**THE ROLE OF PROFESSIONAL BUILDERS IN NATIONAL VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK (NVQF)**

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**&**

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**Abstract**

A number of policy and strategic initiatives have since 2010 been advanced by the Federal government to kick start the operations of the National Vocational Qualification Framework (NVQF). The paper identified the roles of key stakeholders on the NVQF system: Training provider, Awarding Body, sector skills, Council and Regulatory Body. While the Nigerian Institute of Building have been granted ‘Awarding Body’status; Builders have several opportunities in the areas of development of standards, establishment of centers, provision of training and development of resource materials for the effective implementation of the system.

**1.0 Introduction**

A vocational qualifications framework is a hierarchical system for arranging generic skills to be demonstrated and assessed on the job. The framework is a specification of competencies expected of a skilled worker who is gainfully employed in an occupational area at the appropriate level. Such arrangement will provide descriptions of the occupational competences to be demonstrated, as well as a common grid of skill levels for all qualifications included. The main objective of NVQF is to enhance quality, accountability, transparency, access, progression, and comparability of qualifications in relation to existing and future labour market human capital needs.

As a first step towards this, The National Steering Committee on National Vocational Qualifications Framework (NVQF) was set up by the Executive Secretary of the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), Dr. Masa'ud A. Kazaure, mni and was inaugurated by the Hon. Minister of Education, Prof. Ruqayyatu Ahmad Rufa‟I, OON, on 16th December 2010. The membership of the Committee was drawn from various Ministries, Departments and industry organizations. The Committee was charged with the responsibility to draw up a draft National Vocational Qualifications Framework for Nigeria, with terms of reference (TORs) including; specification of the Framework, indicating levels of attainment, level descriptors, quality assurance of qualifications, registration of training centres, as well as required legal framework and involvement of the industry. Following the submission of the committee's report, a submission was made to the Federal Executive Council which approved the proposed six-level National Vocational Qualification Framework (NVQF) for the country.

 ( Fig. 1)The framework as approved by the Federal Executive Council makes for recognition and certification of skills and vocations outside the school system thus enabling their placement in the scheme of service both in the public and private sectors (see proposed scheme for Artisans and Craftsmen in fig. 2)

In line with this background, the objectives of this paper are:

1. To appraise the National Vocational Qualification Framework (NVQF) system with respect to Craftsmen and Artisans.
2. To identify the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders on the NVQF system.
3. To identify the role of professional builders in the operation of the NVQF in Nigeria

**2.0 THE NATIONAL VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK (NVQF)**

The NVQF is a system for the development, classification and recognition of skills, knowledge and competencies acquired by individuals, irrespective of where and how the training or skill was acquired. The system gives a clear statement of what the learner must know or be able to do whether the learning took place in a classroom, on the job, or less formally. The framework indicates the comparability of different qualifications and how one can progress from one level to another. It is important to emphasize that:

* NVQs are work-related, competence- based qualifications, that reflect the skills,    knowledge and understanding needed for entry and progression in employment
* NVQs are based on national standards for various occupations.
* The standards describe what a competent person in a job should be able to do well.

 Figure 1, 2 and 3 can be used to describe the operations of the NVQF



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|  |  |  | CERTIFIED |  |  |  |
|  |  |  | PROFESSIONAL |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  ***EDUCATIONA***L |  | *INDUSTRY* |  |  |
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| *NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM/STANDARDS* |  | POSTGRADUATE |  |  |  | NVQ LEVEL 6 |  |
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|  |  |  |  |  |  | NVQ LEVEL 5 |  |
|  | HND/DEGREE |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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|  | ND/NID/ANTC/ANBC |  |  |  | NVQ LEVEL 4 |  |
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|  | NTC/NBC/NVC 3/ |  |  |  | NVQ LEVEL 3 |  |
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|  | TRADE TEST 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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|  | NVC 2, TRADE TEST 2 |  |  |  | NVQ LEVEL 2 |  |
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|  | PRE- VOCATIONAL |  |  |  | NVQ LEVEL 1 |  |
|  | JSS3, NVC 1& TRADE |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | TEST 3 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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**Source:** Report of the national steering committee on the development of national Vocational qualifications framework (NVQF) for Nigeria, August, 2011.

Note:

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|  The above gives only guide as to the equivalence of these |
|  Qualifications as they measure different things. NVQs are measure |
| of competence to do a job whilst Academic Qualifications generally measure the individual’s knowledge of any other approved qualification will be included on the framework. |
| measure the individual’s knowledge of ny other approved qualification will be included on the framework |



NIOB Level VI Project Manager

GL 12.

Asst. Project Manager

GL 10.

NIOB Level V Site Supervisor

GL 9.

NIOB NVQ Level IV General Foreman

GL 8.

GL 7.

Asst. General Foreman

GL 6.

Trades Foreman

GL 5.

NIOB NVQ Level III Senior Tradesman

GL 4.

NIOB NVQ Level II Tradesman

NIOB NVQ Level I Asst. Tradesman

GL 2.

GL 1.

Entry Level :- Trainee/Apprentice

PUBLIC SERVICE SALARY GRADE LEVEL.

*CPA-Continuous Performance Assessment*

Legend

*CPD-Continuous Professional Development*

Where you move up to.

What must be done to move up.

 Figure 2: NIOB Skills……………….

**Source:** Joint CORBON – NIOB report/ proposals to council (April 2015)

Figure 3: Schematic diagram of certification for work competence

 The Technical Operating Model

Labor Market Needs &

 Analysis



Occupational Analysis

Development of Standards & Qualifications

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| Development and Approval of |  | Development of Instructional |
| Assessment tools and instruments |  | Materials |
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| Assessment of Trainees |  |  | Training Intervention |
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 Award of Certification

**Source:** The development of national Vocational qualifications framework (NVQF) for Nigeria, August, 2011

**3.0 HOW NVQs ARE ACHIEVED**

To achieve an NVQ, a candidate must prove that he has the ability (competence) to perform the stipulated skills tasks at the appropriate level, to the required standard.

The NVQ is sector specific and defined by the demands of the industry in which the skills are required.
Currently the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) which is the agency responsible for regulation of technical and vocational education and training midwived, and is currently charged with the responsibility of developing the system in Nigeria has identified the key sectors  with sizable demand for vocational trades as initial focus areas. These include:

Construction

Hospitality - hotel and tourism

Power

Oil and gas

Health
Clothing Textiles and Leather works

In the construction sector, building and engineering are regarded as sub-sectors with somewhat different skills requirements in terms of the type of work and the equipment utilized, hence both CORBON and COREN have been recognized as sector skills councils, while the Nigerian Institute of Building as well as the Nigerian Society of Engineers were identified as assessment and certification (awarding) bodies.

**4.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER THE NVQF**

The NVQ code of practice, guidelines, roles and responsibilities (NBTE 2014), identifies and spells out four key players in the NVQ hierarchy:

The Training Provider

The Awarding Body

The Sector Skills Council

The Regulatory Body

These roles and their requirements are as follows.

**4.1 Training Provider**

The roles and responsibilities of NVQ training provider as summarized as follows:

1. Provision of clear aims and policies regarding NVQ Assessment supported by Management of Centre and understood by the Assessment Team.
2. Ensure that roles, responsibilities, authorities and accountabilities of the assessment and verification team are clearly defined, allocated and understood.
3. Conduct of internal and independent assessment.
4. Maintenance of standards and the consistency of assessment decisions through internal verification.
5. Maintenance of the requirement for assessors and internal verifiers to have appropriate qualifications and occupational expertise.
6. Registration of candidates with an awarding body.
7. Provision of accurate data in respect of claims for certification.
8. Authentication and recording of candidate assessment and period these records should be retained.
9. Ensure the safety and security of candidate work being held for assessment purposes.
10. Provision of access to premises, personnel and records for the purposes of external quality assurance.
11. Compliance with regulatory procedures for dealing with and reporting malpractice.

 **Requirement to operate NVQ Training Centres**

Select technically competent individuals to take on the necessary roles in the NVQ process. This will imply:

i. One NVQ assessor for every six NVQ candidates

ii. One internal verifier for every ten assessors

iii. A centre co-ordinator to manage the registration of NVQ candidates and to request certificates.

iv. A placement officer who manages relationship with industries

v. The required financial resources,

vi. The required structures. (Lesson rooms, offices, counseling rooms, library, record room, etc.)

vii. ICT facilities.

viii. Agreement with industries for candidates work placement (industry Bank)

**4.2 Awarding Body**

The roles of the Awarding Body are as follows:

1. Developing qualifications based on National Occupational Standards which have been defined by Sector Skills Councils and approved by the NBTE, and periodic review of same.
2. Developing detailed assessment methodology, instruments of assessment and documentation to be used for assessment.
3. Maintaining and monitoring the quality and consistency of assessment of accredited qualifications and units.
4. Ensuring rigorous external verification of assessment decisions
5. Ensuring rigorous monitoring of External Verifiers for accredited qualifications.
6. Advising on the occupational expertise required by trainers, assessors and verifiers based on the general principles specified by the Sector Skills Council or the relevant Regulatory Authorities.
7. Administer accredited qualifications including approving and monitoring centres, and issuing certificates.
8. Provide appropriate advice and guidance on the implementation of qualifications for customers.
9. Market the accredited qualifications to ensure optimum intake.
10. Provide an adequate process for continuous professional development (CPD) for every category of staff.
11. Establish process for implementation and incorporation of emerging trends from the industry emerging trends from the industry.

 **Requirement for an Awarding Body:**

1. Adequate and qualified human resources (external verifiers, monitoring officers, information officers, industry liaison officers, etc)
2. Robust certification system
3. Robust Data base
4. Standards and Qualification.
5. Effective governance, leadership and management, which will support the delivery of NVQs
6. A robust quality framework that ensures quality product is delivered to the candidate
7. Approved governance structure.

**4.3 Sector Skills Council**

1. An employer-led organization that actively involves in trade unions, professional bodies and other key stakeholders
2. Skills and workforce development of all those employed in their sectors
3. Influence how training is delivered in Nigeria
4. Reduce skills gaps and shortages
5. Improve productivity
6. Increase opportunities for all individuals in the workforce
7. Setting up LMIS (Labour Market Information System) to assist planning and delivery of training
8. Identification of skill development needs and preparing a catalogue of skill types
9. Develop a sector skill development plan and maintain skill inventory
10. Standardization of accreditation process
11. Participation in accreditation and standardization
12. Plan and execute training of trainers
13. Establish process of coordinating and incorporating emerging trends in skill development.

**Requirement for a Sector Skills Council:**

1. Research Officers
2. Quality Assurance Managers
3. Master Trainers
4. Industrial Liaison Officers
5. Robust Data Base
6. ICT personnel
7. Effective leadership and Governance Structure
8. Required financial resources.

**4.4 Regulatory Body**

The roles of the Regulatory Body includes:

 i. Issuance/withdrawal of License to/from Awarding Bodies.

ii. Access to Awarding Body information materials.

iii. Monitoring the delivery of NVQs nationwide.

iv. Enforcement of NVQ Code of Practice.

v. Development/Review of NVQ framework.

vi. Registration of Awarding Bodies.

vii. Recognition/Registration of qualifications on the framework.

viii. Promotion of public confidence.

ix. Monitoring Awarding Bodies and Qualifications to ensure that standards are maintained.

x. Serving as risk based regulators.

x. Production of annual qualifications market report.

x. Periodically reviewing Assessment procedures set up by the Awarding Bodies.

 **Requirements of a Regulatory body:**

1. Adequate and qualified human resources (external verifiers, monitoring officers, information officers, Staticians, qualification officers, etc)
2. Robust Data base
3. National Occupational Standards (NOS)
4. Effective governance, leadership and management, which will support the delivery of NVQs
5. A robust quality framework that ensures quality product is delivered to the candidate
6. Approved governance structure.

**5.0 THE ROLE OF THE PROFESSIONAL BUILDER**

Section 13:12:4 of The National Building Code (2006) charges Builders with the responsibility for supervision of Artisans and Craftsmen on site. This implies that they should determine the performance standards, skills sets and competences required to undertake the job to required standards.Thus, from the determination of the occupational standards, prescribing and ensuring provision of training, assessment and certification up to the level of regulation, as far as these pertain to building construction, the professional builder has significant roles to play, and a few of these will be discussed here.

1. **Development of National Occupational Standards (NOS)**

 The Professional Builder has the role of generating appropriately, the sets of competency standards that are to be attained by an artisan/craftsman since he directly manages the workforce onsite and knows what standard is expected for each job component.

1. **Training Provider**

 Having acquired the requisite training in the science and technology of building processes, if he is able to gain sufficient 'hands on' experience, the professional builder is in best position to train and assess artisans/craftsmen for certification by the National Institute of Building (NIOB) and licensing by the Council of Registered Builders of Nigeria (CORBON). It may be noted that the guidelines issued by the institute for registration of training providers includes individual training providers ie duly registered builders who offer training on or offsite as part of, or their main, practice.

1. **Establishment of Training institutes/centers:**

In view of the need to build critical mass of skilled /certified artisans, professional builders have the role of running training institutions or centers at various parts of the country. Centers can also include the construction site/project the builder is handling (industry/site based training).

1. **Resource development**

 Developing training resources and manuals including multimedia and print materials to facilitate and ensure quality delivery of training to artisans and tradesmen.

**6.0 Conclusion**

From the foregoing it is clear that the adoption and implementation of the NVQ offers a new vista of opportunities for the professional builder to work as Trainers, Master Trainers, Assessors, Verifiers, Moderators,  Research Officers, Quality Assurance Managers, Center Managers, etc.

With the plan to build up a critical mass of duly trained, certified and registered artisans over the next few years, to pave way for a law restricting trade practice to those who are duly registered, the institute has initiated plans to train 120 master trainers/assessors and 1,000 trainers before the end of the year. In view of the need for them to be competent in the core domain skills they will train artisans in, their supervisory and managerial role would be significantly enhanced. This should lead to considerable improvement in quality as well as productivity, with concomitant reduction in costs likely to boost demand for their services locally and internationally.

The NVQ train is set to take off, and I would urge my colleagues and fellow builders not to be left behind.

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