

(STATUTORILY BACKED BY ACT CAP, B.13 LFN, 2004)

NATIONAL SECRETARIAT:

APDC Capital Estate, Opp. Brick City, By Mopol Barracks, Kubwa Expressway, Kaba District, Abuja. Tel: +234 (0) 808 924 8789, (0) 809 878 1893 E-mail: info(a)niobnat.org Website: www.niobnat.org

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Bldr. Sir Alderton Ewa Ewa, FNIOB

HONORARY GENERAL SECRETARY

Bldr. Dr. Yusuf Mahmood, FNIOB

BUILDERS DAY 2024: NIOB PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT

THE ROLE OF BUILDERS IN SUSTAINABLE HOUSING DELIVERY

A Call to Action on Builders' Day

Distinguished guests, esteemed colleagues, and fellow Nigerians,

We gather today on Builders' Day, not only to celebrate our profession but also to acknowledge a grave reality: the persistent issue of building collapse in our nation. The tragedy at 63, Massey Street, five years ago, stands as a stark reminder of the devastating consequences of negligence, substandard materials, and the use of quacks in construction. Over 20 lives, including innocent pupils, were lost, leaving behind a trail of grief and a deep scar on our collective conscience. Over 271 buildings collapsed in the last 10 years in Nigeria. Reports have it that Total Collapse in the last 50 years in Nigeria recorded is about 598 and 341 Buildings in Lagos Collapses. "Despite all the efforts in year 2022, there were still a total of 62 collapse of buildings, either partially or fully. In addition, 2023 recorded 12 collapses. Building collapse did not start today in Nigeria and may not end soon if nothing is done as quickly as possible.

Builders play a crucial role in the delivery of sustainable housing by implementing environmentally friendly construction practices, utilizing eco-friendly materials, and adhering to energy-efficient building standards, we also bear a significant responsibility in ensuring the safety and sustainability of our built environment. This responsibility extends beyond brick and mortar, encompassing ethical practices, adherence to standards, and a commitment to quality.

Here, I want to be clear and assertive: engaging quacks or misusing qualified professionals is not collaboration. Collaboration means working together to achieve a common goal. As stakeholders in the built environment, we should thrive on due process, professionalism, discipline, and a shared commitment to excellence.

The theme for this year's Builders' Day, "The Role of Builders in Sustainable Housing **Delivery,"** is a call to action. It compels us to:

- Embrace specialization: Encourage and invest in professional development, fostering expertise in various construction disciplines.
- Uphold standards: Advocate for and meticulously adhere to established building codes and regulations.

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- Champion quality: Prioritize the use of high-quality materials and employ robust construction techniques.
- Combat quackery: Expose and actively combat the illegal activities of unqualified individuals posing as professionals.
- Embrace innovation: Continuously seek and implement sustainable practices that minimize environmental impact and ensure resource efficiency.
- Implementation of Sustainable Construction Practices: Builders are responsible for executing construction projects using sustainable practices that minimize waste generation, reduce energy consumption, and optimize resource utilization.
- **Integration of Renewable Energy Systems:** Builders can incorporate renewable energy systems such as solar panels, and geothermal heating and cooling systems into the design and construction of sustainable homes. This helps reduce reliance on non-renewable energy sources, lowers carbon emissions, and enhances energy efficiency.
- Utilization of Eco-Friendly Materials: Builders play a critical role in selecting and using ecofriendly building materials that have minimal environmental impact throughout their lifecycle. This includes materials with recycled content, sustainably sourced wood products, low-emission paints and finishes, and insulation materials with high energy efficiency.
- Education and Awareness: Builders play a role in educating homeowners and communities about the benefits of sustainable housing, including lower utility costs, improved comfort and health, and reduced environmental impact. By raising awareness and promoting the adoption of sustainable practices, builders contribute to the widespread adoption of sustainable housing solutions.

By fulfilling these roles, we, as builders, can contribute significantly to:

- Reducing building collapse fatalities: Every life saved is a victory against negligence and a testament to our collective commitment.
 - Enhancing housing affordability: Sustainable construction practices can lead to costeffective housing solutions, making decent shelter accessible to a wider segment of the population.
 - Building a resilient nation: Sustainable buildings can withstand environmental challenges and contribute to a more secure and healthy future for generations to come.

Sustainable building production is the prerogative of Builders during building production management. The Builders' professional practice tools include documents prepared and signed by the Registered Builder. These tools are the Construction Programme, Project Quality Management Plan, Project Health and Safety Plan, and the Construction Methodology. The

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Builder must always bear in mind at all times the social, economic, and environmental implications of his work tools.

Building production Management is the organization and management of the plants, resources, equipment, materials, and labour involved in the construction of a building, while at the same time complying with all codes, rules, and contractual stipulations and also minimizing the negative impact of development activities on the environment and the society.

The Builder is well equipped to sustainably manage the 5 M's of Building Production Management which are money, manpower, materials, machinery, and methods. Sustainable building management is not only about reducing environmental impacts, but also about creating healthy, comfortable, and productive spaces for occupants. Only the Builder can effectively execute building production management to satisfy the social, economic, and environmental requirements of human needs.

Current Impact of Forex on Construction in Nigeria:

As a Nation faced with the present impact of foreign exchange (forex) on construction, it is important to note that it is multifaceted, presenting both challenges and potential opportunities:

Challenges:

- Increased cost of imported building materials: A significant portion of construction materials in Nigeria are imported, and fluctuations in the exchange rate can drastically affect their prices. This makes project budgeting and cost control more difficult. An example can be seen in the recent cost of cement.
- Limited access to foreign currency: Due to forex scarcity, construction companies might struggle to access the foreign currency needed to import essential materials, leading to project delays.
- Reduced investment: Uncertainty surrounding the forex market can discourage foreign investors from entering the Nigerian construction sector, hindering potential growth and innovation.
- Erosion of profit margins: Construction companies face pressure to maintain profit margins amidst rising material costs, potentially leading to compromises in quality or project delays.

Potential Opportunities:

Stimulation of local production: The high cost of imported materials can lead to the development and expansion of local production of building materials, fostering economic diversification and job creation.

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- **Increased focus on resource efficiency:** The need to manage costs can lead to the adoption of more sustainable construction practices that utilize local resources and minimize waste.
- Enhanced innovation: Challenges can spark innovation, encouraging the exploration of alternative materials and construction techniques that are less reliant on imported materials.

The Way Forward:

Mitigating the negative impacts of forex fluctuations while capitalizing on potential opportunities requires a multi-pronged approach:

- Government intervention: Implementing policies that encourage local production of building materials, such as tax breaks and subsidies for manufacturers, can reduce reliance on imports.
- **Promoting local content:** Encouraging the use of locally sourced materials in construction projects through public procurement policies and awareness campaigns can further strengthen the domestic construction industry.
- Embracing sustainable practices: Promoting and adopting sustainable construction methods that utilize local resources efficiently can contribute to cost reduction and environmental benefits.
- **Diversifying the construction sector:** Exploring opportunities for public-private partnerships and attracting foreign direct investments can inject capital and expertise into the sector, fostering innovation and long-term growth.

By addressing the challenges and capitalizing on the opportunities presented by forex fluctuations, the Nigerian construction industry can become more resilient, sustainable, and less susceptible to external market volatility.

Overall, Builders are instrumental in driving the transition towards sustainable housing delivery by integrating environmentally friendly practices, materials, and technologies into the construction process, ultimately contributing to a more sustainable built environment for present and future generations.

Builders' Day is a solemn reminder, a call to action, and a beacon of hope. Let us honor the victims of building collapse not with mere words, but with unwavering dedication to building a future where safety, quality, and sustainability are the cornerstones of our profession.

I urge all stakeholders, from policymakers and developers to homeowners and the general public, to join forces with the Nigerian Institute of Building in this crucial endeavor. Together, we can build a nation where every structure stands as a testament to our collective commitment to excellence and a lasting legacy for generations to come.

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Thank you.



Bldr. Sir Alderton Ewa Ewa FNIOB **President**



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