

# ENTRY NOMINATION

## **AGENCY:**

Image Merchants Promotion Ltd

## **CLIENT:**

Nigeria Customs Service &  
RIPAN

## **TITLE:**

Curtailing Smuggling of Foreign  
Rice into Nigeria



# Summary

## SUMMARY

*Concerned over massive smuggling of foreign rice into Nigeria, the Rice Processors Association of Nigeria (RIPAN) engaged in Strategic Public Relations campaigns which influenced a Presidential Directive and rapid actions by the Nigerian Customs Service (NCS) in tackling the menace and boosting the nation's revenue.*

*From over 70% of Foreign Rice predominant in the Nigeria Market as at April 2019 it reduced to 37% by December 2019 due to the effective campaigns on enforcements and awareness creations. This invariably translates to an increase of Nigerian rice in the market from less than 30% to over 60% within eight months.*



# Problems/Challenges

## PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES

Reports has it that over 1 million metric tons of Rice which is equivalent to about 20,000,000 bags of 50kg Rice were smuggled into Nigeria in the first quarter of 2019. The statistics showed that imported rice constitute over 70% in the markets. This discouraged local farmers and increased unemployment in the country

Similarly, there have been reoccurring issues of smuggling of arms, drugs and a host of other contrabands through the same routes used to smuggle rice in the Nigerian borders.

Due to this over-reliance on rice importation, foreign producers and merchants continued to exploit and take advantage of rice consumers in Nigeria, leaving local rice farmers and workers to suffer in penury while the economy dragged in the mud.





# Opportunity/Objectives

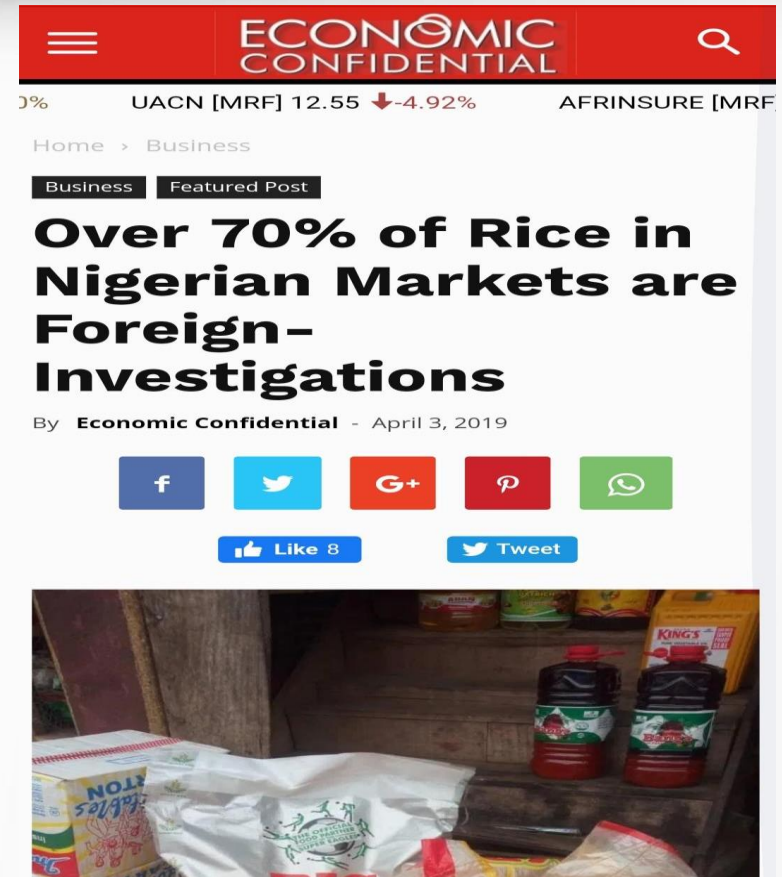
## Opportunity:

The deficiency compelled the Rice Processors Association of Nigeria, RIPAN, to reach out to the major stakeholders including the Presidency, the Legislature and relevant institutions through advocacy visit and media relations to educate and sensitize them on the negative effect of foreign rice on the nation's economy especially in the agricultural sector and labour market.

RIPAN identified the shortcomings and felt the need to collaborate with the federal government through the Nigeria Custom Service to help control this menace of rice smuggling.

## Objectives

- To curtail smuggling of foreign rice into the market
- To encourage local farmers in massive rice production
- To Revive and create job opportunities in the agricultural sector
- To boost the national revenue and saving of foreign exchanges for the country



# Geographic Location/Targeted Organisations

## Geographic Location:

Nigeria as a whole, especially the border axis of Benin Republic, Cameroon, Chad and Niger Republic.

## Targetted Audiences

Policy Makers

Security agencies

Media

Farmers

Consumers



# Tactics/ Endorsement

## TACTICS/ENDORSEMENT

**Advocacy:** Advocacy visitations to relevant stakeholders to educate them on the negative effect of smuggled foreign rice on the economy and the health of the citizens.

**Media relation:** The hosting of Press Conferences and Press Releases to sustain the campaign among the citizens, especially the nutritional value and health benefits of Nigerian made rice.

**Lobbying:** To ensure a legal and policy framework from the highest level of governance, including the Presidency, Legislators, Central Bank of Nigeria to take immediate action on the war against smuggling campaign





# Theme and Communication Tactics

## Theme and Focus of the Campaign:

The theme of the campaign was “Curtailling Smuggling of Foreign Rice into Nigeria” aimed at discouraging smuggling activities in the country

The focus is also to enforce the government’s directive on the partial border closure.

## Communication Tactics:

Social media

Media relations

Crisis communication

## Targets:

Citizens

Media

Neighbouring Countries



# Executions of the Campaign Programme:

**Orientation Stage:** Given that the main problem is the dominance of foreign rice in the Nigerian market, a market survey was undertaken by Economic Confidential, a publication of Image Merchants Promotion which indicated the alarming statistics of over 70% of Foreign Rice in the Nigeria's market.

**Brainstorming Stage:** The Rice Processors Association of Nigeria, RIPAN examined the disturbing situation which affected the local farmers, processors and employees and resolved to address the challenge through effective PR campaigns.

**Decisive Stage:** The RIPAN decided on PR Strategies of advocacy visitation, lobbying of stakeholders and media campaigns to win the trust and confidence of the target audiences. The Nigerian Custom Service (NCS) keyed into the campaign by enforcing the law on ban of foreign rice into the country.

**Implementation Stage:** The Nigerian Customs Service took over the campaign and assumed the responsibility in sustaining and improving the Strategic PR campaigns on the enforcement of partial border closure to curtail smuggling of rice and other contrabands into the country.

**Feedback Stage:** The partial border closure has impacted positively on the Nigeria's economy. Even against deliberately sponsored smear campaigns against the policy, the RIPAN and Customs Service sustain the media campaigns by providing updates on seizures as well as nutritional values of Nigerian rice.

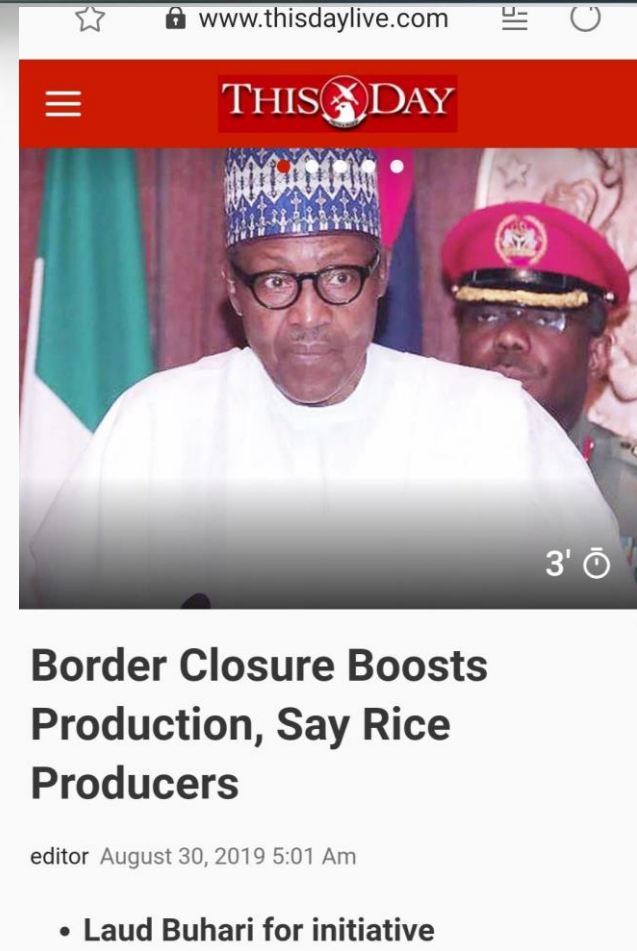


# Creative Solutions/Difficulty Eliminated

**Creative Solutions:** Strategic lobbying and effective media relations where various engagements and activities are widely reported in the media on the campaigns

## **Difficulties Eliminated:**

Despite some misleading reports and smear campaigns by smuggling barons, the Nigeria Customs Service with other agencies sustained the tempo of the campaign by ensuring that the processes of enforcement among others were transparent



# Outcomes of the Campaign

**Rice Production:** A massive increase in Nigeria rice production by local farmers and raising the statistics of Nigerian rice in the market from less than 30% to more than 60% within eight months.

**Revenue Generation:** It boosted revenue generation as the partial border closure saved Nigeria over \$400m within a year. The NCS generated N1.341 trillion as revenue for the year 2019, exceeding its target of N937 billion by N404 billion. The amount is also N139.24 billion more than the N1.20 trillion generated in 2018.

**Job Opportunity:** It created job opportunities for teeming unemployed Nigerians as workers, distributors and allied producers of bags and print for packaging were engaged.

**Reduced Crime:** It reduced border crimes as the NCS through the eagle-eyes surveillance on partial border closure intercepted smuggled rice, ammunition, drugs and a host of other contrabands.

**Reputation:** Enhancing the image of Nigeria as one of the highest producers of rice in the continent



# REPORTS BEFORE AND DURING THE CAMPAIGNS

## REPORTS BEFORE THE CAMPAIGN

Over 20 million bags of rice smuggled into Nigeria in three months – RIPAN

<https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/324341-over-20-million-bags-of-rice-smuggled-into-nigeria-in-three-months-ripan.html>

Over 70% of Rice in Nigerian Markets are Foreign- Investigations

<https://economicconfidential.com/2019/04/rice-nigerian-markets-foreign/>

Over 1m metric tons of rice smuggled into Nigeria in 3 months- RIPAN

<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2019/04/over-1m-metric-tons-of-rice-smuggled-into-nigeria-in-3-months-ripan/>

Survey shows 70 percent of rice in Nigeria are imported, CBN, Customs react

<https://dailypost.ng/2019/04/03/survey-shows-70-percent-rice-nigeria-imported-cbn-customs-react/>

Nigeria Customs Service Doing Less Than Expected to Address Rice Smuggling, Says RIPAN

<http://saharareporters.com/2019/04/08/nigeria-customs-service-doing-less-expected-address-rice-smuggling-says-ripan>

## REPORTS DURING THE CAMPAIGN

EFCC, RIPAN Partner to Stop Rice Smuggling

<https://guardian.ng/news/efcc-ripan-partner-to-stop-rice-smuggling/>

Nigeria closes border to check rice smuggling

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-nigeria-trade/nigeria-closes-part-of-border-with-benin-to-check-rice-smuggling-idUSKCNIV2B1>

Rice Smuggling: Court freezes 45 accounts of firms

<https://punchng.com/court-freezes-45-accounts-of-firms-for-rice-smuggling/>

Customs Intercepts N67m contraband In Just One Week

<https://economicconfidential.com/2020/01/customs-intercepts-n67m-contraband-1week/>

Border closure: FG Seizes N2.3tn smuggled guns, rice seized in 3 months

<https://www.pulse.ng/news/local/border-closure-fg-says-n23tn-smuggled-guns-rice-and-petrol-have-been-seized-in-3/zcqz3l8>



# MEDIA REPORTS ON OUTCOME OF THE CAMPAIGNS

Lagos, south consume 70% of Kano rice

<https://punchng.com/lagos-south-consume-70-of-kano-rice/>

Border Closure: About 500,000 Bags of Local Rice Sold in one week, says Emefiele

<https://www.channelstv.com/2019/10/28/border-closure-about-500000-bags-of-local-rice-sold-in-one-week-says-emefiele/>

Border closure saves Nigeria \$400m – Rice growers

<https://punchng.com/border-closure-to-save-nigeria-400m-rice-growers/>

Foreign Rice in Nigerian Markets now at 37% -Report

<https://economicconfidential.com/2020/01/foreign-rice-nigerian-markets-2020/>

Foreign Rice Influx Drops From 70% To 37%

<https://leadership.ng/2020/01/20/foreign-rice-influx-drops-from-70-to-37/>

Buhari Orders Land Borders Closed in Long-Running Effort to Boost Rice Production

<https://www.cfr.org/blog/buhari-orders-land-borders-closed-long-running-effort-boost-rice-production>

Nigeria as leading rice producer in Africa

<https://www.dailytrust.com.ng/nigeria-as-leading-rice-producer-in-africa.html>

Nigeria border closure: Foreign rice drops as dealers, CBN, Customs react

<https://dailypost.ng/2020/01/19/nigeria-border-closure-foreign-rice-drops-as-dealers-cbn-customs-react/>

Central Bank of Nigeria governor justifies borders closure

<https://guardian.ng/news/cbn-governor-justifies-borders-closure/>

2019 Budget: Customs Revenue hits N1.125trn in 10 Months- Reports

<https://tribuneonline.ng/2019-budget-customs-revenue-hits-n1-125trn-in-10-months---report/>

Nigerian customs records N1.3trillion revenue in 2019, exceeds target by N404billion

<https://nairametrics.com/2020/01/10/nigerian-customs-records-n1-3trillion-revenue-in-2019-exceeds-target-by-n404billion/>

Nigerian Customs breaks record, generates N1.3trn in 2019, supersedes target by N404bn

Read: <https://www.legit.ng/1291589-nigerian-customs-breaks-record-generates-n13trn-2019-supersedes-target-by-n404bn.html>