



Long Title: **A Bill for an Act to Provide for the Establishment of Nigeria Natural Medicine Development Agency**

Sponsor: **Hon. Uzoma Nkem-Abonta**

Background

The Nigerian Natural Medicines Development Agency was established in 1997 by a Ministerial Order, in accordance with the Natural Science and Technology Act of 1980 which empowers the Honourable Minister of Science and Technology to establish Research Institutes where local materials are available.

It was established to enable the Federal Government of Nigeria through Federal Ministry of Science and Technology actualise its critical and strategic mandate to research, develop, document, preserve, conserve and promote Nigeria's Natural Medicine (traditional/Indegenous Healthcare Systems, Medications and non-medication healing arts science and technology) and assist facilitate their integration into the National Healthcare Delivery System. It also hopes to contribute to the Nation's wealth and job creation, socio-economic growth and development effort.

The Bill

This Bill seeks among other things to put in place a Legal Framework for the continous growth of Nigerian Natural Medicine Development Agency to provide research, develop, protect, collate, document and preserve Nigeria's Indegenous (Traditional) Healthcare Systems, Medications and non-medications, Healing Arts, Science Technologies, Bio-Resources and facilitate their integration into the National Health System.

The Summary of the Bill:- The Bill has five (5) parts:

Part I of the bill deals with the establishment of the Agency, membership and tenure of office of the Board etc.

Part II makes provisions for the functions of the Agency and Board appointment of the Director General and Staff of the Agency.

Part III deals with the structure of the Agency,

Part IV addresses funding needs of the Agency, budgetary requirements as well as accounts and audit provisions.

Objectives and Functions of the Agency

The functions and objectives of the Agency includes:

- i. To conduct research, develop, promote, collate, document and preserve indigenous (traditional) healthcare system, Sciences, Technologies and bio-resources and facilitate their integration into the National healthcare delivery system.
- ii. Conduct ethno-medical/ethno-veterinary survey, with a view to developing a comprehensive inventory of medicinal, Aromatic and pesticial plants (MAPPs) and animal/animal parts and minerals and other bio diversities of Nigeria used in Natural Medicine.
- iii. Support, facilitate and promote the conduct of safety assessment, observational studies and clinical trials of Nigeria traditional therapies.
- iv. Establish model experimental farms and activity centres in each of the six geopolitical zones of the country.
- v. Publish and maintain a Directory of Nigeria Traditional Medicine Practitioners for collaborative research and deelopment .

There are other functions of the Agency as outlined in the bill.

Conclusion

The proposed bill is a step in the right direction considering the commendable objectives and its provisions. The Agency has been operating on ministerial order, therefore, the need to put in place a legal framework for the continues growth of Nigeria Natural Medicine Development Agency, that will provide, research, Develope, promote, collate, Document and preserve Nigerians Indegenous (traditional) Healthcare system etc and facilitate their integration with the National Healthcare delivery system need to be supported.