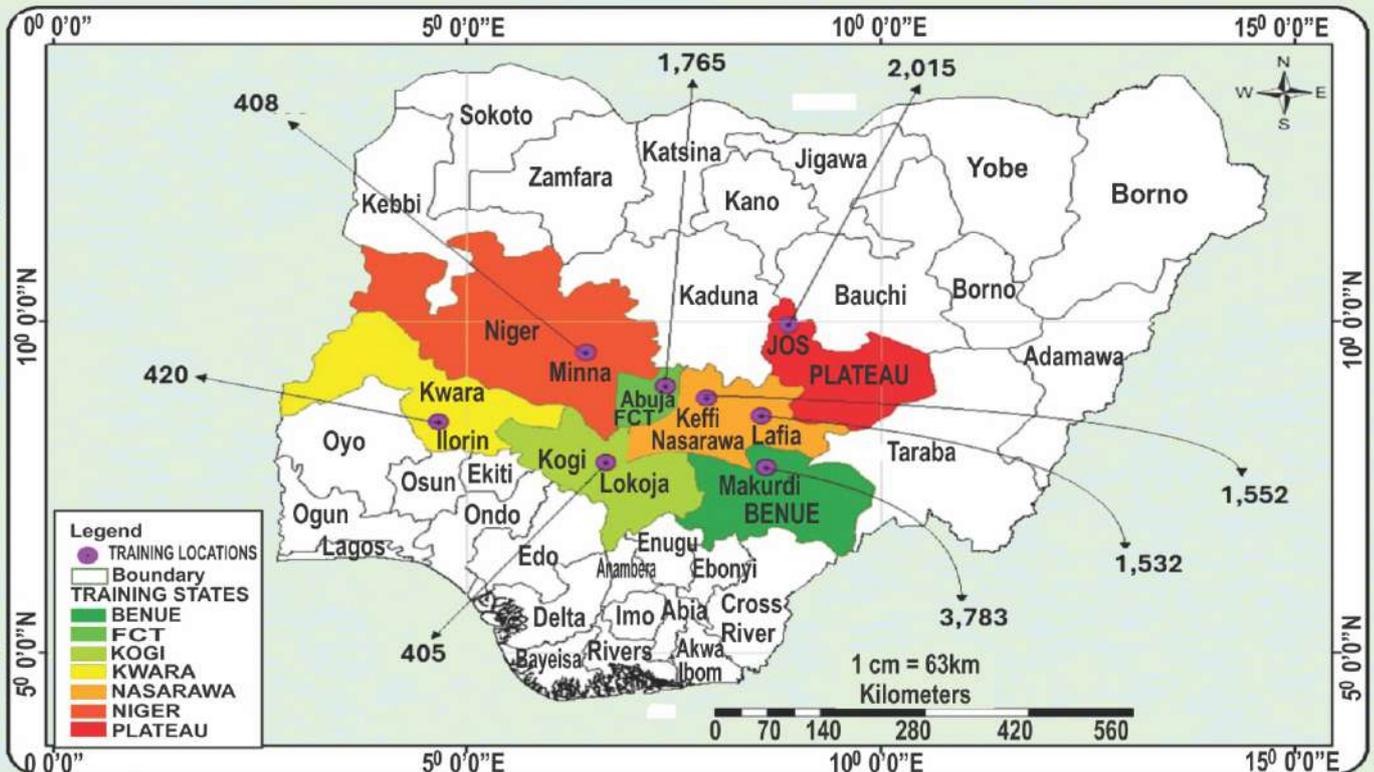




INSTITUTE OF PROCUREMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL STANDARDS (IPESS)

FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE, MAKURDI (FUAM)
NOW KNOWN AS JOSEPH SARWUAN TARKA UNIVERSITY,
MAKURDI (JOSTUM)

SPESSE-FUAM Track A Training and Spread in North Central Nigeria



Excellence & Professionalism

DECEMBER, 2025

BULLETIN
Vol. 3, NUMBER 6

With a heart full of gratitude, I am excited to write this note and present to you the December 2025 edition of our bimonthly bulletin as we bring 2025 activities to a close.

It is both timely and fitting to reflect on the remarkable progress made by the Institute of Procurement, Environmental and Social Standards (IPESS), Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi (JOSTUM) in her quest for sustainable human capacity development in the areas of Procurement, Environmental and Social Standards.

This year (2025), IPESS JOSTUM has demonstrated a relentless commitment to manpower development through our customised training, equipping our trainees with cutting-edge knowledge and practical skills that align with our mission and vision for achieving the Sustainable Procurement, Environmental, and Social Standards Enhancement (SPESSE) project development objective. This has created a new order and shaped the future for better service delivery in the public and private sectors in Nigeria and beyond.

One of the most significant undertakings of the year was the rollout of comprehensive, customised advanced certificate (Track B) training programs tailored to address the ethical, professional, and procedural dimensions of better service delivery. Participants drawn from Ministries, Departments and Agencies of government within and outside the north-central region of Nigeria participated both face-to-face and online. These sessions were not merely checklist exercises, but rather interactive forums designed to confront real-world challenges, share experiences, and collectively build a robust ethical structure for a better society. The customised training sessions, which were held across IPESS JOSTUM's study centres in north-central Nigeria as well as online, produced thousands of fit-for-purpose professionals and change agents in the three thematic areas of procurement, environmental, and social standards.

More so, another key venture by IPESS JOSTUM was the training of postgraduate supervisors. Postgraduate research forms the bedrock of academic advancement and innovation. At the heart of this process are postgraduate supervisors – mentors, guides, and evaluators whose expertise and leadership can profoundly influence the academic, professional, and personal trajectories of their students. Despite playing a crucial role, many institutions often overlook or undervalue the formal training of postgraduate supervisors. Without systematic training, even the most knowledgeable academics may struggle to deliver effective supervision, potentially leading to student disengagement, delays in project completion, or even attrition.

To this end, IPESS JOSTUM facilitated a two-day workshop to equip postgraduate supervisors not only

with expertise in their disciplines but also with interpersonal skills necessary to inspire and guide the next generation of researchers. Investing in postgraduate supervisors' training signals IPESS JOSTUM's commitment to academic excellence and student success. This, in turn, can foster higher completion rates, better research outputs, and more fulfilling academic experiences for all concerned.

These and many other milestones are a testament to our dedication, professionalism, and steadfastness in nurturing talent, inspiring excellence, and driving sustainable growth. As we celebrate the end of a transformative year, IPESS JOSTUM stands as a symbol of optimism and a reference point for institutions seeking to drive positive change through strategic human capacity building. The gains of the past year have laid a solid foundation for even greater achievements in the years to come.

Let us step into the new year with renewed commitment, knowing that transparency and accountability are not just aspirational values but are realities we have the collective power to sustain. Together, we will continue to raise the standard of service delivery and build a society that future generations will be proud to inherit.

On behalf of the Vice Chancellor, JOSTUM, Engr Professor Isaac N. Itodo, and the entire IPESS JOSTUM team, I extend our heartfelt appreciation to all staff, students, and stakeholders whose relentless efforts have made 2025 a landmark year. Together, we will continue to improve and establish new benchmarks in manpower development and institutional excellence.

Wishing you a prosperous and impactful year ahead.



Prof. Lami A. Nnamonu, PMP, FICCON, FCSN, FSTAN, PMP
Center Leader & Director,
Institute of Procurement Environmental
and Social Standards (IPESS)



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Dr. C.O. ECHE
DEPUTY DIRECTOR, IPESS

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IPESS JOSTUM TRAINS POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES' SUPERVISORS

As part of her commitment to improving academic standards and research outcomes, the Institute of Procurement, Environmental, and Social Standards (IPESS) at Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi (JOSTUM) held a two-day workshop for postgraduate supervisors on December 16, 2025, to improve mentor-student engagement, address challenges that delay postgraduate research, and strengthen supervisory practices for timely postgraduate program completion.

The workshop was held from 16th to 17th December 2025 at Tazu Luxury Hotel and Suites, Lafia, Nasarawa State.

The Vice Chancellor, Engr. Prof. Isaac N. Itodo, represented by the Deputy Vice Chancellor Academics, Prof. Raymon Wuana, extended profound appreciation to the management of IPESS for their unwavering commitment to academic excellence, capacity development, and the strengthening of postgraduate (PG) programs in the university.

According to the Vice Chancellor, "This workshop provides a valuable platform for all PG supervisors to deepen their understanding of contemporary supervision ethics, best practices, interdisciplinary research approaches, and outcome-orientated mentorship."

Engr Itodo urged the participants to translate the knowledge and skills acquired to enhance quality and timely completion of PG programmes for the interest of all.

The Center Leader and Director, Prof. Lami A. Nnamonu *PMP* in her presentation titled "Importance of Timely PG Completion to Institutional Performance", rolled out the appreciable number of trainees trained by the Institute from inception to date and stated that the institute has done well, especially in Short Executive (Track A) and Advanced Certificate (Track B) courses. Professor Nnamonu, however, lamented the deficit in the number of postgraduate diploma (Track C) and Master of Science (Track C) students and called on the participants to intensify efforts where necessary to boost students' timely completion of research in Tracks C and D for the actualisation of the project's set targets.

Speaking on the theme "SPESSE Monitoring & Evaluation Arrangements for Postgraduate Supervision", the Monitoring and Evaluation Officer Prof. Simon A. Shomkegh presented the new Monitoring and Evaluation framework for postgraduate supervision within the Sustainable Procurement, Environmental and Social Standards Enhancement (SPESSE) programs. Prof. Shomkegh stated that the initiative introduces a mandatory PG Research Monitoring Form designed to track student-supervisor meeting frequencies, evaluate

the usefulness of those sessions, and set firm research completion dates agreed upon by both parties. He added that this systematic approach aims to address ambitious graduation targets, with the university seeking to graduate 178 PGD and 197 MSc students by June 30, 2026, while adhering to strict program durations of 9 months for PGD and 18 months for MSc. The Monitoring and Evaluation Officer emphasized that to ensure that these goals are met, supervisors are cautioned against critical "red flags" such as approving overly broad research scopes or expensive projects lacking financial plans. He sued for multiple stakeholders' collaborative efforts, ranging from departmental PG boards to the JOSTUM Senate, aimed at maintaining high academic standards and improving student output across the procurement, environmental, and social standards tracks. On his part, the Standard Quality Officer, Social Standards, Prof. Simon A. Ejembi encouraged the

participants not to assume any form of familiarity with the presentations and the presenters to objectively assimilate the essence of the workshop. He further stated that the participants are major stakeholders, and the workshop was an opportunity to enable them to reflect on their activities so far and how they could possibly improve them.



A Section of Participants during Postgraduate Programme Supervisor's Training in Lafia

Delivering the closing remarks, the Center Leader and Director of IPESS JOSTUM Prof. Lami A. Nnamonu, expressed sincere appreciation to the organising committee and the IPESS management team for prioritising capacity building and commended the resource persons for sharing their insightful presentations and practical guidance, as well as their willingness to share experiences drawn from local and international best practices. The Center Director, while appreciating the participants for their active engagement, further urged them to apply the knowledge gained to change things for the better. "As we return to our departments and labs, I encourage us to translate the knowledge and skills we've gained here into improved supervision practices, supporting timely completion, higher research quality, and stronger, healthier supervisor-student relationships." She stated.

Resource persons drawn from within the university, including Prof. Ralph A. Ofukwu, Dean of PG School; Prof. Ebenezer J. Ekefan; Dr. Ayopo O. Olotu; and Prof. Habibat F. Chahul, coached participants on effective postgraduate supervision, research planning and time management, research ethics and quality assurance, and digital tools for research and supervision, respectively.

ONLINE ADVANCED CERTIFICATE COURSE: IPSS JOSTUM GRADUATES 258 PARTICIPANTS

The institute of Procurement, Environmental and Social Standards (IPSS), Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University Makurdi (JOSTUM), on 21st October 2025 graduated no fewer than 258 online advanced certificate course participants in her core areas of procurement, environmental and social standards.

In a goodwill message, the Center Leader and Director, Professor Lami A. Nnamonu, on behalf of the Vice Chancellor, JOSTUM, Engr Professor Isaac N. Itodo, congratulated the graduands and stated that by virtue of the training, graduands were automatically bestowed the status of alumni of the Institute. The Center Leader, represented by the Deputy Center Leader of Procurement Standards, Professor Simon T. Kpelai, commended the sacrifices of the graduands and encouraged them to be good

ambassadors of the Institute, saying whatever the graduands do henceforth should reflect the positive takeaways of the training to protect the reputation of the Institute and the University at large.

Professor Nnamonu further enjoined the graduands to take advantage of the programmes offered by the Institute and gain valuable experiences and certificates that would shape their lives and professional careers.

Patricia Kuma Tabe, Assistant Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, during a lecture on the theme "Drivers of Change" stated that as change agents, graduands are expected to contribute to reducing instances of corruption and mismanagement of public funds in Nigeria's public and private sectors. Patricia Tabe challenged the trainees to share their experiences with their colleagues and to be bold in applying their newly acquired knowledge and abilities, stating that positive change is possible

through courageous men and women who believe in human dignity and prosperity. She urged the graduands to dedicate themselves to becoming professionals in their respective fields.

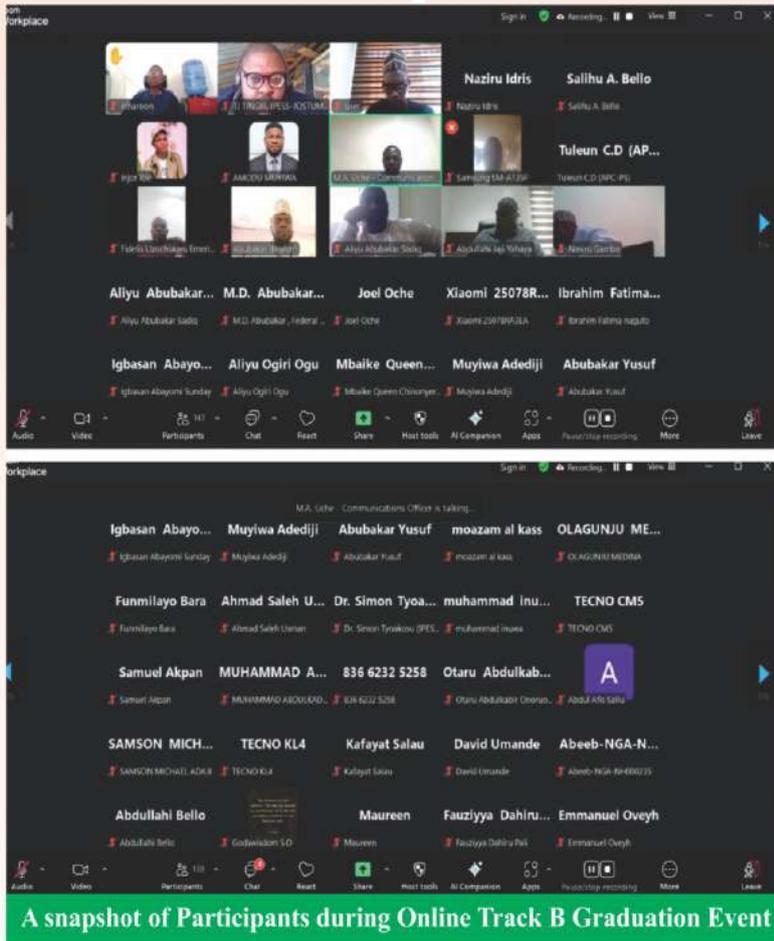
In separate valedictory speeches, Monica Mnyim, Sandra Michael, and Glory Onunka of social, procurement, and environmental standards, respectively, stated that the training was an

educative and enlightening experience that expanded their professional perspectives, enabling them to acquire skills that will guide them in making informed decisions as future leaders in their various sectors. The class representatives appreciated the management of IPSS JOSTUM and the facilitators for their support and unflinching commitment, which made the programme a huge success. They called on their fellow graduates to constantly apply the knowledge gained to promote integrity, sustainability, and positive impacts in

their respective fields and communities. "As we bring this programme to a close, let us remember that our learning does not end here. The real success of this training lies in our ability to apply what we have learnt to promote fairness, respect, and accountability in our daily work and social environments." Monica Mnyim stated.

Delivering a vote of thanks, the Administrative Team Leader, Dr Mercy S. Iannah, extended profound appreciation to the Management of IPSS JOSTUM and the facilitators for their support and congratulated the graduands for attaining the feat. Dr Mercy Iannah called on the graduands to be true Drivers of Change by courageously applying the knowledge and skills they have acquired to better their workplaces and the society in general.

The graduands comprised 78 environmental, 94 social and 86 procurement standards' participants



The Institute of Procurement, Environmental, and Social Standards (IPESS), Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi (JOSTUM), in collaboration with the Federal University of Technology, Minna (FUTMinna), graduated yet another batch of participants in the Advanced Certificate Course in Procurement and Social Standards on Friday, November 14, 2025. The graduation ceremony was held at the SICT Hall, Main Campus of the University.



Prof Adolphus A. Naswem, Deputy Centre Leader, Social Standards
Delivering an Address during IPESS Track B Graduation Event in Minna

The Vice-Chancellor of FUTMinna, Prof. Faruk Adamu Kuta, described the training as timely and essential, especially during a period of scarce national resources, while being represented by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), Prof. Abdullahi Muhammad. He applauded IPESS JOSTUM for delivering world-class training locally, saving Nigerians the high cost of pursuing similar programmes abroad. He urged graduate students to value the opportunity, emphasising that such capacity-building initiatives are crucial for national development.

Delivering a goodwill message, the Centre Leader and Director, Professor Lami A. Nnamonu, represented by the Deputy Centre Leader of Social Standards, Prof. Adolphus Naswem, challenged the graduands to spearhead a cultural shift within Nigeria's public service. He called for an end to the corrupt mindset that views public office as a pathway to personal

enrichment. Instead, he underscored procurement as a transformative instrument capable of fostering fairness, dignity, and inclusive development. Professor Naswem encouraged graduates to embody empathy, transparency, and integrity as they return to their institutions, positioning them as courageous change agents.

During a presentation on the theme "Drivers of Change", Dr Victor A. Otene, representing, outlined a strategic vision for improving accountability in public sector projects. He highlighted the vital role of Standards Monitoring and Evaluation Officers, particularly in social standards. Dr Otene emphasized a two-fold mission for public servants: building sustainable systems for managing procurement, environmental, and social standards, and promoting best practices to address complex workplace challenges.

Speaking on behalf of the graduating class, Abdullahi Usman (SS) and Deborah Bako (PS) expressed deep gratitude to the program's facilitators, management, and all contributors to the training. They described the course as a transformative journey that imparted not only technical knowledge but also a renewed sense of responsibility anchored in integrity and accountability.



Track B Graduands After Graduation Event in Minna

They affirmed that the graduates now form a community of dedicated change agents committed to strengthening public service delivery in Nigeria. They pledged to uphold the values they gained during the programme and to contribute to building a public service system that serves all citizens, particularly the most vulnerable.

The coordinator of Special Projects (CSP) at the National Universities Commission (NUC), Dr Joshua Atah, has called on Communications Officers of Centers of Excellence (CEs) to intensify efforts towards boosting the visibility of their Centers. Dr. Joshua Atah made the call on November 10th, 2025, during a three-day communication strategy workshop for project communications officers held at the NUC secretariat in Abuja.

The coordinator stated that the communication department is crucial in the success of every project and concerted efforts by Communications Officers to publish quality content regarding activities of their projects are paramount. Dr Atah reiterated the pivotal roles of projects' Communications Officers in enhancing the visibility of their Centers and urged them to remain steadfast in communicating milestones attained by their respective Centers in a bid to create the desired awareness.

project, Yvonne Orekyeh, encouraged Communications Officers to build and maintain healthy relationships with journalists and media outlets in their quests to ensure wider reach of their projects' activities. The Communications Officer called on participants to constantly create news articles accompanied by strategic photographs that will tell the stories of their Centers in an intended manner.



SPESSE Coordinator, Dr Joshua Atah (M) with IPESSE JOSTUM Communications Team during Project Publicity Workshop in Abuja

Delivering a lecture on the theme “Stakeholder Mapping and Engagement,” Dr Nats Odaudu stated that specific messages must be targeted at specific audience(s) for better results. The Assistant Communications Officer of the SPESSE project encouraged participants to create, implement, and evaluate communication plans for both internal and external publics towards managing reputation and engaging employees to achieve set targets. Dr Odaudu further called on the Communications Officers to explore digital tools as well as social media to enhance massive visibility of the projects.

The three-day workshop featured the presentation of certificates to participants drawn from various Centers of Excellence (CEs) by the NUC.



SPESSE Communications Officer, Yvonne Orekyeh Delivering a Lecture during Communications Officers Workshop in Abuja

Speaking on Media Engagement and Press relations, the Communications Officer of the World Bank-supported Sustainable Procurement, Environmental and Social Standards Enhancement (SPESSE)



Centre Leader and Director, Professor Lami A. Nnamonu Delivering a Talk during IPESS JOSTUM Postgraduate Programmes' Supervisors Training in Lafia



L-R; Prof. Rufus Sha'Ato, Dr Philip Omolaye, Dr Macsamuel Ughaa and Dr Christopher Eche during IPESS JOSTUM Postgraduate Programmes' Supervisors Training in Lafia



Prof. Simon T. Kpelai, Deputy centre Leader, Procurement Standards Delivering a Lecture during IPESS JOSTUM Postgraduate Programmes' Supervisors Training in Lafia



Participants during a Health Break Session at the IPESS JOSTUM Postgraduate Programmes' Supervisors Training in Lafia



JOSTUM Director of Academic Planning, Prof. Simon Irtwange making a Presentation during IPESS JOSTUM Postgraduate Programmes' Supervisors Training in Lafia

OUR STORY IN PICTURES



Coordinator, Special Projects at the NUC, Dr Joshua Atah (L) and Task Team Lead (TTL), Ishtiak Siddique during Project Implementation Support Mission in Abuja



JOSTUM Vice Chancellor, Engr Prof. Isaac Nathaniel Itodo (R) Seated during Project Implementation Support Mission in Abuja



An overhead Shot of Participants Seated during Project Implementation Support Mission in Abuja



A section of IPESSE JOSTUM Project Staff and Other Participants during Project Implementation Support Mission in Abuja

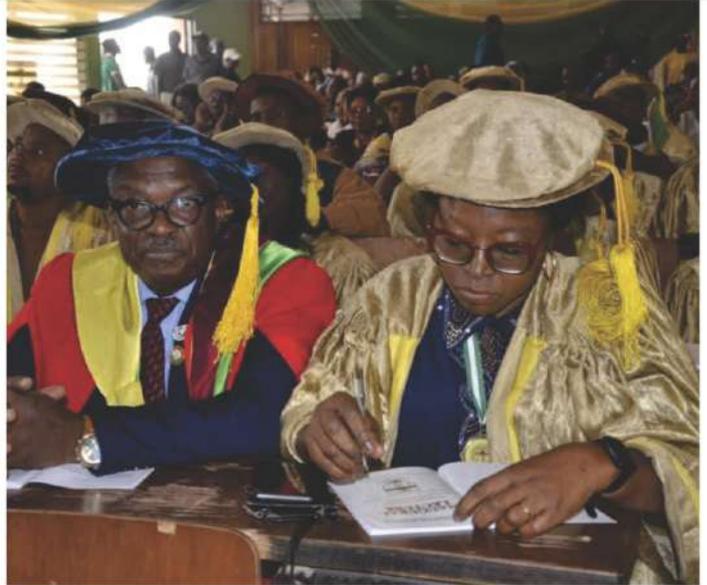


Centre Leader and Director, Prof. Lami A. Nnamonu (2nd Right), Deputy Center Leader, Social Standards, Prof. A.A. Naswem (2ⁿ Left), & Deputy Center Leader, Environmental Standards, Prof. Rufus Sha'Ato (Left) and other Participants during project Implementation Support Mission in Abuja





JOSTUM Vice Chancellor, Engr Prof. Isaac Nathaniel Itodo (L) Delivers Inaugural Lecture Award Plaque Prof. Simon Shomkegh (R) during the 88th Inaugural Lecture of JOSTUM as Wife, Mrs Beatrice Iveren Shomkegh Looks on



L-R: Deputy Centre Leader, Environmental Standards, Prof. Rufus Sha'Ato and Centre Leader and Director, IPSS JOSTUM Seated during the 88th Inaugural Lecture of JOSTUM



A Section of Senate Members of JOSTUM Seated during the 88th Inaugural Lecture of the University Delivered by the Monitoring and Evaluation Officer of IPSS JOSTUM, Prof. Simon A. Shomkegh



IPSS Management Team and Project Staff Members during IPSS JOSTUM End of Year Thanksgiving Service at the Chapel of the Good Shepherd, JOSTUM

NPCP CERTIFICATION: IPESS JOSTUM TRAINS PROCUREMENT ENTHUSIASTS.

In line with the goals of the Nigeria Procurement Certification Programme (NPCP), the Institute of Procurement, Environmental and Social Standards (IPESS), Josph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi (JOSTUM) on 20th October 2025 commenced the training of procurement experts across Nigeria to create a pathway for their certification.

Delivering the goodwill message during an online orientation event, the Center Leader and Director of IPESS JOSTUM, Professor Lami A. Nnamonu, on behalf of the Vice chancellor JOSTUM, Engr Professor Isaac N. Itodo, congratulated the participants and stated that IPESS JOSTUM through her delivery of quality trainings, has become a brand within the Sustainable Procurement, Environmental and Social standards Enhancement (SPESSE) project.

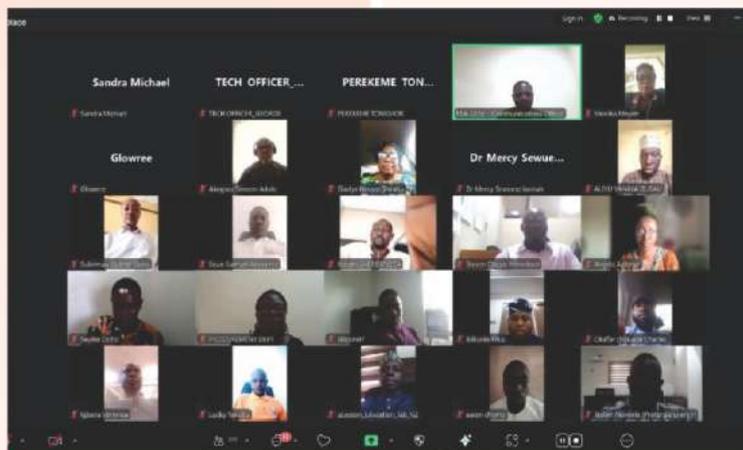
The Center Leader, who was represented by the Deputy Center Leader of Environmental Standards, Professor Rufus Sha'Ato, noted that the training will provide practical knowledge and skills that would enable participants to make informed decisions that would reflect standard best practices in their handling of procurement matters. Professor Nnamonu enjoined the participants to unlearn and relearn to become effective ambassadors of the Institute to lead the positive change Nigeria is yearning for.

During a presentation titled "This is IPESS", Professor Simon T. Kpelai, Deputy Center Leader of Procurement Standards, added that the SPESSE project aims to address the lack of knowledge and skills, particularly in the areas of procurement, environmental and social standards. Professor Kpelai highlighted the Institute's accomplishments since its founding and said that IPESS JOSTUM has exceeded all expectations in project execution. The Deputy

Center Leader urged the participants to take advantage of the opportunity provided by IPESS JOSTUM to advance their knowledge and further their careers.

The Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, Prof. Simon Shomkegh, urged the trainees to dedicate themselves to meeting the certification program's requirements. To create a pleasant learning environment, Prof. Shomkegh urged the participants to respect the diversity, equality, and inclusion of their fellow trainees while also asking them to respond immediately to emails and phone calls from the Institute or Independent Third-Party Verification Agents. He finally encouraged the participants to remain steadfast in their certification journey, as it has become a prerequisite for professional practice.

Speaking on the theme "Navigating the Virtual Learning Environment", the Information and Communication Technology Officer, Engr Terngu Tingir, made a step-by-step demonstration that would enable the participants to gain seamless access into the virtual learning environment for the



A Screen Short of SPESSE-FUAM Online Participants

successful completion of the online programme. Engr urged the participants to commit their time and have an open mind during the programme, adding that mutual respect is a key requirement to complete the programme.

The Academic Programme Coordinator of Procurement Standards, Professor Comfort D. Tuleun, during a vote of thanks, expressed appreciation to the management of the Institute and other supporting staff for the joint effort which has enabled the smooth running of programmes at the Institute. Professor Tuleun, while congratulating the participants, also admonished them to value the training and acquire knowledge and skills to better their professional practice and aim at improving the society.

IPESST JOSTUM TEAM RETURNS TO GOD IN THANKSGIVING

The management and staff of the Institute of Procurement, Environmental and Social Standards (IPESST), Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi (JOSTUM), on Sunday, 21st December, 2025 held a thanksgiving service at the Chapel of the Good Shepherd, JOSTUM to praise God for his unending blessings upon the team.



Centre and Director, Prof. Lami A. Nnamonu Addressing Church Members during IPESST JOSTUM End of Year Thanksgiving Service at the Chapel of the Good Shepherd, JOSTUM

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The centre leader and director, Professor Lami A. Nnamonu PMP, piously expressed gratitude to God for his sustained guidance and protection of the team, which enabled them to achieve commendable results.

Professor Nnamonu observed that despite the University's initial undervaluation in the Sustainable Procurement, Environmental and Social Standards Enhancement (SPESSE) project, the exceptional dedication and commitment of the IPESST JOSTUM team elevated the Institute to the top of the rankings, establishing her as a prominent figure at conferences. She added that those who believe and trust in God are never disappointed, and IPESST was a living testimony.

The Centre Director thanked the Management of JOSTUM led by Engr Professor Isaac Nathaniel Itodo for sustaining the University's support for the activities of the Institute to thrive. She also called on the IPESST JOSTUM team to remain committed to the achievement of the project's set targets.

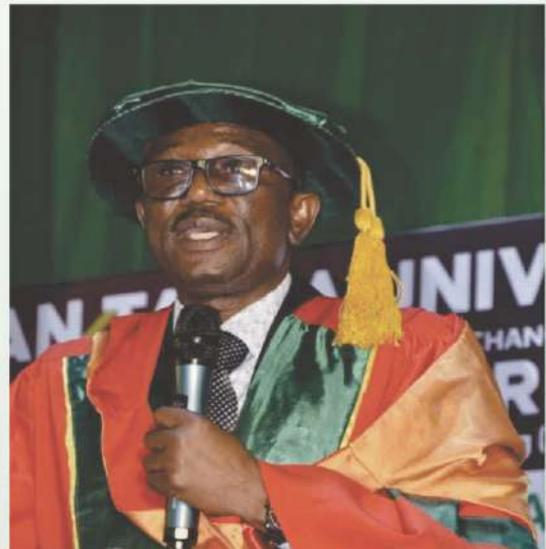
Earlier during a sermon, the officiating Minister, Professor Jonathan Ikyughur, enjoined Christians to re-examine their lives and make beneficial use of the talent God has invested in them for the good of humanity. Professor Ikyughur noted that, just like the biblical story of one of the ten lepers who returned to thank God upon his healing, the gesture by the IPESST team was a clear demonstration of faith and belief in God. He enjoined Christians to live a life worthy of emulation, saying, all mortal beings will account for their lives someday, and only the just shall be saved.'

RECONSIDER YOUR ACTIONS TO LIVE IN HARMONY WITH NATURE: PROFESSOR, SHOMKEGH

As the world grapples with intensifying climate change, deforestation, and biodiversity loss, a Professor of Forest Resources and Environmental Management, who is also the Monitoring and Evaluation Officer of the World Bank-supported Institute of Procurement, Environmental, and Social Standards (IPESST), Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi (JOSTUM), Professor Simon A. Shomkegh, has called on individuals, communities, organisations, and governments at all levels to reconsider current approaches, policies, and plans to ensure that they are in harmony with nature and enhance a habitable earth.

Professor Shomkegh made the call at Aper Aku Auditorium on Wednesday, December 8, 2025, while delivering the 88th Inaugural Lecture of JOSTUM.

Delivering on the theme – Nature's Values and Woes: Rethinking our Actions Towards a Sustainable Future – Professor Shomkegh Stated that, man was created to live in harmony with nature and keep all that the earth was endowed with and not to destroy it. He stated that a careful examination of human actions today portrays a deviation from the divine mandate with consequences not only for today but for future generations.



Professor Simon A. Shomkegh
Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, IPESST JOSTUM

The Monitoring and Evaluation Officer asserted that deforestation, insecurity, poverty, technological advancements, mineral mining, and others have led to the wanton destruction of natural resources – resulting in unprecedented consequences such as climate change, flooding, desertification, and coastal soil erosion. He added that unsustainable use of agrochemicals in crop and animal production pollutes food, soil, and water, making them unsafe for humans, who are the victims of the woes faced by nature. Professor Shomkegh, who also called for the examination of man's attitude towards actions regarding the use of natural resources emphasized that, biofriendly rehabilitation of river and stream banks, use of eco-friendly agrochemicals for soil fertilisation, and halting the current rate of deforestation, among other concerted efforts, will lead to wise use and sustained availability of natural resources.

Earlier, the Vice Chancellor of JOSTUM, Engr Professor Isaac N. Itodo, congratulated Professor Simon Shomkegh for reaching a significant milestone in his academic journey. The Vice Chancellor stated that Professor Shomkegh was one of the best minds produced by the University and his achievements in the academic sphere are not a surprise. Professor Itodo reiterated his commitment to sustain the culture of Inaugural Lecture throughout his tenure as the Vice Chancellor of JOSTUM.



MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT: SPESSE PROJECT CHANGING THE NARRATIVE, GETS WORLD BANK SATISFACTORY RATING

The World Bank-supported Sustainable Procurement, Environmental and Social Standards Enhancement (SPESSE) project has unequivocally stamped its impact on the operations of public and private sectors in Nigeria, and this is bound to endure.



World Bank Specialists and Heads of Projects during Project Implementation Support Mission in Abuja

Dedicated to building sustainable human capacity development in the areas of procurement, environmental and social standards, the SPESSE project, which is a remarkable initiative of the Federal Government of Nigeria, the World Bank and the National Universities Commission (NUC), has continued to bridge the gap between the insufficient supply of quality professionals and the lack of specific academic programmes in these areas through coordinated training programmes anchored by six Centres of Excellence (CEs) situated in Universities across the geopolitical zones of Nigeria.

In line with the SPESSE Project Development Objective (PDO), which hinges on developing sustainable human capacity in managing procurement, environmental and social standards in both public and private sectors in Nigeria, the project has paved the way for positive changes and uninhibited growth of individuals and organisations in various spheres of life and sectors.

Recently, the World Bank organised an Implementation Support Mission (ISM) with clear objectives to assess implementation

progress towards the Project Development Objective (PDO), review the status of ongoing and remaining project activities of the Original Financing, and discuss project closing protocols, the work plan for project activities under the Additional Financing (AF), and agree on implementation actions and milestones for the next six (6) months. The mission team was led by the World Bank Task Team Leader, Ishtiaq Siddique and the National Project Coordinator, Dr Joshua Atah, of the NUC.

The mission's Aide Memoire indicated significant progress since the last ISM. It revealed that all four PDO indicators for the project have been successfully achieved, and the overall Project Implementation Progress (IP) has been rated by the Bank as Satisfactory. This was after the conclusion of verification for the period of January 1–June 30, 2025. The IVA confirmed that 12 out of 18 Performance Based Conditions (PBCs) have been met or surpassed. Five additional PBCs are scheduled for completion by June 30, 2026, with a good deal of remaining targets aligned with the project's conclusion.



IPESSE JOSTUM Short Course Graduands during a Valedictory Event in Keffi

The mission engaged with key national and state-level partners, including SPESSE's National Facilitation Implementation Unit (NFIU) at the National Universities Commission (NUC), the Bureau of Public Procurement (BPP), the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs (FMWA), the Federal Ministry of Environment (FMEnv), and the Federal Ministry of Finance (FMoF), which represents the Federal Government of Nigeria. It also reviewed the operations of the six Centres of

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MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT: SPESSE PROJECT CHANGING THE NARRATIVE, GETS WORLD BANK SATISFACTORY RATING

Excellence (CEs): Ahmadu Bello University in Zaria, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University in Bauchi, Federal University of Agriculture, Makurdi, Federal University of Technology, Owerri, University of Benin in Benin City, and the University of Lagos. Presentations from the CE and IAs focused on results achieved, Project Development Objective (PDO)-related targets, international accreditations, DLIs, and the number of students sent on exchange programmes by CE, as tracer studies further confirmed the overwhelming impact of the SPESSE project from inception to date.

Notably, the SPESSE programme has reached a significant milestone in certifications, as the procurement, environment, and social nodes formally launched professional certification tests between April and June 2025 via online portals. So far, 3,429 people have passed. Of those, 2,121 passed in Procurement, 855 passed in Social Safeguards, and 453 passed in Environmental Safeguards. This is just a fraction of the over 85,000 participants trained across the six Centres of Excellence's programmes, (Tracks A-E).

rating of satisfactory. This rating is uncommon at this stage of implementation among funded projects. This was confirmed by the Director, International Economic Relations Department (IER), FMOF, Mr Stanley Nyeso George. The praised NUC under the leadership of its present and past Executive Secretaries, as well as Dr Atah, for this profound success. Centre Leaders and their committed team members were not left out of this shower of praise.

In keeping with her pledge to assist IAs and CE in achieving their goals, the World Bank announced the approval of Additional Financing (AF), which will take care of the project till June 2026. This is in response to improved outcomes in accordance with the Project Development Objective.

Overall, the SPESSE project underscores Nigeria's commitment to sustainable procurement, social, and environmental governance. With robust participation from national agencies, Universities, and the World Bank, the programme stands at a pivotal moment and will leverage AF to deepen procurement reform, scale online training, and drive the project in a manner that ensures lasting impact for Nigeria's public sector, businesses, and communities.

Meanwhile, IAs and CE remain focused on translating ambitious targets into actionable outcomes – ensuring that the gains in training, certification, and governance translate into more transparent, efficient, and inclusive public procurement in Nigeria.



Deputy Center Leader, Social Standards, Prof.A.A. Naswem Delivers Certificate of Participation to a Graduand during IPESSE JOSTUM Track B Valedictory Event in Minna

Not even the COVID-19 pandemic, which affected the early commencement of the SPESSE project, could hinder the actualisation of tremendous milestones. The unflinching efforts of IAs and CE have made SPESSE one of Nigeria's high-flying projects with an overall



A section of IPESSE JOSTUM Staff during Project Implementation Support Mission in Abuja



SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL STANDARDS ENHANCEMENT (SPESSE) PROJECT.

INSTITUTE OF PROCUREMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL STANDARDS (IPESS)

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CANDIDATES CAN ALSO APPLY FOR THE INSTITUTE'S POST GRADUATE DIPLOMA (PGD), MASTER OF SCIENCE (MSC) BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (BSC) AND DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PhD) IN THE ABOVE MENTIONED AREAS.

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SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL STANDARDS ENHANCEMENT (SPESSE) PROJECT



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MISSION

To produce a critical mass of highly skilled and fit-for purpose professionals in the areas of Procurement, Environmental and Social Standards for sustainable development.

VISION

To be a Dynamic Regional Hub for Expert Training and Research in Public Procurement, Environmental and Social Standards Based on Global Best Practices.

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