**Responding to Challenges beyond the New Normal: A WMO Global Campus Collaborative Webinar Event from 20 to 22 January 2021**

**History**

In the mid-1950s, the National Meteorological Training School was established at Oshodi, Lagos, Nigeria, to train Class IV Meteorologists. The School was part of the then Nigerian Department of Meteorological Services (presently Nigerian Meteorological Agency, NiMet).

In 1964, a Regional Meteorological Training Centre (RMTC) was established at Ikeja to train Class III and Class II Meteorologists. These two training Centres were merged in 1975 and designated Meteorological Research and Training Institute (MRTI) at Oshodi, Lagos, Nigeria.

In 1994, the Department of Meteorology (now Department of Meteorology and Climate Science) at the Federal University of Technology, Akure was also designated as the University component of the RMTC in Nigeria.

**Responding to challenges beyond the new Normal**

Within the last five years, RTC has been able to attract foreign students than before. Between 2016 and 2019, RTC has trained 56 students from Liberia in different programmes and between 2017 and 2018; 7candidates were trained from Sierra Leone.

A memorandum of understanding that made it possible for RTC to train students on their own soil for the first time in its many years of existence was signed in 2018 which made it possible for at least 38 eight personnel of Department of Water Resources, The Gambia, to be trained up to date.

One outstanding achievement of RTC was the establishment of Meteorological Institute of Technology, Katsina, as part of RTC Nigeria to run National Diploma and Higher National Diploma in Meteorology and Climate Change Studies and subsequently the curricular were successfully developed in 2019 and just in October, 2020, the approval to begin the trainings at the Institute was granted.These are various measures being put in place to attract and train more meteorological personnel for different sectors of the economy.

In response to challenges beyond the New Normal, RTC Nigeria is vigorously putting in measures and building capacities for increased and higher quality distance learning delivery.

Sequel to WMO Online Course on Education and Training Innovations conducted from 25 May to 31 July, 2020, RTC Nigeria submitted three different projects all aimed at addressing the New Normal challenges. In order to continue trainings in the new normal that we have found ourselves, three approaches were conceived and were being implemented.

These are:

1. **From Research to Training: Improving Hands-on Approach to Learning**

This innovation falls within two categories; (i) New Pedagogical approach and (ii) Collaboration in Education and Training.

The potential benefits from this innovation are:

* Improved pedagogical approach that helps to develop trainees competencies and capabilities in the workplace
* It also helps to encourage collaboration in research and education and Trainings

Milestones achieved so far

* An online meeting with WMO Representative (Bernard Gomez) in Abuja, Nigeria in the second week of August, 2020. Discussions revolved around the way forward and support. The meeting was facilitated by the Director of Research and Training (D R&T)
* Innovation plan was formally introduced to instructors of RTC in the third week of August, 2020. D R &T and Principal were also in attendance.
* Pilot test was conducted in the first week of October, 2020. Eight (8) trainees and five (5) instructors participated in the exercise.

Greatest Challenges to this innovation are:

* Funding
* COVID -19 – More work will have to be done using online approach.

1. **Implementing Blended Learning at RTC Nigeria to Enhance Performance in Weather Forecasting**

The category of this innovation is Technology –Enhanced learning, curriculum advances.

The Potential benefits from this innovation are;

* To be able to train many weather Forecasters as possible that would probably not be able to attend such trainings, due various reasons such as logistics, time constraints and so on.

Milestone achieved so far:

* Meetings on the execution of innovation have been held.
* The innovation has been accepted and plans are on to have a test pilot phase.
* A mini workshop has been organized and some technical teams have been invited on the requirement for the implementation of the innovation.

Greatest Challenges

* Funding
* Training of the trainers on how to practically facilitate blended learning programs since this is new on how best to deliver online trainings.

1. **Distance Learning Version of the existing classroom of BIP-MT program.**

This innovation is in the category of E-learning environment

Potential benefit

* To train Aeronautical Meteorological Observers and Forecasters right where they are but would have obtained the competencies ofAMO and AMF as outlined in WMO 1083

Milestone

* Meeting on this innovation implementation plan held with the entire Instructors at RTC and Director Research & Training in attendance.
* Meeting for a viable construction of the online e-learning platform with a technical group on e –learning platform solutions

Greatest challenges

* Funding
* Adequate training facility for online platform environment
* Training of Instructors on how best to handle online delivery of lectures.

**Conclusion**

The Regional Training Center is set to have these innovations to conform to the New Normal in the shortest possible time as it will boost human capacity development to the students and Instructors worldwide.