



# The Nigerian Society of Engineers

PORT HARCOURT BRANCH



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website: [www.nseph.org](http://www.nseph.org)

e-mail: [info@nseph.org](mailto:info@nseph.org)

MARCH, 27TH 2010

## An interview with Patrick Plonski on "BOOKS FOR AFRICA"

Patrick Plonski, is the Executive Director of "Books For Africa". Books For Africa is the world's largest shippers of school library and University books to the African continent. They have shipped over 22 million books to 45 African countries, including many books to Nigeria. Patrick visited Nigeria in January to find partners who will receive more books. Seven years ago, they did send a container of books which was sponsored by the Nigerian Society of Engineers. He said they need some collaborators to work with in Nigeria. Below are the excerpts from the interview:

**E-Newsletter:** Please can you tell us what Books For Africa is all about?

**Patrick Plonski:** Books For Africa has an education mission, and our goal is to help Africans to help themselves by providing them with educational materials; so we provide school books, and as I said, we have sent over 22million books over 21 years to 45 African countries, so it's a lot of materials that we have sent, but much more is needed, and the books help people to help themselves. You know when you provide University library with books or community library with books of all types, the students can study whatever they want and even if they are not getting what they want or need from the classrooms, they can go to the library and get books to help themselves. We have also some local supply of computers to assist in some of the technology as a means of sub accessing information.

**E-Newsletter:** Okay sir, how did you come about this initiative "Book For Africa"?

**Patrick Plonski:** Well a founder created Books For Africa in 1988 he visited a library in Tente, Uganda, and this library was a very nice brand of library, but it had no books at all, just a few very old resource books; so kicking back to the United States, he met with some colleagues of his in a publishing industry, and he sent a bag of books to this library; it was well received, and the idea seemed useful, and so he continued from there. I joined 'Books For Africa' seven years ago, and it has reached eight million books, two years ago; so



Patrick Plonski

that is due to the increase of the visibility we are getting. Particularly in Nigeria, we are looking at very large projects, we will like to initiate a million book project, just a million books to Nigeria, so we want some partners to donate and collaborate with the Nigerian Society of Engineers

**E-Newsletter:** Thank you very much sir. In the course of shipping your books, how do you overcome custom problems in shipping the books to these countries? Since the books are free, there are supposed to be some waivers.

**Patrick Plonski:** The secret for overcoming customs problems in Africa is to partner with the Africans in that country; because my experience has been that the partner who receives those books whether universities or NGOs or societies like the Nigerian Society of Engineers here in Nigeria, the Africans are better at clearing customs than Americans are, so what we do is we pass that on as a responsibility to the receiving organization, and they clear customs as part of their responsibility. So we provide the books, we ship them to the port, and the recipient actually clears the customs. In case of Nigeria, with the M form which has more stringent guidelines than other countries, we were having some challenges in the past, we just recently secured a waiver from the M form which is very useful

**E-Newsletter:** How do you know that the books you give out are actually put to good use for the pur-

pose they are meant for. How do you measure them?

**Patrick Plonski:** Well, that's why I am in Nigeria, partly is to ask questions of the people who receive those books. We ask that question all the time. The question is "what do you think of the books that we sent? What books were useful? What books were less than useful? What would you like to see in the future in the shipment?" By simply asking the questions, it allows us to increase our ability to ship what is more needed. The other reason how we know that what we are sending is useful is the demand driven system. We don't send books to just anyone, we only send books to people who can arrange the financing; and so, because the financing always come from Africa or an African organization, arranged for that shipment, they finance it or they get someone else to finance it. We know that the books are wanted because if they don't want it, they will not ask or arrange all that money; and that also helps to make sure that the books get to where they are needed, because the person who financed it will go to make sure that that money was not wasted.

**E-Newsletter:** Thank you very much sir, we are very grateful for the interview you granted us.

**Patrick Plonski:** Thank you, it's my pleasure.

**E-Newsletter:** Thank you sir.



Patrick Plonski & Engr. Otuneh, Otunte John

## **NOTICE! NOTICE!! NOTICE!!!**

Dear colleagues,

The **PROJECT MANAGEMENT COURSE FOR ENGINEERS & MANAGERS** organized by the Nigerian Society of Engineers Port Harcourt Branch which was to be held from 15<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> March 2010 has been postponed to 19<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2010. We regret any inconvenience this change in date might cause would-be participants that are already registered and persons who intend to register at the venue.

Below are some of the prospective members of the Nigerian Society of Engineers during a 3-day refresher course which held in NSE PH Branch secretariat from 17th to 19th March 2010.



**25<sup>TH</sup> International Conference On Solid Waste Technology & Management Philadelphia, Pennsylvania USA March 14th – 17th 2010**



Engr. Dr. A A Ujile (FNSE) 2<sup>nd</sup> from right and Senator Dr. Grace F I Bent, Chairman, Committee on Environment & Ecology, Nigerian National Assembly, Abuja, 5<sup>th</sup> from right.

The above conference took place at Raddison Plaza Warwick, Philadelphia from March 14 -17 2010. About 250 delegates attended the conference which featured eight various technical sessions. The presentations were made by personnel from all the continents of the world and centered on the following: management case studies, energy recovery, Landfill, Industrial,




**PROJECT MANAGEMENT COURSE FOR ENGINEERS AND MANAGERS**

*On the following key areas:*

- PROJECT MANAGEMENT PRACTITIONER (PMP)
- PRINCE2 PRACTITIONER
- EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATION OF PROJECT PROCEDURES
- IT SKILLS FOR PROJECT ENGINEERS & MANAGERS

**OBJECTIVE**

To enhance work productivity by effective and efficient planning, execution, monitoring, controlling and demobilization of projects.

**BENEFITS**

*Participants will among others:*

- Get international certification as Project Management Practitioners (PMP)
- Get international certification as PRINCE2 Practitioners
- Have the chances of enhanced ISO 9001 certification
- Have the opportunity of running the Course in Nigeria
- Save cost, time and energy in running the Course Overseas

**REGISTRATION PROCEDURES:**

1. Registration Form is available at [www.nseph.org](http://www.nseph.org)
2. Registration Fee:
  - Members - N100,000.00
  - Non-Members - N120,000.00
 Payable to NSE, P. H Branch UBA A/C No: 0234-031- 000096-2
3. Submit both the payment Teller/ Slip and completed registration Forms at the NSE Mini Secretariat to complete the registration formalities

DATE: 19th-22nd APRIL, 2010

VENUE: NSE Mini Secretariat Water Works yard #3 Bernard Carr Street Port Harcourt.

TIME: 9:00AM DAILY

Please note that this training programme accommodates only a maximum of 40 persons in a class. Participation shall be strictly on "first registered, first served" basis.

**FOR FURTHER ENQUIRIES, PLEASE CONTACT:**

<b>THE CHAIRMAN</b> Engr. Dr. A. H. Igoni, mnse +234 (0) 702 826 0299; +234 (0) 802 312 3471	<b>THE GENERAL SECRETARY</b> Engr. G. C. Ikemir, mnse +234 (0) 803 285 6649	<b>THE TECHNICAL SECRETARY</b> Engr. R. N. Okparama, mnse +234 (0) 803 262 6169
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Medical, wood, construction and demolition, Wastes, Recycling, Public Investment and Education, Contaminated sites, Environmental Impacts, Composting and Biological Treatment, Generation, Composition and Planning, Policy and Management, Innovative Research among others. Two groups were created for technical field trips to: (1) Delaware Solid Waste Authority Cherry Island Engineered Landfill (an innovative 400,000 US Tons per year municipal solid waste landfill and 18m tall mechanically stabilized earth wall. A Peninsula compost Wilmington Organic Recycling Center. (2) Wheelabrator Falls, a state-of-the-art waste-to-energy facility in Falls Township, Pennsylvania. This facility processes 1500 US Tons (1360 tonnes) of non-hazardous municipal solid waste into electricity per day. Dr. A. A. Ujile presented a paper on "Developing Composting Process Scheme for Port Harcourt, Nigeria".

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**NOTICE! NOTICE!! NOTICE!!!**

All members of NSE PH should pay their **Annual Branch Dues** of **N4,500** for **Corporate Members** and **N6,500** for **Fellows** to **UBA ACC. NO: 0234-031-0000962 (Port Harcourt Main Branch)**. Also pay **National Annual Subscription** of **N7,500.00** for **Corporate Members** & **N9,500** for **Fellows** directly to **AFRIBANK ACC No. 1420202215613** & forward all tellers to the secretariat for reconciliation. All payments should be made at the Bank