

From “JAPA” to “EJE ALO”

By

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GOVERNANCE FIRST NIGERIA CAMPAIGN

Turning Brain Drain into Brain Gain: From “JAPA” to “EJE ALO”

Nigeria is currently witnessing an unprecedented wave of youth migration — popularly called “JAPA”. But rather than resist this reality, Nigeria must **strategically harness migration as a development tool**.

The Institute for Development Synergy (TIDS) proposes a new narrative: “EJE ALO” — an Igbo expression meaning “Travel and Return” — a structured, productive migration system that transforms **Brain Drain into Brain Gain**.

Why Nigeria Must Allow Vibrant Youths to Migrate

1. Limited Opportunities at Home

Thousands of graduates in **Medicine, Pharmacy, Nursing, Medical Laboratory Science, Engineering, ICT, and other disciplines** remain unemployed or underemployed.

- Many medical graduates **cannot secure housemanship/internship placements**
- Pharmacy and laboratory science graduates face **limited internship spaces**
- Other professionals struggle with **employment bottlenecks**

This leads to **wasted human capital**.

According to the National Bureau of Statistics, youth unemployment and underemployment remain significant challenges affecting graduates across sectors.

2. Global Demand for Nigerian Talent

Nigeria has some of the **most skilled and adaptable professionals globally**.

The World Health Organization reports a **global shortage of healthcare workers**, particularly in developed economies.

Similarly, the World Bank recognizes **migration as a powerful development tool** that benefits both sending and receiving countries.

Rather than losing talent, Nigeria can **strategically export talent and import development.**

3. Migration Drives Economic Growth

Nigerians abroad send billions home annually.

According to the World Bank, remittances to Nigeria remain among the **largest in Africa**, supporting families, businesses, and local economies.

This means migration:

- Reduces poverty
- Boosts investment
- Strengthens foreign exchange
- Improves livelihoods

4. Skill Acquisition and Knowledge Transfer

Migrating professionals gain:

- Advanced skills
- Global exposure
- Technology knowledge
- Leadership experience

The United Nations Development Programme recognizes **diaspora knowledge transfer** as critical for national development.

These professionals eventually **return, invest, mentor, and build institutions.**

This is **EJE ALO in action.**

5. Migration Reduces Domestic Pressure

Allowing structured migration:

- Reduces unemployment pressure
- Improves wage competitiveness
- Encourages specialization
- Promotes productivity

The International Organization for Migration supports **well-managed migration** as beneficial for sustainable development.

From JAPA to EJE ALO: The TIDS Solution

TIDS proposes a structured migration framework:

TIDS Brain Gain Strategy

1. Pre-Migration Training & Orientation
2. Ethical Recruitment & Placement
3. Diaspora Engagement Network
4. Return & Reintegration Programs
5. Investment & Innovation Support
6. Skills Transfer & Mentorship Platform

Why TIDS?

TIDS has:

- Policy expertise
- Academic faculty
- Research capacity
- Governance advocacy platform
- Youth engagement networks

Through the **Governance First Nigeria Campaign**, TIDS aims to:

- Normalize structured migration
- Promote circular migration
- Encourage diaspora investment
- Build Nigeria through global exposure

Policy Recommendations

TIDS calls on government and stakeholders to:

- Expand internship and housemanship opportunities

- Establish national migration policy framework
- Create diaspora investment incentives
- Develop returnee reintegration programs
- Support skill export strategies

The New Narrative of TIDS

Not **JAPA**

But **EJE ALO**

Travel. Learn. Grow. Return. Build Nigeria.

Nigeria does not lose when youths migrate.

Nigeria loses when migration is **unplanned and unmanaged**.

With structured migration, **Nigeria gains talent, capital, and global influence**.

Governance First Nigeria Campaign

Think Development. Think Migration. Think Brain Gain.

TIDS — Turning Ideas into Development Solutions