

**TEACHERS REGISTRATION COUNCIL OF NIGERIA**  
HEADQUARTERS ABUJA

**DEPARTMENT OF PROFESSIONAL OPERATIONS**

**ANNUAL REPORT 2010**

**1. PREAMBLE**

The Department of Professional Operations is the **core Department** of the Council charged with the responsibility of implementing all the mandates stipulated in the enabling law of the Council (the **TRCN Act 31 of 1993**). The other three Departments of the Council provide support to the activities of the Department of Professional Operations. Consequently, the Department is a beehive of activities all round the year and the national and international communities assess the performance of the Council based on the activities of the Department.

The Department comprises of the:

- Office of the Director
- Seven Divisions domiciled at **TRCN Headquarters**) and
- Offices in all 36 States of the country and the Federal Capital Territory (**FCT**).

The Seven Divisions of the Department are:

- Education and Accreditation
- Registration and Documentation
- Certification and Licensing
- Field Operations
- Professional Regulations
- Information and Communications Technology, and
- Special Duties.

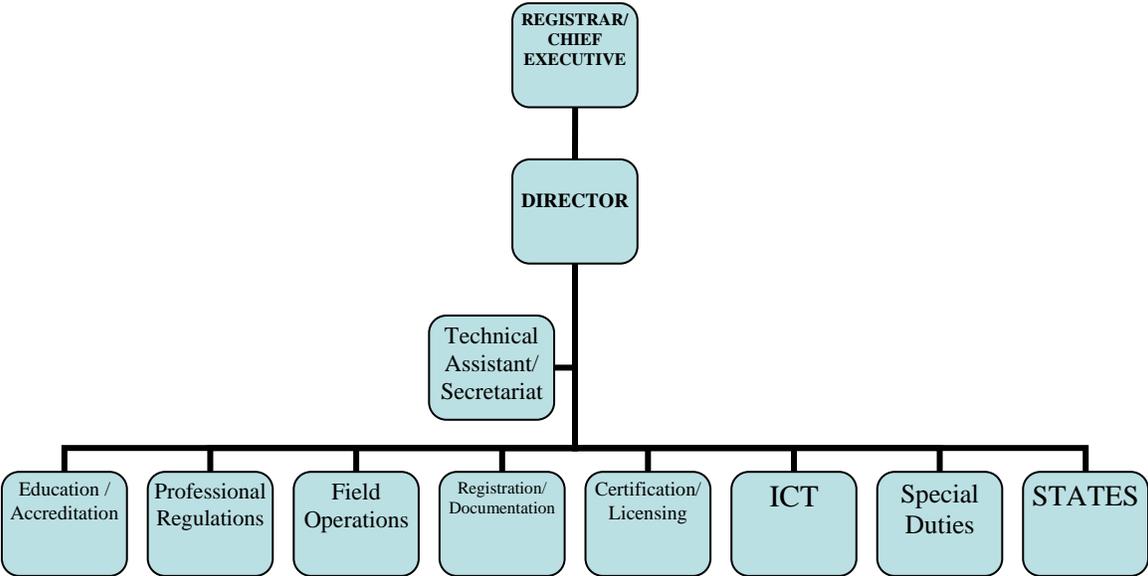


Figure 1: Organogram of Department of Professional Operations

The specific activities and programmes of the Department derived from TRCN mandates and international best practices among the professional regulatory agencies include the following:

- *Registration and licensing of qualified teachers.*
- *Accreditation, monitoring and supervision of the courses and programmes of teacher training institutions in Nigeria to ensure that they meet national and international standards. The institutions include the Colleges of Education, Faculties and Institutes of Education in Nigerian universities, Schools of Education in the Polytechnics, and the National Teachers Institute.*
- *Organisation of Internship Schemes and induction programmes for fresh Education graduates to equip them with the necessary professional skills before licensing them for full professional practice.*
- *Conduct of professional examinations and interviews to determine teachers that are suitable for registration.*
- *Establishment of national minimum standards for and execution of Mandatory Continuing Professional Development (MCPD) to guarantee that teachers keep abreast of developments in the theory and practice of the profession.*
- *Organisation of Annual Conference of Registered Teachers that unites all teachers irrespective of social class or the level of education system..*
- *Publication of a register of qualified and licensed teachers in Nigeria in hard copies and available through the World Wide Web.*
- *Enforcement of professional ethics among teachers using the Teachers Investigating Panel (TIP) and the Teachers Tribunal.*
- *Prosecution in the law court of unqualified persons performing the job of teachers in contravention of the TRCN Act section 17(2).*
- *Acting as the voice of the voiceless teachers and continuously initiating/driving public policies and practices that could reposition the teaching profession in Nigeria as first among equals.*

## **2. OVERVIEW OF YEAR 2010**

The year was packed with activities and accomplishments that advanced the teaching profession not only in Nigeria but the whole of Africa and beyond. TRCN consolidated its reputation as Africa's largest professional regulatory agency and was unanimously chosen by the African countries as the Secretariat of the newly formed Africa Forum of Teaching Regulatory Authorities (AFTRA). The AFTRA is a branch of the International Forum of Teaching Regulatory Authorities.

In specific terms, the milestones of the Department in the year under review included the following:

- *Organisation of the 1<sup>st</sup> Roundtable of the Teaching Regulatory Authorities in Africa*
- *Emergence as the Secretariat of the Africa Forum of Teaching Regulatory Authority.*
- *The development of the Draft Continuous Professional Development (CPD) Protocol by TRCN for world body of the Teaching Councils - the International Forum for Teaching Regulatory Authorities.*

- *High profile participation and presentation of research and policy papers in international conferences.*
- *Advancement of staff skills through world class training programmes in Israel, Dubai, etc.*
- *Very successful Leadership Training for Heads of Educational institutions at all levels of the Education system in Nigeria which was free of charge for the beneficiaries.*
- *Approval of a special **Post Doctoral Diploma in Education (PDDE)** programme by TRCN for the University of Ilorin which has mandated all its lecturers to obtain a teaching qualification.*
- *Development of the National Benchmark for **Post Graduate Diploma in Education (NB-PGDE)** which is a unification of all the divergent PGDE syllabi in Nigeria.*
- *Development of the **Professional Standards for Nigerian Teachers (PSNT)** which marks the first time in Nigeria that a comprehensive document is created to monitor and measure the performance of teachers in terms of knowledge of subject matters, pedagogical skills, ethical conduct, fulfillment of professional obligations, participation in continuous professional development programmes and other critical issues.*
- *Boost in the **Induction** of fresh Education Graduates of Nigerian universities and Colleges of Education nationwide.*
- *Upsurge in the number of teacher education institutions accredited by TRCN to run the **Professional Diploma in Education (PDE)**, a post graduate teacher education programme developed by TRCN for graduates without teaching qualification.*
- *Commencement of full blown online registration of teachers.*
- *Enhanced global visibility of the teaching profession in Nigeria and Africa through the management of robust websites for TRCN and the Africa Forum of Teaching Regulatory Authorities.*
- *TRCN successful implementation of the Science and Technical Teachers in Post Basic Education Project (STEP-B) commissioned by the World Bank.*
- *Up-scaling the co-operation between TRCN and sister agencies abroad in the regulation and control of Nigerians wishing to teach abroad.*
- *Ongoing registration of teachers at all levels of the Education system in Nigeria.*
- *Intensification of the registration of teachers in private schools in Nigeria.*
- *Commencement of the licensing of teachers using biometric technology.*
- *Upgrading facilities of State Offices nationwide and empowering the State Coordinators through Leadership training.*
- *Teachers Tribunal commenced sitting on cases of professional misconduct by registered teachers and the Attorney General and Minister of Justice of the Federation deploys a permanent Attorney to work with the Tribunal as required by law.*
- *TRCN consolidated on the arrangement to prosecute in the law court unregistered teachers and school principals connected with examination malpractices and other offences in the various States.*
- *The Teachers Investigating Panels (TIPs) in all States of the Federation competed among themselves to prove their relevance by extensive advocacy campaigns,*

*monitoring of the conduct of teachers in their jurisdictions and reporting breach of professional ethics to the Teachers Tribunal.*

- *Publication of new editions of the Nigerian Journal of Professional Teachers and the Professional Diary which are regular internationally acknowledged academic journal and newsmagazine, respectively.*
- *Serving as member of the Task Team set up by the Hon. Minister of Education to implement her One Year Development Strategy for the Education Sector in Nigeria.*
- *Participation in national strategic meetings, conferences and programmes of stakeholders and international development partners too numerous to mention which helped in the evolution of positive public policies in Nigeria for the teaching profession. Among the strategic meetings were the Presidential Summit on Education chaired by the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria; the National Council on Education; and Conferences organized by the Hon. Minister of Education to determine and fast-track her One Year Strategic Development Plan for the Education Sector.*

Some of the achievements listed above explained further below.

### **3. FIRST ROUNDTABLE OF THE TEACHING REGULATORY AUTHORITIES IN AFRICA**

The world body of the teaching Councils which is the International Forum of Teaching Regulatory Authorities (IFTRA) at its conference in Cardiff, Wales, United Kingdom in 2009 charged teaching councils from the various regions and continents of the world to organize Summits and Conferences for the advancement of the teaching profession and teaching councils in their regions and to use resolutions in such Summits and Conferences as preparation for the Biennial IFTRA Conference coming up in South Africa in 2011. For Africa in particular, TRCN and South African Council for Educators (SACE) were identified by IFTRA as the only teaching councils in Africa. The two organisations were therefore charged by IFTRA to take up the initiative of convening African countries towards the establishment of teaching countries and professionalisation of teaching.

TRCN and SACE consequently convened the very first Roundtable of Teaching Regulatory Authorities in Africa which held in Abuja Nigeria from October 11 to 14, 2010. The events was historic, declared open by Nigeria's Honourable Minister of Education and supported by Her South African Counter part. The delegates at the Roundtable savoured Nigeria's hospitality and toured important places that included the National Assembly and the National Universities Commission. They also enjoyed rich cultural entertainment organized by delegates themselves and finally ended the Roundtable with remarkable resolutions. Part of these is the institutionalization of the Africa Forum for Teaching Regulatory Authorities (**AFTRA**) and the unanimous adoption of **TRCN** as Secretariat for **AFTRA**. It was also resolved that **AFTRA** shall hold its Conference annually to be hosted by different member countries. Sudan was endorsed as host for the 2011 **AFTRA** Conference.

#### **4. TRCN DEVELOPMENT OF THE DRAFT CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD) PROTOCOL FOR IFTRA**

The IFTRA World Conference of 2009 in Cardiff Wales, United Kingdom resolved to develop draft documents to be ratified in its 2011 Biennial Conference. IFTRA assigned TRCN to produce one of the documents, which is the CPD Protocol. TRCN networked with all IFTRA member countries to collect data and developed the draft document for deliberation at the forthcoming IFTRA Conference.

#### **5. PARTICIPATION IN WORLD CLASS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES**

At the 2009 United Nations International Conference on Electronic Governance held in Colombia, South America, TRCN Registrar/Chief Executive and Director of Professional Operations won the 2009 ICT Best Practice Award. This prestigious Award shot TRCN into limelight among ICT conference organizers world wide. The Registrar/Chief Executive and Director therefore constantly received invitations from many international conference organizers to speak on electronic governance and Education in Nigeria. Within the available financial resources and time, the Registrar/Chief Executive accepted some of the invitations and participated in the international conferences held in the United States of America, China, Australia, etc. The Registrar/Chief Executive and Director accompanied by other staff equally attended other international academic conferences that included the Teachers Without Borders Conference in Accra Ghana, the Universities Council for the Education of Teachers in UK Conference, etc.

#### **6. INTERNATIONAL TRAINING OF STAFF**

As part of staff strategic empowerment, the Director had a two-week training in Israel on the Management of Higher Education which exposed participants to international best practices in the management of tertiary education. Some staff trained at Dubai on Leadership Issues while the others trained at Kenya on skills required for the effective management of the World Bank STEP-B Project.

#### **7. LEADERSHIP TRAINING FOR HEADS OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN NIGERIA**

TRCN has been a strong advocate for leadership training for heads of Educational institutions in Nigeria. In order to demonstrate its seriousness on the issue, it dedicated its entire 2010 teacher training programme and resources to the Heads of Educational institutions. Consequently, capacity building workshops were organized in various locations for heads of the institutions covering university Vice Chancellors; Deans and Directors of Education in the universities; Rectors of Polytechnics; Provosts of Colleges of Education; Principals of secondary schools; head teachers of primary schools; and other critical managers of the various levels of the Education system. The resources persons were mostly Chief Executive Officer of national institutions whose mandates primarily border on Management Issues and Education. Among the organisations were the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies, Nigerian Institute of Management, National Institute for Educational Planning and Administration, Institute of Management Consultants, the National e-Government

Strategies; etc. Others were the relevant Departments of the Federal Ministry of Education, Universal Basic Education Commission and renowned university experts.

TRCN gave the training free of charge for all participants; catered for their transportation, accommodation and feeding, and paid subsistence allowance. Participants in their communiqué described TRCN contribution to teacher capacity building as revolutionary and called on stakeholders to support the initiative.

In the same year under review, TRCN developed a new and printed a new edition of the CPD Manual for teachers and CPD providers in Nigeria. The National Council on Nigeria had earlier endorsed the TRCN CPD manual and charged all persons and organisations organizing CPD for teachers to abide by the provisions of the manual. TRCN distributed the revised CPD manual free of charge to registered teachers and organisations – usually TRCN distributes all its published manuals and documents for the teaching profession in Nigeria free of charge!

#### **8. APPROVAL OF POST DOCTORAL DIPLOMA IN EDUCATION (PDDE) PROGRAMME FOR UNIVERSITY OF ILORIN**

The university of Ilorin which currently is first in Nigeria according to international ranking of universities made history by being the first university whose its Senate came up with a policy that all lecturers must have teaching qualification approved by TRCN. In this regard, the university's Vice Chancellor lead a delegation of the Dean of Education and other principal officers to TRCN Headquarters where he personally submitted a proposed PDDE fashioned after the teacher education programme for top academics in the United States of America. After several meetings and working sessions, TRCN was glad to approve the PDDE for the university.

#### **9. DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL BENCHMARK FOR POST GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN EDUCATION (PGDE)**

The PGDE programme which for decades has been the major route for admission of graduates without teaching qualification into the teaching profession has been without a national benchmark and no quality assurance agency (not even the National Universities Commission) has been responsible for the accreditation of the programme. Each university developed its syllabus and conducted the programme in a way it deemed fit. The situation created opportunity for poor quality PGDE programmes, lack of national standards and disdain for the PGDE qualification by the foreign teaching councils.

TRCN in accordance with its mandates as the apex regulatory authority for the teaching profession took up the challenge to harmonize the divergent PGDE programmes and curriculum and successfully came up with a National Benchmark which must now be operated by all the Nigerian universities. To do this, TRCN partnered with the Committee of Deans of Education in Nigerian universities and other critical stakeholders.

## **10. DEVELOPMENT OF PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR NIGERIAN TEACHERS**

TRCN bequeathed the nation in its first ever comprehensive Standards for assessing the performance of teachers in terms of knowledge, pedagogical skills, professional conduct, fulfillment of membership obligations, continuous professional development and other issues. The *Standards* is one of the best in the world as it took advantage of similar documents in other teaching councils around the world. A consortium of Educational experts and professions did the initial work while various stakeholders made contributions that gave birth to the final document.

The *National Benchmark for PGDE* and the *Professional Standards for Nigerian Teachers* are clearly part of issues which the Hon. Minister of Education included in her One Year Strategic Plan for the Education Sector in Nigeria. The accomplishment of the two documents therefore brought great joy to the Hon. Minister who has fixed March 11, 2011 to personally present the documents to the Nigerian public in a national ceremony in Abuja.

## **11. INDUCTION OF EDUCATION STUDENTS AT POINT OF GRADUATION**

The Induction of fresh Education Graduates spread across universities and colleges of Education as TRCN regularly got invitation from the institutions to come and induct their Education students at point of graduation. Among the universities were the “big two” – Universities of Ibadan and Nsukka and many State and Federal Colleges of Education. The candidates during the ceremony took their oath of professional practice and received their certificates of registration from TRCN. Usually, the induction was attended by the TRCN Registrar/Chief Executive his Directors; Vice Chancellors and Heads of the various institutions; Deans and Directors of Education; Honourable Commissioners of Education; Delegates of other tertiary institutions; members of family of the candidates; the press; and other stakeholders. The Induction ceremony continued to be a turning point in the lives of the new graduates as they confessed that they had become better prepared and informed as teachers and that they were proud like their peers in other professions by seeing the changes taking place in the teaching profession.

## **12. ACCREDITATION OF TEACHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS RUNNING THE PROFESSIONAL DIPLOMA IN EDUCATION (PDE)**

In the course of the year, TRCN strengthened the running of the PDE in teacher training institutions in Nigeria – the universities and Colleges of Education. TRCN banned tertiary institutions that are not accredited by the National Universities Commission or National Commission for Colleges of Education for teacher education programmes from mounting the PDE. It stressed the fact that the PDE is a post graduate programme that entitled its graduates to be admitted into the Master of Education programme and therefore must be run by only universities and Colleges of Education with proven ability and facilities to deliver the programme. TRCN further paid accreditation visit to several institutions that applied for recognition to run the PDE programme and those that met the requirements were approved.

### **13. COMMENCEMENT OF FULL ONLINE REGISTRATION AND GLOBAL VISIBILITY OF TRCN**

As one of the agencies in Nigeria driving electronic governance, TRCN commenced full online registration of teachers with a lot of interactive opportunities and online facilities for teachers. The online registration enables teachers from all the country to register without physical contact with TRCN.

TRCN website was enhanced and a vibrant portal/website for the Africa Forum for Teaching Regulatory Authorities launched. This made the teaching profession in Nigeria and Africa improve its visibility in the global information super highway powered by the internet.

### **14. THE WORLD BANK STEP-B**

TRCN made great advance in the execution of the STEP-B Project commissioned by the World Bank. The Project among other aims is to develop a comprehensive database of all Science and Technical Teachers at the Post Basic Education level in Nigeria. TRCN upgraded the STEP-B software, trained staff handling the project, distributed the relevant data collection instruments nationwide and began the computerization and analysis of the data. A portal/website of STEP-B was also created within the TRCN website and online collection of data from teachers was also done through the portal.

### **15. LETTERS OF PROFESSIONAL STANDING FOR NIGERIANS WISHING TO TEACH ABROAD**

The working relationship between TRCN and sister teaching councils abroad kept advancing. More and more foreign teaching councils made it mandatory for Nigerians to obtain confidential reports (*letters of professional standing*) from TRCN before their applications for registration/licensing could be processed. The requests came from the United States of America, United Kingdom Ireland, Australia, South Africa and other parts of the world.

### **16. OTHER MATTERS**

In keeping with best practices the quality of licenses issued to teachers was radically changed for the better. This was made possible by the deployment biometric technology which electronically captured the photo and bio-social data of teachers and produced identity cards that resemble the national driving license. Owing to the high cost of production, the expiry date of the license was increased from one to three years. However, teachers are still required to pay their annual dues every year as other professionals do.

Several states responded positively with the payment of annual dues for their teachers which entitled them to obtain their teaching licenses whereas other states were still showing lukewarm attitude towards the payment up to the end of the year. The States that impressively responded to paying their teachers annual dues included Rivers, Niger, Kaduna, Gombe and Bauchi States.

The Teachers Tribunal started sitting and cases brought up included that of Adamawa State where a teacher was accused of kidnapping the daughter of his school principal. The teacher has since been dismissed by the Adamawa State Government in line with recommendations of the Teachers Investigating Panel in the State. The Attorney General and Minister of Justice of Nigeria also deployed an Attorney to serve as Advisor of the Teachers Tribunal in keeping with the provisions of the **TRCN** Act. The Attorney developed the necessary legal document that prescribed the rules of procedure of the Teachers Tribunal and which is in the press.

The Hon. Minister of Education forwarded to **TRCN** cases of teachers including a school principal involved in examination malpractice. **TRCN** concluded investigations and received written reports from the National Examinations Council, Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board and other relevant bodies. The next step is actual prosecution of the teachers in the law court.

Many other activities and programmes, some of which are listed earlier under the **OVERVIEW** section combined to make year 2010 very exciting. The programmes helped in no small measure to restore the lost dignity of the teaching profession.

## **17. CHALLENGES**

The great achievements of 2010 were not without logistical nightmares, insufficiency of funds and such other problems.

The great number of teachers (quite over a million) that mandates cover makes the regulation and control of the profession a daunting task. This was worsened by the existence of unqualified teachers at all levels of the Education system which has negative impact on the Education system. It did seem several employers of teachers (in the public and private sectors) continued to pay lip service to the professionalisation of teaching by continuing to engage unqualified teachers contrary to existing National Policy on Education and the decisions of the National Council on Education. During the year under review, **TRCN** also sent a memo to the National Council on Education seeking its support to stop the deployment of National Youth Corps members who did not read Education to the schools. The memo gained the support of several stakeholders while many others regrettably still felt that such untrained teachers could still be used in the Nigerian schools. Therefore, throughout the year, the fight to rid the teaching profession of quacks remained on the front burner.

**TRCN** has hardly received the level of budgetary allocation required to effectively discharge its mandates. The great achievements recorded came mostly due to judicious use of scarce resources and often self-denial by **TRCN** Management and staff who make all sorts of sacrifices to keep the flag flying. Similarly, most States and teachers have failed to respond promptly to the request by **TRCN** for payment of annual dues to **TRCN** as obtains in the other professions. Therefore, a lot of advocacy and co-operation from the teachers unions and employers of teachers are required to empower **TRCN** to deliver the necessary dividends for the profession.

Inadequate publicity was another crippling monster as **TRCN** could not afford the exorbitant fees charged by the electronic and print media for publicity. As a result, great achievements by **TRCN** were either poorly or never publicized to the relevant stakeholders. This was a very serious dis-incentive because some stakeholders due to lack of information dissemination felt that **TRCN** was not doing enough.

Manpower development needs of the Department was not sufficiently met due to paucity of funds as several staff that required training in order to be excellent on their jobs could not have the opportunity for training. Being the core Department, the achievement of the mandates of the Council depended so much on the quality of staff in the Department of Professional Operations. Therefore, there is need to create training opportunities for more staff in the subsequent years.

**Dr. Steve Nwokeocha**

Director, Department of Professional Operations