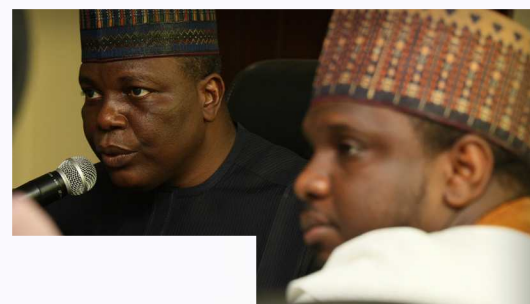




RURAL ELECTRIFICATION AGENCY  
ENERGY=EMPOWERMENT=EFFICIENCY

## REA RECAP

# TOP



## REA STORIES & MILESTONES OF 2021

# Introduction

**A**s we continue to strategically advance the off-grid electrification space in Nigeria, we have equally maintained a steady course delivering renewable energy infrastructure, equitably across the nation through different project vehicles at the Rural Electrification Agency (REA).

With coordination and quality guidance from the Federal Ministry of Power (FMoP), the REA has steadily strengthened its mandate while working in lockstep with other critical stakeholders in Nigeria and across the world.

With the wheels of the Agency's project implementation vehicles always in motion, the year 2021 was equally eventful in spite of the COVID-19 restrictions in Nigeria and across the world. Below, we have

curated 21 stories and milestones based on industry-wide relevance of these events as well as content analytics report on top stories read in 2021 across all REA digital platforms.





## **1** Official Roll-out of SPN

**O**n the 9th of April 2021, the Vice President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Prof. Yemi Osinbajo, the Executive Governor of Jigawa State, the MD/CEO of REA, Engr. Ahmad Salihijo Ahmad and other industry change makers and dignitaries visited Jangefe LGA, Jigawa state where the Vice President officially flagged off the roll-out of the 1st 100, 000 standalone solar home systems under the 'Solar Power Naija' (SPN). The programme is a critical component of the Federal Government's Economic Sustainability Plan (ESP), activated in 2020 as a strategic response to

COVID-19 pandemic. With coordination from the Office of the Vice President and funding facility from the Central Bank of Nigeria to the tune of N140 billion, this programme aims to ultimately aid 5 million solar connections impacting 25 million Nigerians while creating 250,000 jobs in the near term. With a partnership now underway between the REA and the Nigeria Sovereign Investment Authority (NSIA), an additional N10 billion is being invested by the NSIA into the SPN programme.

## **2** REF Call 2 Projects kicks off

Following the success of the 1st Call of the Rural Electrification Fund (REF) which allowed the Federal Government to deliver 12 solar hybrid mini-grids and over 19,000 solar home systems across Nigeria, members of the reconstituted Board of the Rural Electrification Agency (REA), after a critical assessment approved funding for the 2nd REF Call. By design, this 2nd Call is to be used to deliver 51 additional mini-grids. Already, REF Call 2 is active with projects at different levels of completion across the country. In September 2021, the Vice President Yemi Osinbajo commissioned a 100kwp solar hybrid mini-grid now powering the popular Kasuwan Magani Market, Kajuru Local Council of Kaduna State as delivered under the 2nd REF Call. This project now provides constant and reliable electricity to over 500 shops in the market, 1 commercial Bank, 1 Police Station and 1 Fire Service Station. Other REF projects are in different stages of completion across country.



## ③ More Universities Energized under EEP Phase 1

The Federal Government has continued to energize universities through the Energizing Education Programme (EEP). In 2021, two more universities were energized as the REA rounded up the total 9 federal universities and 1 university teaching hospital under the Phase 1 of the EEP, being funded through the Green Bond. Earlier in the year, the Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University (ATBU), Bauchi State as well as the Federal University of Petroleum Resources, Effurun (FUPRE), Delta State became energized with 1.12MW and 1.35MW respectively. Following the objective of the Programme, 1 Workshop and Training Center (WTC) and 20 EEP STEM Female Interns were certified in each of the two universities. With Term Sheets already signed and engagements with more Federal universities underway, more EEP projects will be commissioned in 2022. In December 2021, the Agency held a pre-proposal conference with 19 firms for the development of solar hybrid power plants under the Phase II of the EEP.



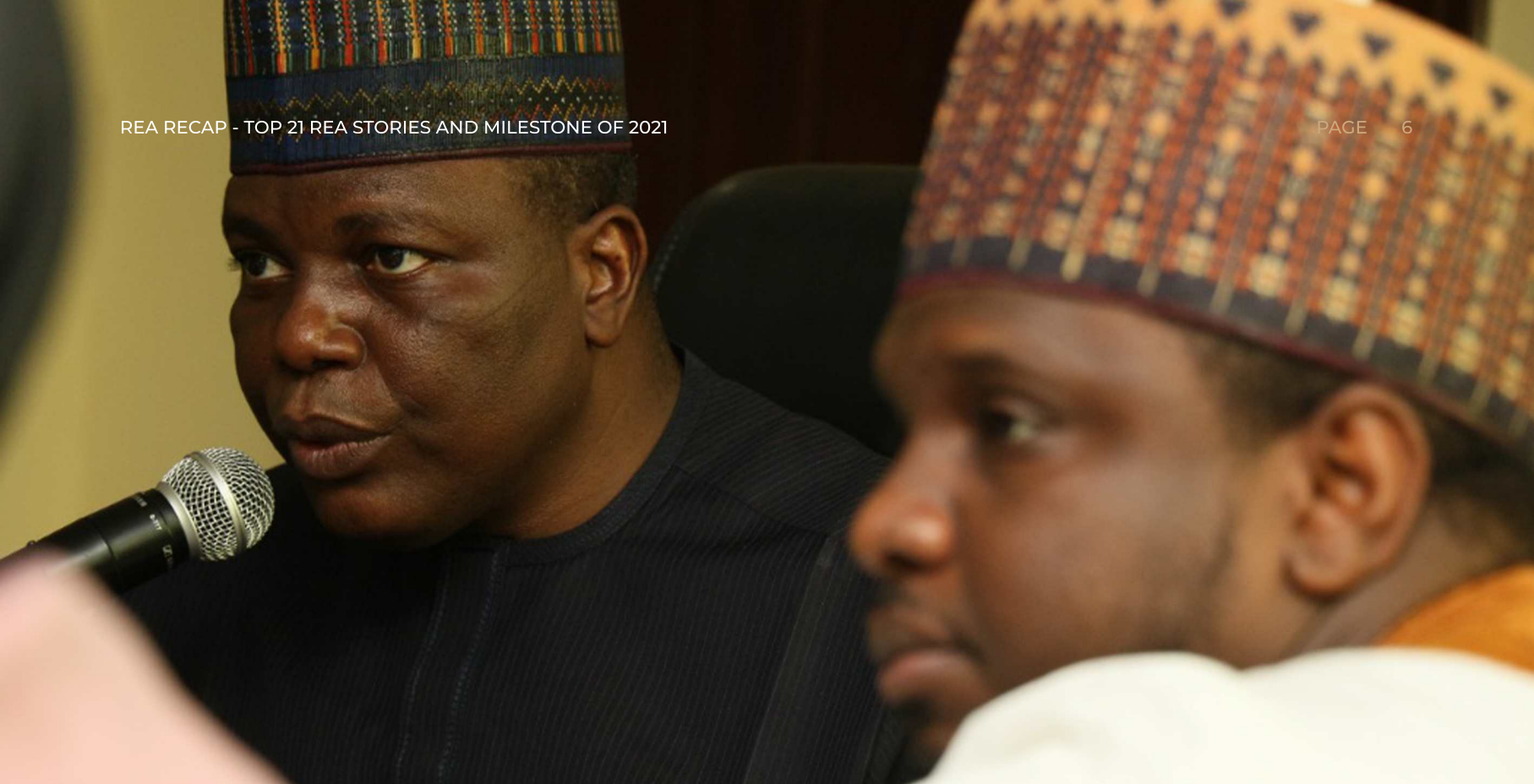


## The REA Research and Innovation Hub now Live!

The successful exploitation of new ideas is crucial for rural electrification as it would improve its structures and processes, introduce improved solutions and services, increase efficiency and capacity, enhance profitability and sustainability as well as bridge knowledge gaps. In March of 2021, a Research and Innovation Hub at the Agency which totally opens up a new window of possibilities for technological and knowledge-driven disruption in the renewable energy space. Since the unveiling, the Agency has continued to collaborate with student researchers, developers and investors. These key stakeholders have continued to access the myriad opportunities such as non-financial Student Research Assistance and the Start-up Innovation Grant.



# VIRTUAL EVENT



## 5 REA, NABDA Sign MoU on Sustainable Energy

Following several meetings and follow-up correspondences between both agencies, the Rural Electrification Agency (REA) and the National Biotechnology Development Agency (NABDA), successfully signed a Memorandum of Understanding in 2021 on “Evolving Hybrid Renewable Energy System for Optimized and Sustainable Electricity Supply in the Areas of Operations of Rural Electrification Agency”. One of the recent innovations at NABDA is the patented “*Biomethanization System for Biodegradable Organic*

*Feedstocks*”, marketed as *BEG Series*, a biodigester that converts biodegradable organic feedstock to biogas, which the biogas further used as fuel for electricity generating sets and other range of uses. Both agencies are already working in lockstep to leverage the *Digesters Series* for REA projects.



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## More Grant Agreements (GA) Signed with Private Developers

As mandated by the Federal Government of Nigeria, the REA has continued to implement the Nigeria Electrification Project (NEP), with funding from the World Bank and African Development Bank. A private-sector driven project designed to power Nigeria, one community at a time using renewable energy technologies, the business portfolio of the Programme increased in 2021. Currently, the Agency has signed agreements with 26 solar home system companies under the Output-Based Fund (OBF) and 16 mini-grid companies under the Performance-Based Grant (PBG). The positive implication of these signed agreements is the addition of about 290 renewable energy connections to households and MSMEs and 5, 629 connections through the SHS and the mini-grid components, respectively.



In April 2021, the Agency convened a workshop where a “Harmonized Technical Standards” for all REA projects (mini-grids, SHS, solar streetlights, grid extensions and injection substations) was presented to critical stakeholders. While this Workshop helped to sensitize critical stakeholders in the sector, it also enabled the Agency to gather quality feedback which helped in the release of the final document, now open to the public. This critical document has continued to play a very important role in ensuring optimum standards and best practice in the deployment of off-grid projects across Nigeria, thereby creating the needed pathway to sustainability.



## REA's Harmonized Technical Standards Unveiled

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A major insight shared by the MD/CEO of the REA, Engr. Ahmad Salihijo Ahmad upon his resumption at the Agency in December of 2019 was the need for a wholesome assessment of the Agency across different layers. After a few months of rigorous work by the team from DAI Nigeria, headed by Dr. Joe Abah and the technical team at the REA, the Institutional Assessment Report of the REA was officially handed over to the Agency in 2021. This report focused mainly on Institutional factors, inter-institutional linkages and external factors to provide an analysis of REA's current structures, complete with recommendations of fit-for-purpose institutional and inter-institutional structures, processes and actions required to improve the ability of the agency to deliver on its mandate.



## REA's Internal Systems Restructured through an Institutional Assessment Report



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## More Impactful NEP Roundtables with Key Private Developers

To continue to deliver on the objectives of the Nigeria Electrification Project (NEP), one of the most consistent cultures at REA is the assurance of access to information and opportunities for quality collaborations between the Agency and the private developers. This close-knit culture of collaboration has led to the achievement of critical milestones since the official launch of the NEP in 2019. In 2021, the Agency held the 4th OBF as well as the 7th PBG Roundtable discussions with the SHS and the mini-grid developers. These meetings were centered on various developments and recent updates, while addressing modifications, findings and feedback related to the verification process, environmental and social implications and grant rate increase under the both sub-components.



VIRTUAL EVENT

# 10 Nigeria Features Prominently at COP26

In November, 2021 the Honourable Minister of State, Power Goddy Jedy-Agba led the Nigerian delegation in the power sector to the 26th iteration of the United Nations Conference of Parties (COP26). The Minister participated alongside other industry professionals at the REA Side Event held at the Nigerian Pavilion. Led by the MD/CEO of REA, Engr. Ahmad Salihijo Ahmad, and moderated by Anita Otubu, the Head, Project Management Unit of the Nigeria Electrification Project (NEP), the Side Event also had in attendance the Director, Renewable and Rural Power Access, Federal Ministry of

Power Engr. Faruk Yusuf; the Executive Director, Rural Electrification Agency (REA) Dr. Sanusi Ohiare; the Executive Director, Technical Services Engr. Barka Sajou as well as the Adviser on Climate Finance and Capital Markets at the Climate Finance Accelerator (CFA), Obi Ugochuku. In line with the commitments and requests made by His Excellency President Muhammadu Buhari at COP26, the REA mainstreamed conversations around the need for better climate financing as well as the myriad opportunities in the renewable energy sub sector in Nigeria.





## REA, NSIA Partner to Roll-out 200K SHS Under the SPN

In 2021, the Nigerian Sovereign Investment Authority (NSIA) and the REA deepened their partnership with a plan to roll out over 200,000 Solar Home Systems under the Solar Power Naija (SPN), a critical component of the Federal Government's Economic Sustainability Plan (ESP). With the leadership of both agencies in sync, the partnership is targeted at catalyzing 200,000 off-grid connections in the first instance with a goal of reaching over 500,000 systems as the Fund revolves and is expanded through to 2023. The program is estimated to also create up to 20,000 jobs across manufacturing, assembly, installation and retail over the period. The NSIA is creating an initial revolving fund of N10 billion for qualified developers to distribute and manufacture Solar Home Systems. The fund will be accessible by Nigerian Electrification Program qualified developers under the existing REA and World Bank scheme that guides technical qualification and provides grants for developers to invest and participate in Off-Grid Electrification projects. The REA under the Ministry of Power is set to provide technical and advisory support to the NSIA as it rolls out the program.



VIRTUAL EVENT



## Improving the stock of knowledge on Interconnected Mini-Grid (IMG) Projects

On the 14th of September 2021, the Rural Electrification Agency (REA), through the Rural Electrification Fund (REF) Directorate, in partnership with the Nigerian Energy Support Programme II (NESP) held a Stakeholders' Workshop for the REF Call 2 Interconnected Mini-Grid Projects. In line with the objectives of the workshop, it helped to improve the stock of knowledge of Interconnected Mini-Grid (IMG) developers on the concept of IMG,

kick-starting a robust discussion amongst stakeholders and improving engagement between Interconnected Mini-Grid developers and DISCOs. Through the workshop, the Agency was also able to chart a course towards commercially viable projects, capitalizing on productive use of electricity, to highlight the legal and regulatory frameworks for deploying an IMG in Nigeria. REF has proven to be an effective project vehicle in the off-grid sector in Nigeria. In the month of February 2021 for example, a previously unserved community; Dakiti community, Gombe state became energized under the REF Call 1 with the commissioning of an 85kWp mini-grid now serving over 500 households in the community under REF Call 1. In the same vein, a 100kWp solar hybrid mini-grid at Adebayo Community, Ovia-South LGA, Edo State.



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## Closing the Energy Access Gap Through Quality Data



The World Resources Institute (WRI) to support this objective on energy access planning in Nigeria through the Energy Access Explorer (EAE). This led to the training of select staff members on the front end and back end of the Geospatial tool. The EAE is an online, open-source, interactive platform that enables the government, energy planners, donors, clean energy entrepreneurs, and development-oriented institutions

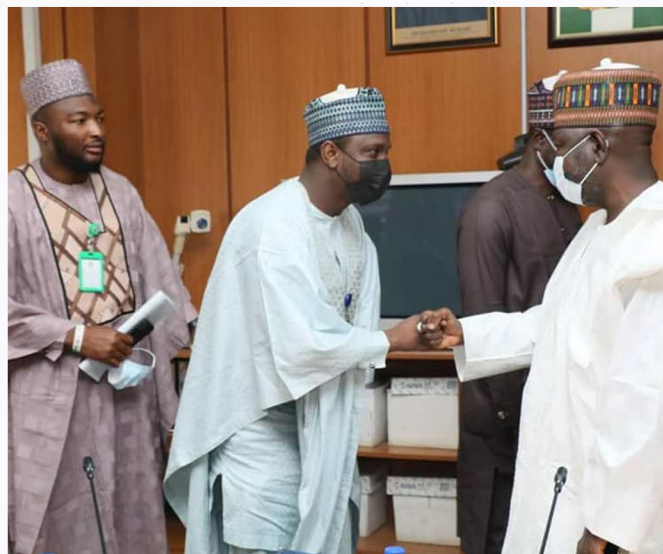


Access to quality and verifiable energy data remains a key objective within the Nigeria power sector. While encouraging the exchange of ideas across the sector, the REA has continued to open its doors for collaboration with multiple stakeholders with the aim of solving this very critical problem in the sector. One of such collaborations in 2021 was with the Africa Clean Energy Technical Assistance Facility (ACE TAF) and



in the health, education, agriculture sectors to identify areas (at 1km squared resolution) where energy access can be expanded and linked to socio-economic development.

On the 13th of September 2021, the MD/CEO of the Rural Electrification Agency, Engr. Ahmad Salihijo Ahmad alongside the Agency's Executive Directors paid a visit to the newly appointed Minister for Power, Engr. Abubakar D. Aliyu. Upon resumption, the Honourable Minister had requested comprehensive briefs from Agencies under the Ministry to enable him assess the state-of-affairs and provide quality guidance on the mandate of accelerating the deployment of energy infrastructure across the nation. While commending the REA for its implementing role in the off-grid sector, following a comprehensive presentation by Engr. Salihijo on the programmes, initiatives and goals being achieved by the Agency, the Honourable Minister emphasized the need for more collaboration, healthy team spirit, quality improved service delivery in the sector as well as impact assessment in order to continue to gauge the growth in the sector.

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## On a Working Visit to the New Minister of Power





## 15 Coordinating the Business of Project Bidding for Implementation

As is tradition at the REA and as mandated by the Federal Government of Nigeria, the Agency invited contractors and private developers for submission and opening of bid documents for 2021 Capital Projects at the Rural Electrification Agency (REA) at its headquarters. This process enables Agency to ultimately work broadly with qualified developers for the continued delivery of its mandate of powering the unserved and the underserved across Nigeria.





## Improving Affordable Debt Financing for Off-grid infrastructure 16

Affordable debt financing is critical to accelerating the deployment of off-grid infrastructure across Nigeria. As part of the Agency's wide range, impactful collaboration with key stakeholders, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed with the Development Bank of Nigeria (DBN) following a series of engagements between both

institutions, including a virtual workshop on "Access to Finance" convened on the 2nd of March 2021. The MoU is aimed at providing affordable debt financing for REA projects, including the Rural Electrification Fund (REF) Call 2 projects, through selected commercial banks. This has, ultimately created an avenue for mini-grid developers, while engaging with financiers, development finance institutions as well as digital financial institutions within the solar space in Nigeria for the purpose of accessing debt financing. DBN, in its interest to promote Renewable Energy Finance, offers incentives to Institutions (PFIs) to increase lending to RE/EE as well as specialized green products/offerings Participating Financial for green finance to MSMEs and SCs. This will be done through strategic partnerships with other DFIs Institutional lenders, State Governments and Government Agencies.





## Working in Lockstep with the State Governments to Aid Local Impact

In July 2021, the Plateau State Governor and Chairman of the Northern Governors Forum, His Excellency Rt. Honourable Simon Lalong Bako visited the REA Headquarters where he was received by the MD/CEO of REA, Engr. Ahmad Salihijo Ahmad; the Executive Director of REA's Rural Electrification Fund (REF), Doc. Sanusi Ohiare; the Executive Director, Corporate Services, Chief Olaniyi Netufo and other Members of the REA Management. Governor Lalong expressed his excitement about the mandate of the REA, while commending the team on the successful commissioning of the 234kWp solar hybrid mini-grid at Shimankar in Shendam LGA of Plateau State back in December of 2020. Governor Lalong further shared his commitments to the people of Plateau State, while seeking the Agency's sustained efforts to help electrify even more communities in Plateau State. Beyond the significance of Governor Lalong being the first state Governor to visit the Agency, State governments are critical stakeholders of the REA as they serve as channels into unserved and underserved communities across Nigeria.



## Re-energizing Okangha Mkpansi

Having endured five years of electricity outage, a 60KwP Solar hybrid mini-grid was installed at Okangha Mkpansi community in Ikom Local Government Council of Cross River State. In May 2021, the Minister of State for Power, Mr. Goddy Jedy-Agba as well as the REA team visited the community where the mini-grid was officially activated for use. The Minister tasked the community to take advantage of the intervention, as implemented by the REA. Businesses and social activities have since been energized through the mini-grid.





## Energizing Obudu Cattle Ranch, Obanliku Community

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**I**n March 2021, the REA commissioned a 60kWp solar hybrid mini-grid designed to energize Obudu Cattle Ranch and the surrounding communities in Obanliku Local Government Area of Cross River State. Now benefiting over 3600 inhabitants, the infrastructure has since improved the energy capacity of the popular Obudu Ranch. While giving his remarks at the official commissioning, the Honourable Minister of State, Power Goddy Jeddy-Agba enjoined the Management of the Obudu Cattle Ranch to optimize this clean, safe and reliable energy to power this vital facility.



## REA team attend USNIS, meet key industry partners for future collaboration

As part of efforts towards funneling foreign direct investment into Nigeria and the United States, key government officials, heads of organizations as well as professionals from within sectors such as Energy, Agriculture, Manufacturing, ICT, Healthcare and Oil and Gas attended the 2-day US-Nigeria Investment Summit (USNIS) which took place in New York City, US. The summit had in attendance, the Honourable Minister of State, Power Goddy Jedy-Agba; the Honourable Minister of Industry, Trade and Investment, Otunba Niyi Adebayo; the CBN Governor, Godwin Emefiele; the MD/CEO, of the Rural Electrification Agency (REA, Engr. Ahmad Salihijo Ahmad and many other change makers in the public

and private sectors. Engr. Ahmad Salihijo Ahmad utilized the opportunity to meet with the leadership of existing partners of the REA, updating them on milestones achieved through the Agency's programmes and initiatives, as well as other upcoming initiatives with potentials for impact and new partnerships in the off-grid sector. Honourable Goddy Jedy-Agba, Engr. Ahmad Salihijo Ahmad and the REA team were able to engage extensively with Amina J. Mohammed, the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations on ongoing projects being implemented by the REA. The team also met with the Special Representative of the Secretary General of the UN and Sustainable Energy for All, Damilola Ogunbiyi.





## Lending a Voice Against GBV 21

As part of REA's gender mainstreaming efforts and the drive of the Nigeria Electrification Project (NEP) in creating awareness on Gender-Based Violence (GBV), mitigating its risk in project implementation, the Agency actively participated in a 16-day global campaign themed "Orange the World: End Violence Against Women Now!". With activities ranging from media appearances, workshops and employee advocacy, the Agency joined other institutions globally through the course of the campaign.





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