



# The Nigerian Society of Engineers

PORT HARCOURT BRANCH



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INTERVIEW WITH ENGR. M. B. SHEHU, FNSE VICE PRESIDENT (MEMBERSHIP) NSE ON ENGINEERING DESIGN IN NIGERIA

**E-Newsletter:** You are welcome to E-newsletter panel sir. We want to discuss on advances of engineering designs. However, our reading audience would want to know you.

**Engr. Shehu:** My name is Engr. M. B. Shehu. I was born in 1963, in Kano State, Nigeria. I attended my primary school in Kano and secondary school in Kaduna after which I gained admission into Amadu Bello University to study Electrical Engineering. After graduation in 1985, I served with the Electrical Inspection Division, Federal Ministry of Mines and Power, Anambra state under the primary assignment program of the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) Scheme. The station then covered Anambra, Cross-River, Rivers and Benue States. After my service I worked with National Electric Power Authority in Lagos- Apapa Station which was the biggest power station in the country. The generation capacity is 1,320 MW. I took up another appointment as the Senior Electrical engineer in the Electricity Board. I rose to the position of Assistant Direction that was within 1988-1998. In 1998 I decided to go into private practice; I setup an Electrical-Mechanical Consulting firm.

**E-Newsletter:** Thank you very much. That is a whole lot of experience. As said earlier on, we are talking about engineering designs in Nigeria. Have you ever been involved in the design of power stations? If yes what are some of the challenges you faced?

**Engr. Shehu:** As I told you we have variety of clients and they consult us for our services in different areas of interest. We do a lot of electrical and mechanical engineering designs mostly on building. For instance, the designs of one of the branches of central bank, sport complex, a ten-story building among others are some of the engineering designs we took part in. We are also involved in the supervision of electrification schemes in the Federal Ministry of Energy, we are one of the consultants to Power Holding Company of Nigeria, but have not been involved in the design of power stations. Coming to issue of challenges, the challenges vary base on the job but there are some challenges that are common to the design of any electrical project.

**E-Newsletter:** In the area of Design a lot of design software have been produced to enhance design and also to achieve high precision which is very good but almost all these software are

*purchased outside the shores of this country and at a very high rate especially software for Oil and Gas industries and most Nigerian firms can not afford. Do you think if Nigerians have the capability to go into the development of their own design software?*

**Engr. Shehu:** I think we are planning of doing this. As consultants we are expected to keep abreast with all these software.

There are people who specialize in the development of these software, I guess it is another field of its own, it is not the duty of an engineer to develop software. All we (engineers) need to do is to develop/improve ourselves on the usage of the software as they are produced. Today a lot of consultants are not well exposed to software applications and this exposure is not only related to the fact that there is no consistency in the patronage on the part of government and other organizations in Nigeria. If the indigenous engineering consultants are consistently being patronized, they will not only be forced to reach out for the latest software in their areas of specialization, but also will be compelled to reach out to foreign colleagues, attend seminars, workshops/conferences. They can then implement these experiences on their projects. Talking about the development of software, we are talking about software engineering itself. That is also another field of specialization all together. Nigeria is old enough to start developing software but as I said earlier it all boils down to consistency in patronage in the services. I have the privilege to attend some conferences outside this country and from my discussion with some foreign colleagues, their companies are consistently being patronized by their countries, they give them job and pay them. Under such environment, they can afford to buy these software, they are left with no choice but to expand technologically. But that is not the case with Nigerian engineering companies. They are not consistently being patronized, they are not well paid. Do you expect these people to spend money in buying software that they would hardly use? They are not motivated to even interact with their colleagues abroad to



Engr. M. B. Shehu FNSE

know what's happening elsewhere. It must not be physical visitation, the internet facility is everywhere. They are also faced with the challenge of inability to employ experienced engineers who are vast in this software because of poor patronage locally.

**E-Newsletter:** Ok. We are talking about engineering education and training. Let us relate it to engineering designs. As a senior engineer in this country, what do you advice the engineering practitioners and the government on the aspect of training?

**Engr. Shehu:** What I observe in Nigeria is that there is a gap between the university and polytechnic curriculum and the industry in the sense that a lot of graduate engineers find their services not relevant for the recent advances in technology. This also goes down to the lecturers if they keep themselves away from the industry, they will also find themselves ruled out practically. If the University system would not have a system whereby lecturers and students have a close collaboration with the industry, the university will not know what the industries need, so their products would not satisfy their requirements and definitely there would be problems. There should be a close collaboration between the university and the industry.

**E-Newsletter:** The last issue I want us to look into is the issue of Hazard and Operability. It is a common happening in Nigeria that design reviews are done by foreigners. Why is this happening? Are there no competent engineers in Nigeria? What is the Association of Consulting Engineers of Nigeria doing to get our engineers trained in this direction?



Engr. Dr. Ujile & Engr. M. B. Shehu

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## Nigeria: Shell Designs Package for Gas Flare-Out Project

<http://www.stumbleupon.com/submit?url=http://allafrica.com/stories/200910050559.html&title=Shell%20Designs%20Package%20for%20Gas%20Flare-Out%20Project>

Lagos — The Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria Limited (SPDC) has taken delivery of detailed engineering design for a project that will put out gas flares in three fields in Western Niger Delta. The Nigerian Technical Company (NETCO), the engineering arm of NNPC, won the contract in December 2007 for design of the Associated Gas Solution project for Otumara node, which covers Otumara, Saghara and Opuama fields. The company said in a statement that project involves the collection of gas from the three fields to a central processing facility at Otumara, which will treat and send it for domestic use through the Escravos-Lagos Pipeline System (ELPS). The detailed design will form the basis for construction of the central processing facility, associated pipelines, booster stations as well as instrumentation and control. Receiving the design package in Port Harcourt, Project Manager Toyin Olagunju said the award of the contract to NETCO was part of a plan to improve the capability of Nigerian companies in this area of engineering. "We are pleased that the job was done in-country with Nigerian engineers gaining valuable skills and experience," he said. NETCO executed the detailed design with the support of their technical consultants IMPaC, at a cost of over N900 million. Under the terms of the contract, NETCO handled the piping, civil, electrical, mechanical, corrosion and HSE/QA-QC aspects of the job from their office in Lagos, while IMPaC worked on process, instrumentation and telecommunication in Port Harcourt. Executive Director of NETCO, Samuel Babatunde said: "This is the first time we are handling design on a large scale for SPDC. The skills we have acquired will equip us better to serve the oil and gas industry in Nigeria." Deputy Project Manager of IMPaC, Christian Obot commended SPDC for the confidence in the collaboration between NETCO and IMPaC, "as this was largely responsible for the successful completion of the design." The completion of the detailed design paves the way for construction, procurement and installation of facilities. The Otumara project is part of SPDC's effort to harness Nigeria's huge gas resources for profitable use, and end flaring of gas in its operations. Since 2000, SPDC has invested some \$3 billion in gas gathering projects; an additional \$3 billion is needed to complete them. Funding and security challenges have delayed implementation of the projects.

E-newsletter wishes the procuring entity to engage Nigerian engineers for the construction, procurement and installation of facilities stages.

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### CONGRATULATIONS TO ENGR. OTUNTE OTUENEH FOR SUCCESSFUL TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE CEREMONY

We congratulate Engr. Otunte Otuenah for his successful traditional marriage between him and Miss Ijeoma Seed Wadibia at Owerri, Imo State which was witnessed by family members & friends on 4th October 2009. We wish them fruitful marriage and God's abundant blessings.



Engr. & Mrs. Otunte Otuenah

### INTERVIEW WITH ENGR. M. B. SHEHU, FNSE ... contd from page 1

**Engr. Shehu:** I'm a member of the Association of Consulting Engineers in Nigeria but I'm not involved in Oil and Gas. We have enough competent engineers to handle this issue but I doubt if this issue has been brought before the Association and The Nigerian Society of Engineers and COREN. These are the engineering bodies that are charged with the responsibility of checking issues like this. We have competent hands to do this job. There is no doubt about this. All these experts we are bringing into the country are just extra cost because we can do even more if we are given the chance. I'm not saying that we know everything, what am saying is that we know to an extent to start off and if we are given the opportunity we can do more.

*E-Newsletter:* Thank you very much for the opportunity given to us. We look forward to receiving this warm audience again whenever we call on you. Once again we say thank you.

### FRANK - OPIGO, ORDIA, & IMAOBONG CONFERRED FELLOWSHIP

On the 2nd of October 2009, the President of the Nigerian Society of Engineers, Engr. Kashim Abdul Ali, FNSE conferred fellowship on several deserving members of the society at NICON LUXURY Hotels Central Area Abuja. Among those conferred fellowship include Engr. Clifford A. Ordia, FNSE, the Managing Director of Ffordiac Engineering Ltd, Port Hacourt, Engr. Imaobong. J. Inyang, FNSE, the Branch Chairman of Eket Branch and Engr. Emma A. Frank - Opigo, FNSE, the Bayelsa State Honourable Commissioner of Works.



Engr. & Mrs. Clifford O. Ordia, FNSE



Engr. & Mrs. Emma A. Frank-Opigo, FNSE



Engr. Imaobong Inyang, FNSE



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All members of NSE PH should pay their **annual branch dues** of N4000 and **compulsory levy** of N5000 towards the Engineer Resource Center to UBA ACC. NO: 0802080000194 (Port Harcourt Main Branch). Also pay **National Annual Subscription** of N7,500.00 for **Members** & N9,500 for **Fellows** directly to AFRIBANK ACC No. 1420202215613 & forward all tellers to the secretariat for reconciliation. All payments should be made at the Bank