

### Introduction

West Africa is the part of Africa that is located at the western part of the African continent with most of it located in the Sub-Sahara. It comprises of 18 countries including Nigeria.

There are several Universities, Research Institutions and other Scientific bodies within the region working in different areas.



### The vDEC

The Virtual Data Exploitation Centre (vDEC) of the CTBTO is a critical resource that has immense potential to significantly contribute to the engagement of Scientists and Researchers from across the globe thereby promoting the understanding of the CTBT and contributing to its early entry into force. The enormous resources committed by the EU and other relevant partners in the design and development of the vDEC can only be justified if it is extensively used, particularly by the developing countries..

### Objective of the vDEC

The vDEC is designed to provide easy access to the CTBTO's IMS data for research and publish new findings thereby contributing, in a way, to global peace and security.

### Motivation for the study

Our enquiries from the CTBTO (vdec@ctbto.org) indicated low utilization of the vDEC by researchers and Scientists from West Africa. As at 2016, only one Scientist from the entire African continent has an active vDEC agreement with the CTBTO. This is what motivated the Nigerian NDC to embark on this work.

### vDEC Logo



### Objective of the study

The study is to help to understand the extent of vDEC awareness within the West African sub-region and determine the strategies for its popularization. We believe that inclusive utilization of the IMS data across the major players in the West African sub-region will support the coordinated global efforts towards developing a robust monitoring systems.

### Earlier Studies

Earlier study carried out by the Nigerian NDC indicated that there is lack of information on the potential benefit of the vDEC. This has significantly contributed to the non utilization of the non-usage across the West African continents.

### vDEC Confidentiality Agreement



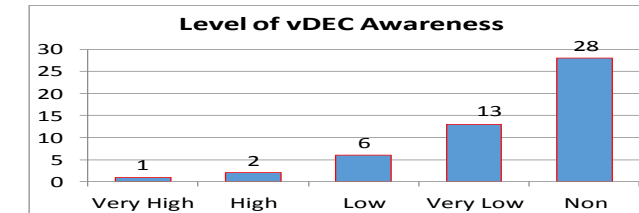
Under the vDEC arrangement, Access to data is provided "as is" and can only be used for research associated with the development of the IMS and International Data Centre or for the purposes stated in the contract.

### Research Method

To determine the extent of awareness, random survey was conducted using simple structured questionnaire. This was administered to 50 respondents drawn from different Academic and Scientific backgrounds across the West African sub-region. The data obtained from this survey and the result of the Focussed group discussions was analysed..

### Results

The analysis of the data obtained indicates that only about 5% of the respondents seemed to have good awareness of the vDEC. A substantial number (over 90%) of the respondents are not aware of what the vDEC is all about.



### Strategies

In order to help in popularizing the values and benefits of vDEC, we have established that the following should be done

- organise a sub-regional Workshop on vDEC.
- Distribution of vDEC literatures across the various institutions in the sub-region for awareness
- Organize the West African CTBT Academic Forum, with presentations focusing on vDEC.
- Invite Academics and presentations from the CTBTO at sub-regional events
- Encouraging the participation of Researchers and Scientists from the region at CTBTO events e.g. S&T Conference

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