporate under the Ministry's supervision charged with the responsibility of developing standards for commodities, products and services for industries and to implement the Federal Government's programmes on standardization and quality assurance including Metrology for both locally manufactured and imported goods throughout the country it was more or less like a lame duck without an appreciable impact on the economy.

Like many such establishments in Nigeria, the organization made steady but very slow progress in trying to implement its mandate of standardization and quality assurance until 1992 when the Federal Government entered into an agreement with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) under the Country Service Frame Work to develop human and testing capacity for the Standards Organization of Nigeria.

Thus was the foundation stone laid, for what was to become a scientific and highly technical Standard Body with proven relevance to all sectors of the socio-economic and political development of the acclaimed most populous black nation in the world, Nigeria.

The Federal Government/UNIDO project took off on a bright note and culminated in the establishment of Textile/Leather Laboratory in Kaduna, Northern Nigeria, an Engineering Laboratory in Enugu, South-Eastern Nigeria and the commencement of the process for a Food Chemistry Laboratory in South-Western Nigeria to take maximum advantage of the unique geographical spread and location of various industries in the country.

The full effect and relevance of these efforts to the socio-economic development of the nation however did not manifest until about 30 years after the Standards member of the UNIDO project team who was absorbed into the SON as staff on completion of the project in order to sustain the capacities already built was given the mandate to lead the organization.

Standards Organization of Nigeria has since his appointment been brought to the consciousness of the citizenry through carefully articulated and systematically implemented road map drawn by the Prof. John Akanya led team of technical and support staff with the use of expertise drawn from different sectors of the economy including Industry, the Academia, Research Institutes, Consumer Associations, Trade Groups and the Mass Media across the length and breadth of Nigeria.⁶

In order to direct and establish a clearer focus and strategies for moving SON forward, he relied on the full co-operation of the work force and support of the federal government. Much was done to give SON the necessary management potency, being the ultimate fulcrum for standardization, regulation of products quality and for metrology.

Since the general public was yet to fully understand the activities of SON, the need arose to tackle the issue of public enlightenment campaigns. The Organisation quickly developed other strategies to support the fight. One strategy led to another. Staff reorientation and motivation were keys and the directorates needed to be restructured. There was also the need to develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and Operational Guidelines. The existing offices and the old laboratories needed to be upgraded, while new ones needed to be built. The Organisation procured a state-of-the-art operational equipments. According to Akanya:

When we came in, the issue of standards was the most crucial topic in the lips of every Nigerians. We found out that we were short in the standards. We went to work and from about 300 standards which we met on ground, we were able to raise them to 2000 within the first 30 months. Apart from that, we saw that there were many areas that needed to be looked into, we therefore established so many new products and services like port and border operations, International desk, product registration and many new things. We then moved from our previous office to our permanent site, established a new library, established laboratories for testing, etc.⁷

He noted that the biggest challenge is fighting substandard products in Nigeria was the fact that the enormity of what was on ground in the market and

shops, in terms of substandard products was beyond what one could imagine. Majority of them were products that were harmful to life. Fighting products like substandard electric cables, tyres, salt, food, and substandard everything are the biggest challenges that the Organisation have. However, SON was happy because they were producing results and Nigerians are responding positively. Apart from that, creating an enabling environment for SON staff to work has been one of the management greatest joy.⁸

Provision of Computers: Computer was provided for all the staff at both Lagos and Abuja offices so that the staff of the Organisation can be in turn with modern practices as long as Standardisation is concerned. This led to total commitment of SON staff to their duties to the extent that they are glued to their job even up to 6:00 p.m one can still see people in their offices; at times they're there till 9:00 p.m still working despite the difficulties in Lagos. The DG personally taught SON staff how to operate computers thereby ensuring that SON work force is computer literate. Computers then replaced typewriters in all offices of the Standards Organization of Nigeria as part of effort to modernize the agency's operations. In July 2002, the management of the Organisation issued a directive that computer literacy must be taken into consideration for all promotions, resulting in many of the staff taking computer training courses seriously, both within and outside the Organisation. As a result, SON employees were able to word-process their own documents. This has greatly improved SON reporting systems and data management. Today, about 90 percent of SON's technical staff has been given necessary training with a view to strengthening their professional capabilities.⁹

Efficient Manpower Development: the Organisation tirelessly embarked on efficient manpower development to enhance the operations of the organisation. Staff Reorientation, Reorganization and Motivation exercises were simultaneously carried out, along with the restructuring of the Organisation and the modernization of SON regulatory processes, through a holistic strategy of overhauling the entire system. The target was to create an enabling environment for the refocused SON staff, while working relentlessly to refocus the staff for greater operational effectiveness and efficiency of the Organisation.

Staff Reorientation, Reorganization and Motivation

For a complete turnaround of SON to be achieved, there must be a change, of attitude in the people, processes and systems. Of all these, "people" is the most important of these elements. Lee Lacocca also captured this in his autobiography, where he stated that, "*in the end, all business operations can be reduced to three words, people, products and profits, and people come first. Unless you have a good team, you can't do much with the other two*".¹⁰

To these end, the management and staff of the Organisation resolved to;

First, SON activities have to be conducted in a professional and businesslike manner, and in this regard, they are to see themselves as being in the business of safeguarding standard.

Secondly, SON has a special call, not only a life-saving mission but also saving the life, socio-political and economy of the nation.

Thirdly, fraudulent practices such as over-sampling of products for analysis, unnecessary delays in inspection and registration and aiding and abetting corruption in any form must stop.

Fourthly, they could not afford to continue the way things were, and that all hands must be on deck to stop fake and substandard products, and other regulatory lapses.

The need for staff reorientation was inevitable and a change of mindset was critical to achieving the turnaround in the system. The entire staff needed a total change of attitude and in fact, a cultural revolution throughout the organization. The Organisation therefore embarked on staff rationalization and reorganization. The following steps were taking to reposition members of staff for better effectiveness:

- i. Staff found to be corrupt, redundant and incorrigible was retrenched. This was because a culture of blatant corruption *pervaded* the entire Organisation. The members of staff who were not ready to imbibe the new culture of change was identified and noted for dismissal. Some of these recalcitrant staff challenged management openly. They felt uncomfortable with the entire change process, and could not hide their feelings. Some staff members evidently lived beyond their means, while others were reported by their colleagues to be corrupt. Still others were found to be lazy, redundant and irredeemable. Each report was fully investigated before decisions were taken. These groups, which made up about five per cent of the entire staff, were summarily dismissed, and the Organisation continued to dismiss corrupt and incorrigible employees whenever necessary.
- ii. The management of the Organisation embarked on extensive staff training and re-training, both locally and internationally. This was necessary to equip them with the relevant skills required for effective regulation of products and services in the country. Induction training was organized for newly recruited staff members, to acquaint them with all SON operations. Specialized in-house training and computer appreciation courses for all staff members, and offshore training for a good number of them was organised. Each month, at least 15 members of staff of

the organization enjoy training with different international organizations at no cost to the Organisation. In-house training for all staff members on Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP), Hazard Analysis, Critical Control Points (HACCP) and other relevant areas that encourage efficient operations of the Organisation are regularly organized.

iii. Manpower Training and Development for Industries

In addition, SON as part of its mandate undertakes the development of necessary manpower for the Nation particularly in the areas of Standardization and Quality Assurance to fast track the growth of the Industrial sector through the introduction of internationally acclaimed programmes for the private and public sectors, including manufacturing as well as service industries.

To maximize available opportunities, the organization invested heavily in training the trainer approach by developing first, internal capacity which in turn is deployed to train professionals in industry, the academia as well as the public sectors to imbibe the culture of international best practices.

It all began with the adoption of the world acclaimed generic ISO 9000 Quality Management System Standards in 1994 by the Organization, the development of internal capacity, establishment of a National Training programme, followed by an accreditation programme for Industries which has shot Nigerian companies and their products into international acceptability. In 2007 alone, the organization achieved the following:

- Sustained Quality Assurance Training Programme for Industries and SON staff that is, NIS ISO 9000 Quality Management System (163 participants)
- NIS ISO 14000 Environmental Management System (60 participants).
- Introduction of new training programmes namely NIS ISO 18000 Occupational Health and Safety Assessment System (OHASS) (58 participants) and
- NIS ISO 22000 Food Safety Management System (100 participants)
- Capacity building for take-off of the National Laboratory Accreditation System, through nationwide training on, NIS ISO 17025, Laboratory Accreditation Systems Management Standards.

Lectures were prepared and staff of SON trained in-house on the ISO 18000 (OHASS) and ISO 22000 by a team of SON Lecturers led by the Director General himself who develops curriculum and participates in the training programmes. As an experienced lecturer, technician and active chemist, the Director General brought SON into its main functional perspective

which are designed to meet the objectives of President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua's 7-point Agenda in particular and the needs of an emerging economy such as Nigeria.¹¹

These trainings includes both local and oversea trainings programmes and people are picked for such training based on merit without favouritism, tribal or religious sentiments and considerations. Staffs do not have to lobby to be selected. That means that unexpectedly, one can just be picked to proceed overseas for one training programme or another unlike before when it was meant for few and privileged staff. The management of SON evolved policies, which have contribution in no small measure to the upliftment of the Organisation.

It is only through a very dynamic and resourceful leadership that the task of ensuring that products imported into and locally manufactured in Nigeria can comply with the specified minimum global standard. Consequently, SON management has over the years been able to evolve standards for numerous products be they imported or locally manufactured such that stakeholders appreciate the need to standardize their operations and products. Expectedly, the demand for products certification by stakeholders has also over the years, increased tremendously on annual basis, a development which is attributable to increase in consumers and manufacturers awareness, also resulting from the intensive public enlightenment effort of SON.

- iv. Staff redeployment was based on competence and area of specialization. The management invited a team of consultants who assisted the Organisation in deploying staff according to qualifications, competencies and suitability for defined job functions.
- v. The Organisation recruited new staff, based entirely on merit, through very meticulous and effective screening exercises, conducted by external consultants and experts. During the first major recruitment exercise, advertisements were placed in most Nigerian newspapers, inviting interested and suitable candidates to apply. Over 3,000 applications were received. Consultants were engaged to shortlist the candidates for the next stage. Aptitude tests was conducted for the 1,500 short-listed candidates and the successful candidates were interviewed before being employed. This was unprecedented for a government Organisation where tribalism, nepotism and political leanings are the order of the day.¹²
- vi. The employment criteria were modified to include handicapped persons, making SON a truly equal-opportunity employer.

- vii. Nepotism, partiality and favoritism were totally discouraged in the Organisation
- viii. Effective delegation of duties and staff empowerment at all levels was encouraged. The new corporate culture of staff empowerment engendered their effective buy-in to the vision of the Organisation. The employees became committed to the change process when they realized that they were recognized as important partners in the restructuring effort. Heads of Directorates were empowered to take decisions even in the absence of the Director General. The standing instruction was that, in the absence of the Director General (D.G), any Director acting for the DG, in consultation with the Director of a Head of Directorate that had an issue, and the DG's Special Assistant, could take a decision on that issue. Furthermore, if any junior staff reported a case to a Head of Directorate or a Senior Officer and action was not taken within one week, the junior staff was encouraged to report the matter directly to the Director General. This greatly empowered the junior staff, while putting the senior officers on check.
- ix. There was constant staff performance evaluation, to ensure commitment and effectiveness. To check staff tardiness and absenteeism, the management of the Organisation introduced clock registers in every unit. The measure drastically reduced the frequency of excuses' "going to the bank", a common practice by public service employees in Nigeria. A staff member found to be violating timekeeping policies was issued a query and disciplined appropriately. Staff of the Organisation can be dismissed for habitual tardiness and delaying the treatment of any document for more than 48 hours. It attracts a query, which could lead to suspension if unjustified. Memos were issued to that effect. To enforce this directive, the Director General's Special Assistant performed routine checks on mail and file movements. The management of the Organisation highly detests lateness to work by SON staff as evident in their early presence at their duty post.
- x. Various welfare packages were introduced and sustained. The management paid all over-due staff benefits, allowances and remunerations that had accrued over time to SON staff. This included paying "thirteenth month" salaries to employees as year-end bonuses from the Organisation's internally generated revenues. This incentive drove them to work aggressively towards generating revenue, knowing that it was spent judiciously in running the affairs of the Organisation, and for their collective welfare. To boost staff morale, he provided transport allowances and welfare packages for events such as marriages, births, burials, in addition to medical and several other benefits, knowing that an unhappy person cannot give his or her best at work. Computers, mobile telephones and walkie-talkies were made available

whenever needed. A crèche to cater for babies of staff was also established. This made the environment conducive for nursing mothers to take care of their babies and be close to them during working hours, while still contributing to moving SON forward. The Council and Management of SON continually sought avenues to motivate staff towards greater productivity. In addition, the outstanding reputation, coupled with her good public image, constituted the highest motivating factor for SON employees under Prof. John Ndanusa Akanya.

- xi. Hard work, dedication and transparency were handsomely rewarded. Reward was in the form of recognition, promotion and exposure to relevant trainings. Letters of commendation, signed by the DG were always written to deserving staff for any outstanding achievement. Whistle blowers who exposed importers or producers of fake and substandard products were rewarded appropriately. This explained why some SON staff members were prepared to spend their nights hiding in-between containers at the ports, even without overtime payments, to apprehend criminals. Staff members who reported any fellow employee found to have compromised with defaulting companies were similarly rewarded. When hard work and integrity are not rewarded, corruption is promoted.
- xii. Corruption was severely sanctioned and any form of laxity was penalized. Any SON staff caught negotiating or accepting a bribe from a manufacturer or importer in the course of his or her duty was dismissed. Staff members who aided or abetted such action received the same treatment. This was necessary to reverse the entrenched culture of bribery and corruption. An Anti-Corruption and Transparency Unit (ACTU), was set up to help fight the scourge of corruption in the Organisation. Members of this ACTU was charged to lead by example, and urged to come up with programmes that would sensitize SON workforce on what constitutes an offence under the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) Act 2000.
- xiii. Heroic acts were adequately compensated.
- xiv. The management spared no efforts in the eradication of administrative sluggishness and red-tapism which is widely known to be a common feature of most Government agencies from the Organisation.
- xv. Leadership by example is highly emphasized at all levels.

These initiatives, geared towards motivating the staff to work as if they were in a private Organisation, was a departure from what is usual in government organizations, which were characterized by nepotism, mediocrity and lack of commitment.

Restructuring the Organization

Prior to 2002 SON had only six Zonal offices throughout the country but in 2003 they were turned from SON Zonal Offices to SON State offices. As a result, SON State Offices was established in every State capital of the thirty-six States of Nigeria to take care of every state. They do not have to travel very far to assess the services of SON. In addition, Six Regional Offices was established in South-West, South-East, South-South, North-East, North West and North Central. The Organisation was expanded by introduction of functional Directorates. The creation of new Directorates which includes the Directorate in charge of Ports Inspection and Enforcement which further positioned the Organisation to effectively tackle the problems emanating from inspection lapses and poor enforcement activities respectively. These aided the Organisation in its efforts to stopping the importation of fake and substandard products, mopping up same already in circulation, and enforcing standards and sanctions. With this expansion, SON's organizational structure was changed to a more functional one.

New departments was created in the Organisation under the regime of Prof. Akanya as DG such as the Quality Management System and the Environmental Management Systems an initiative which has greatly enhanced the performance of the Organisation.

In 2008, the Office of the Head of Civil Service of the Federation stipulated that there should be a reorganization of the Administration and Finance Directorate in all Nigerian Federal Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs). Following the directive, in July 2008, former Administrative organ was upgraded to the Administrative Department and Finance and Accounts Departments was created.¹³

Development of Nigerian Industrial Standards

Elaboration of standards for locally manufactured as well as imported products, services and systems within the confines of Nigeria is one of the primary functions of SON as enshrined in its enabling Act No. 56 of 1971. However, the organization up to the year 2001 had only about 230 Nigerian Industrial Standards for products most of which were due for review either due to change in Consumer expectations and demands, new research discoveries or advancement in technology.

Through a carefully thought out action by the John Akayan led team, massive review of standards, elaboration of new standards, adoption and adaptation of standards were carried out from 2002 which by 2015 brought the volume of Standards available in the SON reference Library to about 100,000 out of which the Nigerian Industrial Standards are 700.

These volumes of Standards include those from the International Organization for standardization (ISO), International Electro-technical Commission (IEC), British Standards Institute (BSI), American Standards and Testing Methods (ASTM), German Standards Institute (DIN), South Africa Bureau of Standards (SABS), South Korea, China, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Kenya and Ghana among many others.

To achieve these, the Management had to revive all inactive Technical Committees of experts drawn from the Industries, Academia, Research Institutes, Consumer Associations, Trade Groups and the Media as well as form new ones to regularly review existing standards and elaborate new ones in line with Consumer and Marketing expectations.¹⁴

Physical Infrastructural Improvement

SON also embarked on major improvement and regeneration of the existing physical structures, and acquisition and development of new ones.

Laboratory Network

The laboratory network forms the core of the operations of SON. In order to make pronouncements on the quality and Standard of products circulating in Nigeria, the functionality, efficiency, effectiveness and integrity of the laboratory tests upon which those pronouncements were based must be assured. The laboratory complexes of SON before 2001 were grossly inadequate for a Standard regulatory Organisation. There was need therefore to upgrade them to world-class standards and a considerable success was achieved in this regard. Also SON existing laboratories was refurbished and upgraded. The Food Chemistry, Electrical/ Electronic Screening Laboratories complexes at Lekki, Lagos was also built. Laboratories of SON are now fully accredited by the United Nations through its UNIDO programs and the European Union (EU). Nigeria, being a developing country, suffers from intermittent power outages and inadequate supply of potable water. All SON laboratory complexes were therefore equipped with power generating plants and boreholes for uninterrupted supplies of electricity and treated water.

The laboratory complex at Enugu, South-East Nigeria, was up graded due to the need to have easy access to functional laboratories to boost SON's regulatory efforts in all the geopolitical zones of the country, since it have adequately provided for the Northern, Western and South-South Regions.

Regional and State Offices

Until 2001, SON had offices only in five states as zonal Offices throughout the Federation. But the Prof. John Akanya led SON established offices in all the 36 states and the

Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. Six additional Regional offices were also established to coordinate the activities of the state offices in each of the Region. SON under Akanya constructed land border offices in the border areas of the country and these provided the infrastructure needed to enforce the ban on importation of Substandard products through land borders. Portakabins were provided at all seaports to serve as offices for the Organisations's port inspectors.

Warehouses

In the past, SON was confronted with the disturbing situation whereby seized products were stored in the owners' warehouses during investigation. But in 2002 SON built two new warehouses in Lagos; one for thermo labile (i.e. heat-sensitive) products, and the other for thermostable products. Having put its own warehouses in place SON took full control of all seized products, while investigation was continuing concerning any issues relating to such products. At the end of investigations, the products were either released to their owners if proven to be fit for human use, or destroyed if otherwise.

Corporate Headquarters

The acquisition of SON new Corporate Headquarters in Abuja was the crowning glory of all efforts to rebuild the organization. The building of its National Head Quarters in 2003 was indeed a monumental achievement for a government Organisation that has for over thirty years not having a befitting National Headquarters at Abuja, the nation's capital. Even more impressive was the fact that all the funds used to purchase the property were internally generated. This edifice not only enhanced the Organisation's corporate image, but also provided a conducive environment for staff operation.

Establishment of SON library

One of the primary infrastructural needs of a national Standards Board is a technical Library. Until the organization's movement to a more befitting 5-storey building in Lekki, Victoria Island in Lagos, the SON Library was ill-equipped for a modern national standards body. The SON Lekki Library by 2004 was a modern library stocked with over 100,000 volumes of national and international standards and other reference materials in either hard copies or soft copies in a database. In year 2005, SON commenced its ICT program of the sale and purchase of its standards on-line from any part of the world. The program which was completed in December 2007 was well patronized both nationally and internationally.

Quality Assurance Activities

The SON Quality Assurance activities include routine inspection of factories for guidance on standards implementation and quality control checks; certification of products to the Nigerian Industrial Standards (NIS) specifications; local and off-shore conformity assessment programmes to prevent and reduce the incidence of importation, manufacture and sale of substandard products; registration of products to provide data and inventory on their specified quality parameters for traceability; investigation and settlement of consumer complaints; promotion of competitiveness among local manufacturers through the annual certification of products and celebration of the Nigerian Quality Week.

NIS Certification Scheme

From 195 Companies and 384 Products in the highly competitive annual Nigerian Industrial Standards Product Certification Scheme in 2001, Nigeria by December 2007 had 458 Companies and 1930 products in the NIS scheme in the following categories.

Diamond Award Category – Products that have consistently met and surpassed the requirements of the relevant standards for 25 years and above.

Gold Award Category – Products that have consistently met and surpassed the requirements of the relevant standards for 10 years and above.

Silver Award Category – Products that have consistently met and surpassed the requirements of the relevant standards for 5 years and above.

Bronze Award Category - Products that have consistently met and surpassed the requirements of the relevant standards for 2 years and above.

However, in line with consumer expectations, SON has recently introduced a Mandatory Conformity Assessment Programme for all locally manufactured products (MANCAP).¹⁵

Import/Export Inspection for Quality checks

The SON Import inspection scheme came about as a child of necessity following a Presidential directive in 1988 in the face of indiscriminate dumping of substandard goods on the nation.

However, increasing importation of goods to match the demands of the ever expanding Nigerian market and the expansion of the economy brought about greater challenges of checking the quality of imported products in order to preserve hard earned foreign exchange, ensure Consumers get value for money and provide a level playing field for imported and locally manufactured goods.

SON evolved different strategies to combat the importation of substandard products through the sea port and land borders, including the strengthening of Standards Enforcement Department through the setting up of Special Task forces for Border activities at Seme & Idroko in Lagos and Ogun States respectively as well as Jibia in Katsina State with attendant apprehension of substandard goods to the tune of over N5 billion within the first 8 months of its formation in year 2007.¹⁶

The most recent of the strategies are the twin Conformity Assessment Programmes, the Standards Organization of Nigeria off-shore Conformity Assessment Programme, SONCAP for imported products and the Mandatory Conformity Assessment Programme, MANCAP for locally manufactured products.

SONCAP – The Standards Organization of Nigeria off-shore conformity assessment programme is designed to protect Nigerian Consumers from unsafe and or substandard finished products most of which are imported and sold directly to them.

In addition, it is aimed at ensuring that products meet the specifications of acceptable standards and become easier to regulate by Agencies charged with such responsibilities.

The programme scope covers among others;

- A verification of product compliance.
- Assurance that regulated products conform to specifications of Nigerian Industrial Standards or other approved International Standards.
- Assurance of a review process which covers the following elements:
 - (1) Accreditation of Laboratory used.
 - (2) Scope of Test performed.
 - (3) Validity and Authenticity of Test Report.

One of the beauties of the programme lies in the liability clause on the ISO 17025 accredited Laboratories that issue test reports upon the issuance of the Product Certificate is based. This makes the programme World Trade Organization (WTO) compliant and does not create any technical barrier to trade.

Another is that the SONCAP Certificate which is subsequently issued on a shipment-by-shipment basis for goods with the Product Certification is a mandatory Customs Clearance Document in Nigeria and regulated products arriving without this document will be subjected to delays and possible denial of importation. The programme is applicable to Regulated Products in addition to any other existing import processes such as Destination Inspection and

the local SON Country office in the Exporting Countries or near them performs all certification procedure.

In 2007, the 2 year old programme achieved the issuance of 21,169 SONCAP Certificates and 41,473 Product Certificates world-wide.

MANCAP – The Mandatory Conformity Assessment Programme was put in place by the Standards Organization of Nigeria (SON) since January 2006 to ensure that all locally manufactured products conform to the relevant Nigerian Industrial Standards (NIS) before such products are presented for sale in the Nigerian market in line with the statutory provisions of the enabling Act No. 56 of 1971 as amended.

The programme is aimed at protecting Consumers from locally manufactured substandard and /or unsafe products which do not meet the minimum requirements of relevant Nigerian Industrial Standards thereby generating confidence that Made-in-Nigeria products provide value for money. It is designed to protect genuine manufacturers against unhealthy trade practices, counterfeiting and unfair competition in the market place. In addition to providing a level playing field for competitiveness with imported products, MANCAP is among others;

- Applicable to all manufactured products in Nigeria which have been verified to comply with acceptable Nigerian specified requirement or Standard;
- Ensure conformance to minimum requirements of the relevant Nigerian Industrial Standard; (NIS, codes or any other acceptable Nigerian Specification).
- Involves comprehensive assessment of product quality characteristics and performance tests before conformance certificate is issued;
- Renewable on three-yearly basis subject to maintenance of specified quality requirement and the existence of the product.

Since its introduction, the programme has so far achieved the certification of 458 Companies and 1930 Products as at December 2007.¹⁷

Other Infrastructural Improvement

Prof. Akanya provided power-generating sets for all offices and laboratories of the Organisation nationwide, to ensure continuous supply of electricity. New vehicles were purchased and dilapidated ones repaired to serve as staff buses and utility vehicles. Computer, telephones, photocopiers, fax machines and other office equipment were installed in all SON offices. Within the first one year of the appointment of Prof. John Akanya as SON Director General, functional Internet services were provided for the Organisation. The website is now

operational and regularly updated. SON structure, guidelines, SOPs, speeches, and other relevant information were all posted on the website.

Operational Headquarters was established in Lagos. This takes care of the implementation of a Wide-Area-Network (WAN) of the Organisation. The WAN connects Abuja Headquarters to other offices across the country, in order to facilitate free flow of communication.

Despite all the difficulties encountered in the task of rebuilding SON Prof. Akanya was fully convinced that with determination and hard work, he would succeed.

A new SON Organisation alive to its statutory responsibilities was born through the appointment of Prof. John Akanya as its Director General. At the 2002 and 2003 annual Nigeria Economic Summits, SON was showcased as a moribund public institution which was resurrected back to life.

STRATEGY II: Operational Strategy

Active Participation In National Codex Commission To Check Food Safety And Promote International Trade

Prof. Akanya on assumption of duty as SON DG urged to took full advantage of the global economic and trade benefits accruable to it from a functional National Codex Committee in advising policy makers on food safety and internal trade fairs. He made the call in the welcome address he delivered to the technical meeting of the National Codex Committee (NCC) held at the Federal Secretariat, Ikoyi, in 2001. According to him, a functional National Codex Committee (NCC) is a national forum where consumers, the relevant arms of government, the food industry and individuals with interest in Codex work as well as other stakeholders discuss and take national position on issues of food safety and international trade fairs

Prof. Akanya disclosed that SON has given a new lease of life to the Codex Contact Point which houses the Secretariat of the NCC. He therefore called on members of the committee to assist in its funding. The SON Director-General stated that the membership of the Committee has been further expanded to accommodate experts in the relevant field in line with the request made by the NCC. He stated that the recognition of Codex as the final texts by the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in arbitration of cases of disputes between participating countries is significant for member nations of the Codex Alimentarius Commission. In a good will message to the meeting, the Director-General of National Agency for Food, Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC), Late Pro. Dora Akunyili

expressed delight at the new impetus being given to the NCC as witnessed by the varied representation at the *meeting*. *She* confirmed that the circulation of Codex Documents to stake holders has significantly improved, stressing that Nigeria through the NCC is set to take its rightful place at international fora of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) and the World Trade Organisation.

According to the NAFDAC Director-General, Nigeria would henceforth be able to present a truly national position arising from inputs expected from the gathering of experts and professionals with relevant knowledge and skills, who constitute the NCC.¹⁸

The Organisation in 2002 identified poor monitoring and enforcement as the weakest links in the chain of SON regulatory activities. To address these problems, the management evolved new operational strategies to eradicate fake and substandard products, and created a strong regulatory environment. The strategies include developing new regulations, reviewing tariffs, developing guidelines and standard operating procedures, targeting the sources of substandard products in Nigerian environment, increasing surveillance at ports of entry, mopping up substandard products in circulation, and monitoring the GMP of manufacturers, among others.

New Regulations

Nigerian SON laws were non-deterrent, unwieldy, overlapping, and sometimes conflicting. SON were however, expected to operate with these laws in spite of their deficiencies. Since regulations, which are sub-legislation, are easier to promulgate and the principal laws empower SON to do so, SON in the interim create regulations within the laws to enable the Organisation operate effectively. Consequently, initiated a review of the existing regulations with representatives of the relevant stakeholders, and this resulted in the repeal and re-enactment of some old regulations, as well as the enactment of new ones.

Developing SON regulations and partnering with Agency like NAFDAC was a well-articulated, step-wise procedure that ensures transparency and takes into account inputs from stakeholders. This was aimed at promoting easy compliance with the regulations when concluded and finally coming into effect. The procedure involves the identification of the need for a regulation by the SON management team. The Organisation sources information from credible international organizations such as the WHO and FAO websites, or websites of national bodies such as the United States Food and Drug Administration (USFDA), EU etc. The draft regulations are considered by an in-house Standards and Regulations Committee, corrections made and inputs of the Committee are reflected in the draft regulations circulated

to members and endorsed at the next Committee meeting. The draft regulations are later sent to the relevant groups and posted on SON website for stakeholders' comments and input. All acceptable comments and input are considered before the draft regulations are sent to our Governing Council, which considers them and sends them to the Federal Ministry of Justice, through the Legal Unit in the Director General's Office. The regulations was finally sent to the Federal Government Printing Press and gazette for use by the public after consideration and approval.¹⁹

Mandatory Pre-Shipment Information

SON made it mandatory for all products importers to provide pre-shipment information to the Organisation before the arrival of any shipment into Nigeria. The pre-shipment information includes the chemical name of the product, the brand name, the active ingredients and the strengths, the dosage forms (in the case of drugs); pack sizes, quantities, MANCAP Number, type of product, country of manufacture, name and address of manufacturer, country of shipment, name of vessel, expected date of arrival and port of entry.

Requirement of Certificate of Free Sale for Registration

Efforts was made by SON to enforce that any product presented for registration to SON must be confirmed to have been freely used in the country of production. To this end, SON required that the Certificate of Free Sale, signed by the Minister of Trade or Industry of that country of origin of a product and authenticated by the Nigerian Embassy, or any Commonwealth Mission, (if there is no Nigerian Embassy in that country) be submitted along with the rest of the required documentation before it can enter into Nigerian market. This Certificate of Free Sale must clearly state that the product is freely used in the country of production. Any product not used in the country of production was not be accepted in Nigeria for registration; hence products labeled "For Export Only" are not allowed to be registered or used in Nigeria.

Strengthening Surveillance at all Ports of Entry Ports/Border Operation Scheme

The role of SON at the Nigerian Ports/Border is aimed at controlling the influx of substandard products into the Nigerian Markets. It was in pursuit of this statutory function that a presidential directive was issued to SON in 1988 directing it to man the Nigerian ports and border posts nationwide. Sequel to this directive, SON in 1989 established the ports operations scheme, and SON presence in the ports nationwide had led to regular monitoring of the quality of imported products to ensure that they conform to relevant NIS requirements.

The Federal Government trade liberalization policy and the deregulation of the economy, has influenced the influx of goods into the Nigerian market, but not without some problems such as increased importation of substandard and unsafe products into the country. The SON's role at the Port/Border operations scheme over the years has yielded positive results in checking the indiscriminate dumping of poor quality products in the country.

Procedure

The port/border inspection scheme involves the inspection, examination, sampling and the laboratory analysis of imported goods. It is pertinent to mention that, despite its numerous constraints and problems, SON has continued to make its presence felt in virtually all the Sea Ports in monitoring the quality of imported goods. While progress is being made to completely cover airports and borders, efforts are equally afoot to improve communication and operational facilities for effective performance of duties.

Problems

Nevertheless, there are many problems encountered at the ports. Among them are, the increased activities of smugglers bringing poor quality products into the country through routes not manned by SON (illegal routes at border posts). The smuggling activities have continued to puncture the effective impact the organization's operation would have had on the economy. Other obstacles being encountered are evasion of SON inspection by importers/clearing agents, shortage of manpower and funds to operational vehicles and sophisticated testing equipment. However, it is being hoped that with continued and increasing assistance of government agencies, and the general public the Organization continued to exert greater impact on the imports into the country.

The creation of the Ports Inspection Directorate for effective surveillance at all ports of entry and the Enforcement Directorate for the enforcement of regulations, led to increased seizures of Substandard products. Hitherto, land and sea borders were major routes of importation of fake and substandard products. As a result of intensified surveillance at the borders, fake and substandard products' dealers resorted to air freighting their cargo. Consequently, SON, with the support of the Ministry of Aviation, issued new guidelines, prohibiting all aircraft from carrying products into Nigeria without obtaining SON authorization from their clients. SON wrote to all the airlines informing them that any aircraft caught bringing substandard products into Nigeria would be grounded. Advertorials were also placed in print and electronic media to this effect. When it became very difficult for them to freight the substandard products by air, dealers resorted to the use of speedboats and other forms of water transportation.²⁰

Mopping up Fake Products in Circulation

Cognizant of Nigeria's many porous borders, SON embarked on planned, continuous and sustained surveillance in all markets and retail outlets for products and other related products.

SON carried out routine sampling, checking and testing of all SON registered products in circulation. The Organisation also traced dealers of fake and substandard products through reports received from victims, other professionals and tip-offs from the general public. Some of these reports assisted SON in identifying the sources of large consignments of fake, counterfeit and other substandard products.

China And Substandard Products In Nigeria

The People's Republic of China denied exporting counterfeit and substandard products to Nigeria. The denial was made by the Chinese Consul-General, Dr. Liu Xianfa, when asked to respond to an allegation by the former Director General of National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) late Prof. Dora Nkem Akunyili that a large portion of the fake goods in Nigeria emanated from China. Before the denial, the Director-General of NAFDAC, had alleged, during a press conference, that India and China accounted for most of the counterfeit drugs and other substandard products imported into the country. She added that while India was playing supportive role to fight the trend, China was passive. The DG did not explain what she meant by passive role, but Xianfa's denial did not seem to change the opinion of general consumers and authorities in the country. Both the old and young in Nigeria believe that substandard products are synonymous with China; it used to be India. It is generally held that products made in China have short life span and cannot be repaired when damaged. Again, all inferior products in the country are believed to have been made in China or Taiwan. When one says a product is China or Taiwan, the underlying meaning is that such product is either counterfeit or substandard. Unfortunately, what many Nigerians do not understand is that China manufactures for Europe and America. Before the emergence of China's economy, South Korea and Japan were seen by Europe as a base for low-cost labour which offered low production cost. It all translated to low prices of goods. Note that low price is not the same as poor quality of, or cheap, goods. The price of a product is largely, determined by the cost of producing the product. Following the 1990s reforms in China, the country emerged to challenge the biggest economies of the world. It has come on top of such economies, given the availability of a large labour force, superior power supply, low taxation and favourable currency exchange rate.

Major investors in Europe, Americas and even Asia now turn to China to produce goods which they could not produce in their respective countries. The best Nokia phones in the American and British markets are manufactured in China. If such quality phones are produced in Europe, the prices would have been too high, given the high cost of their production. Like American and British investors, Nigerians have also turned to China to produce. But while American and British investor-vendors have respect for model and quality specifications in accordance with the prescriptions in their respective countries, their Nigerian counterparts prefer to cut corners to make ungodly profits. Worse still, the Chinese factories accept to produce whatever poor quality that is asked for by the Nigerian investor-vendors. The Nigerian investor goes to China with products for which they have no copyright for counterfeiting, without the Chinese factories asking questions or complying with the existing laws. This explains the poor quality or counterfeit products from China and the culpability of the country in the crime. While Indian authority, which was as bad as China, is now assisting the Nigerian government to wage the war, China doesn't seem to be bothered. Counterfeiting in China is a serious offence which carries death penalty. If offenders are prosecuted in China, it will be difficult for the Nigerian investor or vendor to continue the illicit business.²¹ It is also of great concern that men of the Nigerian Customs Service are not able to stop these products from coming into the country. It is worrisome that some of the counterfeits pass the screening by the Standards Organisation of Nigeria (SON). They are largely detected in the market before actions are taken. Not all the counterfeits are smuggled, as SON may want people to believe. Again, Nigerians do not have the moral justification to call the products of others substandard according to Ifebu Okoli, a phone and electronics dealer at Computer village Ikeja, Lagos. Nigeria should produce for the Nigerian market. The major industrial enabling factor – power or energy if tackled will bring to an end the age-long wahala over fake products from China and India. Nigeria is yet to experience impressive transformation in that direction. Nigerians should avoid partisanship in dealing with the issue of industrialisation and power development in the country. It is not about who rules the country but about existence of the country and its citizens.²²

Someone who travelled to Israel recently said he refused to buy certain things over there because they were poorer than what he found back home in Nigeria. It is, therefore, about time we began to look inward. These importations are not anywhere close in quality to what is produced in Aba, Lagos or Kano. The onus is on the government to promote locally made goods in order to stop blaming counterfeits on India and China. But if the importation becomes imperative, over and above everything the solution is that there has to be collaboration between Nigerian and Chinese governments. Counterfeiting carries death penalty in China; and the manufacturers in China are not spirits. There is, therefore, the need for the government to

make the Chinese counterpart to check their manufacturers. If the Chinese government refuses to cooperate, it is also the duty of the Nigerian government to blacklist products from that country until the home government complies.²³

Substandard ICT Products and their Effects

The use and sale of substandard mobile phones in the country telecommunications space have been increasing to the extent that it has become a menace as it affects quality of service among other consequence. According to Mrs. Ify Umenyi, director general, Consumer Protection Council (CPC),

apart from the health hazards that consumers of counterfeit products are exposed to, since counterfeit products are usually not subjected to any regulatory authority and thereby not made in conformity to relevant standards and specifications, the country loses a lot of revenue through the activities of counterfeiters. Producers of counterfeit products evade legitimate sources of government revenues like duties and taxes. Also, employment opportunities are lost as genuine producers and employers of labour are hindered from attaining economies of scale and as a result forced to shut down on many occasions. There is also a genuine concern around the world that terrorists get their funding from illegal activities like counterfeiting smuggling, bunkering and so on²⁴.

In view of the foregoing, the influx of fake and substandard products has been a source of concern to the federal government of Nigeria. The apex consumer protection agency of the federal government, Consumer Protection Council (CPC), she said, came up with an interventionist programme like the establishment of joint task force, in conjunction with the Standard Organization of Nigeria, National Environmental Standard Regulation and Enforcement Agency (NESREA) and Alaba Market Association, on fake and substandard electrical and electronic products in Alaba International market, Lagos. She noted that CPC partnered with some genuine manufacturers to raid some known black spots, with a view to ridding them of fake and substandard products. In this regard, the council and the joint taskforce carried out more than three different raids in GSM village, Lagos, to rid it of fake mobile phones, and carried out several other raids in Lagos metropolis and other states of the federation to remove different counterfeit and unwholesome products from the marketplace.²⁵

In spite of all these efforts being made by other regulatory agencies to combat counterfeiting in Nigeria, the trade appears to be gaining grounds at huge costs to consumers, manufacturers and government alike. For instance, the result of a research carried out by the Business Software Alliance (BSA) and the International Data Corporation (IDC) disclosed that Nigeria lost more than N19.8 million to software counterfeiting and associated problems. Microsoft Nigeria said that, consumers and companies spend millions of dollars each year on counterfeit copies and financing scammers who threaten the integrity of the software industry. But for victims of software piracy, the losses are not just monetary. In the telecom market to be precise, apart from the loss of valuable income through the purchase of fake handsets and their frequent replacement by consumers, there is a growing concern that the result of highly hazardous emissions from fake mobile phones may soon begin to manifest. Counterfeit mobile devices are low in quality and do not meet standards. In some situations, the radiation from them is beyond the permissible limits and can cause serious damage to the health of consumers. Scientific study on the levels of radio frequency emissions from mobile phone handsets indicated that several of the sophisticated looking fake and cheap phones in the market emit high levels of radiation, far higher than what is globally accepted as safe. Ironically, manufacturers, and dealers in fake handsets are harvesting bountifully from this illegal business.²⁶

Timi Bomodi, the Public Relation Officers, Nigeria Customs Service, Apapa Area 1 Command, said that the **“counterfeiting of products has been a source of worry to governments, and institutions the world over. He added “that the behaviour of certain individuals and companies in developing countries such as Nigeria has made dealing in counterfeit products very attractive. That the large domestic IT market is buoyant, and developing at an incredibly fast rate”.**²⁷

This should be an economic asset to the country. However, it has negative connotations, he observed. Standard Organization of Nigeria has put in place a programme it called SONCAP, which means SON Conformity Assessment Program, designed to protect the Nigerian consumer. The aim of SONCAP is to identify those goods which pose the highest risk to consumers in Nigeria and ensure that their claims of safety are verified before they are exported to Nigeria. This helps to ensure that Nigerians are protected from unsafe and substandard goods as well as ensure that Nigerian manufacturers or brand owners are not subjected to unfair competition from such goods.²⁴ The extent to which these initiatives by the country’s gate keepers have effectively performed it obligations is open to debate as in spite of these programme substandard mobile phones still find their way to Nigerian markets.

Challenges

Engr. Adewumi Richard, group head, Electrical and Electronics, SON, “said that tracing sellers of counterfeits mobile phones poses a challenge towards curbing the menace”. According to him, the sellers don’t have a permanent location as they move from one location to the other to avoid being arrested by law enforcement agents when first time buyers of the counterfeit identifies that they have been conned and decides to approach the police. It is also the responsibility of brand owners to expand their sales outlets, and to make its products more accessible to consumers. Where there is a void in the supply, and demand chain, the counterfeiters are more likely to exploit it for profit. The pricing of original products too is a factor, as research has shown that people are mainly attracted to counterfeits by their lower prices. People in the lower economic strata, are more likely to acquire counterfeits than people in the higher strata. However people with means have been fooled by the external characteristics of counterfeits too. Brand owners should partner with government institutions like Nigeria Customs Service and Standard Organisation of Nigeria. This partnership should be in form of training, and information sharing.²⁸

Monitoring the GMP of Local manufacturers

To ensure that local manufacturers of products manufacture good quality and safe products, SON inspect and certify the GMP of factories regularly. The different types of inspections are as follows:

- a) **Advisory Inspection:** When a producer has acquired premises and machines, SON officials inspect the factory and offer advice on production flow, the staff qualifications needed and the standard operating procedures (SOPs) required for the factory to be GMP compliant. This simplifies the procedures for the local manufacturer who may not have adequate resources to employ the services of consultants. The advisory inspection is free and optional for the new manufacturers.
- b) **Pre-Production Inspection:** This is a general GMP assessment inspection aimed at products, to assess the manufacturing facilities, personnel and location of new production plants. This applies to other regulated products.
- c) **Pre-Registration Inspection:** This inspection is designed to further assess GMP and to evaluate the product formulation intended for manufacture.

- d) **Production Inspection:** This type of inspection is carried out for all products. It is to ensure compliance with GMP before commencement of production.
- e) **Routine Inspection:** This is a spontaneous inspection carried out at a factory without prior notice to the manufacturer, to monitor the normal activities of the plant and assess its compliance to GMP standards. The surprise element ensures that manufacturers are kept on their toes at all times.
- f) **Investigation Inspection:** As the name implies, this type of inspection is usually investigative, prompted by consumer complaints, requests from the public, or alerts from the government, media, embassies or other interest groups.
- g) **Surveillance Inspection:** This type of inspection is usually carried out in areas of interest to SON. Surveillance activities enabled SO to detect malpractices such as adulteration and faking of products, production of unregistered products and non-compliance with requirements which the manufacturer met at the time of product registration.
- h) **Follow-up Inspection:** This inspection is carried out when compliance directives have been issued to manufacturers following unsatisfactory GMP inspections. It is conducted to ascertain that the directives issued have been fully effected. Failure to do so would result in the case being transferred to SON Enforcement Directorate for appropriate sanctions.

Compliance directives are issued where lapses are observed. Administrative penalties are imposed when there is a failure in complying with given directives. Prosecution is as a last resort, if the manufacturer is found to be recalcitrant, or the level of violation has serious adverse implications on the lives and well-being of consumers.²⁹

Encouraging Self-Standardization by Product Manufacturers

SON encouraged self-regulation among product manufacturers by insisting that product registration or its renewal, or concessions such as administrative approval, would only be given to companies that belong to the Pharmaceutical Manufacturers 'Group of the Manufacturers' Association of Nigeria (PMG-MAN) and other members of Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN). Product importers are also not allowed to register or renew their registration if they do not belong to an accredited association of product importers such as the Association of Pharmaceutical Importers of Nigeria (APfN), Indian Pharmaceutical

Manufacturers and Importers in Nigeria (IPMIN) or other similar organizations. SON extended this rule to food and beverage manufacturers. This strategy greatly improved regulation within the industry, which made the work of SON easier.³⁰

Tariff Review

Although SON, being a Government Organisation, is expected to be fully funded from the Nigerian Government Federation Account, the funds the Organisation received from that account were grossly inadequate. Determined to succeed in turning around the Organisation in a sustainable way, Akanya had to develop creative means of generating the funds needed to achieve this mission. He funded the rebuilding and restructuring of the Organisation from internally generated revenue. The funds came from a combination of registration tariffs and fees charged as administrative penalties for offences. In line with current global trends and in order to improve on the existing services and processes as well as promote the local industries, the old tariffs that had been in use since 1990 were reviewed in December 2001, because they were out of tune with the present economic realities. Four-digit increases in operational costs, coupled with the need to acquire sophisticated modern analytical instruments- such as High Performance Liquid Chromatographs (HPLC), Gas Chromatographs and Atomic Absorption Spectrophotometers - and the maintenance of the old ones for better effectiveness, made the old tariff regime inadequate. It was also necessary to ensure an adequate supply of top quality analytical reagents and chemicals. There was the need to increase the testing parameters of the Organisation for products in order to ensure conformity with international standards and compliance with the quality, safety and efficacy requirements for manufactured products. In the case of water, for instance, microbiological, physical and chemical tests were initially carried out for analytical processes only. However, SON under Akanya included pesticide residues and Polyvinyl chloride (PVC) contaminants tests. In the case of imported foods such as fish, milk products and canned food, SON included radioactive tests, pesticide residue tests, and Melamine assay for milk products. It also included tests for toxic Diethylene glycol contaminants for any product in which Propylene glycol is used as a vehicle. This last test is essential given the striking similarity between Propylene glycol and Diethylene glycol. Diethylene glycol, toxic antifreeze, has a notorious history of fatality. Local manufacturers were encouraged through the application of a differential tariff regime. Registrations for foreign products which Nigerian local manufacturers have sufficient capacity to manufacture attract the highest tariff. They are randomly sampled at points of entry and laboratory evaluation is conducted to ensure quality, safety and efficacy.

This new tariff regime encourages foreign investors to establish their manufacturing plants in Nigeria and discourages "briefcase importers", who are the major fake and substandard product importers. The new tariffs generated the funds that SON needed to effectively perform its duties. The Organisation financed foreign GMP inspections with the revenues, thereby discouraging any form of financial assistance from foreign manufacturers and eliminating any form of conflict of interests.³¹

STRATEGY III: Engaging Stakeholders

SON employed the strategy of public enlightenment campaigns through workshops, seminars, publications, grassroots sensitization campaigns and consultative meetings with stakeholders both at national and international levels.

Public Enlightenment Campaign

Most Nigerians were unaware of their right to good quality products. The manufacturers and distributors of fake and substandard products cashed in on the ignorance of the public and the regulatory bodies inadequacies to dump unsafe products in Nigeria. Consequently, SON embarked on massive enlightenment campaigns using dialogue, education and persuasion, to sensitize Nigerians on the dangers of fake and counterfeit products. This strategy addressed the fundamental issue at stake, which is behavioral change. SON involved various stakeholders within and outside Nigeria, ranging from professional bodies like Pharmaceutical Manufacturers 'Group of the Manufacturers' Association of Nigeria (PMG-MAN), Pharmaceutical Association of Nigeria, Council for Registered Builders of Nigeria (CORBON), Council for the Regulation of Engineering practice in Nigeria (COREN), Nigerian Medical Association of Nigeria, and other health practitioners to professional bodies, patent medicine dealers, traditional medicine practitioners, manufacturers, importers and exporters of manufactured products, service providers, chemical marketers, bakers and hotel and fast-food restaurant operators etc. Others included government agencies, regulatory agencies, journalists, the judiciary, road transport employers and operators, financial institutions, educational institutions, the maritime industry, freight forwarding and clearing agents, printers, advertising practitioners, the diplomatic community, NGOs, youth groups, politicians, traditional rulers, religious leaders and groups, business associations, market associations and consumers. The print and electronic media were extensively used in the campaign.

SON adopted public enlightenment as a strategy in the framework of information, education and communication, (IEC). The result-oriented campaigns became the Organisations most effective approach towards eradicating fake products. They were designed to inform

consumers, thereby empowering them to exercise their rights to good quality regulated products. SON encouraged them to cultivate new habits such as scrutinizing labels of products for name and content of the product, SON quality registration mark, batch number, manufacturing date, expiry or "Best Before" date, manufacturer's full name and address and any other relevant information.

SON increased the staff strength at the enlightenment Department Unit and improved the information technology capacity to disseminate information on the activities to the public. Important alert notices of identified fake products were disseminated through print and electronic media, the SON website and quarterly bulletin and bi-monthly newspaper publications. SON also disseminated information using billboards, jingles, announcements and advertisements in the media. Grassroots mobilization campaigns for the rural areas kicked off in February 2002 in Lagos State, and were replicated nationwide. SON produced different kinds of publications, handbills and posters, both in English and in other local languages, to reach its target audience.

Workshops and Seminars

The workshops and seminars organized for various stakeholders were interactive in nature and encouraged contribution of ideas from participants. In this regard, SON traversed the length and breadth of Nigeria and covered diverse subject matters. The following are a few examples of the workshops and seminars organized by SON for some key stakeholders:

Importers of products in Nigeria

Importers are key stakeholders in the fake and substandard products business. By law, foreign companies must have local agents to import certain products into Nigeria. On April 3, 2002, about 450 participants attended the workshop organized for importers in Lagos. It was also an opportunity for SON to introduce the Organisations' new guidelines for stopping fake product importation. The workshop was interactive to encourage the flow of ideas from the participants and obtain their commitment to the cause of the Organisation. SON also explained the reasons for revising the Organisations registration tariffs.

According to Prof. Akanya, products presumed to be cheap are in the real sense, very expensive. Viewed from this perspective, it is cheaper to buy quality goods that are long lasting than to purchase cheap items that will disappoint at any time and also cause the user pains, sorrow, economic loss, health hazards and even death. He believes that quality products last longer than substandard products and this also applies to cars and their accessories. He stated that every tyre has an average life span of four years therefore, most second hand used tyres has lost its qualities before it is brought into the country by importers. Nigerian importers

and traders simply went abroad and purchase expired tyres at a ridiculously cheap rates only to ship them to Nigeria for use by the unsuspecting public and that is why there are tyres bust and peeling off with the vehicles in motion.

Through the D.G's tireless and patriotic efforts, an appreciable working relation was established between the Standards Organization of Nigeria and dealers, importers and manufacturers of products. These made them to realize the need to acquire standard specification from SON before proceeding on the importation of goods. It has become imperative for Nigerian business tycoons to often place national interest above personal interest by ensuring that only (healthy and durable) goods which comply with SON specified standards are made available to consumers. According to Prof. Akanya, Substandard products destroy lives, which mean that the importation of fake and Substandard products into Nigeria is an importation of weapon of mass destruction because it destroys human beings and values. Either by omission or commission many Nigerians who ordinarily would have made meaningful contributions to the economic and socio-political growth of the country have been carelessly eliminated through the consumption of harmful and sub-standard products. Regarding efficient manpower development, Prof. Akanya can be referred to as an encyclopedia of human resource development. His aura of goodwill, humility y, kindness and patriotism has earned him respect. He is a man that believed in actions and activities capable of bringing about positive result.³²

The Yellow Pages

In its concerted efforts to find new ways to rid Nigeria of Substandard products, SON under Prof. Akanya engaged in Public-Private Partnership (PPP) with Adient Limited, a company owned by Deacon S. Chapi. SON initiated the partnership in the last quarter of 2003 with the signing of an agreement between SON and Adient. The company was to compile, edit and present in user-friendly form, the SON Yellow Pages, a listing of all SON registered products in a multimedia format. The publications fill the gaps perceived in the use of government gazettes, which contain listings of registered products in forms that are not user-friendly. The SON Yellow Pages provide opportunities for the advertisement of registered products, offering the marketing authorization holders platforms to showcase their products to the consuming public and allowing them to differentiate their genuine products from fakes and counterfeits. Furthermore, in villages and rural areas where there is erratic power supply and sometimes lack of Internet access, the SON Yellow Pages may be the only authentic source of information on genuine SON registered products.

The introduction of the SON Yellow Pages opened a new vista in SON's enlightenment campaigns. The publications are clear and verifiable sources of information, providing

accurate data on all registered products, along with the authentic source of each product. SON Yellow Pages will make it impossible for persons or organizations that are involved in the distribution of Substandard products in Nigeria to claim ignorance of the authenticity or otherwise of any product they deal with.

The SON Yellow Pages was presented in three forms - book, CD ROMs and the Internet which makes it readily available to the public and amenable for updating in cases of registration of new products or the deregistering of old ones. The collaboration between SON and Adient in publishing the SON Yellow Pages illustrated some of the benefits derivable from a Public-Private Partnership. The beauty of the project was that it was successfully implemented at no financial cost to the Organisation. Adient Ltd provided funding for the project, while SON provided the necessary information from its registration database. The usual practice of SON financing public enlightenment campaigns with its limited resources was thereby eliminated. SON was also paid 10 per cent from the sales of the publication.

The SON Yellow Pages was offered to the public on June 3, 2003, and it was available for purchase at all SON offices nationwide. Easier access to the information contained in the SON Yellow Pages will aid the public in making better-informed decisions about products and items before buying them.³³

Advocacy / Interaction with the Nigerian Government and Her Agencies

SON laws provide that the Organisation interacts with other regulatory and government bodies such as the Nigerian Customs Service (NCS), Nigeria Ports Authority (NPA), National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC), Federal Airport Authority of Nigeria (FAAN), Nigeria Police Force (NPF), Shipping Association of Nigeria (SAN) and the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) etc.

Advocacy with the Executive and Legislative Arms of the Nigerian Government

As part of the efforts of Prof. Akanya to reposition SON for effective regulation of product and services in Nigeria, he saw the urgent need to return the Organisation to the ports. SON had been excluded from all Nigerian ports for years. He made a passionate plea to the then President for the reinstatement of SON at the ports, informing him that the absence of SON at the ports contributed immensely to the prevalence of imported counterfeit, fake and substandard products in Nigeria. His request was approved and SON was returned to the ports in October 2001. Furthermore, upon his recommendation, the Federal Government banned the importation of all products through land borders and designated Calabar and Lagos (Apapa) seaports and Murtaia Mohammed and Aminu Kano International Airports, as the only ports through which products and manufacturing raw materials could be imported. The Federal

Government also directed the Nigeria Ports Authority (NPA), shipping lines and airlines to release all shipping and cargo manifests to SONS inspectors.

State Governors were not left out in their support for SON. The Governors of Anambra, Lagos and Kano States approved all the appeals made by SON for office accommodation for SON state offices. Many State Governments also provided accommodation for staff members of SON in their respective states. In Kogi State, the traditional ruler of Ejule Local Government area donated a building for office accommodation. The traditional ruler of Okene in Kogi State also donated a piece of land for office accommodation.³⁴

SON invited the Commissioners for Commerce, Trade, Industry and Markets of the thirty- six states to a meeting, the first of which was held on May 31, 2002. These Commissioners from the 36 States of the Federation attended the meeting and was briefed on the functions of SON and the problems posed by fake and substandard products in Nigeria and appealed to them to support the state offices in their enforcement activities against the distribution of such products in their various states. SON also asked them to assist them in reactivating the defunct State Task Forces and set up monitoring units that would liaise with SON in the state offices to enable them clamp down on counterfeiters, fake and substandard products in their states. SON also requested that they translate into their local languages the bi-monthly publications of SON dealing with identifying characteristics of fake versus genuine products, so that people, especially those in rural areas, could spot the differences. SON explained the need for each State Governor to avail SON the use of at least 30 minutes of airtime per week in their various State radio, television services and free newspaper space, at least once a week, to disseminate messages to the citizens, especially to the grassroots. Cognizant of the fact that only the Governors have the power to make this happen, SON wrote to them for their help in this regard.

The relevant Committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives, (the upper and lower houses of Nigeria's National Assembly), also championed the cause. A Senator of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, by way of a private bill, sought to have SON enabling laws amended for greater effectiveness. The bill went as far as the second reading.

The Nigerian Courts - The Judiciary

The slow pace of Nigeria's judicial system affected the performance of SON statutory functions. Cases of violations lingered in courts. Accused persons abused the process by using injunctions and other court orders to stall SON activities. Over the years, SON spent a great deal of energy and scarce resources prosecuting hundreds of cases. Most of these cases turned out to be endless and frustrating. SON also had problems with private lawyers retained at

different times to represent the Organisation in various courts. The Organisation believed that sometimes these lawyers, even after being paid all legal fees, connived with the accused persons, in one such case, a highly placed lawyer and a Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN) settled a case out of court with the opponent, without informing the Organisation of the terms of settlement and definitely without its consent.

Some of the cases initiated are still pending in the courts following delays and frustrations from incessant adjournments resulting from the death, transfer, suspension or retirement of the presiding judges. Cases transferred from one court to another; challenges to the jurisdictions of courts to hear cases; congestion in courts cases lists; missing exhibits; inability of the police to produce accused persons; post-conviction counter appeals, as well as deaths and transfers of investigators, all add to the frustration. Encumbered by the daunting challenges SON faced in the court process, it switched track, embracing the strategy of public enlightenment campaigns and advocacy.³⁴

In October 2006, SON in collaboration with the National Judicial Institute (NJI) and National Agency for Food and Drug Administration (NAFDAC) held a national conference in Abuja, on fake, counterfeit and Substandard products for Nigerian judges. This conference was intended to become a regular feature in the Organisation's regulatory calendar. It aims to continuously sensitise Nigerian judges on the scourge of counterfeit and substandard products and to emphasize the strategic role of the judiciary in combating fake products in Nigeria. Worthy of mention was the exemplary decision by Honourable Justice Olayinka Faji, sitting at the Federal High Court Enugu, who sentenced Mr. Jacob Amadi to five years' imprisonment without option of fine. Justice Faji stated as follows, when the defense lawyer pleaded for leniency: "Even though he was a first offender it is necessary to make it clear that production of counterfeit products is a dangerous menace, an indirect form of genocide. It should not be tolerated." Furthermore, SON continued to collaborate with the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), due to the strategic role they play in the administration of justice. The Organisation honoured several invitations from the NBA to address their members on the need for effective collaboration in the fight against counterfeit and Substandard products in Nigeria. For the most part, lawyers, on the prompting of their unscrupulous clients, instigated some of the frivolous and ill-motivated applications for injunctions to restrain the Organisation from pursuing counterfeiting and substandard cases.³⁵

The Nigeria Police Force (NPF)

On June, 28, 2001, Prof. Akanya paid a courtesy call on Mr. Musiliu Smith, the then Inspector General of Police, to solicit his support for SON activities. Considering the fact that

SON staff members do not carry arms, he requested his assistance in posting police officers of proven integrity to work with the Organisation during surveillance and enforcement activities. Police assistance was also needed in ensuring speedy investigation of cases, protection for some of the Organisations key officers whose lives were endangered due to the nature of their job, and protection for facilities and assets of the Organisation. Mr. Smith provided the Organisation with adequate police security in the Organisation's day-to-day operations such as raids on suspected business premises. Police protection was also extended to the Enforcement Director for obvious reasons. Successive Inspectors General of Police have continued to support activities of the Organisation.

Nigerian Customs Service (NCS)

The Nigerian Customs Service (NCS) is one of the agencies responsible for the implementation and enforcement of the government's trade and fiscal policies. One of their major functions is the control of all cargoes and goods entering, exiting or transiting through Nigerian national territory. As an important government agency, an effective and mutually cooperative relationship between SON and NCS would support the Organisation's efforts to stop the importation of counterfeit, fake and substandard products through the ports.

The Ports Reform Decree 61 of 1999 (as amended) authorized only the following agencies to operate at the various ports of entry: Nigerian Customs Service, Nigeria Ports Authority, Nigeria Immigration Services and the Ports Police. As a result of this reform, the NCS, at its discretion, might elect to invite SON for joint inspection of regulated products. Consequently, SON was impaired in the execution of its statutory functions. This situation was resolved in October 2001 when SON was returned to the ports by a presidential fiat.

Most customs officials considered SON's presence at the ports as interference. As a consequence, there were conflicts between its staff members and the resident customs officers. To resolve these conflicts, a consultative meeting was organized for the management of both agencies. Furthermore, a specimen signature of SON stamping and releasing officers was circulated to all the relevant customs bodies nationwide. In spite of these efforts, on several occasions, some NCS officers flagrantly disregarded SON "Stop" and "Seizure" notices and released the offending products from the ports. A container load of 1,382 cartons of Nixoderm cream and Transverse cream imported from China, but fraudulently labeled as Made in Nigeria and Made in England respectively, were released by Customs in August 2001 in utter disregard of SON and NAFDACs "Stop" notice on that container. As a result, Prof. Akanya paid a courtesy call to the Comptroller-General of the NCS on September 5, 2001, to inform him of these dangerous and unhealthy events and to solicit the support of his organization in SON operations. Following the meeting, the Customs boss issued strong warnings to the officers,

stating that any officer who released goods seized by SON and NAFDAC would be summarily dismissed. These warnings were issued regularly by the Comptroller-General, but were not taken seriously by customs officers. Some of the SON staff members also visited the ports several times, appealing to the Area Comptrollers at various terminals for their cooperation. These pleas were unsuccessful. The visits were subsequently followed up with letters to the NCS, to express the Organisation's displeasure over their lack of cooperation.

Another unresolved issue was the NCS's periodic auctioning of overtime cargoes in all Nigerian ports. SON ought to have automatic representation in the Joint Committee for the disposal of overtime cargoes. This was necessary to avoid the auctioning of unwholesome, banned, expired and substandard products and their release for sale to the public. For instance, a 40-foot container of fake and substandard products was auctioned in Port Harcourt in July 2002. The Nigerian Customs Service also authorized the pre-release of bulk substandard products, without prior notice to SON. Another issue of serious concern was the transfer of Substandard products to bonded warehouses by customs officials. SON inspectors usually were not informed of such transfers, and sometimes such consignments ended up being diverted to unknown destinations.

However, the introduction of the Comptroller-General of Customs (CGC) Squad at the Lagos Ports brought about modest cooperation between SON and the NCS. The squad exhibited a very high sense of responsibility, referring cases of entries with fake stamps and forged signatures to SON. On several occasions, the Comptroller-General of Customs'Squad referred fake products released by resident customs officers without SON stamps back to SON. In appreciation of the Squad's activities, Akanya wrote to the Comptroller-General of Customs commending members of the Squad for conducting their duties effectively. This commendation letter led to the promotion of some members of the Squad.

The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA)

The NDLEA is a complementary agency to SON. The NDLEA controls the illicit use of narcotics. The two bodies enjoy a positive working relationship. Shortly after becoming the head of SON, Akanya paid a courtesy call to the then Chairman/Chief Executive Officer of the NDLEA, Alhaji Shaba Lafiaji, to solicit his support and to establish a collaborative partnership. He went ahead to deploy some of his staff members to assist SON in their enforcement activities before the arrival of the police officers assigned to SON.

The Nigeria Ports Authority (NPA)

The NPA is the custodian of the ports. As mentioned earlier, the Ports Reforms of 1996 banned SON from operating at the ports. The NPA, therefore, removed all SON owned

structures within the ports' premises. When the ban was set aside in 2001, SON held a consultative meeting with the management of the NPA, to discuss the modalities for its return to the ports. Following the meeting, the Organisation installed Portakabins as its offices in all the ports.

The NPAs refusal to release shipping manifests to SON in compliance with the Presidential directive remained a challenge. On several occasions, the NPA denied SON access to ship cargo manifests. Akanya believed quite strongly that the influx of unregistered, fake and unwholesome Substandard products into the country would be drastically reduced if correct and genuine shipping manifests were made available to SON before any vessel berths.

The Shipping Lines

The shipping lines are the major carriers of all products imported into Nigeria. Before the Port Reforms of 1996, a few shipping lines, such as Lansal, voluntarily cooperated with SON by putting SON "Hold" status on suspected cargoes. After returning to the ports, no shipping line cooperated with SON. As a result of this antagonism, Akanya wrote to all shipping lines, decrying their flagrant violations of Nigeria's laws, by facilitating the transportation of fake and Substandard products into the country. In January 2003, the Federal Government directed all shipping lines to furnish SON with all their cargo manifests. Unfortunately, the shipping lines, especially Maersk Line, failed to comply with the directive. SON wrote to the Shipping Association of Nigeria protesting this utter disregard of a government directive. All shipping lines now comply with the directive. This is noteworthy breakthrough.

Federal Airport Authority of Nigeria (FAAN)

The Ports Reforms of 1996 did not only affect SON operations at the land and sea borders, but also at the airports. SON offices at the airports in Lagos, Port Harcourt and Kano were shut down and officials were denied access to the vital areas of the airports. The cargo sections became fast lanes for clearing imported Substandard products.

When SON returned to the ports, it appealed to the then Minister of Aviation, Dr Kema Chikwe, to issue to SON officials, On-duty Cards (ODCs) and car stickers to grant them unrestricted access to all vital areas of the airports. She obliged and within days of issuance of the ODCs, some airlines that were cooperating with substandard product dealers were dictated. SON directed the airlines to desist from aiding and abetting the transportation of fake and substandard products to Nigeria. Since resuming operations at the airports, large consignments of fake and substandard products have been impounded at the Murtala Mohammed International Airport in Lagos. In contrast, the Airport Facilitation Committee at the Aminu

Kano International Airport imposed restrictive orders against SON officials, in spite of the ODCs and the ministerial directive. SON officers were therefore, unable to perform their statutory functions and had to rely on the personal goodwill of terminal managers to obtain vital information on the importation of Substandard products.

International Advocacy

SON had various forms of interaction with many international organizations such as the UNIDO, WHO, UNICEF, IAEA, DFID, PATHS and EOHSI etc. It enjoyed their active cooperation in the areas of information sharing, capacity building, donation of equipment and training. It also received support from British Standard Organisation, American Standard Organisation in the USA, South Africa, China, India, Singapore, Indonesia, Pakistan, Ghana and Belgium etc.

Consultative Meetings with Ambassadors of Countries Implicated in the Importation of Substandard Products into Nigeria.

Although some European and Asian countries were implicated in the fake, product trade, mainly as transit ports, most of the counterfeit and Substandard products imported into Nigeria come from Taiwan and China. In 2001, in concert with Nigeria's House of Representatives' Committee on Trade, Commerce and Industry SON held a consultative meeting with the High Commissioners/Ambassadors of China, Taiwan and some other countries SON identified as sources of Substandard products. The High Commissioners/Ambassadors and their representatives pledged their cooperation to curb the menace.

Apparently worried by the spate of building collapse which has become rampant in recent times, SON under Prof. Akanya focused on strengthening the construction and building sectors. He noted that the Organisation is worried about the state of building and construction industry in Nigeria. Being a body whose responsibility is to standardize the numerous sectors of the Nigerian economy, the onus of evolving comprehensive standards for construction and building as well as the materials used rests on the Organisation.

Apparently worried by the spate of building collapse which has become rampant in Nigeria, he evolved policies aimed at strengthening the construction and building sectors. In his words "*We are worried about the state of building and construction industry in Nigeria*".³⁶ Being the Director General of Standard Organisation of Nigeria whose responsibility is to standardize the numerous sectors of the Nigerian economy, the onus of evolving comprehensive standards for construction and building as well as the materials used rests on SON.

Prof. Akanya as SON Director-General came out strongly on the need for builders to contact SON before embarking on any project in this direction. To that effect several enlightenment programmes was held by the Organisation in addition to seminars and workshops for stakeholders in the construction and building sectors in Abuja, Nigeria's federal capital territory. According to Prof. Akanya, there are standards for various building materials e.g cement, nails, wood, roofing sheets, electrical materials etc and all these are the components which make a building. He opined that,

*if we provide standards, then somebody must be there to supervise. For instance, I am not an architect neither am I a quantity surveyor. There are people who draw building and construction plans and there are also those who should be at the site to supervise with the intention of ensuring that what is in the plan is converted into durable physical structures. When such project is denied the deserved adequate supervision, the consequence is often disastrous.*³⁷

The SON boss was not happy that quacks seem to outnumber professional engineers and builders in an enlightened society like Nigeria. He argued that it is due to failure on the part of these professional engineers, architects, builders and surveyors to play their part effectively and efficiently in this regard which led to the incessant collapse of buildings in Nigeria that necessitated meetings between professionals in the building and construction sector with SON. It was meant to awaken the consciousness of these professionals with a view to directing them to redouble their professional efforts in the interest of Nigeria. The workshop organized in Abuja by SON and the Council of Registered Builders of Nigeria, focused on standards and building collapse in Nigeria.

Elucidating further on the importance of having professional builders play their part in this sector Prof. John Akanya emphasized that the construction and building sector rely on a conglomerate of professionals while SON simply provides them with specific standards.

According to him

*-----it is the responsibility of the Council for Registered Builders of Nigeria (CORBON) to certify builders while that of certifying engineers rest on the shoulders of the Council for the Regulation of Engineering Practice in Nigeria (COREN).*³⁸

Due to the recurring incidence of collapse structures, bridges, etc, SON had to assemble the professionals so that it could identify reasons for this development as well as proffer solutions. Explaining further, Akanya opined that,

Having identified the problems, we told the professional bodies to regulate their people as well as flush out quacks and make sure that only professionals are allowed to handle construction and building jobs. If a design is on paper, it is certainly not every Dick and Hary that can translate it into a physical structure. The architects, builders and engineers are required to put their heads together and ensure that what is built tallied with what is on the plan.³⁹

He said that SON is determined to enforce standards in order to reduce the incidence of building collapse to its barest minimum in Nigeria.

Collaboration with the Stakeholders

In order to disseminate the concepts of standardization effectively across the strata of stakeholders and interested parties, SON went into collaboration with many organized and informal sectors in quality assurance, standardization and other mutually beneficial arrangements in the form of trainings, workshops, MoUs,, etc, depending upon the different needs of the interested party through her Collaboration and Consumer Complaints Desk which was established in 2003. Some of the collaborative programmes embarked upon are as follows:

- * Welding Institute of Nigeria-Organized through SON support and assistance, the Institute signed an MoU with SON, the implementation of which brought International recognition to it.
- * Federal Road Safety Commission-Partnered with SON in many standards and safety programs in the areas of public transportation and Road Safety Management. Staffs of the Commission were trained on ISO 9001 Quality Management System Standards.
- * SandCrete Block Makers nationwide was organized into Cooperative associations for a nationwide enlightenment programmes and promotion of self-regulation among the members under SON guidance.
- * Institute of Quality Assurance of Nigeria - The Institute went into collaboration with SON to promote quality culture and values.

SON also collaborated with such organizations as:

- Poultry Association of Nigeria
- Cassava Farmers Association
- Various Sector groups of the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria and State Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture as well as other market and trade groups, both formal and informal.
- Local Fabricators of all forms of machines.⁴⁰

Collaboration at International level

Based upon the inspection tour of a Presidential Delegation from Liberia to Nigeria in 2005, SON was accepted as the best Standardizing bodies in Africa amongst other countries by the President of that Country to train Liberians and assist the country establish its own National Standards Bureau. A Delegation of the SON, led by the Director General himself and facilitated by the Nigerian Embassy in Freetown visited Liberia in the year 2006 and signed a MoU for the collaboration program. By the end of February 2008, five (05) citizens of Liberia being the first batch have graduated from six months theory and practical training programme in various aspect of standardization from Nigeria.

Because of this arrangement, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) decided to associate with the Liberian government's efforts in standardization and commenced the development of her infrastructural needs for the emerging National Standards Bureau of Liberia.

SON experts also helped in a Commonwealth sponsored project to prepare the foundation for the take-off of the Gambian Standards Bureau in year 2005. The DG in a UNIDO sponsored program within the same period also participated in preparing Sierra Leone for the take-off of that country's Bureau of Standards amongst others.

In acknowledgement of the efforts of SON under Akanya in the fight against substandard products in West African sub-region, Mr. Nimo Ahinkorah, former Chief Executive officer of the Ghana Standards Board in Accra, Ghana noted that,

SON has been a very dynamic institution that every African is looking up to. I was amazed to see the number of standards that they have developed and adopted and it gives Africa a good inspiration and good leadership in standards development such that what we are doing now is that Ghana and Nigeria are collaborating to be able to harmonize standards at ECOWAS

level. On the whole, I rate SON as being a very vibrant organization. SON is doing well, when I look at their programmes, I discovered that they even have an activity called 'walking for standards' as part of effort to make people aware of what they are doing. In Ghana, we are imitating Nigeria to also do the same.⁴¹

He observed that:

Dr. Akanya's management of SON has been very dynamic, for instance the port inspection scheme started during his tenure. He also championed Nigeria/Ghana Standards harmonization initiative. He played a major role at ARSO (Africa Standards Organization). He is indeed a quiet and loveable personality. He is also lucky to have got dynamic people that worked with him. That is, good staff that believed in his vision for SON and is always supportive of him. So even in the absence of Dr. Akanya work was done by SON staff as if he was around. I have had opportunity to travel to Enugu, Kaduna and Abuja to see SON laboratories and I like to tell you that the independent thinking that the SON staff use in doing their work, probably has been inspired by Dr. Akanya's style of leadership.⁴²

SON is in collaboration and has entered into MoU with over 40 different bodies including the following:

Egyptian Metrology Agency, Cairo, (Metrology)

CISS South Africa (Metrology and Testing)

African Organization for Standardization (ARSO)

Ghana Standards Board (GSB)

Congolese Standards Board

American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME)

American Society for Test Methods (ASTM)

South African Metrology Association (SADECMET), etc

SON was listed in a preliminary assessment program for West Africa to benefit from a European Union (EU) program of accredited laboratories to be handled by UNIDO. This, to SON was another milestone in its efforts at promoting Standards, Testing, Metrology and Quality Assurance (MSTQ). The Laboratories contribute significantly to promoting the 7-point agenda of former President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua in wealth creation through export promotion of certified goods.

Through the re-engineering and positive reputation management programs of the current management of SON, the organization has since the period under review continued to pay its membership subscriptions regularly to:

- International Organization for Standardization (ISO)
- International Electro-technical Commission (IEC)
- African Organization for Standardization (ARSO)
- CODEX Alimentarius Commission
- International Organization for Metrology (IMEKO)

Consequently, SON has revived its membership in over 28 Technical Committees of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO)

SON has not only achieved active membership of these bodies but indeed two of its staff have been put forward by the present management and have won the following positions for Nigeria:

- ARSO Secretary General – Mr. D. U. Agbanelo (SON staff who has been in Nairabi, Kenya since year 2003)
- Vice President, the Africa Electro-technical Commission (AFSEC) – Engr. C. I. Okoro was elected at the inauguration of the body in Accra in early March 2008, for the next three years.

In the year 2005, SON was selected as the emerging Standardization body to serve as the gateway to African trade by the Commonwealth Investment Forum. Since then, SON has been on the Common-wealth website advertising its capacities.⁴³

The Re-engineering

As at 2002, SON has just two core departments: Quality Assurance and Standardization. The International development manual for all National Standards Bodies (NSBs) to which SON belong demands that its organizational structure complies with the minimum requirements in addition to other socio-economic and cultural practices of the particular member body's home country. SON nder Akanya engaged different expertise including

national and international experts including UNIDO to review the structure of SON to enable it to meet the set objectives of government.

SON under Akanya modified its structures to outlines the different roles of SON in a well articulated format. Subsequent upon an approval for re-organization in August 2000 and upon the inception of his administration in 2002, both Management and Governing Council of SON, supported by the supervisory Ministry continued to ensure that the statutory responsibilities of SON are met and its structures reviewed on regular basis.

Though the Ayida panel recommendation of 1978 which stipulated a minimum staffing level of 1,900 has not been met, the staff strength of SON was improved upon from a total of 386 in 2001 to about 598 by October 2007. The imbalance between the ratios of technical to non-technical staff continues to be reviewed by Management and successive Governing Councils of SON in order to make it relevant to the ever increasing technical demands of government activities, industry and other stake holders.

The criteria for re-engineering were focused on technical needs, local and international demands of emerging global markets and government policies as well as SON socio-economic and cultural requirements. The organization has come to realize that SON must continue to position itself to be flexible, adaptable and proactive in order to tackle the ever increasing challenges of technologies from different parts of the world.

SON realised the fact that the SON of today must meet promptly the local demands of the Nigerian people through addition of value to local contents and to challenge the competing forces of dumping and counterfeiting which are the bane of industrial development and innovations in a developing economy such as Nigeria.⁴⁴

SON and Innovations of the System

SON was second in the year 2007 SERVICOM rating for public institutions in Nigeria. The Organisation demonstrated its ability for innovations in its Information Management Systems including Computerization of its processes, quality assurance, standardization, testing and certification programmes. These are all on-going programmes and since quality is a journey SON do not expect to reach the destination at any one time. Thus, her motto is “Continual Improvement.’

The continual challenge posed by the need to implement government policies and priorities continue to be the major guiding principle of SON innovative activities. For example, government policies which were steered towards revival in agricultural, oil and gas, industrial and other economic sectors in the 7-point agenda of President Umaru Musa

Yara’Adua made SON to intensify its efforts in standardisation and these was made readily available to interested parties.

To this effect, over 100 standards underwent elaboration, adoption or adaptation in order to meet this demand between year 2006 and 2007 (e.g.in cassava and cassava products, cocoa, cotton, meat and meat products, poultry, fish and fish products)

In order to meet the frequent demands of stakeholders across the country, SON between October 2005 and March 2007 commissioned the following state offices:

Abia	Aba
Anambra	Awka
Imo	Owerri
Katsina	Katsina
Cross River	Calabar
Kogi	Lokoja
Benue	Makurdi
Borno	Maiduguri
Bauchi	Bauchi
Kebbi	Kebbi
Ondo	Akure
Osun	Osogbo
FCT	Abuja

These are in addition to existing offices in the following (pre-year 2001)

Niger	Minna
Oyo	Ibadan
Edo	Benin
Kano	Kano
Plateau	Jos
Kaduna	Kaduna
Enugu	Enugu
Rivers	Port Harcourt
Lagos	Lagos
Adamawa	Yola

SOURCE: These table have been compiled by the researcher through intensive reading of several sources.

In the year 2003/2004, trade activities continued to increase across many Border posts across the country particularly at the Seme and Idiroko borders in Lagos and Ogun States respectively. This led to the establishment of SON activities within the area in order to ensure that goods coming into the country through these entry points are covered by quality assurance procedures.

Facility Development/Equipping

The following facilities were developed from 2001-2007:

Enugu Multi-storey SON Engineering Materials Testing Laboratory Complex, Enugu State.	Abandoned by previous Administrations for over 20 years. Completed in December 2007
SON Food Chemistry Laboratory, Lekki, Lagos.	Commissioned in July 2004 with installed UNIDO sponsored equipment abandoned for about 10 years after it was donated to SON
Electrical/Electronics Screening Laboratory, Lekki, Lagos	Critical for testing life-danger electrical and electronic imports set-up.
Proposed Paint and Allied Materials Testing Laboratory, Lekki, Lagos	Between 2002 and 2005, commenced in 2006 and completed in December 2007

In all these instances, provision of modern office equipment, stand-by generating sets, operational vehicles, etc, are ensured to enhance delivery of effective customer service. There was an articulated programme in place to ensure that each SON office was provided with a fuel efficient operational vehicle which was able to cope with the terrain of the country. Four wheel drive pick-up trucks was bought to join in SON pool of vehicles to allow for the rigours of the day-to-day inspection activities of SON officers.⁴⁵

Standard Organisation of Nigeria (SON) and African Regional Organisation For Standardisation (ARSO)

On 13th November 2001 while welcoming ARSO Council Members to the 28th ARSO Council Meeting that took place in the Capital City, Abuja which was aimed at harmonizing standardization and to facilitate trade among African Countries while promoting the exchange of experts and information within the African continent. Prof. John Ndanusa

Akanya, the Director General of Standard Organisation of Nigeria explained that Nigeria through SON under his leadership demonstrated total commitment to the objectives and aspirations of ARSO not only by being involved in its technical activities and programmes but also by fulfilling its financial obligations and contribution to the body.

He noted that marginalisation of many countries, particularly African countries, poses a major challenge to the economic advancement of their people. It is this challenge that the ARSO intends to address through efforts in standardisation within African nations since standardisation has been known to be a useful weapon for human civilization and better quality of life, economic advancement, poverty alleviation, political and social emancipation.

On the occasion of the ARSO Council meeting implored members to give adequate financial considerations and plans for issues such as peer assessment efforts, networking of infrastructural facilities and concentrated effort in harmonization of standards of member nations which are beneficial in improving intra-African trade and by extension boost the overall benefit in international trade.

The reciprocal and multilateral recognition of certification marks of member states in the manner of operations in other regions need to be enhanced and towards this, harmonized methods and procedures for a common system of certification within the regions would be ideal. Efforts at the preparation or adoption of standards and regulations required to protect the environment within Africa are also urgently needed if the expected industrialization is not to leave our future disadvantaged. Attendant pollution has to be identified, monitored and managed effectively. Effective schemes for implementation and application of standards to all spheres of industrial endeavor should be ensured by ARSO. Development of capacities and strengthening of existing ones with functional networking would no doubt improve our lot, as intra-African trade would then be better facilitated. Pro-active programmes for skill development and improvement are a necessary panacea if knowledge in current technological advancements is to be adequately tapped and utilized within the region. He expressed the hope that the outcome of the Regional body deliberations at the meeting will go along way in accelerating the development of the African continent and that they will rise from the meeting with positive feedback.⁴⁶

DR. JOSEPH IKEMEFUNA ODUMODU AS DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF STANDARD ORGANISATION OF NIGERIA, 2011-2015

In February 1, 2011, President Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, approved the appointment of Dr. Joseph Ikemefuna Odumodu, as the new Director-General of the Standard Organisation of Nigeria (SON). The Minister of State for Commerce and Industry, Ms.

Josephine Tapgun, who recommended the appointment, said this was in line with the Act setting up the organisation, following the completion of two terms of four years each, by the out-going Director-General, Prof. John Ndanusa Akanya, who was appointed on 6th August 2002. The former General Manager (sales and Marketing) Pharmaceuticals at May & Baker Plc,⁴⁷ After his appointment, he noted that:

*----- I didn't have clear ideas of what I was going into but I had had contacts with some of the things that SON does. When I was the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer May & Baker Plc, the company wanted ISO 9000 certification, and we worked with some SON officials in this regard. On my appointment, I did some literature reviews of searched the internet to know what similar bodies around the world do. SON had website, I compared different countries standards bodies and their modalities.*⁴⁸

Odumodu knew that events in the private sector and in public service were worlds apart. In the private sector, Chief Executives are fully in charge and the basis of achievement, of success is profits whereas in the public sector, profit may not even be the issue and a Chief Executive may have to deal with layers of bosses – residual, political and other interests. Following his appointment, Odumodu reported at the SON Headquarters, Abuja and in a brief ceremony, he received the handover notes from his predecessor, Prof. John Akanya. Thereafter, he met the general staff and stated in clear terms that he has come to learn and to work without pre-conceived notions.

*I have come so that we (the SON team and I) can provide service to our country by sharing our various experiences and expertise. I have a lot to learn from the team I shall work with. "I believe that they too may learn a few things from my experience." Odumodu noted, adding that he has a lot of respect for the Organisation. He continued, "As the Federal Government under President Goodluck Jonathan is totally committed to the positive transformation of various sectors of the economy, the transformation of SON into a new SON is my mandate. We must build on the achievements of the Akanya era. "We must target on drastic reduction in the circulation of counterfeit and spurious products that pose potential danger to life and property..."*⁴⁹

He realized that the task ahead was challenging but not unsummontable noting that he was going to focus on making sure Nigerian consumers enjoy products and services that met international Standards. In his words:

*The tasks before us will be challenging but not insurmountable. Our efforts will be primarily targeted to ensure that Nigerian consumers enjoy products and services that meet internationally accepted standards. We will stop at nothing to ensure that acceptable quality standards prevail in Nigeria....*⁵⁰

He made it clear that:

*My vision for SON is to attain an enviable status of a quality development and management body in West and Central Africa. We shall grow our new SON from a mere regulatory agency to a globally recognized organized organization with reputation for independence, integrity and innovation in defining quality and standardization. To achieve this goal, we shall rely heavily on equipping our people to do the work. We shall train them to give value-added services. Above all, we shall reward them equitably to exact their commitment and dedication.*⁵¹

Situation Analysis

SON management realized that while the top management was well trained, the lower cadre was not as good; there was a disconnection in the personnel structure. Odumodu explained that:

.....after my introduction and briefing with the staff, I wanted us to move to the SON headquarters but I was told "This is headquarters." The place was a resident apartment. And the building in Lekki, Lagos - our operational headquarters - belongs to a sister agency. The picture one saw within a few days was that of a corporate body infected by poor work environment and low morale. I found that the top management was well trained but the middle and low cadres had little or no skills. I soon realized that there were factions within the agency and each tried to advance only the members. Some of the staff alleged that some senior staff were sent on trainings regularly

and taken along on sundry extreme travels while some were ignored.....⁵²

The challenge of Nigeria lacking in national quality infrastructure is a continues thing; laboratories which are the key tools of standards business were needed to be re-equipped with modern equipments. There was also the need for periodical accreditation of laboratories to internationally accepted practice since re-accreditation is a continuous process. In fact, it is worthy to note that the most rudimentary tests were done outside Nigeria. Likewise, the national accreditation body, and National Quality Policy needed to be re-energized. Technical regulatory bodies are many, some overlapping to sister agencies' functions; and tending to quarrel over turfs, as a result of which national quality assurance effort was uncoordinated. Nigeria had the fewest management system certifications among countries of comparable population and economic potentials. Correspondingly, Nigeria's participation in ISO technical committees where international standards are developed was very low. Indeed there was no clear strategy for enthroning the quality culture.

In addition, SON lacked good corporate identity. The Logo of SON had to be re-designed and the website enhanced to meet the standard in today's world. Most members of the public thought the Organization was an arm of NAFDAC or part of The Sun Newspapers of Nigeria, part of the Police or the Nigerian Customs Service. Again, office spaces were inadequate. According to Odumodu:

As a scientist, I always like to work with data. I like to know where I stand, the scorecard and then work a progressive path. I hate to do a job that cannot be measured. I wouldn't know how to do it.”⁷ Odumodu told his management team, SON had no baseline data about the prevalence of sub-standard goods, but speculation said the level was as high as 70 percent. Odumodu commissioned a study to establish the reality.⁵³

Within six weeks, the market survey report was completed and it showed that the prevalence of sub-standard in consumer goods stood at 55%. The report provided comparisons with some countries in Africa and around the world and it turned out that Nigeria had one of the bad record but not to be compared with Rwanda and Bangladesh which recorded the worst record of 70% prevalence while most European countries had 10% or less. According to Louise Njoku, former Director Laboratory Services Department, Ogba, Lagos:

Things were in a very bad state. The level of substandard items was above 70% in all cases and in some, it was 90% and above.

For instance, substandard wire cables had over 90% prevalence. But we need to understand some reasons behind the sad state of affairs. Within SON, a lot was bad but some external factors also played some parts. Almost every item had exemptions which should apply only to raw materials and machinery. Every importer was carrying ‘waivers’ and so the market overflowed with fake and substandard goods.⁵⁴

Also, in the report was the information that most of the substandard products were coming from China who manufactured standard products for their own people and the Americans and other European countries, but cooperate with the Nigerian merchants who demand that inferior versions of those products be manufactured for use in Nigeria. The report also said that countries that produce substandard goods for Nigeria mark them “for export only.”

Furthermore, data from the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN) revealed that the tyre manufacturers Michelin and Dunlop and many other manufacturers had left Nigeria owing somewhat to pressure from low-price imported substandard products. This made him realize that substandard products were not only killing the people but also killing the industries and jobs.

Realizing what an emergency Nigeria had to deal with, the new DG formed a think-tank comprising a few management staff and a handful of professionals. Together, they discussed short, medium and long term programmes and decided on measures to stabilize the market vis-à-vis reduced the prevalence level of fake and substandard goods especially in life endangering items. Cynthia Ifeagwu noted that:

The DG appointed me to serve in a committee charged with developing a new vision for the agency. We later held a general meeting in Lekki. People came from all over the country and contributed intellectually. From there the new Mission, Vision and Business values were outlined and presented.⁵⁵

Vision, Mission and the Six-Point Agenda

Under the new management drew a success work plan, that eventually became the Six Point Agenda. It was imperative for effective methods to be clearly outlined and defined, if success was to be attained at the desired level. This required setting up the right administrative structures, but prior to this, focal areas were needed as a guide to the development of enduring

policy framework. This necessitated first, a review of the vision and mission statements of SON. Odumodu opined that he:

..... looked at the mandate and observed what was going on and saw that SON was headed in the wrong direction. SON had no accredited laboratories and so the agenda could in no way perform the basic duty. And how could the agency help local manufacturers stay in business or enter the global market which constitute the manda¹ and key issues? There was no corporate image; people took it as one of the corrupt Public sector. Out of the challenges, we came up with the six-point agenda that hinged on consumer Engagement, Media Engagement, Compliance Monitoring, Capacity Building, Global Relevance and Competitiveness of Made-in-Nigeria Goods.....⁵⁶

Collaboration with Chambers of Commerce, SMEs and NGOs-Consumer Awareness Organization, Consumer Rights Awareness and Advocacy League to fight against fake, counterfeit and substandard products.

Germany, Swedish and Austrian Embassies proposed and worked with SON in various fields of cooperation. The Organisation signed MOUs with Standards Bodies of Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ethiopia and South African Bureau of Standards. SON partnered and collaborated with organizations to achieve common goals that are vital to all parties.

Monitoring And Enforcement: Raids and Roadshows

Mr. Louis Njoku, Director and Head, Laboratory Services Department was previously assigned as one of those who supervised Enforcement, when SON wanted to hit frontally on substandard products that dominated the market. Things were in a very bad state. The level of substandard items was above 45% in some cases and in others, it was 60% and above. For instance, substandard wire cables had over 70% prevalence. The Organisation raided Ladipo Market, Lagos, for substandard tyres, and Alaba International Market in Lagos, which had the largest stock of fake wire cables. It also conducted raids in Nkpor and Nnewi, both in Anambra State. The Organisation shut a cigarette factory in Zaria where the manufacturer used one license for two different brands. It closed a lubricant plant in Kontagora, Niger State for infractions. In Aba, Abia State, some people were printing Bic Shaving Stick sleeves and placing them on face Bic products they manufactured in Awka. The true manufacturers in Lagos alerted SON, leading to the culprits being apprehended. There is no zone or state of the Federation that did not feel the impact of SON raids. SON can do a lot with information. SON

officers are no spirits. The Organisation needs information. Once it gets proper information, the informants can wait and see if SON won't act decisively.⁵⁷

Since SON was working with UNIDO to accredit some of its laboratories, UNIDO donated some food tests laboratories and also installed the ones bought during the tenure of Prof. Akanya. SON purchased and installed new equipments and did some pre-tests for the accreditation and the final assessors finally announced that SON food technology laboratories have earned accreditation for biological and chemical testing.

Soon Nigeria and the world can begin to depend on internationally accepted tests from SON and that would be a turning point for made-in-Nigeria goods entering the world market. SON explained that the standardization of important products categories such as building materials – iron rods, electrical cables, light bulbs, cement and petroleum products that include lubricants, kerosene and gas cylinder as well as automobile parts, mainly tyres were its Zero Tolerance campaign's priority. Other product categories were also focused on, but possibly at a lower level. Along the way, the campaign added new initiatives such as an internal consumer complaint unit for SON interventions, through which some consumers have gotten redress for unsatisfactory purchases.⁵⁸

Iron Rods

Iron rods produced in Nigeria were discovered to have high carbon content, over and above industrial specifications. SON met with the manufacturers and identified the points of weakness in their production processes, and outlined corrective measures. A number of firms that resisted SON's interventions and contravened approved standards were stopped from further production and sanctioned until they complied. Manufacturers got the message, and product improvement was subsequently noticed. By the end of 2013, SON gave made-in-Nigeria iron rods a clean bill of health, owing to the marked improvement in their quality.⁵⁹

Electrical Cables

Between 2011 and 2013, SON seized and destroyed imported substandard electrical cables worth billions of Naira. Substandard cables are made of iron instead of copper, while some were coated with copper to deceive the unsuspecting buyer. Initially, SON burnt them to make sure they did not find their way back into the market, but by 2013, the standards body had found a safer way to destroy them, which was by shredding. The best performing cables in the market today are Nigerian-made, so much so that some importers of cables label their foreign-made cables "Made-in-Nigeria" and place the Nigerian Industrial Standards (NIS) mark of quality on them. But SON detected and frustrated their deceitful moves.⁶⁰

Cement

The Nigerian cement industry with vast prospects under the high industrial outlay and infrastructural deficiency was afflicted with adulterating factories and warehouses and SON under Dr. Odumodu would not let the situation continue. They would not, especially when building collapse in the country was on the increase and Nigerians were getting alarmed. SON went after the adulterators, locking up their warehouses and arresting them. Some of the biggest raids took place in Katsina, Benin City, Onitsha and Ibadan. Given the SON support to the genuine producers, the nation is almost self-sufficient in standard cement production and entering the regional market with Nigeria-made cement that is of international standard.

However, the Nigerian cement industry faces another form of challenge: inadequate labeling; the manufacturer's deliberately omit product information that will help the cement user make the right choice. Information omitted includes cement grade, date of manufacture, best before or expiry date and batch number. In response, SON introduced a new cement standard developed to tackle this challenge. The new standard grades cement into 32.5 for plastering only, 42.5 for concreting, casting and plastering and 52.5 for high-density casting as in bridges and high-rise buildings and directs that this and the other relevant cement product information be on each cement bag. However, this new cement standard that affirmed the cement user's right to know what he is buying and is aimed at helping to prevent building collapse, was resisted by purely commercial interest but the resistance is being tackled by SON because even though some cement manufacturing companies in the country like Portland Cement, which is the most commonly used cement, complied with the grading of: 32.5, 42.53, 52.5 and 53-S (Sleeper Cement) and every grade are meant for a particular type of construction work. 32.5 and 42.53 grades cements standard are supposed to be harmonized to 42.5 and an outright ban of the 32.5 grade of cement. This will help curb the danger posed by this misuse/misapplication of cement grades in Nigeria which eventually leads to the collapse of buildings in the country. Grade 32.5 is suitable for plastering: grade 42.5 is appropriate for concrete, brick masonry, plastering, pointing, flooring and general construction works. Grade 52.5 is used where high early strength (in the first 28 days) is required and it is basically utilized by builders of heavy infrastructure such as bridges, fly-over, large span structures and high rise structures.

The cement grade is determined by measuring its strength after 28 days, and then it is grade 33 cement; if it is between 43 N/mm² after 28 days then it is 43 grade cement and if it is between 43 to 53 N/mm², it is 53 grade cement.

The problem is that site workers, ranging from the common labourers to the site supervisor who is most likely going to be a graduate of civil engineering do not know the different grades of cement and their distributors do not educate their customers on the

appropriate use of their products but leave these uninformed buyers to their fate. The issue of cement standardization is just a step to ameliorating the menace of building collapse in our cities. There should be proper check at work sites to ensure that cement is applied based on the approved standard. Regulators should not fold their arms after setting the required standard but should make efforts to ensure strict adherence by contractors. The general public should understand the grades of cement and their right application in construction works.⁶¹

New Cement Standard: No Retreat, No Surrender

A technical committee sat down and decided that the cement standard had to change in the interest of consumers and the country generally since misapplication of the product was a bane of building. Next, the industry and trade minister Aganga gave an executive order, making the new cement regulations enforceable. But rather than comply, a foreign multinational that once dominated the Nigerian cement industry started criticizing the new cement standard as the handiwork of one Nigerian cement manufacturer. The multinational tried to use the court to prevent the enforcement of the new standard despite the fact that the regulations are in line with global trends and soundly based on the best thoughts for the people of Nigeria. SON DG was sure that the new standard was too good an idea to be defeated by narrow commercial interest so he persisted and won by enforcing the policy.⁶²

Electric Light Bulbs

A normal incandescent bulb is expected to have a minimum life of 10,000 hours. However, laboratory results indicated that the measured life of the ones in Nigerian markets averaged between 200 to 480 hours. On discovering that Nigeria loses about N500 million annually to imported electric light bulbs alone, SON increased its surveillance and clampdown on light bulbs and lamps entering Nigeria. Hardly have any major commercial center in Nigeria not been visited by eagle-eyed SON officials on the lookout for huge loads of the low-quality things. Just as in cement and iron rods, SON has recorded huge progress. The dumpsites around Nigeria have seen millions of defective light bulbs destroyed by SON.

Gas Cylinders

In 2011, SON responded to the threat posed by substandard and expired gas cylinders in Nigeria by publishing the names of authorized importers of cylinders with a warning that hard times awaited those who imported substandard wares. Odumodu observed that:

.....we has strengthened compliance monitoring and has made appreciable progress especially in life-endangering items. From a prevalence rate of 65 percent, we now have 40 percent

substandard goods prevalence in consumer goods. We have transferred the ownership and responsibility for gas cylinders to the manufacturers and distributors. End-users merely rent and so if an accident occurs, we hold the distributor liable. He should be able to know when a product is no longer good and withdraw it.....⁶³

SON embarked on e-products registration in 2013 so to establish traceability. In 2013, SON banned cylinders that were 15 years old or more. Finally in 2014, the standards body declared that end-users were not to own cylinders any more but will rent them from authorized marketers who will be held accountable for any damage done by the cylinders. The authorized marketers were directed to put their identity on their cylinders.

Lubricants

In 2012, producers of lubricants raised an alarm that producers of fake and adulterated lubricants had virtually taken over the Nigerian Market. SON subsequently ordered all manufacturers of lubricants to register their products. The standards body followed up with facility inspection, seizures and closures. It embarked on sanitization exercise, while spreading their dragnet wider to catch defaulters across the country. In the process, several factories doing the illegal business were stormed, sealed and their operators arrested. One of those apprehended was a SON trainer on lubricants who operated an ssssssunauthorized factory in Kontagora, Niger State.

Petroleum Product Testing at Abuja Filling Stations

Similar road-show was held at Abuja same February when SON fulfilled a pledge made three weeks earlier. Going from filling station to filling station and testing petroleum product quality and accuracy of declared measurement, the standardization officers threatened to take punitive steps against adulteration, under-dispensing, etc. Just as in the main road show above, the DG personally led the march to the admiration of his colleagues.

Raids and road shows made increased impact all through the duration of the administration of Dr. Odumodu as SON DG. This was the most visible expressions of the SON policy of zero tolerance to substandard products. The road shows demonstrated Odumodu's belief in moral persuasion and awareness creation even in the midst of enforcement.

Tyres

SON observed that the quality of tyres is an important public safety issue and made it one of the priorities of the zero tolerance campaign. The correctness of this thinking soon

became unquestionable when a Federal Road Safety Corps report indicated that substandard tyres accounted for a high proportion of road accidents and accompanying deaths every year. Thereafter in 2012, a high-powered force led by the SON Director General evacuated 40 truck-loads of expired and substandard tyres from Ladipo Market, Lagos in one day.⁶⁴

By 2013, SON announced that 40 million expired and substandard tyres had been imported into Nigeria but that it had removed 10 million of them. It can be recalled that Nigeria had a thriving tyre manufacturing industry. Today, manufacturers like Dunlop, Micheline, Pirelli, Odutola and others have collapsed, with some relocating their factories to Ghana. This stemmed from the influx of second-hand and substandard tyres that were cheaply priced and massively patronized by the unsuspecting public. Massive job and revenue losses in Nigeria's transport sector resulted from the departure of these manufacturers. The Jonathan administration strived to create the right environment for tyre manufacturing companies to, once again, thrive in Nigeria. Odumodu observed that:

.....we made considerable impact on set goals. Over 30 percent of Nigerians now know what SON is and what it does; people now know that substandard goods are harmful and sometimes fatal. We are partnered with the media and people now know for Instance that substandard tyres are not just the second hand stuffs but that even new tyres that have passed their lifespan are dangerous. Motorists now check the number on their tyres to know if they are using roadworthy or expired tyres.....⁶⁵

The Tyre Expiry Date Road Show

In February 2012, while maintaining the crackdown on substandard products targeted primarily on life-endangering items, SON had to stage road shows to address the widespread ignorance of the fact that vehicle tyres, used or unused, expire four years after manufacture.

Reports from the Federal Road Safety Commission said that bad tyres contributed largely to road accidents with attendant frequent fatalities. The road show held in Awka the Anambra State capital, featured free tyre checks for motorists. Personally led by Dr. Odumodu, it started at the Alex Ekwueme Square, Awka and coursed through the main streets and terminated at St. Paul's University. During the march, drivers, passengers, SON officials and many transport stakeholders, listened as the DG advocated tyres replacement every four years.

Raid in Ladipo Tyre Market

When the SON Enforcement Team began to seize the expired tyres, some traders fiercely resisted them in flagrant disregard for the law. Incidentally, one trader, a native of Dr. Odumodu's hometown, spotted the SON DG who was in direct command of the operation and appealed to him sentimentally in Igbo to exempt his goods from confiscation, "Ikem, ngwa ahiam so na ndi an'esiz". Responding, the DG spoke in both Igbo and English, reiterating the necessity of Zero Tolerance to Substandard Products. Meanwhile, most of the traders continued flexing muscle with the law enforcement agents. Then reinforcement came in and the resistance melted away. Several truckloads of expired tyre were removed from that market that day.⁶⁶

Phones

There is influx of substandard phones into Nigerian market. Emeka Okoli, a staff of SON narrated how SON stepped up its operations at Ikeja Computer Village to rid the market of fake and substandard phones, accessories and product. According to him

----- It was near the Ikeja Computer Village, arguably the largest concentration of phones in West Africa, that one young ambitious business executive was walking the street when someone offered him a phone at a considerate price. The phone was one of the smart ones, shining, looking new, so the executive brought out money and bought it. Arriving in his office, he began to explore his new joy. Then, he discovered that it is the semblance of a phone that drew him and made him part with his hard-earned money. Fortunately, the young man cried out loud and SON heard about it.....⁶⁷

This is only one of the several cases proving that at the Ikeja Computer Village, the fakers of phones, computers, printers, inks etc are making a kill on Nigerians. Consequently, SON carried out some raids in that market, seizing fake IT products such as computers, printers etc and arrested the dealers.

Reaching out to the dealers associations in the market and sensitizing them on the need to key into Zero Tolerance to substandard Products. SON signed an MOU with them where they agreed to cooperate with the national standards body in removing substandard products from the market. The test of the traders' commitment to the SON policy came in 2014 when SON, prompted by surveillance reports, came to arrest a big importer of fake phones who is

the Managing Director of Trinity Technologies and Communication Ltd who came to SON and registered a phone named H-Mobile.

The Trinity Technologies Managing Director escaped arrest in the raid, but his staff were caught. And they helped the police to locate his warehouses. SON also found overwhelming evidence that the company was indeed an importer of fake phones. Several unbranded phones were found there. The company was in the practice of putting the logo of fast-selling brands of phones on these unbranded ones to rip-off unsuspecting consumers.

Free for all fight ensued at Ikeja Computer Village after SON began arresting staff of Trinity Technologies and Communication Ltd. The rest of the phone dealers in sympathy with the phone faker and in defiance of their agreement with SON rallied their boys and miscreants to intimidate SON and abort the operation. They threw stones at the Policemen attached to SON, destroyed SON vehicles and some of them were arrested. Unrepentant, the phone dealers threatened to shut down the entire Computer Village for three days in protest over what they called “SON’s frequent and unannounced swoop on phone dealers.” SON responded by giving them an ultimatum to register all their products within seven days or face the full wrath of the law at its next visit.⁶⁸

Imported Second-handed Cars

By 2013 what SON was hearing from consumers about imported second-hand (also known as Tokunbo) cars was fast becoming sadder and sadder. They were complaints of worn-out engines, carbon monoxide emission (main cause of Ozone Layer depletion) and mechanical dysfunctions. The huge demand for the cars and the huge profit in the business made the importers think that any car – the healthy, the infected, and the comatose – was a money-spinner once it gets into Nigeria. So they kept shipping them in.

In response to the eventual outcry, SON announced its intention to regulate the importation of Tokunbo automobiles. This response was also in line with the new Automobile Policy and the Nigeria Industrial Revolution Plan which prescribe restricted importation of cars to protect Nigeria’s emerging automobile manufacturing industry. In 2014, SON was ready to commence the regulation. The national standards body did not concern itself with the age of the vehicles but the condition of the engine, emission, the mechanical function and so on.

Pens

Four years ago, substandard and fake ballpoint pens pervaded the market and genuine pen manufacturers were going out of business. Users were also suffering. One would buy four

pens unsure he would be able to get the value of one genuine pen from them. SON seized consignments of these low quality pens at the ports, warehouses, trucks and everywhere it was found. This led to a drastic reduction in the importation and manufacturing of substandard pens. Quality pens began to regain the market.⁶⁹

Candles

Years back, candles bought in Nigeria was a huge rip-off by the manufacturers of low quality candles. The candles never stayed erect and, worse still, were used up in less than 20 minutes. Many of these low quality candles were manufactured in Nigeria. SON went after their producers and curtailed their excesses, giving relief to the manufacturers of good quality candles, and to Nigerians.⁷⁰

POOR QUALITY PRODUCTS REPRIMANDS

Although greater percentage of imported product samples, occasionally tested, largely conform to the relevant NIS specifications, but there are occasions when some imported products are found to be below the minimum requirement of the prescribed NIS specifications. Consequently, in such circumstances SON adopted the following three ways of dealing with substandard products depending on the degree of deviation of the tested parameters from relevant specifications or parameters prescribed in the National Standards:

Cases of Seizure and Destruction

In cases, where deviation from the prescribed relevant standards specification are wide enough to constitute health hazards or create harmful effects on the economy, the defective consignments/ containers are confiscated and destroyed usually in the presence of all interested parties of such product. However, such destruction is never embarked upon until infallible proof of the product's failure to meet specified quality parameter is established and verified by laboratory analysis.

Ports/Border Operation Sceme

The role of SON at the Nigerian Ports/Border is aimed at controlling the influx of substandard products into the Nigerian Markets. It was in pursuit of this statutory function that a presidential directive was issued to SON in 1988 directing it to man the Nigerian ports and border posts nationwide. Sequel to this directive, SON in 1989 established the ports operations scheme, and SON presence in the ports nationwide had led to regular monitoring of the quality of imported products to ensure that they conform to relevant NIS requirements.

The Federal Government trade liberalization policy and the deregulation of the economy, has influenced the influx of goods into the Nigerian market, which created some problems such as increased importation of substandard and unsafe products. The SON's role at the Port/Border operations scheme over the years has yielded positive results in checking the indiscriminate dumping of poor quality products in the country.

Procedure

The port/border inspection scheme involves the inspection, examination, sampling and the laboratory analysis of imported goods. It is pertinent to mention that, despite its numerous constraints and problems, SON has continued to make its presence felt in virtually all the Sea Ports in monitoring the quality of imported goods. While progress is being made to completely cover airports and borders, efforts are equally afoot to improve communication and operational facilities for effective performance of duties.

Problems

Nevertheless, there are many problems encountered at the ports. Among them are, the increased activities of smugglers bringing poor quality products into the country through routes not manned by SON (illegal routes at border posts). The smuggling activities have continued to puncture the effective impact the organization's operation would have had on the economy. Other obstacles being encountered are evasion of SON inspection by importers/clearing agents, shortage of manpower and funds for operational vehicles and sophisticated testing equipment. However, it is hoped with continued and increasing assistance of government the agencies and the general public will continue to exert greater impact on the quality imports into the country.

Consumer Complaints and investigation

SON pursued vigorously consumer complaints brought to its attention. Its officers carried out investigations on complaints in respect of deft substandard products received from the consumers who have evidence of purchase of product. As the apex statutory body in charge of standard and quality control, the essence of this is geared toward ensuring compliance with established standards and quality control practice and to protect the national interest. The exercise is carried out two-fold premise. Firstly, consumers who purchased substandard products are afforded a means to redress against the manufacturer through the collaboration of the legal department of SON and the Consumer Complaint Department. Secondly, the exercise is also devised to assist in identifying producers of poor quality products. The role of customers to detect manufacturing defects, report them to SON and thereafter SON will offer practical suggestions that help manufacturers to correct such defects while the consumer will be compensated. SON acts as a forum or intermediary arbiter between aggrieved consumers

with evidence of purchase of substandard products. Upon having ascertained the genuineness of complaint and the supplier, the organization aimed that a corrective action is taken to address the problem and to prevent recurrence. In all cases, SON ensure that the privilege is not abused by the complainant and fair judgment is meted out to the manufacturer based on empirical evidence before it and further evidence provided by laboratory where relevant.

When The Going Gets Tough

Without minding the danger in substandard products, the importers and their collaborators were not ready to give up the trade due to the high profit margin they make from it. For them, requirements like SONCAP, with compulsory pre-shipment test/inspection of goods, was just an obstacle to their business. They sometimes undermined the scheme by faking the SONCAP certificate, and fraudulently obtaining SONCAP certificates. Importers also undermined product inspections on standards and quality by obtaining waivers.⁷¹

Increase in SONCAP Charges

SON reviewed its charges upwards basing its argument on rising operational costs. Default fee of N200 and pre-inspection refundable deposit of N1,000 were previously the rule. Now, any importer who shipped in a consignment without a valid SONCAP certificate would pay default fee of N500,000.00 per container and refundable pre-inspection deposit of N1,000,000.00 per container. SON's position was that the One Million Naira would be used to cover tests and warehousing as well as the cost of destroying the goods in the event they failed tests.

The National Association of Government Approved Freight Forwarders (NAGAFF), threatened to sue SON, alleging that the new charges were causing port congestion and undermining their business. They alleged that the Organisation was making Nigerian port users unfriendly and thus, favouring the ports of neighbouring nations. They also alleged that SON was hindering free trade and driving importers into smuggling.

The National Council of Licensed Customs Agents condemned the new charges as unwanted. *“As a member of the Ministerial Committee on Ports, I know that SON has no business in the ports and its SONCAP implementation should be legalized or else it should stop imposing and collecting money from importers,”*⁷² one agent said.

Many importers abandoned their goods at the ports, rather than pay the new charges. To worsen matters, truck drivers whose SONCAP-defaulting cargoes had been held but later released, abandoned their containers at the ports, saying they would lift the goods out of the ports only if the customs agents paid the accumulated demurrage. A mob believed to be

licensed customs agents then staged a violent protest against what they called “SON’s over-zealous and overbearing activities.”

Eventually, death threats were sent to Dr. Odumodu and his lieutenants but he refused to be distracted. SON invited various Lagos Traders Associations to a meeting at Alaba International Market, Ojo Local Government Area, Lagos State, where it once again enthused upon the menace of substandard products to the health and economy of the nation, urging traders to accept the little delay in the clearing of their goods as its final outcome for the entire country would justify the process, in terms of its benefits.

It however, insisted on zero tolerance for non-compliance, with such statement as:

If a product is covered with SONCAP and does not meet standard, it will be destroyed. It is not about the paper. Our job is to protect Nigerians from products that can harm them or their pockets because they deserve the best. Pay the penalty and deposit while we take some samples for test and within one week, your products are ready for sale or destruction .⁷³

To ensure quick clearance of goods at the ports, SON relocated part of the testing equipment to Apapa to handle items that are not life-threatening. This was in fulfillment of a promise Dr. Odumodu made to the port-users. The SONCAP default fee was reduced from N500,000 to N350,000 and NAGAFF withdrew its notice of legal action, citing plea from their clients and the Importers Association of Nigeria.

Along the line, the Presidency, through the Coordinating Minister for the Economy Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, ordered SON and six other government agencies to quit the ports and ordered the Nigeria Customs Service and other agencies left at the ports to make sure goods were cleared within 48 hours. The presidential order also directed Nigeria customs Service to invite SON to inspect goods at the ports whenever the standard body’s technical expertise is needed. SON complied with the order, believing that it called for a more creative approach to tackling the importation of substandard products. Odumodu noted that:

.....When I came in, every staff member wanted to go to the ports. I soon learnt why: ports operation was for making money; not for SON but private purses. I was trying to figure out how to break the ugly trend when SON and some other agencies were ordered to leave the ports. We learnt this was meant to improve goods delivery time at the ports. I know if that goal has been achieved but I know that not being able to check goods at

*entry points and having to chase countrywide to fish out the fake from the genuine is counter-productive when weighed rationally....*⁷⁴

The creative approach it came up with includes:

1. Monitoring all the containers that are released at the ports without SON approval.
2. Compiling a list of warehouses and keeping the warehouses under watch. *“If we have people chasing substandard products wherever they go, they will have no hiding place.”*⁷⁵
3. Established SON office at No. 3, Burma Road, Off Wharf Road, Apapa for faster response when invited to the ports and for bringing services nearer to stakeholders.
4. Fast-tracking the review and revamp of SONCAP into a more effective obstacle to importation of substandard products.
5. E-registration of all regulated products, assigning a number or a code to each product, for traceability.
6. Review of MANCAP to make it more effective because Nigeria must be rescued from the substandard products menace. In 2012, the Organisation introduced some new policies that enabled it block some of the loopholes of the SONCAP scheme.

Firstly, it terminated the appointment of the erstwhile programme management companies and appointed new ones who undertook to ensure that every product exported to Nigeria was tested.

Secondly, every sampling was to be done at the point when the containers are being sealed.

Thirdly, SON insisted on a Certificate of Free Sales from the exporting country for every product to be imported into Nigeria. It came to this stance after discovering that goods marked “For export only” were being exported to Nigeria. “For export only” means not good for our own use; others can use it.

Similarly, SON threatened to send back any substandard product to wherever it came from while the exporter would be obliged to give back the FOB value to Nigeria. According to Dr. Odumodu, *“The Chinese was not very happy about this, but they were forced to – so long as they want to continue doing business with our country”*.⁷⁶

Fourthly, SONCAP integrated with the Nigeria Customs Service online clearing platform so that there will be no physical certificate to forge. As at May 9, 2014, Customs –

SON cooperation on SONCAP implementation received further impetus through the Nigeria Customs Information System (NICES) which was a single window for all the Federal Government agencies. This means that SON is automatically informed of goods arriving at the ports and who owns them.

Likewise, e-registration is already a reality. After the expiry of the deadline set for compliance to it in 2013, about five percent of the affected products complied.

Later, more of the merchants found out that the scheme serves their own purpose and embraced it. Nevertheless, a new enforcement drive was built around it to achieve maximum compliance.⁷⁷

Resisting the High and Mighty

Unscrupulous importers severally tried to thwart SON's plans by pulling on Governors, Traditional Rulers and the like. Dr Odumodu noted that:

.....Importers and dealers caught in raids have sometimes boasted that they have Abuja contacts to force us to return the seized goods to them. One importer of substandard AVR reported us to his Abuja contact and came with him to our office. In the big Oga's presence, we tested thirty of the AVR and they all failed. Then the big Oga, realizing that we won't succumb to pressure, began to urge him to comply with the standard. We were vulnerable only when we didn't have testing equipment. That is why labs are being developed...⁷⁸

Governmental organizations have equally stood in SON's way. For instance, the upgrade of SON's metrology laboratory in Lekki, Lagos was once discouraged by a Lagos State Government order to the standard body to quit within seven days.

Environment Concern

The seizure of 5 million substandard tyres created a secondary problem for SON: how to dispose of such a huge quantity. Initially, burning was the answer but it posed serious environmental hazards. Indeed, some environmentalists expressed concern over the pollution and threatened legal actions. SON tried to get investors to set up tyre recycling shredding machine to make the substandard tyres useless to those who imported them. Aggressive monitoring of factories, warehouses and carriers of goods continued into 2015 while build-up of national quality infrastructure heightened, and the war against substandard products gained a big momentum.

Raids Are Not Enough

From the outset, Dr. Odumodu knew that market raids, seizure of fake goods and destruction of substandard products are not sufficient to curb the menace posed by these harmful items. Certainly, the destruction or non-release of confiscated substandard products can pass for destruction of national wealth since millions or billions of naira had been spent by Nigerians to acquire those goods. However, raids and other related actions were employed as an interim measure to stabilize the market, just as a doctor would first stabilize a patient undergoing a major health crisis prior to administering proper treatment.

Having stabilized the market, SON embarked on curative measures such as policy formulation, infrastructural development to allow standardization and quality assurance to thrive, internal reforms to make it easier for people to buy into SON activities and policies, developing the competitiveness of Nigeria-made goods, campaign for amendment of the law on SON, winning more partners and collaborators for Zero Tolerance to Substandard Products campaign as well as behavioural change campaign. These were aimed at ensuring an environment where standard products will possess the market. Processes that would lead to the establishment of a national accreditation body and national quality policy are among the key initiatives embarked on.⁷⁹

National Accreditation Body

Accreditation means that certification and inspection bodies have been assessed against recognized standards to demonstrate their competence, impartiality and capability. In line with its obligation, SON has mid-wifed the inauguration of a committee on establishing a National Accreditation Body in Nigeria. This was done in May 2013. The committee was set up to draw the roadmap for accreditation and certification schemes in the country. The committee has in the last quarter of 2014 produced inauguration of the Nigerian National Accreditation Service (NINAS). Having being internationally accredited, NINAS is now giving infrastructure and institutions in Nigeria internationally valid accreditation and such bodies won't have to look outside Nigeria for a globally recognized accreditation body.

Nigeria National Quality Policy Steering Committee

A National Quality Policy is an official national document adopted at the highest level of Government of a country, which gives the general visions on quality, legal and technical regulation issues. The absence of a National Quality Policy in Nigeria may be responsible for poor National Quality Infrastructure, weak technical regulation and low level of international trade. Hence, the Federal Ministry of Trade and Investment, through Standards Organization of Nigeria (SON) made great effort to develop a National Quality Policy. To this end, on the

September 26, 2013 the National Steering Committee to formulate The Quality Policy was inaugurated in Abuja.

This is an inter-ministerial committee with the aim of streamlining regulatory frameworks, and to institute infrastructure development models and modalities for national total quality concept practices that will form the basis for standards in both the public and private sectors.

The broad-based, Inter-ministerial Committee was headed by the Minister of Industry, Trade and Investment; Dr. Olusegun Aganga, while the Director General of the Standards Organization of Nigeria (SON), Dr. Joseph Odumodu was the Secretary. The National Steering Committee was expected to review and harmonize existing quality policies in Nigeria, prepare and draft National Policy that is acceptable to all stakeholders, support the approval and implementation of the National Quality Policy.

These measure produced an encompassing system that provided quality specifications for all manufactured products in the country, and acted as a catalyst for local productivity and quick adaptation of the best global standards and practices towards enthroning the quality culture, improved management of processes and work environment, in addition to attaining efficiency and product competitiveness, decrease of imports and increase of exports. The NQP helps in the definition of objectives and results to be achieved, as well as the necessary resources to mobilize in the field of quality assurance.

An important outcome was that the National Quality Policy facilitated the establishment of functional National Quality Infrastructure (NQI), thereby improving Nigeria's international trade performance in line with global best practices. Producers constitute a major focal point for the national quality policy while the interest of consumers was a key motivation. In addition, Nigerian products were expected to gain global acceptance, among the key factors. To these ends, the National Quality Policy addressed the concerns of producers, proffering adequate solutions to matters that act as stumbling blocks to their adherence to a set standards and quality expectations.

In addition, the national Quality Policy harmonized the roles of all agencies involved in supervision and regulation, especially those of nine principal bodies/groups that exist in Nigeria which are: (1) Standards Organization of Nigeria (SON), (2) The Weights and Measures Department of the Federal Ministry of Trade and Investment (FMTI), (3) Consumer Protection Council (CPC), (4) National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC), (5) Nigerian Export Promotion Council (NEPC),(6) Small and Medium Enterprises Association of Nigeria (SMEDAN),(7) Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs),(8)

Consumer Associations (CAs) and (9) the Organized Private Sector (OPS) of Nigeria which includes bodies like the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN), Nigerian Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture (NACCIMA).

At inauguration, the Steering Committee was endowed with a SON – produced guiding booklet. The booklet is entitled “Tested Once, Certified Once and Accepted Everywhere: the Imperatives of National Quality Policy for Nigeria”.

After several meetings and deliberations as well as consultative forums held in the six geo-political zones of the country, the Nigeria National Quality Policy Steering Committee produced a draft of National Quality Policy. The National Consultative Stake-holders Forum on the National Quality Policy was held at Jevinik Hotel, GRA, Ikeja, Lagos.⁸⁰

National Quality Infrastructure

National Quality Infrastructure is the totality of the institutional framework (public or private), required to establish and implement the following:

- Standards
- Technical regulation
- Metrology (scientific, industrial and legal)
- Accreditation

Conformity assessment services (inspection, personnel certification, testing, products and system certification). These are necessary to provide acceptable evidence that products and services meet defined requirements, be it demanded by authorities (technical regulation) or the market place (contractually or inferred).

National Quality Infrastructure (NQI) was meant to strengthen the capacity of trade, support institutions, improve business and investment climate, enhance consumer protection, and facilitate domestic and international trade, while contributing to job creation and enhancing the goal of poverty alleviation. No doubt, the Federal Government inter-ministerial efforts to make a brood-based National Quality Policy increased awareness and knowledge of issues pertaining to technical regulations, while creating linkages for the organized private sector in the Nation.

Quality Infrastructure

The very low level of acceptance of made-in-Nigeria products stem from metrology, testing and certification defects and other NQI issues, sometimes known as Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) which have a lot to do with laboratory services. The measurements on which

Nigeria's laboratories and product certifiers base their calculations are considered unreliable. This calls for development of metrology in Nigeria. The laboratories which give testing reports on products were not accredited (one was accredited). It takes an accredited lab to give a test report that will be honoured universally; it takes accredited laboratories for a country's products to have a global acceptability.

Only scientific proofs of quality can convince the international consumer and standards bodies abroad to accept a product from any country. The countries with the largest number of accredited laboratories are the countries making the most sales and the most money. USA, China, South Korea, each having thousands of accredited laboratories and South Africa with hundred of accredited laboratories are examples of such countries.

Poor in laboratories, means poor in industry, always buying but hardly selling. In other words, not having products the world can buy, apart from raw materials. International trade favours the countries with the most accredited laboratories. Determined to help improve Nigerian industry and boost non-oil export, SON embarked on upgrading its laboratories, getting some of them international accreditation and building new ones that will also obtain accreditation.

The lab accreditation breakthrough came in 2014 with the American Association for Laboratory Accreditation (A2LA) delivering two certificates to the SON Food Technology Laboratory, Lekki, Lagos. One certificate confirmed the lab competent in biological testing while the other affirmed it's competent in chemical testing. With accredited laboratories, testing and certification by SON, the Organisation became more trustworthy and meaningful to stakeholders. With accredited laboratories those who kick when the test report says their product is substandard no longer sound reasonable.

Similarly, a verdict of standard from an accredited lab is bankable. Certified from the accredited SON laboratory, Nigeria farm produce and other food products began to get favoured internationally. With accredited laboratories, more good products began to emerge to chase away the bad products; more good products at reasonable price began to chase away the bad ones. Furthermore, Nigeria, on the strength of the accredited lab, quickens global adoption of the standards it is offering at ISO.

While still on the way to accreditation of its food Technology lab, SON increased its participation in ISO technical committees, that is, in the development of international standards for agricultural products such as sesame seed, sesame oil, sheer butter, cocoa cake and cassava flour. The Nigeria national standards body also increased its participation in the activities of the African Union (AU) organ, African Organization for Standardization (ARSO). The

Organisation hosted the ARSO General Assembly and Workshop in 2011. The technical session had facilitators drawn from national standards bodies of Germany, South Korea and Japan as well as ISO itself. About a year later, SON donated 200 standards to neighbouring Cameroun.

Dr. Odumodu was latter elected the President of the Regional body. After assuming the presidency of the regional body, Dr. Odumodu became strong advocate of national quality infrastructure. In his statement to the media upon his ascension to the ARSO presidency, he urged Africa to build up her quality infrastructure towards rapid industrialization and inter-Africa trade. He told the media that excellent quality infrastructure in the continent would multiply the good products and chase away the bad ones. He added that it takes Africa's industrialization to multiply trade between the continent's nations and create jobs for her teeming unemployed youths.

Getting a lab to deserve unimpeachable accreditation such as the one from a body as universally respected as the A2LA is very costly, but Dr. Odumodu was happy to pay the price because of the immeasurable benefit of the lab, if well utilized.⁸¹

New Legislation

According to Barrister Umar Kawu, the Director, Legal Services, Standard Organisation of Nigeria, there was remarkable changes in the organization during the tenure of Dr. Odumodu, examples of which are the improved work environment, massive renovation of the office space nationwide, the construction of an ultramodern laboratory in Ogba, the two-storey extension in Wuse, Abuja, completion of Nasarawa, Anambra and several other state offices, acquisition of vehicles for state offices to facilitate stakeholder and consumer engagement. He also made concerted effort to improve the workforce, so much training was done; he also got SON certified. This is a monumental achievement that will outlive several people in SON. As a certified organization, SON can now be in a better position to certify other organizations.

According to Umar, the fundamental duty of the Directorate of Legal Services is to ensure that SON operates within the boundaries of the law. The Directorate has been able to minimize infractions in various activities of the Organisation. During Odumodu era, it ensured that infractions by manufacturers are punished thereby impacting the Dr. Odumodu Administration's six-point agenda. Some people have been punished. With the support of the Police the Organisation carried out enforcement against a trader in Ondo who was often affixed fake NIS marks on his products. The Directorate took legal action against him. Realizing that

big trouble was coming, he submitted to a self-imposed fine, agreed to desist from such offence and also agreed to be under surveillance. There are such cases.

He noted that

----as an incentive to Dr. Odumodu's campaign of zero tolerance to substandard products, the House of Representatives passed an amendment to the SON law allowing SON to seize a violating product for a period of 90 days without any court order. Legal requirements have been preventing SON from locking up such products before the owners remove them. Fortunately, a Lagos court ruled that it is necessary for SON with or without a court order to seize substandard products and prevent their release into the market. The Senate concurred with the amendment passed by the House of Representatives, and the President assented to it and brought us to a higher level of enforcement.⁸²

As noted above SON sponsored a new bill at the National Assembly to give the agency the necessary legal powers to discharge its mandates effectively and efficiently. The new legislation gives SON prosecutorial powers and free hand to bring apprehended offenders to trial rather than go through a third party who may frustrate its efforts purposely or otherwise. The bill passed through the House of Representatives; the Senate's approval finally made it law. This Law came into use in 2015. Dr. Odumodu noted that it was inappropriate that under the former law, the highest penalty that an importer or dealer in substandard goods could suffer was N50,000 fine which represents an encouragement rather than a deterrent.

Visiting Facilitator of Manufacturing

The practice of helping the actors to comply with standards and regulations rather than waiting for them to default so that the power to punish can be asserted is called facilitative regulation and was very dear to Dr. Odumodu. Factory inspection was among the engagements by which a standards body can help manufacturers improve their production sufficiently to gain a market share or increase it. Accordingly, the administration has increased the number of MANCAP visits to factories from two times in a year to four times in a year and the visits are usually unscheduled.

The officers, usually from state offices, go there with the good news of standardization and offer technical advice, encouragement and sometimes necessary rebuke or sanction to make sure that the manufacturers produce better products both Nigerians and foreigners will be eager to buy and keep buying. These mentoring visitors would, sometimes on arrival, head

straight to the manufacturer's factory to get samples which will be compared with what the company has been claiming that they use or produce. They could check the factory sample in the manufacturers own lab after which they will still test it at the SON lab. Such seriousness started endearing SON to some manufacturers.

Another level of assistance to manufacturers was the free certification programme SON and UK Trade Office hold for SMEs. Yearly, this programme produces a crop of industrialists – 2000 of them who know what it takes to play at the global level and are inspired to actualize themselves as manufacturers for the world, rather than manufacturers for Nigeria. It was through this and similar guidance that many manufacturers in Nigeria have embraced MANCAP, SONCAP and management system certifications.

Product Liability Insurance

Addressing a World Press Conference on the state of standards in Nigeria, the SON Director General announced that in 2015 every manufacturer or importer selling in Nigeria must take product liability insurance. With this measure, the consumer automatically obtains redress in the event of damage arising from a product's non-compliance to standard. Simply put, the manufacturers have to pay for their product's failure. This became a serious deterrence to the manufacture or sale of substandard products.

Behavioural Change Campaign

SON under Dr. Odumodu deployed mediating communication in its efforts to overflow the substandard and enthrone the quality culture. Always keenly aware of the challenges and opportunities of the agency, the DG inspired and or approved a number of messages aimed at tackling one issue or the other. The number one issue he tackled was the seduction of Nigeria by substandard product.

The message-response initially came in the form of "Keep moving away from substandard products" the headline to a poster and the title of a news analysis both of which celebrated the 2011 World Standards Day. Next, was the "No paddy for jungle; look well well" radio and television spots which was accompanied by a dramatic TV spot "Mr. Short-cut featuring two Nollywood actors Amaechi Muonagor and Victor Osuagwu. Osuagwu (Mr. Short-cut) in tears told his story: he thought he was saving money by going for cheap wiring cables for his house. Then the cheap cables proved to be more expensive by causing a fire outbreak

For the 2012 World Standards Day, the message was re-invented to "Winners follow standards. Losers don't." At the 2013 World Standards Day celebration, the message was

"Quality infrastructure is our fastest route to the global market." For the 2014 World Standards Day the message turned "National Prosperity is assured when we meet M world on equal terms in every endeavour.

In addition to the World Standards Day series, there are a number of advertisements! Against the substandard. For example, "Substandard products are killing our nations "Don't buy trouble with your money." Specific market segments were also targeted in SON'S behavioural change effort. An example of this was the Tyre expiry date print and radio campaign which informed motorists that tyre has a four-year reliable life span and taught them how to find out the expiry date of a tyre so that they can use only good tyre and minimize the possibility of road accident and loss of life.

Communication to re-orient Nigerians into embracing the quality culture has also proceeded through forming coalitions and organizing events. Among key coalitions formed was National Coalition Stakeholders Forum against Substandard Products. The Sultan of Sokoto graciously accepted to be ambassador of this forum. The events so far held for standardization include the 2011 NIS National Product Quality Award, National Quality Summit and the Zonal Stakeholders Forum on Sandcrete Blocks & Allied Cement Products (Awka, Abuja and Lagos).

A number of campaigns have also been done to support various events or projects. The National Quality Summit (2012) was sold in print, radio and television as a place anticipating companies will obtain the power or boost to keep winning in the business arena.

The e-product registration scheme was pitched to importers and manufacturers as a scheme to help reveal and trace the substandard and counterfeit products, thereby favouring the products that have nothing to hide. To make e-product registration more compelling, SON follow-up with campaigns that tells everyone -manufacturer, importer as well as consumer to "insist on e-registered products only." The Nigeria National Quality Policy Consultative Stakeholders Forum was sold on the NQP theme: a springboard to global competitiveness.

The Stakeholders Forum on Sandcrete Blocks & Allied Cement Products (Awka, Abuja and Lagos) was always projected as a business improvement opportunity for block moulders. SON went into a campaign to create demand for the accredited Food Technology laboratory. The message of the accredited lab was "global market access" which translates to earning more money abroad; not being surcharged or rejected abroad again because of unreliable test report on goods. ⁸³

Customer-friendly SON

One of the ideas Dr Odumodu carried into SON was private sector-grown customer-centricity; the mindset that considers the customer the organization's sustenance without whom the organization is dead. This conviction abhors neglecting the customer and prizes customer satisfaction as the measure of an officer's or programme's success. In line with this principle, SON officers started using a form to obtain customer feedback on how they served. It was quite easy for SON officers to use this form because they had already turned a new leaf, where they needed to change.

And it was easy for some customers to fill in favourable reports because such reports were truthful anyway. Apart from this, some manufacturers and importers wrote special letters of commendation for the new improved standard service they have received from the agency. Typically, the testimony was that SON officers now serve them promptly and cheerfully, as if the bribe-before-work type of officers never existed there. In this spirit of service first, SON made system certification cheaper.⁸⁴

Media Engagement

As a result of the fact that the media control public perception, enlighten organizations and leaders cultivate media support for their policies, programmes and activities. This underscores the inclusion of media engagement in the six-point agenda of the Odumodu administration.

Naturally, the media seek out a person who has been appointed to a strategic position they are eager to know his plans for the organization or the mission. Odumodu however made himself accessible to them, answering their questions and explaining objectives and motives. He also determined to avail all necessary information to them as further demonstration of high regard for them. SON thereafter kept inviting the media in its activities.

SON commences each year with media briefing in which Dr. Odumodu would review activities for the year ended and disclose the standards body's goal for the New Year. At the beginning of 2012, he announced that his agency would embark on registration of products. At the beginning of 2013 he announced that the agency's tolerance campaign had brought substandard products down from 85% to 60% and would strive to further reduce it to 40% by the end of 2014. He further set time for the National Quality Infrastructure build-up which is the real healer or solution to the challenges facing standards in Nigeria.

A vast majority of the media showed interest in SON and its policies as well as its activities. Media content on SON appeared in newspapers and magazines such as The Punch, The Sun, This Day, The Guardian, Daily Independent, Hallmark, Leadership, Union, Manufacturing Today, Tell, African Statesman and Standards News (the in-hours magazine)

launched by the Odumodu administration. As SON's Chief Executive, Odumodu appeared on numerous broadcast programmes: A.M Express (NTA), one-one (NTA), Platform (NTA), Issue (NTA Abuja), Issue of the Moment (NTA International), Sunrise (Channels TV), Ultimate Morning show (AIT), Kakakki (AIT) and X-ray with Afam (AIT). He also appeared on Oga/Madam (Cool FM) in addition to NAN Forum.

The Odumodu administration has also produced and sponsored two television programmes. The first was "Standards & You". Which ran 13 episodes on various television stations in the country? The second one, was "Products & You", SON also produced two major TV documentaries. The first was, "Wheel of Transformation." This programme was aired on Channels Television. The second was, "The Big Momentum" which was aired during the World Press Conference with theme "the state of Standards" Address by Dr. Odumodu, the SON Director General.

There was also advertising in English as well as in the local languages for important standardization themes and behaviours changed on the part of consumers' manufactures, importers and other stakeholders. So far the biggest single event of SON media engagement was the World Press Conference with the theme "The State of Standards" Address at Sheraton Hotel & Towers, Ikeja Lagos. The conference harped on the need for Nigeria to catch up with the rest of the world in standardization and international trade and the need for all sections of the Nigeria elite to join hands with the agency to achieve its set goal.

The media was of immense benefit to SON especially in the area of awareness creation/ advocacy/ agenda-setting as well as in the area of crisis management. The Nigeria press eagerly picked up the gospel of zero tolerance to substandard programme within a philosophy of facilitative regulation and spread it to manufacturers, importers as well as consumers. A research conducted in 2012 by the Odumodu led SON found that the number Nigerians who were knowledgeable about SON and standardization have increased from forty-five percent to almost sixty-five percent. This corresponds with the growing number of trade-based organizations that entered some form of coalition with SON against substandard products,

The media also picked up advocacy for National Quality Policy and projected it in mind of the Federal Government, thereby facilitating the emergence of a Ministerial Steering Committee on the Nigeria National Quality Policy which had made serious progress.

Even the new legislation that empowered SON to punish importers and manufacturers of substandard products owed its emergence partly to support provided by media portrayal. Until the National Assembly saw the inadequacy of the former law, they could not have made

an amendment of that act of parliament part of their agenda. And it was only the mass media that could have kept SON's prayer ringing in their ears.

A big crisis erupted as the adversaries of the new cement standard battled the media. This was the biggest crisis ever witnessed by the Odumodu led SON since after the Clearing Agents' Disturbances over the SONCAP fee hike. SON responded by getting the newspapers to publish easy-to-read scoops of information that shot down the lies being told against its cement regulation. Finally, the key information (cement is in grades) was distilled into an advertisement that ran on television, radio and newspaper. Furthermore, SON in December 2014 ran a newspaper announcement, exposing the anomaly in cement manufacturers failing to indicate their product's date of manufacture, best before (expiry date) and batch number. The announcement was titled "Consumers' right to Know!"

Engr. (Ms) Nwaoma Oluje, Head, Customer Feedback and Collaboration Department observed that the organization has greatly improved to a large extent. That it has actually moved to a much higher level under the administration of Dr. Joseph I. Odumodu. He brought lots of positive changes that have transformed SON, and rebranded the organization.

The international Organization for Standardization (ISO) certification of SON to ISO 9001 is a pointer to this. The Customer Feedback and Collaboration Unit were formerly known as "Consumer Complaints and Collaboration." When Odumodu became the Director General, he learnt that the Unit were resolving mainly third party complaints and asked if it handles and responds to complaints about SON's service delivery and feedback from clients and consumers, and there was no existing mechanism for such. Subsequently, he changed the name to "Customer Feedback and Collaboration" so that the unit will also handle complaints and issues, with the aim of improving its service delivery.

Since then, the Department has been receiving a lot of feedback from Nigerians in the areas of enquiries, complaints and compliments. There have been tremendous changes. Some commend SON through verbal means during interactive sessions, or they do so in writing, while some criticize the Organisation and point out lapses. At the end of the day, SON identifies gaps and strives to improve. Complaints give SON a window of opportunities to improve.

Through administering questionnaires to clients, SON obtained perceptions about SON's service delivery and suggestions for serving them better. Consumer Engagement was one of the six-point agenda of Dr. Joseph Odumodu and this makes Customer feedback and Collaboration central in the realization of this objective. The Customer feedback and Collaboration Unit coordinates productive consumer engagement through a TV programme

called “Your Product and you.” Through this medium, lots of awareness was created. The TV programme runs on NTA every Saturday at 8am. Nigerians now know where to complain, and they are no more afraid or reluctant to come to the government to address their concerns. The unit also carries out stakeholder engagement. Through this forum, SON collaborate and interact with the stakeholders for awareness creation and jointly pursue particular causes and targets.

Also, on collaboration platform, the Department held a meeting with the Commercial Section of United States of America Embassy and this yielded positive results of awareness creation to American Businessmen on SON’s activities, particularly SONCAP and e-product registration for the purposes of trade facilitation. Similarly, the Department met with the Commercial Counselor, Austrian Embassy and her team to educate them on SON’s activities and they were greatly elated and commended SON for having an outreach department such as Customer Feedback and Collaboration. They also noted that this avenue will make it possible and easy for them to engage with SON as a government agency. Sequel to this visit, the Commercial Counselor, Austrian Embassy coordinated a forum with the European Community in Nigeria comprising representatives from Australia, France, Spain, Germany, Canada, Finland and Sweden.

At the forum, they aired their concerns over some SON’s activities such as SONCAP, MANCAP, e-Product Registration and clarifications were made on areas not clearly understood, it was a great interactive session, one out of many SON had done with local and international organizations and groups.

Dr. Odumodu has built capacities particularly in the area of staff training and provision of infrastructures. The structures on ground are testimonies. Dr. Odumodu has a very strong character that is worthy of emulation. He’s an achiever, and the driving force that propels the Department to achieve results in SON for the benefits of Nigerians and Nigeria at large.⁸⁵

Dr. Odumodu brought Private Sector work culture to SON

Margaret Eshiett, Head, Food and CODEX Department observed that Dr. Odumodu came and started making changes in SON. The former DG introduced private sector work culture. Unit heads had to develop job outlines, set weekly targets and make monthly and quarterly reports. There is communication and openness. Everybody makes input to other officers’ activities.

If I need something and it relates to another department, I must go there and sort things out before presenting it to the DG, otherwise, he throws it back at you because you have not done

your homework. Overall, Dr. Odumodu brought private sector work culture to the public sector. Unlike before, no one claims any territory in SON as exclusively their own. For the external stakeholders, we are making positive impacts through customer engagement towards global competitiveness of Nigeria-made-products. Now this department is helping farmers and manufacturers through improving products quality and services. Part of the government's agriculture policy is to make Nigeria the foremost producer of cassava in the world. It is not just enough being the highest producer, farmers and processors must have good markets for products .⁸⁶

SON has helped cassava flour processors attain the right quality needed to add 20% bread content. Bakers were having difficulty getting the right quality but SON worked hard and got it and gave it to them. The final product quality is excellent. The Organisation did nation-wide trainings for cassava revolution.

Formerly, Nigeria used to record high level of rejects which means exported items being returned for one defect or the other. They affected mainly cocoa, melon, ginger, shear butter and sesame seed. In the case of cocoa, lead content was high because farmers were using lead from batteries to fight pod infections which in turn affected the lead content. SON worked with the farmers to eliminate that challenge. It worked with them to add value to products lines rather than just export cocoa beans. The nation is short-changed if SON failed to extend the product chain.⁸⁷

Some severe media attacks on SON might be unwarranted. For instance, The Guardian editorial of March 1, 2013 accused Dr. Odumodu of lacking ideas and being unable to defeat substandard goods; the write-up ignored the substantial achievements of the Odumodu administration. Yet, as far as the DG was concerned, the media are partners in progress and their contributions and attacks help him to stay focused.⁸⁸

Building External Relations

Since Standardization is linked with economy, health and safety, it holds huge attraction for every nation of the world. Each national standards body is either giving or receiving one form of standardization support or the other. Sometimes one is both giving and receiving. In other words, international cooperation in standardization is necessary, almost unavoidable hence, the existence of international standardization bodies and agreements which may be bilateral, regional or global. In this very important preoccupation, the difference

between two administrations or national standards bodies would be in how enterprisingly one goes about it. In the last four years, SON has built strong relations with several international bodies and its counterparts in several countries.

Indeed the agency's on-going internal reforms won't matter if they don't resonate with the global community. SON entered into serious relationship with the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) as basic to the core business of tests, laboratories and accreditation. SON officials worked in partnership with the global body on some standards mechanisms. The relative achievements led to Odumodu emerging the President of African Organization for Standardization (ARSO) in 2013.

The Organisation equally worked with the United Nations (UN), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and partner agencies including the Codex Alimentations Commission (CODEX) in evolving a new SON that actively promotes and protects quality across board. UNIDO has participated actively in workshops and trainings that aimed to equipping Nigerians in key areas of petroleum and electrics. UNIDO has also been of immense help to standardization in Nigeria through facilitating its activities, the drafting of the Nigeria National Quality Policy and funding the building at the National Metrology Institute, Enugu.

The UK Trade Office was another great partner of SON. Since 2012 it has on yearly bases in partnership with SON trained and certified two thousand small and medium scale businesses trainees. In its quest for accreditation of its laboratories, SON approached American Association for Laboratory Accreditation (A2LA), and submitted the association's guidelines and processes for accreditation with the result that this globally renowned authority certified the SON Food Technology Lab for competency in biological testing and chemical testing. Other SON laboratories were accredited once they have met the requirements.

South Korea for instance has done a lot within the last two years to reposition standards in Nigeria. At the first National Quality Summit in 2012, Korean team presented graphic system for standards development as to convince any doubting Thomas that standards do not just happen, that it requires accurate planning and faithful implementation for positive results to show. In July earlier, South Korea and Germany provided the faculty that coordinated the ARSO-sponsored workshop on electromagnetic tests that drew participants from across the African continent.

Malaysia, India and Canada have all joined hands with SON in evolving a national standards body worthy of the name for Nigeria, but China, the largest exporter of consumer goods to Nigeria and chief source of the substandard products in Nigeria, has not given

commensurate support even after the Director General has been in Beijing pleading for her support. Back home in Africa, SON sought to sign an MOU with South Africa's national standards body SABS. However, a sudden strain in relations between the two countries stopped Dr Odumodu from going to South Africa to sign the agreement. In addition, although SON is struggling to find its feet in the standards arena, it donated 200 standards to her Cameroonian counterpart which means that the two countries can trade seamlessly on the items covered by the donated standards.

Inter African trade is reported to be less than five percent and experts say that the nations of Africa must considerably increase the trade between them if they want to be prosperous and Odumodu championed this policy in his tenure as ARSO president.

Some members of the House of Representatives Committee on Trade visited some countries in order to get better pictures of how standards work in other spheres and what the lawmakers can do to impact standards more positively.

Product Certification For Quality Award

One important aspect of the quality control activities of SON is the Annual Certification exercise of products from companies for quality award known as the Nigeria Industrial Standards (NIS) Award. The mark of quality is given to a manufacturer as a symbol of good **performance** and could be displayed on the specific product for the year it was won. It is a voluntary annual exercise whereby, interested companies apply directly to SON for the use of its NIS quality mark on their product for the year. The procedure leading to the award is described below.

Procedure for the NIS Certification Mark

The procedure for certification of product for Quality Award has been basically the same over the years. It involves three important steps, following the receipt of application from interested companies. The steps are as follows:

1. A series of systematic inspections of the product and factory is undertaken to determine whether the product conforms to the relevant NIS specifications. Laboratory tests are carried out on samples of the product being put forward for consideration of the award to verify its conformity with relevant SON established parameters. Once these processes have been carried out and the quality of the product is certified to have met the approved standard, the manufacturer is awarded the mark, which is put on the product for a period of one year.

2. There is often a follow-up and surveillance action on product performance during which procedural inspections are carried out on the company's quality system and laboratory tests are conducted on the product. Monitoring is to ensure that subsequent quality of the product manufactured continues to conform to specified requirements with relevant approved NIS specifications.
3. Though each NIS quality certificate award is only for a period of one year, the process is renewable of goods for quality assessment at the ports/borders. The importance of this exercise cannot be overemphasized, considering its economic implications to the country .With the Federal Government's trade liberalization and privatization policies, the organization is vigorously pursuing the import quality inspection programme in order to ensure that only goods that meet the prescribed national standards parameters are allowed into the country. The experiences of the past years are also being consolidated

It is at the core of SON's desire to assist industries to engage and upgrade standards that will achieve quality and reliability. In the process of achieving this, SON ensures that standardization strategies are designed to promote rather than hinder domestic and international trade.

To reach levels of industrial capacity comparable to the developed world, national strategies are needed to focus on the attainment of world class technological competence and in due time to achieve a good understanding of technical requirements underlying trade in the global market.

In both ways, knowledge of standardization and application of same can bring inherent benefits to domestic manufacturing enterprises that would lead to national economic progress. This would also create the foundation for regional and international trade and exchange of product.

Already, this type of cohabitation is in focus in ECOWAS countries, such as with the Ghana-Nigeria Standards Harmonization Committee which followed the inception of democratic dispensation after years of military rule.

Again, in the emerging realities SON noted early enough that where national standardization infrastructures are weak or do not exist, it is difficult to maintain reliable quality levels in manufacturing or to ensure quality of imports and exports. It would even be more difficult to sustain a growing enthusiasm and the quality culture of local companies under such conditions.

These factors informed the need for SON to create additional Zonal Offices around the country.

Therefore, SON currently has 13 operational bases, including the Corporate Headquarters at Abuja and the Operational Headquarters in Lagos.

SON has also established, as part of the continual improvement process, operational offices at the airports and land border posts to augment existing sea ports operations. This significant development has helped to checkmate the influx of fake and substandard products through such areas at the expense of our local industries.

There are plans to establish modern laboratories in all Zonal areas to support the existing Lagos Food Laboratory; Enugu Engineering Laboratory and the Kaduna Textile/Leather Laboratory. There is also a plan to establish metrology testing laboratory in Abuja.

SON management continues to evolve new dynamism and has since refocused the organization to face its primary responsibilities. Without good leadership, the resources of production remain dormant. SON administration under Odumodu made efforts to re-orient the entire workforce of SON effective management of resources. Major deliberations and decisions are considered with utmost care and efficiency, through a well structured quality management system that fosters team effort and self-criticism for continuous improvement. Although there is now in place effective and efficient electronic information system through internet/e-mail services, plans are afoot to upgrade existing systems to levels that will put SON in the forefront of information dissemination to its stake holders.

According to Banabas Jatau, head Procurement, Standard Organisation of Nigeria, noted that:

-----on appointment as the Head of Monitoring and evaluation (M & E) in May 2011, I set up a framework in which SON would report on its activities. We took a baseline from where we have to establish what's going to be SON's strategies for fulfilling its mandate. Through Dr. odumodu's support, this department has been able to work with the other departments and directorate to identify their key success areas in the implementation of the six-point agenda.⁸⁹

SON succeeded because it have targets and had redesigned its tools where necessary. It improved to the level where it now participating in international standardization activities as expected. It's ensuring that all products made in Nigeria are being standardized. The work culture such that all officers know what to report on was also improved. No more some working, others are looking. Even the cleaner's job has been well spelt out and they knows

their contributions to the overall impact of the organization. Each department has its key performance indicators. So SON is no longer working as civil servants but as people who must deliver on targets set for them – targets upon which their promotion depends. So everybody is working to be found worthy of whatever they desire. The management inherited a backlog of promotion which it worked hard to resolve. Workers who didn't get promoted were told *why*.⁹⁰

Every worker is being trained internally. Externally too, about 95% of workers have been trained. The extensive manpower development programme is reflected in the visible increase in productivity. SON, under Dr. Odumodu, is a success story. The Organisation had identified its challenges and are collectively working to overcome them.

Banabas Jatua, Head Procurement Department, SON, explained that procurement was one of the departments Dr. Odumodu created in SON. He consistently worked to make this department stand. Using this department, some vital infrastructure that was not there was created. Examples are the laboratory complex in Ogba, Lagos, the head office annex in Abuja, the state offices in Bauchi, Nasarawa, Benue and all over the country. Procurement is part of making sure that all the equipment to make SON laboratories ready for accreditation is in place. For example, SON needed an atomic absorption spectrometer, so he sent the Department to get all members of the Tenders Board to give their approval for the purchase. Odumodu led administration provided the funds and the machine were bought.

*In my whole 25 years of service, I have not seen this kind of progress. Initially, none of us in this department had been a procurement officer, but today, SON has three public procurement officers who are recognized by the Bureau of Public Procurement (BPP). He selected seven of us for a procurement conversion course organized by BPP at the Administrative Staff College of Nigeria (ASCON), Badagry. We've gone for the course and three of us passed. He selected me – an engineer, and also selected accountants, economists and lawyers, among others.*⁹¹

The personal development of staff has been very vital to the management of SON. In 2011, SON engaged a consultant to train the procurement staff of SON. In 2012, there was another training which was in-house. In 2013, all the people in procurement were taken out of the FCT and given three days consecutive training on procurement. Also in 2013, some of them who had been trained before were selected and sent to Badagry for further training.

Odumodu was a “now-now-man,” but I am not, so he pushes till he prevails upon me to get things done, and I am now adapting. He built capacity in people all over this organization. The Nigerian economy will experience greater capacity if SON is involved in every sector. Whether for equipment or for services, public procurement must abide by stipulated standards. Dr. Odumodu was very passionate about this, because it is a matter that directly affects the national economy. If in the future, they say, “Where is SON” whenever they want to make procurement, the credit should go to Dr. Odumodu. Some people do not want due process. They want the DG to approve anything and at any cost. Some even attempted to blackmail him by saying he is wasting time and delaying procedures through the procurement unit.⁹²

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CHAPTER SIX

EFFECTS OF STANDARD ORGANISATION OF NIGERIA TO SOCIO-POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC GROWTH OF NIGERIA AND THE CHALLENGES OF THE ORGANISATION ,

THE ROLE OF STANDARDS IN ECONOMIC GROWTH

Prof. John Akanya in a speech said that the Social, political, cultural and economic problems of Nigeria will not be solved unless deliberate, determined and concerted efforts are made in different sectors of the nation to create orderly operations (standardization). This will continue to be elusive even when it is apparent that a great deal of money are committed to different activities. The truth remains, as always, that until the sickness is diagnosed and the right medication is applied, a patient will remain on the sick bed and may eventually die. ¹

STANDARDISATION AND ECONOMICS:

Martin F. O. Ikhilae, opined that the saying that those who don't plan to succeed plan to fail applies to many developing economies today as they are moribund with both political and socio-economic problems which has denied them quick responses to new opportunities offered by technological changes that characterize rapid industrial growth in advanced countries of the World.

According to him, the continuous lack of plan and vision of these nations has led to ineffective use and control of abundant natural resources which has led to self-inflicted catastrophes including poverty, sickness, unending wars and political strife. This has also in some cases resulted into natural disasters and the destruction of the environment. In fact evolving globalization and the implementation of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Agreements have contributed in bringing extra pressure on these nations thereby exposing their weaknesses and inability to effectively and efficiently control their socio-political and economic growth, particularly African countries.²

In very simple terms, he continued, the economic posturing of a country is adjudged to be positive, healthy and sustainable when the aggregate production output is higher than its national consumption or demand. In financial terms, it is a reflection of the capacity of a Country to produce more for export than it imports, thereby earning more foreign exchange than it spends for imports. In the modern world of globalization and WTO, this lofty aspiration becomes a national dream that may not be achieved except the following conditions, among others, are met:

1. Accelerated pace of industrial and technological growth and therefore ability to respond quickly to new business opportunities and to capably manage business

changes.

2. The industrial and the private sector becoming the prime mover or driver of the economy; and
3. National economic and production out-put possesses the comparative advantage at the international market place thereby creating a self-sustaining pool of consumer demand and preference.

Of the three factors above, the last (which can be described as competitiveness in business terms) appears to be the most critical in the current dispensation of globalization and the WTO business practices. The competitiveness of any product or service when considering meeting customer expectations depends mainly on three factors, viz:

1. The quality of the product
2. The price
3. The effectiveness of the product or service delivery.

Of the three determinants above, studies have shown that quality is the most important and that the other two factors depend on it to a great extent. The quality of a product is ability to satisfy (and/or exceed) the stated or implied needs and expectations of the potential consumer. On broader terms, especially when considering total quality management which now forms major ingredient of competitiveness, quality can be described as how behaviours, tasks, information, financial and material resources are managed in order to meet the expectation of customers. If this definition is of any significance to consider in business terms, then it means that for any economy to become virile and competitive all human endeavours that affect its business activities and performance must be put into some desirable level of control (and this includes political and socio-economic factors that affect human existence). What this then means is that the economic survival of a nation now becomes more difficult to revive unless these primary and contributory factors are effectively managed. But it is rife to say here that the realisation of these factors border on the extent of orderly arrangement and the effective execution of the same factors which can simply be described as standardization of processes, activities, norms and legislation and the likes that affect the life of a nation.³

Prof. Akanya, stated that the process of fulfilling the economic requirements of quality management is called standardization. That Standardization ensures that:

There is good, wholesome, safe, nutritious food; Shelter is suitably built and it is safe; Clothing provides adequate protection in all climates; Safe, efficacious drugs are provided; Means of communication between the manufacturer and the customer are provided with

regard to product's composition, size and performance; and Customers are inspired with confidence in their expectations in fulfilling the economic requirements of man. Standardization also;

1. Improves production techniques;
2. Promotes trade (fair trading practices); and
3. Provides the best means of using goods and services.

For production and industry, standardization:

1. Affords a planned process from raw material to finished products;
2. Eliminate waste;
3. Improves output;
4. Simplifies stock-keeping;
5. Facilitate mass production; and .
6. Lowers production cost

For trade, standardization;

1. Provides a facility for comparing products on the same basis;
2. Simplifies orders;
3. Reduces misunderstandings and disputes over orders/contracts;
4. Lowers distribution cost; and
5. Facilitates gradual but systematic establishment of a guide to nationally agreed industrial practice.

For the international market, standardization:

1. Establishes a powerful sales argument;
2. eliminates non-tariff barriers to trade; and
3. Facilitates the growth of national productivity.

In politics and legislation, standardisation.

1. Specifies the rules of the game (rule of law) and prescribe what is acceptable and what is not in an orderly fashion.

Standardisation therefore is man's own effort to specify the minimum that will assure quality in an orderly pattern.⁴

STANDARDS AND PRODUCT/SERVICE QUALITY

According to Prof. Akanya, product standards are documents that define and contain the quality criteria (specifications) and the means and methods by which these expectations of the consumer can be guaranteed and evaluated. A product standard may be company,

national, regional or international (voluntary or mandatory) in scope and application. Taking in itself, product standards, therefore, have the following objectives: They

- * define the quality criteria for the respective products/services by harmonizing the divergent expectations of the various consumers;
- * enable producers to understand and, hence, produce and deliver consumers' expectations;
- * provide level-playing fields for all operators/players in the industry;
- * ensure fair-trade practices;
- * provide the basic means of evaluating performance and compliance with expectations and Laws
- * provide consumers with equal levels of protection;
- * provide verifiable and accessible information to all stakeholders; and
- * facilitate overall economic development.⁵

He observed that in the most recent dispensation, quality has become the most commonly used and equally important word in all aspects and spheres of economic activity. Any business that is not competitive in quality is therefore doomed to all. Consequently, the management of this function has become a great subject. The development and management of international quality systems have a knock-on effect of demanding an improvement in standardization at both national and business levels. The maintenance of business standards relies on the diligence of the quality management and audit team to provide feedback when non-compliances are encountered. Today, quality system management and its Certification and Registration is fast becoming a fundamental consumer requirement and assurance that the products and services of the business Organisation will meet the requirements and expectations of the consumer. Many business organizations have been certified to one or the other of the international quality system standards (ISO 9000) with very good stories to tell thereafter. In the context of the quality management system therefore, standards have the following roles.

- * To communicate to the customers the management technique of quality assurance itself and criteria against which a company's quality management can be assessed
- * To control management system throughout the business from design to delivery of the product or service,
- * To standardize tests which form the basis of quality control and assurance and, if required, product certification (conformity assessment),
- * To record design and manufacturing instructions including those for process control, purchased goods or services and

* To provide a base for conformity assessment and registration.

It is therefore, not surprising that developed countries and those in the "ASIAN TIGERS" category are extremely very sensitive with matters relating to standardization at every level of development. To the developing Countries, including Nigeria, it is recommended that standardization activities should be regarded as extremely vital in the quest for technological and economic growth and every effort should be made to intensify this activity, particularly if it is remembered that Standardization activities provide basic data:-

1. For technical education.
2. For research organizations
3. For laboratories in terms of metrology, test, methods, quality control, etc.

For industry and public undertaking, standardization activities offer the technical framework for a national quality control, assurance policy and utilize the results of international standards work to benefit the country's economy and present the national view point and national problems in international discussions on standards.⁶

Mr. R. Oteng in 1978 observed that a standards body in a developing economy (such as the SON), perhaps unlike its counterpart in the developed country, has a more complex responsibility than that of just writing standards. It has to get involved in all the standardization activities starting with the writing of standards and ending up with their application and observance. Further, it has to also promote internationalism in its activities (with the ISO, IEC, CAC) with the accruing benefits to it's external trade. These assertions are true in the case of SON in Nigeria's current socio- political and economic dispensation where the socio-politico cum economic environment and particularly the industrial and the business sectors are threatened and are almost comatose with the influx of substandard products and services that if not quickly tackled may bring every meaningful investment to a halt and waste. SON is now on the field to enforce standards in order to bring order in business practices including trade which is one of the most difficult tasks in what can be described as a -one-strait-jacked-trade environment.⁷

STANDARDS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH IN NIGERIA

Prof. Akanya noted that a careful study of Nigerian national economic development plans (rolling plans) since 1960 would reveal a visionary recognition of the importance of a virile industrial capacity lunged on the following performance planks:

- *An accelerated pace of industrial development, and
- *A private and industrial sector-driven economy.

Similarly, the objectives of Nigeria's National Industrial Policy presented the following elements:

- Improving the quality and competitiveness of goods and services in Nigeria;

- * Increased local content;
- * Improving technological skills and national capability, and
- * Managing technological change.⁸

PROMOTING NIGERIA'S ECONOMIC GROWTH: THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STANDARDS ORGANISATION OF NIGERIA (SON):

From the foregoing, the importance of standardization (and standards) in the promotion and facilitation of a nation's economic growth prospects has been established. National capacities and productivity must not only be substantial, but they need to be relatively competitive in all quality considerations. Productivity needs to be managed in order to ensure that they satisfy customer's expectations at minimal costs. All these are done with the use of standards. Standards, therefore, lay the foundation for sound economic management. The Nigerian policy for economic and industrial growth recognized, and hence established the Standards Organisation of Nigeria (SON) as responsible for the administration of standardization and quality control in the national economic activity. In this context, the SON is to:

Prepare standards in collaboration with relevant stakeholders;

- * Advise the government on matters relating to standardization and quality control; and
- * Ensure compliance with government's policy on standardization and quality for local and imported products.

So far, SON has discharged this statutory responsibilities and, thus, promoted industrial development in Nigeria through the following ways:

1. DEVELOPMENT OF NIGERIAN INDUSTRIAL STANDARDS (NIS): With the consensus of appropriate stakeholders, the SON has developed over five hundred industrial standards with specification regarding the quality (bench mark) of various branches of science and technology. Copies of these standards are available in its library for sale and public use. These standards are reviewed as often as is may be necessary by social and or technological changes. The programme of SON for standards development envisions massive adoption and adaptation of relevant international standards so as to increase the Organisations standards catalogue to over ten thousand before the end of 2020.

2. DATA BASE OF FOREIGN NATIONAL STANDARDS:

The SON also maintains a database (standards of other countries with whom it had a MOU) to be consulted and used by interested persons and business organizations. These foreign standards will enable potential exporters in Nigeria appreciate the country's requirement

elsewhere which may or may not be the same as the contractual agreement between business partners. Businesses in Nigeria can now have access to relevant technical information that is needed to facilitate trade.

3. INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS (ISO, CODEX, ARSO, IEC, ECOWAS):

The SON is Nigeria's representative in the Preparation of Standards in collaboration with relevant International Organisation for Standardization (ISO), the African Regional Organization for Standardization (ARSO), International Electro-technical Commission (IEC), the National Secretariat/ Contact Point for the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) and also the Standards Harmonization sub Committee of the ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme. While contributing to standards development at the various levels and organizations, the SON maintains a library of relevant documents of those organizations ostensibly for the use and application of interested persons and organizations. These standards include generic ISO 9000 series and ISO 14000 series respectively. SON's introduction and the effective application of these standards to the management of the quality and the environmental management systems in the last few years has led to very significant business and economic gains in Nigeria. In fact these standards are part of an international requirement for competitiveness.⁹

4. CONFORMITY ASSESSMENT, CERTIFICATION AND REGISTRATION:

Conformity assessment and certification are fast becoming a panacea for establishing competence and acceptance at the international business market place. Conformity assessment is the activity concerned with determining directly or indirectly that relevant requirements are fulfilled. Within this context, the SON promotes industrial development through:

- a. Periodic factory visit and inspection of local industries during which, product sampling, on-the -spot tests and quality control audits are conducted using relevant Nigerian Industrial Standards as reference. This evaluates and ensures compliance function.
- b. Annual award of product-quality (NIS) certificates to deserving products nation-wide. These awards are designed to encourage manufacturers whose products have consistently satisfied the requirements of the relevant quality standards and specification. It is also designed to assist consumers in choice making and to encourage the spirit of positive competition within the industry.
- c. Consumer complaints regarding the quality and performance of products are thoroughly investigated with a view to identifying the problem, assisting the producer in introducing corrective action(s) and compensating the complainant, where possible.

- d. Products are often purchased from the open market at random and analyzed against relevant specifications and appropriate actions taken dependent upon the results of the analysis. This activity is done under the Organisation's market survey operations.
 - e. SON also carries out product-type certification, especially for exports, and certificates of conformance to a particular standard or contractual document are issued to facilitate the business transaction. SON has been providing this quality assurance service to many Nigerian enterprises.
 - f. ISO 9000 Certification has become the most relevant quality assurance concept in last decade; especially for international business operation. Demonstrating conformance to one of the three quality assurance models (9001, 9002 and 9003) is a means by which an organization can provide objective evidence that it has in place an effective quality management system. The SON has helped many business and industrial organizations in Nigeria to install and improve their quality management systems in the last since inception. On the satisfactory completion of the exercise, SON awards the NIS/ISO Certificates to the deserving organizations. Organizations that are qualified to receive SON and ISO Certificates have reported very significant improvements in their business fortunes at home and abroad. As at now, SON has awarded over five thousand (5000) NIS and SON Quality Management System Certificates and the demand for it makes local industries become successfully competitive and sustainable.
5. **TRAINING:** SON conducts out door and in-house training for business managers on quality management system and audit and on environmental management and audit. These trainings are designed to produce system managers and auditors in the areas of quality and the environment. So far, SON has trained over two thousand managers from the different sectors of the economy.

6. **ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AND AUDIT:**

Consumers all over the world are expressing various concerns on the environment. They want to know how much the manufacture, handling and consumption of a product contributes to environmental degradation, resulting in a certification process called ECOLABELLING. This is to be of concern to business managers today. The SON has commenced environmental management audit and certification of some organizations in Nigeria. SON has so far certified twenty companies on their environmental management practices.

7. PRESHIPMENT/DESTINATION INSPECTION:

By getting involved in these schemes, the SON has contributed to industrial development by ensuring that products, which do not meet the requirements, are denied entry or destroyed. This process ensures fair competition and protects local industries. Since the establishment of SON, efforts to control the influx of substandard products into the Nigerian economy have increased astronomically. In fact, the need to control this hydra-headed demise, which has almost grounded every genuine business, should now be regarded as a national concern. Everybody in Nigeria should be challenged to rise up to the fight against substandard and fake products of all types and shades (including unqualified professional) which are wasting the country's economic values and taking the lives of Nigerians every second of the day. SON has seized and destroyed unwholesome products worth over 30.2 Billion Naira. This is a colossal economic loss to the nation. This trend must not be allowed to continue as it guarantees no future for any Nigerian.

8. SON, by laying emphasis on quality, serviceability and standardization, has served as a major factor in building an expanding circle of satisfied clients of made in Nigeria products in the local and international markets . Standards have been particularly useful in providing the basic framework for the small and cottage scale industries.

9. PRODUCT REGISTRATION: This activity is designed to characterize, document and evaluate the products in Nigerian economy, those behind them, their origin, source and their quality. Products are tagged with relevant numbers aimed at checking adulteration, traceability, faking and substandard.¹⁰

CHALLENGES FACING STANDARD ORGANISATION OF NIGERIA

REASONS FOR SUBSTANDARD PRODUCTS IN NIGERIA.

The challenge of substandard products from China

According to Dr. Joseph Ikemefuna Odumodu, every country has her own challenges with substandard goods and products, whether manufactured locally or imported, but that of Nigeria is in higher than usual dimensions. The prevalence of substandard products was so much in the pharmaceutical sector until Prof. Dora Akunyili proved that the challenge of fake drugs could be dealt with successfully. It was not easy for her and her colleagues at NAFDAC in those days. Attempts were even made to kill her, perhaps to send warning message to other chiefs of regulatory organisations of government, but she was not deterred; with the support of the Federal Government, she fought the fake drugs lords to submission. Her successors have continued with that spirit. The preponderance of fake products in almost all spheres of human activity in Nigeria is alarming. From computers and ICT products, building materials, machinery, cars and spare parts, hand kerchiefs, towels, to keys and padlocks, fake products flood the market daily, and they are mostly from China and Asia.

Odumodu noted that the substandard and economically wasteful products from China have been a big challenge to Standard Organisation of Nigeria even before and when he was at the saddle of leadership of the Organisation. The government body responsible for designation, establishment, approval and declaration of standards in respect of materials, commodities, structures and processes, certification of products in commerce and industry, their promotion at national, regional and international levels, throughout Nigeria, and the enforcement of same is increasingly finding it difficult curtaining this problem.

He saw the mandate of SON as enormous, the challenge very gargantuan, and the Organisation is committed and doing their best, in stamping fake and substandard products in Nigeria, but the influx of fake products continues without abating. Dr Odumodu led SON enforced standards in the electric bulb section by destroying fake electrical bulbs. He bemoaned the incidences of frequent fire outbreak in homes, industries and offices which resulted to checking fake wires and bulbs. Door keys and padlocks from China do not last for more than a few weeks; same in the motor spare parts markets, where used parts are now preferred to the so called new ones from China. For almost all items in the market, there is original and fake products displayed side by side, with impunity, and the buyer decides, depending on his choice and purse.

But the worrisome aspect according to him was that the crooks are thriving too much in the business. Some of these men import substandard products from China, paste the name and logo of standard and popular brands on them and sell. Others even open up products like television sets, change the internal components, and sell. This is where all genuine companies exporting to sell in Nigeria need to collaborate with the SON Conformity and Assessment Programme, SONCAP. Established since 1971, SON has changed and is actively involved in import inspection of goods and quality assessment at the ports and borders of Nigeria (before they were ejected out of the ports) considering the economic, health and safety implications of influx of substandard goods into the country. But fake products are everywhere.¹¹

Emeka Okoli, an importer, said that the many problems of the importers drive them into cutting corners to make some profit. **First**, they pay import duty, NAFDAC fees, SON dues, ship agent fees, clearing and forwarding fees, wharfinger, wharfage, stevedoring conservancy dues, animal and plant quarantine dues, and many more, before the containerised goods leave the sea port. If any of these government officials or department is not pleased, he simply raises an issue against the importer to the Customs which elicits some enforcement action against the man. At the end of the day, they are settled, resulting to more costs and selling at a loss. This makes the importer to ask the exporter to reduce specification and quality in order to recoup his losses in the earlier consignment, and it subsequently becomes a habit.

Secondly, where the officers in charge of a particular section in the ports clearance process come predominantly from one ethnic group, they use their position to promote the interest of importers from that group and punish or put importers from other or perceived rival ethnic group at a disadvantage.

The net effect is that the disadvantaged importer struggles to also make some profit by importing poor quality products. Greed, corruption, and ethnic manipulations have played together at the seaports to land substandard products in Nigeria, complicating the challenges of SON.

Thirdly, with Nigeria as a dumping ground of all sorts, due to absence of government encouragement for production and manufacturing, many want to import from China, the known centre for fake, cheap and substandard products. They all find patronage for the questionable products they import because of Nigeria's huge population, and continuously depreciating Naira purchasing power. The market for fake products has become large because the majority cannot afford the high cost of the original standard quality products.

Fourthly, the Lagos seaports have been so balkanized among the ruling class and their cronies, in what they called concessioning, which made the place totally unorganized unlike what was obtainable in the 1980s to 90s.

Fifthly, the work of SON needs to be known to all and sundry through more education, more campaign, more information to the consuming public. The cooperation between SON and the consumer protection agencies need to be enhanced in the interest of the people. SON on its part cannot continue to treat symptoms by destroying the importers goods alone, which only impoverish Nigerians.

Sixthly, the battle against substandard products must be carried beyond the borders of Nigeria to China and Asia by the Federal Government, using high powered diplomatic machinery so as to agree on the need to start punishing exporters of fake and substandard products to Nigeria.

Dr. Odumodu disclosed that the Nigeria had been losing an average of N52bn yearly to fake and substandard products and this has raised much concern among stakeholders in the economy.

The onslaughts in products faking, counterfeiting and substandard product manufacturing unleashed on all facets of the Nigerian economy have heightened worries among economic players in Nigeria, prompting fears that the country's economy might be facing a bleak future except viable solutions are found for the three-prong menace.¹²

Dr. Odumodu noted that it is a non-contestable fact that thousands of lives are lost to fake drugs yearly in Nigeria, which usually find their way into the country through the nation's

porous borders. In most cases, this nefarious trend thrives with the connivance of some corrupt customs officials. NAFDAC, especially under Dr. Dora Akunyili, took the battle to the doorsteps of fake drug manufacturers and importers, and on several occasions at the risk of the officials' lives. Despite all these efforts, unscrupulous Nigerian businessmen have kept on sustaining the illicit business just for personal gains to the detriment of the economy and fellow citizens.

The purchasing public has also been blamed for the trend. In an address by the Director-General of SON, Dr. Joseph Odumodu, to stakeholders in February 2013, Nigerians were blamed partly for the trend. According to Odumodu, Nigerians are known to be acute patrons of substandard and fake products. He said in an attempt to buy cheap products, they often bought fake and substandard products, which wore off easily. At the end of the day, he said, they ended up spending more money to buy the same products over and over again.

However, analysts tend to correlate this trend with the growing rate of poverty in the land, which, according to them, is witnessed in the fact that the purchasing power of individuals often influences their buying preferences. A group, Social Alert For Change, paints the scenario succinctly,

An average Nigerian family in lower middle class is more likely to purchase drugs from a 'chemist' rather than go to the hospital for accurate diagnosis and treatment. In this case, there is a greater chance that the consumer may end up buying either substandard or outright fake drug. A similar scenario plays out for other products used by consumers.¹³

Practically, every sector of the economy experiences product counterfeiting or faking. Dr. Odumodu confirmed it when he resumed as the agency's boss. According to him, about 85 per cent of products in the country then were either substandard or fake, making the country the highest among consumers patronising substandard products across the globe.

However, he said the trend had dropped to about 45 per cent, Odumodu admitted that despite the efforts put in so far, and the fight against faking, counterfeiting and substandardisation remained a tough one

Odumodu said that in a spirited and renewed effort to check the trends, SON introduced some strategies. SON's arrowhead of the fight against substandard products, the Zero Tolerance policy for substandard products, expanded the campaign against substandard products. Implementation of the Zero Tolerance campaign, for example, led to meeting with stakeholders, including a number of industrial, trade and professional groups. The immediate outcome of the stakeholders' meetings with Alaba International Traders Association, for

example, was the establishment of the SON Help Desks in the market and other markets across the country.

Products targeted by fakers cut across items like drugs, tyres, household utensils, phones, electronics, clothing materials, IT equipment, as well as food items like beverages, milk, canned foods, toys, cables, automatic voltage regulators, amongst several others.

He said that under the loss estimate of N52bn yearly loss to fake and substandard products auto spare parts appear to be taking the bigger chunk in terms of volume and value of fake products. The sector, according to Odumodu, has an estimated value of N20bn yearly expenditure on fake products.

And in apparent response to the devastating effects of the trade, SON seized fake and substandard products valued at over N9bn, while goods worth over N4.5bn was destroyed in a number of destruction session in 2012 and 2013. Goods periodically seized and destroyed include several packs of cigarettes, consumable products, cables, electronics, other household equipment and assorted tyres. Such goods are usually intercepted and impounded randomly in the various markets by the agency since it was removed from border posts and ports. Its areas of operation include markets and warehouses within and outside cities.¹⁴

The Secretary of a group known as Goods Made in China Importers Association (GMIA) Mr. Charles Udogaranya, in defense of China made products advised Nigerians to stop blaming China for substandard products in circulation, whereas some minor greedy and unpatriotic Nigerian importers should be blamed, alongside those manning Nigerian borders. According to him, this counsel became necessary as the ever-increasing blame trade is growing into a proportional height that may affect the cordial economic relations between China and Nigeria. They said that:

To put the record straight, we can confidently inform that from Beijing to Shanghai, to Guangzhou, to Shenzhen, Xiamen and across small and big cities in China, substandard products rarely exist. China produces for various nations of the world that includes nations like USA, Australia, Britain and other European nations with standardized quality. The exception here is the illicit conduct of a minor Nigeria importers that put pressure on their Chinese manufactures for an unacceptable, poor quality, in order to make the goods extremely cheap at the local market in Nigeria to lure more patronage due to economic condition in the country. “We advise Nigerian buyers to only buy quality products as they will outlast the cheap and poor substandard products and in the long run saves money. We believe that if

Nigerians can patronize only high quality products, importation of poor and substandard products will die naturally from our local markets .¹⁵

In a letter to the Chinese Ambassador to Nigeria, SON stated that the activities of the companies from China have impacted negatively on the perception of the Nigerian people on the quality of goods and services from the Peoples Republic of China. He stated that:

Unless immediate steps are taken to arrest the situation, incurable reputational damage would be done to the Government and People of China. “We are of the view that every step necessary should be taken to prevent them from jeopardising the excellent trade and cultural relationship between the Government and Peoples of China and Nigeria .¹⁶

According to him:

Nigeria has had cause to apprehend and prosecute some Chinese nationals involved in the importation of substandard and life-endangering products and we have also destroyed several substandard products seized from some of the listed Chinese companies worth several millions of Naira.¹⁷

However, he maintained that the measures appear not enough to deter the non-compliant persons and has therefore sought the Chinese Government’s collaboration in ensuring that these companies are equally blacklisted in China and prevented from exporting to Nigeria.

Dr. Odumodu recalled that shortly after he was appointed in 2011 as the Director General of Standards Organisation of Nigeria (SON), he raised an alarm when he revealed that 80 percent of products imported into Nigeria are either fake or substandard. This was in furtherance to the 1996 threat of a formal complaint to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) that China was dumping fake products into the country. At that time, China responded by explaining that it was not deliberately dump inferior goods on Nigeria but that Nigerian businessmen were culpable because they imported the products. Over the years, Nigeria has groaned under the yoke of fake and substandard products in terms of human and material losses. In the drugs category, countless lives have been lost while adverse effects have led to deformation of children. Thousands of houses have been burned and with them many lives as a result of the use of substandard cables and electric appliances imported into the country or even manufactured in some illegal factories. The national economy has also directly suffered in terms of loss of revenues through taxes. Nigeria must rank among the world’s highest market for fake and substandard products and equipment as evidenced by the wanton display

of all manner of poor quality goods and products littering the open markets, shops, supermarkets, chemist and other retail shops. These fake and substandard products span all classes and categories of items from drugs, electrical, electronic household appliances and equipment, building materials, tyres and tubes, automobiles, machine spare parts, food and machines to mention a few. Lives continued to be lost in road accidents when substandard tyres imported from Asia burst on high speed and vehicles either summersault or swerve into other vehicles on the highway.

That in 2014 alone, SON destroyed fake Century brand of stabilizers and other items valued at N5.5 billion. For the mobile market, the counterfeit segment has grown to become larger than life, generating huge income for the perpetrators at the expense of the consumers, the original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) and the economy in general. It is estimated that in 2013 alone, about N2.7 billion was spent on the importation of one million units of fake phone units. Industry watchers believed that this is a huge threat to the nation's economy, if something is not done to check the trend, especially at this time that the country needs to boost its internal generated revenues (IGR) as a result of the drop in crude oil price in the international market. Smuggling is a major activity of importers of contrabands such as fake phones; fake cables; fake and substandard drugs; adulterated products and therefore, it could be one way through which they enter the Nigerian market. Economically, it is detrimental to revenue generation drive of the government. Smuggling is willful under-payment of Customs duties, trafficking-in prohibited or restricted goods and use of unapproved routes and ports. Forging of Custom documents, touting in Customs goods and documents, and those who engage in it are considered economic saboteurs, robbing government of huge revenue that could have been used for other economic developmental purposes. This way, the economy loses potential employment opportunities as genuine manufacturers and employers of labour are hindered because of illegal activities. Investors are discouraged, thus dealing a deadly blow at government's efforts at encouraging foreign direct investment (FDI).¹⁸

Nkechi Mmadumere observed that the influx of counterfeit and sub-standard products into the domestic market raises serious doubts about the current efforts by the federal government to resuscitate the real sector for it to contribute meaningfully to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). According to her, government's inability to provide steady electricity supply, adequate security, are some of the things to promote importation of fake and counterfeit products. She also believed that if the government is committed to its people, the citizens would not patronise any counterfeit or substandard product. Citing a report of Economic Confidential finding she noted that about 99 per cent of the fake and substandard products, which are in circulation in the country, are sourced from China. The findings also show that Nigeria came second as China trade partners in Africa, after South Africa. That for

every original product in Nigeria, its fake alternative is readily available in the market and the products ranges from electronics to household equipment like television, cables, sockets, bulbs, fridges, stoves, cooking pots as well as household utensils. Also listed are products like wines, juice, matches, body creams, confectioneries and phones. Drugs Many Nigerians are reported to have fallen victim of its fake and substandard includes according to the report fast selling drugs which are sold at low prices and are usually offered for sales by hawkers who are more or less quarks with no medical orientation.¹⁹

Abubarkar Jimoh, NAFDAC Director of Public Relations said that NAFDAC, carried a baseline study to ascertain the level of incidence of fake drugs in 2001. The first phase of the baseline study in six major 'drug markets' across the country which was to measure the level of compliance to drug registration, revealed that 67.95 per cent of the drugs were fake and unregistered by NAFDAC. A repeat of this study in 2003 and 2004 however, revealed a 67 and 80 per cent reduction respectively. NAFDAC observed that counterfeit drug is one of the greatest problems of the industry with an estimated 50 per cent of drugs and food drinks sold in Ariaria Market in Aba, Onitsha Market, Alaba Market, Lagos and other markets across the country were counterfeits. It lamented that many families had been wiped away due to the after effects of these deadly medications and consumable goods on human health.²⁰

A study carried out by SON in 2008 on the Quality of Anti- Malaria in Sub-Saharan Africa (QAMSA), puts the incidence of the counterfeiting of anti-malarial drugs at 64 percent, which led to a declaration of a zero tolerance war on counterfeits by SON.²¹

NAFDAC's Director, Public Relations, Ibrahim Jimoh said,

*Drug counterfeiters taking advantage of the growing access and sophistication in printing technology have resorted to manufacturing fake drugs with fake NAFDAC registration number, and packaged in a way that it has a close resemblance with the approved or registered drugs by NAFDAC.*²²

Scores of children died after an adulterated teething drug was administered on them. Security operatives also paraded one Agu, Odumodi Akubue and Francis Uba in Lagos arrested at their local factory in Iba Housing Estate on the outskirts of Lagos with a lorry load of fake 1,750 empty cans and four gallons of insecticides, 11 sub-standard gas cylinders, 178 cans of fake Baygon, 47 cans of Killit, 70 cans of Raid insecticides, 140 cans of Mobil insecticide, four gallons of Rambo insecticides and 214 cans of Easyon Starch. FMCGs and hard wares Fast Moving Consumers Goods such as Milk, wines, juice, beers and non-alcoholic drinks have also been targets of counterfeiting by unscrupulous businessmen. Attempt to nip this in the bud has led to the promotion and sponsorship of a bill to punish dealers of fake products by the Standard Organisation of Nigeria (SON) through the House Committee on

Commerce and Industry, chaired by Hon. Mohammed Ogoshi Onawo. The bill, having been passed into Law, empowered SON to arrest and prosecute importers as well as sellers of fake products in the country. According to Dr. Joseph Odumodu, China, India and other Asian countries accounted for 80 percent of fake products in Nigeria. He noted that 20 percent of annual road accidents were as a result of the over 50 million substandard tyres imported into the country by dubious importers and counterfeiters on a yearly basis.²³

Mrs. Testimony Madubo, a dealer in building materials like wash hand basins, water tanks and toilet seats, said,

I think it is because Nigerians like buying cheap things that is why fake products are everywhere. There are still original ones, but because the prices are on the high side, many people cannot afford them. Also, the system is so corrupt that everybody wants to make quick money, so they are all looking for ways to cut corners. Until government makes a scapegoat of some of these counterfeiters, many people would still be involved in it,²⁴ she warned.

However, an Assistant Director in the Federal Ministry of Environment, Mrs. Oluwatoyin Agbenla, though acknowledging that the purchase of fake or substandard products could be linked to the poor status of the purchasers, said poverty cannot be separated from environmental management. Said she: **“The fact that a product is cheaper does not necessarily mean it is better,”**²⁵ she said.

Narrating his ordeal to Economic Confidential, a businessman in Lagos, Daniel Otuagha, said that he bought a generating set that packed up after about two months, noting that sometimes, fire disasters in houses are due to fake electrical cables. Prince Onyekachi, who sells phones and other goods at the Westminster bus-stop on Apapa / Oshodi Expressway, admitted that 70 percent of the new products that find their way into the Nigerian markets are counterfeit.²⁶

Many of the new products around are fake. They are China products, and they don't last. Nigerians always buy them because they are cheap. Also, 65 percent of phones in circulation are not original. It is even more rampant among shoes. Some are produced in Nigeria and later taken abroad where the name of a popular shoe manufacturer is scripted on it, only to be returned to Nigeria as original. That is why if you are not careful, you can buy a counterfeit shoe thinking it is Italian. By the time you wear it for few months, it begins to wear out. That is why some

Nigerians would prefer to buy second-hand imported materials or equipment to new ones,²⁷ he noted.

While reacting to the activities of fake and substandard products in Nigeria, a public affairs analyst, Olalekan Olaiya told Economic Confidential that;

--they are a disservice to the welfare and well being of Nigerians but as long as these products continue to get patronage in the market it will be difficult to eradicate them. Indeed, as long as poverty remains a challenge for the average Nigerian he will continue to patronize sellers of such products. To the poor man, once the product is able to satisfy his immediate need, there is no problem especially if he finds himself being alive after the experience.²⁸

In his view on whether the regulatory agencies have lived up to their billing in trying to nip this problem in the bud. Olaiya noted:

I believe that the effect of the tremendous progress accomplished by the late Professor Dora Akunyili as DG of NAFDAC in the fight to reduce the prevalence of fake and substandard drugs in the market has rubbed off positively on government agencies across the board. Besides the challenge of corruption which is not peculiar to these agencies, they are doing their best.²⁹

Also, while responding to the cost effect of fake and substandard goods on investors, the analyst maintained that, obviously, producers of genuine goods will suffer low sales and subsequently a poor return on investment. This will translate to loss of jobs, reduction in tax payment to government and a weak economy that is unable to compete at the international level. It discourages production and encourages imports which are not good for the economy. In crunch times like Nigeria is entering now due to falling oil price, manufacturing would have provided succour. Despite the believe in some quarters that, this activity provide job opportunity to a fraction of unemployed Nigerians, Olaiya held that:

---producers of fake and substandard goods do not pay taxes. They do not observe extant laws on the environment and labour laws. They employ slave labour and pay pittance to their employees. Such practices are detrimental to the development of an economy.³⁰

While suggesting ways to curb this menace, Olaiya said:

I am aware that private sector operators have taken up the challenge of reducing the menace of fake products by partnering with regulatory agencies through capacity building and funding of initiatives that can curb the practice. It is also imperative that regulatory agencies and corporate Nigeria intensify support to research institutions where cheaper and better alternatives to some expensive products can be developed. Also, if the banks can adequately fund budding entrepreneurs and start-ups, the desire to engage in the production of fake and substandard goods will diminish considerably. Of course, government must provide the enabling environment.³¹

Also responding to allegations that some security agents sometimes receive bribe from the perpetrators of this acts and turn a blind eye, the analyst stated:

like other areas of national life where corruption and impunity have eroded the observance of what is morally correct, it comes as no surprise to anyone that this is happening. Is it not morally incumbent on the workers in such establishments as well as everyone who participates in the chain from production to the market shelf to bring the existence of such anomaly to the awareness of regulatory and security agencies? The society is morally bankrupt. Poverty has skewed the moral compass of the people.³²

He was also of the view that, no meaningful progress can be attained under such a scenario. *“The annoying part is that shop keepers knowingly stock fake and substandard goods and warn patrons of their existence. The question then is why are Nigerians willingly purchasing these goods?”³³* For him the dangers of fake and substandard product among other things include; job losses, poor health, burnt buildings, denial of revenue to government, relocation of factories to other countries, waste through repeated expenses among others.

Rightly or wrongly, and because of the avalanche of consignments of substandard goods seized by the Nigerian Custom Services (NCS) the average Nigerian points accusing finger at China for the proliferation of fake products in the country, be they building materials, electrical appliances, chewing gum, biscuits, shoes, shirts, baby formula, drugs just to mention a few.³⁴

But President, China-Nigeria Chamber of Commerce (CNCC), Ye Shuijin, in August, 2012, rose in stout defense of his country, saying that most of the imported fake products found in various markets in the country were not imported from China. Shuijin, while commenting on

the issue, however said CNCC and the Standards Organisation of Nigeria (SON) have reached an agreement to check the influx of substandard products into the country.

Most of the substandard products that come into Nigeria are not from China because Chinese government has well-structured standards in place for its products. China products are of high quality, nonetheless Chinese government is already cooperating with the Nigerian government to promote importation of quality products to Nigeria,³⁵ he said.

Shuijin urged importers and consumers to be vigilant and reject outright, any noticed substandard product claimed to originate from China.

In 2013, the SON raised the alarm claiming that 40 per cent of electrical and electronic appliances imported into the country from China are substandard and have caused disasters with destruction to lives and property. SON observed that over the years, China has been trying to build a robust economic, political and socio-cultural relationship with Nigeria. And no doubt, the Asian country is contributing in no small measure to the country's economic growth. The volume of Nigerian-Chinese trade, which has reportedly hit \$6b in the past five years, attests to this.³⁶

It said that in nearly every sector of the nation's economy, ranging from manufacturing to agriculture and mining, China is deliberately working hard to get a big slice of the Nigerian commercial pie, and their impact is being felt. And fortunately for Beijing, many factors are enabling it realise this dream. For one, some western investors are reluctant to do business in the country owing to political and security reasons, while some foreign investors that were willing to do so are closing shop, and returning to their countries, or relocating elsewhere, due to what they describe as "unfriendly business environment."³⁷

China is equally achieving this aim through serious funding of infrastructural development projects, such as roads and rail lines construction, building of airport terminals and power plants, among others, in the country, which run into billions of dollars.

So, more and more Chinese organisations are finding their way into the country, just like the Chinese community in Nigeria, which keeps expanding by the day. With Beijing's keen interest and huge investment, it is only natural that Nigeria, acclaimed Africa's biggest economy, has become its largest overseas customer. The Nigerian market is thus not only flooded with Chinese products, but is also dominated by them. And they come in different grades and qualities.

In a way, this might be deemed advantageous, in the sense that majority of Nigerians, who have been financially incapacitated, are given a respite, as they are able to purchase low-cost Chinese goods. Indeed, the average Nigerian consumer is presently left with fewer

options, as he is forced to patronise what the market has to offer, which in many cases are Chinese products.

However, Chinese operations in the country are not limited to the economy. Socially, there have also been concerted efforts at integrating Chinese culture into the Nigerian society. For instance, Chinese language is presently being taught in some schools in the country including Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. And together with their cuisine, dances and martial arts, which are also being widely promoted, it is evident that to many Chinese residents in Nigeria, the country has become like a second home. And the number of Chinese nationals, who are undertaking one operation or the other in the country, is growing daily.

Indeed, there is an influx of the Asians, who are mainly found in cities like Lagos, Abuja and Kano, which play host to large numbers of Chinese nationals. The Chinese community in Nigeria, which is quite sizeable, makes donations to charities and partners with others to undertake developmental projects. The aim, obviously, is to make its impact felt in every area of the nation.

However, all this is coming at a price. There is a grave downside to this development, which is becoming hard to ignore. As Chinese and their businesses become more and more conspicuous in the country, so have issues of underhand dealings and sharp practices been dogging their steps. For instance, there is the problem of counterfeit and substandard products, which is not only wreaking havoc on the economy, but also on citizens' lives. In addition, there have been reported cases of labour and environmental violations by Chinese-owned businesses, and they range from inhumane working conditions, to illegal extractions of natural resources.³⁸

Although practically every sector is affected by this phenomenon, it is more pronounced in pharmaceuticals, information communications technology (ICT) and electrical. In 2015, the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) disclosed that about 250 million substandard phones were being sold yearly in the country. The Acting Executive Vice Chairman of the commission, Prof. Umar Dantata, who gave the figure noted that the damaging impact of the products on the economy could not be quantified in socio-economic terms.

Specifically, he lamented the adverse effects of the products on the country's national life, saying the ugly development poses grave danger to the environment, as well as health, safety and privacy of the buyers. He said:

Apart from the obvious negative economic impact of this ugly trend on the manufacturers of genuine products, there are other consequences for operators, government and authorised dealers, which include brand evaluation, loss of revenue, copyright and

*trademark infringement, unfair competition, loss of tax, cost of compliance with applicable national legislation, national security and loss of employment opportunities.*³⁹

*This menace also poses danger to the health and safety of consumers, equally breaching the privacy of consumers. A collective effort is urgently needed to curtail counterfeiting in ICT.*⁴⁰

Danbatta, during a tour of the Computer Village, Lagos, lamented the influx of substandard products, especially in the areas of mobile devices. He said the menace of fake products, apart from impacting negatively on the economy, constitutes a major threat to the quality of service improvement. He expressed NCC resolve to partner CAPDAN in the fight to end the menace to counterfeit products in the market in particular, and in the country at large to a standstill.⁴¹

As the controversy surrounding the influx of sub-standard products, especially from China continues to gather momentum, experts including the President, Computer and Allied Products Dealers Association of Nigeria (CAPDAN), Ahmed Ojikutu, have called for regulation of supposed 'cheap products' in the country. Ojikutu, who said that most of these low quality goods are found in electronics and telecommunications products among others, said that the claim that fake and substandard products entering the country were from China is neither here nor there. He explained that the challenge has lingered for this long because of three things, which are, low regulatory oversight; low economic growth and poor orientation. Ojikutu said most Nigerians indulge in shady deals because they have no economic power, lamented that the purchasing power of the people has gone seriously down to the point that:

*some don't even have that power... In this situation, people will demand for very low standard products. It is even worse because some of the countries producing these products ship to Nigeria, low quality products because the Per Capital Income of Nigerians is either low or non-existent. No money to spray about.*⁴²

Ojikutu said if the purchasing power of an average Nigerian is high, he or she would go for durable, original goods.

Let's take China for example, most Chinese use iPhone. Even when the phone is still very exorbitant at about over \$1,000, they still buy the phone. You needed to see queues of Chinese people who want to buy iPhones in shops. They can afford this because their purchasing power is very high. That is the reason I said

that with improved purchasing power of Nigerians, they will go for the very best of products and services in town,⁴³ he stated.

In the area of regulations, the CAPDAN president was quick to call on government to regulate products adjudged to be cheap, stressing that standards must never be compromised. *“If there are no standards, the country will continue to suffer and in the long run, it is the people that will be the first casualty,”⁴⁴ he said*

Speaking on orientation, Ojikutu queried that what exposure and knowledge do they have, those who imports product into the country.

This is where government also comes in. The Standard Organisation of Nigeria (SON), I really don't know what they are doing that they have been denied spot at the ports. I mean both at the Sea and Airports. SON needs to be there. These said sub-standard low products enter the country from these two places. I think government should look seriously and urgently into that. It shouldn't be left to the Customs alone if we must win this fight,⁴⁵ Ojikutu stated.

The CAPDAN chief noted that at Computer Village, the association does so many things to curb activities of low quality products peddlers. Ojikutu revealed that CAPDAN has forged a pact with Fonreg to introduce a platform, which operates with mobile phone's International Mobile Equipment Identity (IMEI) number, in order to curb phone theft, which he described as a major threat to the operations of the Computer Village, in Lagos, which is adjudged the largest market for Information Communications Technology wares in West Africa.⁴⁶

A telecoms expert, Kehinde Aluko, who supports Ojikutu views regarding the regulation of cheap products into the country, said placing embargo on these products is a good starting point. Aluko posited that any Nigerian being caught for smuggling and importing substandard products should be seriously dealt with. *“Increasing tariff on imported products is another way of reducing importation of these products. This will discourage importation of goods generally and promote the growth of infant industries in the country.”⁴⁷* According to him, putting in place these two policies will boost the country's external reserve as it will export than import, increase the level of gross domestic products (GDP) and also boost the life expectancy of people in the country. Aluko, added that some substandard products were also produced in the country hence there is the need for government to send Nigerian youths abroad to learn how to make and brand products.

I think that a multi-dimensional approach would be necessary to tackle the problem of substandard goods into the country. The

*government should set up a task force specially to monitor the activities of the Nigeria Customs Service and the borders as well. I also believe that if the Federal Government solves the problem of power supply, more manufacturing companies would thrive because it would provide ample opportunity for indigenous brands to showcase quality goods. I know that Nigerians can produce just about anything if the enabling environment is provided,*⁴⁸ Aluko stated.

The telecoms expert, who recommended stiff penalties for importers and companies that bring in substandard products into the country, added,

*All in all, I think the greatest solution would be improved power supply. With improved power supply, manufacturing companies would not need to waste funds on diesel or other means of power generation. Instead, they will channel their funds into improving production of goods because if we cannot produce, we will end up importing cheap things from abroad, and that is why Nigeria has become a dumping ground of sorts, where simple things that can be produced are imported,*⁴⁹ he stated.

Bede Obayi, Director of Compliance, SON said that his organisation has been unrelenting in its efforts to sanitise the ICT market, as well as other affected markets. He noted that the task could be made easier, when collaborations are struck and information shared among government agencies, operators and other stakeholders. Obayi regretted that these imported products come through the seaports and land borders undetected.

*All these are sources through which they come into the country, and you must be aware that SON is not inside the port. But we use the opportunity in the Nigeria Integrated Custom Information System to see the importation of products from the seaports. But the point is that what you are made to see can change from one point to another at the point of clearing, because you are not physically there,*⁵⁰ he said.

It was learnt that most of these products come mostly from Asia, especially Vietnam, Thailand, Taiwan and China.

Similarly in the healthcare sector, fake, adulterated and substandard drugs have not only led to the death and suffering of many, but have also stalled the growth of pharmaceutical industries in the country. Without doubt, this development is depriving the country quite much in terms of income, as well as the fact that the healthcare sector is badly affected by it. But if

reports and researches are anything to go by, the Nigerian market is not the only one suffering from this malaise, as such is said to be the case in nearly all African and developing countries, where Chinese businessmen operate.

The relationship between Beijing and these countries is quite multi-faceted and lopsided, in that it appears to favour China more than the host nations. This is brought about by the fact that these countries not only have to fight low commodity prices, but China's highly competitive manufacturing sector has also upset many of their small-scale industries. Recently, a global consulting firm, Mckinsey, said more than an estimated 60 per cent of Chinese companies operating in Nigeria are not documented by the Chinese Ministry of Commerce. Specifically, the firm had put the total number of Chinese companies in Nigeria at 930, out of which it said only 317 are documented back in China. In a research conducted by Mckinsey, it was discovered that there are over 10, 000 operational Chinese firms in the manufacturing, construction, trade services and real estate sectors across Africa. But despite the high Chinese presence in Nigeria, the institute said only Ethiopia and South Africa have a high level of engagement.

These three governments (Nigeria, Kenya and Tanzania) recognise China's importance, but they have yet to translate this recognition into an explicit China strategy. Each has several hundreds of Chinese firms across diverse sectors, but this presence has largely been the result of a passive posture, relying on large markets ties; much more is possible with true strategic engagement,⁵¹ the report said.

The firm went further to explain that only 47 per cent of raw materials used by Chinese firms were of African origin and only 44 per cent of the local managers at Chinese-owned companies were Africans, representing a loss for the continent.

"On balance, we believe that China's growing involvement is strongly positive for Africa's economies, governments and workers,"⁵² the firm concluded.

Back home in Nigeria, whenever appropriate Chinese authorities are confronted with some of these accusations, they have always attributed the problem to a general misconception on the part of the people. In their explanations, they point to the fact that production of fake and substandard products is not limited to China, as other countries equally engage in it. And since Nigeria imports goods from other countries, the searchlight should also be beamed on those countries. They find it baffling why accusing fingers are always pointed only at China, when other countries are to blame for such.

And while some of them acknowledge that there are substandard Chinese products in the country, they, however, believed that the rate is so low that it should not overshadow the

goodwill and positive contributions of the majority to the country's economic growth and wellbeing. To this category, condemning all Chinese business activities in the country would tantamount to throwing away the baby with the bath water. Indeed, it is only natural and to be expected that Beijing would do all in its power to protect its various interests in the country, as well as ensure that set economic and social targets are met. After all, as they say, "all is fair in love and in war."

The onus is, therefore, on Nigeria to equally protect its economic and environmental interests, as well as that of its citizens, by ensuring that relevant agencies apply due diligence, through promulgation and strict implementation of appropriate laws.

Analysts are of the view that if the country is not to become a dumping ground for inferior and counterfeited products from across the globe, it is government, through relevant agencies that can set the standards and maintain same. They insist that nobody else will do it, and the sooner this is grasped in all its ramifications and acted upon, the better for the country and its citizens.

The high volume of counterfeit and sub-standard products in the domestic market is threat to Nigeria's economy, raising serious doubts on current efforts by the Federal Government to resuscitate the real sector to contribute meaningfully to Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

In Nigeria, it is estimated that over 55 per cent of imported products are fake and substandard. In fact, it is a tragedy to report that in Nigeria, for every fast selling genuine product circulating, counterfeiters would either pirate or produce something similar without regards for standards and specifications. There is virtually – or hardly any product that is not either faked or its quality sub-standard when compared with the original. From the pharmaceutical to the textile, beverage, ceramics, electrical and electronics, book publishing, music and even Nigeria's fast rising home video industry, the greatest fear nursed by genuine investors remains how best to recoup their investments and remain in business amid challenges of infrastructure and the untrammled influx of fake goods, counterfeiting and piracy in the country. Counterfeiting destroys creativity, acts as a bane to the efforts of genuine manufacturers.

The Consumer Protection Council (CPS) describes the effect of the trend as 'hydra-headed' noting that 'employment opportunities are lost because genuine manufacturers and employers of labour are hindered from attaining economies of scales, with many shutting down their businesses.'⁵³

In the ICT sector, a recent research carried out by the Business Software Alliance (BSA) and the International Data Corporation (IDC) revealed that Nigeria lost more than N19.8million to software counterfeiting and associated problems in 2009. Obtaining similar

valid data from other sectors was, however, difficult given the constraints in data coalition in Nigeria, but the loss runs into billions of naira annually, according to Mrs. Ify Umenyi, Director-General of the CPC. ⁵⁴

The Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN) in particular has blamed the collapse of the textile industry on the avalanche of sub-standard fabrics that flood the domestic market and which are sold very cheap. The report warned that if the country does not stop influx of counterfeit products, the trend would stunt the economy. ⁵⁵

In the pharmaceutical industry, its regulatory agency, NAFDAC in 2001, carried a baseline study to ascertain the level of incidence of fake drugs. The first phase of the baseline study by NAFDAC in six major 'drug markets' across the country in early 2002, to measure the level of compliance to drug registration, revealed that 67.95 per cent of the drugs were fake and unregistered by NAFDAC.

A repeat of this study in 2003 and 2004 however, revealed a 67 and 80 per cent reduction respectively. NAFDAC said counterfeit drug is one of the greatest problems of the industry, noting that over 50 per cent of drugs and food drinks sold in Ariaria Market in Aba, Onitsha Market, Alaba Market, Lagos and other markets across the country were counterfeits, stressing that many families had been wiped away due to the after effects of these deadly medications and consumable goods on human health. ⁵⁶

*“Our economy is being disturbed, derailed, battered and messed up by heavy importation and smuggling of products from Eastern countries, particularly China”*⁵⁷ said John Akanya, former Director-General of SON.

*'Rather than concentrating our energies towards production, our country has been reduced to a dumping ground for all manners of products and these are in the areas that Nigerian manufacturers are focusing,*⁵⁸ he added.

*'Apart from fostering the depletion of the resources of the economy of the nation, it constitutes a drain on the purse of consumers and it also impoverishes them,*⁵⁹ Ify Umenyi, CPC Director General said.

*Purchases of sub-standard products constitute health risk to consumers, even death as exemplified in the damage caused by the recent teething mixture crisis. 'So if you put all these together, you will agree with me that it has a damaging effect on the economy. That is why the government is determined to reduce the quantum of sub-standard products into the country,*⁶⁰ she added.

But Assistant Director in the Federal Ministry of Environment, Mrs. Oluwatoyin Agbenla, while acknowledging that the purchase of fake or substandard products could be linked to the poor status of the purchasers, noted that poverty cannot be separated from environment management.

The fact that a product is cheaper does not necessarily mean it is better," he said. "Nigeria may be paying lip service if necessary prerequisites like proper ways of recycling e-wastes are not put in place. Due to lack of government legislations on e-waste, standards for disposal, proper mechanism for handling these toxic hi-tech products mostly end up in land fills or partly recycled in an unhygienic condition and partly thrown into waste streams"⁶¹ she noted. Agbenla cited cloned mobile phones which are subjected to open burning and in such a process, toxins are released into the atmosphere and these are dangerous to human health.

Also late in 2009, MAN, the national umbrella body of manufacturers in the country, worried by the influx of fake and sub-standard products, took a step further in its drive to stamp out product faking when it intercepted a container load of imported fake soap brands into the country. The products were impounded by MAN and in collaboration with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) joint inter-border patrol at the Seme border in Ogun State. The goods estimated at about N31 million were a faked version of Unilever's popular brand, Sunlight soap, which the company had earlier rebranded.

"Even if these men are importing genuine products, we can't still compare the importance and contribution of local manufacturing to that of imported goods,"⁶² said Jide Mike, MAN Director-General.

But worst of all, they fake and import sub-standard and unsafe consumer goods into the country thereby endangering the lives of citizens and stopping the economy from growing. You would bear me witness that a citizen who could be so heartless to fake Nigerian manufacturers' products and take the undue profit from it cannot pay even tax to the government. In the long run, he does not only make no contribution to the economy, but also stops those that do contribute. That is the reason we have resolved to fight them from all fronts,"⁶³ the MAN DG added.

Also, a leading electric cable manufacturing company in Nigeria, Nigerchin Electrical Development Company Limited, alerted the CPC, SON and the former Inspector General of

Police (IGP), Hafiz Ringim, about the arrival of substandard and dangerous electrical products, including cables circulating in the country. Officials of the electrical goods said for a long time, it has been bombarded with reports about the importation, distribution and faking of Nigerian-made cables, including Nigerchin products mostly in Port Harcourt, the Rivers State capital and Alaba International Market in Lagos by a very tiny, but powerful economic saboteurs.

Nokia, a company known for its durable mobile phones also complained of facing a threat from the presence of faked or sub-standard phones. Head of Customer Care for West Africa, Nokia, Mr. Silvin Sinan said the firm had been battling with the menace and that the company had realised that majority of the fake products were coming in through Nigeria's porous borders. Customers who end up buying fake products develop a fear factor, a terrible negative perception which scares them from further patronage of such brands. The way out is continuous education and enlightenment campaign.

*“By continuing to make consumers aware of the problem and to educate them on the potential risks, Nokia hopes that all consumers will have access to genuine products,”*⁶⁵ Sinan said. However, of greater concerns on the issue of fake and sub-standard products, is the role of China. The Asian country has always been accused of being the brain behind the influx of fake products into Nigeria. About 99 per cent of the fake products circulating in Nigeria markets come from China, according to SON.

The then Minister of State for Trade and Investment, Dr. Samuel Ortom, called for sanction against China, and other Asian countries where over 80 percent of substandard products come from into the country. He also proposed death sentence for Nigerian importers trading in substandard commodities. He made these calls at Sagamu dump site, Ogun State, where, Standard Organisation of Nigeria (SON) set ablaze fake products worth more than N300 million seized by the agency.

*I recommend that countries where these items are coming from should be sanctioned because it is inhuman for these kinds of products to be used in Nigeria. I also propose that merchants of substandard products should be executed because this is inhuman,*⁶⁶ *he said. According to him,*

we are poised to watch and track down people who milk the resources of the country through the import of substandard products like what we witnessed today. I know how much Nigerians are losing like the D-G said. This is Nigeria's money, this is Nigeria's wealth, and so, the government of President Goodluck Jonathan is translating policies into action and we are

*not going to tolerate substandard products coming into our country again as from the 15th of August. We have met with all stakeholders and have jointly agreed that August 15 is the deadline. Thereafter, stiffer punishments will be meted on those who trade in substandard goods. I want to assure Nigerians that by the grace of God, we shall eliminate substandard products from the country.*⁶⁷

The minister further said that the destruction should send signal to those perpetrators that government will no longer tolerate substandard products into the country. He said that his presence was to send a strong signal to Nigeria's trading partners and every Nigerian and businessman involved in perpetrating in the fake and substandard products, that government will no longer tolerate it. He noted that the Federal Government is serious about maintaining policy of zero-tolerance to substandard products. In fact, the Act establishing SON is being reviewed to be amended, and after its amendment, punishment will not just stop at the point of products destruction, rather, those people who are involved must surely be prosecuted. It will go beyond getting court orders to destroy the products. On the level of damage to the economy, the minister noted that it has led to the death of vulnerable Nigerians, collapsed and burnt buildings, and trillions of naira lost every year to the destruction of substandard products. *"That is why I say we are reviewing the Act establishing SON to incorporate stiffer penalties".*⁶⁸

According to SON Director-General, bilateral agreements will be signed with exporter nations to issue certificates of free use in those countries.

*They will also be required to subscribe to a re-export regime in cases of any substandard product exported to Nigeria. SON will establish market desks in all the major markets across the federation to receive complaints and intelligence reports on fake and substandard products.*⁶⁹

MAN condemned China's flagrant dumping of 'cheap and substandard' products on the Nigerian market, describing the situation as "disastrous." Notable faked products from China include cables, hurricane lanterns, cigarettes, tyres, toothpastes, computer monitors and television sets. Nigeria is China's second largest trading partner in Africa after South Africa, but analysts say China benefits more from its partnership with Nigeria which reached about \$6.5 billion in 2009, according to economic reports.⁷⁰

Nigeria exports raw materials to China and China supplies Nigeria's markets with all kinds of products including motorcycles, machinery equipment, auto parts, rubber tires, chemical products, textiles, garments, footwear and even children's toys. MAN believes the

Chinese were taking advantage of the Nigerian government's failure to create sustainable environment for local industry to thrive as well as the absence of the technological know-how to challenge foreign influences from nations like China.

The Nigerian Government has alerted the authorities in China about this problem and a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed between both countries as regards imports business and the need to curtail substandard goods. Chairman of the Anti-Counterfeit Collaboration, Nigeria and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) KFC Nigeria, Mr. Marc Schreuder, stated that the impact of counterfeiting on the economy and consumers was real.

The international fast food chain boss, who recently opened its doors in Nigeria, stated that the challenge of fake products was not isolated to fast moving consumer goods alone. The fast food industry is rife with copyright infringements which mean consumers do not get value for money, he said. *“We are working on an action plan to reduce the challenges this peculiar problem poses,”*⁷¹ Marc stated. Some manufacturers, however, hold the influx of fake and sub-standard products into the country to the absence of a clear cut incentive to support traders or local manufacturers by government. Their lines of argument tend to exonerate the Chinese, at least to some extent.

The National Union of Chemical, Footwear, Leather, Rubber and Non-metallic Products Employee (NUCFRLANMPE), Mr. Douglas Adiele, said local businessmen should also be blamed for the high rate of substandard products in the country. *“Are you talking about the fake and sub-standard products being imported or the ones produced locally?”* he queried.

He said some Nigerian businessmen specifically go to China to demand for substandard products to sell in Nigeria and that under such circumstances, the Chinese should not take 100 per cent of the blame.⁷²

It is a position shared by the Consul-General of China in Lagos, Mr. Guo Kun, in the first quarter of 2014 (April) at an interactive session between the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA) and a delegation of Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC) held in Lagos

Kun said some Nigerian entrepreneurs compel some Chinese companies to produce sub-standard goods and Chinese companies consent because they do not want to lose good business.

*‘It is a real problem for a product that is say 10 dollars (about N1500) of standard quality, some of the Nigerian entrepreneurs went to China, and asked the host to make it thinner and cheaper,’*⁷³ Kun said.

“At the beginning, some of the Chinese companies were very reluctant to produce for them. But later, you know they are

entrepreneurs, they want to make money. These host factories don't want to make or produce for them. Finally, they (Nigerian entrepreneurs) went to many factories, at least they can find one or two factories to make sub-standard goods and they bring it back to Nigeria,⁷⁴ Kun added.

On his take, Prof. John Akanya, at an international forum confirmed the enormous menace created by fake and substandard products in the country. He said,

Faking of quality electrical and electronic products was on the increase, dumping of substandard electrical/electronic products was on the increase, huge sums of foreign exchange were wasted as SON destroys substandard products, houses (consumers) were littered with burnt electrical/electronic products, reputable manufacturing companies had their products faked and most closed business, fire outbreaks caused by substandard electrical/electronic products were common occurrence.⁷⁵

Property and lives were lost as a result of fire caused by substandard electrical/electronic. Property and lives were lost as a result of fire caused by substandard electrical/electronic products, consumers' complaints of substandard electrical/electronic products were very high, technicians were frustrated and unduly challenged because of the failure of the products they repaired for their clients and generally, the man hour consumed in repairs and rework jobs were on the high side,⁷⁶ he added.

To stem the problem of fake and adulterated products, the government must show a lot of will in assisting in the development of technology to manufacture most of the goods imported which are also vulnerable to adulteration and counterfeiting.

Regulatory agencies like SON, Nigerian Customs Service, CBN and others working at the ports and borders must also close ranks to thwart the antics of fraudulent Nigerian businessmen who collude with foreigners to import low-quality products into the country just to make profits at the detriment of consumers and the economy. These agencies should also take further steps to weed out officials engaged in compromising in the discharge of their duties. There should be an increase in awareness among consumers on how to identify fake products and who and where to report such offenders to.

The government must also create an atmosphere where some of the multinationals who are based offshore and whose products are imported open plants in-country. These would also

ensure additional job creation for Nigerians. Such atmosphere includes, an improved power generation and distribution to manufactures, better road and transportation network facilities and security of lives and property.

The Consul-General of The People's Republic of China, Dr. Liu Xianfa, denied exporting counterfeit and substandard products to Nigeria. The denial was made when asked to respond to an allegation by the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) and Standard Organisation of Nigeria (SON) that a large portion of the fake goods in Nigeria emanated from China. Before the denial, the Director-General of NAFDAC and the Director-General of SON, had alleged, during a joint press conference, that India and China accounted for most of the counterfeit drugs and other substandard products imported into the country. They added that while India was playing supportive role to fight the trend, China was passive. The two DGs did not explain what they meant by passive role, but Xianfa's denial did not seem to change the opinion of general consumers and authorities in the country. Both the old and young in Nigeria believe that substandard products are synonymous with China; it used to be India. It is generally held that products made in China have short life span and cannot be repaired when damaged. Again, all inferior products in the country are believed to have been made in China or Taiwan. When one says a product is China or Taiwan, the underlying meaning is that such product is either counterfeit or substandard.⁷⁷ Unfortunately, what many Nigerians do not understand is that China manufactures for Europe and America. Before the emergence of China's economy, South Korea and Japan were seen by Europe as a base for low-cost labour which offered low production cost. It all translated to low prices of goods. Note that low price is not the same as poor quality of, or cheap, goods. The price of a product is largely, determined by the cost of producing the product. Following the 1990s reforms in China, the country emerged to challenge the biggest economies of the world. It has come on top of such economies, given the availability of a large labour force, superior power supply, low taxation and favourable currency exchange rate. Major investors in Europe, America and even Asia now turn to China to produce goods which they could not produce in their respective countries. The best Nokia phones in the American and British markets are manufactured in China. If such quality phones are produced in Europe, the prices would have been too high, given the high cost of their production. Like American and British investors, Nigerians have also turned to China to produce. But while American and British investor-vendors have respect for model and quality specifications in accordance with the prescriptions in their respective countries, their Nigerian counterparts prefer to cut corners to make ungodly profits.

Worse still, the Chinese factories accept to produce whatever poor quality that is asked for by the Nigerian investor-vendors. The Nigerian investor goes to China with products for

which they have no copyright for counterfeiting, without the Chinese factories asking questions or complying with the existing laws. This explains the poor quality or counterfeit products from China and the culpability of the country in the crime. Like the SON boss said, while Indian authority, which was as bad as China, is now assisting the Nigerian government to wage the war, China doesn't seem to be bothered. Counterfeiting in China is a serious offence which carries death penalty. If offenders are prosecuted in China, it will be difficult for the Nigerian investor or vendor to continue the illicit business. It is also of great concern that men of the Nigerian Customs Service are not able to stop these products from coming into the country. It is worrisome that some of the counterfeits pass the screening by the Standards Organisation of Nigeria (SON) because the Organisation is not at the ports. They are largely detected in the market before actions are taken. Not all the counterfeits are smuggled, as SON may want people to believe. Again, Nigerians do not have the moral justification to call the products of others substandard. Nigeria should produce for the Nigerian market. The major industrial enabling factor – power or energy if tackled will bring to an end the age-long wahala over fake products from China and India. The country is yet to experience impressive transformation in that direction. Nigerians should avoid partisanship in dealing with the issue of industrialisation and power development in the country. It is not about who rules the country but about existence of the country and its citizens. Someone who travelled to Israel recently said he refused to buy certain things over there because they were poorer than what he found back home in Nigeria. It is, therefore, about time Nigeria began to look inward. These importations are not anywhere close in quality to what is produced in Aba, Lagos or Kano. The onus is on the government to promote locally made goods in order to stop blaming counterfeits on India and China. But if the importation becomes imperative, over and above everything is the solution: there has to be collaboration between Nigerian and Chinese governments. Counterfeiting carries death penalty in China; and the manufacturers in China are not spirits. There is, therefore, the need for the government to make the Chinese counterpart to check their manufacturers. If the Chinese government refuses to cooperate, it is also the duty of the Nigerian government to blacklist products from that country until the home government complies.⁷⁸

However, stakeholders appear not to be in the same boat with SON. According to them, the agency definitely needs to do more in its drive to ensure that only quality goods are available in the country. Considering the vast nature of the Nigerian terrain and its markets, stakeholders believe that meeting the 30 per cent fake and substandard products level in the polity SON set for itself may be an uphill task.

In view of the burden and effects such trends are producing on the employment market, stakeholders in the manufacturing, export and other non-oil sectors of the economy and consumers have woken up to the threats presented by product faking.

According to them, implementation of strict penalties against culprits, which might also include the restructuring of existing laws, remained the most effective way to tackle the menace.

The Managing Director, Grand Oak Limited, wine and liquor manufacturers, Akshay Kumar, said consumers' plight in the face of upsurge in the incidence of fake products and pass-offs has remained pitiable. According to him, fake products are very damaging to the consumers for many reasons.

He said,

First of all, consumers often end up paying high prices for a product that is fake and does not deserve that price. Secondly, depending on the type of fake product involved (if it is food and drink product), it could damage their health, even leading sometimes to death. Thirdly, sometimes they end up buying it deliberately as the fake product is sold at a discount price lower than the original product's price.⁷⁹

This heavy incidence of fake often pushes consumers towards making alternate brand choices since they are not sure about the genuineness of their favoured brands. He said all the above criteria could affect the government too as it loses taxes and revenue. Besides, it showed that the government was not in control as illegal elements were operational. Kumar said the government needed to embark on increased awareness education as well as give enhanced support to SON and NAFDAC and other agencies involved. *“Companies too need to be more creative in product design and branding so as to ahead of fakers,”⁸⁰* he said.

On its part, the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria said Nigeria and other developing countries in Africa had been at the receiving end of fake products cheaply dumped in the continent. It urged the Federal Government to review all laws prescribing sanctions for offenders in dumping, faking and counterfeiting to enhance deterrence.⁸¹

In sufficient Laboratories

According to Okechuku Ezeokwei, the SON laboratories saddled with the task of examining the qualities of all goods coming into Nigeria are insufficient. Thirty -five in Ogba, Lagos, one in Enugu, and one in Kaduna. The law requires that all manufactured goods in Nigeria should have a Standard Organisation of Nigeria (SON) registration number or certificate. Products may have on e-registration numbers. The procedures for these are clearly

spelt out. Some of the proud achievements SON claims are that it now has three new cement standards, 32.5, 42.5, and 52.5 grades for various kinds of usage for making blocks, casting and bridge construction. Steel strengths are also certified by SON as well as thousands of building materials. A quick look at a list of what SON says they have standards for is absolutely bewildering.

Various paints including paints for automobile vehicles, sausage rolls, extruded puffed corn snacks, fruit drinks, and medication soap, soft drinks, mineral based oils, ball pens, hair conditioning creams and over 20 other creams, polyurethane foams, biscuits, plastic containers, milk, kerosene, aero fuels, diesels, premium motor spirits etc. There are thousands of other standards. Evident shows that it lacked enough Laboratory to efficiently conduct laboratory tests on all of them to guarantee safety of lives and the nations resources.⁸²

In sufficient manpower

It does not take too much imagination to realize that for Standard Organisation of Nigeria (SON) to do its work properly it has to be a gigantic organisation. Thankfully, there are many internationally accepted standards by international organisations to which Nigeria belongs. Most of these standards are simply applied. But for manufacturers of products in Nigeria, including well known brands these still have to meet the standards of SON.

Dr. Odumodu noted that in so far as the law had empowered SON to act, it required the personnel to enforce rules on the standardisation of products. Odumodu said there were over 1,000 markets in Nigeria as well as many borders and that the only way to address the issue of standards was to get people to enforce rules.

*You do not keep the same person in the same position at the same boarder, port or airport for three to six months without posting and re-posting them, the tendency is that he or she will make friends with the fake product importers and will no longer see anything wrong with the importation of substandard products. There is the need for government to approve the employment of over 20,000 people within the next three months and then people can see real impact of SON enforcement activities.*⁸³

According to the former DG, SON currently have about 1,400 staff strength and most of them are in technical areas, such as biologists, chemists and engineers. These numbers is not even enough to do the background job that is needed to do not to talk of the enforcement and field staff. He noted that some unscrupulous corrupt Nigerians have made billions of naira from importing sub-standard products into the country.⁸⁴

Ejection of SON from the Ports (Sea and Air) and the Nigerian Borders

According to Uche J. Anigbata, SON initially was at the ports to check influx of substandard products into the country and enforce product quality and standard but was later withdrawn by the government. The major operational base of the organization was supposed to be the seaport and airport. But in 2011, the agency was forced out of these major operational bases – sea and airports by the same government that set it up. While government may have acted in good faith as it tries to take measures aimed at sanitizing, standardizing, transforming and repositioning such agencies and institutions to align with international best practices, the collective cost of its action in this case is counter-productive and therefore needs to be re-addressed.

Considering the obvious negative multiplier effects of this singular action or policy, it is right to say that it is probably one of government's bad decisions in recent times. Many concerned Nigerians have been appealing to the government to take necessary steps to review its stand on this issue with a view to reducing the monumental socio-economic cum political pressure exerted on the economy and people by the menace of fake and substandard products in Nigeria, but to no avail.

On the vexed issue of massive importation of fake and substandard goods into the country, Agbata noted that there is overwhelming evidence that Nigeria ranks among the world's highest market for fake and substandard products and equipment. This is evidenced by the shameful scene of all kinds of poor quality goods and products that litter the country's open markets, shops, supermarkets, chemist and other retail shops. These fake and substandard products span across all classes and categories of items including drugs, electrical, electronics, household appliances and equipments, building materials, tyres and tubes, automobiles, machine spare parts, food and machines to mention a few. Both the government and Nigerians appear to have been so overwhelmed by this problem that they have almost given up, thereby allowing it to redefine their lives and mentality as well as reshape their culture and destiny. It is no longer news or strange when a mechanic or generator technician tells one that he will go for a "tokunbo" or fairly used parts instead of new ones because the so-called new ones are obviously fake. Nigerians are now prisoners of a clear culture of collective failure, carelessness, insensitivity, weakness, indolence, incompetence and ignorance.

If government can really identify the gravity of this problem, estimate its size and multi-dimensional nature as well as correctly weigh its multiple socio-politico cum economic costs and effects on Nigerians and the economy, it will certainly discover the urgent need to return SON to the ports

The cankerworm called fake and substandard goods is seriously eating deep into the fabrics of Nigeria with major consequences. Lives and properties are lost due to building collapse and fire outbreak occasioned by substandard electrical and building materials.

Substandard tyres and other fake motor spare parts have sent many people to their untimely graves.

Nigerians are not getting value for their money because it is spent on substandard goods that cannot stand the test of time. On the average, Nigerians may be spending about five times more money and time maintaining these products because of their poor quality. Added to these, is the undue pressure that substandard goods bring to bear on the environment. As a result of the high frequency of replacements caused by the use of poor quality materials and considering the fact that the country have a poor recycling culture, the Nigerian environment is always littered and over burdened with replaced and unusable parts. The chain effect of environmental pressure and pollution as a result of this problem as it relates to farmlands, marine and aquatic life, blockage of canals and drainage channels call for serious attention on the part of government.

Dumping of substandard goods in Nigeria is creating a disincentive to production and investment, thereby negating the whole essence of the protection of infant industries. Many Nigerian businessmen and women who risk importing quality goods are fast closing down because they cannot compete with the fake products dumped in Nigeria from Asia. A typical scenario is where a Chinese company manufactures a product for a Nigerian at a relatively fair quality and almost at the same time produces the same product for another Nigerian importer at a reduced quality. Due to low consumer awareness, these products get into the Nigerian market and sell at the same price, making the man that insists on bringing in quality goods to incur losses. In some cases, these foreigners play the role of importers, wholesalers, retailers and clearing agents at the ports, thereby jeopardizing Nigeria national interest. Where lies the survival of Nigerian businesses if Chinese and Indians with their Nigerian collaborators are allowed to perpetually flood the country's markets with fake and substandard products at large, medium and small scale with impunity. SON has synergy advantage in the port. Other security agencies like the Police, Navy, Air force, State Security Service are at the ports. The customs, immigration, Quarantine, NAFDAC and NDLEA are visibly at the ports. Bearing in mind the enormous problem posed by this growing economic ailment, SON needs to be present at the ports in order to nip these nefarious activities in the bud. SON can also tap the advantage of their cooperation in the pursuit of its tasks at the ports by working closely with them. Such a cooperation is not the same when SON operates outside the ports.

To adequately fight this threat to the Nigerian socio- political and economic interest, SON needs to be brought back to the ports. It is obvious that outside the ports, SON lacks the capacity in terms of workforce, facilities, logistics and even the legal framework to meet the challenges posed by imported fake and substandard products in Nigeria. The geographical size of the country, the poor consumer awareness and the obvious security challenges make it

difficult for SON to confront the problem in the open market.⁸⁵ Dr. Odumodu noted that the absence of its personnel at the nation's borders has made it difficult to prevent the influx of substandard foreign products into the country. In April 1, 2012 SON DG warned importers over substandard goods. The former Director General of the Organisations recalled that prior to the ejection of SON from the ports, that he declared zero tolerance on imported substandard goods in Nigeria and warned importers that the country will no longer be a dumping ground for products not good enough for citizens of the producers' countries.

SON no doubt could have come under criticisms while at the ports due to poor quality performance, lack of integrity and transparency in the performance of its duties, poor enlightenment and training on the economic importance of SON's task for the staff on how to achieve zero tolerance on the issue of fake and substandard products, especially on such life threatening items as electrical, tyres, building materials and other items.

Considering the circumstances of the Nigerian situation, system and environment, it is obvious that SON can not achieve any reasonable measure of success in fighting this ill if it does not operate within the nation's sea and airports. Government should therefore, as a matter of urgency, put the necessary law in place in order to return SON to the ports.

Nigerians also owe one another both moral, social and official responsibility as well as liability which should consistently manifest not only in the form of a deep sense of nationalism and love for one selves but also in continuous flow of sacrifices targeted at reclaiming the nations lost glory and renewing the face of the nation in this generation so as to restore the DIGNITY OF MAN in the nation.⁸⁶

In Sufficient Vehicles for Mobility

SON also is empowered to carry out market surveys to see whether what is sold meets standards. To do this, the Organisation should have an army of inspectors and vehicles to send out and collect goods for examination in their laboratories.

Some of the regional offices of SON (there are only four) have two vehicles to be used by few inspectors. Moreover, public awareness campaigns are necessary as the public know little about SON. Just testing the number of pure water makers in Lagos alone would demand a lot of people. Or testing the various fuels used in Nigeria must be a mammoth task, even before adding the plethora of creams and tooth pastes, soft drinks and other beverages.

Technically, there should be no substandard goods in Nigeria if SON is working efficiently. It knows where most of the substandard goods come from into Nigeria: ideally SON inspectors or eyes should be in and on those countries. There are a whole lot of substandard goods in Nigeria, especially electrical goods, some of which may lead to death – wires used for buildings, steel rods that are substandard, long life bulbs which are not long life; everyone has had experience of buying goods which are below standards.

In Sufficient Training of SON Staff

Standard Organisation of Nigeria (SON) needs to train its inspectors better, and the Nigerian factor must be exterminated in the organisation. Nigerian importers deliberately bring in substandard goods and pharmaceuticals. Even the factories in Nigeria cut corners and produce below standard goods; palm oil makers are now introducing some chemicals to make the oil redder

Over Reliance on Complaints before Action can be Taken, the Nigerian Factor

The Standard Organisation of Nigeria (SON) with all these powers, like all the other organizations and agencies, cannot undertake an investigation on quality unless a complaint was made to it. Dr. (Ambassador) Cole, a consultant to Guardian Editorial Board, narrated that a few years ago, Toyota and Volkswagen made confessions about mechanical defects in their vehicles. There was a worldwide recall of their vehicles to replace the malfunctioning parts. Nothing happened in Nigeria. The reason is that somebody has to complain before SON could go after the vehicles in Nigeria. How must a matter that was in international reports need a further report from Nigerians to galvanize SON into action. There was not one organisation or car dealer that the owners of defective cars had recourse even when the manufacturers had claimed responsibility. The consumer associations said nothing, civil liberties were quiet. The Minister of Foreign Affairs said nothing, nor did either of the ministers of trade or industry. How can Nigeria be taken seriously when someone who had sold her citizens a lemon admitted it and writes the country to get a refund and no one goes because the officials responsible could not care less?

The Minister of State for Trade and Investment, Dr. Samuel Ortom observed that the operating Laws of SON was not enough to deter Substandard product importers and promised to make sure that the law establishing the Standard Organisation of Nigeria, SON, was strengthened to give it more powers to effectively fight the war against production and importation of substandard products in Nigeria. The minister made the promise after at Sagamu where he supervised the destruction of substandard products worth over N300 million seized by SON.⁸⁷

WEAK ENABLING LAWS OF SON

Notwithstanding enabling Laws that established SON, fake products have continued to dominate Nigerian market space and even those that are allegedly 'original' and paraded for sale fall below standard. Consequently, there is, without doubt, a need to ensure quality control of manufactured and imported products in Nigeria as the high volume of substandard products either manufactured or imported into the country have continued to have deadly implications on the health of Nigerians and in some cases, resulted in loss of life and property.

It was in the light of this fact that stakeholders have clamoured over the years for amendment or total overhauling of the Standards Organization of Nigeria (SON) Act, 2004. This clamour is largely due to the fact that the SON Act, 2004 as it was, did next to nothing in ensuring that standards relating to products are being met. This was due in part to the fact that the Law did not impose strict penalties for offences and also saddled the officers of the Organization with minimal functions and powers.

It was in a bid to cure the ‘defects’ in the SON Act, 2004 that the Standards Organization of Nigeria Act of 2015 (the “Act”), was enacted. The Act was enacted for the purpose of providing additional functions for the Organization, increasing penalty for violations; and for related matters. The Act also repeals the Standards Organization of Nigeria Act Cap 59 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004. It was not until 2015 that the enabling laws that established Standard Organization of Nigeria were amended to make it more effective and efficient.

CHANGES IN THE OLD LAW

The SON Act, 2015 maintained, to a large extent, the provisions of the SON Act, 2004. It however added some major provisions to ensure efficacy of the Organization, more stringent penalties for offences and so-on. Some of the salient provisions introduced by the Act are as follows:

1. Additional Functions of the Council

A thing can only function to the extent of its ability. Consequently, a statutory Organization can only function to the extent of the ability (Powers and functions) conferred upon it by the enabling statute. Thus, the first thing the SON Act, 2015 did to properly position and equip the Organization to function optimally was to increase its function.

The Act expands the scope of duties of SON by vesting the Council with additional powers. For instance, the Act has saddled the organization with the responsibility of evaluation of quality assurance activities, including certification of systems, products and laboratories throughout Nigeria. The Organization is to establish an Import and Export Product Surveillance, Certification and Conformity Assessment Scheme to ensure that all products imported and exported are up to the expected standards. There shall also be established a mandatory conformity assessment programme for locally manufactured products in Nigeria. Similarly, the Organization has now been empowered to impose fees, fines or penalties on a person who contravenes any Import or Export Surveillance, Certification or Conformity Assessment Scheme. They are also, amongst others, given the additional responsibility to undertake registration of all manufactured products distributed, marketed and consumed throughout Nigeria; carry

out training and undertake the accreditation of training institutions and organizations for purposes of international standards such as ITU, IEC, ISO, OIML, or Codex, standards or system certification throughout Nigeria; establish a Register for National standards, Standard Marks, Certification Systems and Licenses into which all matters relating to standards referred to under this Act shall be entered; undertake appropriate investigations into the production premises and raw materials and establish relevant quality assurance systems, including certification of the production sites for regulated products; and administer and enforce the provisions of the Act .As seen above, quite a number of the additional functions introduced by the Act are to assist the Organization in being more proactive in the prevention of substandard products in Nigeria. This, in our opinion is very commendable in the sense that if the structures are put in place to register, track, maintain surveillance and assess the quality of products produced or imported in Nigeria, then, there won't be such influx of fake and substandard products in our market.

The Organization has also been given an oversight function. The Act provides that for the purpose of uniformity of standards in Nigeria, the Act provides that all Regulatory Agencies or Organizations' dealing with matters pertaining to or related to standards shall do so in collaboration with the Standards Organization of Nigeria.

2. Stringent Penalties for Non-Compliance Under the erstwhile Act, the penalties imposed for the various offences under the Act ranged from N200 to N100, 000:00. These penalties were grossly incompetent in serving its deterrence purpose; neither did it constitute enough punishment for the havoc being wrought by substandard goods in Nigerian market. Apart from the offences already recognized under the old Act, the new Act created some other offences and imposed stringent penalties on defaulters.

virtue of the SON Act, 2015, both evasion and attempt to evade fees or levies payable or chargeable under the Act is an offence which upon conviction, attracts a fine of not less than N1,000,000 and/or an imprisonment term of not less than nine months.

It was with impunity that people flouted the directives of the Organization in time past, but that will no longer be tolerated under the new Act because now, where a person refuse, neglect or fail to comply with any directive lawfully given by the Organization, he commits an offence under the Act, and in addition to the forfeiture of any article or product seized, he is liable on conviction to a fine of not less than N1,000,000.00, or to imprisonment and, in the case of a continuing offence, to a further fine not less than N250,000.00 for every day during which the offence continues.

It is now an offence for any person, other than the permitted manufacturer, to make, sell, expose for sale or use for the purpose of advertising; any material or document on or in which is portrayed industrial standard of certification mark portraying to be that established under the Act. Anyone in default of this provision is liable upon conviction to a fine of N1, 000,000.00 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 2 years or both. This is as opposed to the fine of N1, 000.00 or 1 year contained in the old Act.

Where a person has been convicted under the Act, the Act gives additional powers to the court to either order the forfeiture of commodities in relation to which the offence was committed, or assess the value of such commodity and impose a fine of that value on the convict; in addition to the usual punishment imposed for that offence under the Act. This is to further serve as deterrence to erring persons.

The law, in its bid to ensure that no offence under the Act goes unpunished, prescribes that where a penalty is not expressly provided in the Act, any person who commits an offence under the Act is liable on conviction to a fine of not less than N500, 000.00 or to imprisonment for a term of not less than 9 months or both. This is to drive home the point that this new Act is not going to tolerate any of its provisions being handled in a wishy-washy manner.

Also, non-compliance with Mandatory industrial standard for manufactured goods now attracts a fine of not less than 20% of the value of the product or N2,000,000.00 (whichever is higher) or to imprisonment for a term not less than 3 years or to both for the manufacturer; a fine not less than 20% CIF per shipment or N2,000,000.00 (whichever is higher) or imprisonment for a term not less than 2 years or to both for an importer; and where such good were found with a seller, to a fine of not less than 15% of the value of the product or N1,000,000.00 (whichever is higher) or imprisonment for a term not less than 2 years or both. This is by far one of the laudable provisions of the Act and if properly implemented and enforced, will go a long way in ensuring compliance with product standards as imposed by the Organization. It is believed that this provision of the law will rid the market of all those substandard and hazardous products daily paraded for sale in our markets, it will also curb the unscrupulous activities of manufacturers, importers and even sellers and ensure that goods conform to the Nigerian Industrial Standards (NIS). For the existing offences under the old Act, there has been an upward review of penalties. Financial liability for most of the offences under the Act have been reviewed to N1,000,000 and imprisonment term has been increased to between nine months and two (2) years. This is to send an unmistakable warning to manufacturers, importers, sellers, peddlers of

fake and counterfeit products and the society at large, that under this new Act, it will no longer be business as usual.

3. Empowerment of the Organization

The old Act couldn't do much in curbing fake products and ensuring good standard of products in Nigeria, this is due to the limited power which the law conferred on the Organization. This new Act has however remedied that wrong by empowering the Organization in the following ways:

4. Power of Recall

Under the Act, the Minister for Industries is now vested with the power to direct a supplier to recall a defective commodity on the recommendation of the Organization. Compulsory product recall had been introduced to the Act to ensure that consumers are given maximum protection from defective products. A product recall is a request to return a product after the discovery of safety issues or product defects that might endanger the consumer. The power of product recall is an international best practice standard that has been exploited for years in developed economies and it is a good thing that we now have it in our law. It serves as a protection to the consumer as well as a check on the manufacturer to ensure that products are of good standards before they are being sold.

a. Power to stop and search

The Act empowers the Director General or any other employee or officer of the Council, authorized by him in writing, to stop and search any vehicle or access any premises at reasonable times where there are reasonable grounds for suspecting the warehousing or storage of items in contravention of the Act.

b. Power of seizure and detention

By virtue of the new law, the Director-general, employee of the Organization or any other person so authorized, can seize and detain any article, product, material or goods which he reasonably believes is in contravention of the provisions of the Act for a period of time not exceeding 90 days without leave of court.

c. Powers of the Director-General in relation to hazardous products

Where the Director-general is satisfied that the quality, purity or potency of any product is hazardous to life, property or the national economy, may seize and detain such product, prohibit the sale of such product, seal up premises where such product is been manufactured or direct that the deficiency be Rectified .

d. Designation of ports for special entry

An order may now be published in a Federal gazette designating certain ports for the importation of certain products into Nigeria. Where such gazette is published, the products named in the order shall be imported only through the designated port. This allows the Organization to track the goods coming into Nigeria and ensure that they comply with the minimum industrial standards set for such goods.

e. Destruction of substandard goods

The goods detained under the Act may be destroyed if the testing indicates that the goods did not meet the relevant Nigerian Industrial Standards and it is reasonable to destroy the goods. At least 14 days notice shall be given of the intention to destroy the goods either by written notice to the owner of the goods or through publication in an official gazette. The organization may even direct the owner of the goods to pay the cost of destruction including the cost of transporting and storing the goods before destruction.

All the additional functions of the Organization as hereinbefore discussed, also forms part of the powers of the Organization.

5. Protection of the organization and its members

The Act took several steps in protecting the organization and its members. This is in a bid to ensure that the Organization and its staff carry out their duties without fear of law suits trailing them for acts done within the confines of the powers vested in them by the virtue of the provisions of the Act. Some of such protective provisions shall be considered hereunder:

a. Exemption from liability

The Act provides that no staff of the Organization shall be personally liable for any act or omission done or made by him in accordance with the terms of his engagement.

b. Limitation of time

The Act limits the time within which an action can be instituted against the Organization, its member and employee to 6 months from the date the cause of action arose or, in the case of a continuance of injury, within 6 months next after its cessation.

c. - Pre action notice

Before a suit can be validly instituted against the Organization, the Act prescribes that a pre-action notice be issued at least 3 months before the date of the filing of the suit before the appropriate court [28]. The court having jurisdiction in matters relating to offences under the Act .

d. Recovery of expenses

Any expenses incurred by the Organization in the exercise of its powers under the Act shall be recoverable from the person to whom the directive has been given.

e. Pension

All persons employed in the Organization are now entitled to pensions, gratuities and other retirement benefits as are prescribed under the Pension Reform Act no 4, 2014. This is in contrary to the old law which was silent as to whether service in the Organization was pensionable or not.⁸⁸

It is very obvious from the above provisions that the Act has set out on a very strong foot, which, if given proper implementation and funding, will lead to standardization of products in the Nigerian market. It will ensure that consumers' lives are not put in jeopardy and that our products can rank paripassu with international standard.

The minister said that the production, importation and marketing of substandard products to unsuspecting consumers are worse than armed robbery as millions of Nigerians are exposed to dangers from the consumption or use of such products. According to him, the situation requires urgent decisive measures to address the trend. SON needed more powers and stronger "teeth" through the review of its enabling laws in order to bark and bite harder. He said that the government will not sit and watch some unpatriotic elements within the country to continue to risk the lives of citizens with their nefarious activities. The destroyed substandard products that were imported into Nigeria by unpatriotic Nigerians in collaboration with some foreigners at various borders include motorcyclist helmets, electrical and electronics products, motor vehicle tyres, food products such as tinned tomatoes, gum and aluminium roofing sheets.

The Minister of State for Trade and Investment, Dr. Samuel Ortom,, called for sanctions against China, and other Asian countries where over 80 percent of substandard products come from into the country. He also proposed death sentence for Nigerian importers trading in substandard commodities. He made these calls at Sagamu dump site, Ogun State, where, Standard Organisation of Nigeria (SON) set ablaze fake products worth more than N300 million seized by the agency in the last three months.

*I recommend that countries where these items are coming from should be sanctioned because it is inhuman for these kinds of products to be used in Nigeria. I also propose that merchants of substandard products should be executed because this is inhuman,*⁸⁸

he said. According to him,

we are poised to watch and track down people who milk the resources of the country through the import of substandard products like what we witnessed today. I know how much Nigerians are losing like the D-G said. This is Nigeria's money, this is Nigeria's wealth, and so, the government of President Goodluck Jonathan is translating policies into action and we are not going to tolerate substandard products coming into our country again as from the 15th of August. "We have met with all stakeholders and have jointly agreed that August 15 is the deadline. That is why a stiffer punishment was to be meted on those who trade in substandard goods in the New Law. I want to assure Nigerians that by the grace of God, we shall eliminate substandard products from the country."⁸⁹

The minister further said that this destruction should send signal to those perpetrators that government will no longer tolerate this. That he was there to send a strong signal to Nigeria's trading partners and every Nigerian and businessman who perpetrating this, government will no longer allow this because the government is committed to zero-tolerance on such products in this country. He said that he was there as the representative of the President to call businessmen and women to order and that this should mark the end of importing substandard products into this country. According to him, the Federal Government is serious about maintaining the policy of zero-tolerance to substandard products. In fact, the Act establishing SON was being reviewed to be amended, and after its amendment, punishment was not just going to stop at the point of products destruction, rather, those people who are involved must surely be prosecuted. It will go beyond getting court orders to destroy the products. On the level of damage to the economy, the minister noted that it has led to the death of vulnerable Nigerians, collapsed and burnt buildings, and trillions of naira lost every year to the destruction of substandard products. *"That is why I say we are reviewing the Act establishing SON to incorporate stiffer penalties".⁹⁰*

According to SON Director-General, bilateral agreements were signed with exporter nations to issue certificates of free use in those countries.

They will also be required to subscribe to a re-export regime in cases of any substandard product exported to Nigeria. SON will establish market desks in all the major markets across the federation to receive complaints and intelligence reports on fake and substandard products.⁹¹

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Effects of Sub standard products to socio politico cum economic wellbeing of Nigerians

Counterfeiting destroys creativity, acts as a bane to the efforts of genuine manufacturers discourages investments and entrepreneurship as it renders their goods non-competitive. More worrisome is the fact that sub-standard goods are inimical to the health of citizens. Hundreds of Nigerians are reported to have died after consuming sub-standard products including drugs. The establishment of SON and its counterpart NAFDAC was in fact government’s direct response to the high casualty figure recorded from the use of fake products.

There are also cases of collapsed buildings which are linked to the usage of sub-standard materials by builders. The same thing applies in the road construction industry where millions of naira was invested in road construction only for them to collapse after few months of its commissioning.

The Standard Organization of Nigeria (SON), the body, regulating products standard in the country, revealed in one of its reports “that proliferation of adulterated products is a rapidly growing menace in the country.”⁹³

The Consumer Protection Council (CPC) describes the effect of the trend as “hydra-headed” noting that “employment opportunities are lost because genuine manufacturers and employers of labour are hindered from attaining economies of scales, with many shutting down their businesses.”⁹⁴

In the ICT sector, a research carried out by the Business Software Alliance (BSA) and the International Data Corporation (IDC) revealed that Nigeria lost more than N19.8million to software counterfeiting and associated problems in 2009⁸. Obtaining similar valid data from other sectors was, however, difficult given the constraints in data coalition in Nigeria, but the loss runs into billions of naira annually, according to Mrs. Ify Umenyi, former Director-General of the CPC.⁹⁵

The Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN) in particular has blamed the collapse of the textile industry on the avalanche of sub-standard fabrics that flood the domestic market and which are sold very cheap. The report warned that if the country does not stop influx of counterfeits products, the trend would stunt the economy.⁹⁶

In the pharmaceutical industry, its regulatory agency, NAFDAC in 2001, carried a baseline study to ascertain the level of incidence of fake drugs. The first phase of the baseline study by NAFDAC in six major “drug markets” across the country in early 2002, to measure the level of compliance to drug registration, revealed that 67.95 per cent of the drugs were fake and unregistered by NAFDAC.⁹⁷

A repeat of this study in 2003 and 2004 however, revealed a 67 and 80 per cent reduction respectively.⁹⁸

NAFDAC said counterfeit drug is one of the greatest problems of the industry, noting that over 50 per cent of drugs and food drinks sold in Ariaria Market in Aba, Onitsha Market, Alaba Market, Lagos and other markets across the country were counterfeits, stressing that many families had been wiped away due to the after effects of these deadly medications and consumable goods on human health.⁹⁹

*“Our economy is being disturbed, derailed, battered and messed up by heavy importation and smuggling of products from Eastern countries, particularly China,”*¹⁴ said John Akanya, Director-General of SON.

*“Rather than concentrating our energies towards production, our country has been reduced to a dumping ground for all manners of products and these are in the areas that Nigerian manufacturers are focusing,”*¹⁰⁰ he added.

*“Apart from fostering the depletion of the resources of the economy of the nation, it constitutes a drain on the purse of consumers and it also impoverishes them,”*¹⁰¹ Ify Umenyi, CPC Director General said.

*Purchases of sub-standard products constitute health risk to consumers, even death as exemplified in the damage caused by the recent teething mixture crisis. So if you put all these together, you will agree with me that it has a damaging effect on the economy. That is why the government is determined to reduce the quantum of sub-standard products into the country,*¹⁰² *the added.*

But an Assistant Director in the Federal Ministry of the environment, Mrs. Oluwatoyin Agbenla, while acknowledging that the purchase of fake or substandard products could be linked to the poor status of the purchasers, she noted that poverty cannot be separated from environment management.¹⁰³

The fact that a product is cheaper does not necessarily mean it is better,” he said. *“Nigeria may be paying lip service if necessary prerequisites like proper ways of recycling e-wastes are not put*

*in place. Due to lack of government legislations on e-waste, standards for disposal, proper mechanism for handling these toxic hi-tech products mostly end up in landfills or partly recycled in an unhygienic condition and partly thrown into waste streams*¹⁰⁴ she noted.

Agbenla cited cloned mobile phones which are subjected to open burning and in such a process, toxins are released into the atmosphere and these are dangerous to human health. A typical portrayal of the magnitude of this vice by its perpetrators was displayed recently when security operatives in Lagos State paraded one Mr. Agu, Odumodi Akubue and Francis Uba. They were arrested at their local factory in Iba Housing Estate on the outskirts of Lagos with a lorry load of fake 1,750 empty cans and four gallons of insecticides, 11 sub-standard gas cylinders, 178 cans of fake Baygon, 47 cans of Killit, 70 cans of Raid insecticides, 140 cans of Mobil insecticide, four gallons of Rambo insecticides and 214 cans of Easyon Starch.¹⁰⁵

Also late in 2009, Manufacturers Association of Nigeria, (MAN) the national umbrella body of manufacturers in the country, worried by the influx of fake and sub-standard products, took a step further in its drive to stamp out product faking when it intercepted a container load of imported fake soap brands into the country. The products were impounded by MAN and in collaboration with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) joint inter-border patrol at the Seme border in Ogun State. The goods estimated at about N31 million were a faked version of Unilever's popular brand, Sunlight soap, which the company had earlier rebranded.¹⁰⁶

According to Odumodu, there is virtually or hardly any product that is not either faked or its quality sub-standard when compared with the original. From the pharmaceutical to the textile, beverages, ceramics, electrical and electronics, building, book publishing, music and even Nigeria's fast rising home video industry.²² The oil boom in the early 1970s stimulated domestic production and facilitated massive importation of goods. Recently, cases of 84 deaths of children in Nigeria due to harmful teething pain drugs and melamine milk scandal which left 6 children dead. And other 300,000 sickened are examples that shade the magnitude of the problem²³ There are reports of collapsed buildings all over the country, bad roads and collapse bridges, automobile that lacks durability resulting in accidents, fire outbreaks, failure of home appliances abound, necessitating inquiry into the role of regulatory agencies and consumer protection institutions.

“Even if these men are importing genuine products, we can't still compare the importance and contribution of local manufacturing to that of imported goods,” said Jide Mike, MAN Director-General. “But worst of all, they fake and import sub-standard and unsafe consumer goods into the country thereby endangering the lives of citizens and stopping the

economy from growing. *“You would bear me witness that a citizen who could be so heartless to fake Nigerian manufacturers’ products and take the undue profit from it cannot pay even tax to the government.”*¹⁰⁷

“In the long run, he does not only make no contribution to the economy, but also stops those that do contribute. That is the reason we have resolved to fight them from all fronts,”²⁵ the MAN DG added. Also, a leading electric cable manufacturing company in Nigeria, Nigerchin Electrical Development Company Limited, recently alerted the CPC and the then Inspector General of Police (IGP), Hafiz Ringim, about the arrival of substandard and dangerous electrical products, including cables circulating in the country.¹⁰⁸

Officials of the electrical goods said for a long time, it has been bombarded with reports about the importation, distribution and faking of Nigerian-made cables, including Nigerchin products mostly in Port Harcourt, the Rivers State capital and Alaba International Market in Lagos by a very tiny, but powerful economic saboteurs.²⁷

Nokia, a company known for its durable mobile phones also recently complained of facing a threat from the presence of faked or sub-standard phones.¹⁰⁹ Head of Customer Care for West Africa, Nokia, Mr. Silvin Sinan said the firm had been battling with the menace in the last 18 months and that the company had realized that majority of the fake products were coming in through Nigeria’s porous borders.¹¹⁰ Customers who end up buying fake products develop a fear factor, a terrible negative perception which scares them from further patronage of such brands. The way out is continuous education and enlightenment campaign.

*“By continuing to make consumers aware of the problem and to educate them on the potential risks, Nokia hopes that all consumers will have access to genuine products,”*¹¹¹ Sinan said. However, of greater concerns on the issue of fake and sub-standard products, is the role of China. The Asian country has always been accused of being the brain behind the influx of fake products into Nigeria. About 99 per cent of the fake products circulating in Nigeria markets come from China, according to SON.¹¹²

Earlier 2005, MAN condemned China’s flagrant dumping of “cheap and substandard” products on the Nigerian market, describing the situation as “disastrous.” Notable faked products from China include cables, hurricane lanterns, cigarettes, tyres, toothpastes, computer monitors and television sets. Nigeria is China’s second largest trading partner in Africa after South Africa, but analysts say China benefits more from its partnership with Nigeria which reached about \$6.5 billion in 2009, according to economic reports.¹¹³

Nigeria exports raw materials to China and China supplies Nigeria’s markets with all kinds of products including motorcycles, machinery equipment, auto parts, rubber tires, chemical products, textiles, garments, footwear and even children’s toys. MAN believes the Chinese were taking advantage of the Nigerian government’s failure to create sustainable

environment for local industry to thrive as well as the absence of the technological know-how to challenge foreign influences from nations like China.

The Nigerian Government has alerted the authorities in China about this problem and a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed between both countries as regards imports business and the need to curtail substandard goods. Chairman of the Anti-Counterfeit Collaboration, Nigeria and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) KFC Nigeria, Mr. Marc Schreuder, stated that the impact of counterfeiting on the economy and consumers was real.¹¹⁴

The international fast food chain boss, who recently opened its doors in Nigeria, stated that the challenge of fake products was not isolated to fast moving consumer goods alone. The fast food industry is rife with copyright infringements which mean consumers do not get value for money, he said. “We are working on an action plan to reduce the challenges this peculiar problem poses,”¹¹⁵ Marc stated. On his part, Dr. John Akanya, the former Director General of Standard Organisation of Nigeria, (SON) at an international forum confirmed the enormous menace created by fake and substandard products in the country. He said that faking of quality electrical/electronic products was on the increase, huge sums of foreign exchange were wasted as SON destroys substandard products, houses (consumers) were littered with burnt electrical/electronic products, reputable manufacturing companies had their products faked and most closed business, fire outbreaks caused by substandard electrical/electronic products were common occurrence. He noted that:

Property and lives were lost as a result of fire caused by substandard electrical/electronic products, consumers’ complaints of substandard electrical/electronic products were very high, technicians were frustrated and unduly challenged because of the failure of the products they repaired for their clients and generally, the man hour consumed in repairs and rework jobs were on the high side,¹¹⁶ he added.

REASONS FOR THE INFLUX OF SUBSTANDARD PRODUCTS INTO NIGERIA.

Some manufacturers, however, hold the influx of fake and sub-standard products into the country to the absence of a clear cut incentive to support traders or local manufacturers by government. Their lines of argument tend to exonerate the Chinese, at least to some extent.

In a recent interview granted in a national daily by the National Union of Chemical, Footwear, Leather, Rubber and Non-metallic Products Employee (NUCFRLANMPE), Mr. Douglas Adiele, said local businessmen should also be blamed for the high rate of substandard products in the country. “Are you talking about the fake and sub-standard products being imported or the ones produced locally?”¹¹⁸ he queried.

He said some Nigerian businessmen specifically go to China to demand for substandard products to sell in Nigeria and that under such circumstances, the Chinese should not take 100 per cent of the blame. It is a position shared by the Consul-General of China in Lagos, Mr. Guo Kun, in the first quarter of 2005 (April) at an interactive session between the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA) and a delegation of Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC) held in Lagos. Kun said some Nigerian entrepreneurs compel some Chinese companies to produce sub-standard goods and Chinese companies consent because they do not want to lose good business.¹¹⁹

*"It is a real problem for a product that is say 10 dollars (about N1500) of standard quality, some of the Nigerian entrepreneurs went to China, and asked the host to make it thinner and cheaper,"*¹²⁰

Kun said

*At the beginning, some of the Chinese companies were very reluctant to produce for them. But later, you know they are entrepreneurs, they want to make money. These host factories don't want to make or produce for them. Finally, they (Nigerian entrepreneurs) went to many factories, at least they can find one or two factories to make sub-standard goods and they bring it back to Nigeria,*¹²¹ Kun added.

CHALLENGES TO QUALITY CONTROL IN NIGERIA

Constant military interventions; Even though SON was established after Nigerian/Biafran Civil War by the regime of Gen. Yakubu Gowon through Decree No. 56 of 1971 and charged with the responsibility of developing and enforcing product and processing Standards successive military regimes in Nigeria only pay lip service to the fight against substandard products in Nigeria without a political will to evolve policies that will strengthen the regulatory body to enable it discharge its statutory functions.

Constant military interventions in Nigeria have been the bane of Nigerian politics, by extension, Standard Organisation of Nigeria. It has resulted to political and policy instabilities as it relates to evolving policies that will strengthen SON in its efforts to discharge its statutory functions of eradicating fake and substandard products in Nigeria.

Ethnicism: Chief H.O. Davis defined tribalism as making "a fetish of one's own tribe and to support members of that tribe at all times whether they are right or wrong."¹²² Continuing he said that

It follows that a tribalist is the fellow who sees nothing but good in his tribe's people; supports, defends and

encourages his tribesman even if he is palpably wrong; who joins in a fight for no reason than that someone is fighting a member of his tribe, who as minister, Board chairman or manager award jobs, contracts or scholarships on the basis of origin and not on merit, efficiency or entitlement such as one is a tribalism. To him, the highest slogan is; my tribe right or wrong¹²³

Even though tribalism is a derogatory usage of Ethnicism or nationalism as being used by the Western and European nations, it carries the same meaning with Ethnicism. Ethnicism is one major hindrance to national integration and the effective fight against substandard products in Nigeria. This is because political appointments are made in Nigeria based on ethnic considerations and not merit. This militates against the efficient and effective fight against substandard Products in Nigeria.

Even political parties were formed along ethnic lines and political elites exploited it to their advantages to garner supports for themselves even when they are mismanaging the nation's resource and corruptly enriching themselves they still drum support for themselves especially from ethnic groups. This has led to;

Poor funding: The implications of poor funding of Standard Organization of Nigeria which is the regulatory agency charged with standardization of products in Nigeria is its inability to effectively and efficiently discharge its statutory functions. SON as a regulatory agency must have well trained and adequate staff, accredited and standard laboratories, inspection vehicles, offices in all the cities and rural communities, field workers and mobile security personnel to be able to cover entire factories and markets in Nigeria. It is only through on-site investigation and inspection of factories that compliance with standard specifications can be guaranteed in domestic production. The attainment of such goals entails provision of adequate funds for coordination of her activities across the country. Therefore the impact of paucity of funds on the implementation of her statutory mandate on products standardization can not be over emphasized.

The table below shows that SON is among the least in terms of Federal Government funding for regulatory agencies and commissions. As a body responsible for quality control adequate funding will not only save lives but salvage losses by Nigerians for patronizing substandard products. The place of adequate funding for procurement of utility vehicles, offices, laboratories, recruitment and remuneration of adequate and qualified manpower for factory inspections and quality regulations cannot be over emphasized. SON as a bureaucratic organization can only be effective and efficient when the necessary funds for procurement of materials for implementation of its duties are made available. Unfortunately in Nigeria given

available evidence, the reverse remains the case. Products standardization entails on site inspection, and participation at the factory level, to ensure that materials and items of production conform with the approved Nigerian industrial and mandatory standards. This includes investigations into the quality of facilities, products and issuance of certification mark.

The Director General, SON, Dr Joseph Odumodu, in an interview noted that shortfall in manpower needs of the organization poses great challenge in ensuring that producers comply with standard specifications. He attributed the shortfall to inadequate allocation from Federal government to SON. He remarked that it is hard to spot how the situation will improve considering the level of manpower working for the SON for the entire spectrum of trade and manufacture in Nigeria. He asserted that there are about 1500 people working for SON and if such number is distributed to all the markets in Nigeria, it will be very few that they will not be able to do anything not to talk of being effective at the grass root level, where most of the factories are located.

An organization that parades 1500 personnel, can handily inspect all the factories more or less constitute a viable force in the implementation of standards related offenses in Nigeria. Besides inadequacy in terms of number, the required expertise and training are lacking which means greater percentage of the staff are field workers and administrative staff.

This left much to be desired in terms of the technical advice and role skilled personnel are meant to render to government and corporate bodies in relation to standard regulation. Besides manpower needs, adequate and internationally accredited laboratories are strategic in products standardization because the quality of materials and items of production could only be ascertained when subjected to analysis in those laboratories. Unfortunately SON, has just one (1) laboratory which even fall below international standards for the whole spectrum of markets, trade and manufacture in Nigeria. The organization recently acquired additional three (3) through Federal Government – UNIDO Partnership Programme, while establishment of metrology laboratory in Abuja is on top gear.

Admitting the poor performance of SON in implementation of her mandate Odumodu noted that even with waning public confidence in the agency, it is hard to imagine SON becoming irrelevant in Nigeria.¹²⁴ He however expressed worry over how SON can operate effectively within international standards given absence of accredited laboratories in Nigeria that should support ascertaining the conformity of products to regulated standards. According to him, the National Accreditation Service is considering setting up more laboratories in addition to the four already in operation, although they have not received international accreditation. Albeit, apart from the identity crisis facing the laboratories, they fall short of 80 and 60 accredited laboratories in Egypt and Ghana respectively. The inadequacy and non

accreditation of the existing laboratories is not only hampering standardization of domestic production by SON, but constitute a challenge for the organization to subject imported goods to quality test. Odumodu noted that given the absence of international accredited laboratories, the SON do not have the right to pick up a product that is coming from either China or India and declare such substandard. This owed to the fact that those scientists who work with standard bodies will insist that if you test a product in two or more standard laboratories, the product will yield same result:

*... the point is that if a laboratory is not accredited to certain ISO call ISO 17025, then such a laboratory does not have a basis especially in international trade facilitation to say that this product does not meet standards. Because they can challenge you on the basis that the laboratory used to test does not even meet the minimum standards of a testing laboratory.*¹²⁵

Closely related to the challenge posed by few and unaccredited laboratories, the Laboratories and staff offices are poorly equipped. It is equally glaring that the presence of SON are not felt in most cities, markets and rural areas where most of the domestic productions are done. Despite fewness of offices, the available ones are poorly staffed and equipped given paucity of funds. This is evidenced from paltry 1500 personnel in the employment of the organization. This must have accounted for shortfall in factories inspectors and apparent absence of SON officials in markets in Nigeria. As noted earlier, implementation of standard specifications requires the presence and onsite inspection of production by staff of SON. This entails mobilization of field workers while materials must be made available. Unfortunately these items are in short supply, thereby retarding supervisory roles of the agency.

It is regretful to note that combined effects of poor funding account for high prevalence rate of substandard products in Nigeria. This is evidenced by the shameful scene of all kinds of poor quality goods and products that litter our open markets, shops, super markets, chemists and other retail shops. These fake and adulterated products span across all classes and categories of items including but not limited to drugs, household electrical/electronic appliances and equipment, building materials, automobiles and machine parts, food and beverages. The Director General of SON, Dr Joseph Odumodu in a Forum in Abuja, organized by Senate Committee on Trade and Investment, on the scourge of substandard products in the country noted that “statistics from a survey we conducted in 2011 showed that an estimated annual loss to substandard products may be in excess of N I trillion”¹²⁶. The foregoing discussion has demonstrated the implications of poor funding of the organization on the implementation of its statutory roles, especially on products standardization.

Table I: Federal Government Statutory Allocation to Standard Organization of Nigeria, 1999-2014

Years	13	MD A	Total personnel Cost	Total overhead cost	Total recurrent	Total capital	Total allocation
1999	12		7117768581	180404110	892172691	3411714	926684405
2000	0222002		745957290	182914603	928871893	36605314	965477207
2001	0222002		7773573396	185603412	959176808	38312412	997489220
2002	0222002		807753464	199413142	1007166606	40314511	1047481117
2003	0222002		880974026	203611744	1084585776	42904162	1127489932
2004	0222002		950936220	213144608	1164080828	43409112	1207489940
2005	0222002		1013263203	233411603	1246674806	45814926	1292489732
2006	0222002		1091361341	245166185	1336527526	45962414	1382489940
2007	0222002		1129891629	296224714	1426116343	46369205	1472485548
2008	0222002		1220259860	299614810	1579874670	47612808	1567487478
2009	0222002		1319013419	301412617	420426036	47658412	1667484448
2010	0222002		1410248256	309141111	1719389366	48098412	1767487778
2011	0222002		1496407951	319727525	1816135476	51352302	1867487778
2012	0222002		1587960009	315190245	190150254	5252302	1955502556
2013	0222002		182062916	319140664	2142203580	56405192	2198608772
2014	0222002		1820112986	324140612	2144253598	59914600	2204168198

Source: Budget Office of the Federation, Federal Ministry of Finance, 2014.

From the above table, it is obvious that the allocations to SON have not significantly increased despite expansion of their Scope of mandate in 2001 by their ejection from Nigerian ports. The director General of the organization, Dr. Joseph Odumodu noted this, when he opined that SON needs to be brought back to the ports. He remarked that it is obvious that outside the ports, SON lacks the capacity in terms of work force, facilities, logistics and even the legal framework to meet the challenges posed by the menace. He called for more funding for the organization to enable it build laboratories and recruit the needed manpower for effective implementation of standard specification of standard specification in product manufacturing.¹²⁷ **The table below further demonstrates under funding of SON when compared with sister agencies in Nigeria.**

Table II: Federal Government Budgetary Allocations to Agencies in 2014

S/N	Agency	2014 Allocation
1.	Petroleum Technology Development Fund	N50bn
2.	Petroleum Products Pricing and Regulatory Agency	N6.4 billion
3.	Ajaokuta Steel Company	N 3.9 billion
4.	National Iron Ore Mining Company	N 1.5 billion
5.	The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission	N 10.2 billion
6.	Independent Corrupt practices and other Related offenses commission	N 4.6 billion
7.	National Salaries and Wages Commission	N 890 million
8.	Nigerian Investment Promotion Council	N 688 million
9.	Fiscal Responsibility Commission	N 595 million
10.	National Board for Technical Education	N 1.4 billion
11.	National Commission for Colleges of Education	N951.7 million
12.	Federal Character Commission	N2.2 billion
13.	Gurara Water Management Authority	N224. 5 million
14.	Nigeria Integrated Water Resources Management Commission	N382 million
15.	National inland Waterways Authority	N7.9 billion
16.	Commercial Law Department	N127 million
17.	Centre for Automotive Design and Development	N2.2 billion
18.	Standard Organization of Nigeria	N1.4 billion
19.	National Orientation Agency (NOA), National Institute for Cultural Orientation	N1.4 billion
20.	National Troupe and the National Theatre	N601 million
21.	National Galley of Arts	N1.6 billion
22.	Energy Commission of Nigeria	N 2.4 billion
23.	National Productivity Centre	N934 million
24.	National Directorate of Employment	N 5.4 billion

25.	National Research Institute for Chemical Technology	N1.93 billion
26.	National Poverty Eradication Programme	N1.8 billion
27.	Federal Road Safety Commission	N30.1 billion
28.	National Action Committee on Aids	N2.15 billion
29.	Nigeria Telecommunication Satellite	N 3.3 billion
30.	Consumer Protection Council	N685 million
31.	National Biotechnology Development Agency	N1.6 billion
32.	Nigerian Copyright Commission	N768 million
33.	Voice of Nigeria	N.276 million
34.	Directorate of Technical Aide Corps	N 2.76 million
35. R	Rural Electrification Agency	N8.2 billion

Source: Budget Office of the Federation, Federal Ministry of Finance 2014

The table above shows that SON is among the least in terms of Federal Government funding for regulatory agencies and commissions. As a body responsible for quality control, adequate funding will not only save lives but salvage losses by Nigerians for patronizing substandard products.

The place of adequate funding for procurement of utility vehicles, offices, laboratories, recruitment and other needs of the agency cannot be over emphasized.

The challenge of opportunism:- There are those who should not have anything to do with managing the resource of the nation but due to the fact that they find themselves at the top in the national level only concerned themselves on how to get their own national cake instead of how to bake the cake for the benefit of the nation, this inevitably leads to wastes of resources and the promotion of ethnic parochial interests

Mediocrity as against Merit and quality in employments and appointments : - Those that are not qualified for a position are allowed to hold such a position while those duly qualified are left out. We sacrifice merit on the altar of ethnicity, religious sentiments and political affiliations. This lowers the quality of productivity and leads to political instability as the qualified individuals feel discontented on the happenings in governance and polity. Round peg are placed in a square hole resulting in inefficiency and ineffectiveness of the regulatory authority, agitations and political instability.

Government Policy Summersaults: - Inconsistent government policies on Standardization help to enhance the influx of substandard products into the country. Constant change of government and failure of successive governments to continue the policies of their predecessors, not being committed to policies that encourage industrializations in Nigeria, (eg) lack of basic infrastructures, environmental pollutions and degradation, neglect etc helps dot fuel problems in the Niger Delta. Riots, strikes by Labour Unions, etc due to various government policies are some of the causes of political instabilities.

Corruption:- The negative effect of corruption in Nigeria is one of the major challenges facing the eradication of Substandard products in Nigeria. According to Ota Ejitu Nnechi, *“The United Nations Development Programme, defined corruption as the misuse of public power, office or authority for private benefit through bribery, extortion, influences pedaling, nepotism, fraud or embezzlement.”*¹²⁸

Although corruption is often seen as a sin of government, it also prevails in the private sector. Black law dictionary define corruption as

*“The act of doing something with intent to give some advantage in consistent with officials use of station or office to procure some benefits either personally or for someone else, contrary to the rights of others.”*¹²⁹

In every facet of Nigerian society, corruption seems to be the other of the day. In fact, it is almost getting to a stage where it can be said to be a norm in Nigeria. Corruption can be found in both political and economic life of Nigeria. The phenomenon of massive corruption and its institutionalization as a key element of statecraft goes far back in Nigeria’s history. Corruption was major excuses for the over throw of the first Republic led by Alhaji Tafawa Balewa Regime, Gen. Yakubu Gowon’s regime, Alhaji Shehu Shagari’s Regime, Gen. Mohamadu Buhari’s Regime, Gen. Badamosi Babangida’s Regime, Gen. Sani Abacha’s regime to mention but a few. Every regime in Nigeria has also been implicated in massive corrupt practices and so Standard Organization of Nigeria can not be left out in the ravaging cancerous grip of corruption.

Right from the colonial period to the present, corruption has been part of Nigerian history. All the military intervention in Nigeria has always given corruption as their primary reasons for toppling regimes of their predecessor. Corruption is a deep rooted social phenomenal problem that not only effect political office holders but the civil service. The culture of impunity, primitive acquisition of wealth, in searchable accumulation of wealth, sycophancy, sacrificing , merit, and competency on the altars of mediocrity, ethnocentric, religious considerations and other primordial considerations and poor reward system, are some of the reason for military interventions.

Nigerian political elites are not seeing politics as a call to service to the people but an investment that demands gains and profits. They effectively collaborate with their business counter parts and corrupt civil servants to corruptly enrich themselves. Because of their economic interest which they protect at all cost, using ethnicity and religion. Nigeria political elites are mostly the mediocre of society, the huge revenues from oil, and other internally generated revenues are corruptly appropriated by Nigeria Political elites and their collaborators using their political power, and their privileged position. Political struggles in Nigeria only serve the political interest of the political gladiators; the seemingly political rivalries between the political gladiators irrespective of their tribe are purely a struggle and rivalry for economic aggrandizement. The citizens are then subjected to abject poverty. That is why ASUU observed that:-

“As a result of the anti-people of Nigeria’s rulers in the successive as government, the crises of insecurity, poverty, corruption, decay of social services and national disgrace international circles have escalated”¹³⁰

These have helped to encourage political instabilities in Nigeria.

ASUU added

.....It is a matter of ordinary human psychology that those who have benefited immensely and who derive political power from fraud are morally politically and other wise too weakened and too comprised to deal ruthlessly with corruption. Unfortunately in Nigeria, morally and politically compromised leaders determine who is not and this created severe credibility problems and handicaps in the struggle to defeat the career of corruption.¹³¹

- **Poverty:** - Poverty helps to make the fight against substandard products ineffective. The growing discontent of the citizenry as a result of their inability to meet their basic needs of food, shelter and clothing for themselves and dependants resulted to some dubious individuals getting involved in production and circulation of substandard products. Asobie opined that

In qualitative terms, poverty in Nigeria has come to assume many manifestations and dimensions. It manifests as both joblessness and deprivation of pensions and gratuity for the retired workers; as homelessness and lack of food; an economic dependence at adult age, inability to fend for self and therefore a loss of human dignity¹³²

Our political leaders due to their affluent life style because of corrupt self enrichment find it difficult to understand that the citizens are suffering in abject poverty. Asobie observes that :

the fraudulent accumulation process has resulted over time in the progressive and phenomenal enrichment of Nigerian rulers (both civilian and military), the emptying of national treasury and the ineptness of the country almost to the point of bankruptcy, hence the critical death of resources for investment on the social economic and overall cultural development of the masses of our people. Nigeria is therefore in a paradoxical situation in which the scandalous, almost legendary, wealth of key ruling class results to unspeakable mass poverty, misery and degradation of the Nigerian people. This has in turn, brought about a situation of potential and actual violent confrontation between the minority plurals and the majority paupers and destitution... this situation is also highly productive at the attitudinal level of mass cynicism about and distrust of the political elites and constitutes a major factor in the persistence of inter and intra-communal disunity, antipathy and strife, as well as the progressively worsening problem of political and social instability. Successive governments in Nigeria have failed in utilizing the rich resources in the country to fast track 9the politico-socio cultural cum economic) sic development of the country.¹³³

Youth Unemployment: Unemployment is one of the causes of production and distribution of substandard products in Nigeria. When graduates of post secondary school leavers were unable to be gainfully employed, there is the tendency that they will channel their energy in anti-government activities, crime, and all what not to make ends meet. This is so because they will be venerable to the political antics of political gladiators who will in turn use them as a willing tool to achieve their selfish economic interests. Their unemployment status or condition makes them to fell discontent with the government in power.

Efficient use of Bureaucracy: The term bureaucracy was first coined by Vincent de Gourmay, an economist from France. He developed the concept from the term “bureaumania”, which stands for a set of practices that constrained public administration in France. According to him bureaucracy suggests routine, constrained behaviour and inefficiency. Since the invention of the concept in 1765, Max Weber (1864 – 1920), Karl Marx and Baronde Grimm in their separate works expanded the concept into a theory for explaining the operation of

modern large – scale enterprises in the political, administrative and economic realms. Bureaucracy connotes two usages and interpretations. **First**, it refers to a collective word for a body of administrative officials. It is a set of regulations drawn by governments to control activity, usually in large organizations and governments. It is represented by a standardized procedure that dictates the execution of all processes within an institution. It equally refers to the way in which the administrative implementation of legal rules is socially organized. **Secondly**, bureaucracy stands for inefficiency and an improper exercise of power on the part of officials, and thus has become a term of abuse. However Max Weber (1864 – 1920) who founded the modern sociological study of bureaucracy, freed the term from pejorative connotation, and emphasized its indispensability for the rational attainment of the goal of an organization. According to Weber, bureaucracy in simple term implies that in an ideal sense the most efficient and rational organization is that in which there is clearly defined hierarchy of offices, each office with a clearly defined area of jurisdiction, each office filled by an individual tested to possess the highest technical qualifications and the entire set of offices linked together by a system of rules, procedures and impersonal relationship. Weber developed the model as a reaction against personal subjugation, nepotism, cruelty and subjective judgment which passed for managerial practices in the early days of industrial revolution. He believed that bureaucracy provides an ideal weapon to harness and routinize human and mechanical energy which fuelled the industrial revolution. He firmly believed that everything about an organization should help in achieving its goals. His views of bureaucracy were thus internally oriented. External pressures on bureaucracies were viewed by Weber as a threat to the organisation's pursuit of its goals.

Weber identified basic elements of bureaucracy to include: formal hierarchical structures, management by laws, division of labour, impersonality, and merit based recruitment, remuneration and growth in service.

Weber concluded that bureaucracy permits the logical division of organization into different functional departments. People can specialize in their respective fields and show improved performance. Thus bureaucracy brings rationality to an organization, which means that judgments are made according to objective and generally agreed upon criteria. Furthermore, by structuring the duties, responsibilities and reporting relationship in command hierarchy, bureaucracy provides form or substances to an organization. Such logical structuring of activities brings about orderly execution of assigned task. The rules, regulations, training, specialization, structure and other elements of bureaucracy enable it to provide predictability and stability to an organization. Above all, bureaucracies advise government officials and implement policies.

Given this study, the theory of bureaucracy dictates that attainment of efficiency and effectiveness in implementation of organizational roles, resources must be in adequate supply. In this respect, such resources include standard and accredited laboratories, offices, skilled and knowledgeable manpower, utility vehicles, above all proper funding to enhance staff moral and meet other logistics needs of the organization. Large scale business organizations strive better when the above resources are amply supplied. The effectiveness and efficiency of bureaucracies depends on the supply and coordination of resources needed for the attainment of organizations goals.¹³⁴

Unfortunately despite these elaborate mandate evidences abound of importation and domestic production of substandard, adulterated and counterfeit products in Nigeria, thereby indicting the organization. The birth of fourth republic in 1999, with the attendant neoliberal reforms, increased influx of foreign direct investment, which in turn stimulated domestic production. Such reforms equally stimulated massive importation of goods into the country. However to facilitate goods clearance and eliminate ports congestion, SON was ejected from Nigerian Sea and Air ports in 2001 by Chief Olusegun Obasanjo's regime. The ejection of the organization from major entrance routes expanded her scope of mandate thereby necessitating additional and commensurate funding. Unfortunately evidences generated indicated that available fund at the disposal of the Organization do not match her responsibilities, thereby inhibiting implementation of her statutory mandate. According to Director General of SON, Dr Joseph Odumodu, the organization is struggling to cope with her responsibilities owed to poor funding from Federal Government.¹³⁵ The poor revenue base confronting the organization was orchestrated by no matching statutory allocations to the organization since 2001, when the agency was ejected from major entrance routes: sea and air ports moreover the SON Act 2004 cap 59 LFN, equally placed a limit to income accruable to the organization from services, it renders to corporate organizations, persons and government. While fines realized from implementation of sanctions over violation of standard specifications go to the Police and Court.

Dr. Dele Cole noted that SON has four laboratories to examine all the qualities of all the goods coming into Nigeria: Two in Lagos, one in Enugu, and one in Kaduna. The law requires that all manufactured goods in Nigeria should have a Standard Organisation of Nigeria (SON) registration number or certificate. Products may have an e-registration numbers. The procedures for these are clearly spelt out. Some of the proud achievements SON claims are that it now has three new cement standards, 32.5, 42.5, and 52.5 grades for various kinds of usage for making blocks, casting and bridge construction. Steel strengths are also certified by SON as well as thousands of building materials. A quick look at a list of what SON says they have standards for is absolutely bewildering.

He observed that various paints including paints for automobile vehicles, sausage rolls, extruded puffed corn snacks, fruit drinks, and medication soap, soft drinks, mineral based oils, ball pens, hair conditioning creams and over 20 other creams, polyurethane foams, biscuits, plastic containers, milk, kerosene, aero fuels, diesels, premium motor spirits etc. There are thousands of other standards.

Explaining further he stated that it does not take too much imagination to realise that for Standard Organisation of Nigeria (SON) to do its work properly it has to be a gigantic organisation. Thankfully there are many internationally accepted standards by international organisations to which Nigeria belongs. Most of these standards are simply applied. But for manufacturers of products in Nigeria, including well known brands these still have to meet the standards of SON.

But what stops goods not up to standards to be imported into Nigeria? Originally, SON was at the ports to check standards but lately they have been withdrawn. SON also is empowered to carry out market surveys to see whether what is sold meets standards. To do this, the SON should have an army of inspectors and vehicles to send out and collect goods for examination in their laboratories.

Some of the regional offices of SON (there are only four) have two vehicles to be used by few inspectors. Moreover, public awareness campaigns are necessary as the public know little about SON. Just testing the number of pure water makers in Lagos alone would demand a lot of people. Or testing the various fuels used in Nigeria must be a mammoth task, even before adding the plethora of creams and tooth pastes, soft drinks and other beverages.

Technically, there should be no substandard goods in Nigeria if SON is working efficiently. It knows where most of the substandard goods come from into Nigeria: ideally our inspectors or eyes should be in and on those countries. There are a whole lot of substandard goods in Nigeria, especially electrical goods, some of which may lead to death – wires used for buildings, steel rods that are substandard, long life bulbs which are not long life; everyone has had experience of buying goods which are below standards.

Standard Organisation of Nigeria (SON) needs to train its inspectors better, and the Nigerian factor must be exterminated in the organisation. Our importers deliberately bring in substandard goods and pharmaceuticals (NAFDAC). Even the factories in Nigeria cut corners and produce below standard goods; palm oil makers are now introducing some chemicals to make the oil redder!

The Standard Organisation of Nigeria (SON) with all these powers, like all the other organisations listed in the beginning of this article, cannot undertake an investigation on quality unless a complaint was made to it.

He narrated how a few years ago Toyota and Volkswagen made confessions about mechanical defects in their vehicles. There was a world wide recall of their vehicles to replace the malfunctioning parts. Nothing happened in Nigeria. When I tried to find out why, I was told that I had to complain before SON could go after the vehicles in Nigeria. I could not understand how a matter that was in international reports needed a further report from me to galvanise SON into action. There was not one organisation or car dealer that the owners of defective cars had recourse even when the manufacturers had claimed responsibility. The consumer associations said nothing, civil liberties were quiet. The Minister of Foreign Affairs said nothing, nor did either of the ministers of trade or industry. How can Nigeria be taken seriously when someone who had sold a lemon to Nigerian consumers admits it and writes to get a refund and no one goes because the officials responsible could not care less? He queried.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

SUMMARY

The well-articulated objectives and strategies of the Nigerian economic policy were designed to encourage accelerated, sustainable industrial development. Unfortunately, certain things went wrong in the 1980s resulting in a situation today where much of Nigerian industrial capacity had been lost. Nigeria have become a nation of importers and consumers of any thing made around the world, more painfully too, the dumping in Nigeria of substandard goods which the country are in position to produce in this country if standardization is allowed to take it's orderly position in all aspects of our lives. The country (public and private organisations inclusive) should agree on the need to reverse the trend for better. The dream can only be realized if the operatives and every Nigerian citizen appreciate and commit energies to satisfying the imperatives of doing orderly and sustainable business in today's global village. Those that have no business to be in a business must not be there. This indeed can only be achieved when the rules of the game are standardized and effectively, and in some cases in fact, painfully implemented. Quality of product and service is the key word and the consumer must decide always to insist on what gives value for money. Nigeria today is a society of waste of both material and human resources due to the prevalence of sub-standard products and services in Nigeria's socio-economic activities. Business cannot survive in such an environment. The road to reaching the consumer is highly competitive yet it is the key to doing successful business. Consumer requirements must be satisfied fully all the time. Thus, management of Nigerian economy (and indeed the quality of Nigerian product at every level of human endeavors) through the effective application of standards must once again become a key to the way forward for the nation. The SON is very poised and determined to assist businesses to become competitive and successful through its various standardization schemes and functions. SON is also proud to have contributed to the development of many industrial organizations today. What SON need is everybody's cooperation and encouragement in this difficult and challenging task. It is very possible that Nigerians can make things change for better. Nigerians can copy the American spirit of enterprises, which says: "if they can do it we can do it also".

CONCLUSION

A nation's economy can be likened to human body made up of net work of organs

- blood
- veins
- bones

The critical index of the body to function is the blood. The critical index of diverse socio-politico cum cultural and economic, activities in any nation is standardisation. The economic growth matrix of a nation ramifies all aspect of live: e.g. individual, communities, groups, the polity, sectoral activities (public and private) etc. Economic growth matrix of a nation includes activities of government, regulatory agencies, private corporate organisations, public - private partnerships etc. In today's scenario, economic growth of nations still revolve around government and governance, its institutions, its regulatory organs. It is so because in government resides instrument of the state: economic, political, judicial, military, etc. Old economic experience shows that Governments run affairs of state and also run business of state. However, in new economic trend all over the world, states are separating themselves from direct participation in economy allowing organised private sector participation. It is found that it is economically unviable for government to be in business and regulate at same time. Governments today play the crucial role of building institutions, capacities, enabling frameworks and developing infrastructures. Whereas regulatory organs and agencies (e.g. SON, NAFDAC, NDLEA etc) , commissions and judiciary ensure that guidelines, procedures, processes are adhered to and sustained, while military and other security agencies ensure integrity and sovereignty of the state. The police of the economy are customs and immigrations and they have direct impact as they contribute huge revenues to nation's coffers along side the organised private sector (OPS). In recent trends, economy of nations have increasingly been vested on the organised private sector (OPS) in modern times the organised private sector (OPS) cover diverse activities like financial services, production activities, service delivery etc the organised private sector (OPS) are private entrepreneurs who create wealth, drive economic development global dynamics of economic development: last century shows that the world is inching closer together. Economic boundaries almost obliterated. The reasons include information superhighway, trade liberalisation through WTO, emergence of rapid economic alliances such as: EU (European Union), ECOWAS (West Africa), SADEC (South Africa), ASEAN (Asian Tigers) NAFTA (America, Mexico Canada. These coupled with WTO enormous pressure on economies of countries e.g. developing countries. The results are that economies are now in a struggle for sustainable portion of world resource.

For effective sustainability there is a need for higher aggregate trade and productive activity to be more than consumption and demand to meet this need, Organised Private Sector becomes prime driver of economy and accelerated industrial and technological development. To meet the national economic and production out-put the nation must possess comparative advantage (competitiveness) at both domestic and international market place. Competitiveness is key and is related to Quality of the product, service and price (or value) of product /service effectiveness of delivery of same.

Economy becomes virile and competitive when all human endeavours that affect its business activities and performance are put into 'some desirable' level of control. This control will therefore include political (good governance) and socio-cultural factors that affect human existence

What this then means is that the economic survival of a nation now becomes more difficult to revive unless these primary and contributory factors are effectively managed but it is rife to say here that the standardisation of these factors borders on the extent of orderly arrangement and the effective execution of the same factors viz: Such factors *can simply be described as standardisation of processes, activities, and norms, legislation and the likes that affect the life of a nation*' Standardisation is mans own effort to specify the minimum that will assure quality in an orderly fashion

In most recent dispensation, quality has become most commonly used and most important word in all aspects of economy. In most recent dispensation, quality and industrial growth and management of international quality systems have knock-on effect of demanding an improvement in standardisation at both national and business level (e.g servicom).

Standards in industrial development in essence means that greater wealth and better living standards under any political system are closely connected with industrialization (necessitates standardisation)

Nigeria therefore invariably looks forward to: industrialization to give her a quantum leap and structural transformation in her quest for global competitiveness'. Nigeria therefore needs to design and implement planned (standardised or quality) policies and strategies for efficient and diversified industrial system standards in industrial GROWTH. Nigeria in order to regain competitiveness at domestic and international markets need to:

increase local value addition to raw materials and finished products (including education,regulatory, legal systems,etc.)

- Standards and Industrial GROWTH: this value addition = Standardisation and Quality assurance/Quality management system will play a significant role in Nigeria.

Standardisation is the process of fulfilling the economic requirements of quality management. It is the most important tool for ensuring the competitiveness of locally available products. (human and material)

Standardisation Ensures:

- Good wholesome, safe, nutritious food
- Shelter is safe and suitably built
- Clothing provides adequate protection in all climates

Ensures:

- Safe, efficacious drugs
- Ensures effective means of communication between manufacturer and the customer with regard to products composition, size, performance etc
- Customers are inspired with confidence in their expectations because Standardisation is Concerned with formulation, application of rules and norms in an orderly approach to a specific activity (even socio-cultural and political)

RECOMMENDATIONS

The roles of the industry, the government and the consumer in preventing the recurring failure of Quality Control/Ethics of production are synonymous with product liability and consumer protection activities in any society or community. The three are the essential elements for sustainable growth and policing of business practices in any society. The structure of one determines the essence and character of the other two. Despite the laws and technological developments, there is yet no foolproof manufacturing process that can guarantee a no-defect production regime. What matters is the degree of determination and commitment by manufacturers to aspire to the target of perfection and excellence for competitiveness, which in turn reduces the probability of the process and making of defective products. The need to reposition the organization so that it can cope with the global challenges and changes led to the appointment of Prof. John Ndanusa Akanya as the Director General of the Organization in 2001. He served the Organization from 2001 to 2011 and totally transformed it from a moribund organization to an organization ready to face global challenges.

In order words,

1. It is the willingness and determination of a producer to fairly beat its competitors in the overall satisfaction of consumer's expectations within the legal provisions. The industry/business should always incorporate the committal statements of meeting its quality and ethical obligation to the consumer and the law in its organizational policy or mission statements.
2. The government should ensure the enabling environment and rules for effective administration of the performance of both the industry and the consumer.
3. The consumer should make rational demands within the law and be conversant with his or her rights to seek and obtain redress.
4. On its part, the SON has provided and continues to improve on some of the outputs that will be required by the industry/business and the consumer to perform creditably well to the satisfaction of all stakeholders. The enabling Decree that established SON made it a peculiar organization that must enjoy the co-operation of government and the

private sector if it must make an impact and function effectively as it tries to respond to the socio- political and technological changes in a world that is fast becoming a global village. It must be allowed to perform its statutory functions.

5. **Better Funding to Challenges to Quality Control.** Poor funding of the organization undermined the implementation of its mandate on products standardization in Nigeria. This is responsible for unbridled production and circulation of substandard products within the country. Consequently the paper recommended improved funding to enable the organization recruit needed manpower, equip and establish more laboratories, open more offices across the country and procure more utility vehicles for implementation of its duties.
6. A better improved funding from the Federal Government and financing Standard Organization of Nigeria so that it can establish and partner with other Standard regulatory bodies of other countries to checkmate substandard products coming into the country.
7. A well equipped laboratory.
8. Human and man power capacity building.
9. Grass root sensitization on the dangers of substandard and counterfeit products in Nigeria, a better government/ private sector partnership in the fight against substandard and counterfeit products
10. making sure that any goods exported into this country receives a guarantee of its genuineness from the country of origin and stopping any good coming into the country with the inscription “FOR EXPORT ONLY” from entering into the country,
11. **Government must show a political will to weed out Substandard Products:** To stem the problem of fake and adulterated products, the government must show a lot of political will in assisting in the development of technology to manufacture most of the goods imported which are also vulnerable to adulteration and counterfeiting.
12. **Co-operate with other Regulatory and other related agents of government:** Regulatory agencies like SON, Nigerian Customs Service, CBN and others working at the ports and borders must also close ranks to thwart the antics of fraudulent Nigerian businessmen who collude with foreigners to import low-quality products into the country just to make profits at the detriment of consumers and the economy. These agencies should also take further steps to weed out officials engaged in compromising in the discharge of their duties. There should be an increase in awareness among consumers on how to identify fake products and who and where to report such offenders to.

13. **Government to create a better political, economic, and socio-cultural atmosphere for industrialists in Nigeria:** The government must also create an atmosphere where some of the multinationals who are based offshore and whose products are imported open plants in-country. These would also ensure additional job creation for Nigerians. Such atmosphere includes, an improved power generation and distribution to manufactures, better road and transportation network facilities and security of lives and property.
14. **Capacity Building:** The former Direction General of SON. Dr. Joseph Odumodu recognized the decline in the capacity of staff of the organization. He noted that:

...the organization need to build capacity. A lot of people in SON are very, very skilled, but I found out that down the line, these skills disappeared. So those other people that are down the line do not get the opportunity and we had to build capacity because we are expanding the scope for example, we are dedicating over 66 percent of our training budget on building capacity among the middle level manpower staff.
15. The enabling Decree that established SON made it a peculiar organization that must enjoy the co-operation of government and the private sector if it must make and impact and function effectively as it tries to respond to the socio- political and technological changes in a world that is fast becoming a global village. It must be allowed to perform its statutory functions. A better improved funding from the Federal Government, a well equipped laboratory, human and man power capacity building, grass root sensitization on the dangers of substandard and counterfeit products in Nigeria, a better government/private sector partnership in the fight against substandard and counterfeit products, making sure that any goods exported into this country receives a guarantee of its genuineness from the country of origin and stopping any good coming into the country with the inscription “FOR EXPORT ONLY” from entering into the country, and financing Standard Organization of Nigeria so that it can establish and partner with other Standard regulatory bodies of other countries to checkmate substandard products coming into the country.
16. **Government must show a political will to weed out Substandard Products:** To stem the problem of fake and adulterated products, the government must show a lot of political will in assisting in the development of technology to manufacture most of the goods imported which are also vulnerable to adulteration and counterfeiting.
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2	Abubarkar Jimoh,	Abuja	Mr	55	Civil servant	Personal interview	Direct	4 th May, 2018	Reliable
3	Abubarkar, Abdulahi	Abuja	Mr	55	Civil servant	Personal interview	Direct	5 th May, 2018	Reliable
4	Achukwu John	Abuja	Mr	45	Civil servant	Personal interview	Direct	5 th May, 2018	Reliable
5	Adamu, Usman	Abuja	Mr	42	Civil servant	Personal interview	Direct	4 th May, 2018	Reliable
6	Adegun, Samson Adebayo	Abuja	Mr	47	Civil servant	Personal interview	Direct	5 th May, 2018	Reliable
7	Agbenla, Oluwatoyin	Abuja	Mr	45	Civil servant	Personal interview	Direct	4 th May, 2017	Reliable
8	Agnamelo, Damian U.	Abuja	Mr	51	Civil servant	Personal interview	Direct	5 th May, 2018	Reliable
9	Ajede, Vincent	Lagos	Mr	48	Civil servant	Personal interview	Direct	17 th March, 2018	Reliable
10	Ajolayan A.S	Kaduna	Mr	53	Civil servant	Personal interview	Direct	15 th March, 2018	Reliable
11	Akanya John Nduanusa,	Abuja	Prof	66	Civil servant	Personal interview	Direct	4 th May, 2018	Reliable

12	Akoshile, Tosan Akin	Abuja	Mr	45	Civil servant	Personal interview	Direct	4 th May, 2018	Reliable
12	Aku, Prince Sunny	Lagos	Mr	61	Civil servant	Personal interview	Direct	17 th March, 2018	Reliable
13	Anago, Peter	Abuja	Mr	45	Civil servant	Personal interview	Direct	5 th May, 2018	Reliable
14	Aniebonam, Boniface	Lagos	Dr	67	Business man	Personal interview	Direct	17 th March, 2018	Reliable
15	Ayeni, Olremi	Abuja	Mr	36	Civil servant	Personal interview	Direct	5 th May, 2018	Reliable
16	Babalola, Julius Bayo	Lagos	Mr	61	Civil servant	Personal interview	Direct	17 th March, 2018	Reliable
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