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TRANSFORMING THE NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICE CORPS

A proposal to re-envision the NYSC Scheme
and harness the potential of Nigerian graduates
for national development

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1.0 Executive Summary

After five decades of continuous existence without any considerable innovative improvement, the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) currently faces significant challenges in terms of relevance and effectiveness. This proposal aims to transform the NYSC into a dynamic and impactful platform for graduate empowerment and national development. Recognizing Nigeria's vast human capital, especially among its youth, this initiative seeks to harness the enthusiasm and capabilities of young graduates through the NYSC. The overarching goal is to reposition the scheme as a catalyst for youth empowerment, economic growth, technological advancement, and social improvement.

Structurally, the proposal calls for a comprehensive overhaul of the NYSC, starting with its management structure and orientation programs. A re-envisioning of the camps as innovation and productivity hubs is suggested, alongside a review of the NYSC's current leadership model. Emphasis is placed on aligning the training and activities within the NYSC to the skill sets and career aspirations of corps members. This approach includes a significant shift towards empowering corps members to make meaningful contributions in their areas of deployment, particularly in rural and underserved areas.

In terms of specific interventions, the proposal introduces six distinct pathways for corps members: Business and Entrepreneurship Development, Public Management and Civic Leadership, Technology Innovation and Research, and Specialized Professions, each tailored to different skills and career trajectories. This categorization aims to provide focused training and opportunities, ensuring corps members are equipped to integrate effectively into the economy post-service. Additionally, there is a strong focus on rural development, economic empowerment, and addressing graduate unemployment through these pathways.

The proposal also acknowledges the need for substantial financial resources and suggests a diversified funding approach, including government, private sector, and international contributions. Anticipated challenges, such as bureaucratic inefficiencies and lack of political will, are recognized, with suggestions for addressing these through structural and legislative changes. Ultimately, this proposal envisions a revamped NYSC scheme as a crucial mechanism for national development, leveraging the potential of Nigerian youth to drive significant socio-economic progress.

2.0 Preamble

Nigeria, a country endowed with enormous human and natural resources, has grappled with persistent challenges arising from prolonged mismanagement, pervasive greed, and a dearth of innovative solutions. However, the recent shift in government has sparked “renewed hope” and interest of well-intentioned citizens in seeking pragmatic approaches to propel the nation towards sustained growth and prosperity. It is widely acknowledged that the greatest asset of any nation is its human capital—an asset that Nigeria possesses in abundance. Particularly noteworthy is the fact that the country is blessed with the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) Scheme, where all the fresh, energetic, innovative, and enthusiastic graduates gather for one year under the umbrella of the government. Leveraging this opportunity to transform the trajectory of our country, represents, on many fronts, a pivotal opportunity for wealth creation and national advancement. The critical question then becomes, how can this be achieved? This forms the basis of this proposal.

By reimagining the NYSC scheme as a platform for targeted impact, Nigeria can harness the talent, enthusiasm, energy, and diversity of its youth population to address multifaceted challenges, and set the country on the path of social, economic, and technological advancement.

After over five decades of existence, the NYSC scheme appears to have encountered diminishing returns. As the number of graduates surges annually, owing to an increasing number of tertiary institutions, and more investment is injected into the program, the perceived

value continues to diminish, while the associated costs, both individual and social, keep rising. This situation therefore necessitates a call for the adoption of practical, strategic, and innovative methods to mobilize and maximize the skills and capabilities of young educated Nigerians by unlocking the full potential of the NYSC program toward poverty eradication, job creation, agricultural and technological advancement, and economic breakthrough.

Considering the complex and rapidly changing nature of the global economy, the realities of our country, and the government’s commitment to “**renew hope**” for Nigerians, the urgency for such transformative reforms has never been more pressing. This proposal is

not about what the challenges are, or why they exist, but it centers on how to be creative in proffering effective solutions to these problems. It proposes a repurposing of the NYSC program as a catalyst for national progress, leveraging the enthusiasm and creative minds of the youths to forge an enviable future for our great nation.

The NYSC program is crucial for addressing graduate unemployment and propelling the nation towards social and economic stability. It offers a vital platform for tackling the numerous challenges confronting Nigerian youth and the country at large. Research

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shows that one empowered graduate can potentially create employment for at least four other people and support at least two dependents. This is besides several other positive externalities and multipliers across various sectors. Consequently, the government must prioritize targeted and innovative empowerment of graduates through the NYSC. In addition, according to Dubem Moghalu (2015), about 89% of government allocation to the NYSC scheme goes into recurrent expenditure while only about 0.52% is directed towards Corps member training and skill acquisition. Hence, this proposal outlines a new approach to revamping the NYSC scheme, emphasizing a considerable investment in both human and financial resources, while also suggesting potential avenues for generating the necessary funds without exerting excessive strain on government finances.

3.0 Problem Statement (The status quo)

Certainly, it is evident that the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) has fallen short of expectations on multiple fronts. Presently, a significant number of graduates no longer anticipate their national service with enthusiasm. This has prompted substantial criticism and questioning of the scheme's continued relevance from various quarters. While some advocate for its complete abolition, others call for a comprehensive overhaul or restructuring. One primary concern surrounding the NYSC is its multifaceted lack of value addition. From a cost-benefit perspective, there are substantial social and private costs

associated with the NYSC program, with anticipated corresponding benefits that are often not realized.

On the private side, corps members take substantial risks by relocating to unfamiliar terrains to serve with the expectation of gaining valuable experiences such as networking, job opportunities, skills development, or, at the very least, a conducive environment to make a meaningful impact in rural communities. However, the reality often falls short, as many corps members encounter challenges such as poor and inadequate facilities, a general lack of innovation, and uninspiring camp activities like the Skills Acquisition & Entrepreneurship Department (SAED) program, which corps members often refer to as “sleeping tablet”. Additionally, nepotism and connections often influence postings, leaving many corps members in undesirable Primary Place of Assignment (PPA) locations, exposed to hardship and poor hygiene, particularly in rural areas. While a few fortunate or well-connected corps members secure placements with organizations that provide adequate support and, at times, retain them post-service year, the majority of the nearly 350,000 annual participants spend the entire year struggling, confused, and frustrated. Therefore, while this proposal encourages and recommends increased rural postings, it also underscores the need for a properly structured and productive framework that will serve the interests of all stakeholders.

On the social side, as of 2022, the government allocated about NGN 120 billion annually to the NYSC scheme (StatiSense, 2023), yet the returns on this investment remain extremely modest, if any at all. Whereas the scheme possesses enormous opportunities that, with appropriate commitment can generate huge returns for the government.

Other issues mitigating against the scheme include poorly structured PPA posting, inadequate monthly allowance, etc. These are just a few of the pressing issues demanding immediate attention and intervention. The time is therefore ripe to revitalize the NYSC scheme. There exists untapped potential within the program that could significantly benefit our nation, and with an appropriate strategic approach, the reform can yield beneficial outcomes.

4.0 Objective of the Proposal

The objective of this proposal is to overhaul the entire structure of the NYSC scheme and reposition it as a catalyst for economic growth and sustainable development through entrepreneurship development, job creation, and improved security, among other things. Specifically, the proposal aims to:

- a. Address the structural challenges facing the NYSC scheme including the management structure, orientation camp (both physical structures and orientation programs), PPA posting, and Community Development Service (CDS).
- b. Develop and recommend a strategy for revamping and repurposing the scheme from just an annual routine exercise, and position it as an indispensable mechanism for wealth creation, national planning, and economic development.

5.0 The proposed reform

Despite all the challenges that have overwhelmed the NYSC scheme, there are still huge opportunities and potentials that if optimally harnessed, vigorously pursued, and properly implemented, will not only provide a good environment for graduates to serve but will also help in exploring, leveraging and maximizing their talents and skills for personal and national advancement.

NYSC provides a unique platform for national planning. It is a scheme where the government has all its fresh graduates under one umbrella.

Firstly, NYSC provides a unique platform for national planning. It is a scheme where the government has all its fresh graduates under one umbrella. This is an opportunity that should be maximized to organize and develop new strategies for job creation, poverty eradication, agricultural revolution, and technology innovation, among other things. Secondly, the posting of corps members across every corner of the country, including remote rural areas is an avenue to discover and harness countless potential and latent resources in the rural communities for optimal and sustainable exploration. Thirdly, NYSC has the potential of helping fresh graduates maximize their technological, creative, and

research prowess. Most students, particularly in the Medical and “STEAM” (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics) fields invest substantial effort in their final-year projects which are often abandoned on school shelves. This proposed reform therefore provides an opportunity to create appropriate platforms within the NYSC scheme for graduates to practicalize and improve their innovation and convert them into tangible economic products and services.

Fourthly, the scheme provides a unique opportunity to restructure and reform the public service and its recruitment process. The new approach would involve training corps members in various aspects of public governance and civic leadership to create a pool of qualified candidates for public service (including the military and paramilitary) based on merit and equity, and establishing new standards for public service recruitment process.

Specifically, to reposition the NYSC scheme, the following changes are hereby recommended in key areas of the scheme:

5.1 Structural Transformation

If the needed reform is to take place in the NYSC Scheme, the structure must first be critically reexamined. Below are some areas requiring immediate review, followed by recommended innovative approaches for a new direction.

5.1.1 Management Structure

The current management structure of the NYSC needs urgent re-examination, particularly concerning the position of the Director General (DG), who is usually a military officer. While it is understandable that NYSC was established during the military regime, the rationale for appointing a military officer as the DG requires reassessment based on the following:

Firstly, it has been nearly 24 years since Nigeria transitioned to democracy, and as such, NYSC, being under the Ministry of Youth Development and not Defense, should ideally be led by a civilian authority, like other government agencies. Secondly, the role of the

military in the program is limited to the initial three-week camp training, while the remaining 49 weeks of corps members service year are spent with civilian NYSC officials.

Additionally, the current leadership structure of NYSC, where the DG is military while all other top management officials are civilians, confirms the need for a reform. Furthermore, the military's training is mainly focused on national security and not economic development and/or youth empowerment. This is a reiteration that military leadership cannot lead the scheme into the desired future. Also, given that the original purpose of NYSC, which was the post-civil war reconstruction and reconciliation (Aljazeera, 2021), is no longer relevant, further indicates the need to re-envision the scheme. Hence, the ideal paradigm shift is to appoint a civilian with a creative mind and expertise in strategic planning, capacity building, youth empowerment, and wealth creation, to lead the scheme.

5.1.2 NYSC Camps

The orientation camps should be re-envisioned as an incubation hub for innovation and productivity, equipping corps members with essential skills and knowledge, and adequately preparing them for the next phase of life. Regrettably, the current state of the camps and the programs and activities carried out there often fall far below expectations. The poor conditions of many of the camps, as equally noted by the Minister of State for Youth Development (Vanguard Newspaper, Nov. 2023), highlight the need for complete remodeling. To address this, a standardized, adequately equipped NYSC camp model should be developed across all states, incorporating necessary facilities and allowing for future expansion. While existing permanent orientation camps will undergo upgrades to meet the new standard, states without a permanent orientation camp, such as Edo will be expected to build one.

Furthermore, the orientation activities should be refocused to align with each corps member's selected pathway (go to Section 5). Corps members will be categorized based on specific criteria such as field of study, interest, skill, natural talents, and career goals. This will allow for tailored orientation activities, ensuring a more beneficial experience for each individual.

5.1.3 Place of Primary Assignment (PPA) Posting

Corps members often face challenges and a sense of inferiority when posted to rural areas, leading to intense lobbying for placements in state capitals or major cities. Rural postings are perceived as punitive due to the hardships encountered, including transportation difficulties, inadequate healthcare, and a lack of basic facilities. To address this issue, we propose a clear definition of "rural areas" within each Local Government under NYSC jurisdiction, coupled with the introduction of a rural posting bonus, equivalent to an extra 20-30% of the regular monthly allowance. This incentive will motivate corps members to serve in rural areas and compensate for the hardships they may encounter. Additionally, implementing a data-driven approach to align corps members' postings with the specific needs of rural communities can enhance the impact and relevance of their service. Encouraging corps members to engage with these communities, post-service, through incentives like community development funding or business loans/grants can foster long-term benefits for both the corps members and the communities.

6.0 New NYSC Pathways

To achieve the long overdue and most expedient reform of the NYSC scheme, we have identified six distinct pathways of categorizing and empowering corps members in a manner that ensures their seamless

Empirical evidence suggests that one empowered graduate can potentially employ up to four non-graduates and support 2-4 dependents

integration into the economy, fostering their productive engagement post-service.

6.1 Business and Entrepreneurship Development (BED)

This pathway promises extensive training, coaching, and support to corps members who are inclined towards entrepreneurship or already own businesses. Participation is voluntary and does not require a pre-existing business idea as the training will expose them to various viable options and strategies.

Corps members in this category will spend extended 2-3 months in camp for comprehensive training in various aspects of entrepreneurship and business management such as business modeling, digital marketing, financial literacy, strategic business planning, market and risk analysis, business ethics, social entrepreneurship, microfinance, and several others. Additionally, participants will be exposed to business and investment opportunities both within the locality/state of their posting and nationwide. Collaboration with institutions like SMEDAN, Bank of Industry, Business Schools, etc., and offering startup support such as mentorship and financing through government and financial partners with considerate repayment and tax terms, will be critical success factors.

Upon completing the training, corps members pursuing entrepreneurship will be individually or collectively posted to relevant organizations for the remainder of their service year, during which they will gain practical skills and make contributions to such establishments. It will also be required of them to organize knowledge transfer and mentorship programs for the youths in their various local communities as part of their Community Development Service (CDS). This pathway is also suitable for individuals interested in private-sector employment (e.g., banking, manufacturing, telecommunications). However, they will be excluded from the financial support that comes with the startup package and will not be subjected to the conditions attached to such financial support. In addition, there will be an adequate system in place to ensure that those, and only those corps members who will set up businesses, gain access to the startup package. The collateral to be used could be, for example, the school and NYSC certificates of interested corps members.

6.2 Public Management and Civic Leadership (PMCL)

This pathway recognizes the pivotal role of public institutions in nation-building and the consensus among scholars that strong, inclusive, and resilient institutions are essential for national development. To this end, The PMCD pathway is designed for graduates aspiring to work in the public service, non-profit, as well as international organizations. Participants in this pathway will undergo extensive training in various aspects of Public Management and leadership such as public finance, project management, public procurement, ethical standards, etc.

The essence is to equip young people with the right mindset and skills needed for success in public service and to restructure Nigerian public institutions toward a merit-based, innovative, accountable, responsible, and responsive system. Corps members in this category will undergo a rigorous evaluation and ranking process during their training, and a pool of successful candidates and their ranking will be established. Upon completion of the service year, government agencies at national and sub-national levels, as well as interested organizations will have the opportunity (or be required) to recruit candidates from this pool.

6.3 Technology, Innovation and Research (TIR)

Recognizing the urgent need to harness and maximize the technological and innovative potential of our young graduates to reduce excessive reliance on imports and promote

Nigeria is a country where almost everything already available to us in abundance are still being imported.

local resource development, the TIR pathway aims to identify and nurture corps members' innovative ideas and research works for further exploration and possible commercialization.

Selection for this category will be based on candidates' disciplines, research and technological capabilities, and prior experience.

Participants in this category will undergo 2-3 months of intensive training to enhance their skills for practical application in research, innovation, and product development, particularly in the fields of Agriculture, ICT, Sciences, and Engineering. This pathway is crucial for fostering local resource development and reducing reliance on imports.

6.4 Specialized Professions (SP)

Besides the pathways stated above, special consideration will be given to the following:

6.4.1 Licensed Professionals

These are corps members in fields that require extra years (s) of learning, or special licenses before they are qualified to practice their professions. They include Doctors, Lawyers, Architects, Pharmacists, etc. Corps members in this category should be allowed to spend three weeks in camp and then be posted to serve in establishments relevant to their professions for six months only except they had indicated at the start of the program

that they would voluntarily complete one year. However, anyone planning to start their own businesses after the service year and is interested in the grant/loan facility would be required to join category a (BED) above. Similarly, individuals whose services are required to help in rural communities such as those in the medical and healthcare fields would also need to spend the full year.

6.4.2 Teachers and other Educators

Whether by training or by choice, every corps member willing to teach or support rural education in any capacity will receive the same treatment as those in the medical and healthcare fields in terms of duration and special allowance. While they can enroll in other categories such as BED, the majority of their service year will be spent assisting students in rural communities upon completion of their camp training. This pathway ensures that passionate and qualified individuals are placed in teaching roles, with additional incentives provided. Upon completion of service, they will follow the same path as those in the PMCL category.

6.4.3 National Security and Law Enforcement

The NYSC provides an ideal platform for identifying and recruiting qualified officers for law enforcement and national security agencies. The 3-week orientation camp (with the possibility of extension) provides ample time to identify corps members who are physically, mentally, and intellectually fit for these professions. With the military already coordinating the camp drills, other law enforcement agencies will have the opportunity to send representatives from each state to various camps to identify talents. Selected corps members may be taken for further scrutiny before successful candidates are recruited. Criteria for selection may include interest, punctuality, dedication, unique skills, height, health status, resilience, and physical and mental fitness.

With proper coordination, this process will also minimize the rigor and expenses of recruitment processes of law enforcement agencies and will encourage merit-based selection processes with fewer inefficiencies and corrupt practices.

These pathways are designed not only to enhance the NYSC experience for corps members but also to significantly contribute to economic growth and national

development. By tailoring the NYSC scheme to meet diverse professional needs and national priorities, we aim to create a more efficient, productive, and impactful service year, while also building a new economic order driven by skilled and energized talents.

7.0 Expected Outcome

The proposed reform for the NYSC scheme is expected to deliver the following outcomes:

7.1 Employment generation

The NYSC scheme is a unique avenue for employment generation, benefiting both graduates and non-graduates. If successfully implemented, the reform promises to engage up to 70% of graduates in productive activities post NYSC year. In addition, Empirical evidence

If successfully implemented, the reform promises to engage up to 70% of graduates in productive activities post NYSC year.

suggests that one empowered graduate can potentially employ up to four non-graduates and support 2-4 dependents, indicating that investment in a single corps member could positively impact 6-8 individuals, alongside generating substantial spillover and multiplier effects.

7.2 Rural Development and Poverty Eradication

This is one of the key objectives of this proposed reform. Currently, comprehensive data on the opportunities, potentials, and resources latent in rural and semi-rural communities is lacking in the country. In other words, there is an urgent need to develop a database for the Nigerian rural economy (both farm and nonfarm) that can guide the government and potential investors on where and how to participate. To achieve this, corps members can be engaged to conduct surveys thereby reducing research costs. This initiative will spur the development of small-scale industries in rural communities, leading to employment opportunities and economic empowerment for youths and women, while also attracting modern infrastructures to those areas. In addition, corps members can discover business opportunities in the rural areas and make a living for themselves while also

helping the youths in the communities through knowledge sharing, training, mentorship, etc.

7.3 Economic Development

With sincere commitment and collaboration from relevant stakeholders, this reform has the potential to productively engage a majority of new graduates annually. This will not only reduce competition in the job market but also stimulate SME development and open up new sectors thereby contributing to economic diversification and offering employment opportunities to a broad spectrum of society, including the underemployed and unemployed graduates.

7.4 Technological Progress

Technological advancement will no doubt transform the way things are done and will bring about several other innovations that will make our country relevant in the global economy.

As a nation, our best bet for technological advancement is out extremely talented and educated youth.

By exploring this opportunity, every sector of the economy stands a chance of benefiting from technological advancement. The best way of achieving this is by empowering our already talented and educated youth. Our ability to harness and maximize the technological abilities

of our youths through the categories earlier discussed will be a good indication that we are ready to progress into the future.

Specific Benefits – The proposed reform will:

- Align with the president's Renewed Hope agenda in the areas of food security, poverty eradication, economic growth, job creation, security, and anti-corruption.
- Position the NYSC as a strategic platform for integrating graduates into the economy.
- Harness the skills and talents of youth for innovation and economic diversification.
- Eradicate poverty and unemployment in rural areas through resource optimization, youth empowerment, and SMEs establishment.
- Promote technological advancement and global competitiveness.

- Address complex challenges such as technology, environment, and climate change.
- Mitigate unemployment and youth violence.
- Revamp public service and institutions.
- Provide practical skills and career-relevant training for corps members.
- Catalyze capacity building for youth wealth creation nationwide.
- Enhance national security through merit-based recruitment.

8.0 Sources of Funding

Implementing such an ambitious reform requires substantial financial resources. While the federal government remains a primary funder, diversifying funding sources is crucial. This includes state governments, financial institutions, private corporations, international development institutions, and foreign government departments committed to international development. A convincing plan, political will, and effective leadership are essential to secure these partnerships. Some identified potential funding partners include, among others:

- The Federal government
- State and local governments
- Financial Institutions
 - Commercial Banks
 - Bank of Industry
 - Central Bank of Nigeria
 - Development Bank of Nigeria
- Other large private corporations
- African Development Bank
- Multinational Corporations
- International Development Institutions
 - The World Bank Group
 - United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
 - International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
- Foreign Government departments for international development

- Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID)
- Global Affairs Canada
- Department For International Development (DFID), UK
- International Development Research Council (IDRC), Canada
- China International Development Corporation Agency (CIDCA)
- Japan International Development Agency (JICA)

9.0 Anticipated Challenges

Listed below are some of the challenges that may inhibit the implementation of this promising initiative:

- Lack of political will
- NYSC Act constraint
- Inadequate funding
- Poor implementation strategy
- Lack of interest/cooperation/support by potential partners
- Change management
- Bureaucratic inefficiencies
- Security concerns
- Corruption
- Inadequate Monitoring and Evaluation
- Resistant from NYSC participants
- Inadequate Data and Technology

10.0 Suggestions for successful implementation

1. Moving NYSC to Presidency from the ministry of Youth. This will remove bureaucratic red tape and speed up implementation and control processes.
2. Revision of the NYSC Act
3. Bold decision to address the Scheme leadership structure of the scheme
4. Appointment of a qualified individual to lead the scheme

11.0 Conclusion

The NYSC scheme has survived fifty years in its current form with very little improvement. The surge in the amount allocated for the program over the years, and the exponential increase in the number of universities and graduates, explain the necessity for having deep thoughts over the next direction for the program. More so, the economic, social, security, and other challenges facing the country currently require urgent innovative thinking and deliberate action on ways to harness, leverage, and optimize our resources toward manpower development and resource optimization. This is an opportunity that the NYSC presents if the program can be reimagined and repurposed.

Hence, this proposal outlines a vision for transforming the NYSC into a more dynamic, impactful, and responsive program, capable of adding long-term value to the lives of Nigerian youths and substantially advancing the socio-economic prospects of our nation. By focusing on empowerment, innovation, and self-sustenance, the NYSC can become an essential tool for nurturing the next generation of noble and innovative leaders, entrepreneurs, professionals, and public officers. Freedom from servitude, wealth creation, choice expansion, and national prosperity are deliverables that such giant stride promises.

Appendix A: Additional strategies to enhance the effectiveness of the NYSC program:

A1. NYSC Farm (Modern Sustainable Agriculture)

Establishing NYSC-owned farms in various states would not only instill the culture of agriculture in the corps members and get them to produce crops and livestock that can be used to feed corps members, but it will also be a source of income for the agency and boost food production in the country.

A2. NYSC Talent and Entrepreneurship Competition

This is a way to encourage corps members to harness and showcase their creative and innovative abilities and talents. The competition will be in stages and winners (groups and individuals) will win prizes and earn the opportunity to get their products/talent commercialized.

A3. Centers for Research and Innovation

This can be established in collaboration with selected universities in each geopolitical zone of the country. Research in STEM-related fields can be explored particularly in areas such as pharmaceuticals, technology, engineering, etc.

Author's Profile

Gbemiga Oyeleke is a distinguished Management Consultant, Policy Analyst, and Project Management Professional with dynamic multi-industry expertise and experience in consulting, finance, oil and gas, and government. He is the founder and CEO of Prolead Consulting and Training, a leading firm offering innovative consultancy, training, and advisory services to start-ups, corporate organizations, and government institutions. He is also currently engaged by the Canadian government as a Senior Project Manager, serving in the City of Ottawa.

In his previous career life, Gbemiga has made significant contributions in various capacities within prominent organizations such as the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce (CIBC), NTT Data Canada, Acorn Petroleum Plc, and SFC Securities Ltd, Nigeria. His diverse professional background has equipped him with a wealth of knowledge and insights across different sectors.

An avid learner and academic, Gbemiga is currently a PhD candidate in Public Policy and Administration. He holds a bachelor's and master's degree in economics from the prestigious Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria, a Graduate Certificate in Project Management, and a Graduate Diploma in Business Administration from two foremost Canadian institutions.

Gbemiga's professional standing is further enhanced by his association and certifications with several prestigious professional bodies. He is a Fellow of the Institute of Management Consultants (FIMC), Nigeria, a Certified Management Consultant (CMC) conferred by the International Council of Management Consulting Institutes (ICMCI), and a Certified Management Specialist from the London Graduate School, United Kingdom. He is also a Project Management Professional (PMP) awarded by the Project Management Institute and a certified Scrum Master. Moreover, he is a member of the US Institute of Diplomacy and Human Rights (USIDHR), which further extends his professional network and opportunities for collaboration.

Beyond his professional pursuits, Gbemiga is deeply passionate about driving positive societal change. He advocates for policy reforms, youth empowerment, entrepreneurship, and inclusive economic growth. His thought leadership is evident in his numerous presentations and publications, where he shares insights and ideas to foster sustainable and impactful development.

Born in the ancient city of Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria, Gbemiga resides in Ottawa, Canada, with his family, including his wife and children. He enjoys spending his leisure time reading inspirational books on world politics and economics, playing tennis, playing the piano, and watching comedy shows.