

PIND's Executive Director Charges Journalists to Tell More Stories on Development in the Niger Delta

Tunji Idowu, the Executive Director of the Foundation for Partnership Initiatives in the Niger Delta (PIND), has called on journalists to join PIND in telling stories of the development in the Niger Delta.

Mr. Idowu said this at an interactive session with the three recipients of the PIND Prize for Niger Delta Development Reporting at the 32nd edition of the Diamond Award for Media Excellence. At the interactive session, which took place on Tuesday, February 20, 2024, in Abuja, the Executive Director noted that the narrative around the Niger Delta was changing from being a region once riddled with conflicts to one with increasingly visible economic growth.

He said: "Due to the activities of PIND and its partners and stakeholders in the region, we have succeeded in changing the narrative about the Niger Delta region from being one of the most restive many years ago to one of the most peaceful now." "Therefore, I enjoin you to recruit other media professionals to tell the story of a region with great potential and its residents working hard to change their economic fortunes and make their environment more peaceful for economic activities to thrive."

During their respective presentations, the three prize-winning journalists: Yekeen Akinwale of Cable Newspaper and overall winner, Soni Daniels of Vanguard Newspaper (runner-up), and Shola O'Neil of The Nation Newspaper (runner-up), made insightful commentaries about the solution journalism in Nigeria and how PIND can continue to promote development stories in the Niger Delta. These ranged

Mr. Akinwale recounted how PIND's media for development initiatives helped cultivate his interest in development communication and solution journalism, and he asked the Foundation to do more in this regard. "PIND needs to sponsor more training for journalists in this area," he said. "It would go a long way in boosting reporting on development within the Niger Delta."

On his part, Mr. Daniel, while praising PIND for its work in the region, echoed the need to do more, stating that "journalists are interested in making society better through solution journalism and are positioned to report the valuable work PIND is doing in the Niger Delta."

Mr. O'Neil then encouraged PIND to share more of its impact stories and commended it for "contributing to the growth of the palm oil, cassava, and aquaculture sectors in the Niger Delta."

The Executive Director thanked them for their presence and all the insights they provided. He assured that he and others will take them to heart, especially as PIND approaches its 15th anniversary, and desires more partnerships to ensure that its models of development are highlighted, celebrated, and shared with more stakeholders so that they can replicate them more for increased peace and economic growth in the Niger Delta.