

**Impact of National Directorate of Employment on Youth Empowerment  
and National Integration in Nigeria, 1986- 2021**

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**Abstract**

*This study examined the impacts of military rule in Nigeria, with specific consideration on the establishment of the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) in response to the mounting unemployment problems facing the country. The study interrogates the establishment of the scheme by the Babangida Military regime since 1986. The study evaluated the mechanisms of operation of NDE and highlighted the prospects and challenges of the scheme. It explored the controversial ideological perceptions of two diametrically opposed camps. The first camp considered the scheme a military tactic to win legitimacy, while the second camp saw it as a watershed moment in Nigerian history. Using a historical research method that relies on interviews from NDE beneficiaries and secondary source of data from books and peer-reviewed journals. The study concludes that NDE has achieved the set objectives of its establishment by reducing unemployment among the teeming youths of Nigerian who have been jobless and have no way out of the problem. It accomplishes this by providing job-related skill training and financial assistance to beneficiaries to start their businesses. The study recommends that proper funding, intensify their monitoring, and adequate facilities needs to be provides to improve the level of participation in the programme.*

**Keywords:** National Directorate of Employment (NDE), Nigeria, Training, Unemployment, Youth



## Introduction

The Nigerian military overthrew Shagari's democratically elected government in a coup on December 31, 1983.<sup>1</sup> Various reasons were advanced as to why the military had to carry out the coup. Nigerian politicians failed to learn from their predecessors during the First Republic (1960-1966). The Nigerian political system is characterised by corruption and misappropriation of public funds. This resulted in the 1983 military coup, which installed Major General Mohammadu Buhari and Brigadier Tunde Idiagbon in power. The duo's military administration implemented radical tactics to instil discipline in Nigerians. The strategies for imposing strict discipline appear to have been too much for Nigerians to bear.<sup>2</sup> This prompted another coup on August 27, 1985, by General Badamosi Babangida.<sup>3</sup> Nigeria and its people were promised hope by the administration. The number of unemployed Nigerian youths was high at the time, and the Nigerian economy was in decline.

Due to the precarious situation, the government directed the National Manpower Board to conduct a survey of unemployed youths in 1986. The findings were alarming, as over two million youths, or 10% of the youth population, were discovered to be unemployed.<sup>4</sup> Despite government interventions, Nigeria's unemployment rate remained unabated from 1986 to 2015, the study period. For instance, the unemployment rate increased steadily from 8.5% in 1985 to 11.9% in 2005, 12.7% in 2007, 14.9% in 2008, 19.7% in 2009, 21.4% in 2010, and 23.9% in 2011. The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) confirmed this in its report, stating that 54% of Nigerian youths aged 15 to 35 were unemployed in 2012.<sup>5</sup> The situation of unemployment explains the reason that made the Babangida administration embark upon various economic measures to bring hope to Nigerians as well as to revamp the battered economy. This is with the understanding that youth unemployment breeds insecurity. Therefore, providing jobs for youths has been considered as an effective strategy to address some of society's problems, especially that of insecurity. As part of the effort, it was observed that from 1985 to 1999, Nigerian governments (military and civilian) embarked on various uncoordinated youth empowerment programmes in the hope of empowering

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<sup>1</sup>Emordi, E. C. *Military Rule, Human Security and the Nigerian State System*. Otoide, L. *History Unlimited: Essays in Honour of Professor Abednego Ekoko*, Benin-City: Mindex Publishing Company Limited, 2012, p.242.

<sup>2</sup>Oyeweso, S. *Causal Factors in the Nigerian Civil War: A Critical and Comparative Analysis of Some Nigerian Account*. (Unpublished MA's Dissertation) University of Ife, Nigeria, 1986, Pp.31-33.

<sup>3</sup>Gambo, K. (1994). *Badamosi Babangida, Military Career and Administration in Nigeria, 1975-1993*. MA Dissertation, Department of History Ahmadu Bello University, 1994, Pp.56-75.

<sup>4</sup>Anyebe, A. A. "An overview of National Directorate of Employment (NDE) and its mandate in Nigeria". *Saudi Journal of Business and Management Studies*, 1(2), 2016, p.52.

<sup>5</sup>Anyebe, A. A. "An overview of National Directorate of Employment (NDE) and its mandate in Nigeria". p.51.

youths for a better standard of living.<sup>6</sup> They identified ten youth development strategies, which include: developing youth skills; providing opportunities for physical, social, and mental development; providing better working opportunities; involving leadership training; providing recreational facilities; active participation in community service; providing micro-credit facilities; scholarship/bursaries; formation of organisations; and participation in decision-making processes. In Nigeria, the Youth Development Strategy has been a multi-sectoral issue and a vital welfare tool used to promote the nation's socioeconomic development, with several ministries involved. The Ministry of Youth Development has been the lead agency in the implementation of this strategy, with the Ministry of Labour and Productivity, which coordinates the National Directorate of Employment (NDE), also playing an important role. The Ministry of Youth Development was founded in 2007 with the aim of helping youths to be self-reliant and take on social responsibilities. The Ministry has been in charge of national youth policy, youth development programmes, youth activity funding, youth participation mobilisation, and management of the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) and the Citizenship and Leadership Program.

This study, on the other hand, focuses on Ibrahim Babangida's administration's efforts to establish the National Directorate of Employment in Nigeria. When Babangida came to power in 1985, the number of unemployed Nigerian youths was alarming. It became a source of concern for the military administration of Babangida, necessitating the implementation of appropriate counter-measures. According to Osakwe, General Badamosi Babangida's government established the National Directorate of Employment in 1987 to address the long-standing youth unemployment problem.<sup>7</sup> Thus, the purpose of this paper is to investigate the impact of NDE on youth unemployment, living standards, and productivity in Nigeria between 1986 and 2015.

### Conceptualization of Terms

To gain a better understanding of this study, it is necessary to conceptualise the key terms. Page and Czuba see youth empowerment as a multifaceted process that assists people in gaining control of their lives. Extrapolating from this scholar's concept, empowerment is a deliberate effort put in place by the government or a group of people embracing political, economic, and social programmes of equipping the youth to achieve set goals.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, youth empowerment is a process in which people learn to see a stronger connection between their goals and a sense of how to achieve them, as well as between their efforts and life outcomes.<sup>9</sup> A close examination of Page and Czuba's ideas reveals a kinship with Mechanic's perception.

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<sup>6</sup>Anyebe, A. A. "An overview of National Directorate of Employment (NDE) and its mandate in Nigeria". Pp.48-51.

<sup>7</sup>Osakwe, C. "Youth, Unemployment and National Security in Nigeria". International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences, 3(21), 2013, Pp.3-9.

<sup>8</sup>Page, N. and Czuba, C.E. "Empowerment, What is it?" Journal of Extension, Vol. 37, No.5, 1999, 3-9.

<sup>9</sup>Mechanic, D. "Adolescents at Risk: New Directions". A paper presented at the Seventh Annual Conference on Health Policy, Cornell University Medical College, 1991.

These scholars saw youths' empowerment as human creative efforts to help them achieve their goals in life. They went further to furnish our understanding that empowering the youth takes different forms. It can take the form of economic, intellectual, religious, military, social, and cultural efforts to enable them to achieve certain objectives for themselves and for the nation. From the above perceptions, we can deduce that youth empowerment entails creating opportunities to enhance the performance of youths for nation-building.

It is therefore pertinent at this juncture to give a brief insight into the concept of youth, which forms the nucleus of the concept under focus of this study. This certainly helps us to gain insights into the question of who the youths are in this study. The concept of youth does not lend itself to a generally acceptable definition. According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), youth is defined as a period of transition from childhood's dependence to adulthood's independence and awareness of being self-sufficient members of a community.<sup>10</sup> The United Nations (UN), on the other hand, defined youth based on statistical consistency across regions. Individuals between the ages of 15 and 24 were included.<sup>11</sup> This viewpoint is not prejudicial to other member states' definitions. The African Youth Charter defined youth as anyone between the ages of 15 and 35.<sup>12</sup> However, in the Federal Republic of Nigeria's Second National Policy Document, published in 2009, youths were defined as people aged 18 to 35.<sup>13</sup>

#### **The Establishment of National Directorate of Employment (NDE)**

The General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida administration established the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) in November 1986. It officially began operations in 1987. The effects of the 1980s economic recession influenced the formation of the Directorate. This had a negative impact on the global economy as a whole. There has been a significant reduction in capacity utilisation and, as a result, the outright closure of industries in Nigeria. Other macroeconomic policies of the time, such as the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), devaluation of the Naira, privatisation and commercialization of the economy, and so on, resulted in massive job losses in both the public and private sectors of the economy.<sup>14</sup> As stated in the National Directorate of Employment's (NDE) 2013 Annual Report, the unemployment rate rose dramatically in 1985 as a result of the previously stated situation.<sup>15</sup> As a result, the government was forced to take drastic measures in response to the

<sup>10</sup>UNESCO (2019). What do we mean by youth, 2016? Available at [www.unesco.org/new/en/soci al-theme-youth](http://www.unesco.org/new/en/soci al-theme-youth) Accessed 19 August, 2019.

<sup>11</sup>United Nations (2007). World Youth Report, 2007, Available at: <http://www.un.org>. Accessed, 8<sup>th</sup> May, 2019.

<sup>12</sup>African Youth Charter, African Union Commission, 2006, Addis Ababa.

<sup>13</sup>National Youth Policy Document (NYPD). Second National Youth Policy Document of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Available at: [www.youthpolicy.org-national-nigeria](http://www.youthpolicy.org-national-nigeria) Accessed, 24<sup>th</sup> July, 2019.

<sup>14</sup>NDE "Brief on the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) Available at: <https://nde.gov.ng/about-us/> Accessed on 23 June, 2021.

<sup>15</sup>Ofem, N.I. & Ayayi, A.R. (2008). Effects of Youth Empowerment Strategies on Conflict Resolutions in the Niger-Delta of Nigeria: Rural Development. Vol.6, No.1&2, 2008, Pp.139-146.

National Manpower Board's report of over two million unemployed youths in 1986.

As a direct response to the rising trend of unemployment, General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida's then-military government established the Chukwumah Committee, which was led by Mr. Stephen O. Chukwumah.<sup>16</sup> The committee was tasked with developing an interventionist solution to Nigeria's rising unemployment rates. According to the committee, the informal sector of the national economy is primarily made up of low-skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled workers. They made up roughly 90% of the workforce. As a result, skilled acquisition and training have risen to the top of the priority list for job creation.<sup>17</sup> Following the report of the Chukwumah Committee, the Federal Government established the NDE through Decree No. 34 of 1989, which was later replaced by ACT CAP 250 of the Laws of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999, as a sign of public acceptance.<sup>18</sup> The ACT authorised the Directorate to operate as a job creation agency with the following mandate: first, to design and implement programmes to combat mass unemployment; second, to articulate policies aimed at developing labor-intensive work programmes; and third, to obtain and maintain a data bank on employment and vacancies in the country with the goal of acting as a clearing house to connect job seekers with vacancies in collaboration with other governments.<sup>19</sup>

The Directorate was established for its operations in January 1987, and has a visible presence in all state of the Federation. To carry out her statutory mandate, the NDE established four (4) major areas of intervention for mass job creation for the unemployed, namely, the National Youth Employment Program, the Small-Scale Industrialist and Graduate Employment Program, the Special Work Program, and the Agricultural Program. In 1996, these four programmes were reorganised in 1996 into four skill development programmes: vocation skill development, entrepreneurship development, agricultural skill development, and public work programmes.<sup>20</sup> Due to the fact that NDE development takes on new forms and patterns on a regular basis, new innovative strategies are implemented on a regular basis to effectively address it. To that end, the agency's other innovations were successfully implemented within the four major areas of intervention.<sup>21</sup> The various job creation programmes developed by the NDE were designed to provide training in the critical skills required to make an unemployed person employable or self-employed.<sup>22</sup> As an incentive to foster an entrepreneurial spirit and create

<sup>16</sup>NDE "Brief on the National Directorate of Employment (NDE).

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

<sup>20</sup>Ukoha, I. I., Osuji, M. N., and Osuji, E. E. "Analysis of the Influence of the Skills Acquisition Programmes of the National Directorate of Employment on Job Creation in Abia State". Rep Opinion, Vol.6, No.3, 2014, Pp.45-50.

<sup>21</sup>Adebisi, T. A., & Oni, C. S. "Assessment of relevance of the national directorate of employment (NDE) training programmes to the needs of the trainees in Southwestern Nigeria". International Journal of Vocational and Technical Education, 4(3), 2012, Pp.29-37.

<sup>22</sup>Amire, C. M. and Ngwama, J. C. "Emergence of unemployment: An assessment of Nigeria Directorate of Employment (NDE) skill intervention programmes between (2005-2011)

wealth, self-employment was prioritised over paid employment. Furthermore, to support this concept, the Directorate made administrative soft loans to exceptional beneficiaries of their various programmes.<sup>23</sup>

To further strengthen the mass job generation efforts of the NDE, the Ahmed Joda Committee of 1999, formed primarily to streamline the activities of the country's various poverty alleviation agencies, classified the NDE's core activities as focusing on job generation training. However, funding assistance to graduates of her training programmes for supervised business start-up was limited to a few symbolic grants to test or demonstrate the efficacy of NDE training activities.<sup>24</sup>

### Structure of National Directorate of Employment

At the apex of the structure is the Management Board, which is chaired by the Honourable Minister of Labour and Productivity. While the Board is in charge of developing policies for the directorate's operations, the Ministry of NDE is overseen by the Federal Ministry of Labour and Productivity.<sup>25</sup> The NDE has offices in all 36 state capitals of Nigeria, as well as the Federal Capital Territory of Abuja. Furthermore, each Local Government Council Area has an NDE Desk/Liaison Officer who ensures that all employment generation schemes are adequately covered and implemented. To improve programme implementation and project monitoring, six zonal offices were established in the country's six geopolitical zones. A director manages each zonal office, and a state coordinator coordinates each state office. The target populations for NDE programmes are school leavers, tertiary institution graduates, matured people, people with special needs, women, prospective entrepreneurs, and artisans.<sup>26</sup>

The NDE is organised into four core programme departments and four supportive service departments that collaborate with the programme departments to ensure that the directorate's mandate is met. The service department of the NDE includes planning, research, and statistics; human resource management; finance and accounting; and an inspectorate. The information branch, the job centre, the women's employment branch, the information and public relations branch, the internal audit branch, the loan, property, utilities and resources centres, and the library are among the branches and units.<sup>27</sup> The NDE has been able to carry out its mandate through

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in Lagos State". *Journal of Economics and Sustainable Development*, Vol.6, No.5, 2015, Pp.188-199.

<sup>23</sup>NDE "Brief on the National Directorate of Employment (NDE).

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

<sup>25</sup>Ahmed, M. Y. "Impact Assessment of the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) on Job Creation in Plateau State, 2007-2015". Unpublished M.A Dissertation, Postgraduate School, ABU, Zaria, 2016.

<sup>26</sup>Adebayo, A.A. "Youth Unemployment and National Directorate of Employment Programme". *The Nigerian Journal of Economics and Social Studies*, Vol.41, No.1, 1999, Pp.31-102.

<sup>27</sup>Amupitan, O. "An assessment of the role of then national directorate of employment (NDE) in reducing graduate unemployment in Kaduna State (2005-2009)". Unpublished MSc Dissertation, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, 2011

the platform of the four key programmes listed below, which evolved from previous programmes.

*Vocational Skill Development Programme (VSD)*

This programme employs unskilled school leavers as trainees in informal sectors such as master-craft men and women.<sup>28</sup> These school leavers are assigned to them for a period of time long enough for the apprentice to learn the required skills. It also includes the use of well-equipped mobile workshops to train unemployed youth in rural areas where formal training facilities are lacking. The Vocational Skills Development Programme encompasses the National Open Apprenticeship Scheme (Basic and Advanced); School on Wheels; Vocational Skills for Physically Challenged and Vulnerable People; Partnership in Skills Training (PIST); and the Resettlement Loan Scheme.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>Odeh, M.A. & Okoye, C.O. Poverty Reduction and Youth Empowerment in Nigeria. Public Policy and Administration Research, 3(4), 2014, p. 98.

<sup>29</sup>NDE "Brief on the National Directorate of Employment (NDE).

*Small Scale Enterprises Programme (SSE).*

One of NDE's business training programmes is the small-scale enterprises programme. The Entrepreneurship Development Programme comes first, followed by business training for tertiary graduates, artisans, school leavers, and retirees (EDP). There is always involvement with the start-up and development training scheme (previously known as start your own business), the micro-business skill training scheme (previously known as Basic Business Training), and the advanced entrepreneurial development scheme. Second, a Loan Disbursement Scheme-Enterprise Creation Fund will be established; third, income-generating activity training for women will be provided; fourth, a common facility centre will be established; and, finally, collaboration with government agencies, multinational organisations, prominent individuals, and the community will be established.<sup>30</sup>

*Rural Employment Promotion Programme (REP).*

This organisation was established to pique the interest of unemployed youths in agriculture in order to capitalise on the enormous employment and wealth creation opportunities in the sector and, as a result, to halt the youths' rural-urban migration. The NDE established a youth agricultural training programme. Across the country, the Rural Agricultural Development Training Scheme (RADTS), Rural Handicraft Training Scheme (RHTS), Integrated Farming Training Scheme (IFTS), Post-RADT Training Scheme, and NDE Agricultural Park Project are all in operation.<sup>31</sup>

The NDE began the establishment of agricultural skill training centres across the country to improve the quality of RADTS training. Thousands of these structures have been constructed to help young people with their education.

*Special Public Work Programme (SPW).*

Furthermore, NDE identified infrastructure construction and maintenance as a potential source of labour. Following that, the International Labor Organization (ILO) introduced the NDE to the use of labour and light equipment for rural infrastructure construction and maintenance. The project was successfully pilot-tested by the NDE and was adopted as an effective employment strategy. The operational schemes under the SPW in general are the Graduate Attachment Programme (GAP), Environmental Beautification Training Scheme (EBTS), Solar Energy Development Training Scheme (SSETS), and Graduate Coaching Scheme (GCS).

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<sup>30</sup>NDE "Brief on the National Directorate of Employment (NDE).

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.



**The Achievements of National Directorate of Employment (NDE)**

The National Directorate of Employment (NDE) has had many successes in the history of youth empowerment in Nigeria. These accomplishments, however, are accompanied by a number of difficulties. Several scholars from various disciplines have attempted to investigate the impact of President Badamosi Babangida's and subsequent governments' National Directorate of Employment. According to some scholars, what could have been significant efforts were obscured by parochial and subjective tendencies. Idoko, for instance, claimed that Babangida's National Directorate of Employment accomplished nothing beneficial for Nigerians.<sup>32</sup>

Notwithstanding, the NDE programmes have had a significant impact on youth empowerment and national integration. They have made a significant contribution to addressing Nigeria's unemployment problem. Anyebe summarised its impact thus:

Over 2 million unemployed Nigerians have been trained by the NDE, and over 400,000 people have received business training, vocational training in up to 90 different trades, and assistance in starting their own businesses. The Directorate has formed labour organisations that have benefited 160,000 people.<sup>33</sup>

According to Umoh, as cited in Anyebe, an average of 108,000 people join NDE programmes each year, implying that after 30 years of operation, the agency would have directly created more than 3.2 million jobs in 2016.<sup>34</sup> If NDE had not been available, many of those who benefited would have been among the country unemployed. Furthermore, NDE stated in its official report that 599,405 people were empowered across the country between 2005 and 2009. Furthermore, according to the official report, 171,253 people benefited from NDE programmes and schemes nationwide in 2010, with 159,076 people benefiting from NDE in 2011.<sup>35</sup>

The success of NDE was also supported by Central Bank of Nigeria reports, which stated that the agency created over one million, two hundred and forty-eight hundred and nine (1,248,109) jobs in 1987. Non-graduates made up 137,200 of this number. It went on to say that by December 1990, the total number of jobs created had reached 776,813, the highest of any programme established by the previous administration for that purpose.<sup>36</sup> As a result, one could argue that the NDE has helped to reduce the high rate of unemployment among Nigerians.

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<sup>32</sup>Idoko, A. (21/06/2017). A retired Director at the National Directorate of Employment, Abuja, Personal interview.

<sup>33</sup>Anyebe, A. A. "An overview of National Directorate of Employment (NDE) and its mandate in Nigeria". p.51.

<sup>34</sup>Anyebe, A. A. "An overview of National Directorate of Employment (NDE) and its mandate in Nigeria". p.53.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid. p.51.

<sup>36</sup>Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN). 1988 Reports of the Central Bank of Nigeria.

Aside from the aforementioned, over two thousand youths were trained in a scheme established by NDE to convert waste to wealth. Waste management has been a major issue in many cities around the world. Similarly, in Nigeria, urban cities such as Lagos, Kano, Port Harcourt, Ibadan, and others were notorious for their waste accumulation problems until the NDE taught these groups of people how to turn waste into wealth. Apart from assisting in the cleaning of urban areas, it also provided thousands of job seekers with serious employment opportunities. Many of the trainees travelled to other towns and cities in Nigeria to put what they had learned into practise.<sup>37</sup>

Furthermore, in 1998, NDE established vocational training for approximately 36,400 Nigerian citizens in approximately eighty vocational centres under the National Open Apprentice (NOA) to cater for the less privileged Nigerian citizens nation-wide. The effects of NDE on national integration have also been studied. There were reports of several NDE skill acquisition programme beneficiaries migrating to other parts of Nigeria to establish their trades and train other NDE beneficiaries from tribes across the country. Master craftsmen serving as trainers are a prime example. It has also been observed that NDE recruitment policies do not discriminate based on religion or tribe, effectively acting as agents of integration by admitting beneficiaries from all over Nigeria.

### **The Impact of NDE on National Integration and Youth Empowerment**

In order to fulfil its mandate and promote national integration as well as youth empowerment, the NDE designed its training programmes with some factors in mind. NDE programmes have been influenced by the following factors:

- (1) The informal sector and the traditional apprenticeship system are being recognised as sources of self-employment;
- (2) The need to encourage young people to become self-employed and self-sufficient;
- (3) The majority of youths' disinterest in agricultural activities, which had previously been their traditional occupation;
- (4) Graduate youth's growing reliance on white-collar jobs; and
- (5) Due to the high rate of foreign exchange and the inability to procure construction machinery and equipment, governments are unable to maintain infrastructure assets across the country.

Using the aforementioned factors, NDE has promoted national integration and youth empowerment through a variety of programmes, the most notable of which is the provision of resettlement loans. Many scheme participants start businesses in places other than their hometowns. Some of the beneficiaries who were contacted confirmed the impact of NDE on national integration.

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<sup>37</sup>Ibid.

Mrs. Abiola Abidoye, who is from Osun State and has been trained for over 5 years by the NDE Women's Empowerment Branch (WEB) of the Small-Scale Enterprises, is a prime example of promoting integration. According to the interview, the NDE empowerment programme and the resettlement loan she received allowed her to establish her business, Break-forth J.A.M., in Kuje, Abuja, far from her home state. She has also participated on several occasions in the NDE exhibition programme at the Kaduna Trade Fair.<sup>38</sup>

Mr. Nelson Agbor, a Cross Rivers State native, is enrolled in the Vocational Skill Development Programme (VSD). He joined the Basic National Open Apprenticeship Scheme (B-NOAS) in 2005 and began learning how to make shoes. With a loan of ₦332,000 from the Resettlement Loan Scheme, he was able to start his own shoe manufacturing business in Masaka, Nassarawa State.<sup>39</sup>

The NDE resettlement loan scheme appears to have aided in increasing national integration, according to several beneficiary. The statistics of resettlement loan scheme beneficiaries are shown in the table below, which is taken from the 2013 NDE Annual Report.

**Fig 1: Distribution of Resettlement Loan Scheme Beneficiaries**

S/NO.	STATE	Number Resettled	Resettled Package
1.	Akwa Ibom	15	2,624,502.00
2.	Bauchi	18	2,323,650.00
3.	Borno	22	2,403,850.00
4.	Kano	15	2,125,427.00
5.	Kebbi	16	2,166,493.00
6.	Kwara	12	2,238,796.00
7.	Nasarrawa	15	2,326,447.00
8.	Ondo	4	465,648.00
9.	Osun	12	2,021,630.00
10.	Plateau	15	2,394,374.50
11.	Rivers	18	2,021,630.00
12.	Yobe	25	2,514,611.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>25,929.078.50</b>

**Source:** NDE Annual Report, 2013.

There are numerous examples of people who have benefited from NDE's various empowerment programmes. Mallam Hamisu M. Dauda, who received training through the Vocational Skill Development programme in 2011, was able to establish Hasmish GSM handset repair and sales in Bauchi State's Wunti market, Ningi LGA. He participated in the Resettlement Loan Scheme (RLS) and received a loan of ₦98,100 to help expand his six-person business.<sup>40</sup>

Lennard Welding and Metal Fabrication is also owned by Lennard Chibuike, a native of Rivers State Ahoada East Local Government Area. He participated in

<sup>38</sup>Abiola, A. (02/02/2021), Osun State, Personal interview.

<sup>39</sup>Nelson, A. (18/02/2021). Cross River State, Personal interview.

<sup>40</sup>Hamisu, M. D. (17/03/2021). Wunti Market, Bauchi State, Personal interview.

the Basic National Open Apprenticeship Scheme in 1989. (B-NOAS). He was also helped by the Resettlement Loan Scheme (RLS). He later rose to the position of NDE Master Trainer, with three people reporting to him.<sup>41</sup>In addition, Hamza Bala of Kano state benefited from the Vocational Skill Development Trainer's Capacity Upgrade (TCU) programme in 2007 and established his own business in Fagge, Kano, with a loan of ₦150,00 to improve his business. Since the inception of his company, he has employed over 50 people.<sup>42</sup>

John Kwalu-Paul is from Anaocha LGA, Anambra State. He has a science bachelor's degree and has been an NDE Master Trainer since 2000. In 2009, he participated in the NDE Basic National Open Apprenticeship Scheme of the Vocational Skills Development (VSD) Programme (B-NOAS). After completing the training, he was able to obtain personal loans from family and friends to start his catering and cosmetology businesses. The company has baking, catering, and cosmetology equipment. His company's headquarters are in Abakaliki, Ebonyi. Over 400 beneficiaries, the vast majority of whom are from NDE, have been trained by him. He employs 14 people and is currently training 100 students.<sup>43</sup>Through their investments, the aforementioned beneficiaries have helped to increase youth empowerment opportunities. They employed a diverse range of young people in the businesses they established as a result of their NDE training programmes and resettlement loan schemes.

In 2015, beneficiaries such as Hajiya Khadija Mohammed of Kebbi State received training through the Small-Scale Enterprise Basic Business Training Scheme. She used a ₦35,000 loan to start a fashion design business in Kebbi state, and she trained 6 employees.<sup>44</sup>Zainab Balarabe of Katsina State was another beneficiary of the NDE's Women's Employment Programme (WEP) in 2010 after completing her training programme. She received a loan of ₦35,000 to start her own business, and she now employs two apprentices in Katsina.<sup>45</sup>

Mrs. Eze Gladys of Aniocha LGA, Anambra State, was another NDE programme beneficiary. She has been an NDE Master Trainer since 2008, has an SSCE, and in 2008 she participated in the Mature People's Program (MPP) through Small-Scale Enterprises. She then established the Unity Brown Palm Oil Mill, a palm oil processing business that she ran with the help of various machines. She revealed that she has more than ten employees.<sup>46</sup> Agomuo Kelechi is a graduate with a Higher National Diploma from Abia State. He took part in the Start Your Own Business Scheme in 2011. He was able to establish his business in Umuahia with a staff of four people thanks to a ₦680,000 NDE resettlement loan.<sup>47</sup>In 2013, Rhoda Gani was another Micro Enterprise Enhancement Scheme recipient. She was given a loan of ₦20,000 right away to help her expand her business in Taraba State, where she now has three employees and one

<sup>41</sup>Lennard, C. (23/03/2021). Ahoada East, Rivers State, Personal interview.

<sup>42</sup>Hamza, B. (25/03/2021) Kano State, Personal interview.

<sup>43</sup>Kwalu, J. (30/03/2021). Anaocha, Anambra State, Personal interview.

<sup>44</sup>Mohammed, K. (21/05/2021). Kebbi State, Personal interview.

<sup>45</sup>Balarabe, Z. (13/05/2021). Katsina State, Personal interview.

<sup>46</sup>Gladys, E. (18/05/2021). Aniocha, Anambra State, Personal interview.

<sup>47</sup>Agomuo, K. (18/05/2021). Umuahia, Abia State, Personal interview.

apprentice.<sup>48</sup>The NDE programme also benefited Ibitoye Oluwatosin and Ayodeji Oyediji, both from Ekiti State. In 2011, Ibitoye, who has an HND in Business Administration, participated in the Enterprise Creation Fund Scheme. He received a ₦200,000 loan package to start his business in Oshogbo, Osun State. While Ayodeji, an HND holder from Ekiti West LGA in Ekiti state, was trained by Start Your Own Business in 2007. He received a loan of ₦300,000 in 2008 to expand his bakery business, and today his company is a well-known bakery in Ado Ekiti called Jovic Bakery, with a staff of 17.<sup>49</sup>

Many people benefited from the Rural Employment Program as well. Akinniyi Taiwo Alayande, from Afijio local government in Oyo State, is one of them. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Science. He took part in the Integrated Farming Training Scheme in 2007. He received a ₦220,000 loan to start a poultry business in his hometown of Oyo State.<sup>50</sup>Furthermore, Oladokun Tunde Bunmi of Ifako-Ijaye, Lagos State, received training through the Rural Agricultural Development Scheme in 2008. He funded himself to start a pig farm with the knowledge he gained.<sup>51</sup>Aghanti Dominic, who is from Ika in Delta State, has an HND in Agricultural Economics and participated in the Graduate Farming Scheme in 1988. He advanced to the rank of NDE Master Trainer and was able to establish poultry farming in Agbor, Delta State, before diversifying into palm plantations once the poultry business was stable. He is currently in charge of seven employees and five trainees.<sup>52</sup>After receiving training at NDE and receiving resettlement loans, the aforementioned beneficiaries were able to establish businesses that thrived and employed several other youths.

Similarly, many youths benefited from Special Public Work, such as Inusa Datti from Sokoto State, who received training through the Environmental Beautification Training Scheme in 2009. After successfully learning interlocking brickwork, he was resettled with a loan of ₦172,987. His company employs 16 more people, as well as ten trainees who are learning bricklaying at the Western Bye-Pass project in Sokoto state.<sup>53</sup>In 2012, Akan Anthony, an Akwa Ibom native, was also trained on the NDE solar energy construction scheme, after which he established his businesses and hired more workers to complete some of the projects awarded to him.<sup>54</sup>

### Challenges of National Directorate of Employment

Despite enormous achievements in the field of youth empowerment and job creation, NDE encountered some difficulties. According to Okoye and Odeh, the

<sup>48</sup>Rhoda, G. (25/05/2021). University Road, Taraba State, Personal interview.

<sup>49</sup>Ibitoye, O. (31/05/2021). Oshogbo, Osun State, Personal interview.; and Ayodeji, O. (31/05/2021). Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State, Personal interview.

<sup>50</sup>Akinniyi, T. A. (09/06/2021) Oyo State, Personal interview.

<sup>51</sup>Oladokun, T. B. (17/06/2021). Lagos State, Personal interview.

<sup>52</sup>Dominic, A. (24/06/2021). Agbor, Delta State, Personal interview.

<sup>53</sup>Datti, I. (21/07/2021) Sokoto State, Personal interview.

<sup>54</sup>Anthony, A. (28/07/2021) Akwa-Ibom, Personal interview.

NDE's operation was hampered by insufficient funding and late release of funds.<sup>55</sup> This was also revealed in the research of Anyebe who wrote inter alia:

The NDE was hampered by insufficient funding from the federal government. Its predicament is exacerbated by the fact that it has overstretched itself by acquiring skills, granting loans, acquiring and selling agricultural inputs such as fertiliser... There is also the issue of duplication of efforts with the Federal Ministry of Labour and Productivity's statutory role in the compilation of statistics on the country's unemployed and claims to maintain a data bank of these as well as match applicants with vacancies.<sup>56</sup>

The aforementioned describes the complex NDE challenges encountered during the course of our research. This explains why the programme was unable to continue. However, the scheme accomplished a great deal before being merged with the Ministry of Labour and Productivity on the grounds that they served the same purpose.

Furthermore, as Amupitan pointed out, NDE had resource constraints (both human and material), resulting in inadequate monitoring.<sup>57</sup> Loans were diverted in some cases. Some applicants who applied for loans to carry out projects were discovered to be diverting funds to projects not covered by NDE projects. Some people received loans in order to marry more wives. There were instances of loans being disbursed with poor repayment status, as well as beneficiaries who were late or unwilling to repay their loans. The Environmental Beautification Board (EBS) and the Graduate Attachment Programme (GAP) are only three months long in some cases, causing participants to be concerned because they are effectively thrown back into the world of unemployment after three months.<sup>58</sup> The 3–6-month time frame is insufficient for acquiring the necessary practical skills. Stipends were not paid on time to trainers and trainees, resulting in a lack of commitment on the part of the participants.

Another study conducted by Amupitan discovered that low enrollment in NDE's programmes was due to a lack of awareness of the organisation's activities. Despite the fact that NDE was established to provide employment, particularly for graduates, there was still room for improvement because the number of people who benefited from the schemes was not proportional to the number of graduates who graduated each year.<sup>59</sup> Inadequate funding has also undermined

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<sup>55</sup>Odeh, M.A. and Okoye, C.O. "Poverty Reduction and Youth Empowerment in Nigeria". *Public Policy and Administration Research*, 3(4), 2014, Pp.92-103.

<sup>56</sup>Anyebe, A. A. "An overview of National Directorate of Employment (NDE) and its mandate in Nigeria". p. 54.

<sup>57</sup>Amupitan, O. "An assessment of the role of then national directorate of employment (NDE) in reducing graduate unemployment in Kaduna State (2005-2009)".

<sup>58</sup>Ebenechi, O. "Impact Assessment of the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) on Rural Livelihood in Kogi State Nigeria". Unpublished M.A Dissertation, Postgraduate School, ABU, Zaria, 2012.

<sup>59</sup>Amupitan, O. "An assessment of the role of then national directorate of employment (NDE) in reducing graduate unemployment in Kaduna State (2005-2009)".

the effectiveness of NDE across the states. Similarly, Ogunlela claims in his study that despite the NDE's minor impact on graduate employment, graduates who were supposed to be placed on attachment were not.<sup>60</sup>

Inadequate infrastructure was another impediment to the NDE's progress. Some training facilities, primarily agricultural skills training centres, do not have a reliable supply of water. Furthermore, the unwillingness of some organisations to retain Graduate Attachment Programme (GAP) participants after the attachment discouraged a large number of prospective trainees across Nigeria. Furthermore, some organisations' refusal to supplement monthly stipends did not improve trainee morale. Some participating organisations had a policy of posting participants outside of their headquarters without providing housing or financial assistance. This discouraged many participants and prospective enrollees.

### Conclusion

The study examined at the impact of Nigeria's National Directorate of Employment on youth unemployment. The Nigerian economy was affected by the 1980s economic meltdown. As a result of this, several people have lost their jobs. Many young people, who account for a sizable portion of the labour force, were affected. When General Badamosi Babangida took power, he recognised the dangers of the development and took immediate action to address them. When he took office, he established the National Directorate of Employment as one of the strategies he used to combat youth unemployment in Nigeria (NDE). The establishment was part of his administration's efforts to alleviate the effects of unemployment, which was one of Nigeria's major issues. The implementation of this scheme has sparked considerable debate. Some believe that the scheme has accomplished nothing meaningful for Nigeria. Intellectually, the two schools of thought were thoroughly examined in this study. It has critically assessed the prospects and challenges that have affected the scheme in Nigeria, as confirmed by several interviews. Despite the challenges that the scheme faced, it was concluded that NDE had made a significant contribution to youth employment strategies and national integration in Nigeria. It is recommended that proper funding, adequate monitoring, and adequate facilities be provided to improve the level of participation in the programme.

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<sup>60</sup>Ogunlela, Y.I. "Impact of the Programmes of the National Directorate of Employment on Graduate Employment and Unemployment in Kaduna State of Nigeria". *Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences*, 9 (1), 2012, Pp.40 – 45.



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