

2020 Sustainability Report

The year 2020 was a life-changing year globally. The emergence of the novel Corona Virus Disease (COVID-19) brought about serious global health risks, high death rate and great uncertainty. Many countries struggled to slow down the transmission of the disease by testing, treating patients, isolating suspected persons, restricting large gatherings, maintaining complete or partial lock downs etc. The pandemic led to significant reduction in income, rise in unemployment, and disruption to economic activities such a manufacturing, services and transport, all due to the emergency measures adopted by many countries including Nigeria.

The Nigerian Banking industry also felt the strain alongside its customers and other stakeholders. Fidelity Bank therefore recognized that there is no better time to standby its customers, employees and the public than a critical time as this. The Bank lent its support in various ways including offering low cost and flexible financing structures through internal initiatives and partnerships with Development Finance Institutions and the regulator. The Fidelity Bank Business Continuity plan including the Pandemic Response Plan was immediately triggered towards ensuring safety of lives and availability of services to its teaming customer. Meanwhile, the Bank also gave its support through its Corporate Social Responsibility activities.

Commitment to Environmental Social Governance

The 2020 pandemic and its attendant impact has made Fidelity Bank even more committed to Sustainability. The Bank recognizes that its longevity depends on its tenacity and discipline to conform by sound Environmental Social Governance practices. As a purpose driven institution, we embrace the concept of Sustainable Development while aligning same with the vision to be the number one Bank in every market we serve and every branded product we offer. Fidelity Bank remains committed to delivering value edge product and services with the goal of achieving outstanding business growth, innovation and performance in the most sustainable manner.

We understand the significant role we play in driving economic growth in Nigeria especially through our lending activities and the likely undesirable impact such investment can present to the environment and our people if not adequately managed. We therefore commit to ensuring that our lending decisions meet the tripod objectives of economic viability, environmental responsibility and social relevance. This way, we continue to ensure that the costs of economic development do not fall disproportionately on those who are poor or vulnerable, that the environment is not degraded in the process, and that renewable natural resources are managed sustainably. With this understanding, Fidelity Bank will continue to observe relevant local and international standards such as the Nigerian Sustainable Banking Principles (NSBP), Equator Principles, the

International Finance Corporations (IFC) Performance Standards, World Bank Environment Health Safety Guidelines and other best practice standards in managing environmental and social risks in our operations as well as that of clients we finance.

Managing Environmental and Social (E&S) Risks in Clients' Businesses

At Fidelity Bank, we understand that our client's projects/operations are exposed to environmental social governance issues hence our lending decisions could, in uncontrolled circumstances, produce negative environmental and social impacts. Consequently, we have developed systems and processes to identify, assess, mitigate, monitor and report such impacts. Our comprehensive E&S Risk Management Systems which is well entrenched in the Bank's Credit processes, afford the Bank the opportunity to help clients secure long-term sustenance of their businesses. By so doing, we meet our own objective of engaging in responsible banking. In line with the strategic aspiration to become a Tier 1 Bank, the Bank aspires to be a leader in the provision of sustainable financing products by ensuring Environmental Social and Governance criteria remains a major consideration in product development and all client engagements.

Compliance with Equator Principles

Equator Principles (EPs) is a global risk management framework for identifying, assessing and managing environmental and social risks in project finance. The EP framework is the financial sector's leading voluntary standards, which also builds on the International Finance Corporation's (IFC) Performance Standards (PS) and the World Bank Group's Environmental, Health & Safety (EHS) Guidelines. Fidelity Bank joined the Equator Principles community in November 2012 and is committed to implementing the Equator Principles through internal environmental and social risk management policies.

As part of the structure to mainstream E&S issues in our lending processes, our Sustainable Banking Unit that operates out of the Risk Management Directorate reviews project related applications above the threshold of US\$10m as stipulated by the EPs while also reviewing other applications below this threshold in line with other national and international requirements.

Fidelity Bank has continued to strengthen its environmental and social risk management systems. The environmental and social risk assessment procedures form an integral part of the Bank's credit analysis process. Every business-related credit is screened against a set of Environmental and Social Risk criteria and then classified based on category definitions. Measures to mitigate identified risks are presented as part of loan preconditions and covenants. Fidelity Bank has also instituted measures including maintaining a robust database that supports effective monitoring and reporting on credits assessed to E&S requirements. Although physical monitoring activities were impaired by the COVID-19

pandemic in the year, monitoring was conducted through the receipt of regular reports from customers and supported by virtual meetings (where required). When engaging with our customers, we endeavor to provide education on approaches to achieving long-term sustainability through identification and management of environmental and social risks and opportunities.

As part of its routine roles, the Sustainable Banking Unit organizes capacity building programs across the Bank covering the Board, Management and other employees. The Unit circulates quarterly bank-wide internal communication to promote environmental and social risk management culture and awareness among staff. The Unit also delivers Environmental and Social Risk Management training modules at all staff induction programs, Bank's Thursday lecture series and E-Learning portal assignments and quizzes for all staff.

As a financial institution adopting the EPs, Fidelity Bank undertakes not to support projects where the borrower will not, or is unable to, comply with the environmental and social requirements arising from the application of the EPs. As part of our E&S assessment procedures, we classify projects in line with the International Finance Corporation's Performance Standards for project categorization as follows:

- Category A: Projects with potential significant adverse social or environmental impacts that are diverse, irreversible or unprecedented.
- Category B: Projects with potential limited adverse social or environmental impacts that are few, generally site-specific, largely reversible and readily addressed through mitigation measures; and
- Category C: Projects with minimal or no social or environmental impacts.

Below, we report our project finance activity, in line with Equator Principle IV requirements for the period, January 1 to December 31, 2020. During the review period, Fidelity Bank did not participate in any project-related refinance and project-related acquisition finance, project finance related advisory services, project-related corporate loans and bridge financing, as defined in the Equator Principles:

Project Finance - Sector Reporting

Sector	E&S Risk Categories		
	A	B	C
Mining	0	0	0
Infrastructure	0	0	0
Oil and Gas	1	0	0
Power	0	0	0

Others	1	0	0
Total	2	0	0

Project Finance – Regional Reporting

Region	E&S Risk Categories		
	A	B	C
Americas	0	0	0
Europe, Middle East and Africa	2	0	0
Asia and Oceania	0	0	0
Total	2	0	0

Project Finance – Country Designation

Designation	E&S Risk Categories		
	A	B	C
Designated Countries	0	0	0
Non-Designated Countries	2	0	0
Total	2	0	0

Project Finance – Independent Review

	E&S Risk Categories		
	A	B	C
Yes	2	0	0
No	0	0	0
Total	2	0	0

MANAGED SME SCHEME AS A VEHICLE FOR POVERTY REDUCTION

Fidelity Bank recognizes the crucial role played by Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the growth and development of the economy. Such enterprises remain the engine of economic growth of the nation as they stimulate economic activities thereby creating employment, alleviating hunger and poverty and promoting general prosperity. However, the outbreak of the novel corona virus Disease (COVID-19) in early 2020 resulted in a great impact on the global economy, which did not leave out Nigeria and businesses including SMEs. There was so much uncertainty as oil prices crashed, reduced foreign exchange income, high volatility in foreign exchange rate, rising prices all impacting lives. Beyond the traditional challenges faced by SMEs, the pandemic affected chances of survival of many in no small measure, hence the need to support the economic side-effects of the pandemic.

In keeping with our commitment to support and help the Nigerian SMEs grow and transform their businesses especially ensuring their survival during the pandemic, we designed and implemented a number of initiatives. Working with our partner Development Finance Institutions (DFIs) such as the Bank of Industries (BOI), Development Bank of Nigeria (DBN) to avail lower interest rate loans with flexible repayment structures to support SMEs distressed cashflows. Similarly, management approved reduction of interest rates on our internal SME Quick Loan products.

In the area of business management capacity building for existing and aspiring entrepreneurs, we transformed our weekly Fidelity SME Forum radio programme to a TV show via a digital channel. The programme now runs on Instagram TV bringing on broad subject matter experts to share knowledge and insights to our over 3 million viewers. Through this medium, we have continued to empower entrepreneurs by helping them adopt new strategies for business recovery and Sustainability in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.

As evidence of our commitment to the support of SME businesses, our SME customer footprint as at date is in excess of 400,000 customers across Nigeria.

CONTRIBUTING TO GREENHOUSE EMISSIONS REDUCTION

Fidelity Bank understands that the COVID-19 pandemic which manifested in 2020 affected human lives globally presenting serious health risks with consequent negative economic and social impact arising from shutdown of economic activities globally. However, the actions taken to manage the pandemic by different countries led to some environmental benefits. Following the lockdown in Nigeria, our over 200 branches and Head Office facilities shut down to customers while only a few critical staff who ensured availability of our digital channels worked onsite the Head Office. The Bank for the rest of 2020 worked at 50 percent staff capacity onsite its Head Office and Branches due to the social distancing requirement. During this time, the Bank's energy requirement reduced substantially, thereby significantly reducing our carbon footprint.

Fidelity Bank in continuation of its commitment to pursue greenhouse gas emission reduction commenced implementation of its Sustainable Power Solution in 2019 with the installation of Solar energy in part of the Head Office and some Lagos Branches. The Bank in 2020 earmarked more Branches bank-wide for the solution to further reduce its carbon footprint. To fulfil the requirements of our environmental strategy, which is geared towards adoption of cleaner energy and efficient resource use, electronic equipment such as air conditioners are being replaced with low energy consuming ones while we continued in the use of LED lightening across the Bank. Again, the Bank continued its strict implementation of the early closure policy, which mandates Branch Management to shut down power by 6pm at the Branch Offices, and thus reduce power consumption from

fossil fuels and associated carbon emissions.

Although the employee split-work policy in 2020 due to the pandemic reduced home-to-work commuting, Fidelity Bank while observing all social distancing rules and safety practices continued to maintain its fleet of staff buses which offers well over 600 members of staff free home-to-work commuting services every workday minimizing the number of vehicles driven by staff and the associated GHG emissions. While this gesture serves to promote employee welfare, it also contributes to the Bank's overall greenhouse emission reduction.

GUIDED BY THE INTERNATIONAL BILL ON HUMAN RIGHTS

The Fidelity Bank's Human Rights Policy defines the Bank's commitment to upholding human rights standards and encapsulates a non-discrimination policy, which prohibits the use of child labour, forced labour and discrimination on grounds of religion, gender, race, tribe, age, physical challenge, or economic background.

Our Bank has always been committed to upholding Human Rights and has continued to identify with the International Bill on Human Rights in line with the conventions of the International Labour Organization. To demonstrate this resolve, the Bank in dealing with employees, suppliers and third-party contractors, ensures fair treatment without any form of discrimination or disregards for human rights. Our Diversity Policy articulates a corporate culture which not only supports workplace diversity and inclusiveness but also recognizes that employees at all levels of the Bank have a role and responsibility in fulfilling this objective.

The representation of employees per employee category in each of the following diversity groups as at December 31st, 2020 are as summarized below:

Gender Distribution of Employees

Gender	Percentage Representation (%)
Female	45.4%
Male	54.6%

Board Seat - Gender Composition

Gender	Percentage Representation (%)
Female	14.3%
Male	85.7%

Age Group Distribution

Age	Percentage Representation (%)
21 - 25	5.9%
26 - 30	17.5%
31 - 35	12.8%
36 - 40	31.5%
41 - 45	22.9%
46 - 50	7.6%
51 - Above	1.9%

Fidelity Bank is committed to the development of an engaging and inclusive work environment with the objective of ensuring employability, skill development and fair remuneration. Our training institute, Fidelity Crest Academy, organizes different capacity training programs for employees.

Below is the average hours of training per annum per employee by employee category:

Level	Nos of hours
ET – MGR:	120hrs
SM – Above:	80hrs

In her continued bid to support employee welfare, Fidelity Bank has a number of compensation benefits accessible to all employees irrespective of gender. The benefits includes Share of Profit and/or Dividend, yearly provision of Essential Commodities (Essenco), Status Car, Study Leave, HMO, Reimbursement of Certification Courses Exam Fees, Burial Support, Wedding Grant, Professional & Club Membership, Offshore Trainings, Personal Loans, Maternity Leave, annual medical check-up, COVID19 patients special medical support, etc.

Fidelity Bank maintains effective Whistle Blowing policies, and grievance mechanism policies for prompt identification and remediation of grievances. Again, our HR Clinic initiative has continued to provide an interactive one-on-one meeting between the HR team and employees bank-wide. This Initiative creates opportunity for feedback on HR processes, counselling to staff (including stress management) and promotes freedom of expression.

Fidelity Bank also ensures that human rights considerations are given due attention during lending decisions and same standards are embedded in contract agreements including the service level agreements of vendors.

HEALTH POLICIES

The Bank in its commitment to support good health and wellbeing recognizes her workforce as one of her strategic assets with a competitive advantage for

sustainable business success. This commitment to drive high standards in health and safety management led to the Bank's certification by the British Standard OHSAS 18001 on Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems in 2018 and in 2020 was upgraded to ISO45001.

Fidelity Bank's Corporate Membership of the British Safety Council, an Occupational Health and Safety Standards UK awarding body has always placed the Bank on an advantage. The Bank has in place, a robust Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems as well as appointed safety champions and fire wardens with day-to-day responsibility for the management of Health and Safety in the institution. The safety champions and fire wardens are trained regularly and have been certified by the World Safety Organization. On a regular basis, awareness materials on Health and Safety are communicated to all employees while formal trainings are conducted through the Bank's Thursday Lecture Series and through E-learning platforms, with all employees benefiting. In 2020, no job related fatality was recorded in the Bank.

Additionally, the Bank in supporting the good health and wellbeing of every employee adopts best practices that cater for their healthcare using appropriate medical intervention through HMO services, guidance and counseling, cancer care treatment, annual medical check-up, equal opportunity policy structures and workplace inclusiveness. In 2020, the Bank sustained the collaboration with the HMO to operate an In-house Medical Bay with a sit-in Medical Doctor and Nurse to provide primary health care to staff around the Lagos and Victoria Island environs.

A. HIV/AIDS

The Bank has continued to enforce its policy of non-discrimination against any employee or customer based on their HIV/AIDS status. Employees living with HIV/AIDS have the rights to confidentiality and privacy concerning their HIV status. Except where required by law to disclose to specific people or with the express consent of the employee, all medical information regarding employees with HIV/AIDS are kept strictly confidential. However, the Bank's standard incapacity procedures are usually applied in the event of a noticeable deterioration in the health of an employee living with HIV/AIDS matched by a decisive impact on the employee's work ability.

B. COVID-19

In a bid to preserve the health and wellbeing of staff and customers during the COVID-19, Fidelity Bank adhered strictly with the safety guidelines and protocols from the government. Facemasks and hand sanitizers were made available to all staff. Surfaces were disinfected regularly, thermometers used

and sanitizers made available for all visitors to the Bank and the required social distancing requirement complied with in our Banking Halls and at all our facilities. The Board and Management of the Bank approved a split-work practices which allowed only 30 percent of its workforce onsite in the first instance, however with increased economic activities, the percentage was geared up to 50 percent which was maintained for the rest of 2020 to ensure adequate social distancing.

Fidelity Bank sponsors the PCR test for staff who are exposed to either an index or a suspected index. Staff that are positive are availed a palliative to get treatment/medication and any staff with life threatening symptoms are referred to one of the specialized hospitals recommended by Government for treatment at the bank's cost.

In addition, vulnerable staff members are exempted from the on-premise shift arrangement and equipped to work remotely. Environments where there is suspected or confirmed index are immediately shutdown for decontamination while the business continuity plan is triggered to enable our customers get the full services despite the pandemic. Screensavers on COVID19 were activated and weekly literature/updates are circulated to staff for continued sensitization.

The Bank's commitment in tackling the COVID19 pandemic is further shown by the setting up of a COVID19 Advisory Committee headed by an Executive Director and responsible to the Executive Committee and Board.

EMPOWERING AND CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN

Fidelity Bank recognizes the role of women in the society and the significant contributions they can make to economic development of any society. When a woman is empowered, she has the willpower to elevate herself out of poverty and contribute significantly to family income.

Recognizing that women are often prevented from realizing their economic potentials because of gender inequity, Fidelity Bank is committed to creating opportunities for them in its employment as well as through lending and advisory activities. The Bank's gender diversity policy framework provides the structural entrenchment of gender diversity within the Bank to actively facilitate a more diverse and representative workforce.

In this regard and in compliance with the Central Bank of Nigeria requirement, Fidelity Bank ensures adequate female representation in its workforce. The appointment of its first female MD/CEO effective January 01, 2021 is one of the Bank's several decisions to support the empowerment of its female employees as well as welfare of their families. As at December 31st, 2020, Fidelity Bank had 45.4%

female representation in its total workforce. The bank at the end of 2020 also had 14.3% women representation on the full Board and 33% of all executive directors being women. Also given the Bank's commitment to ensure equity in employee development, 28% of total expenditure on capacity building was spent on female employees. In addition, female employees are given adequate access to the staff health care program as well as financing schemes available in the Bank.

In 2020, we marked the International Women's Day with a series of activities, including the 'Giving Her Wings' event which served as a platform to mentor and connect young female entrepreneurs with role models. Our MD/CEO was in attendance, as well as other female model entrepreneurs such as Tara Fela-Durotoye and Linda Ikeji. The event provided a platform for business knowledge education to over 500 women entrepreneurs who attended.

A documentary series was also released to celebrate and empower female entrepreneurs as critical agents of economic transformation in Nigeria. This series features Mariam Lawani (Founder, GreenHill Recycling), Monalisa Chinda-Coker (Award-Winning Actress, Producer and Entrepreneur), and Dr. Yetunde Ayo-Oyalowo (Founder, Market Doctors).

In the first quarter of 2020, all editions of the 30-minutes Capacity Building radio program, the Fidelity SME Forum, was dedicated to showcase successful women entrepreneurs who have remarkably performed well in their respective fields. These model entrepreneurs who are subject-matter experts shared their knowledge and experiences on air, provided insights and encouraged existing and prospective entrepreneurs especially the females.

TIMELY REPORTING AND TRANSPARENT DISCLOSURES

Relevant statutes and codes guide Fidelity Bank on Corporate Governance including the Company and Allied Matters Act (2004). Fidelity Bank seeks to provide accurate and timely information regarding its lending and advisory activities as well as more general information in accordance with its corporate governance practices.

The Bank recognizes the importance of disclosure of information, for itself and its clients, as a means of managing environmental, social and governance risks. To guard against the risk of financial crime within our business, we focus on training our employees, strengthening our screening systems and ensuring that our policies and procedures are effective and up to date.

CODE OF ETHICS AND INSIDER DEALING

Fidelity Bank continues to pride itself in its long-standing good professional and

ethical reputation sustained through a combination of policies, systems and cultural practices. The Bank has a Code of Business Conduct and Ethics Policy, which clearly communicates the Bank's zero tolerance for corruption, money laundering, bribery, abuse of office and similar transgressions.

Our Ethics Committee, which, among its duties, ensure provisions of this Policy are communicated to all staff at the start of each year, followed by individual staff attestation to comply with the provisions. Trainings on ethics and bribery/anti-corruption are a part of the Bank's Induction programme for new staff and periodic lectures on ethics are held in ensuring ethical standards are enshrined in staff throughout the year. Staff members have become increasingly aware of the need to maintain high ethical standards in pursuit of their daily activities and engagement with colleagues, customers and stakeholders.

During the year, Fidelity Bank joined the Global world in celebrating the Ethics and Compliance Week by marking it with different activities that speaks to its core value and ethical standards.

Fidelity Bank has in place a Whistle Blowing Policy, in partnership with the professional firm KPMG, which encourages internal and external stakeholders to report their concerns about any unethical behavior to enable the Bank investigate and address promptly. We host our Whistle Blowing Application on our Internet webpage and dedicated telephone line and email address available for anonymous reporting to the Bank.

The Bank frowns towards illegal practice by its employees trading its securities on the stock exchange to their advantage after having access to confidential information. To guard against the illegal practice, the Bank has a formal Insider Trading Policy that prohibits all "Insiders" and their "Connected Persons" (as defined in the Policy) from dealing in the Company's securities at certain times. The Policy is communicated to all persons to whom it is applicable hence the Company Secretary periodically notifies affected persons of when trading in the Bank's securities is either permitted (Open Periods) or prohibited (Blackout Periods). The Bank has established a mechanism for monitoring compliance with the Policy and affected persons are required to notify the Company Secretary of transactions undertaken on their accounts in the Bank's securities.

Fidelity Bank's Anti-Bribery and Corruption Policies and procedures is communicated regularly to employees and management in the Bank while at the beginning of the year each staff mandatorily signs an attestation to comply

with the provisions of the policy. There were no fines paid by the Bank on account of any of its staff being found wanting on cases of Bribery and Corruption in 2020. The Bank also did not contravene any environmental law and regulation in the year hence no monetary fines paid. As a responsible Financial Institution, we will continue to embrace adaptation measures that promote sustainable investment.

Fidelity Bank is committed to being responsive to the needs and concerns of customers and to ensure that their rights are protected at all times in accordance with consumer protection legislation and contractual requirements. In support of this commitment, the Bank has a Consumer Protection Policy as well as a Complaints Handling Policy. Trainings and awareness campaigns for all staff on the provisions of the policies are held periodically on a continuous basis. The bank's Customer Contact Centre and Customer Complaints touchpoints are committed to upholding these standards at all times.

COLLABORATING WITH PARTNERS

Fidelity Bank recognizes that it can achieve greater results with combined efforts rather than acting alone. The Bank therefore endeavors to collaborate with clients who identify and manage environmental and social risks and who pursue environmental and social opportunities and outcomes in their business activities with a view to continually improving sustainability performance. Fidelity Bank participates actively in sector-wide efforts and international initiatives to promote sustainable development. Fidelity Bank is a signatory to the United Nations Environmental Program-Finance Initiative (UNEP-FI), United Nations Global Compact, and Equator Principles. The Bank actively participates at the Sustainable Banking Champions Industry meetings and is a member of the National Financial Inclusion Technical Committee representing the Banker's Committee. Fidelity Bank also collaborates with the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF) on environmental advocacy initiatives.

LEADING BY EXAMPLE IN E&S FOOTPRINTS MANAGEMENT

Fidelity Bank strives to lead by example in the management of environmental and social management practices. We work to manage the E&S concerns associated with our internal operations and undertakings by making sustainability considerations a fundamental part of everyday decision making in our offices wherever located. The Sustainable Banking Governance Committee with membership at Executive and Senior management levels oversee the implementation of the Bank's Sustainable Banking Policy. The Committee ensures best practice in Environmental Social and Governance standards are pursued within the Bank's operations. Following the Committee's regular sittings since 2018, various projects and activities have been executed while others are ongoing.

The Bank in 2020 continued in its stride in Sustainable Power implementation by earmarking more branches bank-wide for the project, this is following the installation of solar energy in a part of the Head Office and some Lagos Branches in 2019.

Fidelity Bank has continued to maintain the 6pm mandatory early operational closure policy at all its Branches thereby impacting overall power use and carbon emissions. Again, environmental and social considerations are now factored into the Bank procurement decisions while vendors have integrated in their SLAs environmental and social risk requirements.

Fidelity Bank understands that water scarcity remains a serious global social challenge and with this realization is committed to ensuring that it manages the use of water resource efficiently. To this end, water flow meters were installed in all facilities of the Bank in 2020 to allow effective monitoring of reductions in water consumption.

The COVID-19 pandemic brought numerous changes in the corporate work practice such that virtual communication became the norm. To ensure we adapt to these changes, more automation of our processes took effect in the year. An example is the development of the Fidelity e-Signature portal that allows documents move through the approval process electronically thereby reducing the need to use papers. This has led to a significant reduction in the use of papers in our Bank.

Through the Fidelity Bank Waste and Pollution Management Policy, the Bank commits to increasingly promote good waste management practices in line with local regulation and best practice. During the year, we commenced implementation of waste segregation and recycling at the Head Office facilities and appointed an accredited Recycling Company to manage our wastes. This initiative will be extended to other Branches following the completion of the pilot programme.

Also in the year, the Sustainable Banking Management Systems portal went into full use in gathering Sustainability data across its branches and facilities for effective monitoring as well as support internal and regulation reporting.

Fidelity Bank has continued through its Corporate Social Responsibility activities to strive for positive social contributions in communities to reduce poverty, support education, improve health, providing basic needs and increasing long-term employment through the Bank's central CSR platform as well as through a vehicle known as the Fidelity Helping Hands Program (FHHP). The FHHP project is an employee volunteer program, which allows employees contribute towards community projects, while the Bank supports with a matching fund and allows execution in paid time. Branches, divisions or departments of the Bank is saddled

with the responsibility of identifying pressing needs in their immediate communities, ascertain the cost and make personal financial contributions towards execution. The concerned branch work with the Corporate Social Responsibility team for the matching fund, execution and commissioning. The Bank ensures that the desired outcomes from the investments align with the objectives of the Sustainable Development Goals.

In 2020, the Bank focused its overall CSR activities on Education, Youth Empowerment, Social Welfare, Health and Environment with the highest contribution going to Health (33.60%), followed by Education and Youth Empowerment 24.69% while Environment and Social Welfare had 20.96% and 20.75% respectively representing the total investment by the Bank.

During the year, the Bank joined other private sector organizations in Nigeria in the fight against COVID-19 to form the Coalition Against COVID-19 (CACOVID). Through this platform, the Bank made financial contributions to the COVID-19 relief fund to support the Federal Government in combating the pandemic.

In addition, Fidelity Bank built a 50-bed isolation Centre in Anambra State and donated to the COVID-19 Trust Fund of Fourteen (14) States of the Federation. This was in the Bank's effort to extend its support in containing the spread of the virus and also to ensure that patients get the care they need and frontline workers get essential supplies and equipment; and to accelerate efforts to provide tests and treatments.

Fidelity Bank birthed the Youth Empowerment Academy in 2016 in recognition of the significant roles the youth population play in economic and social development of a country and the need to deliberately empower them for the future. This initiative, which is in partnership with Gazelle Academy (a foremost Vocational Training Institute), is targeted at undergraduates, empowering the youth in developing entrepreneurial skills to attain self-employment and financial independence. Vocations like fish farming, programming language coding, phone engineering, baking and confectionary, tailoring, cloth embellishment, beauty make-over etc. are trained for at the event. The program which has held in seven (7) tertiary institutions across the country has now impacted both directly and indirectly over 4,000 beneficiaries who have gone ahead to start their own businesses and supporting others through trainings to join the business. The beneficiaries, with the support of the Bank, start to earn a living from their businesses, contributing to family income and alleviating hunger and poverty.

In 2020, the Fidelity Bank continued to maintain its environmental advocacy program through financial sponsorship and renewal of membership with the Nigerian Conservation Foundation. Nature conservation and environmental beautification strategies by the Bank also was in collaboration with State and Local Governments to create and maintain green parks in key locations across

Nigeria.

The Bank in the year also extended its support to supply essential materials to over a hundred Sickle Cell Warriors across Six States of the Federation during the COVID-19 pandemic through sponsorship and partnership with Sickle Cell Aid Foundation (SCAF).

DEEPENING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT THROUGH FINANCIAL INCLUSION

Fidelity Bank's mission is to make financial services easy and accessible to customers. The Bank understands that by creating convenient and affordable products and services to all its customers it stimulates an all-inclusive growth of the economy ensuring the poor, marginalized people and those vulnerable to low economic power, engage in formal economic process through ownership and regular usage of formal financial products and services.

Fidelity Bank aligns its internal Financial Inclusion policy with the provisions of the Central Bank of Nigeria National Financial Inclusion Strategy (NFIS), and leverage on strategic partnership with different stakeholders including Government, MDAs, the Private Sector and Developmental Agencies to achieve its Financial Inclusion targets.

In recognition of the bank's efforts in this space, Fidelity Bank received the mandate of the Federal Government to register and open accounts for 128,000 youths participating in the Special Public Works project where youths across the six geographical regions will be engaged in menial jobs to earn monthly stipends. Fidelity bank opened accounts for the beneficiaries, many of which are first time bank account holders.

In addition, Fidelity Bank was one of the first three banks to comply with the integration of SANEF interoperable platform to connect to all super-agents and Mobile Money Operators (MMOs) using a common middleware for account opening processes.

In 2020, the Bank launched the eUniverse solution, a mobile money platform driven by agent network, as this provides the best avenue for reaching the financially excluded and underserved especially the poor and vulnerable.

The bank will always continue to identify with projects that will affect the lives of the populace positively and improve their livelihood.