ANNUAL REPORT

2023

Research, enterprise development and practical pathways for Nigeria's industrial growth.

INDUSTRY ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

CONTENTS

A structured account of SBF's research, fieldwork, findings and recommendations for MSME development.

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Report scope

This edition preserves the complete source report while presenting its content through a clearer editorial hierarchy, editable diagrams, charts and forms.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The Startup Business Foundation (SBF) continues to vigorously pursue its goals and objectives, contributing significantly to the advancement of society, particularly in sector investigative research and study publications on the development of micro, small, and medium-scale enterprises in Nigeria.

Nigeria's manufacturing sector is among the largest in Africa, with numerous opportunities. However, the COVID-19 pandemic, which led to suppressed consumer demand and supply chain disruptions, resulted in a decline in actual manufacturing output in 2020. In addition, before 2020, the sector faced several structural challenges that led many manufacturing firms to shut down, limiting growth and investment infills into the industry. We deduced that perennial issues such as power supply constraints, logistical bottlenecks, limited availability of credit, and foreign currency scarcity have affected the sector's performance over time. As a result, manufacturing sector growth has been stagnant (average of -0.6 percent between 2015 and 2019), while capacity utilization has remained unimpressive.

The objective of this report is to identify ways we can contribute to revitalizing Nigeria's manufacturing sector by addressing these issues, thereby accelerating the country's industrialization. Overall, within the impianter, we aim to improve the entire sector to overall industrialization. Nigeria accelerates progress by removing impediments to manufacturing and creating an enabling environment for large-scale industrial investment, while also promoting the development of small and medium-sized manufacturing firms. The manufacturing industry offers numerous opportunities for growth and investment, including market access and export opportunities within the AIFCTA single market.

Other areas of progress included human capacity building through training and education for MSMEs on the availability of funding and investment opportunities, and the steps to access them. In more practical terms, we were able to train 24,333 entrepreneurs through organized private-sector organizations, providing them with information and loan applications, especially for businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, several initiatives, programs, and projects were largely hindered and left unexecuted due to a lack of financial support and assistance from sponsors or partners. However, the SBF persisted in pursuing its objectives and achieved tremendous success in sector research and publications.

To deliver on the laudable initiatives contained in this report, concerted efforts and the commitment of all stakeholders are required and must be attained. We are open to partnership with individuals, corporations, agencies, civil society groups, and the government to bring sustainable development through industrialization in Nigeria. We believe that when people are given the right skills, information, and support, they can solve their own problems.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS IN 2023

24,333
entrepreneurs trained through organized private-sector organizations.

Extensive sectoral research conducted across industrial clusters and centres in key states.

Assessment of Industrial Development Centres (IDCs) to identify gaps and opportunities for improvement.

Continued commitment to partnerships for sustainable industrial development and entrepreneurship growth.

PHILOSOPHY OF STARTUP BUSINESS FOUNDATION ON DEVELOPMENT

01 Remove constraints

02 Close development gaps

03 Act proactively

04 Advance workable solutions

Community and National development are the government's highest priority. Part of this is to remove all constraints to ensure that economic growth is enhanced, inclusive, and sustainable across all sectors, and to provide an enabling environment for the private sector to thrive.

However, we are not here to analyze Nigeria's economic situation, which we are all well aware of, but rather to expedite action to improve the country's system. We are also aware of the infrastructural problems, governance, and other issues facing the country at the moment. Nevertheless, the Foundation is established to offer ways to close the gaps, and we believe it is one step at a time, proactively.

As part of our efforts, we are continuously researching ways to achieve our objectives while considering the fundamentals. None of these will come easily, as there are no silver bullets. However, the many successful initiatives presented by the Foundation offer a sense of hope. They are workable solutions to overcome the challenges faced by startup businesses and the development of small industries in Nigeria.

ONE STEP AT A TIME, PROACTIVELY.

03

SECTORAL RESEARCH

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CENTRES

Visits, observations and the enduring development role of industrial support infrastructure.

VISITS TO INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CENTRE (IDC)

To identify and highlight areas of need that could improve the expansion and development of MSMEs in Nigeria, we stepped up our sectoral research activities. To determine the scope and influence of these sectors on Nigeria's artisan, small, and medium-sized manufacturers and processors, the SBF team visited several industrial clusters, industrial estates, and Industrial Development Centers (IDCs), including those in Osogbo, Kano, and Owerri.

The SBF team found that the Federal Government had spent enormous sums on workshops, machinery, offices, and cars during the centres' establishment. In 2011, the centres were transferred from the Ministry of Industry, Trade, and Investment to the Small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN). However, the centres are rapidly deteriorating due to years of government neglect.

N600 MILLION

SMEDAN allocation for rehabilitation of 12 centres in the 2017 and 2018 budgets.

The money was used to finish other renovations and build fencing around some of the sites.

DEVELOPMENT GOAL AND IMMEDIATE AIMS

> “the growth and rational placing of small-scale companies, existing and new, to provide job opportunities, mobilise local resources (both human and financial), and stop the flow of rural migration to the urban centres"

Furthermore, “the growth and rational placing of small-scale companies, existing and new, to provide job opportunities, mobilise local resources (both human and financial), and stop the flow of rural migration to the urban centres" is the project document's stated development goal.

Even though it could be stated more succinctly, this development goal remains valid and may even be more pertinent to the current state of the economy than it was when the project was first conceived. Additionally, the government affirms its dedication to small-scale industries in the National Development Plan (1981–1985): "The objective of mounting a special small-scale industries program is to ensure that budding investors are assisted to establish and eventually develop into future industrial giants."

The project's “immediate aims” were stated as follows:

1. Encouraging the creation of new SSI by supporting the States in implementing the SSI Credit Scheme through industrial, economic, and marketing surveys, feasibility studies, loan application evaluation, and loan follow-up;
2. Increasing the productivity and efficiency of current SSI in the six Western States through an ongoing training program and by looking into and resolving entrepreneurs' issues.
3. Create a cadre of IDC and other government officials who can carry out the aforementioned;
4. Promote subcontracting of goods and services to act as a catalyst for SSI's integration with larger businesses;
5. Offer a full range of services to the SSI industrial estates that will be established.
6. Provide technical assistance when needed in the creation of additional IDCs in the six states in question.

04

FIELD RESEARCH

EXTENSION SERVICES SURVEY

Assessing the need for MSME extension services and an industrial incubator in Southeastern Nigeria.

A REPORT ON ACCESSING THE NEED FOR EXTENSION SERVICES FOR SMES IN SOUTHEASTERN NIGERIA

Introduction

Startup Business Foundation conducted a survey to determine the need for MSMEs extension services and the establishment of an industrial incubator in the southeastern region of Nigeria, specifically covering the states of Imo, Abia, Anambra, Enugu, and Ebonyi.

IMO | ABIA | ANAMBRA | ENUGU | EBONYI

OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAM

01

INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT

To assess the relevance of MSMEs extension services in the development of industries, with a focus on socioeconomic growth and job creation in the region.

02

WORKFORCE & RAW MATERIALS

To identify the availability of workforce and the uniqueness of raw materials within each local government area in the states, and to what extent they are significant.

03

CLUSTER REVIVAL

To identify any stagnant industrial clusters or units, the reasons behind their decline, and the steps that could be taken to revive them.

04

INDUSTRIAL INCUBATION

To evaluate the managerial, technical, and financial implications of setting up an Industrial Incubation Center in the region.

ORGANIZING THE PROGRAM

01

Planning the Exercise.

The program was planned to cover the five southeastern states: Imo, Abia, Enugu, Anambra, and Ebonyi. The initiative was carried out sequentially, state by state, using five teams, each consisting of three members from the Foundation.

02

Preparation of Necessary Documents

Questionnaires were designed and prepared. Introductory pamphlets or contact forms were created. Letters were sent to the State Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the chairpersons of all local government areas, chambers of commerce, the Nigerian Association of Small Scale Industrialists (NASSI), and the Nigerian Association of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (NASME).

The purpose was twofold:

a. To collect data on existing small-scale industries and identify the support services they require, especially for start-ups and growing businesses.

b. To seek their assistance and cooperation during the survey.

5	**5**	**3**
Southeastern states	Field teams	Members per team

PROBLEMS IN ORGANIZING AND PLANNING THE PROGRAM

Funding for the program

Although funds for the exercise were planned for the third quarter of 2022, they were not received until the first quarter of 2023 due to insufficient external funding, resulting in serious delays in purchasing necessary stationery. Field officers also faced delays in securing resources for the exercise. The funds for the project were provided solely by the Founder, as many solicited for support didn't respond.

M

Mobility

The entire exercise depended on functional vehicles. The Foundation only had two vehicles, which were not roadworthy. We were uncertain whether they would be repaired due to a lack of funds. However, the Foundation managed to hire two vehicles from vendors. Despite a shortage of field workers and limited mobility, the exercise was conducted on a state-by-state basis. The exercise was scheduled as follows: Imo, Abia, Enugu, Anambra, and Ebonyi states.

E

The Exercise

The Founder briefed the groups on their fieldwork tasks. Each group was given clear instructions on what they needed to do. He advised the field workers on how to carry out their interviews, emphasizing the need for caution, patience, and understanding. He also highlighted their role as ambassadors, the importance of objectivity when assessing problems, and the need to appreciate their work.

DOCUMENTS AND FIELD WORK IN IMO STATE

THE DOCUMENTS:

Each group was provided with approximately two thousand and three hundred (2,300) questionnaires and contact forms for their assigned zone. These were distributed to entrepreneurs, who were asked to complete the questionnaires either during or after meetings and return them to the field officers.

2,300

questionnaires and contact forms per assigned zone

THE FIELD WORK IN IMO STATE

Meeting the L.G.A. The groups proceeded to their respective zones as planned. Each team first met with the chairmen of the local government areas in their zone to introduce themselves, explain the program, and request their assistance as outlined in the letters. After meeting with the LGA chairman and other scheduled officials, the teams met the entrepreneurs. During the initial meeting, the team leader introduced his team and explained the purpose of the visit. The program was discussed at length.

ENTREPRENEUR ENGAGEMENT & INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION

Persuading the Entrepreneurs

Questionnaires and contact booklets were handed out to the entrepreneurs, and they were instructed to complete them on the spot or send them back to the field officers later. Persuading the entrepreneurs. A great deal of persuasion was necessary to secure the cooperation of the entrepreneurs and industrialists. The entrepreneurs were informed about the importance of completing the questionnaires to help the SBF build a meaningful database on SMEs in each state. The information possibly had a spelling mistake.

Working Relationship with NASSI:

We experienced improved cooperation between the SBF and NASSI in the state. During the exercise, NASSI's activities were widely promoted by field officers to attract new members. The collaboration resulted in the following outcome: Stalls were purchased during a visit to an LGA in Abia State for NASSI's use at the last NACCIMA Trade Fair in ABA.

01
Introduce

02
Explain

03
Distribute

04
Retrieve

05
Build database

QUESTIONNAIRE DISTRIBUTION AND INDUSTRIES IDENTIFIED

2,000+
questionnaires distributed

46
respondents recorded

4,000+
estimated SMEs in former Imo State

DISTRIBUTION / RETRIEVAL OF THE QUESTIONNAIRES:

More than 2,000 copies of the questionnaires were distributed to entrepreneurs in the five zones of the former Imo State. However, the number of respondents was low, around 46. Most of these respondents were from the Okigwe and Orlu zones. The low response rate indicates a negative attitude towards information gathering among the people. This should not discourage us. What is needed is continued effort and greater awareness amongst the people.

INDUSTRIES IDENTIFIED DURING THE EXERCISE:

A conservative estimate suggests that there are over four thousand small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the former Imo State. Aba has the highest concentration of SMEs, with over two thousand located in Aba Urban. As shown in Appendix V. In the Ariaria market alone, the shoe sector involves over 120 entrepreneurs sharing workshops, with an average of four per workshop. These 120 individual shoemakers are based in 30 workshops within a single part of the market.

LIST OF KNOWN ENTREPRENEURS

Appended below is the zonal spread of industrial establishments identified during the survey.

The list is highly unrepresentative. More will be said about it later, but suffice it to say that this is only the beginning.

Orlu zone comes next to Aba in the league of Industrial establishments. It was in the zone that new industries were discovered. Mention was made of an indigenous electronics genius there. There were also many serious indigenous engineering establishments in the zone. Prominent L.G.As are Orlu, Ideato, and Okigwe.

However, all indications show that the Orlu zone has one or two of the poorest L.G.As industrially, i.e., Isu and maybe Nkwerre. There are very few industrial activities in Isu L.G.A, yet it is highly populated. The mainstay of economic activities in the L.G.A.s is subsistence agriculture. The menace of erosion is ravaging the area, leaving no roads, water, or infrastructure.

Enugu and Ebonyi were underrepresented in this exercise, while Imo and Abia States were adequately covered. Each L.G.A and zone was covered by the field officers. Okigwe and Umuahia faced many logistical problems that hampered the exercise's progress. These zones will be given prominence in future similar exercises.

THE FINDINGS

The Questionnaire Returns:

WHAT BECAME APPARENT

From the analysis of the respondents' reactions, the following became apparent.

Very low response rate resulting from the entrepreneurs' failure to appreciate the value of the exercise, no matter the field officers' explanations.

- They failed to see what was in it, which failed them.
- Some entrepreneurs were fearful that the exercise might be used for tax purposes.

As a result, a good many respondents failed to disclose their details, i.e., they did not give their names or the names of their businesses.

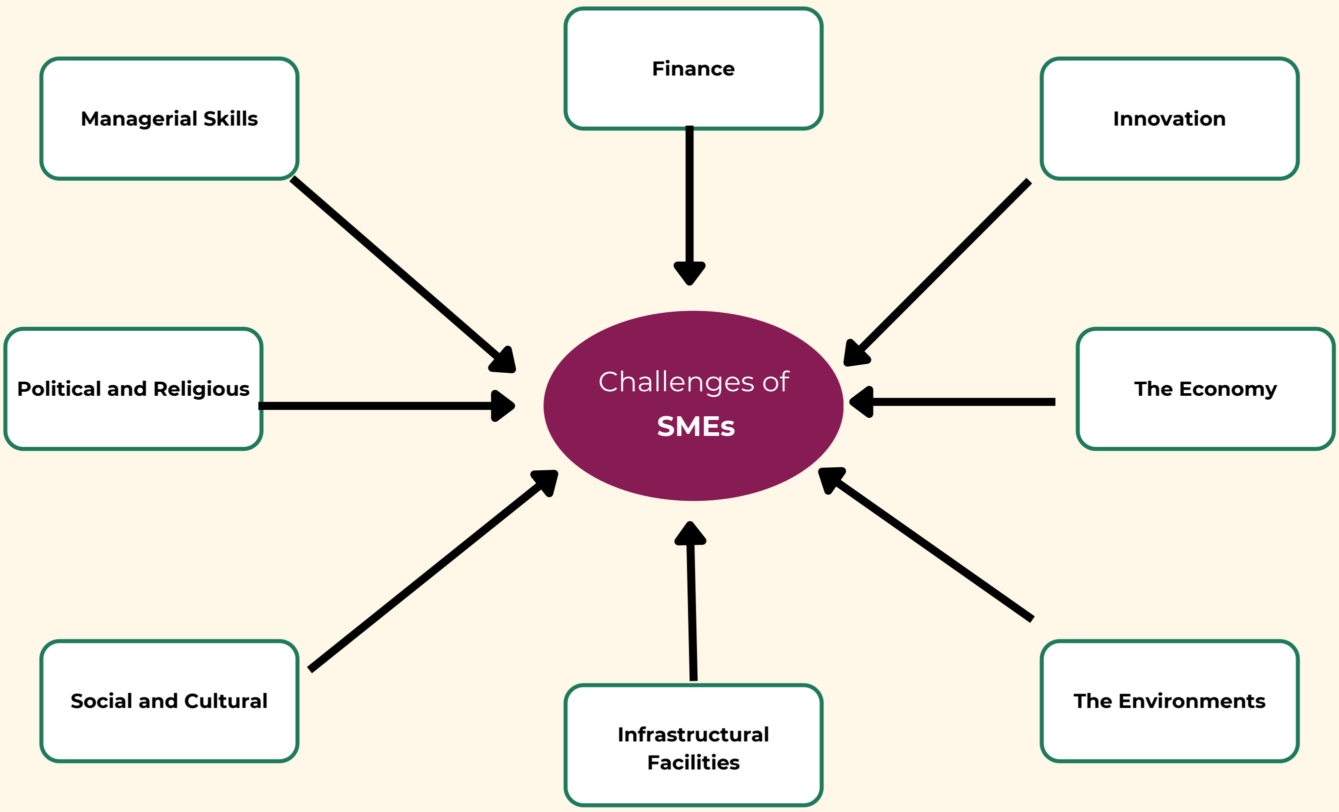
Some complained about government policies, which they saw as not helpful to their businesses. This disillusionment led many entrepreneurs to refuse to complete the questionnaires. Other credit schemes, like AGSMEIS. They felt that the fund was for well-established industries, not for SMEs.

THEIR PROBLEMS AS THEY SEE THEM

Their problems are as follows:

Lack of Raw Materials	Lack of Technicians and Technical Know-how	Lack of funds to finance their projects
High interest rates	High cost of raw materials and machines	Lack of Government help
Political & religion	Lack of innovation	Social and cultural barriers etc.

The full details are as represented on the diagram below.



PROBLEMS & CONSTRAINTS IN EXECUTING THE PROGRAMME

NO FUNCTIONAL VEHICLES FOR THE PROGRAMME:

It had been mentioned earlier at the planning stage of this problem. Although the Foundation had two vehicles, neither was roadworthy for such a project. Serious efforts to address the problems yielded limited results. As no money was available for vehicle maintenance, about 20% of the extension money was, in some cases, used to rent tires to achieve the objectives. There were two or three vehicles serving the whole center; the extension services had to compete seriously with other equally important programs, such as working capital. The result was the constant breakdown of the vehicles during the exercise.

20%

of extension money was, in some cases, used to rent tires

THE WORKING CAPITAL AND OTHER PROGRAMMES:

The working capital program interfered with some extension services. As the vehicles were neither adequate nor roadworthy, it became rather difficult since the problems were running concurrently. There were problems with which program used which vehicle, who repaired which vehicle, and who travelled to where, when, and for how long. Besides, other ongoing programs at the center were making similar demands on the inadequate facilities, creating additional bottlenecks.

Limited vehicles → **Competing programmes** → **Maintenance disputes** → **Fieldwork bottlenecks**

PAST PROGRAMMES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS

PAST PROGRAMMES OF GOVERNMENTS:

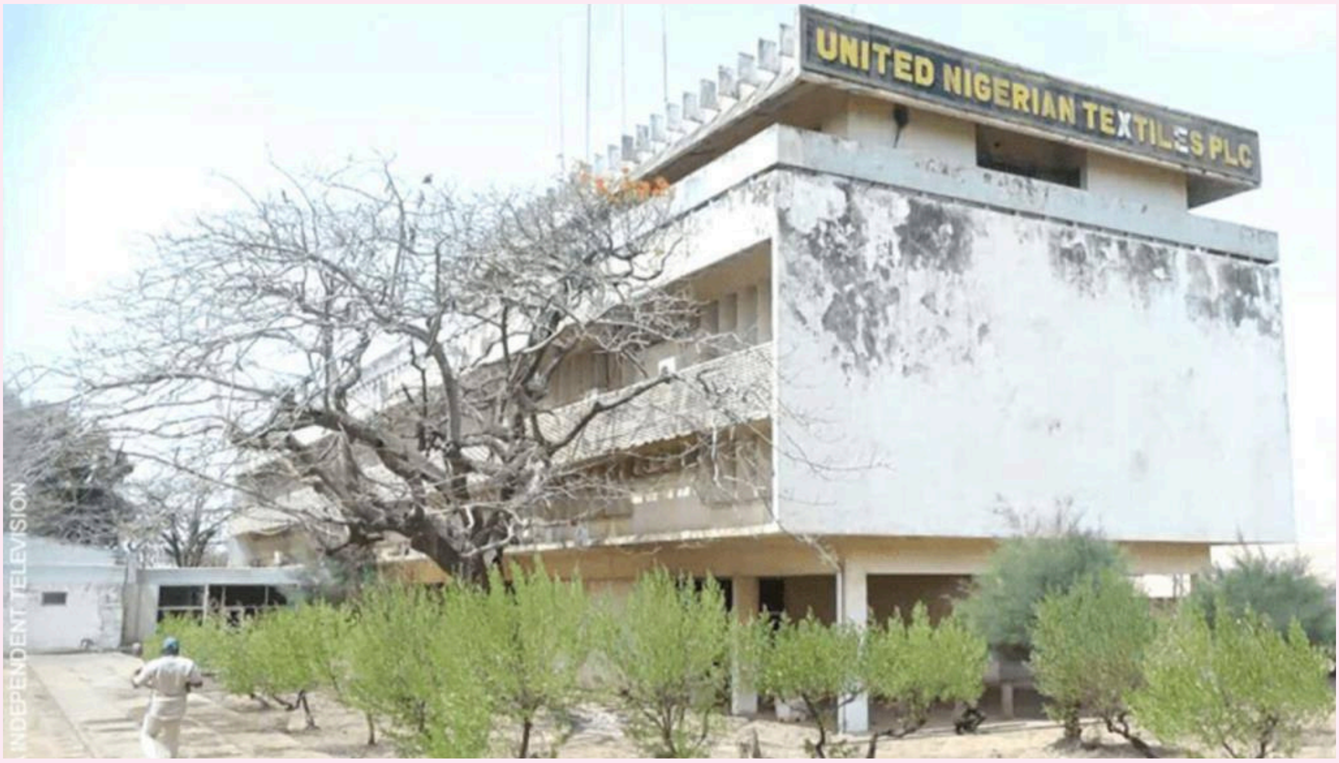
A good many entrepreneurs did see the need for the exercise. Their negative attitude stemmed from past frustrations with similar exercises, which they said yielded no useful results. Their sympathy centered on EDP/WFYP, which many of them participated in, but nothing came of those programs. As such, their co-operation became very difficult to obtain.

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS:

The letters written to the State Government, the local Government areas, and other institutions – see 2.2 were not responded to. Most of the letters were delivered by hand, yet no traces of them could be found in nearly all the L.G.As. This created serious problems for field officers in communicating with each other. In many cases, the chairman would send the letters to the L.G.A. Secretaries, planning officers, or other scheduled officers. It was difficult to get them in their seats. In some cases, photocopies of the letters had to be reproduced for the L.G.A.'s use.

All in all, the machinery in the L.G.As has been very slow in helping the field officers. The L.G.As were supposed to have information about entrepreneurs in their areas, but this was not the case in most areas. It is important, and in fact inevitable, that the L.G.A. be involved if the exercise is to achieve complete success without incurring high costs.

There was an air of uncertainty and insecurity, apparently displayed by the chairman, as more new local government areas were created. The chairmen were not sure of themselves, nor was their political future; thus, their spirit of co-operation in the program was seriously dampened. This was not the case with Oru in Orlu Zone, nor in Okigwe L. G.A. Even in Aba L.G.A, which was split, it is gratifying to note that politics did not make



THE ISSUE OF SICK UNITS

The general economic indicators of sickness are:

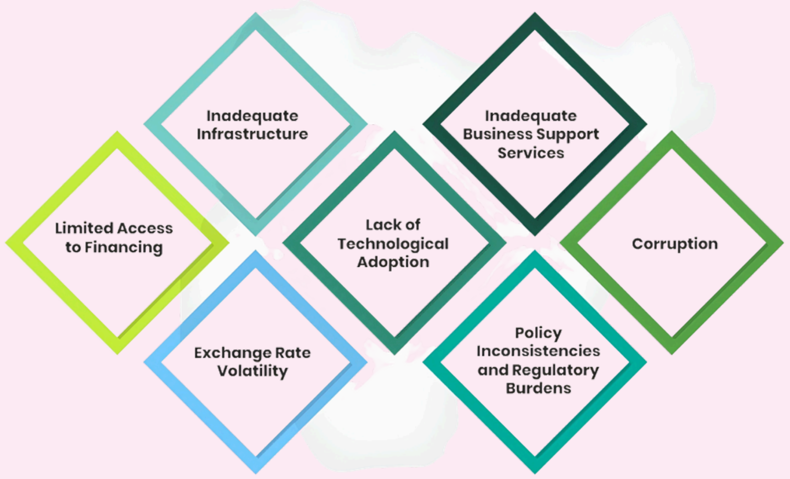
- **01** High Inflationary pressure
- **02** Low capacity utilization
- **03** Lack of or inadequate record-keeping
- **04** Insufficient home demand for goods and services
- **05** Lack of export potentials
- **06** High stock of Inventory
- **07** Liquidity
- **08** High debt rates
- **09** Poor quality products or services
- **10** Poor management
- **11** Heavy Dependence on foreign inputs as against local components.
- **12** Low value added
- **13** Limited technology
- **14** Lack of Infrastructures
- **15** Weak Local Currency

MARKET FINANCE MANAGEMENT TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE

THE CHALLENGES FACED BY SMES

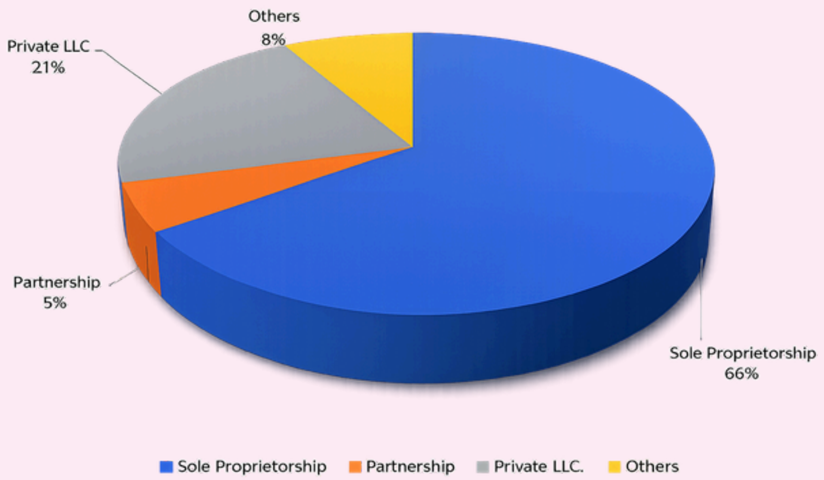
As discussed earlier, the issues identified fall under the listed indicators. Whether one examines the leather and shoe industry, the textile industry, the engineering sector, or the wood industry, the challenges encountered are largely similar. These challenges mainly fall into three categories: financial, technical, and managerial. In other words, the problems listed above are common to nearly all the sectors studied.

The Challenges within Nigeria Business Environment



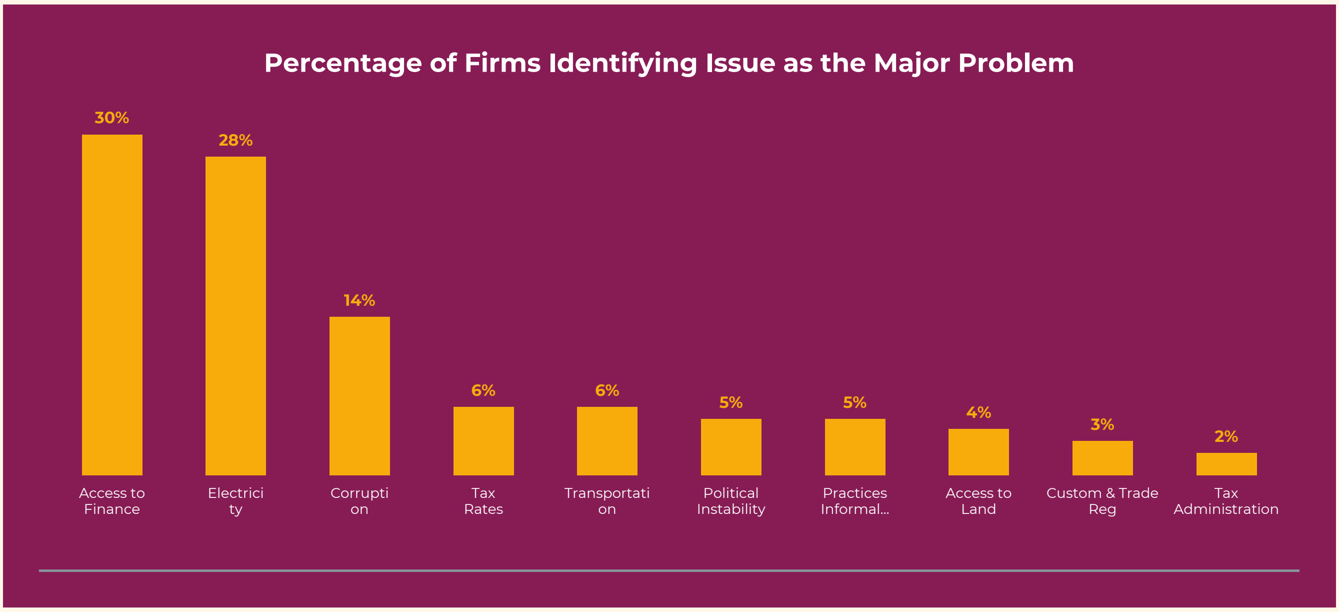
In simpler terms, most MSMEs studied so far indicate that many entrepreneurs are in difficult situations. Further research is needed to determine whether this situation has broader implications for the economy as a whole.

Furthermore, the business status of the visited enterprises was mainly sole proprietorship, followed by private limited liability companies, and least were partnerships. It is important to know that a good number of these companies were unregistered.



MAJOR PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED BY FIRMS

Also, the firms identified issues such as access to finance, electricity, corruption, tax rates, transportation cost, political instability, land, custom and trade rate etc. as other major issues experienced in the course of their enterprises.



CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS:

This report has outlined the planning and organizing efforts made in the extension services program. It has reviewed the fieldwork undertaken, the interactions with entrepreneurs, and other stakeholders.

The report has highlighted what has been accomplished, the constraints and challenges faced during the program's execution, and the existing issues within SMEs. It has also referred to the economic indicators that indicate a business is not performing well.

Given that the issues faced by SMEs are often linked to these indicators, the report concludes that most SMEs studied are not performing well. While the extent of these challenges may differ between sectors and businesses, this is a common trend.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

01

Geographic focus

Despite efforts to cover all Local Government Areas (LGAs) across the five senatorial zones of the former Imo State, some areas were not adequately addressed. Future work should place more focus on Okigwe, Owerri, and Umuahia. Additionally, more detailed studies are needed for each LGA.

02

Sector-specific studies

Furthermore, in-depth sector-specific studies are necessary to develop effective, targeted programs that meet the needs of each industry. It is important to recognize that a quick survey of each zone does not provide an accurate or comprehensive understanding of the region's industrial activities. Therefore, more detailed assessments are required to accurately capture the number and nature of industry establishments in Enugu State.

03

Continuous engagement

Regular interaction with SMEs is essential to sustain the progress made in this initiative. This means ensuring that field officers have the necessary resources, such as funds and functional transportation, to effectively carry out their duties, benefiting SMEs and the country as a whole.

04

Training programmes

In consideration of the issues faced by SMEs, this SBF plans to develop training programs focusing on management, skills enhancement, and product improvement through quality standards. Given the nature of the SBF's work, it was important to anticipate the challenges SMEs face when designing the training program.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

01

Implementation support

During the extension services, field officers visited SMEs to gain their support and acceptance. The SBF requires appropriate backing to implement this program effectively. In the areas of machinery, equipment, and raw materials, the work of the Raw Materials Research and Development Council should be more widely promoted, while their research findings and publications should be made easily accessible and affordable to SMEs.

02

Funding coordination

Funding for MSMEs must be a priority. This should be a collaborative effort between the federal government, state and local governments, and financial institutions nationwide. There may be a need to establish a central coordinating body to oversee and manage assistance provided to SMEs.

03

Infrastructure and estates

Infrastructure plays a crucial role in the economic and social development of any country. In areas with good roads, reliable electricity, and clean water, it is much easier to establish industrial activities; in areas lacking these basics, development is difficult to achieve. Therefore, providing these facilities in rural areas can significantly support the development of cottage industries. More of these can be achieved through cooperation between the state and local governments. Infrastructure also includes the availability of industrial estates. In such a case, providing industrial estates in LGAs will help SMEs set up and operate their businesses more effectively.

04

Policy clarity and enterprise census

Furthermore, entrepreneurs expect clear government policies regarding loans for SMEs from financial institutions, interest rates on these loans, and the importation of goods that can be replaced with locally sourced products. Policy tools exist for these issues, but perhaps what is needed is a single document that consolidates them.

Finally, L.G.As need to work with the Startup Business Foundation to conduct a comprehensive census of medium and small-scale enterprises.

CONTACT FORM

This questionnaire, prepared by the Foundation, is intended for our extension services, consultancy & counselling services, research & information gathering to foster and promote the development of small and Medium Industrial Enterprises in Nigeria.

The questionnaire is for gathering data and information on small and medium industries solely for the above objectives. Therefore, the information you give will be treated with utmost confidence. Your cooperation will therefore be very much appreciated.

PART 1

1. Name of Enterprise: ______

3. Local Government Area (L.G.A) ______

5. Products (or service rendered) ______

7. When the Business commenced: ______

(a). Skilled ______

(c). Apprentices ______

2. Address of Enterprise: ______

4. Type of Business (Service/Manufacturing) ______

6. Business Status (Sale Proprietor, Partnership, Limited Liability) ______

8. Number of Employees: ______

(b). Unskilled ______

(d). Others ______

9. THE PROPRIETOR (S)

i. (a) Name and Address:(b) Qualification & Experience:	i. (b) Name and Address:(b) Qualification & Experience:	Ii (a) Name & Address:(b) Qualification & Experience:

CONTACT FORM • CONTINUED

MACHINERY & EQUIPMENT

NAME	PURCHASE COST	SUPPLIER	LOCAL OR IMPORTED

RAW MATERIALS

NAME	SUPPLIERS	UNIT COST	LOCAL OR IMPORTED

12. Who are your customers?

(a) ....

(b) ....

(c)..

13. Weekly Output is

....

....

14. Channel of Distribution:

(a) Retail ....

(b) Wholesale ....

(c) Distributorship ....

16. FINANCING THE BUSINESS:

(a) Solely by yourself ....

(b) Partnership ....

(c) Bank Loan ....

15. Competitors:

(a)...

....

(b)...

....

(c)...

....

REQUEST FOR DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION

PROGRAMMES BY THE STARTUP BUSINESS FOUNDATION: REQUEST FOR DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION ON THE PROGRAMME TO POTENTIAL BENEFICIARIES

This is to inform you that the Startup Business Foundation will be carrying out extension services and seminars for the benefit of small and medium industrialists in the various parts of the State as follows:

1. Personal Details

Name: ______________________________

Address: ______________________________

Phone No: ______________________________ Date: ______________________________

2. Company/ Business Details

Company / Business name: ______________________________

Position / Rank: ______________________________

Address: ______________________________

Phone No: ______________________________ Email: ______________________________

3. Area(s) of Interest: (Tick appropriately)

- ☐ Business Development
- ☐ Business Plan/ Feasibility Study
- ☐ Finance Investment
- ☐ Business Funding
- ☐ Market/ Product Development
- ☐ Training/ Capacity Building
- ☐ Workforce Management
- ☐ Software/ App Development
- ☐ Other (please detail):

Additional comment:

____

____

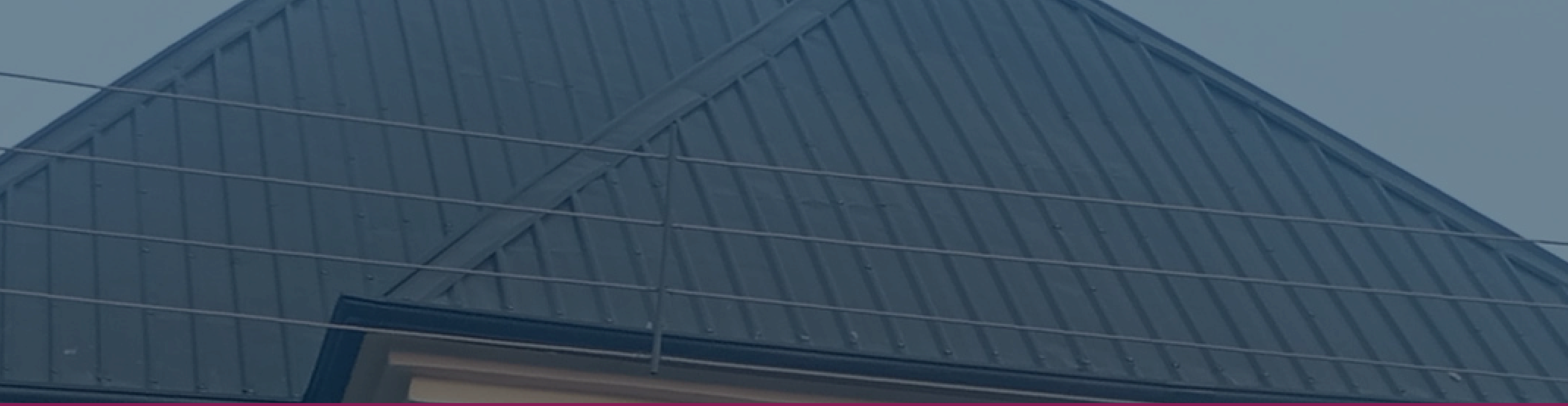
____

____

Remarks: ______________________________

Assigned by: ______________________________ Assigned to: ______________________________

Date: ______________________________ Signature: ______________________________



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BUSINESS FOUNDATION