Dataphyte Handbook
of Data-Driven Election Reporting

Dataphyte

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Foreword

A Unique Agenda Setting Handbook

Dataphyte, since its grand entry into the development orb, has stamped its authority on data-based analysis of public interest issues. But, just in case anyone still harbours some doubt that Dataphyte effectively fights with data for socio-economic development and good governance in Nigeria, then this handbook offers ample evidence of what it does, how it does it, and why it does it so well. Anyone that reads the Handbook, as I hereby strongly recommend, is bound to appreciate the depth of the uncommon efforts and unparalleled commitment to promote data-driven development.

It is no exaggeration to say that there is something for everyone in this 290-page Handbook whose infographic-enriched narratives are compelling. Certainly, there is something for each and every organisation or individual that lays claim to be an election-stakeholder — the election management body, the civil society, the bench and the bar, the election monitors and observers, gender activists, the youth, persons with disabilities, election analysts, political advertisers, and of course, the media.

Talking about the media — my constituency for over thirty years as a journalist, editor, trainer, author and media development specialist — I can safely argue that if the publication is to be given another name, it should be **Dataphyte Handbook of Data Driven Election Reporting**; and this is without prejudice to the rich menu it offers diverse interest groups. I boldly make this submission because the handbook, which is divided into seven sections, helps to give data-context or data-meaning to the agenda setting function of the media at elections in relation to its four major roles during electoral processes. These are the transparency and watch-dog role; the public educator role; the campaign platform/open forum/public voice role; and the conflict management role.

This can be seen in the reflective and perceptive manner the series of articles strewn across the seven sections, especially by Dennis Amata, Seyi Olufemi, Ayantola Alayande and Khadijat Kareem, address what should be the issues in the elections and the gamut of challenges of election management in the country. The articles are themselves models of political and election reporting. Despite being largely opinions, they are presented factually with sources of data and information copiously identified. The handbook leans heavily on the socio-economic indicators that it believes should shape the way and manner presidential and gubernatorial candidates are

interrogated during the campaigns, including subjecting their antecedents to rigorous scrutiny.

Among others, the handbook therefore presents data from the Poverty World Clock, which shows that "69.98 million Nigerians now live in poverty, up from 65.83 million in 2019"; and highlights the prediction by the World Bank that another 7 million Nigerians might have been pushed into poverty as at the end of 2022. It also highlights a new report by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) that "the Number of Out-of-School Children in Nigeria has risen to 20 million from the initial 10 million". UNICEF adds that, "One in every five of the world's out-of-school children is in Nigeria. Even though primary education is officially free and compulsory, about 10.5 million of the country's children aged 5-14 years are not in school. Only 61 percent of 6-11 year-olds regularly attend primary school, and only 35.6 per cent of children aged 36-59 months receive early childhood education."

With collapsing educational structure, it is not surprising that the handbook quotes the 2021 March report of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) showing that Nigerians spent $28.65bn for their wards to study abroad between 2010 and 2020. "Today, a sizable amount of the foreign exchange requests Nigerian banks receive for school fees are for primary and secondary school education, some of which are for neighbouring African countries", CBN stated.

The handbook also expresses concern about low GDP across the states with few exceptions like Lagos State. "The 2021 GDP data published by BudgIT in its recent state of states report puts Lagos' GDP at N41.17 trillion, leading others as the state with the highest GDP in Nigeria", the report notes.

The state of insecurity is another major public interest issue that the handbook touches by situating the problem within the context of the **"The Fragile States Index"** which measures vulnerability in pre-conflict, active conflict, and post-conflict situations. Here, it is particularly shocking that with a score of 98 the only country that is worse off than Nigeria is Somalia.

Concerned about the troubling indices mentioned above and others, the handbook believes that the presidential candidates should be made to commit to a few pledges. I present the **top 10:**

1.   Reversing Nigeria's Economic downturn and reducing Nigeria's 2021 index values for economic decline from 8.6 to 5.8 or below, economic inequality from 7.7 to 5.3 or below, and human flight and brain drain from 6.5 to 5.3 or below, between 2023 and 2027.

2.   Reducing Nigeria's fragile state index value from an aggregate of 98 in 2021 to 66.4 or

below, between 2023 and 2027;

3.   De-escalating the ethnic and religious threats to cohesion in Nigeria and reducing Nigeria's 2021 index values for threats to the security apparatus from 8.8 to 5.3 or below, factionalized elites from 9.6 to 6.6 or below, and group grievance from 8.8 to 5.7 or below, between 2023 and 2027;

4.   Reducing by 2025 the number of people killed by violent groups to 2,255 that it was when President Muhammadu Buhari resumed office in 2015;

5.   Reversing allocation to the educational sector in 2024 to the 10.8% or more that it was in 2015.";

6.   Ensuring that every Federal and State government official, whether elected, appointed, or a career civil servant, must send their wards to public schools or resign;

7.   Reversing the 44% decrease in the population of Medical doctors in 2019 by increasing the current 2022 figure by 44% by 2025;

8.   Reducing Nigeria's 2021 index values for demographic pressures from 9.3 to 5.85 or below, refugees and IDPs from 6.6 to 4.7 or below, and external intervention from 5.7 to 5.18 or below, between 2023 and 2027;

9.   Reducing Nigeria's 2021 index values for State legitimacy from 8.4 to 5.75 or below, Public services from 9.3 to 5.67 or below, and human rights from 8.7 to 5.42 or below, between 2023 and 2027;

10.   Upping the terribly low political empowerment index of women and achieving at least the current world average score of 22% for Political Empowerment, which will be a token of 22 female legislators to 100 male legislators by 2027, or simply 2 female legislators to 10 male legislators in the Local government councils, State legislatures, and the National Assembly by 2027.

Beyond obtaining the commitments, the handbook advocates that the presidential candidates should also be made to state how they will accomplish the task. It is my submission that this 10-point agenda should be adopted by the Nigerian media and civil society groups to aid the course of democratic accountability in the country. There is still enough time to do this.

The media and civil society should also adopt the same approach for the governorship candidates

that will be on the ballot in 2023 and those that will contest during the off-cycle elections. Fortunately, Dataphyte's state governors' performance appraisals reports, few of which are captured in this Handbook, can help inform the kind of questions to ask in seeking to obtain the desired commitments.

Apart from obtaining commitments from candidates, the handbook in **section 2** highlights the necessity of mobilising registered voters to vote to address the problem of voters' apathy. However, I expect the think-tanks of the candidates to be interested in the pattern of voter turn-out in the 2019 elections and the current pattern and demography of PVC collection rated as highest among the young ones, particularly students.

In **section 3**, the handbook dwells extensively on the gender factor in the electoral process as it relates to the declining number of women elected to political offices. The facts contained in the section are sufficient to encourage the media to commit to giving more visibility to female candidates because such can influence their electability.

In **sections 4 and 5**, the Handbook interrogates the issue of election administration and technology, which election monitors, observers, civil society groups working on electoral reforms, journalists, analysts, researchers, parties, candidates and voters will find most useful particularly because of the detailed attention it pays to the electoral law and the technologies being deployed to conduct elections — crucially, the INEC's Voter Enrolment Device (IVED), the Bimodal Voter Accreditation System (BVAS) and the INEC Election Result Viewing Portal (IREV). It is notable and commendable that in these two sections and others, the handbook makes important recommendations to INEC, which the election management body is advised to adopt unconditionally.

The simple and important recommendations are:

- Make PVC collection easier than registration;

- Prevent vote buying;

- Stop under-age voting;

- Prevent voter/electoral officials intimidation and ballot snatching;

- Get enough BVAS and prevent malfunctioning

- Make sure electoral officers and voting materials do not arrive late on polling days;

- Embark on effective communication;

- Avoid election postponement so as not to worsen the problem of voter apathy.

To go back to the beginning. This is a handbook for every election-stakeholder; and everyone, or anyone, concerned about the conduct of credible elections and the future of democracy in Nigeria. It is a resource for today, tomorrow and beyond.

Lanre Arogundade
Executive Director
International Press Centre (IPC), Lagos-Nigeria

Introduction

Nigeria's 2023 general elections would be the seventh since the country's return to democracy in 1999. It would also mark the 5th successive uninterrupted democratic transfer of power since the nation's independence in 1960.

In every sense, 2023 represents a positive tipping point in Nigeria's democratic history: the evolution of its election management body, INEC; the massive overhaul of electoral laws; the expansion of civil society; and the growth of civic media, have all strengthened democracy and civic participation over the last nearly-two-and-a-half decades of uninterrupted democracy.

This development presents researchers, journalists, and NGO actors with opportunities to draw out analytical insights, social conversations, and policy cues from numerous perspectives. However, it also leaves us with substantial challenges to grapple with, such as, how do media organisations and newsrooms represent Nigeria's highly heterogeneous political landscape in a way that is objective and factful, without resorting to sensationalism-something election news is more susceptible to; or, how do we shift from overly focusing on national elections to sufficiently capturing election updates at the subnational level, in a nuanced way?

Over the past year and a half, Dataphyte has "followed the data" on election conversations in Nigeria, resulting in the publication of more than 70 data-driven and citizen-focused articles, policy pieces, and news stories on several aspects of Nigerian elections via our platform. In this handbook, we have compiled about half of that body of work into a single collection that casts an overarching narrative on elections reporting in Nigeria, which is: "how can media organisations and newsrooms foster a data-driven approach to reporting on elections in Nigeria?" This handbook is by no means an authoritative guide for that puzzle, but it offers a replicable blueprint for Nigerian media practitioners and civil society actors to think about how to quantifiably analyse, write, think, and talk about election issues in Nigeria.

Noteworthily, the pieces in the handbook are mostly focused on the 2023 elections-unsurprisingly so due to the timing of this project. However, we believe our approach could be remodelled for subsequent national and subnational elections. Our context is also Nigeria, but newsrooms across Africa are welcome to adapt our style and data sources to their own national contexts.

The collection is divided into seven (7) sections. Perhaps the most extensive, **Section 1** combines the topics of agenda setting with performance appraisal of Governors seeking re-election either

at the state or national assembly level. The section is also quite a unique one as it pulls four articles from our weekly Data Dive-written in a slightly witty but data-heavy style. The performance appraisal part focuses on state governors' performance across 8 to 10 key metrics in their state's economy, including fiscal sustainability, poverty rate, education, and healthcare, among others. Worth mentioning, in "Agenda 2023: Of Presidents, their Antecedents, and Present Incidents", we evaluate the last seven years of President Muhammadu Buhari and highlight potential areas for the next elected president to focus on. The point here is that, when reporting candidates' declarations or expressions of intent to run, rather than merely focusing on candidates' political profiles, journalists can scan present incidents, score past presidents and schedule preset indices that any serious-minded presidential candidate can deploy to set new precedents.

Section 2 discusses the very important topic of citizen participation in elections– looking at issues like voting patterns and the persistent problem of declining voter turnout rate since the 2007 elections, despite the growing number of registered voters. A small part of this section is also devoted to highlighting ways in which voter fraud happens in Nigeria.

In **Section 3**, we discuss the important issue of gender, and more broadly, representation in the political space. The articles highlight Nigeria's abysmal performance in electing women into political office and how it is a reflection of a society still struggling to see women beyond stereotypical depictions. The articles also attempt to set a gender agenda ahead of the 2023 polls in the hopes of better representation for a group that represents about half of the population.

Section 4 attempts to capture the varied dimensions of election administration from the election management body (EMB), INEC's point, including topics such as budgeting and finance, voters registration and PVC collection, voting procedures, as well as management of electoral officials and devices on election day. As the Kenyan presidential elections were just being concluded at the time of writing most of the pieces in this section, we also briefly discuss lessons INEC could take from the Kenyan polls. The section also includes an important explainer of Section 84(12) of the newly signed Electoral Act (2022) which discusses the ineligibility of political appointees to be a voting delegate or be voted for at a political party's convention or congress whilst she/he still occupies that position.

In **Section 5**; we focus on the non-negligible topic of the impact of digital technology on elections and democracy. We discuss the Twitter ban, social media broadly, content moderation, and internet governance in Nigeria and what this could mean for the 2023 elections. We also examine online political advertising efforts, using digital research tools to evaluate how far the

three leading presidential candidates have gone in their online political advertising, up until August 2022. Finally, we turn to the question of how technology itself is used to foster election administration, teasing out the benefits and concerns with INEC's Election Results Viewing Portal (IREV) and the Bimodal Voter Accreditation System (BVAS).

In **Section 6**, we present a template for reporting on voting day and election results. Interestingly, all pieces in the section focus on subnational off-cycle elections, since those were the only elections that could be reported at the time. However, the content and style of our analysis are reproducible for national elections. The section examines how to report crucial moments on voting day such as voter turnout, conduct of election officials and party agents, security, functioning of election materials and devices, and election observation groups.

Seven articles in **Section 7** discuss political parties, their candidates and manifestos. This is arranged in both logical and chronological manner; moving from political parties to candidates and then manifestos; as well as progressing from primary elections topics to the general elections. The first piece on legal restraints to political defection in Nigeria surveys the pattern of party switching by elected politicians, focusing on the major political parties and beginning from 2015. In another piece on political parties, we discuss the culture of setting outrageous party nomination forms by the major political parties in Nigeria. We then moved to analysing specific candidates and their political profiles relative to their capacity to deliver on key development challenges the country faces. Lastly, we discuss campaign promises and manifesto, beginning with the promises of Vice President Yemi Osinbajo in his declaration of intent to run speech. The last two pieces discuss the manifestos of the 4 leading political parties in the presidential elections: Labour Party vs. Peoples Democratic Party, and the All Progressives Congress vs. New Nigeria Peoples Party.

This handbook is an abridged version of a much more comprehensive election analysis portfolio, which can be found on our website here. We recognise that this handbook might either be a rather long read or an insufficient narrative-depending on what type of reader you are. But our goal is that it functions as a one-stop shop for everything data-driven election analysis, fostering a culture of reliance on data among journalists, civil society actors, and researchers working on elections in Nigeria. Have a great read!

Dataphyte Election Research Team

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Agenda setting and performance appraisal

At the heart of our agenda setting section is the will to establish an objective — often quantitative — paradigm or yardsticks by which both the media and the masses at large could assess the performance of political office holders. We can imagine this section in two halves: i) the first half containing 3 pieces was crafted to connect national development indices with the latest political developments as at the time of writing the pieces, drawing from a range of desk-based secondary sources — both domestic and international; ii) the second half contains 4 articles focusing on sub-national socioeconomic performance, applying similar development metrics drawn from domestic data sources to analyse, relative to other states, the performance of selected state governors seeking re-election.

In the first piece, to successfully sift the incumbent's performance from previous administrations', we show trended data on several development indicators from the Olusegun Obasanjo era to the incumbent, Muhammadu Buhari. These indicators cover measures such as security and governance (state fragility, number of violent attacks, social cohesion and trust), economic performance (growth, inequality, human capital). This approach was extended to the second piece, where we apply similar metrics but focus specifically on the question of human security, examining indicators such as displacement, human right abuses, and political violence that have occurred under President Buhari's administration. In the third piece, we attempt to connect seemingly unconnected events to think differently about the performance of Nigeria's public institutions. We use Ademola Adeleke's education controversy to highlight the performance of public education in Nigeria, from elementary to tertiary level; wanted terrorist, Adamu Aleru's chieftaincy coronation in Zamfara to discuss the state of insecurity in the country; and Osinbajo's medical surgery to underscore the much contested issue of medical tourism among Nigeria's political class. Our data was drawn from several secondary sources such as the Fund for Peace, the World Bank, the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED), Statista, NBS, news sources, among others.

The last 4 pieces mirror the approach above at the state level, using micro-indicators such as GDP, IGR, Fiscal Sustainability, Poverty Rate, Unemployment rate Number of out-of-school children, and under-5 mortality rate and access to healthcare to evaluate selected governors' performance, relative to other states, and relative to historical performance in the same state. An important quality in these pieces is that we used the same set of metrics across each state, making comparisons easier. Data sources include the NBS, and CSOs such as BudgIT and PLSI.

Agenda 2023: Of Presidents, their Antecedents, and Present Incidents

Published on July 4, 2022

Oluseyi Olufemi

As Nigerians look forward to the 2023 election year, the tottering state seeks a president that can, at least, hold the cracks together for another 4 years and bandage the gaping wounds of 80 million lacerated souls nibbled away by hunger pangs.

Survivors from every part of the federation seek a president who can prop up the mental fractures of millions of listless and restless young people till the much-needed national reconstruction begins. However, to force departure from old campaign scams, there is a need to scan present incidents, score past presidents and schedule preset indices that any serious-minded presidential candidate can deploy to set new precedents.

In the last 60 years, Nigeria has had just 7 civilian presidents. The rest have been military heads of state and one military president. The 7 Presidents are Nnamdi Azikiwe, Shehu Shagari, Ernest Shonekan, Olusegun Obasanjo, Musa Yaradua (Late), Goodluck Jonathan, and Muhammadu Buhari.

While the last 4 presidents were the only ones that emerged successively without any military intrusion, they have supervised a country on the brink of collapse.

FRAGILE: Nigeria is the 11th most fragile state among 173 countries in the world as of 2021, with a score of 98 out of 120

Fragile States Index sums 12 Indices of failing states (2007-2021). High points=very fragile

94.4   99.8   101.1   103.5   98   66.4

(Categories: Obasanjo, 2007, 2008, Yaradua, 2010, 2011, Jonathan, 2013, 2014, 2015, Buhari, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, Buhari 2021, World 2021)
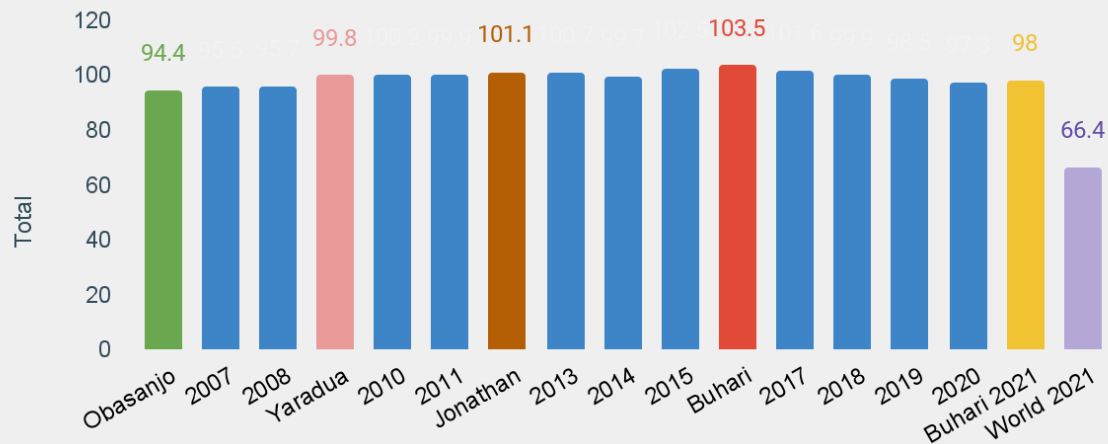
Source: Fund for Peace; www.theglobaleconomy.com; Chart: Dataphyte Research

Each of them rose on the promise that they would make the country better than their predecessor(s) — none of them ever said they would make life worse for the citizens.

Some people opine that those campaign promises are, in the first instance, pedestrian, and below the usual discourse of candidates vying for elective posts in more stable countries. Even then, the masses' cry out that subsequent presidents fail to keep these campaign promises. Instead, their spokespersons discount the people's complaints as mere grudges by disgruntled opposition members.

They often go away with these coverups because the campaign promises are usually not set in numbers in the first place. So, there are hardly any agreed numerical yardsticks for measuring the performance of the elected officials or the disappointments of the people.

Yet, the last of them, Muhammadu Buhari, a retired general in the Army, supervised the worst progressive bloodbath in the country in recent times. Actually, in 2014 many believed the worst killings were happening under his predecessor, Goodluck Jonathan. But the horrible statistics of unchecked violence and unending massacres all over the country from 2015 to date, present a grim spectacle of ineptitude and indifference that define the 8 years of Mr Buhari's management of the country's crises.

Buhari's Approach to Insecurity: Violent deaths rose each year from 2,255 in 2015 to 9,558 persons killed in 2021

Persons killed per year

Year	Value
2015	2255
2016	3126
2017	3572
2018	4432
2019	4726
2020	7115
2021	9558
2022 (Jan - May)	4902

Source: ACLED; Chart: Dataphyte Research
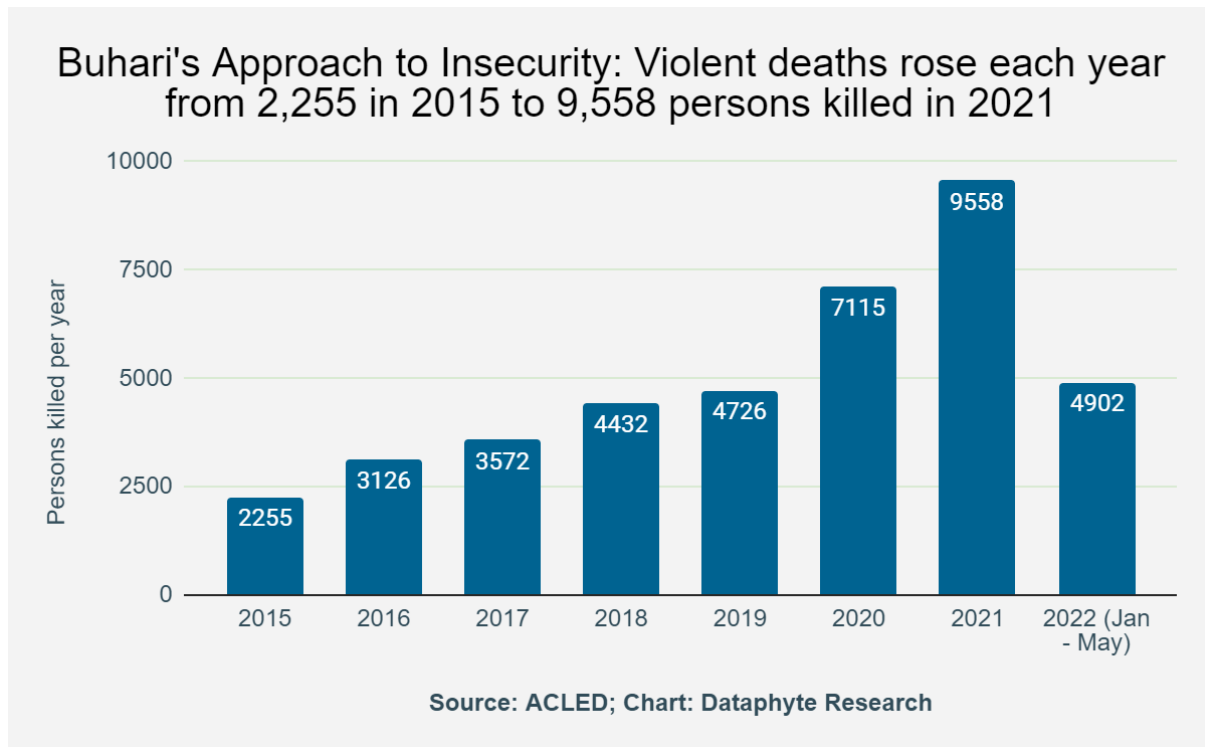
Sadly, President Buhari's actions and inactions towards insecurity impacted the economy, promoted ethnic strife, and worsened food insecurity, as farmers deserted farms to escape the blood tax that citizens pay insurgents who hold sway in many rural and semi-urban areas of the country.

Thus, a combination of economic privation, imminent chaos, political oppression, and social disorder place Nigeria among the league of failed and failing states, among which Nigeria is the 11th worst state.

Unfortunately, it is difficult to measure a president's (or governor's) criminal dereliction of duty because her/his responsibilities have no calibrated targets. So, it is hard to reach a consensus to disapprove or approve of President Buhari's performance. This then leaves the country in the hands of persons, popularly called presidents, who lack any sense or standard of accountability.

Without setting such quantitative performance expectations, it does not matter the level of palpable misery that the vulnerable masses endure, spokespersons for Presidents and unconscionable party faithful would insist that the existential acid that burns the people is soothing, in so much as it flows like water.

Thus, the minimum any of the 2023 presidential hopefuls can promise now is to sign a pact with

the people which states clearly and in numbers what index of economic viability, state cohesion, and political and social wellbeing they intend to achieve in the first 4 years.

Pre-set Indices expected to be achieved by the next President in 4 Years

A good place to start is with the fragile state index because it presents this holistic evaluation of a country's well-being across 12 indicators that measure a country's political cohesion, as well as economic, public, and social wellbeing.

According to the global index, "The Fragile States Index" measures the vulnerability in pre-conflict, active conflict, and post-conflict situations. The index comprises twelve conflict risk indicators that are used to measure the condition of a state at any given moment: security apparatus, factionalized elites, group grievance, economic decline, uneven economic development, human flight, and brain drain, state legitimacy, public services, human rights and rule of law, demographic pressures, refugees and IDPs, and external intervention. The higher the value of the index, the more "fragile" the country is.

FRAGILE STATE INDEX: Worst Country - Yemen

Best Country - Finland

Worst Country	Nigeria	World Average (Expected)	Best Country
111.7	98	66.4	16.2

Fragile State Index (Total)

Source: Fund for Peace; www.theglobaleconomy.com; Chart: Dataphyte Research
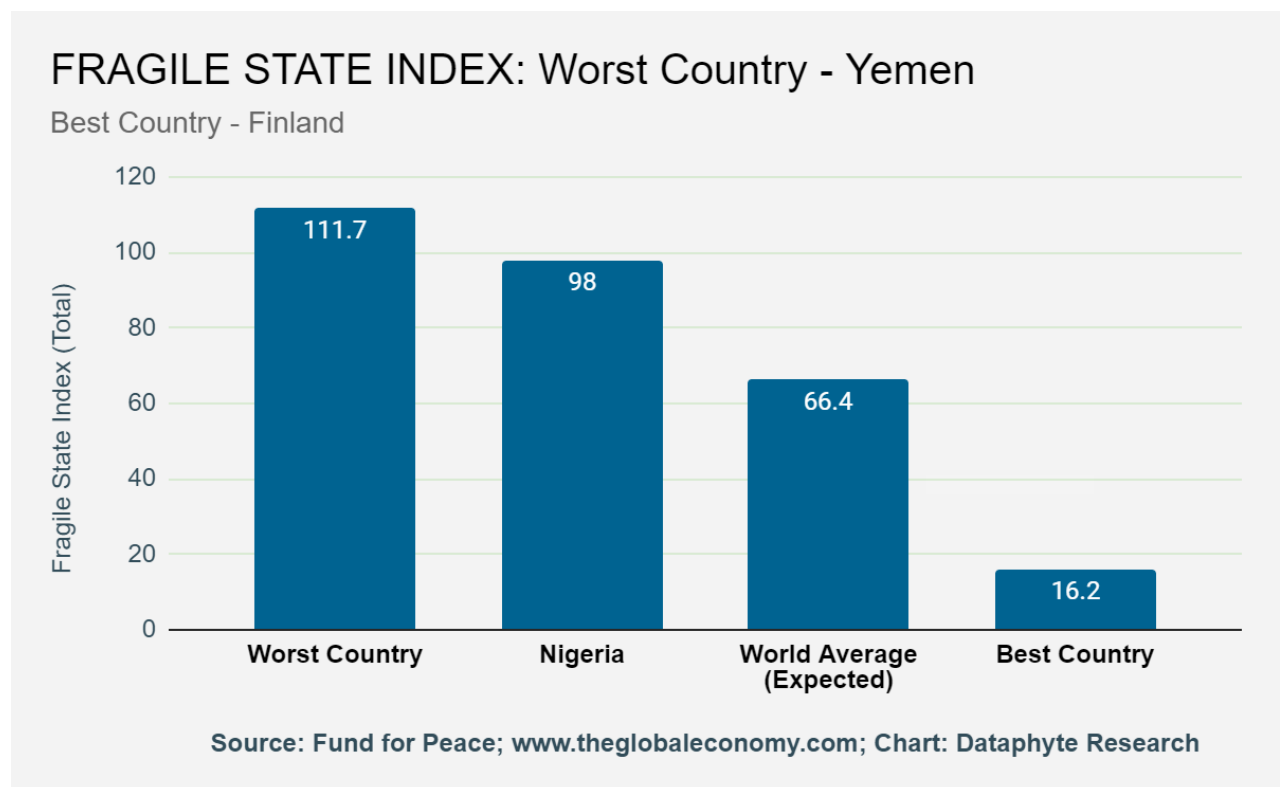
Now, are there any known presidential candidates that can commit to reducing Nigeria's fragile state index value from an aggregate of 98 in 2021 to 66.4 or below, between 2023 and 2027? If there is one who dares, he should state how he plans to achieve it. Then, perhaps the people could sign a pact with him on the ramifications if he fails and if he succeeds?

In the present circumstances, to ask to become at least an average nation in the comity of nations is not too much. Alternatively, the presidential candidate who feels he can achieve more or less should also state his own targeted index. This provides a framework for easily measuring a President's failure or success.

If we do not have any of the presidential candidates making any tangible measurable time-bound campaign promises like this, the citizenry may just forget that anything would change.

The Economy

The economy improved most during the 8 years of President Obasanjo (1999-2007). But the highest growth rates were maintained during President Yaradua's administration (2007-2010). The Jonathan administration (2010-2015) and Buhari administration (2015-2019) were periods of steepest economic decline, respectively.

The economy improved most in the Obasanjo era, but the highest growth rates were maintained in the Yaradua period

Source: World Bank; Chart: Dataphyte Research
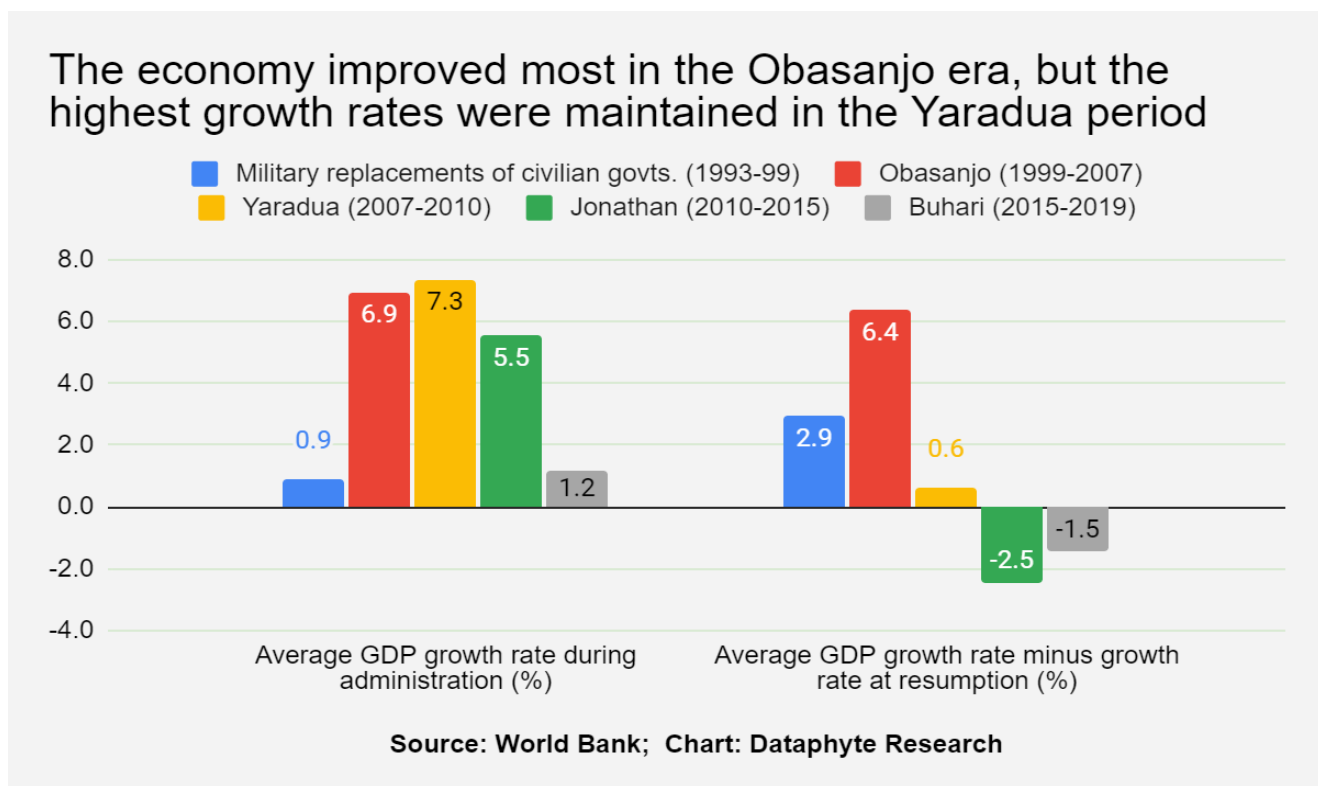
With respect to Nigeria as a fragile state, 3 indicators measure its economic downturn, which are economic decline, uneven economic development (income inequality), and human flight and brain drain.

First, **The Economic decline indicator** considers factors related to economic decline within a country. For example, the indicator looks at patterns of the progressive economic decline of the society as a whole as measured by **per capita income, Gross National Product (GNP), unemployment rates, inflation, productivity, debt, poverty levels**, or **business failures**.

ECONOMY: Since Obasanjo, there have been greater signs of Economic Decline while inequality & immigration decreased

Economic Decline   Economic Inequality   Human Flight and Brain Drain

Source: Fund for Peace; Chart: Dataphyte Research
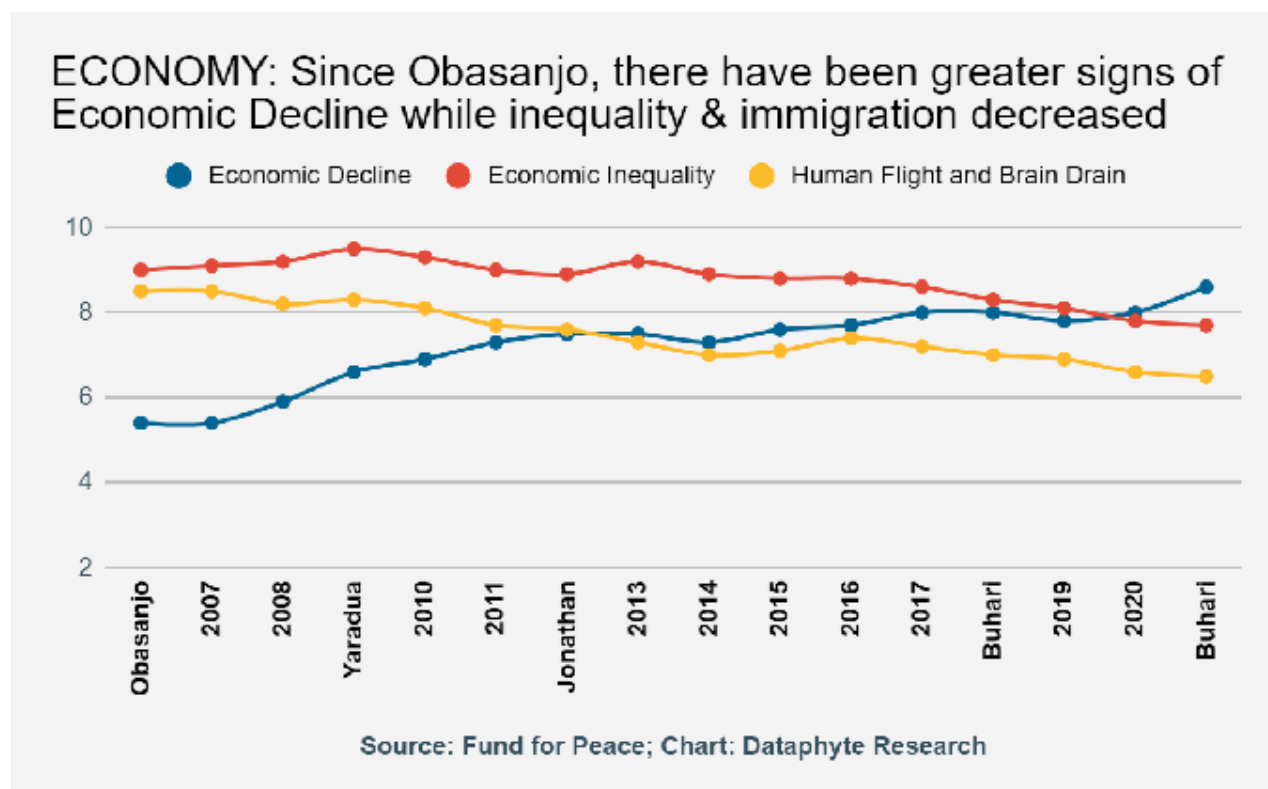
It also takes into account **sudden drops in commodity prices, trade revenue, or foreign investment, and any collapse or devaluation of the national currency.** The higher the value of the indicator, the greater the economic decline in the country.

Consistent with the trend of economic decline indicators determined by the Fund for Peace, the Dataphyte Research team discovered that since the Obasanjo era, there have been greater signs of economic decline in the country. On the other hand, **the Uneven economic development indicator considers inequality within the economy,** irrespective of the actual performance of an economy. The higher the value of the index, the higher the inequality in the country's

economy.

Also, consistent with the uneven economic development/ economic inequality indicator measured by the Fund for Peace, the Dataphyte Research team observed that income inequality has decreased since Obasanjo's tenure as President till now.

However, while inequality has reduced considerably since 2003, the Obasanjo administration reduced inequality the most by 11.8 percentage points, from 51.9% in 1996 to 40.1% in 2003. Next to this performance is the Yar' Adua's government which supervised a 4.4 percentage points reduction in income inequality in the country.

Obasanjo's Government reduced inequality the most by 11.8 points, followed by Yaradua's Government's 4.4 points

Source: World Bank; Chart: Dataphyte Research
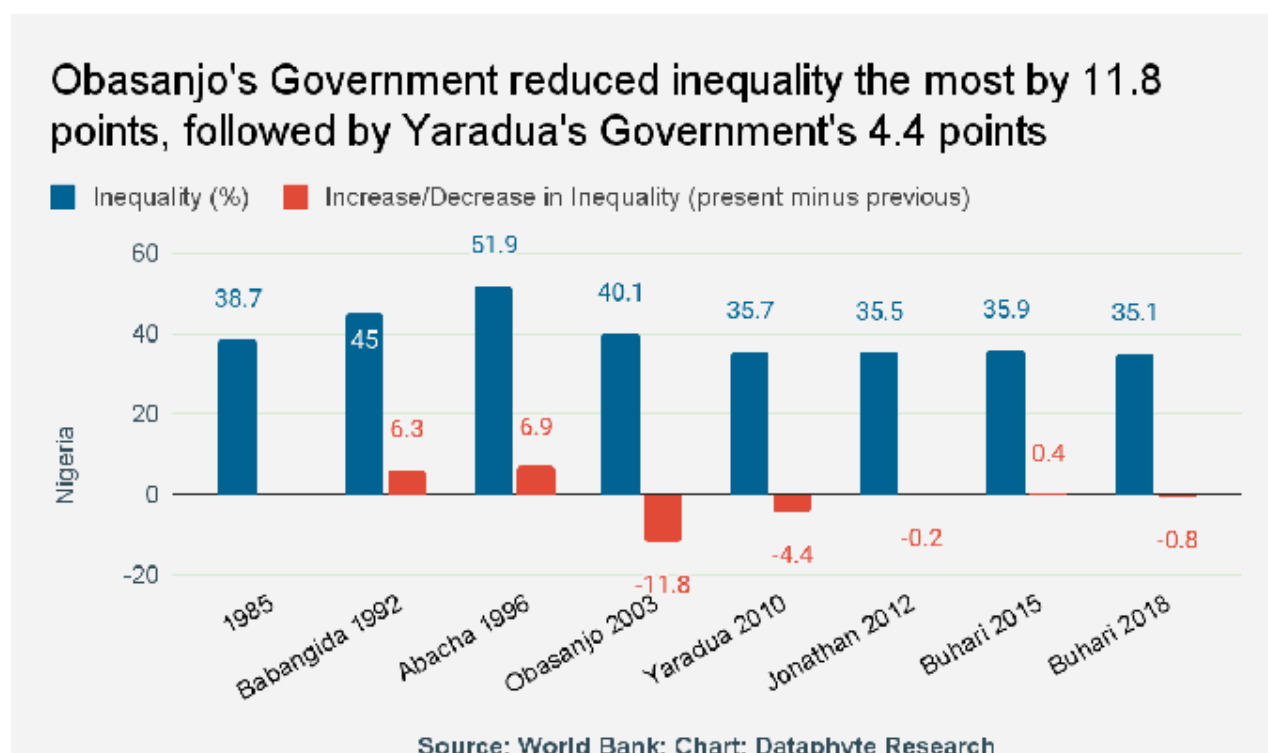
Thirdly, the **Human flight and brain drain indicator** consider **the economic impact of human displacement** (for economic or political reasons) **and the consequences this may have on a country's development.** The higher the index, the greater the human displacement.

Regarding this measurement, it appears there has been a general decline in the net rate of human flight, and especially brain drain. This may be due to a large rate of labour turnout from high schools and universities that replenishes the annual losses of labour and entrepreneurship to other countries.

However, Nigeria's human flight and brain indicator of 6.5 as of 2021 is still higher than the world's average of 5.3. It is 3.4 points below that of the worst country (Samoa) with a score of 9.9, but 6 points short of the best country (Australia) with 0.5.

ECONOMY: Worst Countries - Swaziland, C.A.R, Samoa,

Best Countries - Israel, Finland, Australia

- Economic Decline
- Economic Inequality
- Human Flight and Brain Drain

Worst Countries: Economic Decline 9.8, Economic Inequality 9.6, Human Flight and Brain Drain 9.9

Nigeria: Economic Decline 8.6, Economic Inequality 7.7, Human Flight and Brain Drain 6.5

World Average(Expected): Economic Decline 5.78, Economic Inequality 5.25, Human Flight and Brain Drain 5.25

Best Countries: Economic Decline 1.2, Economic Inequality 1, Human Flight and Brain Drain 0.5

Source: Fund for Peace; www.theglobaleconomy.com; Chart: Dataphyte Research

Thus, to reverse Nigeria's Economic downturn, the serious-minded presidential candidate needs to commit to reducing Nigeria's 2021 index values for Economic decline from 8.6 to 5.8 or below, economic inequality from 7.7 to 5.3 or below, and human flight and brain drain from 6.5 to 5.3 or below, between 2023 and 2027.

State Cohesion

Three indicators measure the cohesion of states, namely, Threats to security Apparatus, Factionalised Elites, and Group Grievance, going by the global index descriptions:

COHESION: Rising Instability since 2006 subsided after handing power to Buhari, except factions among the Elites

Source: Fund for Peace; Chart: Dataphyte Research
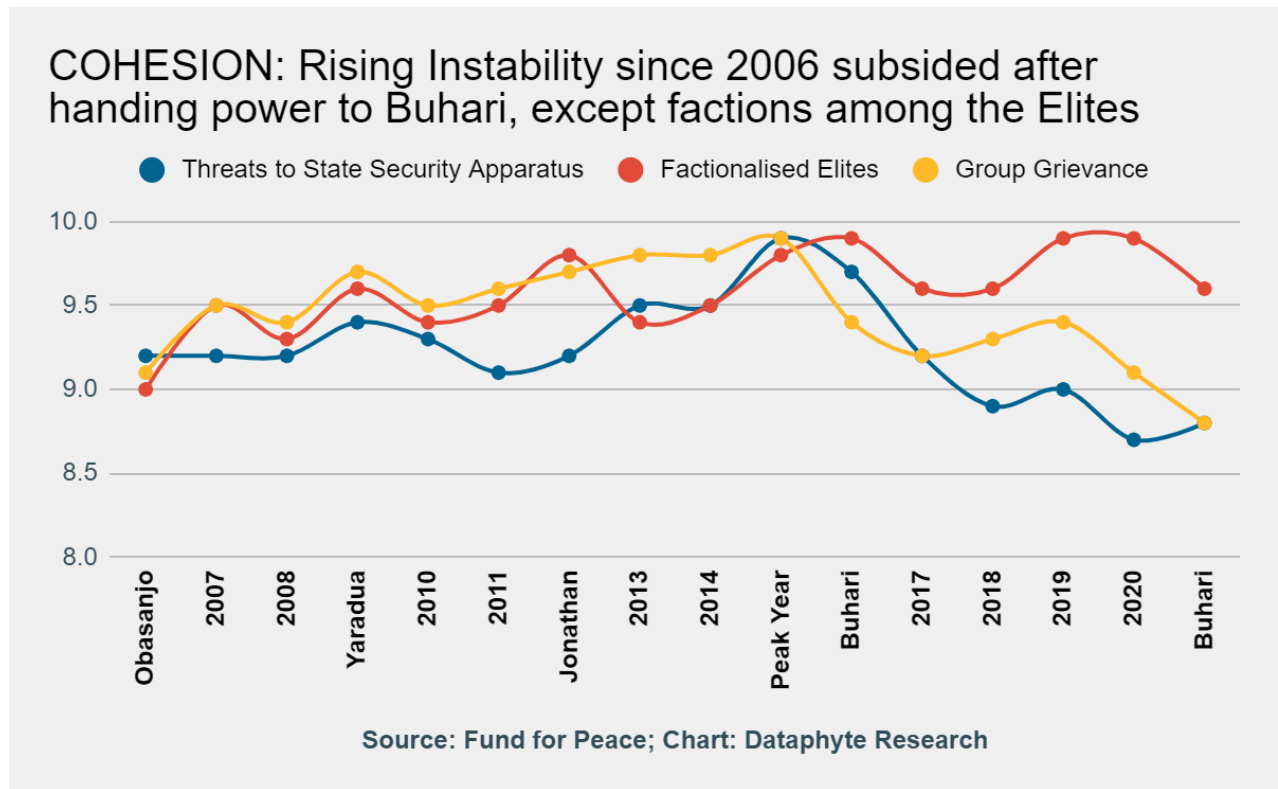
The Security Apparatus indicator considers the security threats to a state, such as bombings, attacks and battle-related deaths, rebel movements, mutinies, coups, or terrorism.

The Security Apparatus also takes into account serious criminal factors, such as organised crime and homicides, and the perceived trust of citizens in domestic security. The higher the value of the indicator, the more the threats in the state.

Next, **the Factionalized Elites** indicator considers the fragmentation of state institutions along ethnic, class, clan, racial or religious lines, as well as brinkmanship and gridlock between ruling elites. The higher the value, the more fragmented the institutions in the country.

How much trust do you have for the following...

Category	A lot of Trust + Some Trust	Little Trust + No Trust at all
Religious Leaders	55%	45%
Traditional Leaders	44%	56%
Other ethnic groups apart from yours	39%	61%
Media (Newspapers / Radio / TV)	39%	61%
Other religious affiliations	38%	62%
Army	38%	62%
Judiciary	26%	74%
The Government of President Buhari	26%	74%
National Assembly	22%	78%
Police	22%	78%

A lot of Trust + Some Trust Little Trust + No Trust at all

Figure 29: Extent of Trust in the Government and Institutions in the Nation

Source: API Social Cohesion Report 2021

This fragmentation of state institutions, particularly along ethnic and religious lines shows that 62% of Nigerians have little or no trust at all for people from the other religion, while 61% of Nigerians have little or no trust at all for the other ethnic group, going by the API Social Cohesion Report 2021.

Conversely, trust for religious leaders and traditional leaders was the highest. 55% have a lot of trust and some trust for religious leaders, while 44% have a lot of trust and some trust for traditional leaders.

These strong allegiances to religion and ethnic tradition as against distrust for the other groups' religion and ethnicity show that the country is divided along religious and ethnic lines-a strong

indicator of the dualistic dynamics of **"group grievance"** in Nigeria.

The Group Grievance indicator focuses on divisions and schisms between different groups in society – particularly divisions based on social or political characteristics – and their role in access to services or resources, and inclusion in the political process. The higher the value of the indicator, the higher the division of the societal groups in the country.

COHESION (2021): Worst Countries - Afghanistan, Somalia, Myanmar
Best Countries - Portugal, Switzerland, Iceland

Source: Fund for Peace; www.theglobaleconomy.com; Chart: Dataphyte Research
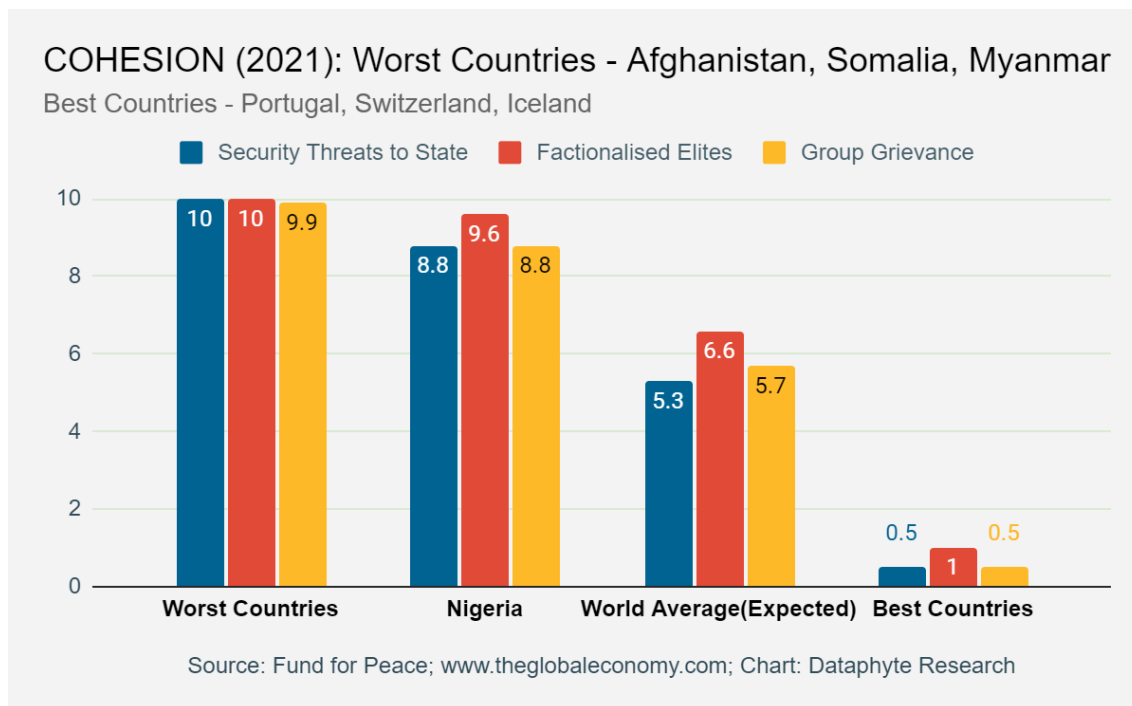
Thus, to de-escalate the ethnic and religious threats to Cohesion in Nigeria, the serious-minded Presidential candidate needs to commit to reducing Nigeria's 2021 index values for threats to the security apparatus from 8.8 to 5.3 or below, factionalized elites from 9.6 to 6.6 or below, and Group grievance from 8.8 to 5.7 or below, between 2023 and 2027.

Then there are the other 6 socio-political indices too to present for the next serious-minded president. Find out in the next episode of "Agenda 2023: Crime, Crimea, Cremations and Recriminations."

Agenda 2023: On Crime, Crimea, Cremations, and Recriminations

Published on July 16, 2022

Oluseyi Olufemi

Nigeria is a crime scene!

But that's a cliche.

So thought the editor of The Economist too, when the British newspaper described Nigeria as **"The crime scene at the heart of Africa"** in the headline of its special report last year. Because its editors thought the description of Nigeria in the headline was already trite, they gave a disclaimer to their international audience, thus:

"Readers who do not follow Nigeria closely may ask: what's new? Nigeria has been corrupt and turbulent for decades. What has changed of late, though, is that jihadism, organised crime and political violence have grown so intense and widespread that most of the country is sliding towards ungovernability.

In the first nine months of 2021, almost 8,000 people were directly killed in various conflicts. Hundreds of thousands more have perished because of hunger and disease caused by fighting. More than 2m have fled their homes."

Before now, Nigerians endured crimes prevalent among the aberrant poor and struggling masses, but now they perish daily under the present elitist crime regime that has institutionalised violence and monetised terror through the various realms of the state and deep state.

Then, some try to retreat from the sordid **crime scene** that the country has become. A majority of them subscribe to one of the **two Crimean options**-to either leave the country as a collective ethnic group through a referendum or leave the crime scene individually to associate with a less savage state-hence the slang japa (meaning, to escape from harm with frantic speed).

However, those who want to stay on in Nigeria's widening crime scene are soon implicated, summarily impaled, and savagely cremated in a macabre execution-style. And the country moves on.

Some more are abducted and auctioned for money, and where they delay in paying the ransom,

they are offered as blood sacrifices to Mammon, the arch-demon Nigerians worship quietly and openly. The mutilated bodies of these oblations are later found or never found again.

Then follows **recriminations** between a government who blames murdered farmers for going to their farms, between clerics who blame roasted women and men for deserving their widely supported lynching and **cremations**, between legislators who blame people who paid ransoms to rescue their family members from pampered savage killers, between all these agents of the state and the few sane observers at the national crime scene.

Crime: From Top to Bottom!

President Buhari finally got a chance to see Abba Kyari, his government's most decorated **top cop**, who has finally been reduced from top to bottom, when he visited the remains of the Kuje Prison last Wednesday.

Abba Kyari, a Deputy Commissioner of Police, accused of money laundering and narcotics offences was one of the 111 loyal prisoners that remained in the prison when the other 879 criminals walked out on the subdued corrections officers at the Kuje penitentiary.

Other top inmates who remained there include Reverend Jolly Nyame, the former governor of Taraba State and Farouk Lawan, a former National House of Assembly member.

ISWAP claimed that its brave fighters successfully crushed the defences of the Kuje Custodial Centre, in a commando-style invasion, freeing 64 Boko Haram members and several others Tuesday night.

Earlier in 2019, when Mr Buhari repeated his mantra, **"from top to bottom!"** during his **"Next Level"** campaign, some believed he meant to finally redistribute the largesse that the people close to his government at the top enjoy to reach the citizens at the bottom rung of the societal ladder.

Not at all. For Governor Samuel Ortom of Benue State, Buhari's slogan was a subtle promise to lower people from life on top of the ground to the bottom of their grave. And the statistics support this morbid view of the President's campaign slogan.

FROM TOP TO BOTTOM: Under Buhari, 3,126 human beings were killed by criminal groups and lowered from top to bottom in the grave in 2016.

NEXT LEVEL: Buhari achieved the next level of 7,115 killed in 2020 and 9,558 from top to bottom in 2021

[Bar chart showing SUM of fatalities by year]

- 2015: 2255
- 2016: 3126
- 2017: 3572
- 2018: 4432
- 2019: 4726
- 2020: 7115
- 2021: 9558
- 2022: 4902
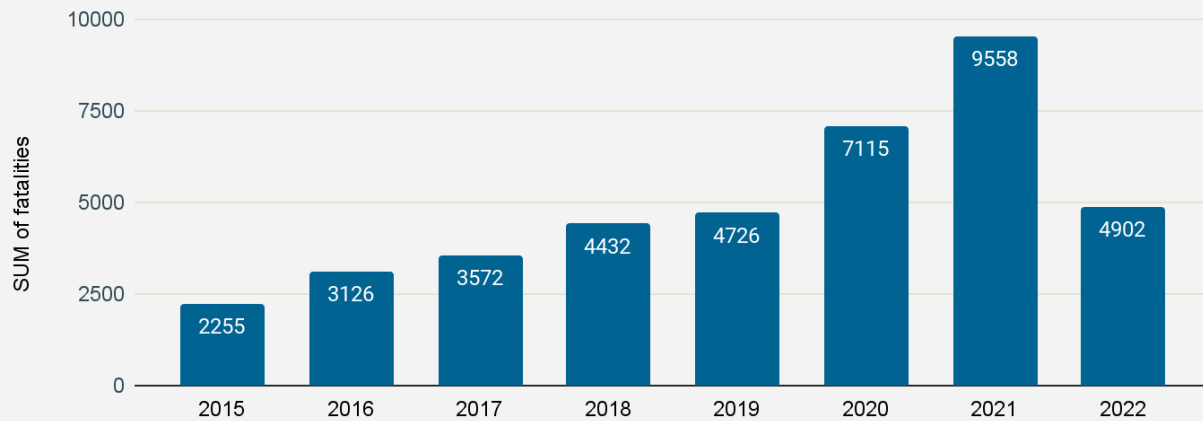
* The 2022 figure is as of 31st May 2022. Source: ACLED; Chart: Dataphyte Research

Today, some wonder why they just could not see then that Mr Buhari actually meant to reduce all the country's fortunes **from top to bottom**, as he completes his second and last term of 4 years.

Thus, to avoid such misunderstanding of the goodwill of a presidential candidate like Mr Buhari, or to avoid voting in 2023 for a candidate who subtly informs the crowd of the ill will that he has-to lower his people from top to bottom in grinding poverty and mass graves, **it is better for the electorate to require presidential candidates (and other candidates) to quantify what they intend to achieve and simply state it clearly in figures.**

Cremations: From North to South!

"Across the north and south, to kill and lynch, light the fire", to disembowel Sade Adu's evergreen lines in Smooth Operator.

But lately, lynching and burning of the victim moved to the next level in Nigeria.

On one hand, Nigerians are used to people meting out jungle justice or carrying out extrajudicial executions on perceived criminals, especially, armed robbers, ritual killers, and kidnappers of kids on the streets in full public glare. Somehow this crime is popular and the people just move on.

Anyone could suffer the same fate if someone simply shouts that you stole a loaf of bread. The motions are: a crowd gathers around, who are not privy to what really happened, who don't listen to what you say. Each moral retard begins to experiment their morbid impulses on the hapless victim, hitting with sticks, stoning with heavy objects, stabbing with knives, baying for blood.

In fact before you know it, they soak the hapless offender with petrol, and affix used vehicle tyres on her/his body to ferry the next legally innocent human being in a cloud of fire to Gehenna, northsouth of Nigeria. **They just love to watch the victim run and burn.**

Some believe the crime of killing people without official trial was normal because **they don't trust the police** when they arrest both criminals and innocent people. They also don't trust the country's judicial process for justice to be served. The Nigerian Police scored lowest among public institutions with regards to people's trust.

2. 'Trust' Sub-Index
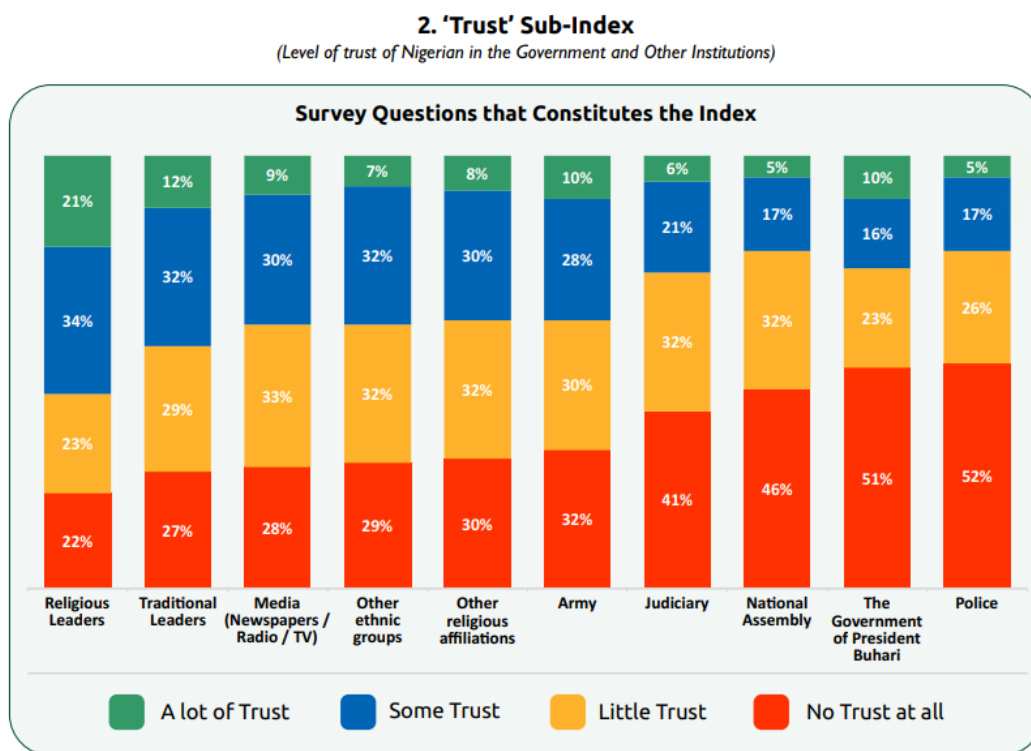*(Level of trust of Nigerian in the Government and Other Institutions)*

Figure 8: Questions that constitutes the Trust Sub-Index

52% of respondents have "no trust at all" in the Police, followed by 51% of the sample population having not trust in "the Government of President Buhari". Next, 46% have no trust at all in the National Assembly, and 41% have no trust in the judiciary.

Such is Nigeria's endemic crime culture that crime is punished by crime, whether mob lynching or police extrajudicial killings.

Recently, it ran from the filming of the lynching and burning of the body of a school girl in Sokoto, Northern Nigeria, by her classmates, to the shock of the world but to the cheer of the masses in that city. She was proudly and publicly killed because of a text she shared in her class chat group that supposedly bordered on faith.

None of the leading 2023 presidential candidates condemned the act. They all appear okay with the crime.

Then this crime wave ran through Abuja, the centre of the country. A young man was killed by a proud mob in Lugbe, within the Federal Capital Territory also for allegedly expressing his own faith in a way not consistent with his fellows.

Again, none of the 2023 Presidential candidates mentioned or condemned the crime-a promise they would countenance such brazen criminality as it progresses to the next level during their reign, post 2023.

Finally, this crime arrived the country's southern coast of Lagos. A humble commercial sex worker was impaled and burnt by her suspected fraudulent customer because she possessed her own religious book in her own room.

As expected, all the 2023 presidential candidates said nothing. Yet, the presidential candidates have spoken thrice with a resounding silence that this crime would continue across the north and south of the country if they are elected into office.

So, as many more people now see, like Kole Omotosho saw in 2017, that Nigeria is **"a giant crime scene enclosing other sub-scenes"**, they seek several **options to escape from this perennial crime scene.**

The Crimea Options: From East to West

Crimea seceded from Ukraine in 2014, exactly 60 years after the region was transferred from Soviet Russia to Soviet Ukraine in 1954. And Russia defended the wish of some ethnic Russians in Crimea to leave Ukraine.

This was effected with despatch through a referendum in which 97% of the Crimean populace voted to secede from Ukraine and be annexed by the Russian Federation. Some doubted the

outcome of the referendum, but like many rigged elections that recycle civilian despots and corrupt governors in many parts of the world, including Nigeria, the Crimean referendum results too have not been proven yet by any law court to be false.

The world barked, initiating some weak sanctions, and moved on.

For Nigeria too, going by the increasing insecurity and instability in Nigeria, especially arising from the 10 most vicious criminal groups (listed in table, "Buhari's Presidency", below), many minority ethnic groups, as well as major ethnic groups, believe the best option is to lead their ethnic group out of the Union called Nigeria.

This option is not recent. In fact, it dates back to the days of some of the founding fathers of the country. Delving deep into Nigeria's roots, the UK-based journal, The Economist, wrote:

"Little more than six decades ago, as Nigeria was nearing independence, **even those who were soon to govern Africa's largest country had their doubts about whether it would hold together.** British colonists had drawn a border around land that was home to more than 250 ethnic groups.

Obafemi Awolowo, a politician of that era, evoked Metternich, fretting that **"Nigeria is not a nation. It is a mere geographical expression."**

Today, from the east of the country to the west, the Nigerian Indigenous Nationalities Alliance for Self-Determination (NINAS), continually attempts a referendum to decide the future of those in various parts of the country.

The alternate Crimean option was taken by many who later felt victimised by the Russian regime in Crimea after it aceded to Russia. Individuals began to exit the region, leaving behind those who prefer or could bear with Russia's high-handed regime in Crimea.

This seems to be the easiest option, and the one most taken by people in Nigeria. They escape from home into the diaspora, enduring the pain, just to be in a saner and safer geographical entity, other than Nigeria.

Yet, from clamours for restructuring of the "mere geographical expression" called Nigeria, to the people's frustrations at its marred ethnic diversity, it is uncertain whether Nigeria would transcend Obafemi Awolowo's thoughts and finally become a "nation".

No Recriminations: Number does it

The Zamfara State APC stakeholders and members on Friday, "called for an end to banditry and insecurity as a condition for them to vote for the APC presidential flag bearer, Asiwaju Bola Tinubu".

Indeed, one overriding factor for choosing Nigeria's next president in 2023 is their approach towards the plague of crime and endemic insecurity.

To hold the current 2023 presidential candidates to account, it's useful to learn from the campaign of candidate Muhammadu Buhari in 2014 and 2015, and 2019. It is generally reported that his disposition now as the incumbent president is clearly at variance with his pre-election promises.

No Recriminations: Solving Zamfara State Insecurity with Numbers

21 Armed Groups killed 4,006 people in Zamfara between 2015 and May 2022

Armed Group	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Grand Total
Zamfara Communal Militia (Nigeria)				116	530	160	532	362	**1700**
Military Forces of Nigeria (2015-)		20		71	215	308	553	102	**1269**
Unidentified Armed Group (Nigeria)	104	26	2	146	27	45	11	0	**361**
Police Forces of Nigeria (2015-)		0		140			78	1	**219**
Yansakai Militia				41	9	10	65	12	**137**
Civilian JTF: Civilian Joint Task Force					83				**83**
Fulani Ethnic Militia (Nigeria)			3		16	17	47		**83**
Unidentified Communal Militia (Nigeria)		3		63			0		**66**
Kaura Namoda Communal Militia (Nigeria)								20	**20**
Maru Communal Militia (Nigeria)							16		**16**
Katsina Communal Militia (Nigeria)				0	15	0			**15**
Islamic State (West Africa) and/or Boko Haram - Jamaatu Ahli is-Sunnah lid-Dawati wal-Jihad					12				**12**
Kanoma Communal Militia (Nigeria)							8		**8**
Fankashi Communal Militia (Nigeria)				7					**7**
Nahaci Communal Militia (Nigeria)							7		**7**
Ansaru								3	**3**
Nahuce Communal Militia (Nigeria)							0		**0**
NURTW: National Union of Road Transport Workers								0	**0**
Ruwan Tofa Communal Militia (Nigeria)							0		**0**
Grand Total	**104**	**49**	**5**	**584**	**907**	**540**	**1317**	**500**	**4006**

Source: ACLED; Analysis: Dataphyte Research

So, when the Zamfara people's major request is for a 2023 presidential candidate to end banditry and insecurity in their state, the vote-seeking candidate on his campaign tour could simply assure them that "I will end banditry and insecurity in Zamfara State!"

But a more serious candidate would look at the situation on ground, get the numbers right, and set a target like this: **"I will reverse the number of people killed by violent groups to 5 dead bodies by 2025 as it was in the year 2017, before the Zamfara Communal Militia became a formidable murderous group." This or a similar promise bound in numbers does it.**

This approach makes it easy to assess performance without the government and the opposition and the people forever trading blames.

For the entire country too, the 2023 presidential candidate can stipulate, for example, that "by 2025, I will reduce the number of people killed by violent groups to 2,255 that it was when my predecessor resumed office in 2015 (see chart, "From Top to Bottom", above).

And this is how I intend to achieve this: I will focus first on the 10 combatant groups that killed 20,120 Nigerians, more than half of the total 39,696 people killed between 2015 and May 2022."

Buhari's Presidency: 473 armed Groups, 39,686 deaths, 8,387 combat points (2015 - May 2022)

ACTOR	Number of People they killed (2015 - May 2022)	% of the Total killed	Number of locations they operated at
Military Forces of Nigeria	**13,268**	**33%**	**1,748**
10 Combatant groups that killed the most	**20,120**	**51%**	**4,854**
Unidentified Armed Group (Nigeria)	4436		1692
Fulani Ethnic Militia (Nigeria)	4393		948
Islamic State (West Africa) - Lake Chad Faction	2625		455
Zamfara Communal Militia (Nigeria)	1734		228
Islamic State (West Africa)	1720		161
Islamic State (West Africa) - Lake Chad Faction and/or Boko Haram - Jamaatu Ahli is-Sunnah lid-Dawati wal-Jihad	1219	51%	255
Police Forces of Nigeria	1214		557
Kaduna Communal Militia (Nigeria)	978		284
Islamic State (West Africa) and/or Boko Haram - Jamaatu Ahli is-Sunnah lid-Dawati wal-Jihad	918		172
Boko Haram - Jamaatu Ahli is-Sunnah lid-Dawati wal-Jihad	883		102
The Rest 462 groups	**6,298**	**16%**	**1,785**
TOTAL	**39,686**	**100%**	**8,387**
Source: ACLED; Analysis: Dataphyte Research			

Snapshot of Insecurity under Buhari's Presidency

Dail Data Card

39,686

people have been killed under
President Buhari's regime
(between 2015 - May 2022)

473 Armed Groups Responsible

Military Forces of Nigeria	10 Combatant groups that killed the most	Remaining 462 groups
13,268 killed	**20,120** killed	**6,298** killed
33% of total killed	*51% of total killed*	*16% of total killed*
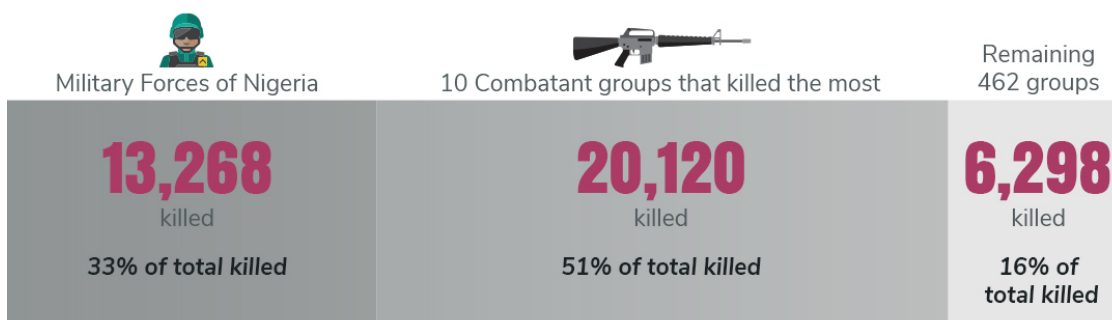
Source: ACLED; Analysis: Dataphyte Research

Dataphyte

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This or something similar does it, rather than a candidate couching his selfish and criminal apathy towards the plight of the people in high-sounding campaign slogans.

Crime: From Bottom to Top

While the intending presidents in 2023 seek to tackle organised crime head on, it must be clear that there are **social and political factors that predispose people to** crime in the first place.

At the root of large scale crime as we witness in Nigeria, there are 6 more factors (besides the ones treated in the first episode of the Agenda Setting Series).

These include, Demographic pressures, prevalence of Refugees and IDPs, and a country's need

for external intervention. The others are State legitimacy, public services and human rights.

The **Demographic pressures indicator** considers pressures upon the state deriving from the population itself or the environment around it. For example, the indicator measures **population pressures related to food supply, access to safe water, and other life-sustaining resources, or health, such as the prevalence of disease and epidemics.** The higher the indicator's value, the higher the demographic pressures in the country.
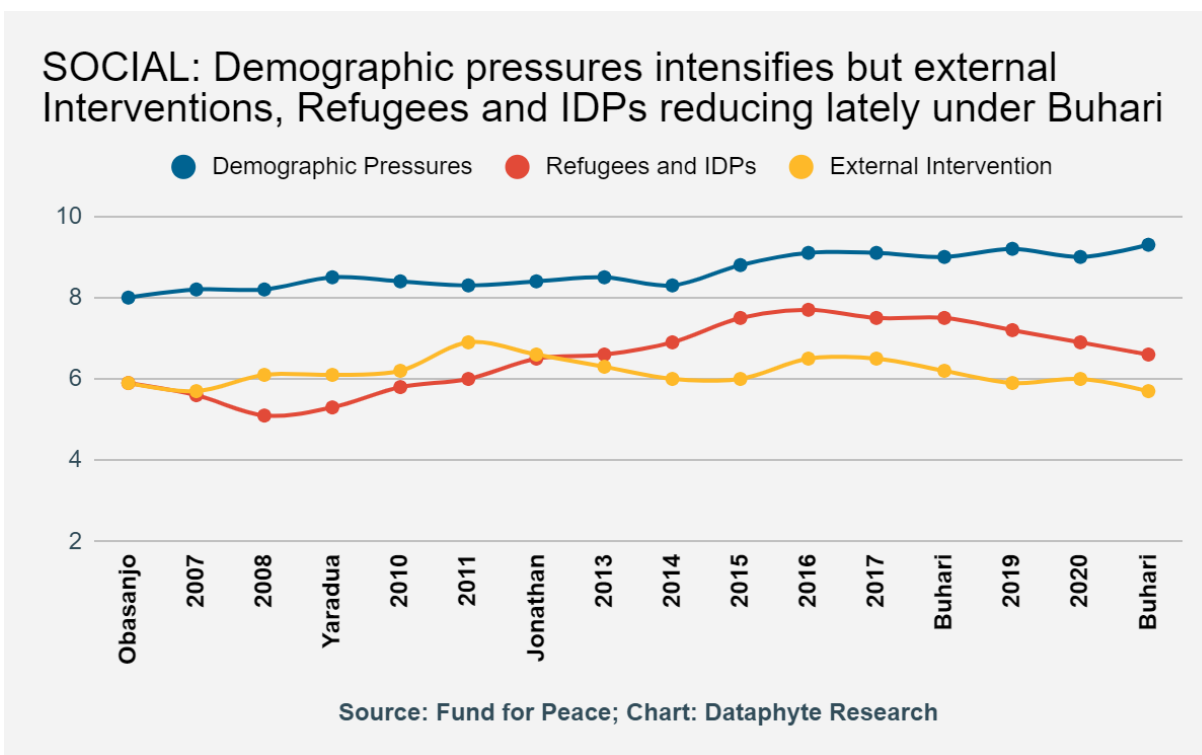
The **Refugees and internally displaced persons indicator** measures the pressure upon states caused by the forced displacement of large communities as a result of social, political, environmental or other causes, measuring displacement within countries, as well as refugee flows into others. The higher the value of the indicator, the higher the refugee flow in the country.

The External Intervention Indicator considers the influence and impact of external actors in the functioning – particularly security and economic – of a state. The higher the indicator's value, the greater the external interventions in the country.

For Nigeria's 3 social indices, the worst, worsening, and farthest from the average performance

is "Demographic pressures." As of 2021, approximately 93 out of 100 Nigerians experienced inadequate "food supply, access to safe water, and other life-sustaining resources", or are vulnerable to "the prevalence of disease and epidemics".

Such a "geographical expression" as this is set up to stage the performance of the worst expressions of criminal behaviour across its demography-a bottom to top emergence of **a giant crime scene enclosing other sub-scenes**, all playing out **at the heart of Africa.**
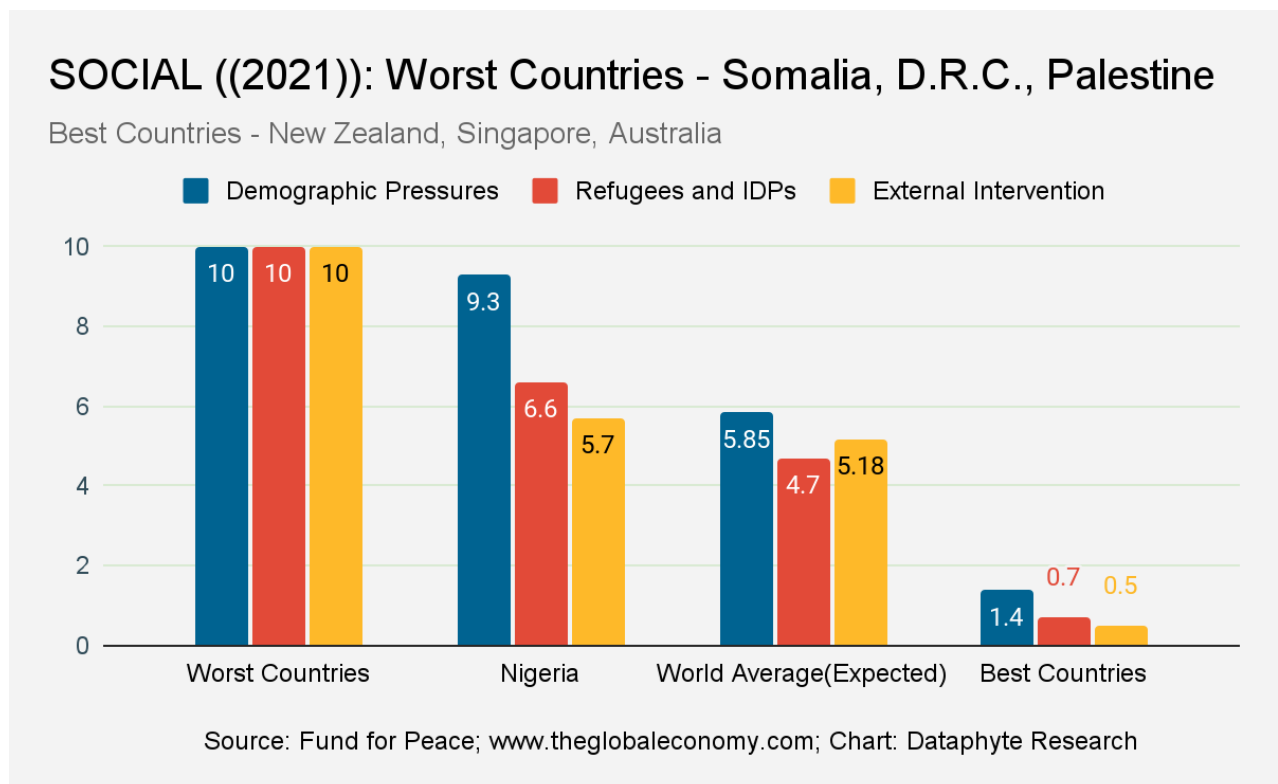
SOCIAL ((2021)): Worst Countries - Somalia, D.R.C., Palestine

Best Countries - New Zealand, Singapore, Australia

Legend: ■ Demographic Pressures ■ Refugees and IDPs ■ External Intervention

	Demographic Pressures	Refugees and IDPs	External Intervention
Worst Countries	10	10	10
Nigeria	9.3	6.6	5.7
World Average(Expected)	5.85	4.7	5.18
Best Countries	1.4	0.7	0.5

Source: Fund for Peace; www.theglobaleconomy.com; Chart: Dataphyte Research

The serious-minded Presidential candidate needs to commit to reducing Nigeria's 2021 index values for demographic pressures from 9.3 to 5.85 or below, refugees and IDPs from 6.6 to 4.7 or below, and External intervention from 5.7 to 5.18 or below, between 2023 and 2027.

Besides this is **the State legitimacy indicator.** It considers the representativeness and openness of government and its relationship with its citizenry. The indicator looks at the population's **level of confidence in state institutions and processes,** and assesses the **effects where that confidence is absent, manifested through mass public demonstrations, sustained civil disobedience, or the rise of armed insurgencies.** The higher the value of the index, the lower the country's legitimacy.

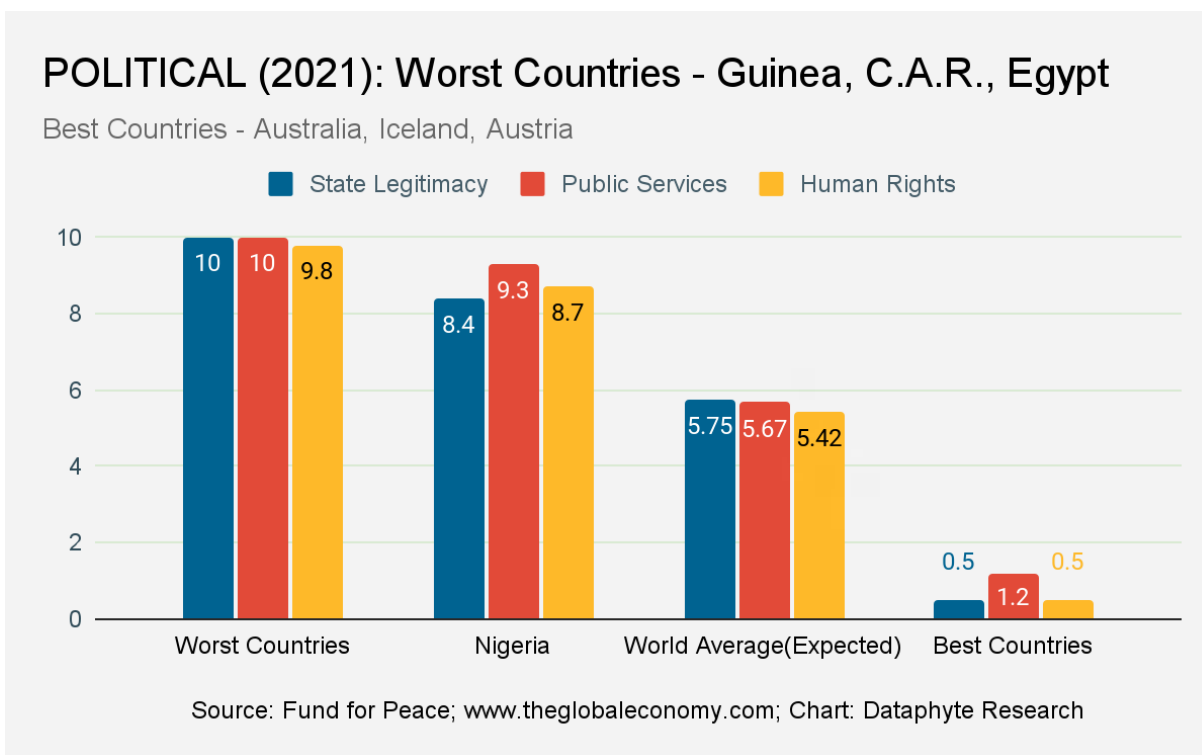A lack of state legitimacy obviously predisposes people and groups, in the words of Wole Soyinka, to exhibit feelings of "inner refuge and outer defiance" manifesting in the wildest dimensions of coven care and crime simultaenously.

Next, **the Public services indicator** refers to the presence of basic state functions that serve the people. This may include the **provision of essential services, such as health, education, water and sanitation, transport infrastructure, electricity and power, and internet and connectivity.**

On the other hand, it may include **the state's ability to protect its citizens,** such as from terrorism and violence, **through perceived effective policing.** The higher the value of the indicator, the worse the public services in the country.
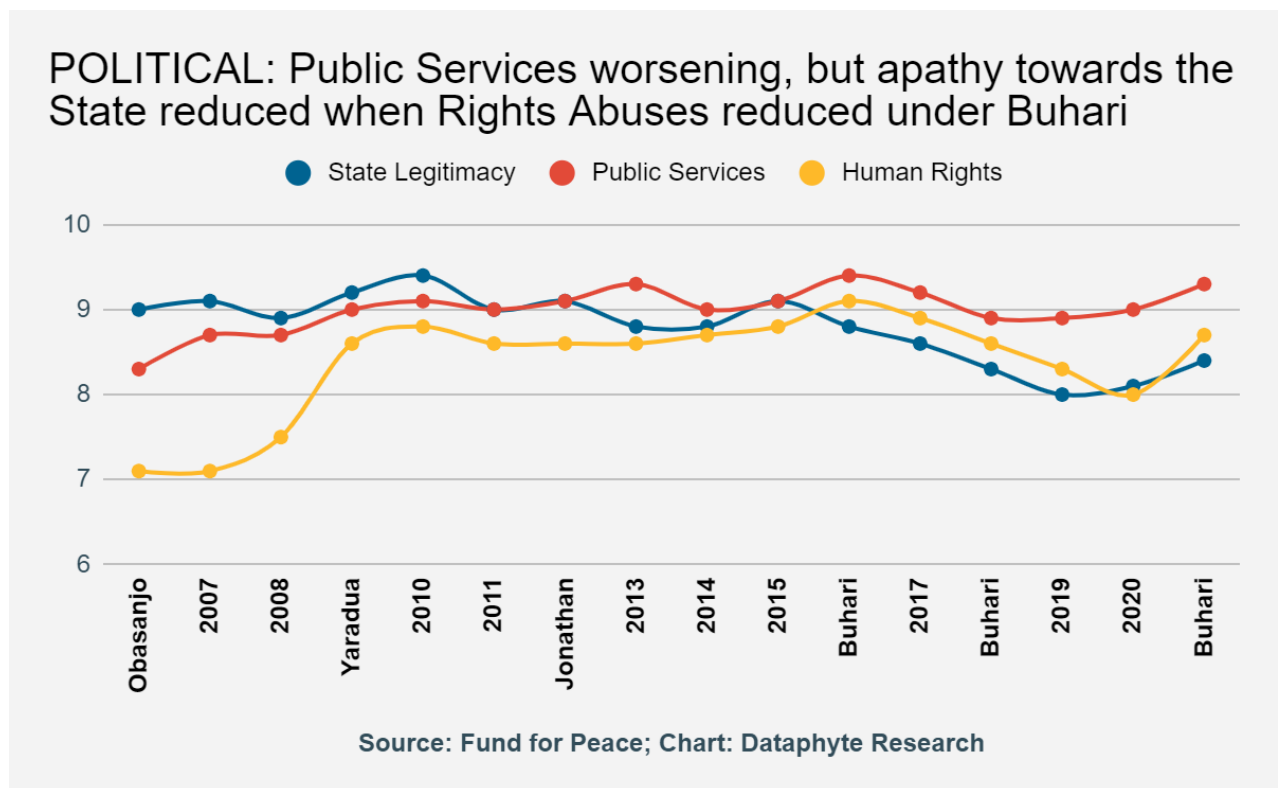
Lastly, the **Human rights and rule of law indicator** considers the relationship between the state and its population in so far as fundamental human rights are protected and freedoms are observed and respected. The higher the indicator's value, the less protected are the human rights and the rule of law in the country.

POLITICAL (2021): Worst Countries - Guinea, C.A.R., Egypt

Best Countries - Australia, Iceland, Austria

Legend: ■ State Legitimacy   ■ Public Services   ■ Human Rights

Worst Countries: State Legitimacy 10, Public Services 10, Human Rights 9.8

Nigeria: State Legitimacy 8.4, Public Services 9.3, Human Rights 8.7

World Average(Expected): State Legitimacy 5.75, Public Services 5.67, Human Rights 5.42

Best Countries: State Legitimacy 0.5, Public Services 1.2, Human Rights 0.5

Source: Fund for Peace; www.theglobaleconomy.com; Chart: Dataphyte Research

The serious-minded Presidential candidate needs to commit to reducing Nigeria's 2021 index values for State legitimacy from 8.4 to 5.75 or below, Public services from 9.3 to 5.67 or below, and human rights from 8.7 to 5.42 or below, between 2023 and 2027.

Setting out to cater first for the welfare of the people, before the mercantile gains of the political office holder, is the best way to inspire love for country in a citizen, and a sense of indebtedness to a country that has given so much service and support to its citizenry and residents as well.

Indeed, the best way to fight crime from top to bottom is to fight it from bottom to top.

Agenda 2023: Trumping an Incumbent, Turbaning an Insurgent, Tending an Inpatient

Published on 24 July, 2022

Oluseyi Olufemi

Saturday, 16th July 2022

0400 hours, Ede, Osun State

Ademola Adeleke woke up from sleep in his private suite in the palatial family home. He pressed hard on the pillow as he lifted his weight off the 2-seater sofa in his room.

The Senator could hear the voice of his Personal Assistant in the adjoining living room in what appeared to be a discussion with his chief security officer about the change of plans on the time of movement, and the route to the polling booth where oga (their principal) will cast his vote.

Mr Adeleke immediately falls on his knees, begging God for the third time since he retired to his room at 2.30 am: "My Father, my Father, please give me victory today. Let not my enemy triumph over me. Let not Oyetola or any other candidate triumph over me. Let affliction never arise in my life the second time. Let me dance the dance of victory today. Make me the Governor today. Baba, demi lade Governor leni…"

0430 hours, Near Munhaye Village, Tsafe LGA, Zamfara State

Adamu Aleru opened his eyes and scanned his moonlit room. He rolled his body aside, reaching under his pillow for his sidearm. He could hear the voices of women and girls in the courtyard. He heard the frantic bleating of the rams about to be slaughtered, the thuds of cows marching to their deaths, all donated by Ali Zakwai, Bello Turji, Danboko, Sanata, Isuhu Yelo, Damina, and Mai Shamuwa Bello, and other notable bandits for the day's celebration.

He paused to reflect as he reached for his kettle, "Since 2019, I have been declared WANTED BY THE POLICE; today, I am WANTED BY THE PALACE. Before, they wanted to attack and arrest me; today, they want to appoint me Sarkin Fulani and adorn my head with the royal Turban…."

Adamu was jolted back to consciousness by the voice of Ayuba cutting through the somnolence of dawn as he called the people to the fajr prayers.

"Allahu Akbar", Aleru reechoed the Muezzin's chant. "Allahu Akbar", he repeated all the way as he

filled his kettle with water for the ablution. "Wanda Allah ba ya gafartawa babu shi", he muttered as he stepped out to join his lieutenants for the congregational prayer.

0500 hours, Duchess International Hospital, GRA, Ikeja, Lagos State

"You are all good, Sir", the Physician assured the inpatient in Duke Suite. "We will return at noon for the preparations."

"Please rest the leg, Sir. We'll need it just as calm for the procedure", the Orthopaedic surgeon counselled.

"Thank you, Doc. Campaigns have ended. I won't be trekking today," Yemi Osinbajo quipped. The two clinicians laughed as they escorted Nigeria's Vice President out of the suite's private examination room into the living room.

Four cold-faced security details nodded at the doctors as they made for the door out of the suite.

Then the VP attempted a slow and steady stride into his cosy room.

Sitting on his bed, the patient no. INP2 reached for his iPad on the bedside drawer, the table lamp guiding his hand. He then retires his legs slowly in the plum eiderdown and opens his Bible app.

He scans Psalm 23 and highlights two lines that read, "though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil for thou art with me".

He slid fully into the downs, lying on his side, and continued to read the Psalm on the iPad. And he read on even when the iPad screen had timed out.

This is where the faction ends.

History pessimistic, Humans Optimistic

By the time the sun set on Saturday, 16th July 2022, three Nigerians had made history.

One, by the name of Ademola Adeleke, had been voted to topple the incumbent governor of his State. The other, Adamu Aleru, **a notorious serial killer** declared wanted by the Nigerian Police, had been decorated with a turban as an exemplary community leader **in the presence of Nigerian State officials**. The third, Yemi Oshinbajo, became the first incumbent Vice President to be an inpatient or placed on anaesthesia in a hospital in Nigeria since 1999.

Recent events highlight the emerging prospects for free and fair elections and the youth's growing disgust for entitled and irresponsible leaders. On the other side, one sees the ruling elite's effort to arrest the chaos encircling the country and their own imminent overthrow-by the youths' ballot or the terrorists' bullet.

For instance, President Buhari suddenly found his voice on the closure of Universities for the umpteenth time during his administration. Suddenly, Vice President Oshinbajo now appears empathetic with the state of healthcare in the country by submitting himself to the scalpel in Nigeria, even if it had to be in a highbrow Lagos hospital built only for Dukes like him.

Toppling an incumbent party and its governor through the people's ballot and Turbaning a mass-murderer who kills his own people for a living prefigures the dual path to political leadership in Nigeria come 2023 - a steep double lane of vice and violence that leads backward side by side the double lane of vision and virtue that leads forward.

Indeed, the lead-up to the 2023 elections appears to be another watershed moment in the 30-year cycle of the nation's political history of recurring misery, following the aborted progress in 1963 and a political stillbirth in 1993. Yet, while history is pessimistic, humans are optimistic.

Adeleke and the Nigerian Education Curriculum

Senator Ademola Adeleke's election as the Governor of Osun State is a story of fame, failure and fortitude. But his election story began with his education.

Born in Enugu into the aristocratic family of Adeleke in Ede, he was nursed by both cleavages of fame and fortune. He waltzed through 4 missionary primary and secondary schools but emerged as a classic case of academic failure. It appeared he was destined to learn directly from life rather than be coached about it in a classroom.

Mr Adeleke is not alone. He belongs to a dynasty of accomplished merchants, manufacturers, and entrepreneurs who did not have a great time in formal school. Two cases in point are Tony Elumelu and Peter Obi, who excelled in the corporate world far above what they ever did in the classroom.

Also, beyond the public exhibition of politicians like Tinubu and Adeleke as ethical deviants, the duplicity that trails their certificates compared with the distinction in their careers calls into question the means and meaning of education in Nigeria.

Is it time for Nigeria's curriculum planners to revisit why some students do well outside the classroom rather than within it? Is it time to introduce those real-world dynamics into our educational settings? If learning becomes hands-on, will Nigeria's arts, management, science and technology students become more productive to the economy?

Should the country's educational curriculum still reward rote learning and not practical, real-life application? Should private firms and government agencies continue prioritising (fake) certificates over (actual) individual competence?

These questions should shape the conversation on Nigeria's educational policy going into the 2023 elections.

For Mr Adeleke, what he missed in Montessori he now compensates for in music and dance. And though he evaded intellectual exertion, he embraced the industrial experience. Top of that, the people just employed him as the Governor of Osun State.

Agenda 2023 on Education

Senator Ademola Adeleke attended public primary and secondary schools in Nigeria, even though he came from an upper-class family. That period was when the public school was a leveller between the rich and the poor. A period when government official

However, Governor El Rufai currently shared this belief when he enrolled his son in a public primary school in Kaduna State. A major shake-up in the State's Ministry of Education followed, resulting in the purge of misfits from the State's teaching service.

As of 2019, there were more Public Elementary Schools than Private ones. For Senior Secondary Schools, it's the reverse

Number of Elementary and Senior Secondary Schools in Nigeria by Ownership (2019)
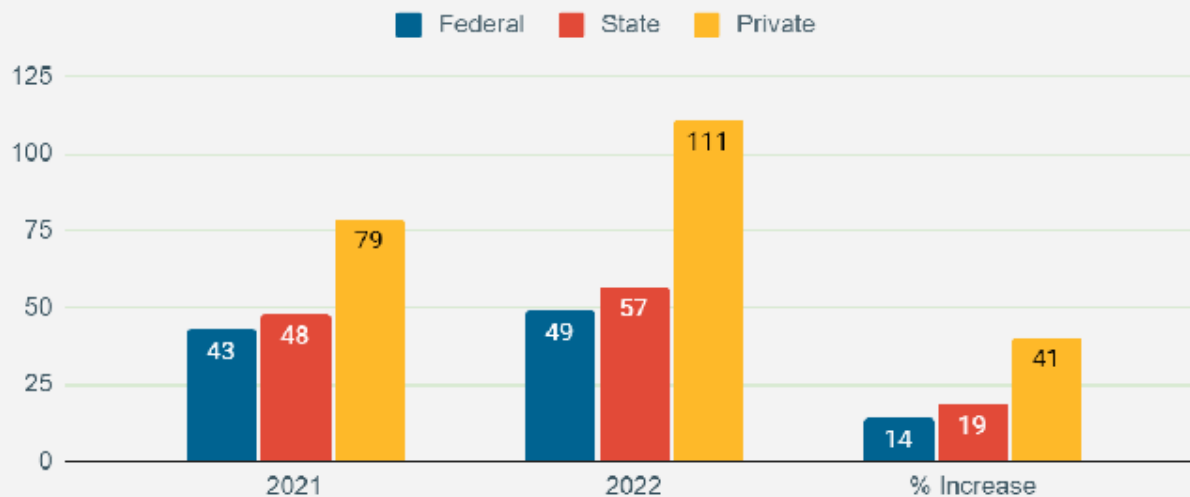
■ Private   ■ Public

- Elementary School: Private 55004, Public 61921
- Senior Secondary School: Private 17453, Public 9589
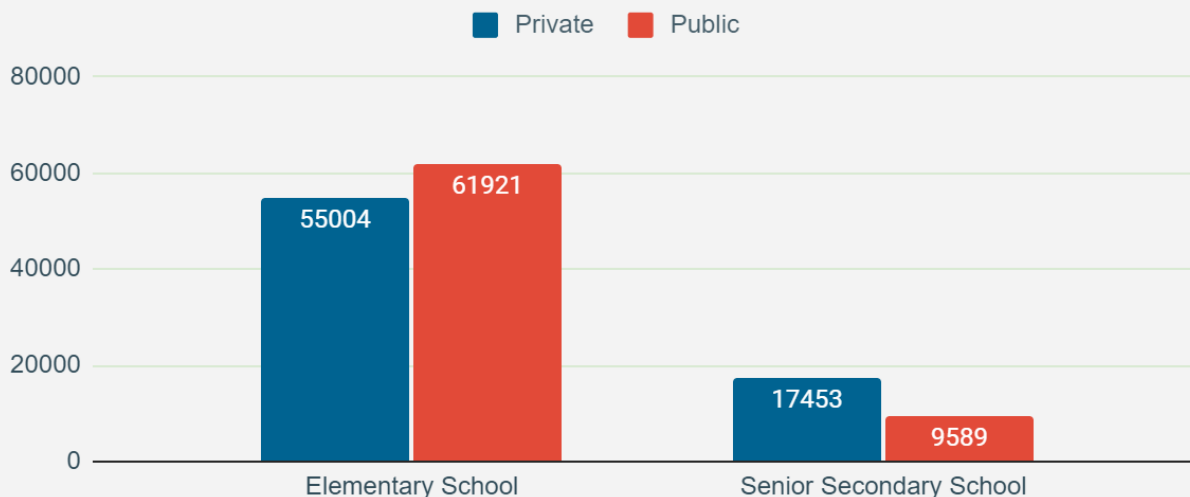
Source: Statista; Chart: Dataphyte Research

Many believe that if all elected, appointed, and career government officials are mandated to train their wards in Nigerian public schools at the primary, secondary, and undergraduate levels, only then can they become responsible stakeholders in the public service project, and only then can the educational sector of the country be salvaged.

The Number of Private Universities grew by 41%, the highest rate of increase between 2021 and mid-2022

Number of Federal, State, and Private Universities in Nigeria (2021-2022 June)

■ Federal   ■ State   ■ Private

- 2021: Federal 43, State 48, Private 79
- 2022: Federal 49, State 57, Private 111
- % Increase: Federal 14, State 19, Private 41
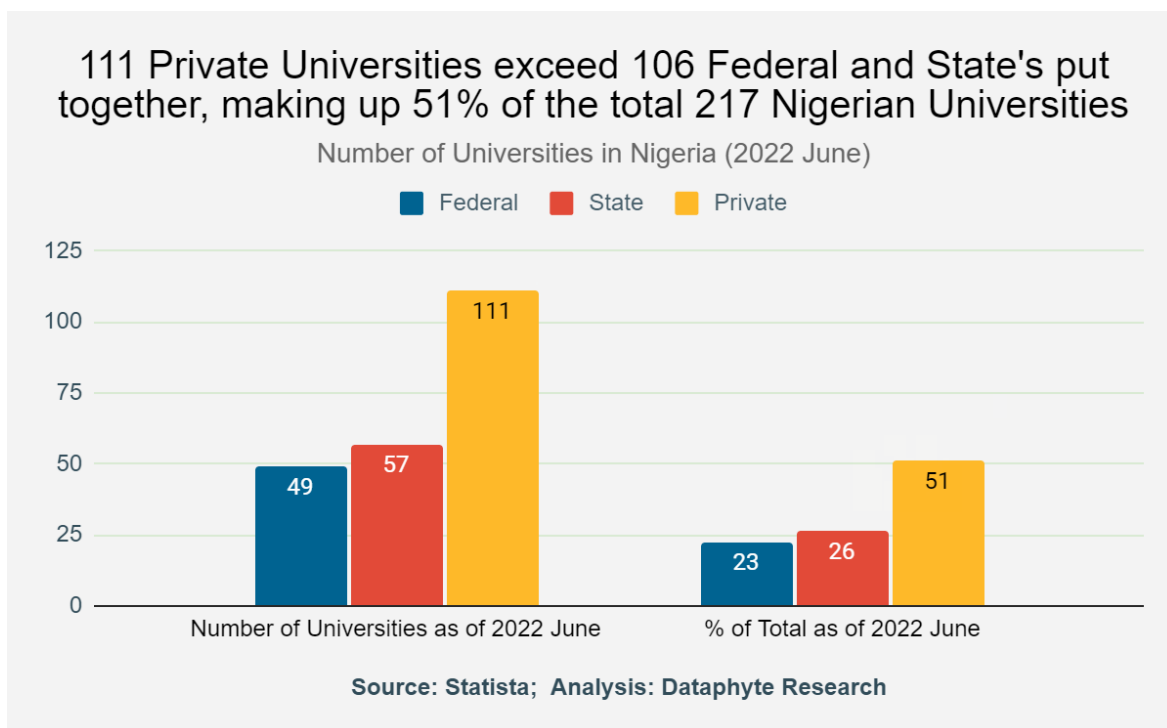
Source: NUC, Statista; Analysis: Dataphyte Research

In its March report, the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) stated that Nigerians spent $28.65bn for their wards to **study abroad** between 2010 and 2020. **"Today, a sizable amount of the foreign exchange request Nigerian banks receive for school fees are for primary and secondary school education, some of which are for neighbouring African countries"**, **the report indicated**.

Yet, according to **UNICEF**, "One in every five of the world's out-of-school children is in Nigeria. Even though primary education is officially free and compulsory, about 10.5 million of the country's children aged 5-14 years are not in school. Only 61 percent of 6-11 year-olds regularly attend primary school, and only 35.6 per cent of children aged 36-59 months receive early childhood education."

Besides this considerable patronage of foreign primary and secondary schools, the Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria, Godwin Emefiele, **spoke** the government's mind concerning tertiary institutions as well:

"Nigerians now go to school shamefully in some of our neighbouring West African countries, and they pay dollars.

I do understand the feelings of ASUU, the feelings of our lecturers, but they need also to know that by keeping these children at home, their parents, looking at them, it is a dangerous trend...But again, I must say that I'm happy that there are very strong private universities that have sprung up in Nigeria."

111 Private Universities exceed 106 Federal and State's put together, making up 51% of the total 217 Nigerian Universities

Number of Universities in Nigeria (2022 June)

■ Federal ■ State ■ Private

[Bar chart showing:
Number of Universities as of 2022 June: Federal 49, State 57, Private 111
% of Total as of 2022 June: Federal 23, State 26, Private 51]

Source: Statista; Analysis: Dataphyte Research

Mr Emefiele's statement exposes the ruling class' unwillingness to restore the lost glory of public tertiary institutions in Nigeria by quickly pointing toward private universities in the country as the government's sole option to lower the demand for dollars to pay for school fees outside the country.

Why Public School standards are falling: Allocation to the Education Sector dropped from 10.8% in 2015 to 7.1% in 2019

Allocation to education sector as share of total Federal budget in Nigeria (2015 to 2019)

[Line chart showing: 2015: 10.8%, 2016: 7.9%, 2017: 6.1%, 2018: 7.1%, 2019: 7.1%]

Source: Statista; Chart: Dataphyte Research
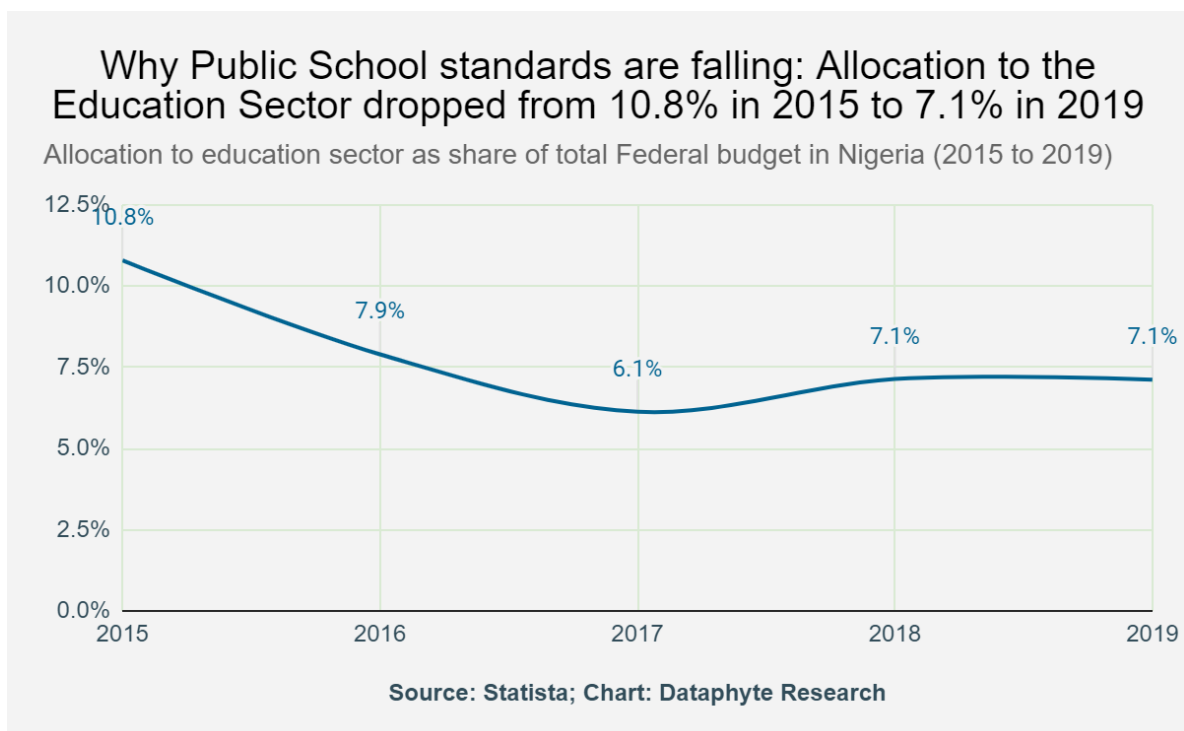
Are there any political parties fielding presidential candidates in the 2023 elections that can commit that if voted into power, every Federal and State government official, whether elected, appointed, or a career civil servant, must send their wards to public schools or resign?

Definitely, this commitment may be difficult if the federal government and each state government do not commit to increasing their investment in education at the elementary, senior secondary and tertiary levels.

And it is best to state it clearly: "On education, I will start by reversing allocation to the educational sector in 2024 to the 10.8% or more that it was in 2015." Such a number-driven commitment would do.

Alero: Is the Deep State Directing the State?

"Katsina Police Commissioner, Buba Sanusi, said, "Recall that on June 9, 2020, at about 7pm, a group of bandits numbering over 200 on motorbikes armed with sophisticated weapons and led by a notorious bandit, one Adamu Aliero Yankuzo, in collaboration with other gang leaders carried out an organised attack on Kadisau village in which 20 persons were killed while many others were injured.

In the course of investigation, a suspect, Bello Usman, confessed to having participated in the attacks and killings at Kadisau village of Faskari and others at Musawa, Matazu, Karaduwa and Yantumaki. The suspect also stated that the attack was masterminded by a notorious gang leader of bandits, one Adamu Aliero Yankuzo, in protest of the arrest of his son, one Sulaiman Adamu Aliero, 24.

Adamu Alero Yankuzo: **Wanted by the Police and Welcomed in the Palace** *(Pictures: Premium Times)*

Consequently, the command hereby wish [sic] to declare Adamu Aliero Yankuzo, 45, of Yankuzo village of Tsafe Local Government Area of Zamfara State, a notorious leader of groups of bandits terrorising Katsina and Zamfara states wanted and has placed a bounty of N5m on his head – dead or alive" a **Punch Newspaper** review of notable terrorists reported.

When Premium Times **broke the news** that this presumed fugitive was to be turbaned (crowned) as a community leader by the Emir of his town, it startled not a few. Of course, it made the victims of his alleged crimes, civilians and security officers, feel entirely powerless.

Worse still, Premium Times subsequently **reported** that "The ceremony was attended by the Zamfara State Commissioner for Security and Home Affairs, Mamman Tsafe; security advisor to the governor, Abubakar Dauran; Tsafe Local Government Chairman, Aminu Mudi, and representatives of the information commissioner, district heads and other traditional title holders and government officials."

Will Turbaning Adamu Alero Yankuzo reduce the number of people killed by armed groups in Zamfara State from 1,317 persons in 2021 to 5 persons as it was in 2017?

21 Armed Groups killed 4,006 people in Zamfara between 2015 and May 2022

Armed Group	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Grand Total
Zamfara Communal Militia (Nigeria)				116	530	160	532	362	**1700**
Military Forces of Nigeria (2015-)		20		71	215	308	553	102	**1269**
Unidentified Armed Group (Nigeria)	104	26	2	146	27	45	11	0	**361**
Police Forces of Nigeria (2015-)		0		140			78	1	**219**
Yansakai Militia				41	9	10	65	12	**137**
Civilian JTF: Civilian Joint Task Force					83				**83**
Fulani Ethnic Militia (Nigeria)			3		16	17	47		**83**
Unidentified Communal Militia (Nigeria)		3		63			0		**66**
Kaura Namoda Communal Militia (Nigeria)								20	**20**
Maru Communal Militia (Nigeria)							16		**16**
Katsina Communal Militia (Nigeria)				0	15	0			**15**
Islamic State (West Africa) and/or Boko Haram - Jamaatu Ahli is-Sunnah lid-Dawati wal-Jihad					12				**12**
Kanoma Communal Militia (Nigeria)							8		**8**
Fankashi Communal Militia (Nigeria)				7					**7**
Nahaci Communal Militia (Nigeria)							7		**7**
Ansaru								3	**3**
Nahuce Communal Militia (Nigeria)							0		**0**
NURTW: National Union of Road Transport Workers								0	**0**
Ruwan Tofa Communal Militia (Nigeria)							0		**0**
Grand Total	**104**	**49**	**5**	**584**	**907**	**540**	**1317**	**500**	**4006**
Source: ACLED; Analysis: Dataphyte Research									

The Zamfara State's government latter efforts to dissociate itself from the turbaning ceremony by mouthing a suspension of the Emir, after it had sent its delegates to celebrate and validate a famous terrorist when it could locate and apprehend him and his murderous gang, reveal that there is more to the architecture of terrorism and banditry in Nigeria than meets the public eye.

Premium Times reported that the Palace Secretary, Mr Yusuf, told its correspondent that the decision to turban the wanted terrorist was communicated to the Tsafe Local Government Area and Zamfara State government:

"We couldn't have done that without approval from the state government. We did it with the best of intentions and because we've seen the commitment so far. Our people can now go to the farm, and nothing happens to them. It used to be very difficult for everyone. Nobody was safe from the bandits' attacks, but we hope that the peace we are enjoying now will continue," he said.

Anyways, Chief Adamu Alero Yankuzo, the newly installed Sarkin Fulani of Yandoton Daji Emirate himself, has **assured** the Emir and the people that "he would do whatever it takes to prevent attacks on communities in the emirate."

One can only wish the people of Zamfara (and Katsina) well as Mr Adamu Alero joins his forces with the Nigerian Armed Forces and the Nigerian Police Force to reduce the number of people killed by armed groups in Zamfara State from 1,317 persons in 2021 to 5 persons as it was in 2017

Osinbajo and APC's Health Agenda

Vice President Osinbajo, who presumably doubles as the vice leader of his party, the All Progressives Congress, just successfully underwent surgery at the Duchess International Hospital, GRA, Ikeja, Lagos.

And again, the Central Bank Governor, Godwin Emefiele, **said** we need to do "everything that needs to be done to improve the level of health care and education in Nigeria. We should all put our hands on deck to get this done. But I repeat your [sic] selfish interest of CBN here is that we need to stop medical and educational tourism in Nigeria."

To this end, he thanked the Vice-President for undergoing surgery at the Private hospital as this "proves that world-class hospitals exist in the country", maintaining that what Mr Oshinbajo had done "is to set an exemplary example to say that in Nigeria, you can go to a hospital and get

treated no matter how highly placed that you are."

Actually, Mr Emefiele had accompanied the Vice President when he opened that same hospital, The Duchess International Hospital, Ikeja, **9 months ago**.
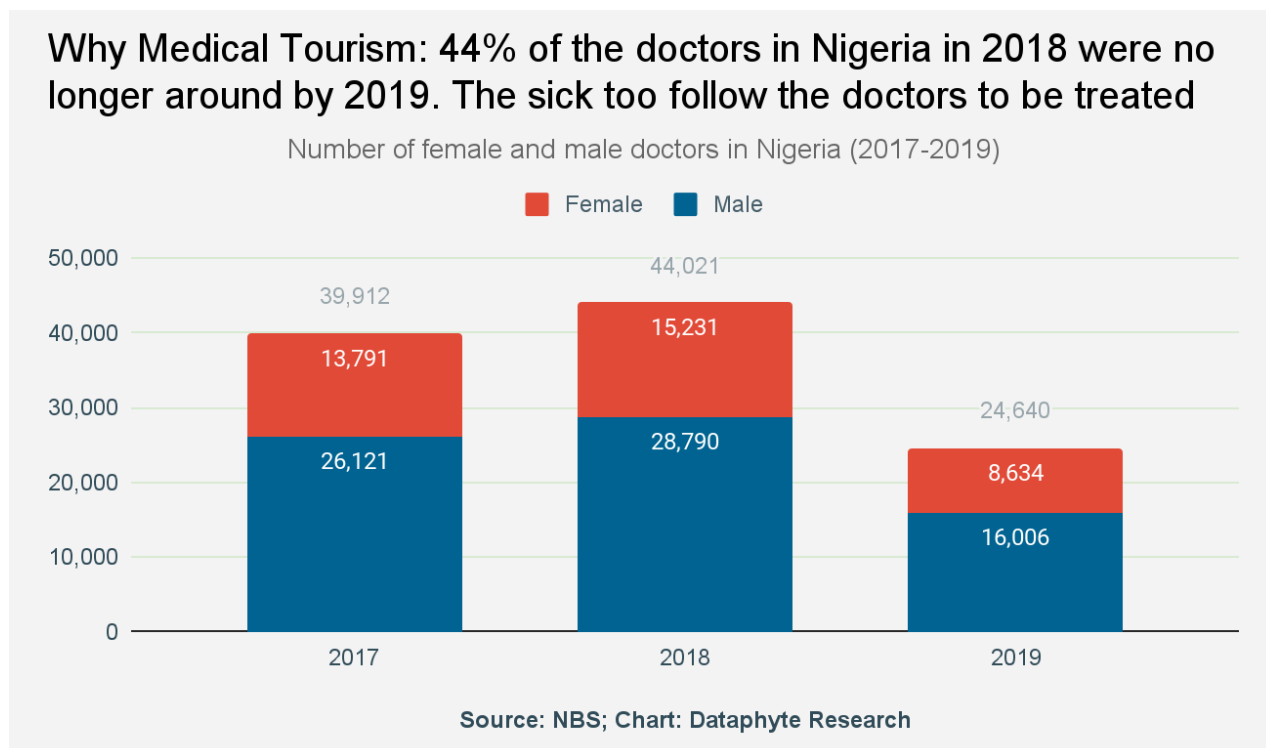
Thus, Mr Emefiele upbraided the APC leader, a ranking medical tourist abroad, on the "need to stop medical and educational tourism" and praised the APC vice leader's patronage of Duchess Hospital as the solution to medical tourism in Nigeria instead.

What he did not say is that of the less than 400 orthopaedic surgeons serving Nigeria's 170 million population as of 2017, 3 were pulled out in addition to 3 other specialists to attend to the Vice President's fracture, which he sustained while playing squash.

The number of orthopaedic surgeons in Nigeria might be fewer now, owing to the mass exodus of doctors from the country in the last seven years.

Mr Emefiele thought that building more private hospitals like Duchess Hospital would discourage Nigerians from reaching out of the country for medical treatments.

Obviously, he did not consider that people leave the country with CBN's precious dollars in search of doctors because their doctors, too, had left them behind.

Why Medical Tourism: 44% of the doctors in Nigeria in 2018 were no longer around by 2019. The sick too follow the doctors to be treated

Number of female and male doctors in Nigeria (2017-2019)

Legend: ■ Female ■ Male

Year	Female	Male	Total
2017	13,791	26,121	39,912
2018	15,231	28,790	44,021
2019	8,634	16,006	24,640

Source: NBS; Chart: Dataphyte Research

The National Bureau of Statistics data showed that about 44% of the doctors in Nigeria in 2018 were no longer around by 2019. Of the 44,021 doctors in 2018, 19,381 had left, leaving 24,640 behind.

Mr Emefiele worries because the March CBN balance of payment (BoP) report revealed that Nigerians paid $11.01bn for healthcare-related services in foreign countries.

In fact, the $39.66bn spent on foreign education and healthcare-related services between 2010 and 2020 is almost equivalent to the current value of the country's foreign reserves, which stood at $39.51bn as of March 23. This has economic consequences, as more naira chases fewer dollars and drives up the price of the dollar, that is, the foreign exchange rate.

The Presidential candidates for the 2023 election may need to see beyond what Mssrs Osinbajo and Emefiele are painting and prescribing as the solution to the medical tourism in the country and its economic toll on the price of the dollar and other foreign currencies in Nigeria.

They must state how they want to retain and return exiled medical doctors. And it begins by saying, "I will reverse the 44% decrease in the population of Medical doctors in 2019 by increasing the current 2022 figure by 44% by 2025, and this is how I intend to achieve it."

Till the next episode of Agenda 2023, we wish Senator Ademola Adeleke success as the governor of Osun State, the Emir of Yandoton Daji a long reign and peaceful coexistence with the terrorists in his Emirate, and Nigeria's Vice President Yemi Oshinbajo a speedy recovery in Lagos.

2023 Elections: Performance Appraisal Time for States and their Governors-Lagos State

Published on November 11, 2022

Dennis Amata

As political parties and their respective candidates continue with their political campaigns, stating their plans for the next four years for the people and seeking their votes ahead of the 2023 elections, Dataphyte releases its latest state governors' performance appraisals report.

In this series, we evaluate the performance of Babajide Sanwo-Olu, the current governor of Lagos state, using selected key socio-economic indicators.

Sanwo-Olu was elected as the state's chief executive officer in 2019, having polled 739,445 votes to defeat his closest contender, Jimi Agbaje of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), in the 2019 guber polls. Since then, he has managed the affairs of the state.

On April 29, 2022, he formally expressed interest in continuing the work his administration started 3 and half years ago by picking up a Nomination and Expression of Interest form for a second term in office.

As the 16 candidates for the Lagos state governorship position continue to outline their plans for the state and its residents, Dataphyte examines how the state has performed under the current administration, highlighting specific socio-economic indicators in the state that should inform the candidates' manifestos and plans ahead of the governorship election in 2023.

GDP, IGR & Fiscal Sustainability

GDP

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) **suggests** using real GDP growth rate as an indicator of the general health of an economy. Hence, GDP growth is one approach to evaluate both the size and performance of a state's economy.

According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS)' most recent GDP data, Lagos state has an estimated GDP of **$74.674 billion**, ranking as the state with the highest GDP in the country. It is essential to state that this data was released in 2010, and so far has been the only time that the NBS has published the subnational GDP reports.

However, in 2016, the Lagos Bureau of Statistics (LBS) said that Lagos had an estimated GDP of **$145.141billion** (N27.125 trillion). By using an average annual growth rate of 4.2%, the LBS predicted that the state's GDP would reach N628 trillion ($157.728 billion) by 2018.

Due to the unavailability of data, the current GDP of the state, particularly the growth rate under the Sanwo-Olu administration, cannot be determined. However, the 2021 GDP data published by BudgIT in its recent state of states report puts Lagos' GDP at **N41.17 trillion**, leading others as the state with the highest GDP in Nigeria.

IGR

Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) is another metric to assess how a state is performing economically. This explains why, in discussions about states' economic performance — particularly on revenue — many people, Lagosians especially, would **point** to the enormity of the state's IGR, and how it is greater than the combined IGR of numerous states in Nigeria.

Without a doubt, Lagos state has the highest IGR in Nigeria, frequently exceeding the total IGR of two or three other regions combined.

Under the Sanwo-Olu administration, the state has maintained its record of generating the highest internal revenue and has recorded only positive growth so far.

The IGR data (revised) sourced from NBS shows that, in 2019, Lagos state generated a total of N646.614 billion as internal revenue. The following year, the state recorded a 2.07% increase in its internal revenue despite the financial storm caused by the coronavirus (COVID-19), which had an impact on the IGR of many states in Nigeria in 2020.

At the end of 2021, the total IGR generated by the state stood at N753.465 billion, 14.16% more than its 2020 figure, still maintaining its position as the state with the highest IGR and one **out of the only two** states in Nigeria that generates more IGR than the amount it receives as FAAC disbursement.

Every month, the Federation Account Allocation Committee (FAAC) disburses funds among Nigeria's three tiers of government. The disbursed **funds** are a collection of the government revenue generated from tax, oil sales, and other statutory sources in the previous month.

While many states in Nigeria **depend heavily** on FAAC disbursement for survival, it is the opposite for Lagos state, as data shows the state's IGR far exceeds allocations from the central government.

Lagos state's IGR vs FAAC Allocation between 2018-2020 (N'Billion)

Lagos' 2019 IGR is higher than the amount it received as FAAC allocation in 3 years.

■ IGR   ■ FAAC

Year	IGR	FAAC
2019	646.614	117.884
2020	659.996	115.933
2021	753.465	135.077
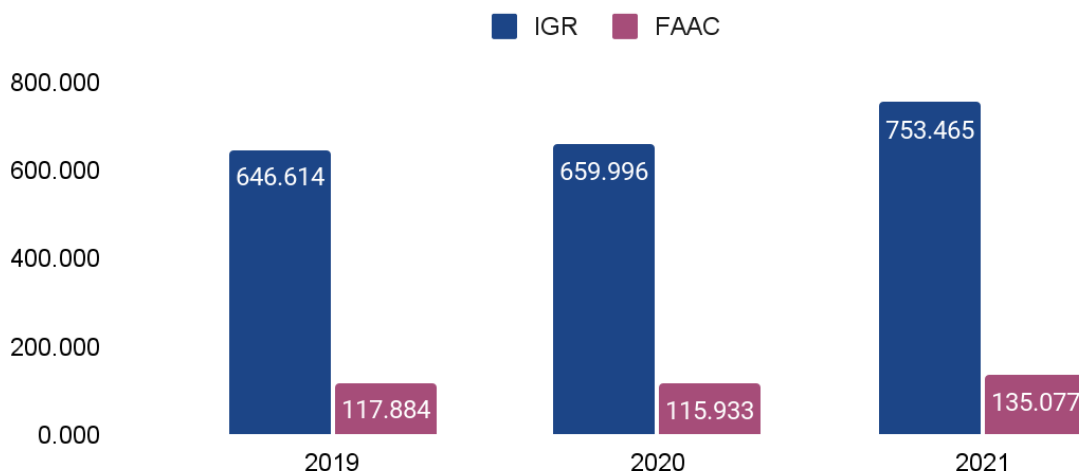
Source: NBS | Chart: Dataphyte

For instance, in 2019, the total FAAC allocation Lagos received was N117.884 billion. The following year its FAAC allocation dropped to N115.933 billion. In 2021, the FAAC allocation was N135.077 billion.

The total amount Lagos state received in these three years (2019-2021) as FAAC allocation was only N368.89 billion, while it generated N2.06 trillion as internal revenue within the same period.

Overall, the IGR growth under the Sanwo-Olu administration has been impressive. However, the state may still need to increase its revenue to meet its infrastructural needs, as data shows that it still borrows heavily to fund this. Therefore, the 2023 governorship candidates in the state must prioritise more innovative ways to generate revenues.

Fiscal Sustainability

In **2021**, BudgIT assessed the fiscal sustainability of Nigeria's 36 states using four indexes which include the ability of states to meet their operating expenses; the ability to meet operating expenses and loan repayment without recourse to borrowing; fiscal power to borrow more given low debt burden vis-à-vis how much is generated in a year; and prioritisation of capital over recurrent expenditures.

Lagos State ranked fourth in the fiscal performance rankings for 2021, the same spot it held in 2020. However, the 2022 ranking released by BudgIT in October reveals that the state made progress, emerging third overall among the 36 states evaluated. This demonstrates an improvement in the state's fiscal performance in the period examined. The state must, however, be mindful of its significant debt profile.

According to data from the Debt Management Office (DMO), Lagos state was the most indebted state in the nation at the end of 2021, with a total domestic debt of N658.960 billion. The total debt was N444.227 billion when the current administration assumed office in 2019. This indicates that between 2019 and 2021, Lagos's domestic debt under Sanwo-Olu grew by 48.34%.

Lagos state domestic and foreign debt (2019-2021)

Year	Domestic Debt (N'billion)	External Debt ($'billion)
2019	444.227	1.396
2020	508.779	1.406
2021	658.960	1.334

Table: Dataphyte • Source: NBS • Created with Datawrapper

In foreign debt, Lagos is also the most indebted state in Nigeria, even though it reduced its foreign debt by $72.96 million in 2021. According to DMO, Lagos state foreign debt liability as of December 2021 stood at $1.334 billion, the highest among the 36 states.

Although BudgIT asserted that the state's total debt (domestic and foreign) is within sustainable debt limits using indicators such as the debt to GDP, debt to revenue, debt service to revenue, and personnel cost to revenue ratios in 2021, it nevertheless cautioned that the state is extremely exposed to exchange rate volatility, particularly since its foreign debt makes up 45.56% of its total debt stock. Plans to repay these debts and cut borrowings should form key components of the manifestos of the candidates vying for the state's highest office.

Unemployment rate

When he was elected governor in 2019, Sanwo-Olu **declared** that one of his administration's top priorities would be fostering the state's economic growth.

"We will develop specific and concrete plans to establish the types of businesses and investments in Lagos that will provide sustainable growth and job opportunities for the 21st century," Sanwo-Olu, the governor-elect as he was then, said.

Recently, the Lagos state governor said that his administration, in the last three years, had spent over **N10 billion** in grants to strengthen the Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSEFT's) activities geared towards creating job opportunities in the state.

Despite the promise to prioritise job creation and the funds the state had committed to boosting employment in the state, data from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) shows that the unemployment rate in the state has increased under the Sanwo-Olu-led government.

Before Sanwo-Olu came into office, the state's unemployment rate was **14.5%**, and it ranked as the 5th state with the lowest unemployment rate in 2018. But according to the NBS's Q4 2020 labour force statistics, Lagos' unemployment rate is now 26.9%, although now ranking as the 3rd state in Nigeria with the lowest unemployment rate. Given that there haven't been any new unemployment statistics published since the first quarter of 2021, there are worries that the state's unemployment rate may even be higher. Nevertheless, the 2020 data shows a 12.4% increase in the state's unemployment between 2018 and 2020.

The governorship candidates should take into account this increase in the unemployment rate. Whoever emerges as the winner will need to develop workable measures to lower the state's unemployment rate.

Poverty rate

Poverty in Nigeria is pervasive and has been rising annually in recent years. Thus, it has become a major campaign point for politicians seeking elective offices both at the state and federal levels.

In 2019, Sanwo-Olu **said** that the essence of government in any country or state is to eradicate poverty. He promised that his administration would focus on poverty eradication and provide an avenue to assist businesses to thrive in Lagos state.

As part of the effort to achieve this, the state government conceived several initiatives to empower the residents. According to the government, an estimated **48,000** households have been rescued from poverty in the state since the implementation of the state's various poverty initiative programmes.

While no subnational poverty headcount data has been published to assess the impact of the various poverty alleviation initiatives conceived and implemented by the government since assuming office in 2019, the most recent poverty headcount data by the NBS places Lagos state's poverty rate at 4.50%, making it the state in Nigeria with the lowest poverty rate out of the 35 states that were assessed in 2019.

However, given that the most recent subnational poverty headcount data is from 2019, this may not accurately reflect the state's situation right now. The number of people in the state who live in poverty may have increased (even though the state may still maintain its position of having the lowest poverty rate) due to the notable rise in the national poverty rate.

According to data from the Poverty World Clock, 69.98 million Nigerians now live in poverty, up from 65.83 million in 2019. As the World Bank **predicts** that another 7 million Nigerians might be pushed into poverty at the end of 2022. Lagos state may experience a corresponding increase, especially as the number of unemployed people in the state continues to rise. Clear and innovative policies for reducing poverty in the state should be a critical part of Lagos' 2023 governorship candidates' plan.

Number of Out-of-School Children

Lagos has 254,654 out-of-school children, making it the 17th state with the highest number of out-of-school-children in Nigeria, according to the 2018 data provided by the NBS. A breakdown of the figure showed that there were more boys (170,279) than girls (84,375) who were out of school in Lagos. Since then, no data on the Number of Out-of-School Children at the subnational level has been released by the NBS. However, in January 2022, Hon Wahab Alawiye-King, the Executive Chairman of Lagos State Universal Basic Education Board (LASUBEB), **disclosed** that the state now has over 2 million out-of-school children.

As part of the Sanwo-Olu led-government to tackle the problem — the high Number of Out-of-School Children — the government introduced the EKOEXCEL, a transformational intervention **launched** in 2019 to provide quality education to both the rich and the poor in the state and

upskill teachers leveraging technology. The Executive Chairman of the LASUBEB **claimed** that the intervention has yielded tremendous results since its commencement, with many out-of-school children now enrolled.

While no new data has been published to assess the programme's impact and give accurate data on the current Number of Out-of-School Children in the state, the current data reveals that the state has a high Number of Out-of-School Children, which needs to be addressed.

Moreover, a new report released by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) this year stated that the Number of Out-of-School Children in Nigeria has risen to **20 million** from the initial 10 million. With this high jump, Lagos may also record an increase. Thus, policies and programmes to improve access to education in the state should be a priority for candidates and an issue of interest for the electorates. The policies should also include the quality of learning, school infrastructure, and teachers' welfare.

Ease of Doing Business Ranking

The business climate of a state plays a big role in attracting both domestic and foreign investment. Investors are overly careful in their choice of investment location for their monies.

Although Lagos state remains a top investment destination in Nigeria, the most recent subnational data on the ease of doing business ranked the state **20th** out of 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). The state had an overall score of 5.28 out of a total index score of 10, which was assessed on **four thematic** areas — Infrastructure and Security, Transparency and Access to Information, Regulatory Environment, and Workforce Readiness.

By this ranking, Lagos state is not among the top states with the ease of doing business and may not be a preferred place for investors; but for its huge available market and other factors, the state has remained an attractive option for business owners, despite the low ranking.

While the Sanwo-Olu administration has repeatedly assured the business community in the state of his administration's commitment to improving the business environment and making it more attractive to investors, the governorship candidates will need to pay attention to the four thematic areas of the ease of doing business, with a plan to improving them and maximizing business opportunities in the state.

Under-5 Mortality Rate and Access to Health

With respect to health, Lagos state fares relatively well especially compared to other states. According to data from the NBS, the under-five mortality rate in Lagos is estimated at **59 deaths per 1,000 live births** and ranks 5th out of 36 states and the FCT with the lowest under-five mortality rate. Although the under-five mortality rate in Lagos is a little lower than the average **62 deaths per 1,000 live births** in Lower-Middle-Income Countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, it is still much higher than the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) target of **20 per 1,000** live births. Therefore, commitment to reducing mortality rates, improving access to healthcare in the state, and meeting the SDGs target should be a significant plan of the candidates seeking to manage the affairs of the state for the next four years.

A second point on health performance in the state has to do with health insurance coverage. To achieve universal health coverage and boost access to affordable and quality healthcare services in Lagos, the government launched its mandatory Health Insurance Scheme (HIS) for the state's residents. According to Dr. Emmanuella Zamba, the General Manager of the Lagos State Health Management Agency (LASHMA), the scheme **currently** has 623,183 persons enrolled, up from the 5,000 it had about 3 years ago. She also noted that the number of primary and secondary healthcare providers (public and private) has equally increased from 40 to 250. This represents a 12,364% increase in the number of persons now covered by the state's HIS and a 525% increase in the number of healthcare providers.

Though commendable, if the figures are anything to go by, particularly the number of persons covered in the HIS, it means that only 4.05% of the state's estimated **15.4 million** population is covered in the state HIS. More effort will be needed in this regard. As such, the governorship candidates should factor it into their manifestos as they tour the state to seek the support of the electorates in the upcoming governorship election.

2023 Elections: Performance Appraisal Time for States and their Governors-Kwara State

Published on October 28, 2022

Dennis Amata

According to the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) timetable and schedule of activities for the 2023 general elections, the Kwara State governorship election will be held on March 11, 2023.

Governorship campaigns commenced on **October 12, 2022**, and like previous election cycles, the 14 candidates vying for the governorship position in office in Kwara state will lay out their plans for the next four years for the state and its people. Among the contestants for the highest office in the state is AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq, the incumbent governor seeking a second term.

On **March 10, 2019**, AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq won the Kwara state governorship election and has presided over the affairs of the state for the past three and a half years. In April, AbdulRahman announced his intention to contest a second term and subsequently **secured** his party's ticket, joining the list of other candidates for the governorship in 2023.

As candidates and political parties continue with their campaigns ahead of the Kwara state governorship election, it is essential to bring issue-based voting to the forefront of voter education. Thus, in this article, Dataphyte examines some crucial socio-economic indicators in Kwara state, particularly assessing the current administration's performance for the past 3 and half years from a data perspective, where such data is available. We also present the current state of these issues to potentially shape the manifestos and campaign promises of the 14 governorship candidates as they make their case to the people of Kwara state in this campaign season.

GDP, IGR & Fiscal Strength

GDP

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) simply refers to the **total monetary** or market value of all the finished goods and services produced within a country's borders (in this respect, Kwara State) in a given period.

The GDP gives information about the size of the economy of a state and how the economy is

performing. In fact, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) **explains** that the growth rate of real GDP is often used as an indicator of the general health of the economy.

The latest GDP data released by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) shows that Kwara state has a total GDP of **$4.12 billion**. This places it as the 9th state in Nigeria with the lowest GDP and the 2nd lowest in the North central region. Although no subnational GDP report has been released since the current government assumed office, some recent reports put the GDP of Kwara state currently at an estimated **$3.7 billion**.

If this report and other recent extrapolations are anything to go by, it suggests that the state's GDP has declined over the years. Therefore, increasing the GDP should form a critical agenda of the candidates for the state in the 2023 election.

IGR

Another indicator for assessing a state's economic performance is the amount of revenue it can generate internally. As a matter of fact, economic experts hold the view that a state's ability to drive sustainable economic activities, such as boosting employment and providing efficient public service, shows in the level of independent revenue it can generate.

According to the data from NBS, in 2018, Kwara state generated a total of N23.05 billion in internal revenue. In 2019, the state recorded a 32.93 percent increase in its IGR, bringing the total revenue generated to N30.64 billion. Dataphyte's review of the state's IGR from 2010 shows that the 2019 figure stands as the highest IGR the state has generated so far.

Kwara state's IGR vs FAAC Allocation between 2019-2020 (N'Billion)

■ IGR   ■ FAAC

	2019	2020	2021
IGR	30.64	19.62	26.96
FAAC	42.43	42.10	44.50

(Y-axis: 0.00, 10.00, 20.00, 30.00, 40.00, 50.00)
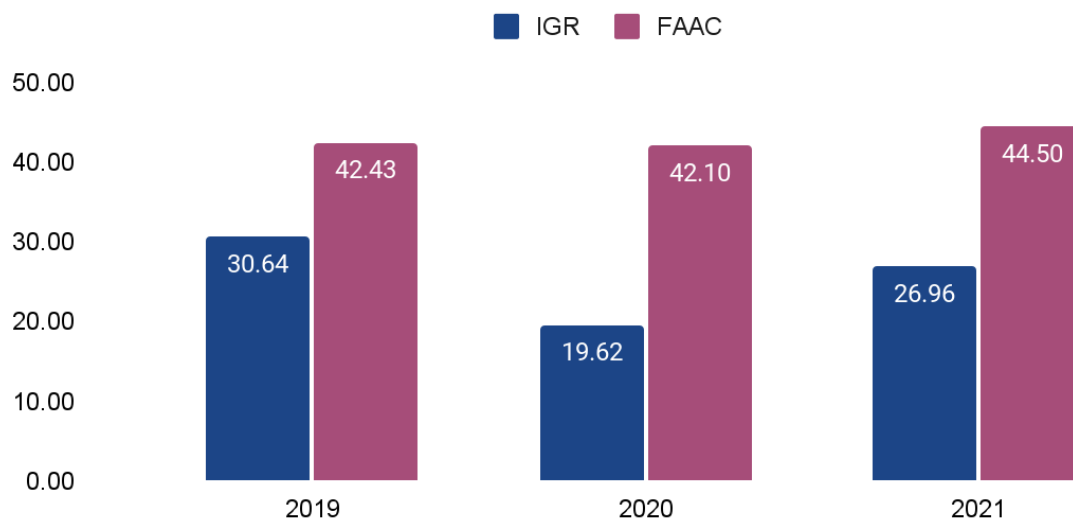
Source: NBS I Chart: Dataphyte

In 2020, Kwara state's internal revenue dropped by 35.95 percent to N19.62 billion. Compared with the other 17 states that recorded negative revenue growth in 2020, Kwara state had the 4th worst decline. The Kwara State Internal Revenue Service (KW-IRS) Executive Chair, Shade Omoniyi, attributed the sharp decline to the effects of COVID-19 and other **related factors**.

The 2021 full-year IGR data that NBS recently published shows that Kwara state generated N26.96 billion, indicating a bounceback from the impact of COVID-19.
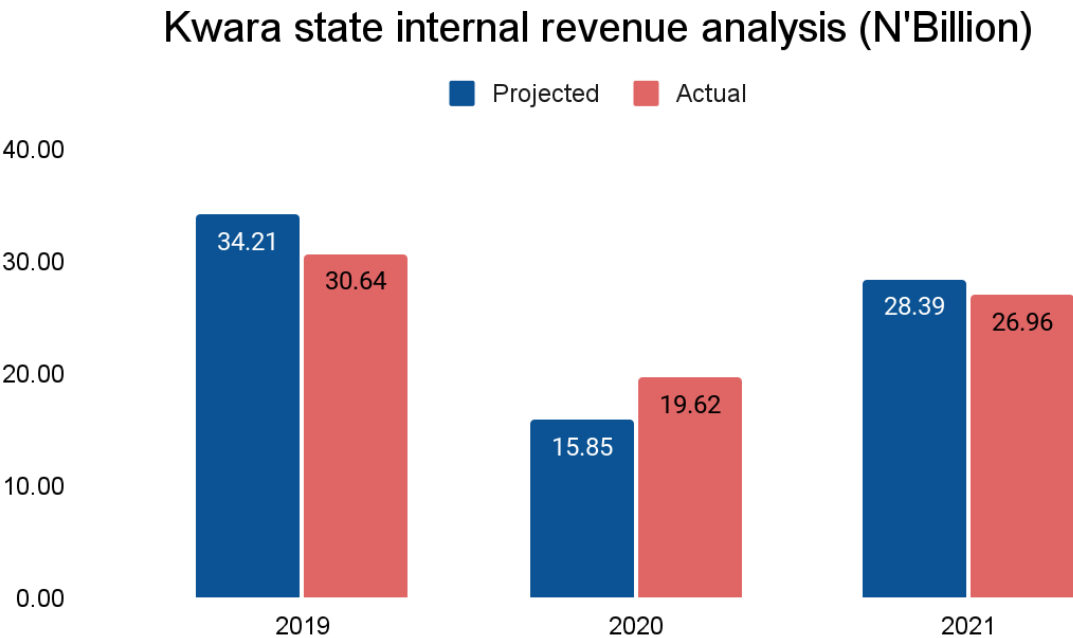
While the positive gains the state has recorded in its IGR in recent years are impressive, it would need to consolidate on these gains if it hopes to steer its finances away from over-dependence on FAAC allocations, as data suggest that the state is still highly reliant on FAAC allocations.

Between 2019 to 2021, Kwara state generated only N77.22 billion as its internal revenue. However, in the same period, it received N129.03 billion as FAAC allocation. This shows that the amount the state received as FAAC allocation in 3 years is 40.15 percent higher than the IGR it generated within the same period, indicating a high level of dependence on FAAC allocation. This is unhealthy for the state and worrisome, as Dataphyte pointed out in an **earlier report.**

On its budget performance, particularly with respect to IGR, there has been an improvement annually in the years under review, although it only surpassed its projected revenue once.

In 2018, before the current administration came into office, the state government projected to generate a revenue of N26.53 billion. However, at the end of the year, it generated only N23.05 billion, representing 86.88 percent performance.

When the AbdulRahman-led government took over in 2019, the projected IGR was pegged at N34.21 billion, and the state achieved 89.57 percent of the projected revenue. In 2020, due to the impact of COVID-19, the state's projected IGR was reviewed to N15.85 billion. At the end of the year, the state surpassed the revenue, recording a 123.70 percent performance. In 2021, it recorded a 96.96 percent performance.

Kwara state internal revenue analysis (N'Billion)

Projected ■ **Actual** ■

- 2019: Projected 34.21, Actual 30.64
- 2020: Projected 15.85, Actual 19.62
- 2021: Projected 28.39, Actual 26.96

Source: Kwara State Budget Performance Report I Chart: Dataphye

As Kwara state consolidates its efforts in increasing its IGR post-COVID-19, a similar effort would also be needed to meet its projected revenue for the year. Therefore, its governorship candidates would need to develop a clear plan to achieve this.

Fiscal Sustainability

In **2021**, BudgIT assessed the fiscal sustainability of Nigeria's 36 states. According to the assessment, which used 4 indexes — the ability of states to meet their operating expenses; the ability to meet operating expenses and loan repayment without having to borrow; fiscal power to

borrow more given low debt burden vis-à-vis how much is generated in a year, and prioritisation of capital over recurrent expenditures to determine the health of states — Kwara state came 10th place, standing as the best-performing state in the North-Central region. In the earlier **2020** ranking, the state had ranked 12th out of the 36 states, indicating its fiscal performance had seen slight improvement in 2021. However, there is still work to be done with respect to the state's increasing debt.

According to the data from Debt Management Office (DMO), at the end of December 2021, Kwara state had a total domestic debt of N93.40 billion. In 2019, the total domestic debt was N63 billion, indicating a 48.25 percent increase in domestic debt between 2019 and 2021.

The state's total domestic debt as of December 2021 is 17.32 percent higher than the total IGR it generated between 2019 to 2021.

Kwara state domestic and foreign debt (2019 - 2021)

Year	Domestic Debt (N'Billion)	External Debt ($'Million)
2019	63.00	1400.00
2020	63.60	47.06
2021	93.40	48.87

Table: Dataphyte • Source: Debt Management Office • Created with Datawrapper

The state recorded a significant drop in foreign debt between 2019 and December 2021. According to the data from the DMO, in 2019, Kwara state had a total foreign debt of $1,400 million ($1.4 billion), making it the second state with the highest external debt out of the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT)

In 2020, Kwara's foreign debt declined by 96.51 percent to $47.06 million. However, as of the end of 2021, the foreign debt stood at $48.87 million, a 3.84 percent increase over the 2020 figure.

Unemployment rate

One of common promises made by nearly every government in Nigeria, both at the state and federal levels, is the creation of job opportunities for the people. It was the same for Governor

Abdulrahman Abdulrazaq of Kwara State.

At the 5th Annual General Meeting of the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN) Kwara/ Kogi Chapter shortly after his inauguration, the Governor reiterated that his administration would collaborate with manufacturers in the state to create more job opportunities for the youth. He restated this in **2020**, noting that job creation remains a priority in his administration.

Before Governor Abdulrahman assumed office in 2019, the unemployment data in the third quarter of 2018 showed that the state had a **21.13 percent** unemployment rate; but the fourth- quarter of 2020, labour force statistics released by the NBS put the unemployment rate in Kwara at **42.5 percent** — a 21.37 percent increase in its 2018 figures.

With a 42.5.71 percent unemployment rate in 2020, Kwara state currently has the lowest unemployment rate in the North-central. However, the current rate is still a substantial increase in its 2018 rate. Whoever of the 14 governorship candidates that emerges winner will need to develop strategies to reduce the high unemployment rate, especially as no new unemployment data has been released since the first quarter of 2021 and, thus, may not represent the state's current reality.

Poverty rate

One of the many actions the Governor of Kwara State, Abdulrahman Abdulrazaq, took when he took over in 2019 was to forward a bill to the Kwara state House of Assembly to institutionalise his various initiatives to counter poverty in the state.

The bill, which the lawmakers passed, established the Kwara State Social Investment Programmes (KWASSIPs) with initiatives such as the **K-Power**, **Owo Arugbo**, and **Owo Isowu**. The state government noted that the initiatives were created for the purpose of lifting the people of the state out of poverty.

Dataphyte's checks on the **KWASSIP** portal show that implementation of the various initiatives commenced between 2020 and 2021. The impacts of these various poverty reduction initiatives established by the government cannot be determined, especially as the NBS has since published no recent poverty headcount data under the Abdulrahman administration.

However, the 2019 poverty headcount data released by the NBS shows that Kwara state has a poverty rate of 20.35 percent, the lowest poverty rate among the 6 North-central states and 9th

out of the 34 states that were assessed that year.

But then, with the increase that has since been recorded in the national poverty rate between 2019 till date, the poverty rate in Kwara state may have also climbed up.

According to the Poverty World Clock data, 65.83 million Nigerians were living in poverty in 2019, but now, the number has risen to 69.98 million. With this increase and another 7 million Nigerians that the World Bank has **projected** that may be pushed into poverty at the end of 2022, the 2019 poverty rate in Kwara state may not adequately capture the number of poor people in the state.

Therefore, clear plans and policies for reducing poverty in the state should form a critical part of the agenda of governorship candidates in the upcoming election.

Budgetary Allocation to Key Sectors-Education, Health & Agriculture

Investments in education and **health** are necessary for **accelerating** the economic growth of every society. Hence, the reason the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) advises governments to allocate **15 percent to 20 percent** of their total public spending for the fiscal year to education. It's for this similar reason that the **Abuja Declaration** recommends 15 percent of government annual spending for the health sector.

A review of the budgetary allocation to these 2 sectors between 2019 to 2021 shows that the state has always met the minimum suggested benchmarks, except for health in 2021.

In 2019, Kwara allocated 17.95 percent of its total budget for the fiscal year to education. The share of allocation to education dropped to 17.29 percent in 2020 but not below the advised minimum 15 percent benchmark of UNESCO. The 2021 allocation recorded the highest share of budgetary allocation to the sector — 23.06 percent.

Percentage of the Kwara state total budget that went to education, health and agriculture sector (2019-2021)

Year	Education	Health	Agriculture
2019	17.95%	17.84%	
2020	17.29%	31.17%	3.84%
2021	23.06%	12.15%	3.09%

Table: Dataphyte • Source: Kwara State Budget • Created with Datawrapper

For health, the highest share of allocation was in 2020, double the 15 percent of the Abuja Declaration benchmark. This may be attributed to COVID-19 as the share of health allocation in 2021 dropped to 12.15 percent, even below the 2019 record.

While the state's share of budgetary allocations to the education and health sector has been quite commendable, the share of allocation to agriculture has been extremely low, far below the Maputo Declaration recommendation. A review of the state's 2020 and 2021 budgets reveals that the government only allocated 3.84 percent and 3.09 percent of its annual spending to agriculture, respectively.

Given that in Kwara state, agriculture is the **primary source** of income, particularly in the rural parts, better investment in the sector, in terms of higher budgetary allocation, could help the state to maximise the economic gains in the sector.

Number of Out-of-School Children

The most recent data on the Number of Out-of-School Children in Nigeria was published by the NBS in 2018. According to the data, Nigeria has a total of 10.19 million out-of-school children. Of this figure, Kwara state accounts for **84,247**. Since then, no data has been released, especially one that gives a breakdown of the figure by state.

As part of its initiative to boost school attendance in the state, the current government introduced the **Ounje Ofe** programme. The impact of this initiative by the AbdulRahman administration to

reduce the Number of Out-of-School Children in the state cannot be assessed, as there hasn't been new data showing the Number of Out-of-School Children at the sub-national level.

However, a recent report by UNESCO noted that the Number of Out-of-School Children in Nigeria has risen to 20 million. This high increase will also impact the current Number of Out-of-School Children in Kwara state. Thus, policies to improve access to education, as well as the quality of learning, should be key in the agenda of the candidates for the state.

Ease of Doing Business Ranking

One of the key factors investors consider before choosing an investment destination is the business climate. As such, governments, both at the state and federal levels, endeavour to create a conducive business environment to attract investors, considering its economic importance and contribution to the state's economic development.

In this regard, the Kwara state fares poorly. According to the latest subnational data on the ease of doing business that was published in a report by the Presidential Enabling Business Environment Council (PEBEC), Kwara state is the 7th least favourable investment destination in Nigeria. The state came in **30th** place out of the 36 states and FCT in the PEBEC ease of doing business ranking, with a score of 4.70 out of a total index score of 10.

This should also be an area of concern for candidates in the 2023 elections. For the state to boost its economic fortune, a commitment to improving the business environment should form a crucial part of the plans of the 2023 governorship candidates.

Under-5 Mortality Rate and Access to Health

On health, the indicators in Kwara state are not quite impressive. According to the data from NBS, the under-five mortality rate in the Kwara state is estimated at **74 deaths per 1,000 live births.**

Although the state has the second lowest rate in the North-central region, the mortality rate is, however, higher than the average of **62 deaths per 1,000 live births** in Lower-Middle-Income Countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) target of **20 per 1,000 live births.**

Another important point to highlight under the health indicator is the state's poor access to quality healthcare. According to a **study** by Lawal and Lodenstein (2022) there is limited access to quality healthcare, especially for rural dwellers in Kwara state. While the current administration

has taken some measures to address the issue of access to healthcare in the state by setting up a **new health** insurance scheme, known as the 'Go Live', more efforts will be needed to improve access to quality healthcare in the state, particularly a commitment to reducing the under-five mortality rate. This should also be a top priority for the governorship candidates.

2023 Elections: Performance Appraisal Time for States and their Governors-Delta State

Published on September 30, 2022

Dennis Amata

On **October 20,** 2014, Dr. Ifeanyi Okowa formally announced his intention to run for Governor of Delta State on the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP)'s platform.

His ambitions for the people and the state **included**, among other things, wealth creation, youth employment, and economic diversification, especially in agriculture. He also spoke up on **health and education**, promising to create effective policies to improve both.

Fast forward to April 13, 2015, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) **declared** him the winner of the governorship election, having polled a total of 724,680 votes to defeat his closest contender, Great Ogboru of the Labour Party (LP), who secured **130,028** votes.

On May 29, 2015, Okowa was **administered** the oath of office by the then Chief Judge of the state, Justice Marshall Umukoro, at the state's capital, marking the beginning of his administration as the 12th Executive Governor of the oil-producing state.

He was re-elected Governor of Delta State **in 2019**, and by June 12, 2023, Okowa would have completed his second term as the **12th Governor** of Delta state. If his political party, the PDP, wins the 2023 presidential election, he will become the Vice President of Nigeria as he is on the ticket as the vice presidential candidate of Atiku Abubakar.

How well did Delta State do under his leadership? Let's look at some crucial socio-economic indicators under his administration and how the state fared.

Why? It is a performance review for a potential vice president who will be in charge of more than one state in the country. But more importantly, it is necessary to spotlight the issues that directly impact citizens of the state and should influence the electorates' decision of who they give their mandate to.

GDP, IGR & Fiscal Strength

GDP

Based on available data, Delta state has an estimated Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of **$14.8 billion**. Although it is difficult to estimate the actual GDP growth rate under the Okowa-led administration due to a lack of data, the chief economic adviser to the governor of Delta State, Dr. Kingsley Emu, however, claimed that there was over a 50% growth rate.

He claimed that between 2015 and 2019, the state's GDP **increased** from N2.961 trillion to N4.471 trillion. Using the average exchange rate of $306.64 for the year, this comes to $14.580 billion.

Based on the figure provided by the governor's chief economic adviser, it could be said that the state's GDP increased by **51%** from 2015 to 2019.

GDP simply refers to the **total monetary** or market value of all the finished goods and services produced within a country's borders (in this respect, Delta state) in a specific period.

IGR

One of the ways to **evaluate** a state's capacity to drive long-term economic activity, such as boosting employment and offering effective public services, is through the independent revenue it can generate. The Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) of a state demonstrates its financial strength and ability to function well, independent of the allocation from the federation account.

Even though Delta state's internal revenue increased annually during the review period, it is clear from our analysis that the state is mainly dependent on allocations from the Federation Account Allocation Committee (FAAC).

From 2016 to 2019, the IGR of Delta state grew steadily. But in 2020, it dipped by 7.65%, bringing the total IGR for 2020 to N59.73 billion from 64.68 billion in 2019. This drop may be attributed to the impact of the coronavirus that resulted in the shutdown of major economic activities in the country and globally.

Delta state's IGR vs FAAC Allocation between 2016-2020 (N'Billion)

■ IGR   ■ FACC
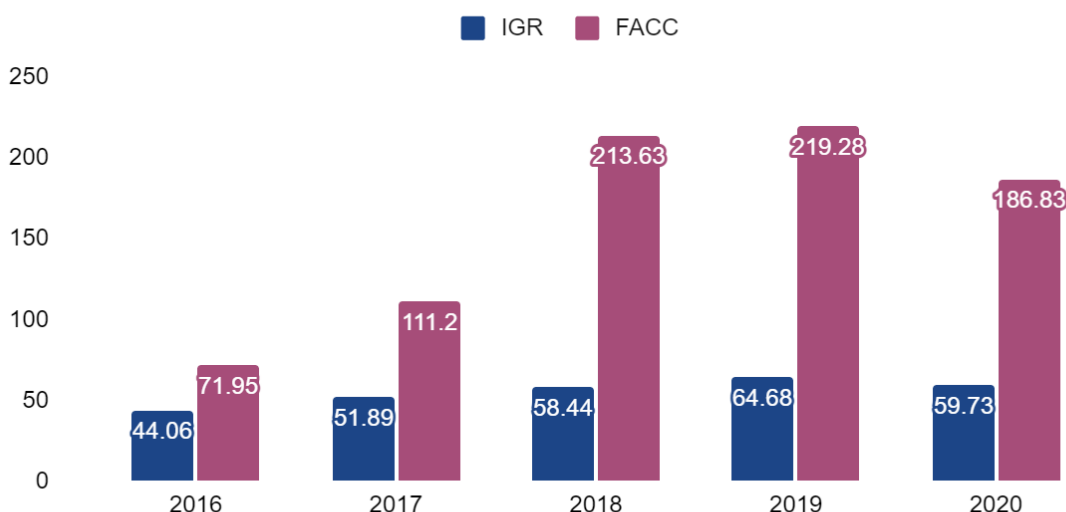
Source: NBS & Delta State Budget I Chart: Dataphyte

Although the 2021 full-year data is not published yet, the half-year data provided by the NBS shows that the state generated N41.93 billion internally between January and June, bringing the total internal revenue generated by the state between 2016 to 2021 half year to N380.46 billion.

Its FAAC allocation, on the other hand, was N802.89 billion from 2016 to 2020, indicating a heavy dependence on FAAC allocation, a situation that Dataphyte had identified in a **previous report** as worrisome, especially as the federal government struggles with revenue issues.

Apart from heavy dependence on FAAC allocation, a review of the state's budget performance report for the same period under review reveals that the actual IGR — the amount generated at the end of the fiscal year — has always been less than the projected amount. Except for 2020, Delta State has never met its internal revenue projections.

In 2016, the Delta state government projected to generate N75.40 billion internally as part of the revenue to fund its budget for that year. However, at the end of the year, it generated only N44.06 billion, representing 58.43% of IGR performance.

The following year, the projected internal revenue dropped to N70.17 billion, and the state could only generate N51.89 billion. This shows a 73.95% internal revenue performance.

Delta state internal revenue analysis (N'Billion)
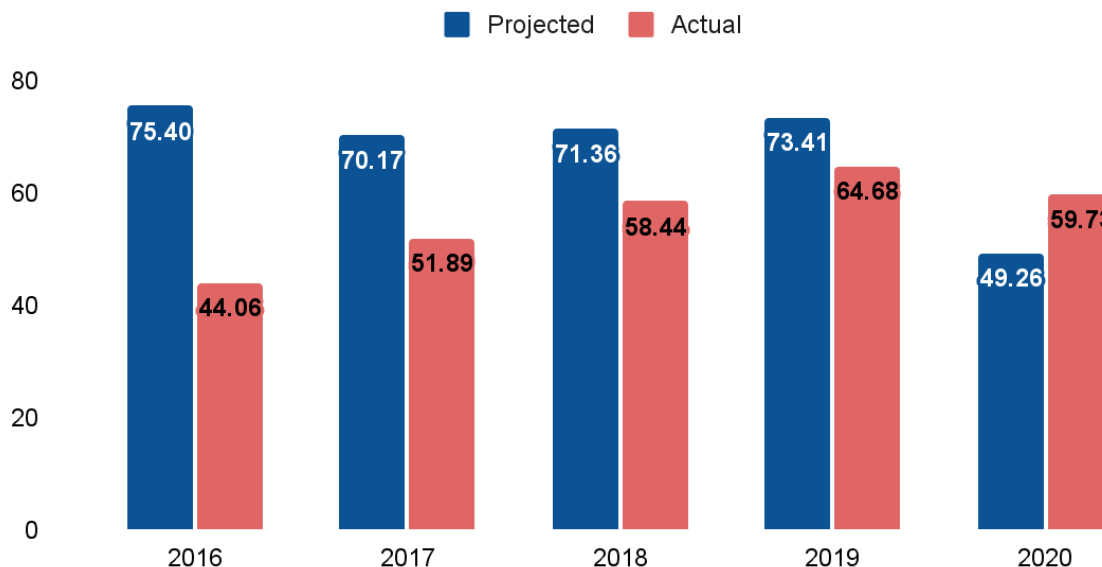
Source: Delta State Budget Performance Report I Chart: Dataphye

The projected IGR increased in 2018 and 2019, and the two-year total revenue also did. The IGR performance stood at 81.89% and 88.11%, respectively.

In 2020 however, the state generated more than its projected internal revenue. The IGR performance for the year was 121.27%.

It is important to emphasise that the 2020 budget revision, which reduced projected revenue to **N49.26 billion** from the initial **N71.01 billion** as a result of the **negative impact** of the coronavirus on the economy, played a significant role in the 2020 IGR performance.

Overall, the state has always fallen short of its targeted internal revenue. Whoever emerges as the state's next governor must have clear plans to achieve the internal revenue generation plans and targets.
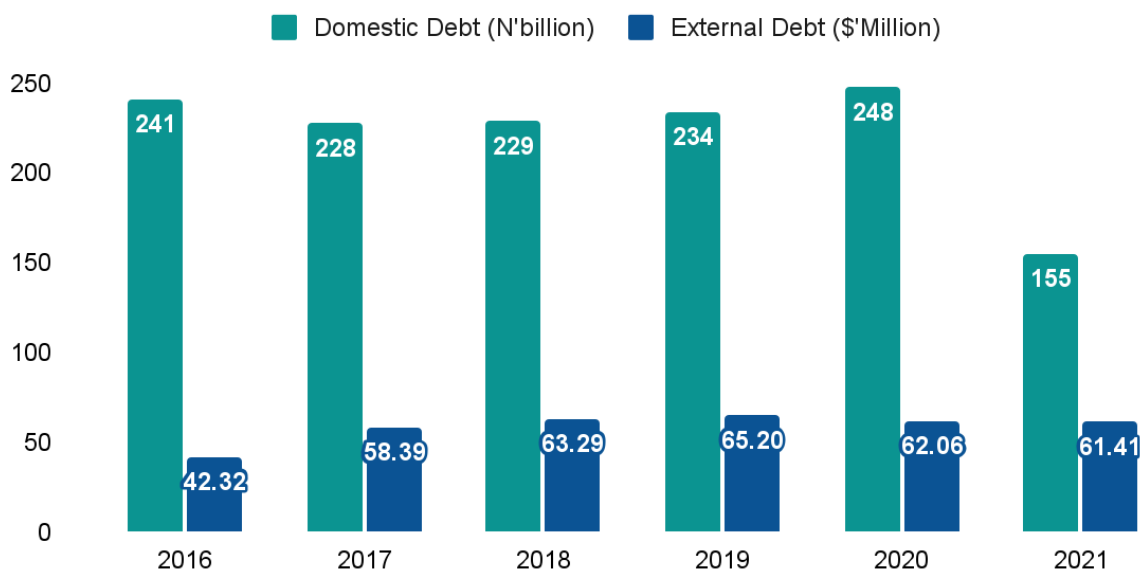
Fiscal Sustainability

Delta state ranks poorly in fiscal sustainability, using the BudgIT's State of the States report which **ranks** the fiscal sustainability of the 36 states using 4 indexes. The indexes used include the ability of states to meet their operating expenses; the ability to meet operating expenses and

loan repayment without having to borrow; fiscal power to borrow more given low debt burden vis-à-vis how much is generated in a year, and prioritisation of capital over recurrent expenditures.

According to the 2021 ranking, Delta State placed **31st**, down from its previous position of **23rd** in the 2020 ranking, demonstrating poor performance. The state's poor performance in 2021 was attributed, among other things, to its low prioritisation of capital expenditures and growing debt-to-revenue ratio.

In 2016, the state had a total domestic debt of N241 billion. This dropped to N228 billion the following year; then, it picked up again in 2018 and grew to N248 billion in 2020. By December 2021, Delta state's domestic debt dropped to N155 billion, making it the 7th most indebted state in the country.

Delta state domestic and foreign debt (2016 - 2021)

Domestic Debt (N'billion)   External Debt ($'Million)

Year	Domestic Debt (N'billion)	External Debt ($'Million)
2016	241	42.32
2017	228	58.39
2018	229	63.29
2019	234	65.20
2020	248	62.06
2021	155	61.41

Source: Debt Management Office I Chart: Dataphyte

On external debt, Delta state ranked as the 10th state in Nigeria with the highest external debt, with a total of $61.14 million as of December 2021. With the exception of 2020 and 2021, Delta state recorded an increase in its external debt every fiscal year.
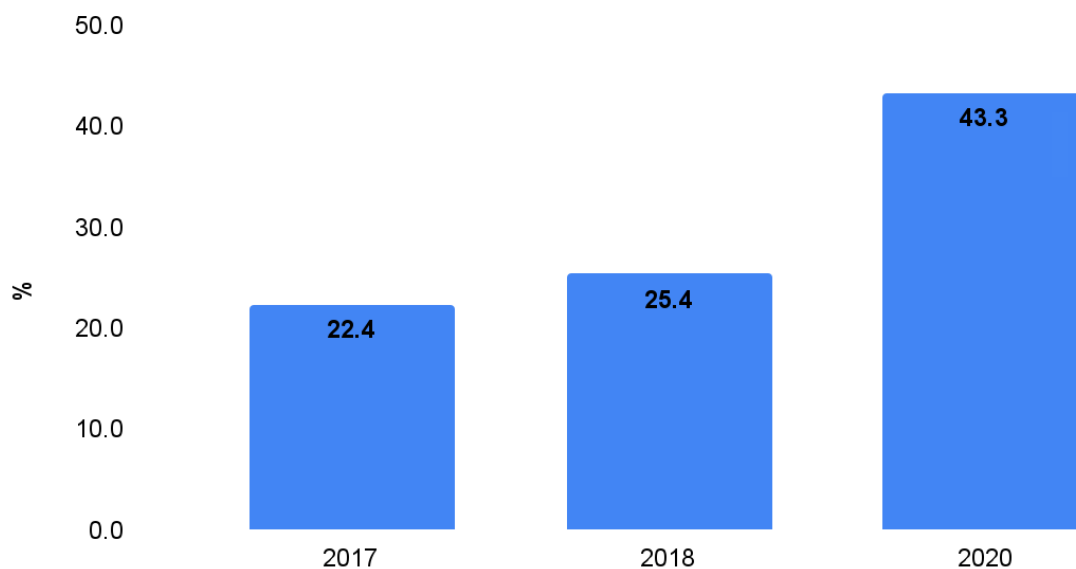
Unemployment rate

When Okowa took office in 2015, he **declared** that his administration would work with multinational corporations in the state to enhance job opportunities for the residents of the state.

To this end, the Okowa-led administration established the Office of the Chief Job Creation Officer (OCJCO) to carry out its pledge to create jobs for the people of the state.

Despite the establishment of the OCJCO and the jobs the state government said were created through various programmes such as the Graduate Employment Enhancement Programme (GEEP), Skills Training and Entrepreneurship Programme (STEP), and **YAGEP**, the state's unemployment rate has been continually increasing.

The most recent labour force statistics by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) put the unemployment rate in the state at 43.3%.

Percentage of Unemployment in Delta State (2017-2020)

Source: NBS | Chart: Dataphyte

A 43.3% unemployment rate in 2020 means that at least 4 out of every 10 Deltans are unemployed. In the preceding years, the unemployment figures were lower, which indicates an increase in the unemployment rate in the state.

This should be an area of focus for the electorates and governorship candidates in the upcoming election.

Poverty rate

One of the many challenges of Nigeria today is the increasing poverty rate. According to 2019 NBS data, Delta State has the second-lowest poverty rate in the nation; however, the 2019 6.02% poverty rate may have gone up because the national poverty rate has significantly increased due to the COVID-19 crisis's effects, population growth, and a "galloping trend" of inflation.

By the end of this year, the World Bank has **projected** that the number of persons living in poverty in Nigeria may hit 95.1 million, almost half of the country's population. In 2020 it was 40%. With increase in the national poverty rate, the sub-nationals will also experience a corresponding increase which therefore calls for a clear plan from all gubernatorial candidates in the state on how they intend to tackle this issue.
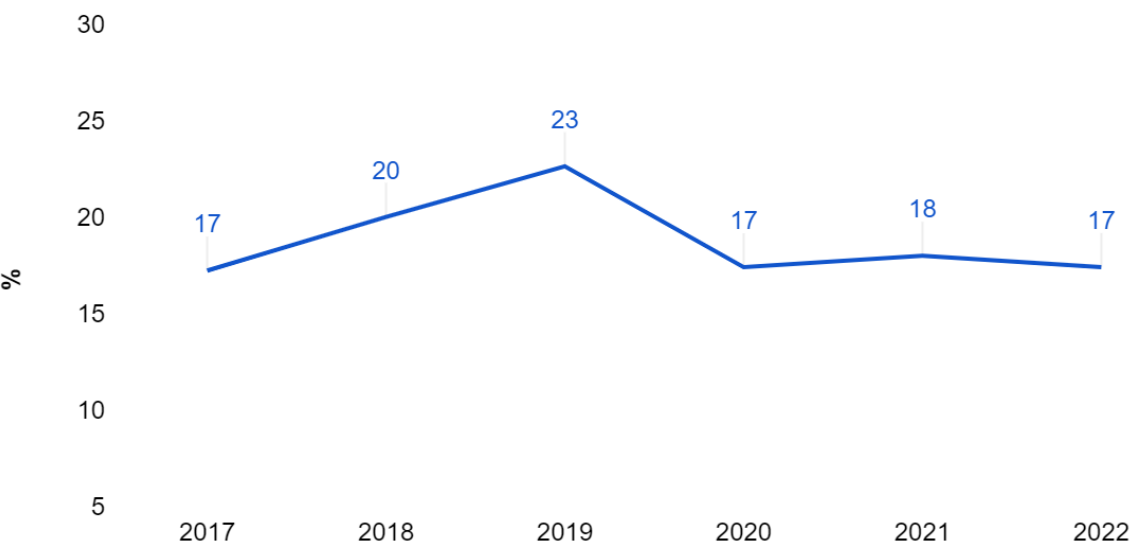
Budgetary Allocation to Key Sectors-Education, Health & Agriculture

An analysis of the budgetary allocation to the education, health, and agricultural sector in the past 6 years shows that Delta state has never met the recommended benchmarks for expenditure on health and agriculture. However, it has always surpassed the minimum benchmark for education.

The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) recommends that governments should allocate **15% to 20%** of their total public spending for the fiscal year to education.

According to an analysis of Delta State's education budget from 2017, the state has consistently allocated at least 17% of its annual budget to education. The budgetary allocation for education in 2019 even went above the UNESCO recommended 20%.

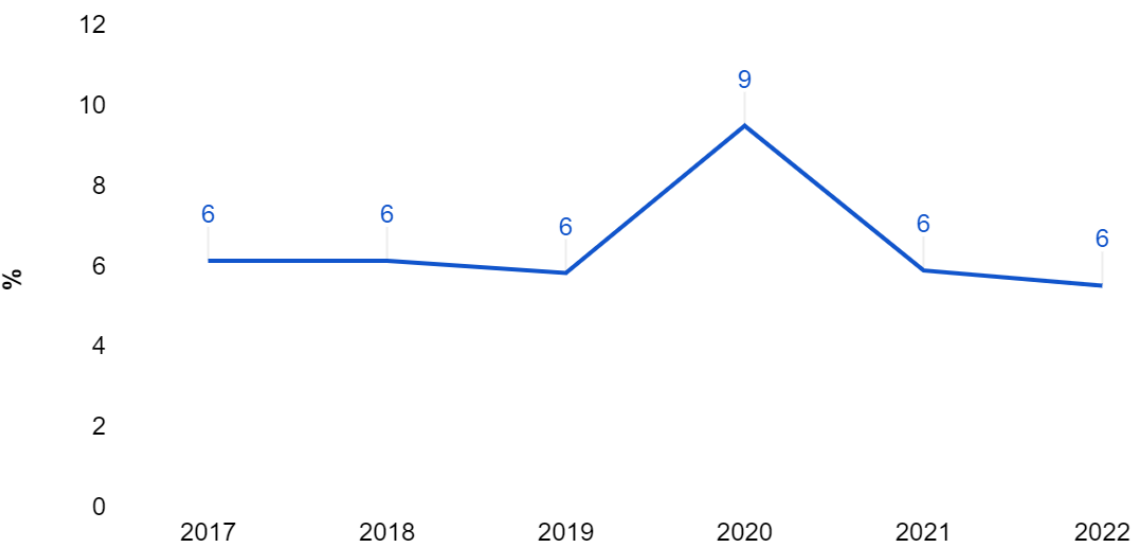## Percentage of the total budget that goes to education in Delta State

Source: Delta State Budget Document I Chart: Dataphyte

However, the state's fiscal commitments to agriculture and health have never met the recommended benchmarks. An agreement reached in Abuja in 2001, popularly known as the **Abuja Declaration**, stipulated that African governments should set aside at least 15% of their annual budget to improve the health sector. This may well be applied to Delta State.

A review of the state's allocation to the health sector shows that the state has never met that 15% mark. Its yearly health spending has consistently been 6% of total spending, hitting 9% only in 2020.

## Percentage of the total budget that goes to health in Delta State

Source: Delta State Budget Document I Chart: Dataphyte

This increase in 2020 could be **attributed** to the coronavirus pandemic management, as the share of annual spending on health quickly fell back to 6% in 2021 and 2022.

In a similar vein, Maputo's recommended allocation for agriculture has not been met. According to the declaration, governments are required to allocate at least 10% of their public spending to agricultural and rural development. Yet, the Delta state government has never allocated up to 1.5% of its public expenditure to the sector. The highest share of its annual budget to the agriculture sector since 2017 was 1.2%, far below the recommended 10%.

Percentage of the total budget that goes to health in Delta State
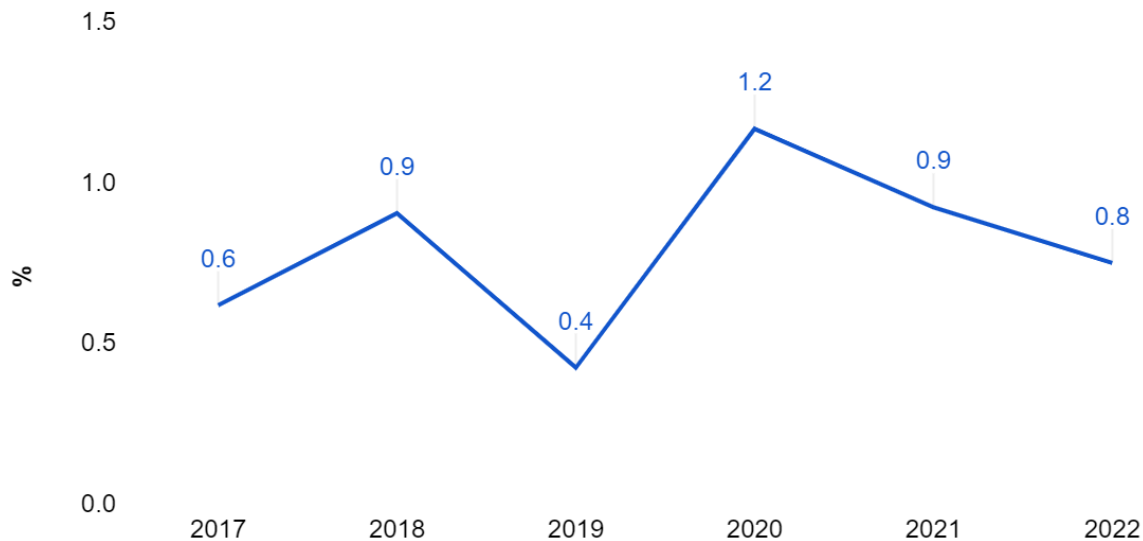
Source: Delta State Budget Document | Chart: Dataphyte

As nations begin to imagine a future beyond oil, other sectors like agriculture prove to be viable options. However, to maximise the sector's full potential, more investments need to be made, particularly the type that will enhance the sector's productivity. This should therefore form a significant part of the campaign promises of the governorship candidates of the states for the upcoming election.

Number of Out-of-School Children

One of the building blocks of any society is education. The United Nations regards it as a **key** to escaping poverty.

According to data from NBS, there are **145,996** out-of-school children in Delta state as of 2018. This figure places the state among the 10 out of the 36 states with the lowest Number of Out-of-School Children in the country.

However, the electorates will have to look out for the candidate with a robust plan to improve access to education in the state, particularly for the boy-child, as they account for 97.5% of the total Number of Out-of-School Children in the state. The quality of learning, school infrastructure, and teachers' welfare is also critical.

Ease of Doing Business Ranking

A conducive business environment is one of the **prerequisites** for economic growth and poverty reduction. A primary factor that attracts local and international investment to a country is the business environment. Unfortunately, Delta state ranks really low on this.

Delta ranks **35th** out of the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) on the subnational ease of doing business ranking done by the Presidential Enabling Business Environment Council (PEBEC).

The state scored only 4.32 out of the 10 score indexes, which were assessed on f**our thematic** areas — Infrastructure and Security, Transparency and Access to Information, Regulatory Environment, and Workforce Readiness.

To attract investment to the state, which will create more job opportunities for the people, and further boost the IGR, improving the business environment should form a critical part of the plan of the 2023 governorship candidates.

Under-5 Mortality Rate & Access to Health

The under-five mortality rate in Delta state is estimated at 53 **deaths** per 1,000 live births. The state is the third out of 36 states, and FCT with the lowest under-five mortality rate. However, commitment to reducing mortality rates and improving access to healthcare in the state, especially for children, women, and vulnerable groups, must be clearly spelt out in manifestos and agendas, especially in the light of the state's healthcare budgeting which is low and far beneath accepted benchmarks.

While there are many other socio-economic indicators, these few provide templates to assess the agendas of guber candidates and the capacity of a potential vice president of the country.

Osun 2022: 6 Key Socio-Economic Indicators Candidates and Electorates Should Know

Published on April 29, 2022

Dennis Amata

On April 12, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) **released** the final list of candidates for the Osun state 2022 Governorship election. In this year's contest, there are 15 candidates; all male. As a series of failed promises continue to cripple citizens' faith in the political system, bringing issue-based voting to the forefront of voter education ahead of the Osun guber polls becomes crucial. In this article, Dataphyte examines 6 important socio-economic indicators that these 15 candidates could include in their manifestos in order to achieve meaningful development in the state.

GDP, IGR & Fiscal Strength

The last Gross Domestic Product (GDP) data released by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) shows that Osun state has a total GDP of **$7.3 billion**. This places it among the 14 states in Nigeria with the highest GDP. It is however the second-lowest in the South-West region, only ahead of Ekiti state.

In the first half of 2021, according to NBS data, the Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) of Osun state stood at **N13.67 billion**, placing it among the top 16 states with the highest IGR in the first 6 months of 2021.

Data shows that the state has experienced continuous annual growth in its IGR from 2016 to 2020 except in 2018 when it dipped. The IGR grew from N8.88 billion in 2016 to N19.67 billion in 2020. It is worth mentioning that since the current administration assumed office, the state's IGR has increased by 9.77% (2019-2020).

5 Year Trend of Osun State Internally Generated Revenue (NGN Billion)
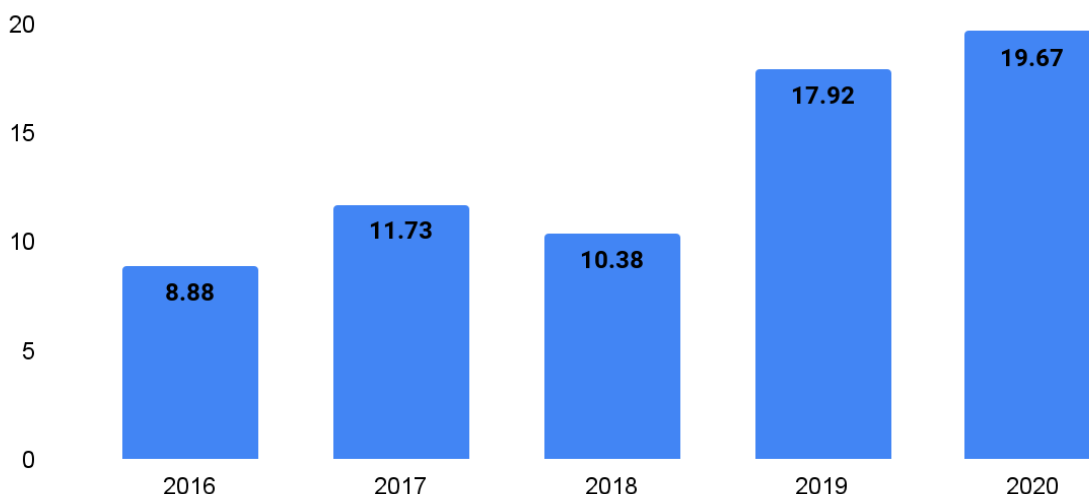

Source: NBS

While such growth is commendable, data from NBS shows that the state still relies heavily on the statutory allocations from the federal government to meet its expenditure obligation, even though those allocations have been **declining** since 2018.

Also, when the state's IGR is analysed on a per capita basis, it is relatively low compared to its peers. According to BudgIT, in 2021, Osun state's IGR per capita stood at **N3,678**, which falls below the national average of **N4,616**. Osun state has the second-lowest IGR per capita in the South-West region and 19th nationally.

On fiscal sustainability, Osun state improved in the latest BudgIT **report** which examined Nigeria's 36 states' fiscal performance using several indicators. The report used 4 indexes: the ability of states to meet their operating expenses; the ability to meet operating expenses and loan repayment without having to borrow; fiscal power to borrow more given low debt burden vis-à-vis how much is generated in a year and, prioritisation of capital over recurrent expenditures.

In the report, at the end of 2020, Osun state had a total debt of N192.82 billion; an increase of N89.02% from the 102.01 billion in 2016. The state was also ranked 31st out of 36 states for its fiscal performance in the year **2020**. However, in the 2021 ranking, the state came 13th place out of the 36 states, indicating an improvement in its fiscal sustainability. However, there's still work to be done in this regard as the loan versus IGR ratio is still high.

Osun State Total Debt from 2016-2020 (NGN Billion)
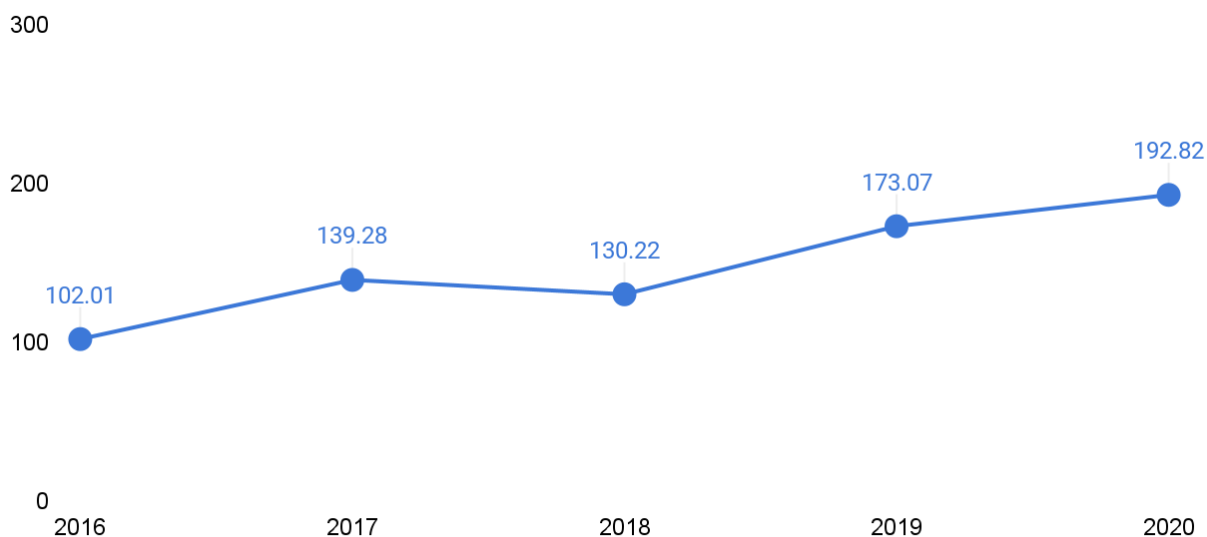
Source: BudgIT

Under the Gboyega Oyetola-led administration, the state's debt increased by 11.41% between 2019-2020, making Osun the 7th most indebted state in Nigeria.

Whoever is elected as the next governor of the state will have to give serious attention to the state's debt burden vis a vis fiscal sustainability and put in place strategies to boost the state's IGR and reduce its heavy dependence on statutory allocations from the federal government in order to meet its expenditure obligation.
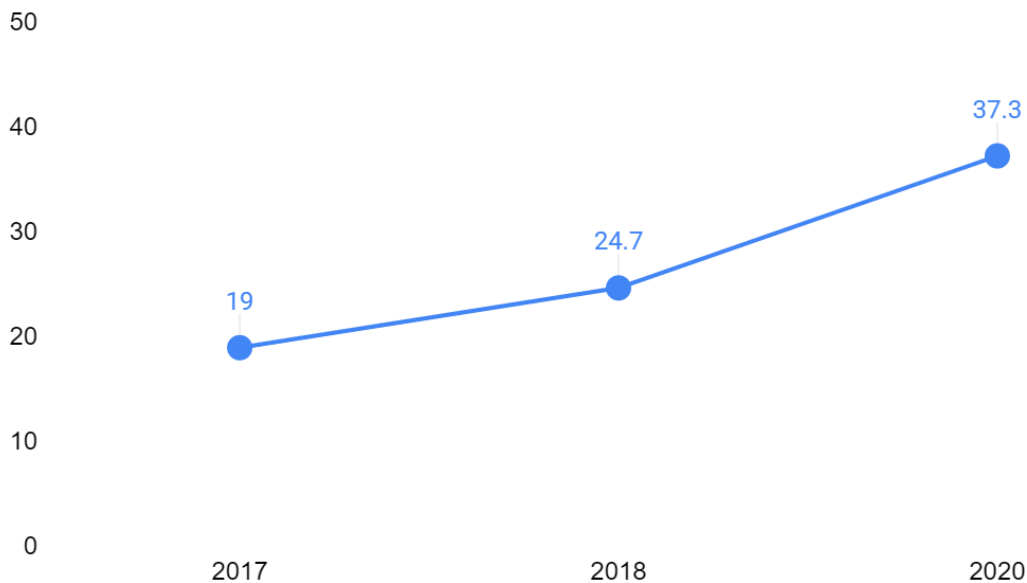
Unemployment rate

During his inaugural address in 2018, the current Governor, Gboyega Oyetola said he would create at least **30,000 jobs** in Osun state.

"We, in partnership with private sectors, will establish large manufacturing industries in the major sectors of the economy to create at least 30,000 jobs", Oyetola said.

Although Osun state has the fourth lowest unemployment rate in the country and the second-lowest in the South-West region, it appears the incumbent Governor did not fulfil his promise of creating at least 30,000 jobs— as the latest labour force statistics by NBS show an increase in the state's unemployment rate. Before the current administration came on board, in 2017 the

unemployment rate in Osun was **19%**. In 2018, the figures increased to **24.7%**, then to its current **37.3%**. This shows an upward trend in the unemployment rate. In fact, within three years, the unemployment rate in the state has increased by 96.47%

Percentage of Unemployment Rate in Osun State (2017-2020)

Source: NBS

Strategies to reduce unemployment figures within the state should be integral to the plans of the contestants vying for the top job in the state.

Poverty rate

A major problem plaguing Nigeria today is the increasing poverty rate. In 2019, NBS reported that Osun state has a poverty headcount ratio of **8.52%** — ranking as the 3rd state with the lowest poverty headcount. While this is commendable, there are fears that the poverty rate might have increased in recent times, considering the fact that the national poverty rate has also climbed up. In 2019, the national poverty headcount was **70%**; by 2020 it had increased to **73.22%**. This year, the World Bank has said that the number of persons living in poverty in Nigeria will increase to **95.1 million**, which is an increase of 6.7% from the 2020 figure.

With the increasing national poverty rate, Osun state may likely experience a corresponding

increase in its poverty rate. Therefore, the people of Osun state should be interested in the candidate's plans to keep the poverty rate in the state low.

Number of Out-of-School Children

According to data from NBS, there are **165,114** out-of-school children in Osun state as of 2018. With this figure, Osun is among the 11 states with the lowest Number of Out-of-School Children in the country. Of this figure, 68.52% are males, and 31.48% are females.

Even though Osun is among the states with the lowest Number of Out-of-School Children in the country, the numbers are still too high. Thus, improving access to education in the state should be a priority for candidates and an issue of interest for the electorates that also include the quality of learning, school infrastructure, and teachers' welfare.

Ease of Doing Business Ranking

Among other things, one key factor that attracts both local and international investment to a country is its business environment. The latest subnational data on the ease of doing business ranked Osun state **15th** out of the 36 states and Federal Capital Territory (FCT). The state scored 5.57 out of a total index score of 10.

The ranking was published in a report by the Presidential Enabling Business Environment Council (PEBEC), in which the 36 states and the FCT were assessed on four thematic areas – Infrastructure and Security, Transparency and Access to Information, Regulatory Environment, and Workforce Readiness.

To further boost the state's IGR, whoever emerges as winner in the July 16 polls, will have to improve Osun State's business environment. This is important to attract both local and international businesses to the state which in turn will drive economic growth.

Under-5 Mortality Rate & Access to Health

With respect to health, the indicators in Osun state are quite poor. The under-five mortality rate in the state is estimated at **70 deaths per 1,000 live births**. According to a 2020 **report** by the USAID and Health Policy Plus (HP+), mortality rate in Osun is higher than the average of 62 deaths per 1,000 live births in Lower-Middle-Income Countries in Sub-Saharan Africa.

A second point on health performance in the state has to do with health insurance coverage. Last

year, the Executive Secretary of the Osun Health Insurance Agency, Dr. Niyi Oginn, **disclosed** that only 3.7% of Osun state population is covered in the state's Health Insurance Scheme (HIS). According to him, the state government has a plan to increase this to 60% in 10 years (2029).

A commitment to reducing the under-five mortality rate and ensuring improved access to healthcare, especially for children, women, and vulnerable groups should be top of mind for the electorates as they cast their votes and decide who will be at the helm of the state's affairs for the next four years.

To achieve meaningful development in the state, improvement in these indicators are critical and electorates' voting decisions should be guided by the candidate who presents a plan that would mean advancement for the state on many of these indices.

Citizen participation & voters turn out
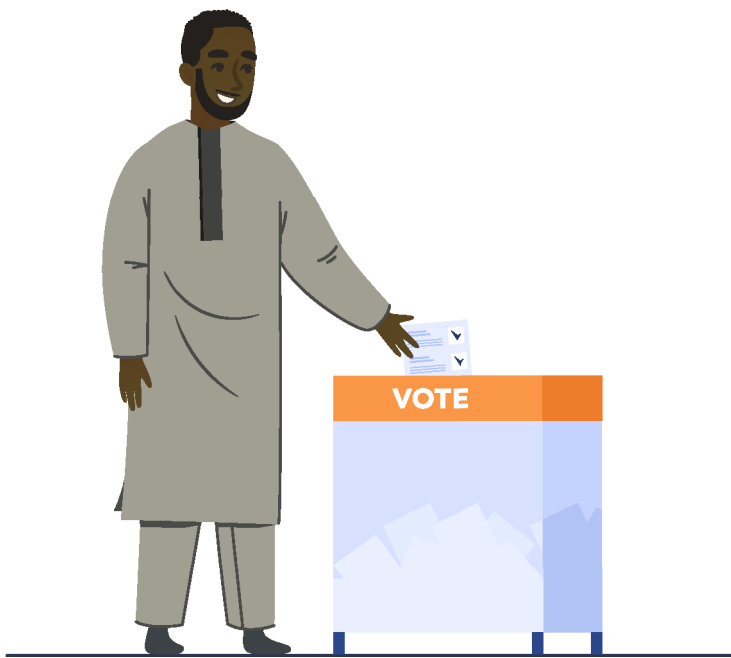
One of the hallmarks of democracy is citizen participation. Since Nigeria's return to democratic rule in 1999, the country has conducted six general elections and is set to conduct the seventh in 2023.

Although there has been increased participation, if only the first step of election participation is considered — registration for voter cards; but the actual participation — that is, coming out on election day to vote, has been low since 2007, despite the various initiatives taken by election stakeholders to ensure more voter turnout. For instance, in the 2019 general election, the Nigerian electoral umpire, INEC, used different media outlets for its voter education, which among others, was aimed at increasing voter turnout. Rightly so, the level of voters' education was reported to be high. Yet, the turnout for the election was the lowest in the country's democratic elections since 1999.

This section of the book primarily focuses on citizens' participation, essentially looking at voters' turnout and voting patterns, particularly in the 2015 and 2019 general elections. More importantly, it highlights the huge resources wasted due to low voter turnout in Nigeria's elections, especially in the 2011, 2015, and 2019 general elections. Using several data sources — mostly registration and voter turnout data from INEC and International IDEA, we mapped out the various trends in voter turnout, where the first article focused on voting trends for the two major political parties; the APC and the PDP. The second piece in the section looked at voter turnout numbers by State for both the 2015 and 2019 elections, while the third looks at PVC registration by states, gender, and occupational breakdown.

The section also points out three common ways voter fraud happens in Nigerian elections, which directly or indirectly has contributed to the low voter turnout as we have observed in recent elections. Here we reviewed various articles about the Nigeria electoral processes.

All data sources are cited in the article, and for the most part, the charts were produced using the free-to-use online visualisation platform, Datawrapper and MS Excel.

2023 Elections: How Nigerians Voted in the Last 2 Presidential Elections

Published on March 16, 2022

Dennis Amata

According to the Chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Prof Mahmood Yakubu, the 2023 Presidential election will be **held on February 25**, 2023.

Recall that the election was earlier scheduled for **February 18, 2023**, but with the signing of the Electoral Act, 2022, the Electoral Commission has announced a new date, which is now 345 days away,

As Nigerians and other relevant stakeholders prepare for the upcoming polls, with many hoping for a leader that will lead the country away from its many struggles towards better outcomes; Dataphyte looks at the voting decisions across the country that earned us the current administration.

Why? History always holds covert and overt lessons; the 2015 and 2019 elections are far gone, but would voting patterns in 2023 be different from the last two general elections?

Number of Registered Voters in the 2015 General Elections and States Where APC and PDP Won the Presidential Election

According to data from INEC, **67.42 million** Nigerians registered to vote in the 2015 general elections. However, the election recorded only **29.43 million** votes cast, representing a **43.7%** voter turnout.

Although 14 candidates/political parties contested in the 2015 Presidential election, the contest was mainly between Goodluck Jonathan of the then ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), and Muhammadu Buhari of the All Progressives Congress (APC), the main opposition party.

At the end of the contest, Muhammadu Buhari of the APC won, having secured 15.42 million votes against Goodluck Jonathan who polled a total of 12.85 million votes.

The APC won in 21 states, while PDP won in 15 states plus the FCT.

The Northern region (North Central, North East, and North West) favoured the APC as the party won in 16 out of the 19 states that make up the region. APC polled a total of 11.30 million votes in the 16 Northern states where it won.

States Won by APC and PDP in the 2015 Presidential Election
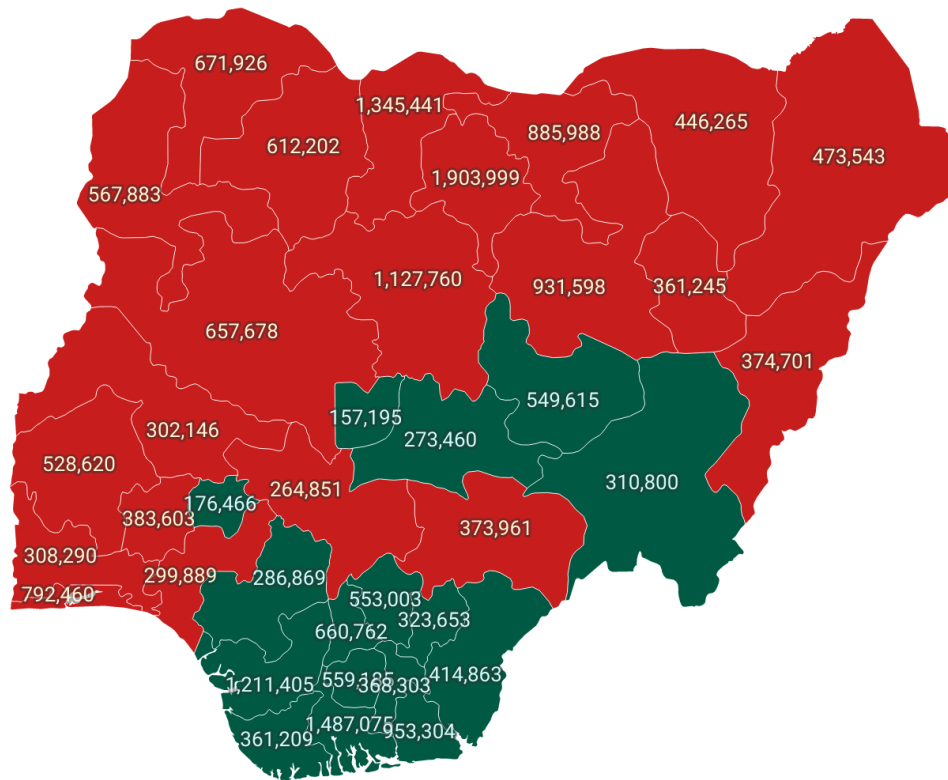
The red colour represents APC while the green is PDP
Map: Dataphyte • Source: INEC • Created with Datawrapper

Except for Ekiti state, the party also won in 5 out of the 6 South-Western states. It polled a total of 1.52 million votes from the 5 states.

APC did not win in any of the South-East and South-South states. The PDP won in all the states from both regions.

PDP won in only 3 northern states (Nassarawa, Plateau, Taraba, and the FCT) in the 2015 Presidential election. It polled only 1.29 million votes.

Number of Registered Voters in 2019 General Elections

84 million Nigerians registered to vote in the last general elections, with Lagos and Kano states accounting for the highest number of registered voters, having 6.5 million and 5.4 million registered voters, respectively. This is not a surprise as both states have the highest population in the country.

Number of Registered Voters by State in the 2019 General Election

Number

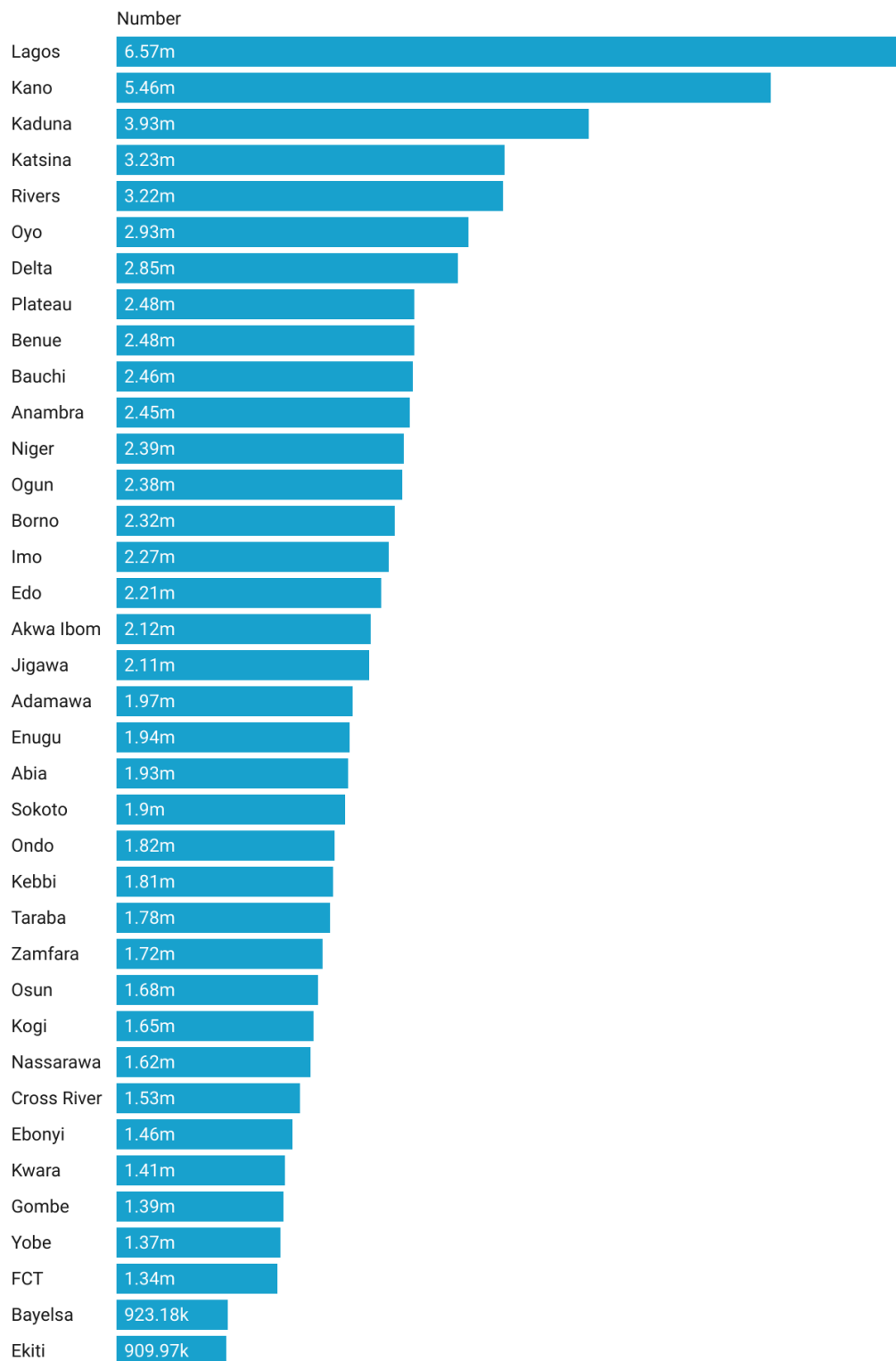| State	Number
Lagos	6.57m
Kano	5.46m
Kaduna	3.93m
Katsina	3.23m
Rivers	3.22m
Oyo	2.93m
Delta	2.85m
Plateau	2.48m
Benue	2.48m
Bauchi	2.46m
Anambra	2.45m
Niger	2.39m
Ogun	2.38m
Borno	2.32m
Imo	2.27m
Edo	2.21m
Akwa Ibom	2.12m
Jigawa	2.11m
Adamawa	1.97m
Enugu	1.94m
Abia	1.93m
Sokoto	1.9m
Ondo	1.82m
Kebbi	1.81m
Taraba	1.78m
Zamfara	1.72m
Osun	1.68m
Kogi	1.65m
Nassarawa	1.62m
Cross River	1.53m
Ebonyi	1.46m
Kwara	1.41m
Gombe	1.39m
Yobe	1.37m
FCT	1.34m
Bayelsa	923.18k
Ekiti	909.97k

Chart: Dataphyte • Source: INEC • Created with Datawrapper

Ekiti and Bayelsa States recorded the lowest number of registered voters, having 923.1 and 909.9 thousand registered voters, respectively.

States Where the Two Major Political Parties Won in the 2019 Presidential Election

Seventy-three (73) political parties participated in the 2019 presidential election. However, the contest was largely between the All Progressives Congress (APC) and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).

28.61 million votes were cast, representing a 35% turnout. The candidate of the APC, Muhammadu Buhari, polled a total of 15.19 million votes from the 36 states and the FCT, while his closest contender, Atiku Abubakar of the PDP polled 11.26 million votes.

The APC won in 19 states, while PDP won in 17 states plus the FCT.

States Won by APC and PDP in the 2019 Presidential Election
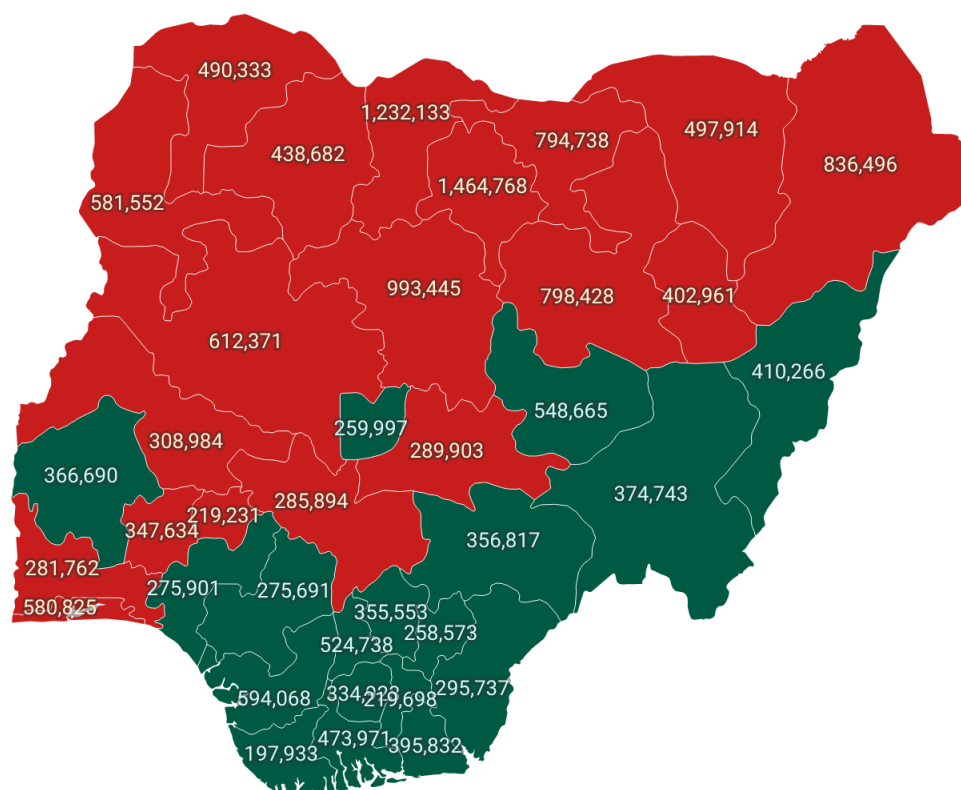
The red colour represents APC while the green is PDP.
Map: Dataphyte • Source: INEC, BBC • Created with Datawrapper

Out of the 19 states in the 3 Northern regions (i.e North Central, Northeast, and North West), APC won 15 states, polling a total of 10.03 million votes, while PDP won in only 4 Northern states (Adamawa, Benue, Plateau, Taraba) and the FCT with 1.95 million votes (Recall that in the 2015 Presidential election, the PDP also won in Plateau, Taraba, and FCT).

The APC won in 4 of the 6 South-Western states (i.e Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, and Osun) polling a total of 1.43 million votes. The party however recorded zero wins in both South-East and South-South states, as PDP won in all the states in the two regions.

Although there was a higher number of registered voters in 2019 compared to 2015, voter turnout to registered voters was low — at 35%.

The opposition party gained more ground in the total number of states won in the 2019 general elections compared to the 2015 elections — 19 states in 2019, and 17 in 2015; although the total votes cast for them was lesser than in 2015.

All the other parties on the ballot did not win enough votes to present a challenge to the two main parties. Collectively, all 71 of them polled a total of 2.16 million votes which represents just 7.55% votes.

2023 Elections: 3 Common Ways Voter Fraud Happens in Nigeria

Published on February 3, 2022

Dennis Amata

Nigeria returned to civilian rule in 1999 and has conducted 6 general elections since then. **According** to experts, out of these 6 general elections, none has been reported to meet both local and international standards because they were 'fraught with high levels of irregularities and voter fraud'.

Nigeria's elections have always been rated **poorly**, as a result of voter fraud alongside other factors. This has also led to **loss of confidence** in the electoral processes and to a large extent, political apathy, particularly on the part of the youth who form a larger part of the country's voting population.

One of the major **elements** of the electoral process is that elections must be conducted in a free and fair atmosphere and the electoral results should reflect the wishes of the people. But a close review of the country's last 6 general elections may have not fully reflected this, given the atmosphere in which they were conducted and the reported level of electoral and voter fraud.

As the country prepares for the 2023 general election, Dataphyte examines voter fraud in Nigeria and draws the electorates and critical stakeholders' attention to them as the country prepares for the next polls.

Electoral fraud is simply an illegal interference with the process of election that thwarts the mandate of the people. In Nigeria, this happens in different ways — from vote buying to under age voting, snatching of ballots and/or results before or after elections to favour a particular party/candidate, intimidation at the polls using militant gangs or even state security, among others.

All of these have had a negative impact on electoral participation among Nigerians, particularly the youths. **Jahdiel and Amaka's** story of apathy during the 2019 elections comes to mind. This article examines 3 common ways voter fraud happens in Nigerian elections.

Vote Buying

In the last 6 general elections conducted, vote buying has been reported at each election. Vote buying, which is the act of offering of money or other goods or favours in exchange for the vote

of a voter in elections, has grown steadily with each successive election despite its criminalisation in **Section 130** of the Electoral Act, 2010.

This act takes place at multiple stages of the electoral cycle; from the voter registration period, to campaigns, up to the election day. Cash, foodstuff, clothes and other souvenirs are some of the commonest items used.

According to **Onuoha and Ojo**, vote buying is more prominent during election day, either shortly before or during vote casting. For keen observers, this is a common trend during elections in Nigeria. In fact, in every election cycle, **pictures** and **videos** of politicians buying votes from citizens surface online. Hunger and increasing poverty in the country have provided a loophole for politicians to weaponise.

Olamide, a Lagos resident and a first time voter in the 2015 general election told Dataphyte that he experienced vote buying firsthand. "I became eligible to vote in 2015. I registered in Lagos and my polling unit was in Lekki-Ikate. While on the queue waiting to cast my votes, a man approached me and told me I should vote for a particular party and he will give me N1,500", said Olamide. When asked if he collected the money, the Lagos resident emphatically, saying no, "I know my worth and as an educated person, I know the consequences of doing such, so I told him clearly that I will not sell my vote", he noted.

He however explained that some voters collected the money being offered at the polling unit. There are several reports of people who sell their votes for lesser amounts. For instance, YIAGA Africa reported that in **2019**, some voters in Bayelsa and Kogi states traded their permanent voters' cards (PVC) for as low N500 and N1,000 ahead of the governorship elections in the states.

While vote buying is very common today in Nigeria, Onuoha and Ojo **explained** that the act predates Nigeria's return to democracy in 1999. The duo **stated** that vote buying was rife during the Social Democratic Party (SDP) presidential primary in Jos in 1992 and the 1993 presidential poll. They even highlighted it as one of the reasons for the annulment of the 12 June 1993 presidential poll.

The act of vote buying is still very much around as seen during the recent governorship elections conducted in **Anambra** and **Edo** states, where there were media reports of voting buying. While vote buying transcends locality, it is however more prevalent in rural areas.

A survey **conducted** on the 2019 election by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) showed that

a larger share of people living in rural areas were offered money or a favour in exchange for their vote than in urban areas. The prevalence was also higher among men than women. The same 2019 **NBS survey** revealed more men (23.1%) were offered bribes for their vote in 2019, while this was 18.8% for women.

Surprisingly, those who are self-employed with dependent employees, self-employed without employees and private and public sector employees are more targeted for vote buying than unemployed people. According to the **NBS survey**, the prevalence of vote buying among self-employed citizens with dependent employees was 23.4%, and those without employees was 23%. Private and public sector employees stood at 22.5% and 22% respectively. On the other hand, unemployed people recorded 20.9%

Explaining the reason for higher prevalence among self-employed with or without dependent employees and public and private sector employees, the NBS noted that they are targeted more often than others, due to their potentially greater socio-economic influence.

Underage Voting

While this may not be so common in urban areas, it is rampant in the **rural areas** with zero or minimal media attention.

In many remote places in the country, politicians sometimes intimidate and bribe electoral officials to allow children who are ineligible to cast their vote.

Several cases of this have been reported in many parts of the country. It was reported in the **2021** Kano local government elections, in **Osun and Ekiti** state in 2014, in Plateau state local government elections held in 2014 and other parts of the country.

An anonymous resident of Delta State told Dataphyte that he has witnessed underage voting in his community in Delta state,

Narrating his experience, he told Dataphyte that "I am not proud to say this but when I was 13 years old during the 2007 election, I remember that I and my friends voted in that election. Other children who were the same age group as me also voted".

In many rural areas, this is a common practice. Although a crime, which electoral officials are fully aware of, for safety of their lives, they are sometimes forced to comply with the communities in carrying out this act.

In 2018, Prof. Lai Olurode, a former INEC National Commissioner, confirmed instances of underage voting.

According to him "There are certain areas of this country where even if they know the person is a kid, they will insist that the child must vote. I had to run for my life at one of the election centres in a part of the country because these people said children must vote or there would be no election at all. It is that bad."

This is one of the several ways voter fraud is carried out in the country.

Voter/Electoral Officials Intimidation and Ballot Snatching

Another common way electoral fraud happens in Nigeria is through voter intimidation; a strategy that has been employed over the years by politicians in keeping those likely to vote for opponents away from the polls.

While in most instances political thugs are the ones that perpetuate this act, **security personnel** have also been fingered to carry out this act.

In instances where this is pulled off successfully, (intimidation of voters and INEC officials), the ballot boxes are often snatched and taken away with INEC officials **running** for their lives or sometimes **whisked away** with election materials to undisclosed locations.

Several reports of this abound. There is hardly any election in Nigeria where such acts have not been reported. It happened in the 2011 and 2015 elections. In the 2019 general election, an occurrence of this was also reported.

The 2023 general election is less than **381 days away**. As citizens and civil society groups continue to encourage those eligible voters to get their PVC in preparation for the polls, more electoral education may need to be done in enlightening the public on the various forms of electoral frauds and implications to the development of the country's electoral processes and democracy as a whole.

2023 Elections: Which States had the Highest Voter turnout in the last 2 Elections?

Published on July 11, 2022

Dennis Amata

Only two out of Nigeria's 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) recorded up to 50% voter turnout in the 2019 Presidential election. In 2015, it was 10 states that reached that turnout mark.

Nigerians go to the polls every four years to choose their leaders. Since the country returned to democracy over two decades ago, 6 general elections have been held, and the 7th is scheduled for February 2023.

A previous Dataphyte **article** had highlighted that voter turnout in the last 6 elections were relatively low and has in fact been dropping since 2007 and the billions of naira the country invests in elections is **wasted** because of low voter turnout.

Percentage of Voter Turnout in Nigeria's General Elections

Voter turnout has been on a steady decline since 2007

Year	%
1999	52.26
2003	69.08
2007	57.54
2011	53.68
2015	43.65
2019	34.75
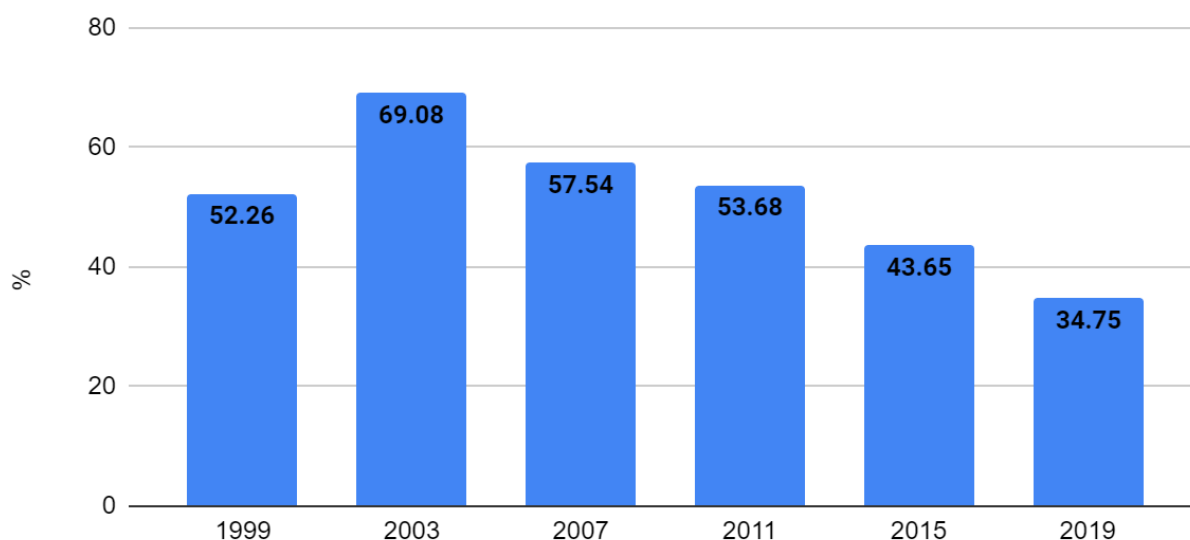
Source: INEC; Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance

As the country prepares for the upcoming election and against the backdrop of the low voter turnout in the just concluded Ekiti election, Dataphyte reviews voter turnout across the 36 states and the FCT in the last 2 presidential elections.

What was the voter turnout like in the 36 States and FCT in the 2015 Presidential Election?

The 2015 presidential election was conducted on March 28. The total number of registered voters was 67.42 million but on the election day, only 29.43 million people, 43.65% of the total registered voters, came out to vote.

The data from INEC shows that Lagos, Kano, Kaduna, Katsina, and Oyo states had the highest number of registered voters ahead of the 2015 election however none of these states were among the top 5 states with the highest voter turnout.

Except for Katsina where a little above half of its registered voters came out to vote, the other 4 states recorded less than a 50% turnout rate despite having the highest number of registered voters. In fact, Lagos state recorded the lowest voter turnout in the election. Only 25.67% of its 5.83 million registered voters came out to vote in the presidential election.

Voter turnout by State in the 2015 Presidential Election

Except for Katsina, the top 5 states with the highest number of registered voters had less than a 50% turnout rate.

	No. of Registered Voters	No. of Vote Cast	Percentage of Voter Turnout (%)
Lagos	5.83m	1.5m	25.67
Kano	4.94m	2.17m	43.94
Kaduna	3.36m	1.65m	49.09
Katsina	2.84m	1.48m	52.12
Oyo	2.34m	928.61k	39.61
Rivers	2.32m	1.58m	68.18
Bauchi	2.05m	1.04m	50.63
Delta	2.04m	1.28m	62.85
Niger	2m	844.68k	42.33
Plateau	1.98m	1m	50.61
Anambra	1.96m	703.41k	35.83
Benue	1.89m	703.13k	37.13
Jigawa	1.82m	1.07m	59.03
Borno	1.8m	515.01k	28.62

Voter turnout by State in the 2015 Presidential Election

Except for Katsina, the top 5 states with the highest number of registered voters had less than a 50% turnout rate.

	No. of Registered Voters	No. of Vote Cast	Percentage of Voter Turnout (%)
Imo	1.75m	731.92k	41.88
Ogun	1.71m	559.61k	32.74
Sokoto	1.66m	876.37k	52.69
Edo	1.65m	522.79k	31.67
Akwa Ibom	1.64m	1.03m	62.55
Adamawa	1.52m	661.21k	43.55
Ondo	1.5m	582.44k	38.79
Zamfara	1.48m	780.18k	52.54
Kebbi	1.46m	715.12k	49.06
Enugu	1.38m	585.63k	42.39
Osun	1.38m	663.37k	48.14
Taraba	1.37m	602.72k	43.86
Kogi	1.35m	439.29k	32.52
Abia	1.35m	401.05k	29.73
Nasarawa	1.22m	521.64k	42.69
Kwara	1.18m	461.4k	39.07
Cross River	1.14m	465.91k	40.72
Gombe	1.11m	473.44k	42.65
Yobe	1.08m	491.77k	45.62
Ebonyi	1.07m	393.34k	36.72
FCT	886.57k	316.02k	35.64
Ekiti	723.26k	309.45k	42.79
Bayelsa	605.64k	371.74k	61.38

Chart: Dataphyte • Source: INEC • Created with Datawrapper

The states that recorded the highest voter turnout in the election were Rivers, Delta, Akwa Ibom, and Bayelsa. Others include Jigawa, Sokoto, Zamfara, Katsina, Bauchi, and Plateau. Only these 10 states had at least 50% voter turnout.

The Only States in Nigeria that recorded up to 50% Voter Turnout in the 2015 Presidential Election

4 out of the 6 South-South States had the highest voter turnout
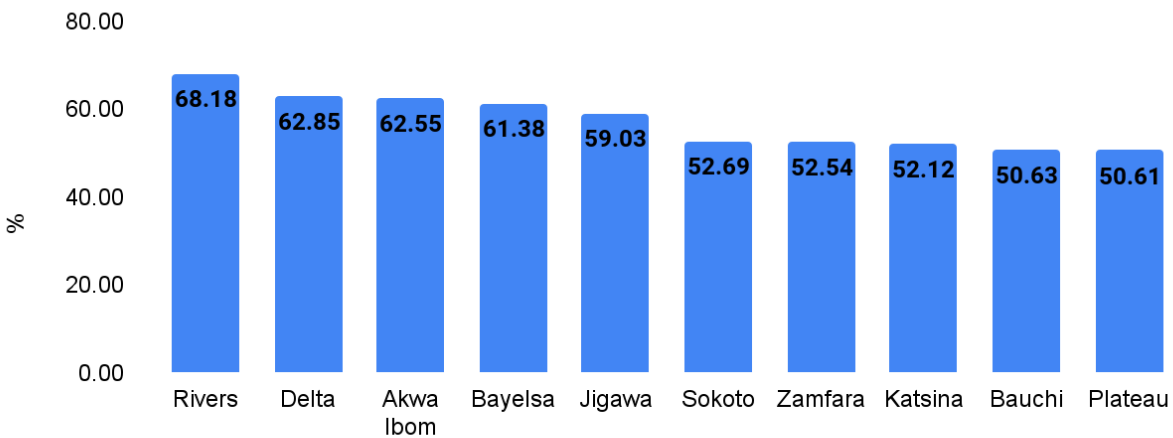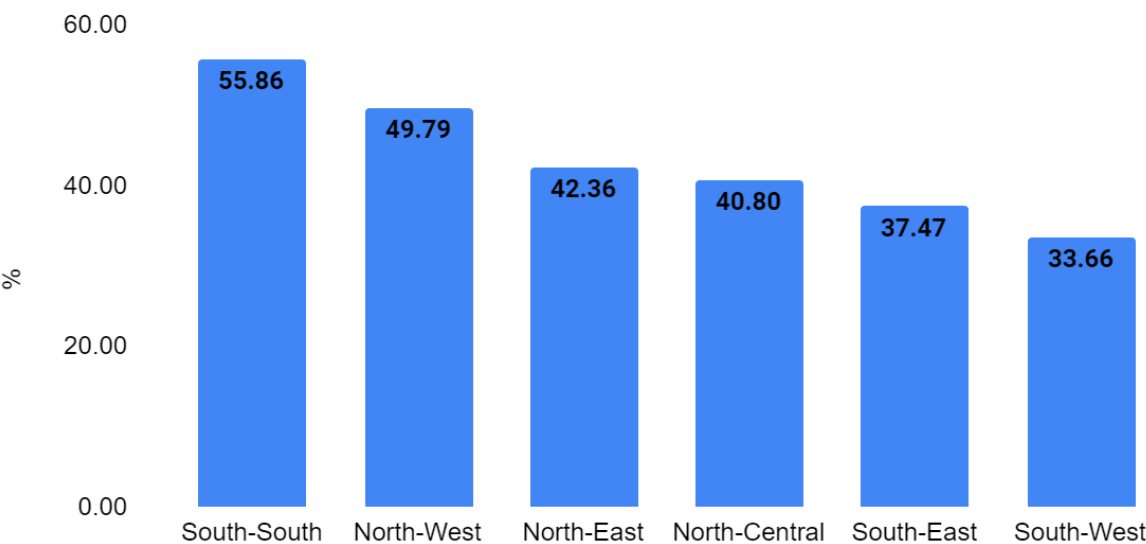

Source: INEC

Even though Bayelsa had the lowest number of registered voters in 2015, it was the 4th state with the highest voter turnout in the election.

By zone, South-South recorded the highest voter turnout in 2015, followed by North-West. The turnout in the South-West and South-East region was the lowest among the 6 geo-political zones.

Percentage of voter turnout in 2015 Presidential election by Geo-political zone

Source: INEC

Any Difference in 2019?

Unlike the 2015 presidential election when more than half of the registered voters in 10 states came out on the election day to vote, this time around only 2 states (Jigawa and Katsina) recorded up to 50% turnout. The turnout in the states was 54.47% and 50.13% respectively.

Sokoto followed with 48.65%. The other states including the FCT did not have up to 45% voter turnout.

Voter turnout by State in the 2019 Presidential Election

None of the top 5 states with the highest number of registered voters had up to 50% voter turnout except for Katsina.

	No. of Registered Voters	No. of Vote Cast	Percentage of Voter Turnout (%)
Lagos	6.57m	1.16m	17.6
Kano	5.46m	1.96m	36
Kaduna	3.93m	1.71m	43.46
Katsina	3.23m	1.62m	50.13
Rivers	3.22m	666.59k	20.73
Oyo	2.93m	891.08k	30.37
Delta	2.85m	882.25k	31.01

Voter turnout by State in the 2019 Presidential Election

None of the top 5 states with the highest number of registered voters had up to 50% voter turnout except for Katsina.

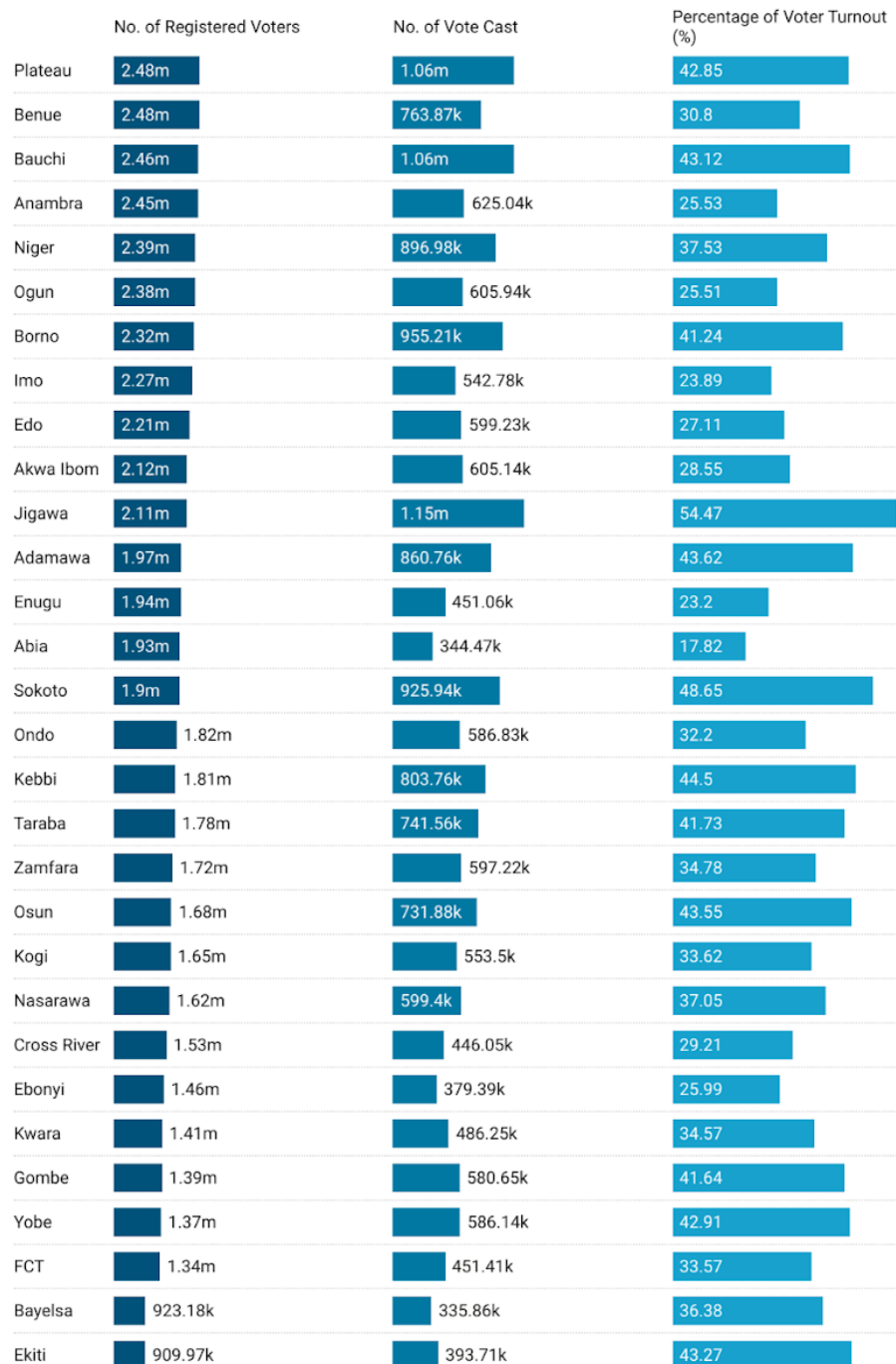|	No. of Registered Voters	No. of Vote Cast	Percentage of Voter Turnout (%)
Plateau	2.48m	1.06m	42.85
Benue	2.48m	763.87k	30.8
Bauchi	2.46m	1.06m	43.12
Anambra	2.45m	625.04k	25.53
Niger	2.39m	896.98k	37.53
Ogun	2.38m	605.94k	25.51
Borno	2.32m	955.21k	41.24
Imo	2.27m	542.78k	23.89
Edo	2.21m	599.23k	27.11
Akwa Ibom	2.12m	605.14k	28.55
Jigawa	2.11m	1.15m	54.47
Adamawa	1.97m	860.76k	43.62
Enugu	1.94m	451.06k	23.2
Abia	1.93m	344.47k	17.82
Sokoto	1.9m	925.94k	48.65
Ondo	1.82m	586.83k	32.2
Kebbi	1.81m	803.76k	44.5
Taraba	1.78m	741.56k	41.73
Zamfara	1.72m	597.22k	34.78
Osun	1.68m	731.88k	43.55
Kogi	1.65m	553.5k	33.62
Nasarawa	1.62m	599.4k	37.05
Cross River	1.53m	446.05k	29.21
Ebonyi	1.46m	379.39k	25.99
Kwara	1.41m	486.25k	34.57
Gombe	1.39m	580.65k	41.64
Yobe	1.37m	586.14k	42.91
FCT	1.34m	451.41k	33.57
Bayelsa	923.18k	335.86k	36.38
Ekiti	909.97k	393.71k	43.27

Chart: Dataphyte • Source: INEC • Created with Datawrapper

In the last two presidential elections only Katsina state has had at least a 50% voter turnout. Lagos state on the other hand has recorded the lowest turnout in both elections.

Data further show that none of the South-South states were among the top 16 states with the highest turnout, unlike the 2015 election when the top 4 states were from that region.

This change may be because neither of the two major contenders in the 2019 election was from the South-South region. This was not the case in 2015 when one of the major contenders for the presidential position was from the South-South region.

Overall, the voter turnout was higher in the Northern region in 2019. Each of the 3 geo-political zones in the North had more turnout than the 3 in the South.

Percentage of voter turnout in 2019 Presidential election by Geo-political zone

The 3 Northern geo-political zones took the lead over the Southern zones.
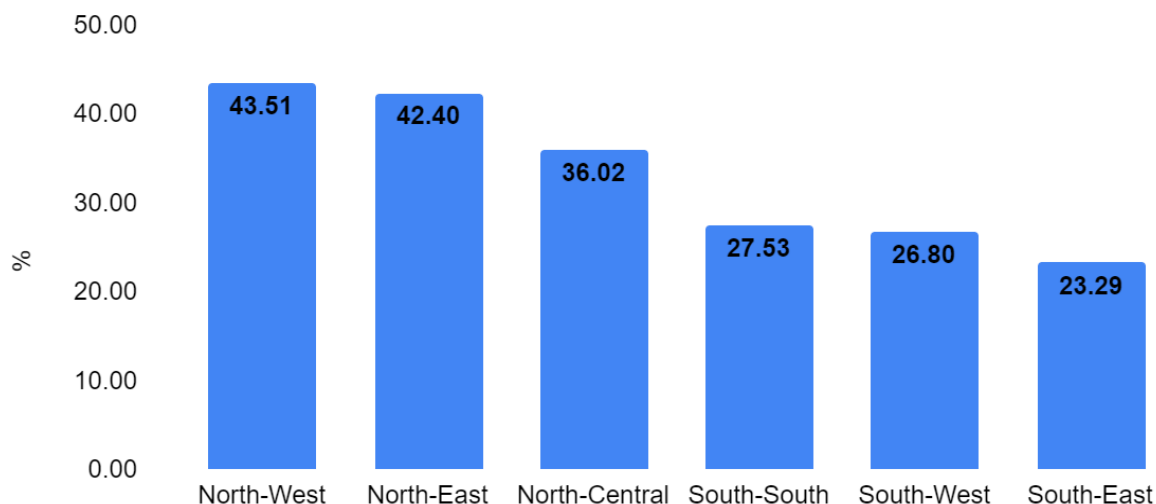
Source: INEC

This was slightly different in 2015 when the South-South region was ahead of the 3 geo-political zones in the North, suggesting that the major contestants from a certain region could determine the pattern of voter turnout. Perhaps the pendulum of voter turnout will swing south again with two major contenders for the highest office of the land, coming from the south.

If Ekiti's voter turnout is any indication, a higher level of attention must be paid to ensuring registered voters actually exercise their rights come election day.

2023 Elections: Completed PVC Registration Across Nigeria in 5 Charts

Published on August 3, 2022

Dennis Amata

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has officially ended the Continuous Voter Registration (CVR) exercise, which **started** last year.

The total number of registered voters who completed their registration (online and physical) at the close of the CVR exercise stood at 12.29 million.

On June 28, 2021, INEC **resumed** the CVR and has since then given weekly updates of the online pre-registration and the physical completion of registration by voters.

The CVR was initially scheduled to **end** on June 30. However, on that day, the Commission, through its National Electoral Commissioner for Information and Voter Education, Festus Okoye, **announced** an extension of the exercise to ensure that all eligible Nigerians get registered.

The CRV was first extended by 15 **days**, then another 2 weeks, bringing the total duration for the extension to 31 days (July 1st-31st).

This new deadline elapsed on Sunday, July 31st, and the electoral Commission has **stated** there would be no further extension as they need to carry out other functions, which among others, include the **clean up** of the voter register for double and multiple registrations.

As the exercise finally ends, Dataphyte looks at the figure of those who completed their registration in the year-long CVR exercise and will join other registered voters from previous elections to decide the country's fate in the 2023 general election.
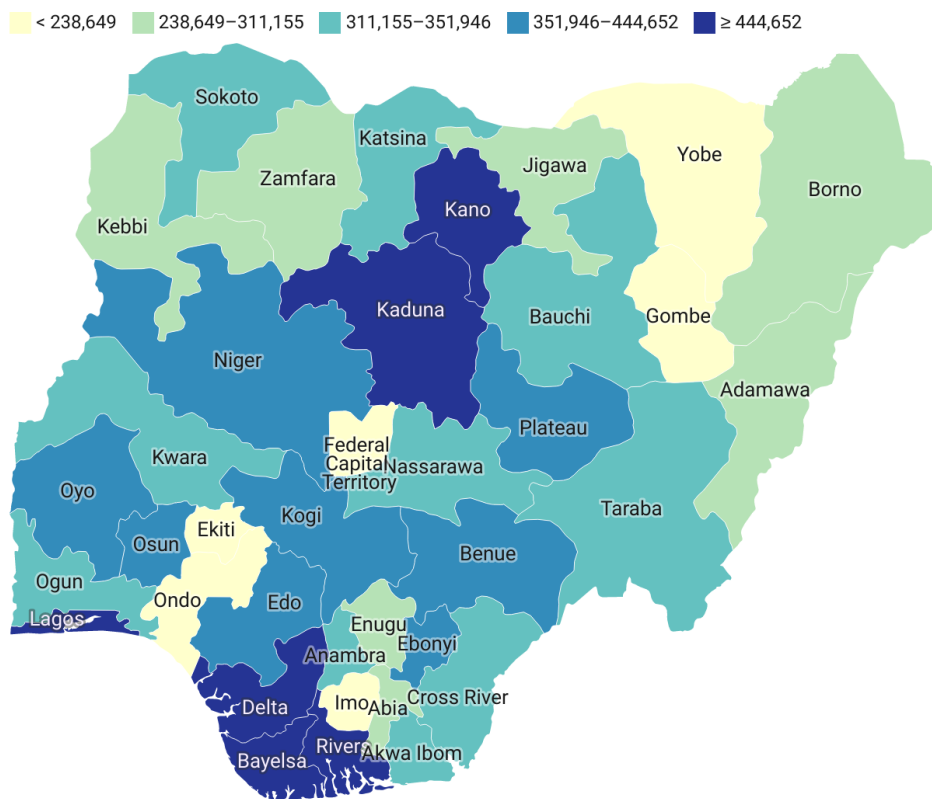
Number of Completed Registrations

Data released by INEC shows that 12.29 million persons completed their registration. Of this figure, 3.44 million were done online, while 8.85 million were done physically. By this figure, the total number of registered voters for the 2023 election is an estimated 96.3 million.

Election Year	Number of Registered Voters (Millions)	Percentage Increase of New Registration
1999	57.94	-
2003	60.82	4.98
2007	61.57	1.22
2011	73.53	19.43
2015	67.42	-8.30
2019	84.00	24.59
2023* estimated	96.30	14.64

Completed PVC Registration by States

At the end of the CVR exercise on July 31, the data published by INEC shows that Lagos has the highest number of persons who completed their PVC registration. The state has a total of 585,629 persons who completed their registration, followed by Kano with 569,103. Delta state came third with 523,517.

Number of Completed PVC Registration by States

Legend: < 238,649 | 238,649–311,155 | 311,155–351,946 | 351,946–444,652 | ≥ 444,652

Map: Dataphyte • Source: INEC • Created with Datawrapper

https://datawrapper.dwcdn.net/YgjPl/3/

On the other hand, Ekiti, Yobe, and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) recorded the least number of registrations. Ekiti and Yobe recorded 124,844 and 152,844 completed registrations, respectively, while the FCT had 211,341.

Number of Males and Females who Completed their PVC Registration

As earlier stated, 12.29 million persons completed their registration in the just concluded CVR exercise. Of this figure, 6.22 million, 50.6% of those who completed their PVC registration are females, while 6.07 million, 49.4% are males.

Percentage of Females and Males who Completed their PVC Registration
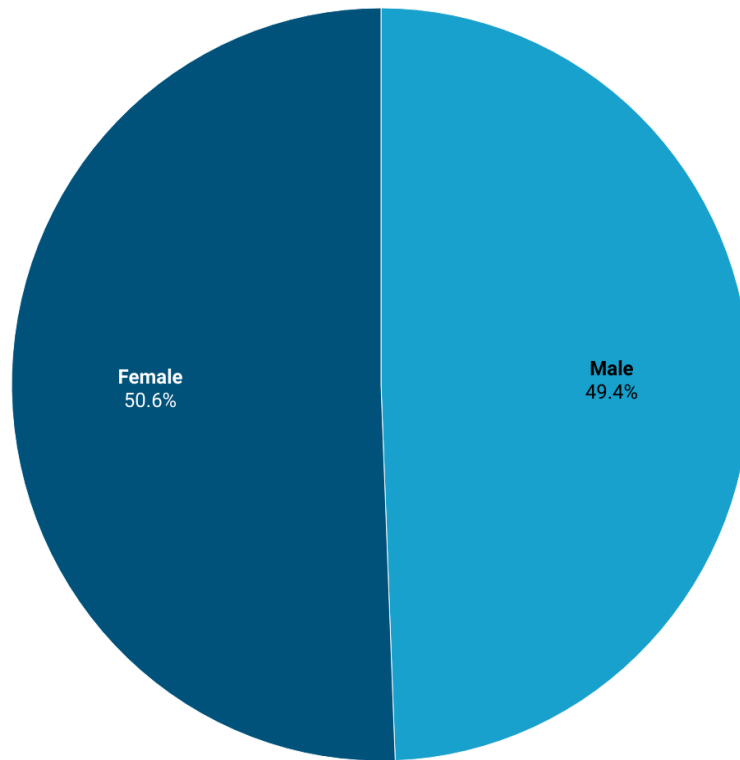

Female
50.6%

Male
49.4%

Chart: Dataphyte • Source: INEC • Created with Datawrapper

It is worth mentioning that 84,083 Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) completed their registration across genders. This is 0.68% of the 12.29 million completed registrations.

Completed PVC Registration by Age Group

A breakdown of the data shows that 71.4% (8.78 million) of those who completed their registration are youth. This means that out of every 10 persons who completed their registration, at least 7 fall within 18-34 years range; the Soroke generation.

Age Group Distribution of Nigerians who have Completed their PVC Registration

Elderly (50-69 yrs)
(7.8%)

Aged (70 & above)
(1.0%)

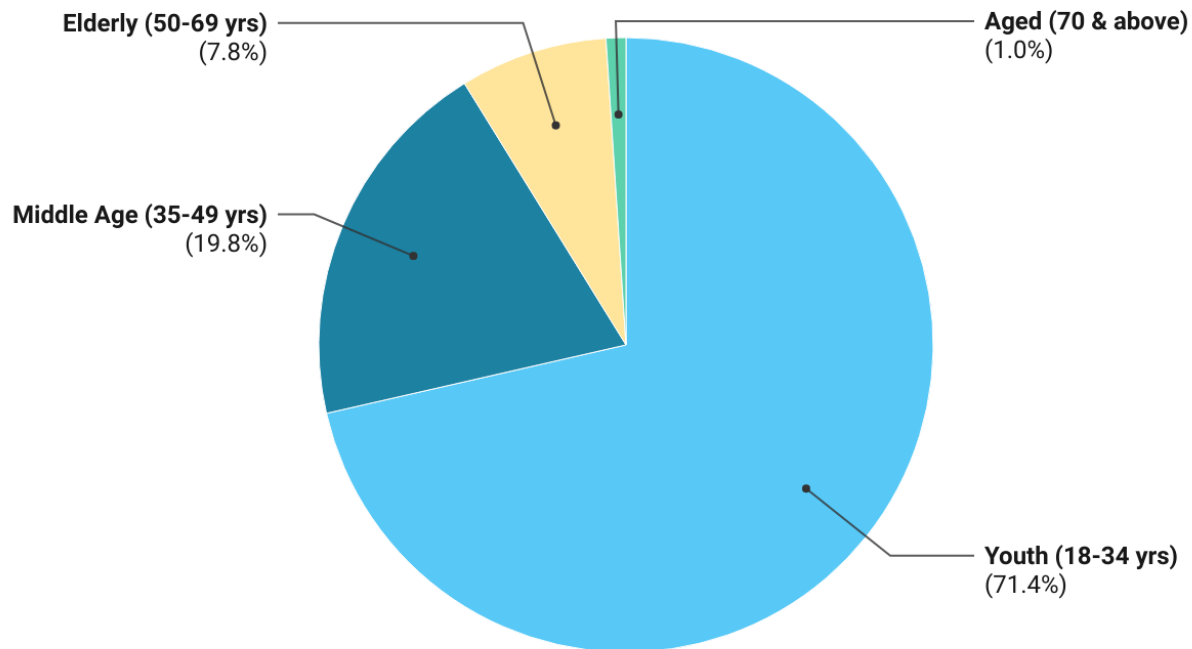Middle Age (35-49 yrs)
(19.8%)

Youth (18-34 yrs)
(71.4%)

Chart: Dataphyte • Source: INEC • Created with Datawrapper

Following is the middle age group, which accounts for 19.8% of the total number of persons who completed their registration. The elderly and the Aged (70 years and above) account for 7.8% and 1% of the completed PVC registration, respectively.

Completed PVC Registration by Occupation

Students constitute the highest population of those who completed their registration. Of the 12.29 million who completed their registration, 4.5 million persons identified themselves as students.

4.5 million Students completed their PVC registration in preparation for the 2023 general election

Occupation	Number ▼
Student	4.5m
Business	2.24m
Farming/Fishing	1.54m
Housewife	1.47m
Others/Not Specified	734.51k
Trading	667.35k
Artisan	640.64k
Civil Servant	381.25k
Public Servant	124.03k

Table: Dataphyte • Source: INEC • Created with Datawrapper

Those into business and farming/fishing followed with 2.24 and 1.54 million respectively.

At the bottom are Public Servants and Civil Servants, with 124,027 and 381,254 completed registrations, respectively.

Completed PVC Registration by Geo-Political Zones

Nigeria has six geo-political zones. 2.51 million persons in the North-West completed their PVC registration making it the region with the highest registrations.

In the South-South, 4.46 million completed their registration. The North-Central and South-West followed with 2.31 million and 2.04 million respectively.

2.51 million persons completed their PVC registration in North-West, while in the South-East only 1.44 million did
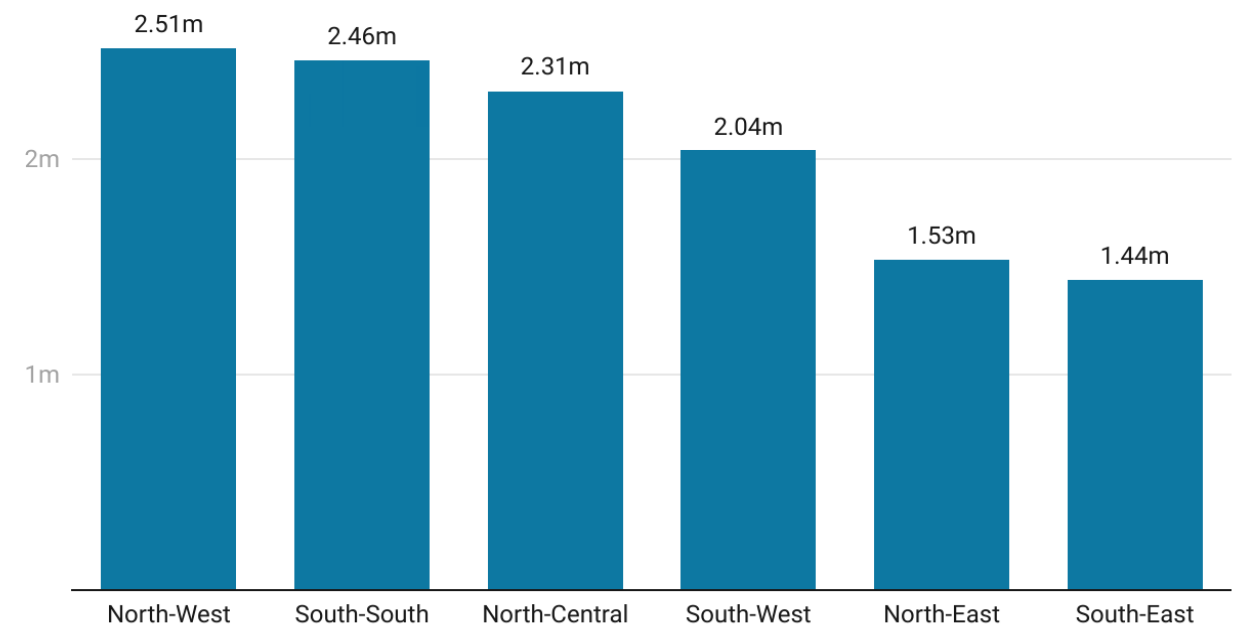

Chart: Dataphyte • Source: INEC • Created with Datawrapper

The North-East and South-East recorded less than 2 million, making them the two regions with the lowest number of persons who completed their registration at the end of the CVR exercise.

# Nigeria Wasted Over N255 Billion due to Low Voter Turnout in the Last 3 General Elections

Published on August 21, 2021

Dennis Amata

The Federal government of Nigeria has spent a total of four hundred and forty-four billion naira (N444.5 billion) to conduct the country's last three general elections, but altogether wasted over N255 billion due to low voter turnout recorded in each of the elections, Dataphyte's review of the election expenses revealed.

In the last two elections alone, the country wasted over 62% of elections funds due to low turnout of registered voters.

Total Expenses for Nigeria's last 3 General Elections(N'b)
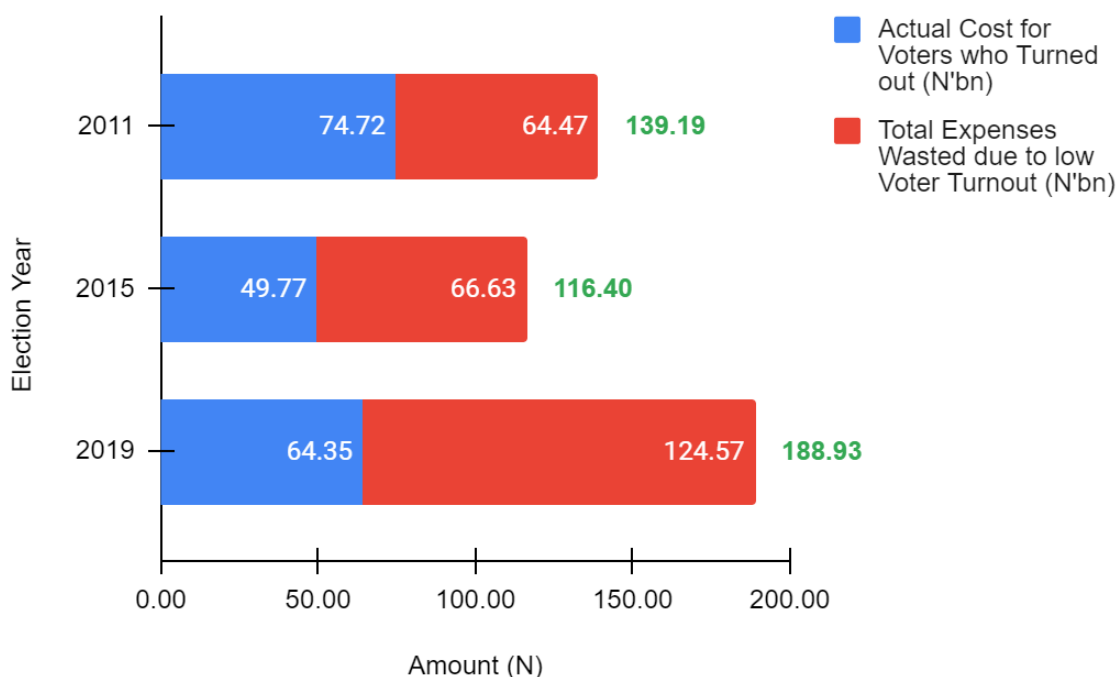
Every four years, Nigerians go to the polls to elect representatives into various political offices. In carrying out this exercise, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) puts different plans in place to ensure the success of the elections in line with the Constitution and Electoral Acts. Amongst other things, the INEC prepares their budget and submit it to the National Assembly for consideration and approval.

While a lot of factors are considered in planning the election, Samson Itodo noted that in Nigeria, the law compels the electoral Commission to use the voter register, that is, the number of people who have registered for an election, as a basis for election planning, instead of the figures of those who merely collected their Permanent Voters Card (PVC).

In 2011, the INEC recorded 73.5 million registered voters. The election budget for that year was then based on an average cost of N1,893 or $9 per voter. This amounted to N139 billion.

For the 2015 elections, 116.3 billion was budgeted at the rate of N1,691 or $8.5 per voter for the 68.9 million citizens who had registered prior to the election funding stage.

The highest number of registered voters preceded the last general elections in 2019. The electoral commission recorded 84 million registered voters, and budgeted N2,249 or $6.24 per voter. This cost the country N189.2.

A look at the Average Cost per Registered Voter Index (ACRVI) as noted in the 2019 general election **report** showed that the money Nigeria spent is well within the internationally accepted ranges, which placed the cost per voter in established and stable democracies at the rate of $1 to $3; transitional democracies at $4 to $8, and post-conflict and transition democracies from $9.

When the figures are looked up with the number of people who actually turned out to vote in the last three general elections, data showed that low voter turnout has cost the country over N255 billion.

Infact, except for the 2011 elections, the money wasted in the other two elections was more than the actual cost, going by the number of people who eventually turned out to vote on election day.

Year	No. of Registered Voters (A)	Actual Voters (B)	Cost per voter in Naira (C)	Total Expense in Naira (D = A*C)	Actual Cost due to Voter Turnout in Naira (B*C)	Total Expenses Wasted due to lower Voter Turnout in Naira (D-E)
2011	73,528,040	39,469,484	1,893	139,188,579,720	74,715,733,212	64,472,846,508
2015	68,833,476	29,432,083	1,691	116,397,407,916	49,769,652,353	66,627,755,563
2019	84,004,084	28,614,190	2,249	188,925,184,916	64,353,313,310	124,571,871,606
Total				444,511,172,552	188,838,698,875	255,672,473,677

An earlier **report by Dataphyte**, noted the low level of electoral participation in Nigeria's general elections since 1999. The country's voter turnout in 2019 was the lowest in Africa, despite the continuous increase in the number of registered voters.

In his article titled **"Why Nigerians don't vote"**, Tobiloba underscored widespread malpractice, electoral violence, and the people's felt disillusion with successive governments, as some of the reasons for the low voter turnout in Nigeria. According to him, these factors discourage even the most ardent believers in our democracy.

In the same vein, an election observer who spoke to **Al Jazeera** in 2019 noted that voters, especially young people, feel betrayed by the electoral commission. They expressed the belief that their votes in the last elections did not count, and don't trust the system enough to come out to vote again.

Jahdiel feels the same way about this too. "I wanted to vote in the 2019 elections but I ended up not going to the polls because my mum told me that my vote would not count because she heard that the elections were already being rigged", says the 22 years old Lagos resident who waited for years to cast his vote for the first time.

It was a similar experience for Amaka who got her PVC in 2014 but always feared coming out on election days because of fear of violence which is reported to have claimed over **3,900 lives** in past elections. "I see voting as my right as a citizen but because of the violence that happens during almost every election period, I have not been able to exercise this right because of fear".

While these factors show the level of mistrust of the electoral political process on one hand, it also reveals how much goes to waste in every election cycle due to low level of turnout.

The INEC started its continuous voters registration on **June 28**, 2021. This ongoing exercise is expected to **increase** the number of registered voters. This in turn could lead to an increase in the budget for the 2023 general elections, since INEC uses the number of registered voters for election logistics planning and budgeting. But this may not guarantee an increase in turnout, going by the trend in the past three federal elections.

The INEC has fixed **February 18**, 2023 as the day for the next general elections. To prevent another situation of huge resources going into waste as a result of lower voter turnout, the country may need to adopt workable measures to ensure more participation.

Gender and elections
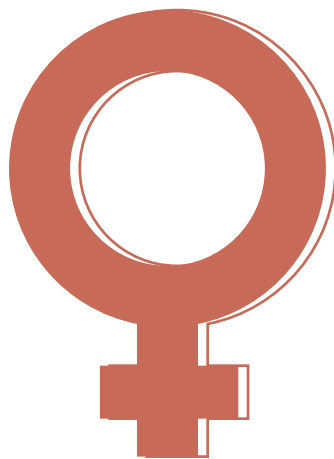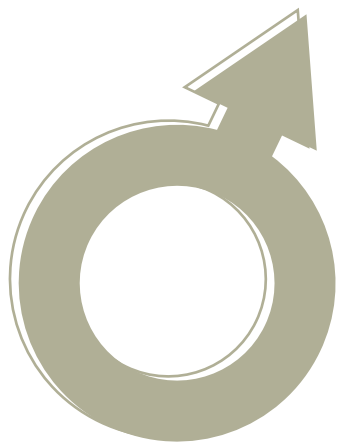
The most significant risk in reporting gender is the lack of data. The problems are glaring, but there is sometimes no data to substantiate what is anecdotally true. With elections, data on women's political participation, especially in contesting elective positions, are available. And the story appears to have been told so much that there are sentiments that enough has been said about it.

However, there is no data on the pipelines that produce the result we see in political participation. How many women are members of political parties? How many women hold seats in political parties?

Even though gender data is scarce, it is essential to use existing data to inform, spotlight and raise questions, as some of the pieces in this section have done. Where sparse data exist on, for example, women's voting patterns, that which is available can be used to raise important questions, as was done with the pieces in this section.

One other approach is to take focus away from the central government and focus on gender data coming from subnational governments. For example, one such technique that has yet to be fully explored is tracking how many women start out in political races across the states and state assemblies and how many eventually make it to the ballot. Achieving this is similar to keeping track of candidates and updating the database as INEC updates theirs until the body announces a final list. Typically, INECs list of candidates across most elective positions is disaggregated by gender and is a good data source. The problem is that as political plots thicken and intrigue mounts, the spotlight is on prominent politicians, often male. So these politicians stepping down for another, cross-carpeting to other parties get a lot of play, and often the women are not remembered.

Telling these stories requires paying attention to gender-specific details, especially in the coverage of elections. The story on female inclusion in this section adopts this approach. The report spotlights the decline in female deputy governors and analyses female participation at the state houses of assemblies. Trend analysis showed that female participation has been topsy-turvy across most states, primarily registering marginal increases and gaping declines.

Gender, despite its obvious importance, is yet to become mainstream and so largely disconnected from other issues considered mainstream, like elections. Gender is treated as a specialised issue in elections and receives far less attention than subjects like ethnicity, religion, economy and other topics that often consume political discussion. The approach adopted in the Male-Male ticket piece in this section demonstrates how to mainstream gender. It considers the issue of gender

alongside other issues that were driving conversations on Nigeria's 2023 elections.

The piece also shows how to leverage gender data otherwise not considered in an article about present-day politics. This is especially important considering how little gender data exists around the country's politics. It is, however, possible to leverage gender data on different issues to provide context, explain a phenomenon or spotlight a trend, even when the core conversation is politics, elections and women's participation in them.

For example, is maternal mortality rate an important election conversation? Unarguably, but less obviously so, than data on how many women have been elected into office since 1999. Yet how often do we fail to make these linkages and so miss out on opportunities to spotlight gender in elections and politics? The connections between gender and issues like elections have not been very well drawn, and it is hoped that the pieces in this section show an example of how journalists can better mainstream gender.

Agenda 2023: Male-Male Ticket, Muslim-Christian Thicket, and a Modest Male Trinket

Published on October 25, 2022

Oluseyi Olufemi

The lead-up to Nigeria's 2023 general elections could have been less dramatic if the All Progressive Congress (APC) presidential candidate, Senator Bola Ahmed Tinubu, simply insisted that he could not remember the religion of his running mate, Senator Kashim Shettima, just as he insisted he could not recollect the primary and secondary schools he attended when he filled his **2003 INEC governorship form** and **2023 INEC presidential form**.
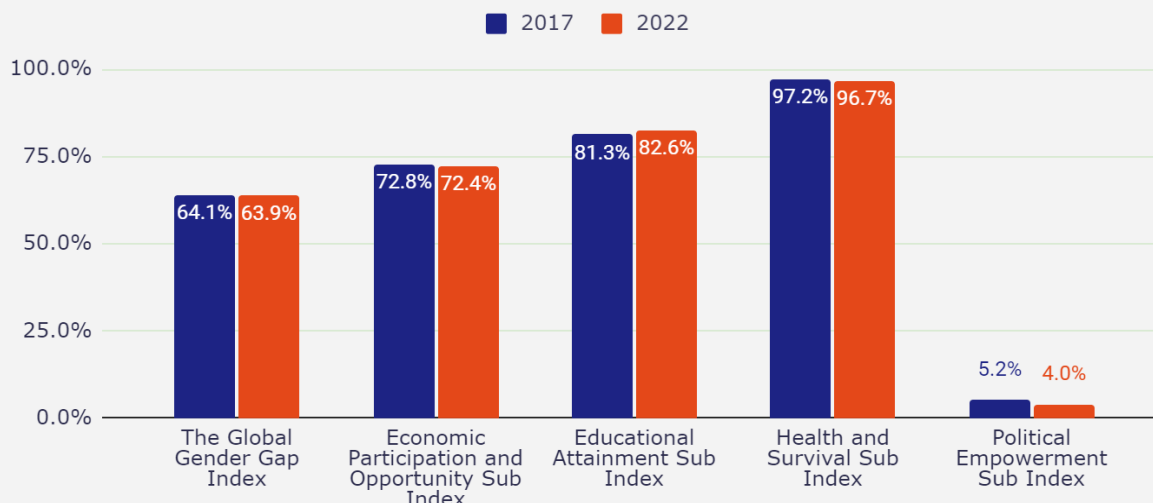
Unfortunately, many people all over the country are persecuting Mr Tinubu for opting for a "Muslim-Muslim ticket" just because he fessed up once that he remembered his classmates — no, his running mates and their religion, and stands by his recollections. Yet, there is something about Mr Tinubu's choice of a VP that shifts the people's attention from an unarguable injustice among all the major political parties — the exclusion of females as presidents or vice presidents in 2023.

According to the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index, "The subindex where Nigeria has the widest gap to close is Political Empowerment, which has been widening since 2012 and currently stands at 96%."

This means Nigeria maintains a 96% disparity or 4% equality between women and men in political positions at the beginning of 2022. This means the female: male ratio is 4:100 or 1:25.

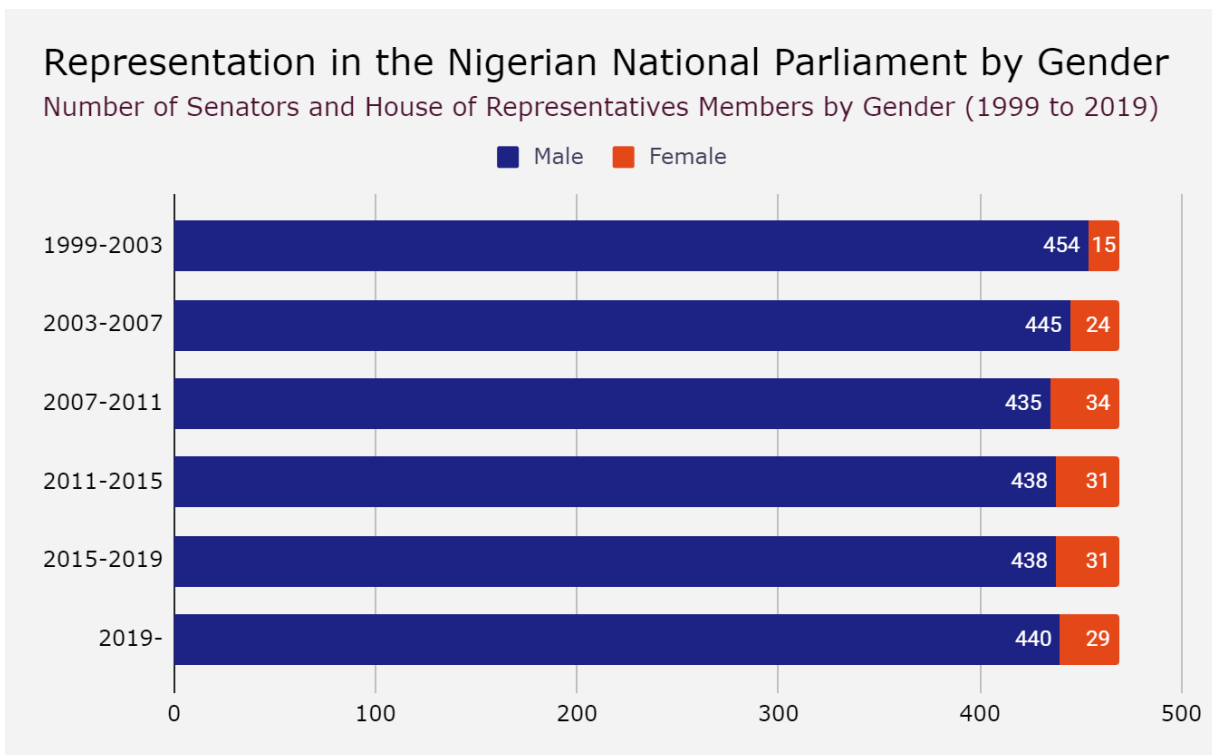## NIGERIA: In 2017, Only 1 woman had an equal political position with 20 men. In 2022 it is 1 woman to 25 men

Nigeria's worst Female:Male Political Empowerment ratio in Africa in 2017 worsened by 2022

■ 2017   ■ 2022

Index	2017	2022
The Global Gender Gap Index	64.1%	63.9%
Economic Participation and Opportunity Sub Index	72.8%	72.4%
Educational Attainment Sub Index	81.3%	82.6%
Health and Survival Sub Index	97.2%	96.7%
Political Empowerment Sub Index	5.2%	4.0%

Source: World Economic Forum; Analysis: Dataphyte Research

Up till now, no one has asked why Tinubu did not choose a Muslim female from the North as his Vice President, why Abubakar Atiku did not choose a female Christian from the south, or why Peter Obi did not choose a female Muslim from the North for the same role, or why a female Muslim-Christian presidential candidate did not emerge in any of the 3 prominent parties, APC, PDP and LP.

Besides the elected Executive positions, Nigeria had 29 female House of Assembly members to 440 Males-less than 7 women representing the female population which is about half of the population while 100 men represent the other half population which is male.

Representation in the Nigerian National Parliament by Gender
Number of Senators and House of Representatives Members by Gender (1999 to 2019)

Male ■ **Female** ■

Period	Male	Female
1999-2003	454	15
2003-2007	445	24
2007-2011	435	34
2011-2015	438	31
2015-2019	438	31
2019-	440	29

In discussions on inclusion as a developmental goal towards 2023 (together with other forms of inclusion), is anyone talking about the inclusion of females, who are approximate half (49.3%) of the 206.14 million population as of 2020, for elective and appointive positions, especially when Muslim-Christian males have shown incremental cluelessness in the past decade and an incorrigible calling to ground the country in deaths and debts, and when science is providing new evidence that females are more suited to solve a problem like Nigeria?

Male-Male Ticket: The Price of Male Dominance

The audacity of a male-male ticket, in Tinubu-Shettima, Atiku-Okowa, Obi-Datti, and many other 2023 presidential teams, against the people's loud silence at such a costly exclusion of women from leadership in the next dispensation, reveal that Nigeria is not ready to tap into the salvific strengths of conscientous female leadership.

A recent study **cited** in the Harvard Business Review showed that women leaders in government and corporate organisations outperformed their male counterparts on most leadership competencies during the Coronavirus pandemic:

"According to an analysis of 360-degree assessments conducted between March and June of

this year, women were rated by those who work with them as more effective. The gap between men and women in the pandemic is even larger than previously measured, possibly indicating that women tend to perform better in a crisis. In fact, women were rated more positively on 13 of the 19 competencies that comprise overall leadership effectiveness in the authors' assessment."

Women Outscored Men on Most Leadership Competencies

According to an analysis of 360-degree reviews during the pandemic, women were rated higher on most competencies.

Competencies — WHERE DIFFERENCE IS STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT	WOMEN	MEN
• Takes initiative	60	50
• Learning agility	59	50
• Inspires and motivates others	59	52
• Develops others	58	49
• Builds relationships	58	51
• Displays high integrity and honesty	57	49
• Communicates powerfully and prolifically	57	52
• Collaboration and teamwork	56	50
• Champions change	56	51
• Makes decisions	56	49
Innovates	56	53
Solves problems and analyzes issues	56	53
Customer and external focus	56	54
• Drives for results	55	48
• Values diversity	55	45
• Establishes stretch goals	55	50
Develops strategic perspective	55	54
Technical or professional expertise	53	55
Takes risks	52	51

Source: Zenger Folkman, 2020   HBR

Source: The Havard Business Review

An earlier study cited by the American Psychological Association (APA) also showed that when women are given gender-neutral roles, they performed better than men:

"After participants in one experiment were told that they would not be identified as male or female, ... none conformed to stereotypes about their sex when given the chance to be aggressive. In fact, they did the opposite of what would be expected-women were more aggressive, and men were more passive."

However, Diane Halpern, a professor of psychology and a past president of the American Psychological Association, cautions that, "even where there are patterns of cognitive differences between males and females, differences are not deficiencies."

Women Were Rated as More Effective Leaders Before and During the Crisis

Based on analysis of 360-degree feedback data between March and June, their scores were even higher during the first wave of the pandemic.

Overall leadership effectiveness ratings

Men: PRE-PANDEMIC 49.8, PANDEMIC 51.5
Women: PRE-PANDEMIC 53.1, PANDEMIC 57.2
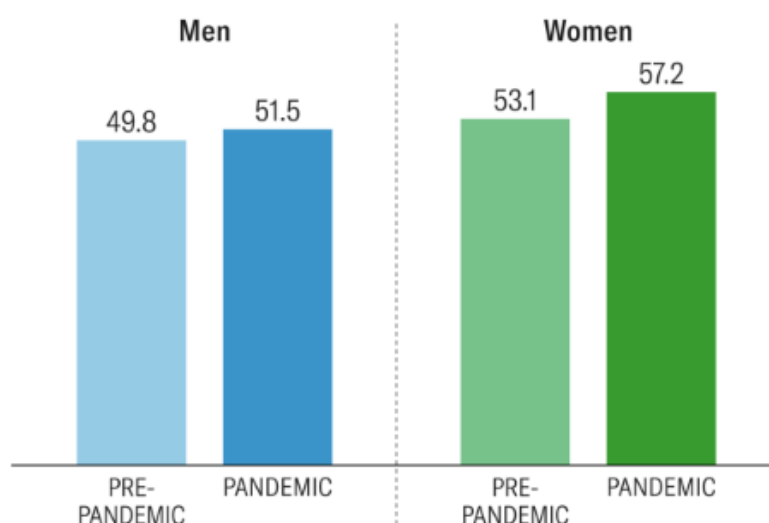
Source: Zenger Folkman, 2020   ☗ HBR

Thus, while males are not cancelled as absolutely deficient in leadership, where they are evidently lacking in remedial, reconstructive and progressive leadership as is the case in Nigeria, the nation only does itself more disservice to ignore the edge of dexterity that Nigerian women can bring to its governance.

To perpetuate males and preclude females from private and public sector governance comes at a huge cost to companies and the country. The 2023 policy thrust of national and subnational governments needs to veer off this male chauvnistic trajectory.

Leader-Manager Template: The Promise of Gender Diversity

If several test results return women as better leaders than men, is it safe to say men should step aside for women in most governance roles?

Definitely not. Neither a male dominated or female dominated leadership suffices.

Despite case studies that highlight the leadership dexterity of women over men, such as the conclusion of Zenger Folkman that "Employees reporting to women had higher levels of engagement with their female bosses than their male bosses", the consensus is for gender diversity in business and politics rather than female dominated or male dominated governance.

Employees Reporting to Women Had Higher Levels of Engagement

Based on direct reports' answers to questions about how engaged they felt during the pandemic.

Employee engagement score, by leader's gender

Men	Average for all leaders	Women
49.2	51.0	55.2
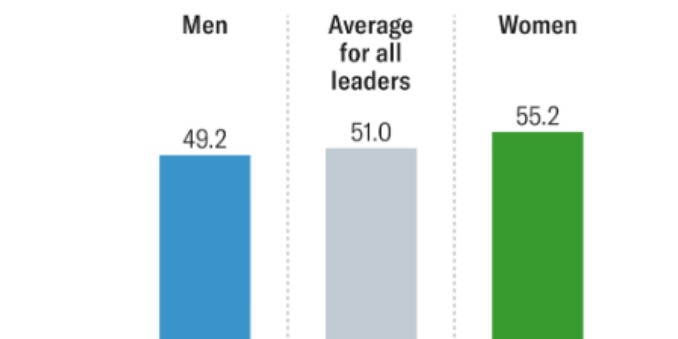
Source: Zenger Folkman, 2020

⊽ HBR

Stefanie K. Johnson, a Bloomberg analyst, believes the "think manager, think male" stereotype no longer stands alone. She **concludes that** we can add a new one: "Think leader, think lady", going by the leadership edge of women globally in 2020.

In other words, gender diversity balances stereotyped masculine managerial expressions with stereotyped feminine leadership expressions. Furthermore, the gender-inclusive manager-leader construct accommodates female managers who deploy the masculine managerial tact as well as male leaders who exhibit the feminine leadership instinct too.

Emma Charlton, a Senior Writer with the World Economic Forum **maintained** that the Global Gender Gap Report consistently highlights the strong correlation between a country's gender gap and its economic performance.

He **adds** that "Such themes are also echoed in McKinsey's "Delivering through diversity" report- that research showed companies in the top quartile for gender diversity on their executive teams were 21% more likely to experience above-average profitability than companies in the fourth quartile."

However, Nigeria still discounts the gains of gender diversity. The country ranks 27th in gender equality among 36 Sub-Saharan countries and 123rd among 146 countries in the world on the World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Index table as of 2022. These rankings position the country among the 10 countries with the poorest records of gender equality in Sub-Saharan Africa.

NIGERIA: Economic and Political Opportunities for Women are on the Decline - Global Gender Gap Index (2017, 2022)			
	Rank among 144 countries (2017)	Rank among 146 countries (2022)	Relative Gain/Drop in position
The Global Gender Gap Index	122	123	1
Economic Participation and Opportunity Sub Index	37	50	-11
Educational Attainment Sub Index	135	134	3
Health and Survival Sub Index	94	97	-1
Political Empowerment Sub Index	135	141	-4
Source: World Economic Forum; Analysis: Dataphyte Research			

Besides, the level of economic participation and political empowerment of women are on the decline when the 2022 sub-indices are compared with the 2017 figures.

These limiting scenarios rob the country of the managerial reforms of women like Dora Akunyili who deployed effective restraints on Nigeria's fake drug cartel, or the leadership instincts of Dr Stella Adadevoh who detected, wrestled, and subdued the index case of Ebola in Nigeria, preventing him from infecting others, saving her country from the deadly Ebola outbreak in Nigeria.

The 2023 Presiential and Gubernatorial candidates need to be discussing now how they intend to reverse the low, and yet, declining emancipation of women in Nigeria, and its negative effect on good governance and other socioeconomic outcomes.

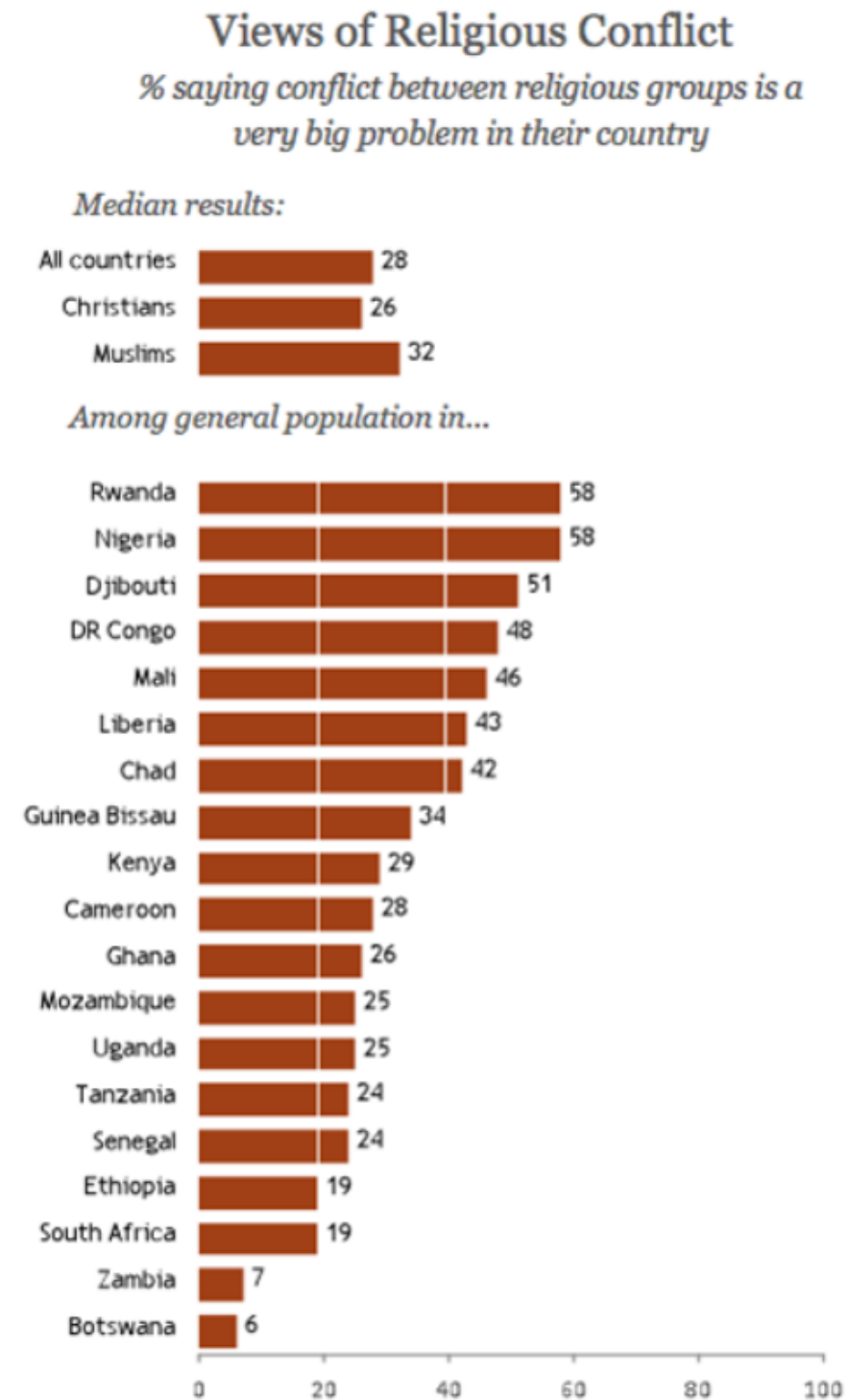## Muslim-Christian Thicket: The Pursuit of Same Difference

Just as gender diversity correlates with profitability and value creation in business, Top-team ethnic and cultural diversity correlates with profitability too, the Mckinsey research, "Delivering through Diversity", **revealed**.

It follows then that if ethnic diversity and cultural (religious) diversity could be harnessed like gender diversity in the larger country context, it could yield the promise of economic growth and political cohesion.

However, Nigeria handles its ethnic and religious diversity just as poorly as it handles its gender diversity. The result has been losses, problems and pain of every imaginable kind. As of 2010, 58% of the sampled population view religious conflict as "a very big problem" in Nigeria.

Considering the incremental numbers of those who have perished between 2010 and 2022 in the hands of Boko Haram, Islamic State of West Africa Province (ISWAP) and other religion-motivated terrorist groups in Nigeria, the proportion of those who 'view religious conflict as a very big problem' in Nigeria may situate in the 90th percentile.

Views of Religious Conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa

Views of Religious Conflict

% saying conflict between religious groups is a very big problem in their country

Median results:

All countries	28
Christians	26
Muslims	32

Among general population in...

Rwanda	58
Nigeria	58
Djibouti	51
DR Congo	48
Mali	46
Liberia	43
Chad	42
Guinea Bissau	34
Kenya	29
Cameroon	28
Ghana	26
Mozambique	25
Uganda	25
Tanzania	24
Senegal	24
Ethiopia	19
South Africa	19
Zambia	7
Botswana	6

Source: **Tolerance and Tension: Islam and Christianity in Sub-Saharan Africa**

"Since the end of military rule in 1999, Nigeria has followed an unwritten rule where power is shared between the largely Muslim north and mainly Christian south", **Reuters** observed in a report that highlighted the religious identity of Senator Bola Tinubu's running mate before giving his name.

While the other two presidential contestants in the two major parties, the Peoples Democratic Party and Labour Party, kept this rule in their VP pick, Bola Ahmed Tinubu broke the unwritten commandment.

Religious affiliations and the relative size of the Muslim and Christian populations remain a tangled thicket harmful for touchy sensibilities to wriggle through. It is so tangled that the government chose not to ask about religion in the national census conducted in 2006, the first in 15 years, a Pew research document **noted**.

The same goes for the census scheduled for 2022/2023. The National Population Commission also plans to help people not to recollect their religions due to the religious dualism between Christians and Muslims, the two major religious identities in Nigeria.

However, Andrew Mckinnon, who obtained 11 nationally representative social surveys from 3 different sources, for his research "Christians, Muslims and Traditional Worshippers in Nigeria: Estimating the **Relative Proportions from Eleven Nationally Representative Social Surveys"** published on Springer, made these submission, among others:
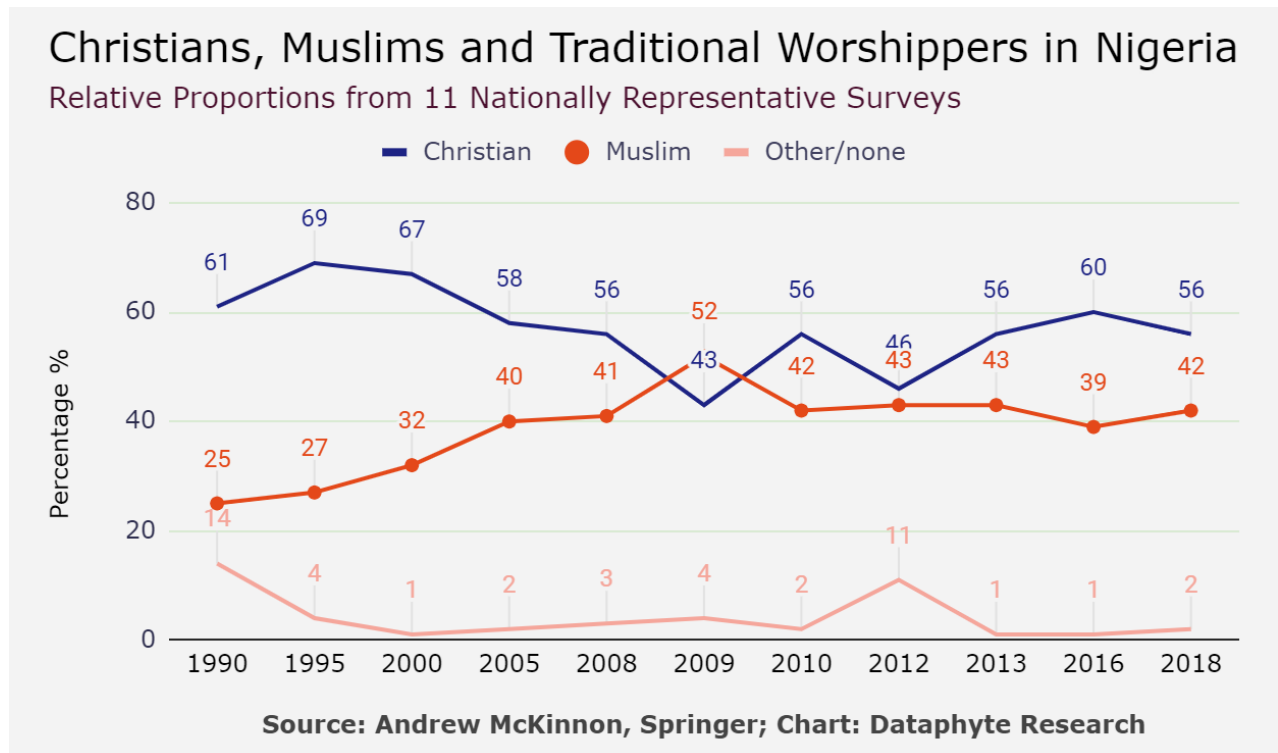
"Looking over the two other categories, the first thing to notice is that Muslims form a majority in only one of the ten samples: in the 2008 Pew Research Center study the absolute majority identify as Muslim (52%) and 43% identify as Christian, and this stands out from all the rest of the samples in this respect. One would have to say that on the evidence of the ten other surveys, coming from three different research groups, it seems highly unlikely that those who identify as Muslims constituted the largest religious group of adult Nigerians between 1990 and 2018."

Table 1 Religious identity by survey-year, adult population of Nigeria

From: Christians, Muslims and Traditional Worshippers in Nigeria: Estimating the Relative Proportions from Eleven Nationally Representative Social Surveys

Religious identity	1990	1995	2000	2005	2008	2009	2010	2012	2013	2016	2018
	World values survey 2[a] (%)	World values survey 3[a] (%)	World values survey 4[a] (%)	Afro-barometer round 3[b] (%)	Afro-barometer round 4[b] (%)	Pew tolerance and tension[c] (%)	General household survey[d] (%)	World values survey 6[a] (%)	Afro-barometer Round 5[b] (%)	Afro-barometer round 6[b] (%)	Afro-barometer round 7[b] (%)
Christian	61	69	67	58	56	43	56	46	56	60	56
Muslim	25	27	32	40	41	52	42	43	43	39	42
Other/none	14	4	1	2	3	4	2	11	1	1	2
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Sources [a] Inglehart et al (2014); [b] Afrobarometer (2018); [c] Pew Research Center (2009); [d] Minnesota Population Research Center (2019)

Christians, Muslims and Traditional Worshippers in Nigeria
Relative Proportions from 11 Nationally Representative Surveys

— Christian ● Muslim — Other/none

Source: Andrew McKinnon, Springer; Chart: Dataphyte Research

He concluded that, "If a census of the population could ask the question about religious identification without being drawn into the politics of representation (and the funding implications that follow), this would be a much better source of knowledge on this question. That seems unlikely to happen any time soon, however."

Yet, ascertaining the **number** of Muslims and Christians in various parts of the country is only the first stage in resolving the religious identity crisis. The other part is humanising divergent Muslim-Christian **narratives**.

For example, one story goes that the Muslim-Christian problem in Nigeria, as mostly elsewhere, started with a ram entangled in a thicket, caught by its horns on some remote mountain in Arabia. The two sides agree that a gentleman named Abraham saw the distressed ram, removed it from the thicket and offered it up for a sacrifice to his God instead of offering his son as he earlier intended.

There and then, the family vendetta between Muslims and Christians began-not a dispute about the cruelty of Abraham towards an innocent, helpless animal in distress-which he murdered in cold blood, but a disagreement about the identity of the ransomed son.

While animal and child rights activists argue that, if this was indeed the case, Mr Abraham should be tried for animal cruelty and attempted murder of a minor, Muslims argue that in the event of a trial, Ishmael, Abraham's first son, would be the plaintiff in the case for it was him that Mr Abraham attempted to kill that day. Christians insist that Isaac, the younger brother was the first plaintiff, together with the murdered ram, joined in the suit by the state of Arabia.

Highlighting common moral and humane concerns as this in the different religious narratives may help further peace and tolerance rather than insisting on one absolute rendering of these extraordinary narratives

A Modest Male Trinket: The Push for Official Discretion

On their part, young people in some sections of the country, who are desperate to disengage the country from the reverse socioeconomic gear, look toward a forward-looking driver in Peter Obi, a "Christian-Muslim Male-Male" presidential candidate whose bragging rights remain his fiscal thriftiness and personal modesty.

Not everyone takes the young 61-year-old former governor of Anambra State seriously on his ability to transform the country.

Yet his antecedents suggest he may not go all out to "borrow from here till eternity" as the APC Chairman, Abdullahi Adamu, insists is the way Nigeria should go.

Mr Adamu says this when the government struggles to repay debts, and the Central Bank owes foreign airlines over $600 million, a debt which keeps rising due to the scarcity of dollars.

Still, everyone trusts that Mr Obi would not wear a **costly wristwatch** or any such **extraordinary trinket** as the governor of Imo State, Hope Uzodinma, even when he (Peter Obi) can afford it.

Peter Obi's track record of circumspect spending of public funds might appeal to an electorate that is tired of government officials borrowing funds for profligate spendings.

Incidentally, the few notable persons who have endorsed Mr Peter Obi on account of his character in private life and of his competence for public service were women from his home state-Senator Bianca Ojukwu, and the Orange Prize winner, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, and the Director General of the World Trade Organisation, Ngozi Okonjo Iweala.

2023-2027 Political Empowerment Goal: To Achieve 2 women per 10 men in Federal, State, LGA legislatures

Source: World Economic Forum; Analysis: Dataphyte Research
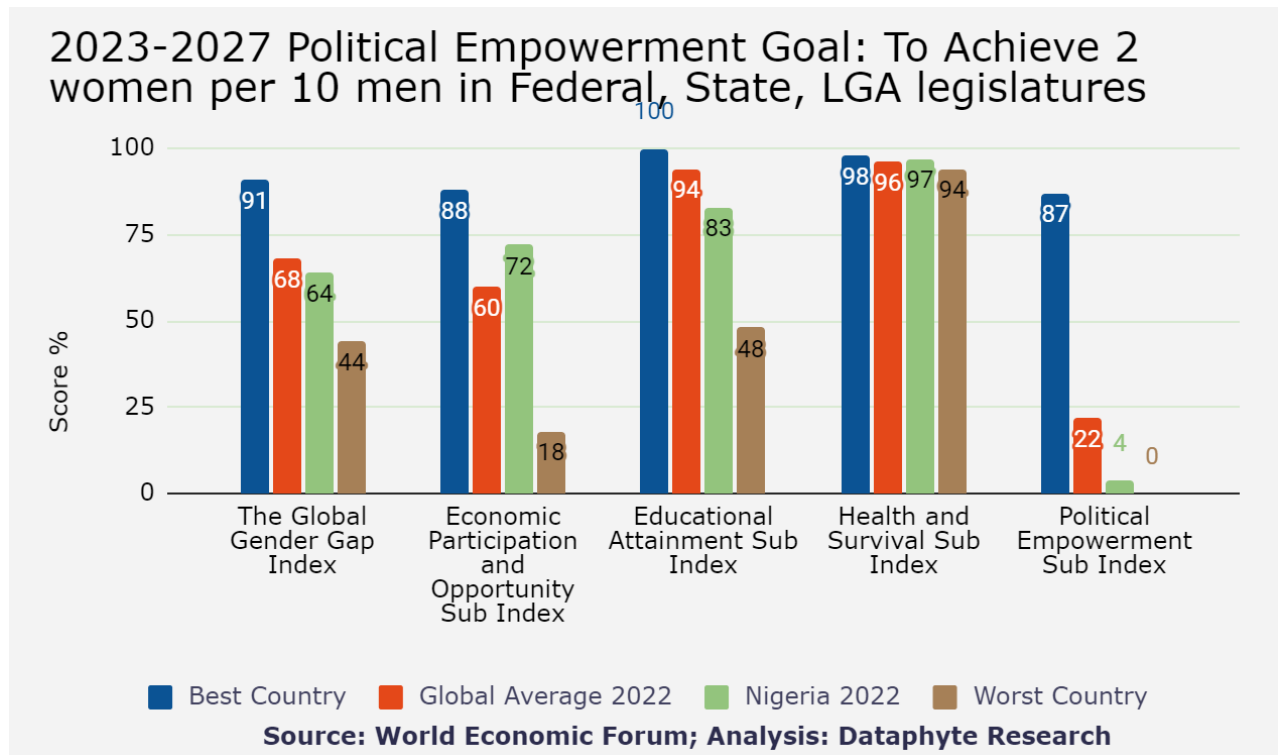
However, Peter Obi and his colleagues on the 2023 Presidential and governorship races need to commit to up the terribly low political empowerment index of these women. Can they commit to pursuing an Agenda to achieve at least the current world average score of 22% for Political Empowerment?

This is a token of 22 female legislators to 100 male legislators by 2027, or simply 2 female legislators to 10 male legislators in the Local government councils, State legislatures, and the National Assembly by 2027.

2023 Elections: With Only 4.5% Representation in State Parliament in 2019, How Can Female Political Inclusion Be Improved?

Published on February 8, 2022

Dennis Amata

In Nigeria, both at the national and state level, women have received the short end of the stick with respect to political representation, even beyond politics.

According to data from Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre (PLAC), fourteen out of the thirty-six states in Nigeria have zero women representation in their parliament.

Data from Statista shows that only **6%** of the total elected lawmakers in the current Nigerian National Assembly are women. At the state level, the figure is even lower at 4.5%.

This low level of representation does not only set the country back in attaining the 30% and 35% affirmative action as prescribed by the Beijing Platform for Action and National Gender Policy respectively, but also excludes women from being part of the governance process in the states and at the federal level, despite making up almost half of the population.

Since Nigeria's return to democratic rule in 1999, six general elections have been conducted and women have vied for different positions but have r**ecorded poor results**, minimal gains and slow progress.

For instance, in 1999, women made up only **1.2% of the 990** elected lawmakers in the States' Houses of Assembly (SHoA) in the country.

The 2003 and 2007 general elections recorded little increase. The percentage of women representation in the SHoA across the country increased to **3.8%** and **5.3%**, respectively.

In 2011, the 36 states in the country had a total of 990 seats in their States' Houses of Assembly (SHoA). Out of that, women had only **62 seats**, a meager of 6.3%.

Percentage of Men and Women in States' House of Assembly in 2011
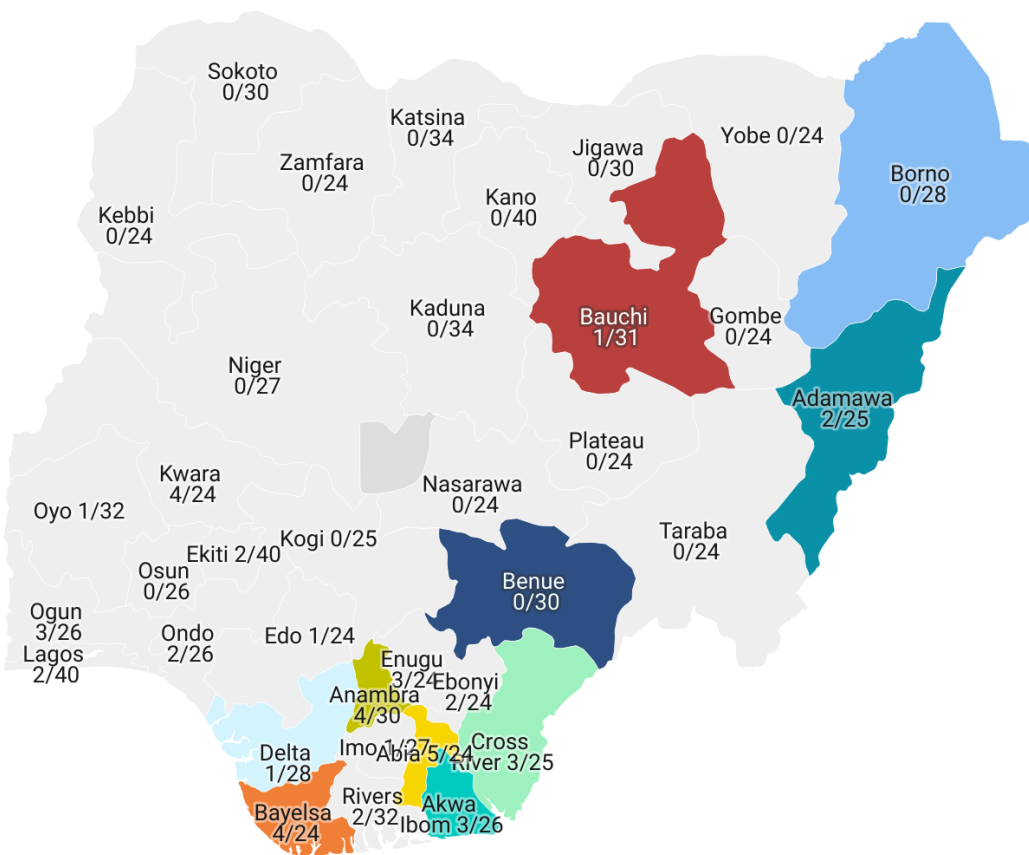
Women
6.3%

Men
93.7%
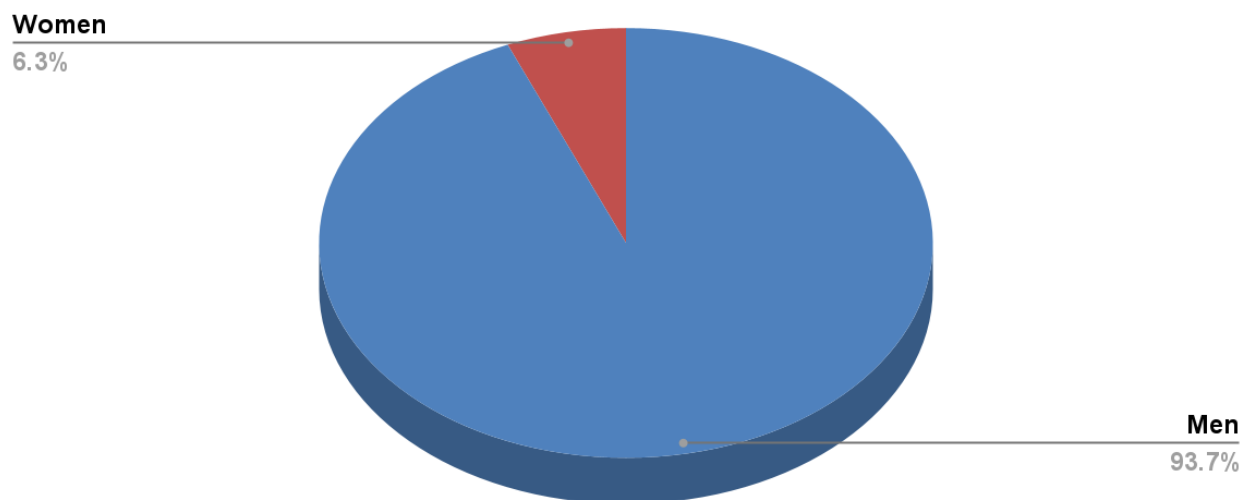
As worrisome as the numbers were in previous elections, the number of seats occupied by women across the 36 SHoA dropped to 46 in 2015, bringing their total representation to only 4.6%.

A state-by-state analysis shows that Abia state had the highest number of female legislators in the country in 2015. Women occupied 5 seats out of the 24 in the state.

Anambra, Bayelsa and Kwara states followed with 4 female SHoA members each. Akwa-Ibom, Cross Rivers and Enugu came next with 3 members each.

Then Adamawa, Ebonyi, Ekiti, Lagos, Rivers and Ondo had just 2 females each in their SHoA. With the exception of Bauchi, Delta, Edo, Imo and Oyo which had 1 female each, other states which are mostly in the Northern region had zero women representation in their SHoA.

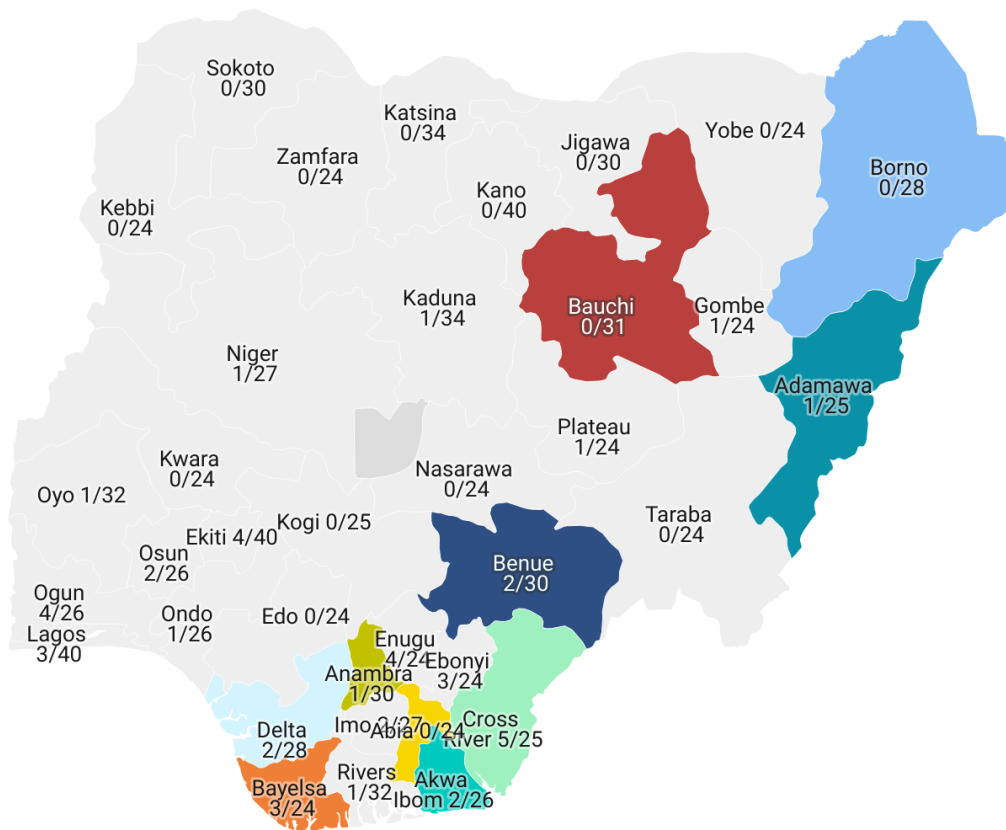## Female Representation at the SHoA to Number of Available Seats in 2015

x/y refers to the number of women representation/total seats (remaining seats being occupied by men)

Map: Dataphyte • Source: PLAC, IRI • Created with Datawrapper

Rather than improvement, the numbers dropped again in 2019. Only 45, representing 4.5% of States' House of Assembly members elected in 2019 were women. Fourteen states recorded zero female representation.

Like the 2015 figure, the Northern region accounted for most of the states where no women were elected to serve in the SHoA.

Female Representation at the SHoA to the Number of Available Seats in 2019

x/y refers to the number of women representation/total seats (remaining seats being occupied by men)
Map: Dataphyte • Source: PLAC • Created with Datawrapper

Abia state pedalled backwards, from having the highest number of female legislators in its SHoA in 2015 it became an all male-parliament in 2019, as no woman was elected.

By region, the North West has the lowest female representation. Only 1 out of the 7 states that make up that region has a female legislator.

Women Representation in States' House of Assembly in 2019 by Political Zones

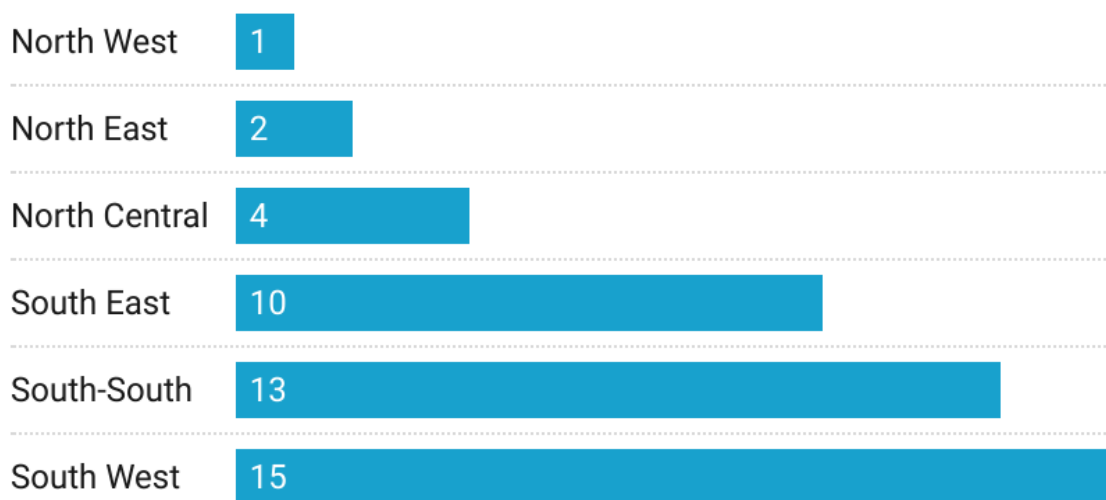| Zone	Value
North West	1
North East	2
North Central	4
South East	10
South-South	13
South West	15

Chart: Dataphyte • Source: PLAC • Created with Datawrapper

The Southwest region, on the other hand, has the highest number of female legislators elected in their states' parliament in 2019, although the numbers are still abysmally low.

Experts Highlight High Cost, Poor Media Coverage, Others as Barriers to Female Participation in Politics

Damilola Agbalojobi, a political scientist and gender specialist, **attributes** the high cost of politics, poor media coverage of female candidates and societal factors such as cultural or religious norms surrounding issues like marriage and the burden of care as some of the factors affecting women participation in politics in Nigeria.

According to the gender specialist, oftentimes, women do not have enough money to pay for the mandatory expression of interest and nomination forms required by political parties to run for positions on their platforms. Not to mention the huge cost required to run an election campaign.

She explained that the poor access of women to education means poor access to gainful employment which makes it more difficult for them to follow through the process of getting leadership positions.

The latest Labour Force Statistics released by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) in the fourth quarter of 2020 puts the female unemployment rate at **35.2%**, a rise from the 31.6% recorded in the second quarter.

When this is put into perspective, it shows that many women are not employed in Nigeria. Thus, may not have access to the necessary resources to pursue political ambitions since **money is a necessity** in contesting for political office, especially in the Nigerian context.

Bukola Saraki, the former President of the Senate also hit on the subject of the high cost of elections in Nigeria in a Twitter space that was organized last week.

The President of the 8th National Assembly noted that elections are expensive everywhere in the world, Nigeria inclusive.

The expensive nature of elections is **believed** to discourage female participation therefore leading to low representation.

Speaking on media coverage, Agbalojobi stated that women don't have the same media coverage with respect to political activities compared to their male counterparts. In her view, this also affects women's chances of getting elected/representation in politics.

Desmond Ekeh corroborated this in this article titled **"Media and Gender Inequality in Nigerian Politics"**. According to him, his analysis of two major nationally circulated newspapers in Nigeria, 28 days prior to the 2015 general election revealed that the female presidential candidate in the race did not receive media attention and her activities were not adequately covered in the media compared with her male counterparts in the other two parties.

The implication of this could be that less people are likely to be aware of her political activities, agenda, strategy etc. thus, further impacting the chances of winning. This might be worse at the state level given that more attention seems to be at national level.

In conversation with Dataphyte, Professor Sonaiya Oluremi, a presidential candidate in the 2015 general election also highlighted the issue of finance and the political culture that has been developed over the years as some of the barriers standing in the way of women from participating fully in politics.

She explained that the Nigerian state, politically, has been captured by a few people, a political class which has continued to just circulate access to political positions among their members.

According to her, some of them have been there for many years and have also erected some very strong barriers which many women are unable to confront. One of the barriers being the expensive nature of politics in Nigeria which keeps women out.

Speaking on how to ensure that more women are represented in politics both at the state and national level especially in the 2023 general elections, the former presidential candidate said she hopes that the Bill that seeks an **additional 111 special** seats for women in the National Assembly becomes a law and also hope that such will be done at the state level too. Although she believes that women can compete favourably if there was a level playing ground given that they have the competence and capacity to contribute significantly to the development of Nigeria politically just as they are doing in other spheres of life.

Abdulmalik-Bashir Mopelola, a commissioner of Women Affairs in Kwara state, noted that the issue of policy needs to be addressed if women would be encouraged to participate in politics.

She further noted that it is important to put in place institutional parameters that assist women who want to venture into politics including harnessing the capacity of women.

Mopelola also reiterated the importance of planned actions by the government towards ensuring that women are well represented in politics.

Section 4

Election administration
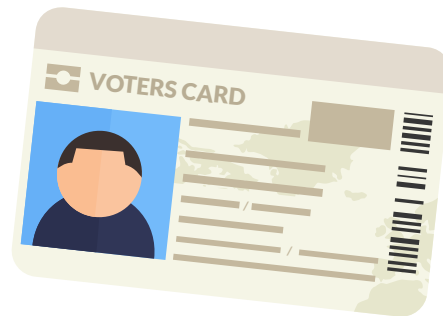
Important moments about INEC's preparation ahead of elections — such as the announcement of the budget, election dates, allocation of election materials, adoption of new technologies, and other modalities — rarely elude the attention of newsrooms. What's often missing, however, are the details of each moment, where for example, in reporting INEC election budgets, a comparative analysis of what's happening in other developing countries or a historical account of what was spent in previous years could be overlooked. This section perhaps contains the least data visualisation or analysis techniques, as we focus on a simple, story-led writing method that could easily capture the attention of election administrators, in addition to the fact that most pieces in the section are quite 'futuristic' or explanatory in nature, in that they focus on how the election administration body could improve the 2023 polls.

The first piece in this section examines INEC's budget for the 2023 elections, highlighting the items in the budget and comparing expenses with previous years. The data used for analysis here was primarily drawn from online sources (for cross-country comparison and previous elections) and INEC's 2023 "Election Project Plan" document. The second piece gives insight into 5 key areas INEC should pay attention to for the 2023 elections. PVC registration and collection, BVAS, electoral officials, and distribution of polling units. Much of this section relies on news sources and a small amount of data from INEC. The third piece gleans from the 2022 Kenyan Presidential elections, drawing insights mostly from East African and Kenyan online news sources and the Kenyan Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) to make suggestions for INEC ahead of Nigeria's 2023 polls. The fourth article is an explainer on Section 84(12) of the Electoral Act in relation to the judgement of the Federal High Court Umuahia on the timeline for the resignation of current political appointees seeking to contest or be a delegate in a party primaries or congress. To get a broader perspective on the issue, this piece included interviews with civil society stakeholders. The final piece describes 3 mistakes INEC should avoid in the 2023 elections, drawing upon the 2019 experience, relying mostly on news sources, academic research, and previous Dataphyte reports.

INEC Budgets N305 Billion to Conduct 2023 General Elections in Nigeria

Published on May 6, 2022

Dennis Amata

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has proposed the sum of N305 billion for the conduct of the 2023 general election. This was revealed in the Commission's Election Project Plan (EPP) document for the 2023 general election.

On Saturday, **February 25, 2023**, Nigerians will go to the polls to elect a new president. To effectively carry out this exercise, the EPP Committee has stated that INEC will need N305 billion to conduct the 2023 general election. This proposed figure was reached by the **EPP Committee** following a review of the budget proposals submitted by the 23 Departments and Directorates of the electoral commission.

Across the world, conducting elections is **expensive**, and the cost in each country is determined by certain factors and electoral events-some of which **include** the structure and size of the democracy, country population, and frequency of elections. Thus, globally, the average Cost per Registered Voter Index (**COVI**) is used to determine the adequacy of election funding. For established and stable democracies, the average cost per voter is pegged at **$1 to $3**. In transitional democracies, it ranges from **$4 to $8**, while the cost is fixed at **$9 and above** in post-conflict and some transitional democracies. In effect, elections tend to be more costly in 'weaker' democracies.

Following the COVI, INEC has put the cost per voter for the 2023 election at an estimate of $5.39, with a target of 100 million registered voters for the election. Using the N565 to $1 parallel market exchange rate the Commission quoted in its EPP document, the actual figure is N304.54 billion. However, the figure is pegged at N305 billion.

This figure is a 61.37% increase over the **N189.2 billion** that was spent to conduct the 2019 general election. The cost per voter in 2019 was fixed at **$6.24** at an exchange rate of N305 with a total of **84 million** registered voters.

In real terms, the cost per voter for the 2023 election reduced compared to 2019 ($5.39 against **$6.24 in 2019**), only that the exchange rate has skyrocketed since the last general election. In addition, the increase in the number of registered voters-one of the determinants for planning

election budgets-and the creation of 56,873 new polling units, among others, may also account for the increase in the proposed budget for the 2023 election.

An analysis of the 2023 proposed election budget shows that 9 items account for 76.68% of the total budget. Procurement of accreditation devices will take the bulk-**34.51%** of the entire budget, while provision for run-off elections is **8.89%** of the budget. Honoraria for adhoc staff, logistics, and printing of ballot papers cover 7.79%, 7.54%, and 6.78% respectively.

Cost of 9 Key Items in the 2023 Proposed Election Budget

Item	Cost (NGN Billion)	Percentage of Total Budget
Procurement of Accreditation Devices for 2023 Election	105.25	34.51
Provisions For Run-Off Elections	27.11	8.89
Honoraria for Adhoc Staff	23.77	7.79
Election Logistics Expenses (Movement, Deployment and Retrieval of Men and Materials for Election)	23.01	7.54
Printing of Ballot Papers	20.68	6.78
Procurement of Non-Sensitive Materials	12.72	4.17
Printing of Result Sheets	9.58	3.14
Procurement of Ballot Boxes	7.82	2.56
Procurement of Operational Vehicles	3.92	1.29

Table: Dataphyte • Source: INEC's Election Project Plan for the 2023 General Election • Created with Datawrapper

On funding the 2023 election budget, INEC explained the Federal Government will **provide** the required funds for the Commission to cover the fixed and direct costs of elections. INEC further **explained** that although it is not reflected either in the fixed budget of the Commission or in the core costs for the conduct of elections, it will also receive support from development partners for some of its electoral activities such as training, capacity building, civic and voter education, production of information, education and communication materials, and engagement with stakeholders which are all geared towards strengthening the integrity of the electoral process, promoting citizens' participation, and enhancing advocacy for inclusivity with reference to women, youths, persons with disability and other marginalised groups.

As the Federal Government, INEC, and other relevant stakeholders set things in place for the general election, beyond mere election funding, another point to pay critical attention to is ensuring that more people turn out to vote in the upcoming election to avoid another waste of funds, as witnessed in the last 3 general elections.
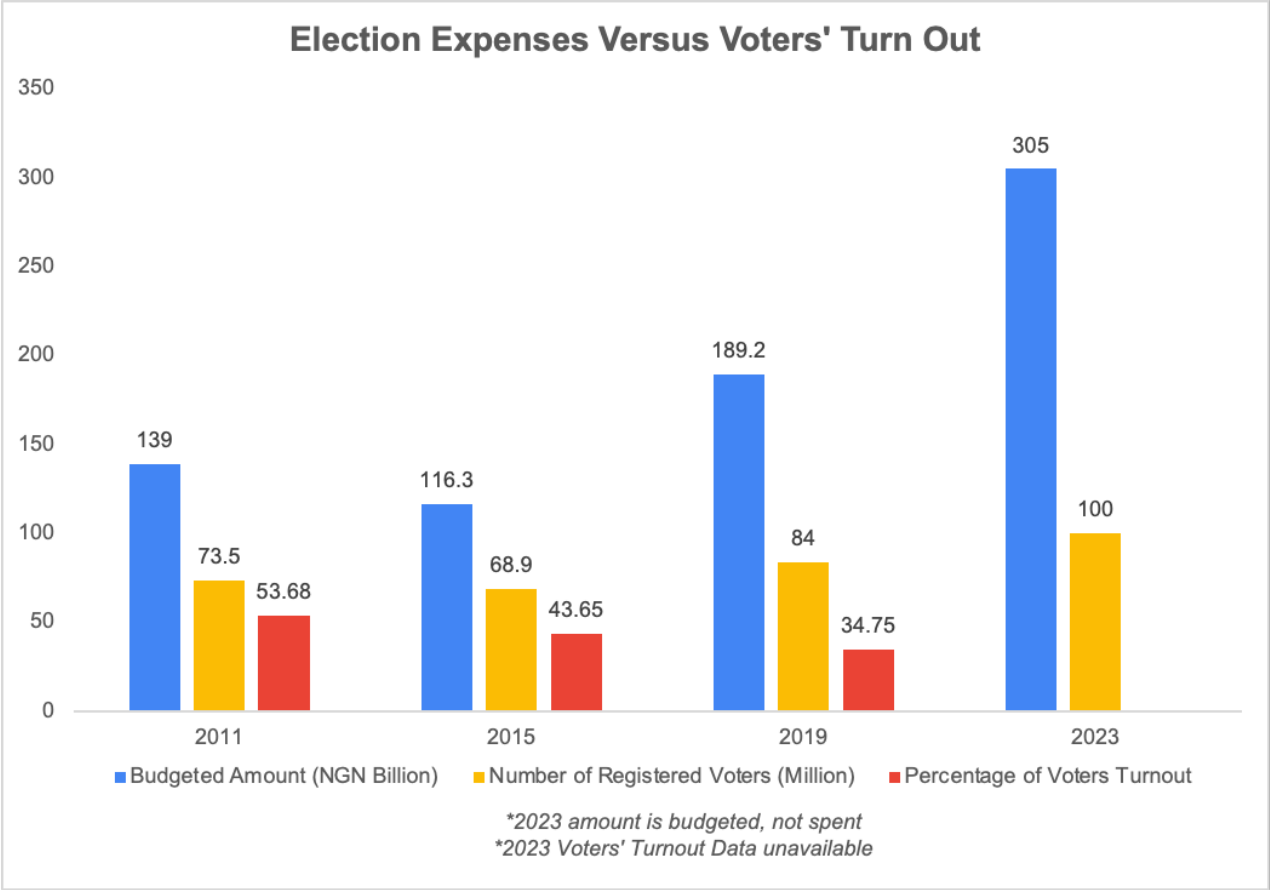
Last year, Dataphyte **reviewed** the country's election expenses and noted that while the Federal Government spent **N444.5 billion** to conduct the country's last three general elections a total of **N255 billion** was wasted due to the low voter turnout recorded in each of the elections.

Among other things, the electoral Commission uses the voter register, that is, the number of people who have registered for an election, as a basis for election planning. Thus, in the 2011 general election, INEC spent **N139 billion** at the average cost of N1,893 or $9 per voter for the **73.5 million** registered voters.

For the 2015 elections, **N116.3 billion** was spent at the rate of N1,691 or $8.5 per voter for the **68.9 million** citizens who had registered prior to the election funding stage. In 2019, the number of registered voters stood at **84 million**, and **189.2 billion** was spent to conduct the election.

However, in all these elections, except for 2011, more than half of the registered voters **did not** turn out to vote on the election day which accounts for the N255 billion waste since INEC relies on the number of registered voters to plan election budgets.

In the last general election, only **34.75%** of the 84 million registered voters came out to vote; the lowest turnout recorded in Africa in 2019 and Nigeria's **lowest** since its return to democracy in 1999.

Election Expenses Versus Voters' Turn Out

2023 amount is budgeted, not spent
2023 Voters' Turnout Data unavailable

Now, for the 2023 elections, INEC has projected 100 million registered voters; proposing N305 billion to conduct the election. With the country's declining voter turnout rate, the possibility of a huge waste of funds is quite concerning. To prevent another situation of huge resources going to waste as a result of lower voter turnout, the electoral commission may need to adopt workable measures to ensure more participation at the 2023 polls.

2023 Elections: Dear INEC, Here is How not to Disenfranchise Nigerians in 5 Steps

Published on September 19, 2022

Dennis Amata

My good friend, Stephanie, couldn't wait till November 20, 2017, to clock 18. Aside from the big party, we had planned for months to throw to welcome her to "adulthood," she was also eager to register for her Permanent Voter Card (PVC) in order to cast her vote in the 2019 general election.

The "big party" was held, but Stephanie couldn't cast her vote during the 2019 election because she could not collect her PVC despite many attempts. Eventually, Stephanie gave up and was among the 55.39 million Nigerians who did not vote that year.

As the collection of PVC begins this year, Stephanie, now 23, is more determined than ever to collect her PVC. But one question keeps popping up in her mind, is INEC just as determined to have her to exercise her civic rights? The many Nigerians who could not vote in the 2019 election are asking the same question of INEC. They have dutifully registered for their voter's card and/or updated their details during the Continuous Voters Registration (CVR) exercise, which ended on **July 31st**. They now await collection.

In 2019, INEC disclosed that 11.23 million PVCs were uncollected. Apart from the willful failure of certain voters to obtain their PVCs, as INEC **noted** per the low turnout rate for PVC collection, Adekunle Osibogun also **attributed** the reasons for the uncollected PVCs to red-tapism and other bureaucratic bottlenecks in the electoral system. Adekunle **explained** that many people went to INEC offices as early as 5 a.m, spent the entire day there, and were still unable to pick up their cards, eventually giving up. The experience was similar in 2015.

This history, the stress of the recently concluded CVR **exercise**, which some Nigerians found very **tedious**, and news of the removal of **invalid** registrations by INEC are affecting citizens' confidence.
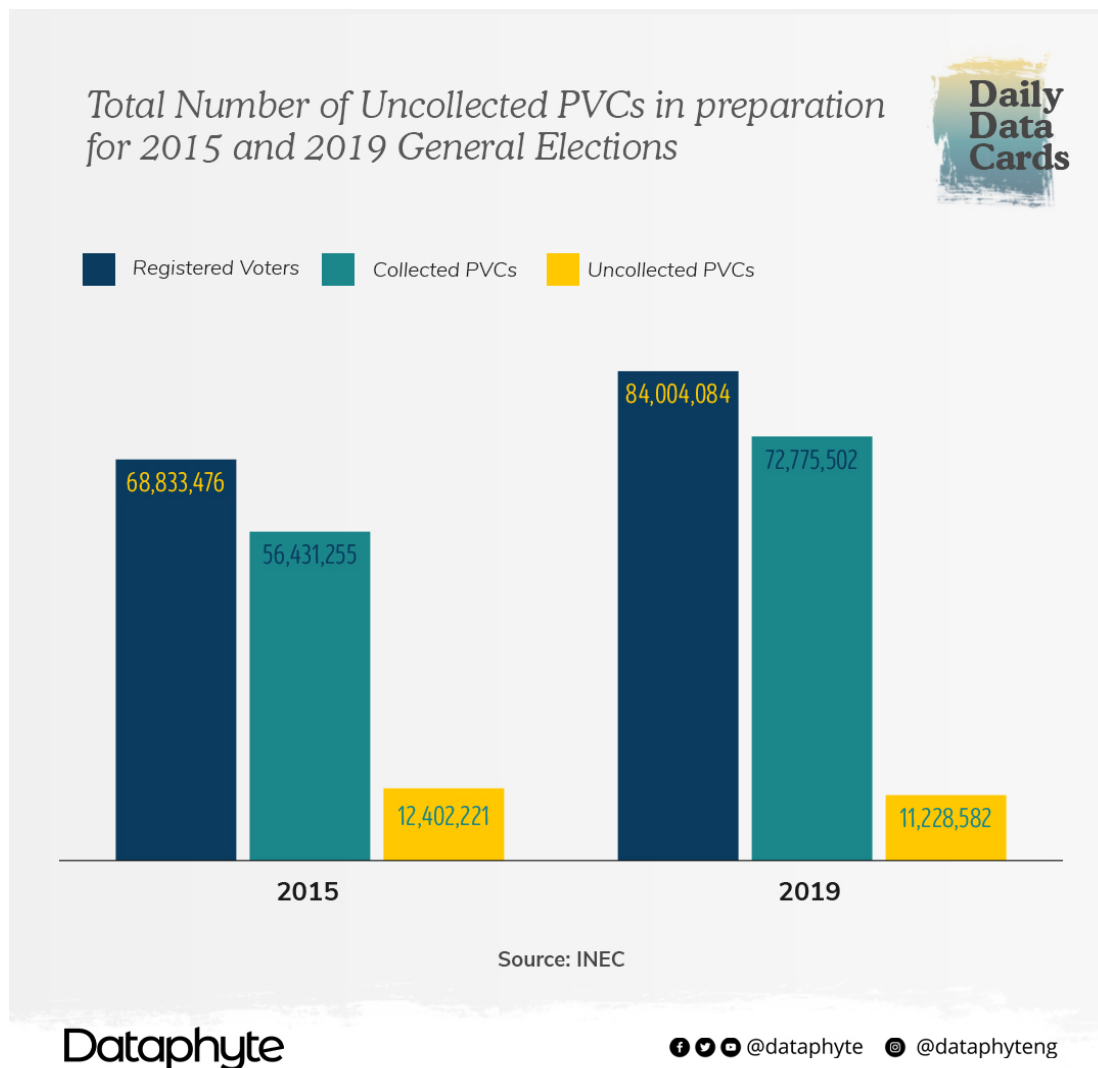
So on behalf of Nigerians, dear INEC, here are 5 steps that will help buoy confidence in the electoral processes as we approach 2023.

STEP 1: Make PVC Collection Easier Than Registration

On June 28, 2021, INEC resumed the CVR exercise, and it ran till June 30, 2022. On the last day of the deadline, an extension was announced to give room to citizens who wanted to register but could not meet up with the initial deadline.

Despite the additional time, more than **7 million** Nigerians were unable to complete the registration. This, among others, was attributed to 2 reasons-**waiting** until the very last minute to begin and/or finish their PVC registration on the part of citizens and frustration with INEC's official process, including insufficient **equipment**, an interminably slow **process** and alleged request of payment for registration. Now that the CVR is over, there is some anxiety over the PVC collection process.

As earlier noted, 11.23 million PVCs were not collected before the 2019 election. In 2015, it was 12.40 million.

Total Number of Uncollected PVCs in preparation for 2015 and 2019 General Elections

Daily Data Cards

■ Registered Voters   ■ Collected PVCs   ■ Uncollected PVCs

2015
- 68,833,476
- 56,431,255
- 12,402,221

2019
- 84,004,084
- 72,775,502
- 11,228,582

Source: INEC

Dataphyte   @dataphyte   @dataphyteng

Among **others**, the reasons for this large number of uncollected PVCs were attributed to **red-tapism** and other bureaucratic bottlenecks in the electoral process.

In 2018, there were reports that INEC officials **demanded** money for PVC collection, an accusation that reared its head again during this year's **CVR exercise**. Chukwunwodo Augustus, a 44-year-old Apapa resident in Lagos state **shared** that it took 4 years and a bribe to collect his PVC, during which time he missed voting in the 2015 elections. Another citizen, who refused to pay a bribe, **said** that he spent almost 8 hours in a queue while those who offered the officials bribes got their PVC quickly.

INEC must ensure that the collection process is better organized to considerably reduce the number of uncollected PVCs before the 2023 elections. It must deal with the issues that have

been spotlighted, like corruption, bureaucracy, etc., to ensure that Nigerians who have gone through the process of registering, collect their PVCs without stress.

One way to make collection easier is to send out Short Message Service (SMS) notifications to registered voters, notifying them that their PVCs are ready for collection. Another idea is to deliver PVCs by mail, like it's done in other climes.

STEP 2: Get Enough BVAS, Make Sure They Work

Now that we've made it to election day, what could go wrong?

During the 2015 general elections, INEC **introduced** a Smart Card Reader (SCR) machine. Prior to the election, INEC assured the country that the SCR would not pose any challenge. However, there were numerous **reports** from many parts of the country about the device malfunctioning and causing delays and frustration for voters. It was a similar story in the **2019** general election, with several reports of the failure of machines in various parts of the country. As a result, some voters were **disenfranchised** since one of the regulations for the conduct of the 2019 general election by INEC was that the SCR must accredit voters, and the election too must be held using the SCR.

For the 2023 election, INEC will use the Bi-Modal Voter Accreditation System (BVAS), the new technology that is adopted by the electoral commission to **authenticate** and accredit voters during elections.

The BVAS device was first **deployed** in the Isoko South Constituency 1 bye-election in Delta State on September 10, 2021. Then the **Anambra** gubernatorial election. The BVAS has also been used in other elections conducted in the country — the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Area Council election, Ekiti, and Osun state governorship elections.

While the BVAS has been viewed as a **game changer** in the country's election, there have also been complaints of malfunctioning of the device, which INEC has acknowledged.

Earlier this year, Dataphyte monitored the FCT Area Council election, and the monitoring team **observed** cases of malfunctioning BVAS. Thousands of voters were left **stranded** due to the failure of the BVAS, **resulting** in some voters not casting their votes. BVAS failure was also reported during the **Anambra**, **Ekiti**, and **Osun** governorship elections.

The electoral commission has **assured** Nigerians that before the 2023 election, it plans to deploy

200,000 BVAS for the election, and will work on the challenges to the optimal functionality of the devices.

Alongside functionality, the BVAS must also be enough, especially for high-density areas. Last year, INEC announced the creation of additional **56,872** polling units to the existing 119,974, bringing the total polling units in Nigeria to 176,846. However, according to **Cecilia Uwakwe**, the 200,000 BVAS INEC plans to deploy across the 176,846 polling units for the 2023 general election may not be sufficient for a hitch-free election. Deploying 200,000 devices translates to 1 device per polling unit. With a high population in some polling units and possible network breaches and/or failure of the device, assigning 1 BVAS to a polling unit is a little more than concerning; it's impracticable.

Here is a simple math, if 1 polling unit has 500 registered voters and 1 BVAS machine, and it takes 3 minutes for each person to get accredited. It will take 25 hours for 500 people to do accreditation, half that time with two voting machines. But in the two instances, the time for voter accreditation alone, with one fully functional BVAS machine, exceeds the total time allocated for the voting exercise, which is just 6 hours, from 8:30 am to 2:30 pm. The figures do not add up.

To prevent a situation where the BVAS fails and voters are stranded and unable to vote due to time constraints, as has been witnessed in **recent** elections, INEC may want to consider increasing the number of BVAS it plans to deploy and, more importantly, make sure they function optimally to ensure an efficient and credible election in 2023.

STEP 3: Electoral Officers, Don't Come Late, Please

According to INEC's **Regulations** and Guidelines for the Conduct of Elections, 2022, accreditation and voting in the 2023 election shall commence at 8:30 am and close at 2:30 pm.

The previous **guidelines** put the commencement of polls at 8 am and scheduled to close at 2 pm. But in many instances in previous elections, INEC officials and voting materials did not arrive on time, leading to late commencement of voting.

For instance, the African Union Election Observation Mission **stated** in its report on the 2015 general election that only 23% of the polling units they visited opened on time, while 77% opened late because of the late arrival of polling personnel and election materials.

In 2019, a similar scenario played out as thousands of Nigerians **tweeted**, complaining about the late arrival of INEC officials at the polling units.

The European Union Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) also **affirmed** this in its report about the 2019 general election, noting that most polling units opened extremely late.

According to the EU EOM, only 65% of polling units were opened by midday, thereby leaving many voters waiting for hours and uncertain when voting would begin. The report added that late arrival deterred many voters from participating.

In recent off-cycle elections, there have been reports of late arrival of INEC personnel and materials. For instance, in the 2021 Anambra state governorship election, YIAGA Africa **noted** that as late as 9:30 am, only 28% of polling units commenced accreditation and voting, then only 50% at 10:30 am.

According to the group, the late arrival of electoral officials, materials, accreditation, and voting, denied many electorates the right to vote in the Anambra governorship election.

A similar event happened in the FCT Area Council elections held this year. Dataphyte **reported** that INEC's punctuality was generally low. YIAGA Africa also **corroborated** this in their Midday Situational Statement on the election.

For a voting period of just 6 hours (8:30 am-2:30 pm), the lateness of election officials and materials will have one definite outcome, disenfranchisement of citizens.

INEC needs to develop a strategy, including reviewing logistics for the movement of its people and materials to circumvent lateness as Nigerians prepare to exercise their voting rights in the forthcoming election.

STEP 4: Let Data Guide the Distribution of Polling Units

Among others, the lack of access to polling units and overcrowding of polling units are some **challenges** bedevilling Nigeria's electoral process. The creation of the additional **56,872** polling units by INEC is a much-needed response to this challenge.

To ensure that the goal of having these new polling units is not defeated, it is necessary to let data guide the distribution of the new polling units in the upcoming elections. In the 2022 FCT Area Council elections conducted earlier this year, YIAGA Africa **noted** in its observation report that

there was an imbalance in the distribution of voters to new polling units. According to the report, during the FCT election, some polling units had as many as 2,500 registered voters, while others had less than 5 voters within the same location. Similar concerns were **raised** about the recent Ekiti governorship election.

If the trend continues in the 2023 general election, some of the polling units may have more voters than they can handle in the time allotted for the election exercise, which defeats INEC's objective for the expansion of polling units. Therefore, INEC needs to ensure that its decision to distribute polling units in the upcoming election is well guided by data. Regions/Areas with high voter registrations should be allotted more polling units and vice versa.

STEP 5: Effective Communication is the Key to a Successful Relationship, INEC Please Communicate

In recent times, INEC has been under a lot of criticism by **citizens** for either failing to share necessary information or the lack of clarity in the information it shares. In 2019, the EU EOM **noted** that the lack of clear information from INEC resulted in some voters not casting their votes on the election day in some polling units.

Apart from this, there have been instances where registered voters do not have adequate information about the collection of their PVC and/or **polling units** and thus, get disenfranchised.

More recently, INEC's announcement of the "**delisting**" of 1.1 million new registrants could have benefitted from clearer messaging. The sensitivity of elections, wariness of government, and its institutions' motives among citizens should have inspired a clearer communication campaign that clearly outlines the reasons for INEC's actions, leaving little room for speculations and **accusations**. Perhaps the media could have done better with less volatile headlines, but INEC has the room and resources to communicate better.

As the election approaches, it is necessary for INEC to improve on its communication policy/ strategy to ensure that all eligible voters are adequately informed and exercise their political rights.

Four Lessons for Nigeria from Kenya's 2022 Elections

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Ayantola Alayande and Dennis Amata

Public display of division among its electoral commissioners and subsequent petitioning of the elections at the supreme court by rival candidate, Raila Odinga, are just few of the reasons the recent Kenyan election might be far from the perfect example of a democratic contest. Those two occurrences may have cast **doubts** on the credibility of Kenya's Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC), as several political analysts **raise questions** on trust and legitimacy of the process.

Despite these, the successes and failures in the election administration procedures of Kenya's IEBC might offer some crucial lessons for other African countries gearing up for their own elections.

In this article, we highlight 4 lessons Nigeria can glean from the Kenyan 2022 elections, as the country prepares for its 2023 polls.
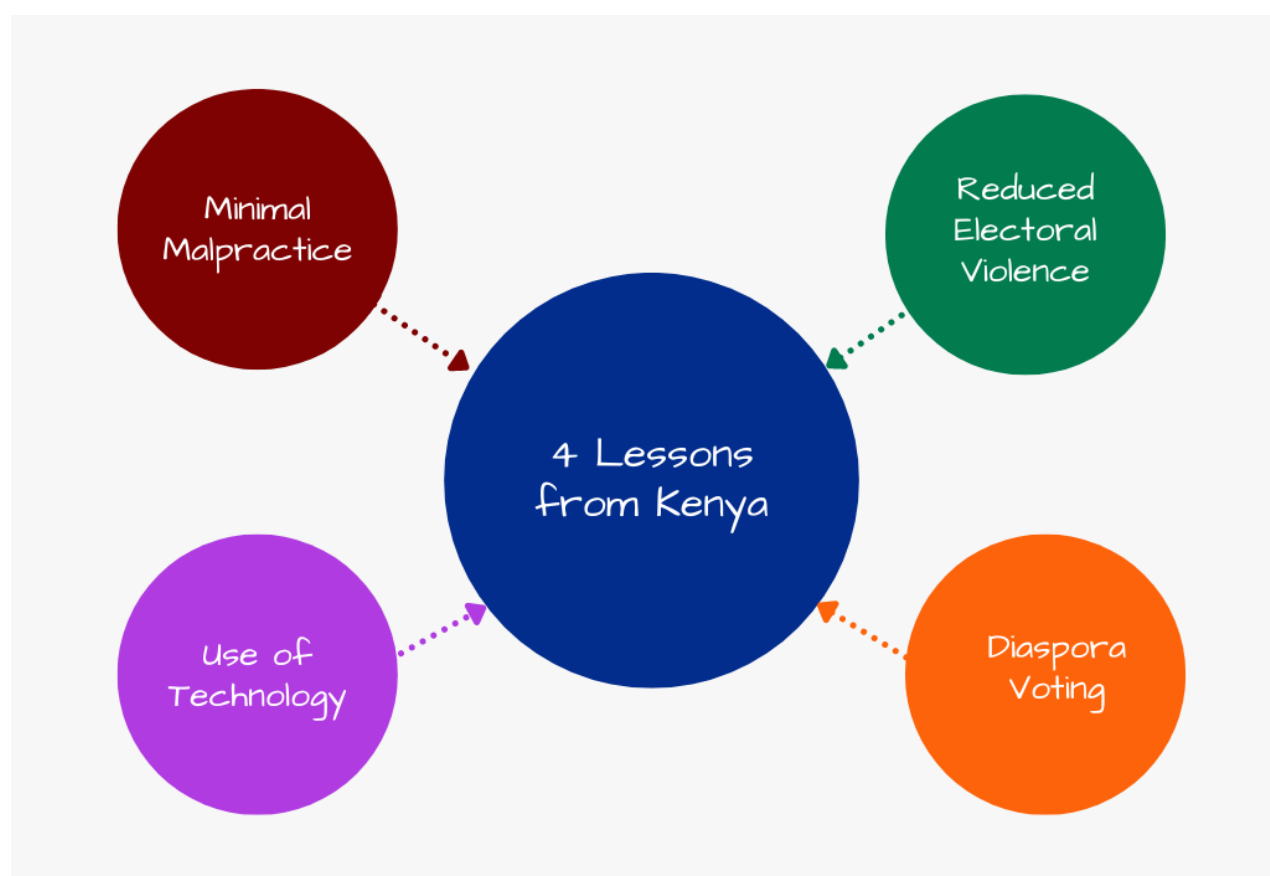
Minimal Malpractice

The 2022 election is the most closely contested elections in Kenya's political history — with William Ruto **winning the election** with 50.5% of the total votes cast, as against the opposition, veteran Raila Odinga's 48.9%. Odinga challenged the election in court, **claiming** that the results were not "complete, accurate or verifiable", on about 9 grounds, **including** that the voter turnout was not comparable with the election results, that the IEBC chairman had acted unilaterally in declaring the results (referencing the 4 out of 7 electoral **commissioners** who disagreed with the results), and that the commission failed to tally ballots from 27 constituencies. However, the court upheld Ruto's victory, **dismissing** Odinga's petition, and affirming that little to **no evidence of** electoral malpractice or failure of the IEBC's technology was found in the electoral process.

The court's ruling on the election and the subsequent decision of Odinga to **welcome** the court's decision "with tremendous humility" suggest that, despite shortcomings, the election was not marred by any significant fraud. The concerns raised by Odinga's are normal in a keenly contested election as this, and despite the odds, political analysts have termed the elections a **success** and an **improvement** to the 2017 elections, which had re-runs and extensive court cases.

Claims by the four commissioners (including the vice chairman of the IEBC), who disowned the results, were largely based on a supposed, negligible **mathematical error** (100.01% rather than 100% sum of total votes) which were essentially rounding errors. In fact, the IEBC's final election results corresponded with the Parallel Votes Tabulation (**PVT**) data of Election Observation Group (ELOG) Kenya — an independent election observation organisation — showing a margin of error of only 2.1% between both results. The Kenyan 2022 election might be **the first** national election in Africa, where an election management body (EMB)'s results perfectly match an independent organisation's votes tabulation.

This scenario suggests that public confidence in an electoral system can be boosted by improving accessibility of real time election data to the public and civil society actors. In Nigeria, some domestic election observation groups such as YIAGA Africa **piloted** the use of PVTs in the 2019 general elections based on a random sampling of polling stations across the country. As we prepare for the 2023 elections, the introduction of a real time election results update portal by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) would help election observation groups deploy a more robust PVT process and have a larger sample base to work with.

Diaspora Voting

With patterns of migration increasing across the world, the political participation of citizens in diaspora becomes more important. Globally, most countries that hold elections have in place some form of diaspora voting. It is **estimated** that, since 1990, the number of countries that practise diaspora voting has increased from 37 to about 135, with 38 of those being African countries.

In 2013, Kenya witnessed its **first round** of diaspora voting in just 4 neighbouring East African countries. The figure increased to 8 countries in the 2017 elections, and 13 in the recently concluded 2022 contest.

In West Africa, nearly all of Nigeria's counterparts — including Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Togo, Niger, Benin, Togo, and Senegal, have all at one time or the other **implemented** diaspora voting in their national elections. Yet with Nigeria's National Assembly's **rejection** of the proposal for diaspora voting, INEC has stated that it is **unable** to implement voting for Nigerians abroad in the forthcoming elections. Such legislative concerns could be fuelled by the conservative **perspective** that diaspora voting empowers those who are the least affected by the consequences of their votes and the logistical implications of ensuring ballot secrecy, costs of administration, and safeguarding election integrity in another country.

Yet, the justifications for diaspora voting far outweigh the concerns about it. The United Nations (UN) record **shows** that in 2020 alone, there were 1.7million emigrants from Nigeria as at mid-year, while the Nigerian government **estimated**, as of 2017, that there were at least 17 million Nigerians living abroad. Nigeria was also among the **top** 5 developing countries receiving the largest remittances globally as of 2017 — indicating the commitment of Nigerians abroad to their home country. Nigerians abroad have also recently been heavily involved in the political conversations in the country.

Therefore, implementing diaspora voting is a necessity for the 2023 elections. Nigeria can learn from the gradual implementation in Kenya; beginning with small scale trials in countries with the highest proportion of Nigerians abroad.

On a broader scope, perhaps it is time the country explores the possibility of online voting — something African countries generally lag behind in and for which Nigeria might provide leadership.

Highly Techy Election

Kenya's elections have been described as highly **techy**. Several new features were introduced to

improve the election administration, including a voter identification system known as the Kenya Integrated Elections Management Systems (**KIEMS**) which biometrically identifies voters using their IDs and matches it with their registration records. The KIEMS also includes a system that enables the instant transmission of polling unit results to the constituency, county and national collation centres.

The KIEMS system is similar to a new system introduced by INEC, called the Bimodal Voters Registration System (**BVAS**). The BVAS is an improvement to the mere use of card readers to identify voters, and also enables the real time transmission of election results to the INEC's Results Viewing Portal (**IREV**) — another newly introduced feature. While Nigeria has already put in place technologies similar to Kenya's, the electoral commission could take some lessons from the successes as well as failures and blindspots of Kenya's electoral technologies.

In Kenya, the IEBC election results portal got continued live updates from the transmission of Form 34Bs (constituency results), with the IEBC results meshed with platforms like Google and Reuters election updates. These results were accessible to the public, making it easier for CSOs and media organisations to conduct their own analysis of the results. It also promoted **transparency** and reduced the spread of disinformation about election results. An important factor in the success of the process was that the portal had been **tested** for functionality two months prior to the elections. One important lesson to point out here is that INEC should not have to wait till all votes are collated before constituents get updates about election results. The essence of a real-time technology update becomes defeated if voters end up waiting for a final announcement of results.

The tech deployed during the Kenyan election was not however without some flaws as several **reports** point out. It is **noted** that the KIEMS kits failed to recognize fingerprints of some voters, as a result, some citizens could not exercise their franchise despite being on the queue for long hours. In fact, the low voter turnout in the Kenyan election was largely attributed to technology failure in several areas, particularly in 2 counties — Kakamega and Makueni. Voting also commenced **late** in some quarters due to the failure of the KIEMS kits.

This is something INEC must watch out for with its BVAS, especially as there have been several complaints about the device in elections where it has been **deployed** so far, which INEC itself has acknowledged.

As we see in Kenya, the introduction of digital technologies would not necessarily reduce the prevalence of election malpractices, but it has the potential to make the electoral process more

seamless and legitimate. For instance, the introduction of smart card readers in the 2015 general elections **was found** to have increased citizens' confidence in the credibility of the electoral system. The **acceptance** of the outcomes of the 2015 election by many of the candidates (particularly the incumbent president) and the decline in the number of electoral petitions filed in the aftermath of the election lend credence to this.

Likewise, the introduction and deployment of technology (BVAS) by INEC in recent elections has also been viewed as a **game changer** in Nigeria's elections and has increased voters' confidence in the electoral process.

Reduced Electoral Violence

One would expect a keenly contested election as this not to be devoid of violence, especially when viewed in the light of the **post-election** killings and violence during the 2017 polls and the country's most deadly ethnic clash of 2007. However, the Kenyan public and particularly the politicians whose rhetoric were less inciteful paved the way for a decline in violent outburst during the elections. For example, even though Odinga disagreed with the election results following the announcement of William Ruto as winner, he tempered his supporters' anger, **admonishing** them to remain at home and assuring them that he would instead seek legal recourse. Not only that, he also eagerly agreed with the Supreme Court's decision after the court ruled in favour of the IEBC's results which had proclaimed Ruto winner.

Compared to previous polls, the 2022 elections were far less violent, although one election official was **found dead** outside Nairobi, just days after the voting took place, and another official **collapsed and died** under mysterious circumstances possibly unrelated to the elections.

Nigeria on the other hand still has a long way to go in ensuring its elections are peaceful. During the 2019 elections, several death cases and election violence were reported, **with reports** placing pre-election to election day killings at 626 persons (6 times more than the 2015 figures).

As in the Kenyan example, one important way to stem the tide of violence is to encourage politicians to admonish their supporters to act with civility, while also publicly educating citizens. A strong security system is a potential deterrent, but we must also be wary of police brutality and sparking public outrage as we have seen in previous elections.

Why is Section 84(12) of the Electoral Act 2022 Causing so much Controversy?

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Dennis Amata

On **March 18, 2022**, a Federal High Court sitting in Umuahia, Abia State, declared **Section 84(12)** of the newly amended Electoral Act, 2022 as illegal and a violation of the provisions of the **1999 Constitution** of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended).

The judge, Justice Evelyn Anyadike in her ruling, **held** that Sections **66(1)(f)**; **107(1)(f)**; **137(1)(g)**; and **182(1)(g**) of the 1999 Constitution already stated that appointees of government seeking to contest elections were only to resign at least 30 days to the date of the election and that any other law that mandated such appointees to resign or leave office at any time before that, was unconstitutional, invalid, illegal, null and void to the extent of its inconsistency to the clear provisions of the Constitution.

In view of this, she directed that Section 84(12) of the Electoral Act, 2022 be struck down as it cannot stand when it is in violation of the clear provisions of the Constitution.

Recall that President Muhammadu Buhari signed into law the Electoral Act on **February 25, 2022.** But on **March 1**, Mr. Buhari wrote a letter to both chambers of the National Assembly requesting them to delete Section 84(12) of the Electoral Act.

Prior to his letter to the National Assembly, Mr Buhari had **expressed** his dissatisfaction with that particular section of the Electoral Act. He stated this emphatically on the day he signed the Bill into law, **noting** that the Section constitutes a fundamental defect, as it is in conflict with extant constitutional provisions.

What Exactly is in Section 84(12) of the Electoral Act?

This particular **Section** of the Electoral Act states that "No political appointees at any level shall be a voting delegate or be voted for at the Convention or Congress of any political party for the purpose of the nomination of candidates for any election".

What this means in simple terms is that a political appointee (like ministers, commissioners, special advisers, personal assistants, etc), be it at the federal or state level is not allowed to be a voting delegate or be voted for in a political party primary. And since such an individual was not

allowed by the provision of Section 84(12) of the Electoral Act to be a delegate or be voted for in the political party's primaries, thus, he/she cannot be a candidate for an election.

The only way such an individual would be a candidate is if he/she resigns before the party's primaries, and political parties are mandated by **Section 29(1)** of the Electoral Act to conduct their primaries and submit the list of candidates at least 180 days (i.e 6 months) before the date appointed for a general election.

In a situation where a political party fails to comply with Section 84(12) of the Electoral Act, **subsection 13** of the same Section states that the political party's candidate shall not be included in the election for the particular position the candidate has filled in for.

Perhaps because there are **reports** of some political appointees in this current administration intending to vie for some political positions in the upcoming general elections, or that political appointees have historically contested elections while holding their positions or intend to continue to do so, there have been several debates or push for Section 84(12) of the Electoral Act to be deleted, relying on the provisions of the 1999 Constitution which Justice Anyadike, the Judge of the Federal High Court in Umuahia, Abia State also relied upon in her ruling.

What the Provisions of the Constitution say About Appointees of Government Seeking to Contest Elections

While delivering her judgment, Justice Anyadike cited 4 Sections in the 1999 Constitution. Here's what each Section says.

According to **Section 66(1)f** of the Constitution, **(1)** no person shall be qualified for election to the Senate or the House of Representatives **(f)** if he is a person employed in the public service of the Federation or of any State and has not resigned, withdrawn or retired from such employment 30 days before the date of the election.

Section 107(1)f states that **(1)** "No person shall be qualified for election to a House of Assembly **(f)** if he is a person employed in the public service of the Federation or of any State and he has not resigned, withdrawn or retired from such employment thirty days before the date of election".

Sections 137(1)g and Section 182(1)g make reference to individuals who want to contest for election to the office of President and Governor, respectively.

Section 137(1)g says that such a person (i.e the individual contesting for the office of the President)

is not qualified if he/she is a person employed in the civil or public service of the Federation or of any State, and he/she has not resigned, withdrawn or retired from the employment at least thirty days before the date of the election.

Section 182(1)g is for individuals who want to run for the office of the Governor of any state. It states that "No person shall be qualified for election to the office of Governor of a State if-being a person employed in the public service of the Federation or of any State, he has not resigned, withdrawn or retired from the employment at least thirty days to the date of the election".

It was based on these provisions of the 1999 Constitution that the Judge of the Federal High Court sitting in Umuahia directed that Section 84(12) of the Electoral Act, 2022 be struck down. The judgment has however been met with mixed reactions and has generated debates among legal practitioners.

On the Umuahia High Court Judgment

Ariyo-Dare Atoye, the Executive Director of Adopt a Goal Initiative (AGI) and one of the frontliners in the push for the Electoral Act to be signed into law told Dataphyte that the National Assembly acted rightly on Section 84(12). "Political appointees give the Executive arm an undue advantage during party conventions and congresses for elective office. Political appointees seeking elective office deny other aspirants a level playing field if they remain in the office during the primaries", he said.

According to Atayo, Sections 66(1)f; 107(1)f; 137(1)g; and 182(1)g of the 1999 Constitution which the judge cited in her judgment did not cover political appointees because they are not public servants.

Mr Atoye explained that "there are a plethora of cases in which the status of a public servant has been defined. One of the cases is that of ADAMU V. TAKORI (2010) ALL FWLR (P. 540) 1387 C.A". The Court of Appeal held that a political appointee like the Attorney-General is not a public servant employed in the service of the federation or of a state and is therefore not covered by Section **318(1) of the Constitution**".

He reiterated that political appointees are not public servants that they exist at the pleasure of the appointors who can hire and fire without recourse to the public service rule which is not the case for a public servant, as the Executive cannot fire a public servant without going through the laid down procedure in the Public Service Book.

Mr Atoye further explained that by global convention, once political appointees are interested in public office, they resign immediately before the party's timetable is out.

He stated that the matter the judgement on Section 84(12) of the Electoral Act will not stop at the outcome of the "forum shopping" in Abia State, and therefore advised that all political appointees who are seeking to contest their party primaries should not ignore the provisions of Section 84(12) until the Supreme Court has settled the matter.

Meanwhile, yesterday, the **House of Representatives** and **Senate** stated that they will appeal the judgement of the Federal High Court, Umuahia asking the Attorney-General to delete Section 84(12) of the Electoral Act, 2022.

2023 Elections: Three Mistakes INEC should not Repeat

Published on March 8, 2022

Dennis Amata

On February 25, President Muhammadu Buhari **signed** the Electoral Act Amendment Bill, now known as the Electoral Act, 2022. With the signing of the Electoral Bill 2022 into law, the Chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Prof Mahmood Yakubu, **announced** a new date for the 2023 general election.

According to INEC, the new date for the Presidential and National Assembly elections is Saturday, 25th February 2023. Governorship and State Houses of Assembly will now be Saturday 11th March 2023.

As the Commission and Nigerians prepare for the forthcoming elections, these are some of the issues observed and reported during the 2019 general election that INEC may need to pay more attention to, to prevent their recurrence in the 2023 general election.

Election Postponement

On February 16, 2019, Nigerians woke up in preparation to go to the polls only to hear that the Presidential and National Assembly elections fixed for that date had been **postponed**.

Before the 2019 election, other general elections have been **postponed** in the country by INEC. It happened in the **2007** general elections on the grounds of logistics, the same in **2011**. The Electoral Commission also postponed the **2015** general election due to security **concerns**. It appears that postponement of elections has more or less become a **recurring phenomenon** in Nigeria.

The INEC Chairman, Prof Mahmood Yakubu, **said** in postponing the 2019 general elections on the night preceding the scheduled date for the Presidential and National Assembly elections, that the Commission carefully reviewed its logistics and operational plans and concluded that proceeding with the election as scheduled was no longer feasible. Following this, INEC **announced** new dates for the elections. February 23, 2019, for Presidential and National Assembly elections, and March 9 for Governorship and State Houses of Assembly elections.

Before his announcement, the INEC Chairman had at several press conferences **assured** stakeholders and Nigerians of the preparedness and readiness of the Commission to conduct the

elections on the fixed dates.

Research has shown that the postponement of the 2019 general election discouraged many people from participating in the election, particularly those who had travelled to the states where they registered to exercise their constitutional rights. The postponement was thus a significant cause of the low voter turnout of 35% in the 2019 elections; the lowest the country has ever had and the lowest recorded in any African election that year.

Besides this, Muda Yusuf, the then Director-General of Lagos Chambers of Commerce and Industry (LCCI), said the country **lost** about $1.5 billion due to the postponement of the 2019 general elections.

As the country gears up for the forthcoming general election, INEC should dot all i's and cross all t's before the election dates to prevent a postponement of the 2023 general elections. The cycle of election date postponements must be broken.

Smart Card Reader Malfunction

In the 2015 general election, INEC introduced a Smart Card Reader (SCR) machine, which the Commission believed was an **anti-electoral** fraud device that would enhance the integrity of the voting process and dissuade multiple voting, since only duly accredited and verified Permanent Voters Card (PVC) holders would be able to vote.

Before the election, INEC **assured** the country that the SCR would not pose any challenge. However, there were numerous **reports** from many parts of the country about the device malfunctioning and causing delays and frustration for voters.

The story was not different in the 2019 general election. There were several reports of the **failure** of the SCR to function in various parts of the country, which led to a delay in the conduct of the election and announcement of final results. Besides these, some voters were **disenfranchised** since one of the regulations for the conduct of the 2019 general election by INEC was that the SCR must accredit voters, and the election too must be held using the SCR.

Although INEC has introduced another device, the Bi-Modal Voter Accreditation System (BVAS), the reports in the elections where it has been deployed so far have not been encouraging. The BVAS device was first **deployed** in the Isoko South Constituency 1 by-election in Delta State on September 10, 2021, then in the Anambra **gubernatorial** election and in the Area **Council**

election in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). At the different elections where the current device has been deployed, there were several reports of **malfunctions** that delayed the voting process, and in some cases, disenfranchised voters. Dataphyte **noted** this during its monitoring of the FCT Area Council election.

Tackling this issue is something INEC should prioritise as the country prepares for the forthcoming election.

Late Arrival of INEC Officials and Deployment of Voting Materials

Since Nigeria's return to democracy in 1999, the country has conducted six general elections and in each of those elections, there have been reports of late arrival of INEC officials and voting materials.

For instance, in the 2015 general elections, the polling process was scheduled to officially commence at **8 am**. The process **entails** authentication of PVCs, fingerprints, and verification in the voter register. However, the majority of the polling units opened later than 8 am. According to the African Union Election Observation Mission **report** on the 2015 election, only 23% of the polling units they visited opened on time, while 77% opened late because of the late arrival of polling personnel and election materials.

The European Union Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) gave a similar **report** of the 2019 general election. According to the EU EOM, most polling units opened extremely late, noting the absence of sensitive election materials as the key reason for the delay. The **EU EOM** stated that only **65%** of polling units were opened by midday, leaving many voters waiting for hours and uncertain when voting would begin. According to the report, this deterred many voters from participating.

The EU EOM further noted that lack of clear information on voting procedures from INEC further compounded the situation, which resulted in some voters not being allowed to vote in some polling units.

Even in the recent off-cycle elections conducted by INEC, there were reports of late arrival of INEC personnel and materials. For instance, in the Anambra governorship election, YIAGA Africa **noted** that as late as 9:30 am, only 28% of polling units had commenced accreditation and voting, then only 50% at 10:30 am. According to the group, the late arrival of electoral officials, materials, accreditation, and voting, **denied** many electorates the right to vote in the Anambra governorship
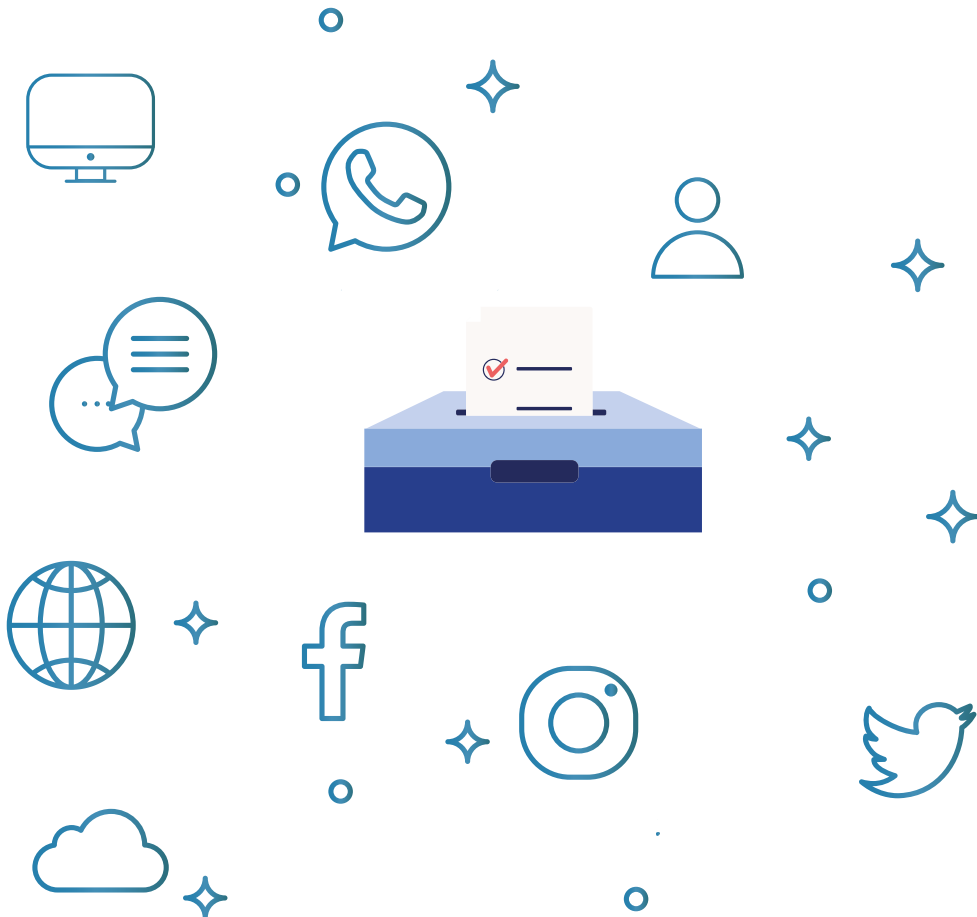
election.

A similar thing happened in the FCT Area Council elections held this year. **Dataphyte**, during its monitoring of the election, reported that INEC's punctuality was generally poor. YIAGA Africa also **corroborated** this in their Midday Situational Statement on the election.

With repeated reports of the late arrival of INEC officials and materials, which leads to late accreditation and voting, and in some cases result in some electorates not casting their votes, INEC needs to develop workable measures as Nigerians prepare to exercise their voting right in the forthcoming election.

Digital technology and elections

Digital technology has had a significant impact on electoral politics in recent years — from changing the way politicians communicate with citizens and campaign during elections, to enabling more efficient election administration by election management bodies. Notably, in Nigeria, 2015 was the waypost for the massive adoption of social media and 'the digital' in the country's electoral politics; although social media services and digital platforms existed before then, citizens did not put them to much use prior to this time. A few reference points come to mind, including the most fierce social media battle between then incumbent President, Goodluck Jonathan of the PDP, and Muhammadu Buhari of the APC. However, things have changed ever since, and much as we have seen increased benefits of digitalisation in our national elections, we are also witnessing negative consequences that are extremely dangerous for the nation's democracy — for example, the spread of misinformation and online threats during elections, as well as digital surveillance and authoritarian tendencies, as in the case of the 2021 Twitter ban.

This section attempts to capture these two-sided perspectives on digitalisation and elections in Nigeria. We begin with a piece teasing out the implications of poor social media governance for the forthcoming 2023 elections, citing examples of recent events in other (African) countries. By assessing the social media campaign efforts of the top 3 presidential candidates in the forthcoming elections, we then looked at how platformisation is shifting political campaigning in Nigeria,. The last 2 pieces focus on INEC's adoption of technology in its election administration; here we discuss each technological component, how they work in practice, their benefits, as well as blindspots that require stakeholders' attention.

The pieces in this section rely primarily on secondary sources — including desk search, open data sets, and document reviews, most of which can be replicated by other journalists (all charts and data visualisations contain links to our data sources). On rare occasions — for instance in the piece on Digital Advertising — we relied on analysis of metadata rather than the easily interpretable and openly accessible data sources on social media and elections. This required using paid services such as Sprinklr, and free services that require authors' own aggregation of data, e.g Facebook Ad Metadata; but in most cases, our pieces used the more common and easily operable tools.

Digital Technology's Long Shadow Over Democracy: Talking Twitter and Nigeria's 2023 Elections

Published on September 1, 2022

Ayantola Alayande

On June 4, 2021, the Nigerian government banned the operations of microblogging site, Twitter, stating that the company's activities are. Some have argued that the government's action was not really predicated on a democratic concern about Twitter's influence on Nigeria's politics, but a vindictive reaction to the platform's deletion of President Buhari's violence-invoking, anti-Biafra Tweet. Yet, regardless of whether[1] the Nigerian government's decision was reactionary or truly democratic, Nigeria's Twitter ban feeds into a broader global concern about the big techs' monopolising power over social conversations.

The influence of digital tech platforms has permeated all aspects of global politics and economy — from being able to **disrupt the stock market**[2] (the GameStop short squeeze on Reddit) and making cross-border tax regulations more difficult (intangibility of assets), to the risks of data surveillance and misinformation. More worryingly, big techs' reach far outpaces the extent to which governments and international institutions have been able to regulate their activities. This reach produces impacts in the most unusual ways, raising a fundamental concern of whether the powers of social media platforms could truly be **checked**[3] by the government.

The consequences of a heavily digitised globe are innumerable — from concerns of data privacy to cross-border inconsistency in data governance; cybersecurity; as well as misinformation and content moderation during important political moments. As a result, governments are becoming resistant of the scarcely regulated world of data assets in which big social media companies are in possession of large amount of customers' data that are rarely subject to public accountability (for instance, data on the numeric and demographic composition of Twitter users are publicly unavailable, while historic big data on trends/hashtags is only available to academic researchers).

As such, there have been numerous regulations or efforts targeting the governance and economic

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1   Princewill, N., & Busari, S. (2021, June 5). 'Nigeria bans Twitter after company deletes President Buhari's tweet'. CNN

2   Biancotti, C., & Ciocca, P. (2021, November). Financial markets and social media: Lessons from information security [Cyber Policy Initiative Working Paper Series, #10]. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

3   Naughton, J. (2021, November 21). 'Can big tech ever be reined in?'. The Guardian.

dynamics of digital tech —such as the push for a special **antitrust**[4] law for big techs in the US, the **Global Data Protection Regulation**[5] and **Digital Sovereignty**[6] frameworks in the EU. Such policies that are generally "governance" and "economically " oriented have moved swiftly across the global south, as we begin to see a solid policy reaction in developing (African) countries in the **areas**[7] of data protection (e.g., the Nigeria Data Protection Regulation), the digital economy, cybersecurity, and data sharing.

Regulating the Political side of the Digital

However, despite these policy footprints, the political dimensions of social media impact have remained much-less regulated — more so on the African continent. Yet, the positive and negative externalities of social media on politics are wide-ranging than are often discussed. Too many times, countries focus only on disinformation and propaganda; yet the virtual world of social media has darker side-effects than just 'fake news' during elections. For instance, since voters' source of information has hugely shifted from traditional media to the digital, many risk being locked in an echo chamber, where a specific set of information (even if correct) is repeatedly fed to a group of people based on their digital profile. Combined with the fact that many social media platforms like Twitter lend convenience to 'brevity' rather than an elaborate analysis of political issues, unaudited algorithms would swiftly lead to the distortion of political views — increasing political polarisation — even if actors are acting on a factual set of information.

The chart below illustrates 5-umbrella areas where big tech platforms significantly impact politics.

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4   Nylen, L. (2022, July 26). 'Tech antitrust bill threatens to break Apple, Google's grip on the internet'. Bloomberg UK.

5   Wolford, B. (n.d.). 'What is GDPR, the EU's new data protection law?'. GDPR, EU.

6   The European Parliament (n.d.) 'Digital sovereignty for Europe'. The European Parliament.

7   Phillips, T., Kira, B., Tartakowsky, A., Dolan, J., & Natih, P. (2020). Digital technology governance: developing countries' priorities and concerns. Digital Pathways at Oxford.

Info Source: European Parliamentary Research Services (2021)[8]. Modified & Illustrated by: Dataphyte

While many of the pain points within each umbrella area above require a complex interaction of government, citizens, and social media operators, the highlights in red suggest areas that require the sole attention of social media administrators.

When it comes to elections, platforms like Twitter function as a townhall of ideas, where journalists and citizens reel out and monitor live updates on the voting process, civil society organisations mobilise and orientate the public, and policy makers share resources to keep the political conversation alive. For instance, during the 2019 general elections, many media organisations curated Twitter hashtags like #SnapandSend and #NigeriaDecides to mobilise citizens around a common resource and provide real-time results from each polling unit. Yet, while such free speech could flourish more easily with Twitter, determining "whose" speech flourishes is another dynamic that raises concern on the extent of the platform's sovereignty in content moderation. In the Tweet deletion controversy between the Nigerian government and Twitter, the **FG rightly pointed**[9] out that Twitter had paid very little attention to censoring the divisive hate speech that pro-Biafra leader, Nnamdi Kanu, consistently churned out on the platform. Twitter operators only **began deleting**[10] Nnamdi Kanu's Tweets 24 hours after the Nigerian government imposed

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8   Dumbrava, C. (2021, December). Key social media risks to democracy. European Parliamentary Research Services (EPRS).

9   Oyero, K. (201, June 8). 'Twitter is Nnamdi Kanu's platform to destabilise Nigeria –Lai Mohammed'. The Punch.

10   Olufemi, A (2021, June 5). '#TwitterBan: Twitter deletes Nnamdi Kanu's tweets'. Premium Times.

a ban on the platform. Such selective moderation rarely catches the public's attention. Whether President Buhari's Tweets violated Twitter's engagement rules isn't up for debate, it sure did; the bigger concern is the lack of accountability and **double standard**[11] that was swift to censor the President but let other non-state actors have a free day violating the platform's engagement rules. There was also Twitter's lack of poor procedural engagement with the government prior to the Tweet deletion.

One crucial thing to understand about the distortion of political views during elections is that its effects rarely stay on social media. Just as the digital media has been lauded for facilitating a cost-effective, real-time citizen mobilisation during civil moments, it also bears the risks of **fuelling offline aggression even faster**[12] — as was in the case with the January 6 capitol insurrection in the USA.

While more established democracies can swiftly ramp up regulatory and legal responses to address situations such as this, fragile and near-autocratic ones often simply respond with internet censorship. For instance, with the exception of Russia and China, the majority of social media and internet censorships in the last decade **have occurred**[13] in Asia and Africa (Africa leads on internet services suspension while Asian countries have blocked social media the most).

The chart below shows the list of African countries that have, at one point in the past, blocked access to one or more social media platforms. The Nigerian Twitter is the 4th most prolonged social media blockage in Africa so far, while countries like Burkina Faso and Eritrea still currently restrict access to Facebook and YouTube, respectively.

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11   Anku, A (2021, June 11). 'Nigeria bungled the chance to lead a global conversation on social media regulation'. GZERO.

12   Lee, C.S., Merizalde, J., Colautti, J.D., An, J., & Kwak, H. (2022). 'Storm the capitol: Linking offline political speech and online twitter extra-representational participation on QAnon and the January 6 Insurrection'. Frontiers in Sociology.

13   Surfshark [Dataset] (n.d.). 'Internet shutdown tracker'

African Countries: Blocked Access to One or More Social Media Platforms (No of Days)
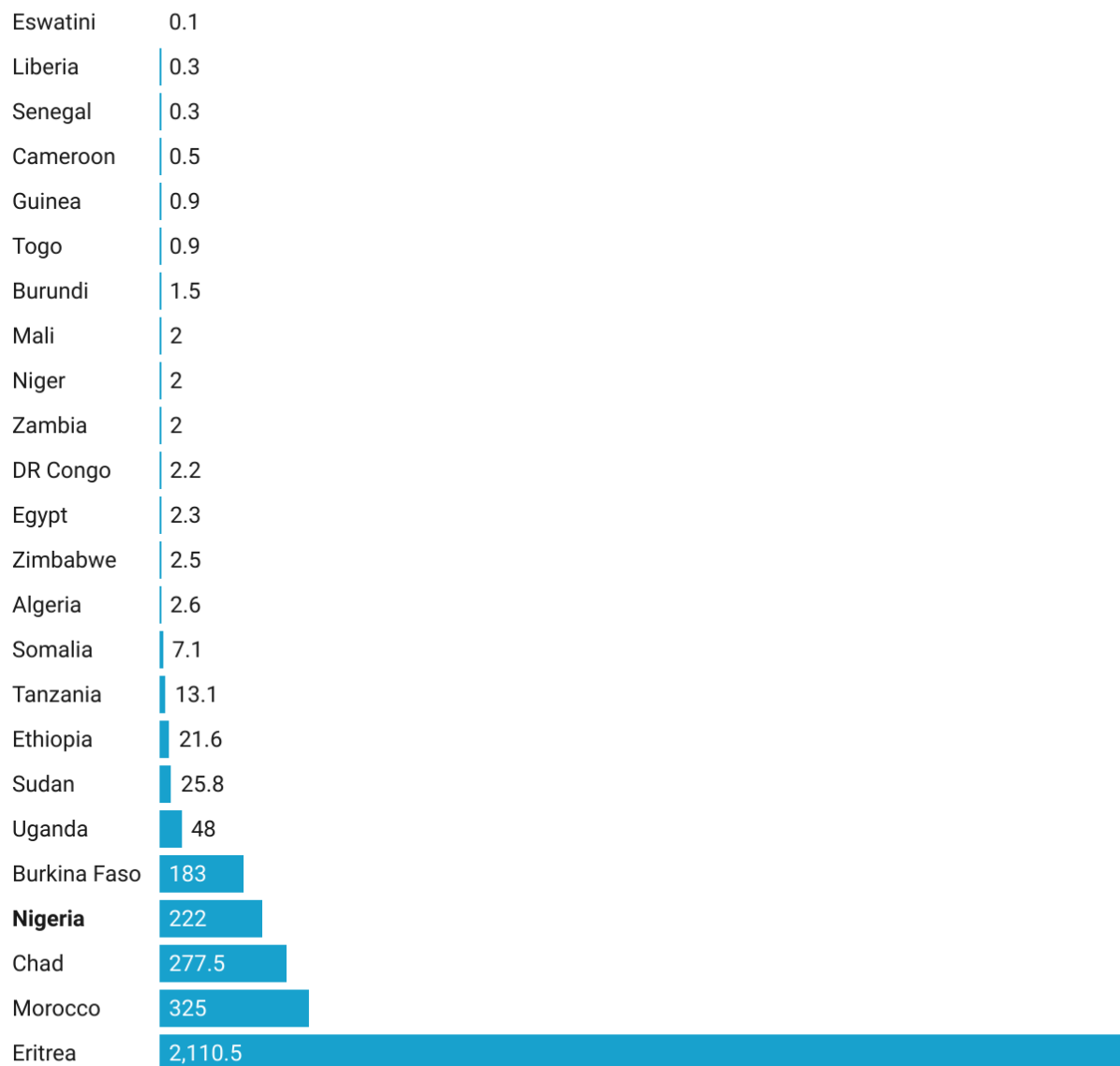
Eswatini	0.1
Liberia	0.3
Senegal	0.3
Cameroon	0.5
Guinea	0.9
Togo	0.9
Burundi	1.5
Mali	2
Niger	2
Zambia	2
DR Congo	2.2
Egypt	2.3
Zimbabwe	2.5
Algeria	2.6
Somalia	7.1
Tanzania	13.1
Ethiopia	21.6
Sudan	25.8
Uganda	48
Burkina Faso	183
Nigeria	222
Chad	277.5
Morocco	325
Eritrea	2,110.5

Chart: Dataphyte • Source: Surfshark • Created with Datawrapper

These bans have generally occurred **during election periods or civil unrest**[14]. In other words, the timing of the bans suggest that African governments are increasingly concerned about the mobilisation power of social media platforms during crucial political moments.

Yet, navigating the troubled waters of the digital during important political moments such as

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14   Zandt, F. (2022, January 14). 'Where the Twitter Bird Is Caged'. Statista.

elections involves a compromise-a delicate balance between fighting divisive political rhetoric versus suppressing citizens' digital rights altogether. This is because the de facto and easy choice of shutting down social media can have a ripple effect on the continent's evolving gig economy, much of which heavily relies on citizens' ample access to digital platforms.

One subtle statistic from the chart above is that there is no correlation between the duration of digital access blockage and the enormity of economic impacts in a country, i.e., there is generally no relationship between lengthy restriction of internet services and economic cost of such blockage-even the briefest restriction of social media could have tremendous economic impacts.

The Most Costly Social Media/Internet Blockage in Africa
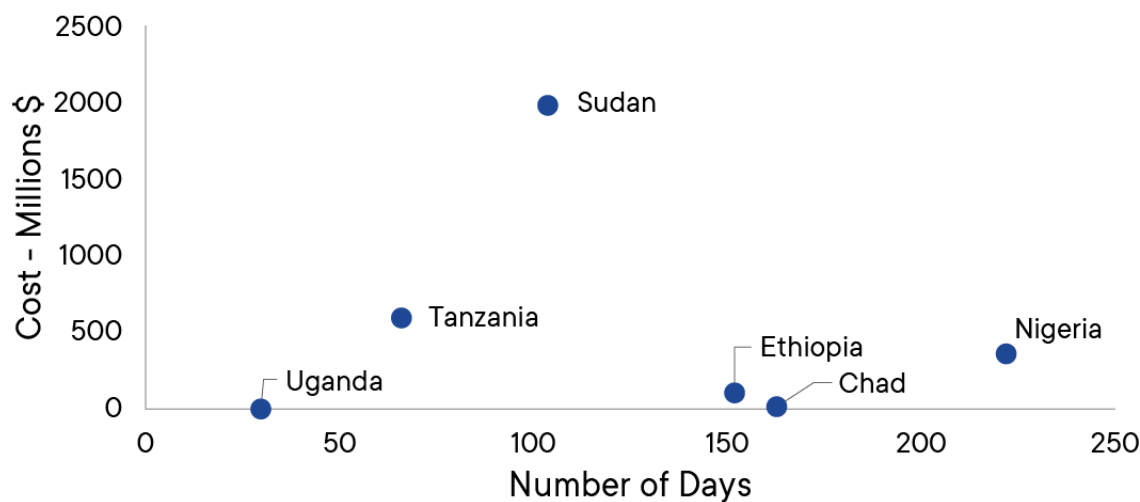
Year of Occurrence: Sudan: 2018 to 2019; Uganda: 2020; Chad: 2020, Ethiopia: 2020, Tanzania: 2020, Nigeria: 2021. Data Source: Quartz Africa (2022)[15]. Charted by: Dataphyte

Nigeria's Twitter Ban and the 2023 Elections

Preventing a repeat of social media blockage is an important concern for Nigeria, as the 2023 elections draw near. Would the country witness another episode of "power" play between digital media platforms like Twitter or will big tech regulators step up their game in protecting democracy in the country? Noteworthily, Twitter has already begun to honour **some of the conditions**[16] set by the Nigerian government during its reinstatement-including agreeing to a legal presence in Nigeria through registration with the Corporate Affairs Commission and the establishment of a

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15   Ngila, F. (2022, July 20). 'These are the African countries that censor the internet the most'. Quartz Africa

16   Erezi, D (2022, January 13). 'Five things Nigeria says Twitter agreed to before lifting ban'. The Guardian NG.

physical office before the end 2022. Indeed, a quick search of the CAC portal shows that Twitter registered with the Commission in April 2022, stating a physical address in Lagos; of course, it is unsure whether the company has commenced physical operations in Nigeria. It is also uncertain whether it has commenced tax payments; not to forget that information about Twitter's revenue status in Nigeria is not publicly available, anyway.

1 Establishing a legal entity in Nigeria, including the operation of a physical address

2 Compliance with relevant tax regulations

3 Appointment of a country representative and registration with regulatory authorities (NIPDA, NCC, NBC)

4 Facilitating government's inclusion in Twitter's Partner Support and Law Enforcement Portal

5 A culture-sensitive operation that acknowledges Nigeria's political History

5 conditions Twitter agreed to with the Nigerian Government

▇ Election-relevant

Of all these conditions, the most crucial to the forthcoming general elections are collaboration with Nigerian government officials in the management of prohibited content through Twitter's Partner Support and Law Enforcement and working with the government in developing a code of conduct that is culture sensitive. While one might be quick to applaud Twitter for being cooperative with regulatory demands, we must also raise questions as to why the regulations that could potentially shape political outcomes haven't been publicly addressed by the tech platform as of 6 months to the general elections.

Citizens may rightly argue that the politics-related aspect of the demands sets Nigeria on a path

to digital autocracy (e.g., citizen surveillance during the elections). However, we need to recognise that the avenues set by the Nigerian government in implementing these regulations have been participatory, democratic, and institutional. This is reflected in the FG's explicit demand for Twitter's formal engagement with agencies such as the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC), the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA), the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC), and the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC). Recall also that the Minister of Communications, Lai Mohammed had **noted**[17] that the FG was reaching an "amicable" solution with Twitter, adding that the social media company had acknowledged that the correspondence from the Nigerian government was the most detailed engagement it has ever received from any national government.

Besides, no single country in the world is allowing tech operators a free-day during elections-not even countries with a more stable democracy. The duty of citizens and civil society groups is to discourage every form of informational, legal, and technical tactics that politicians may introduce to digitally interfere in the elections, while in the same vein, encouraging, not disincentivizing, tech platforms to comply with legal regulations.

Lessons From Kenya

Recent events in the last decade could justify several governments' desperation to "rein-in" Twitter's activities in the coming elections. Perhaps, the most relevant example here is the (in)famous interference of Cambridge Analytica in the U.S.' 2016 elections and violation of citizens' data privacy through targeted political advertising, aided by Facebook's complicity. What is however unknown to many is that, in a more covert manner which came to light much later, Cambridge Analytica was also involved in the general elections of two of Africa's largest democracies - **Nigeria**[18] and **Kenya**[19] - in 2015 and 2017, respectively.

If any African country should be gravely concerned about digital interference in its elections, it should be the duo of Kenya and Nigeria. Indeed, in the recently concluded 2022 Kenyan General Elections, Twitter acknowledged that the election was "happening on Twitter". Commendably, the platform then developed a wide-range of **responses**[20] proportional to the scale of its influence
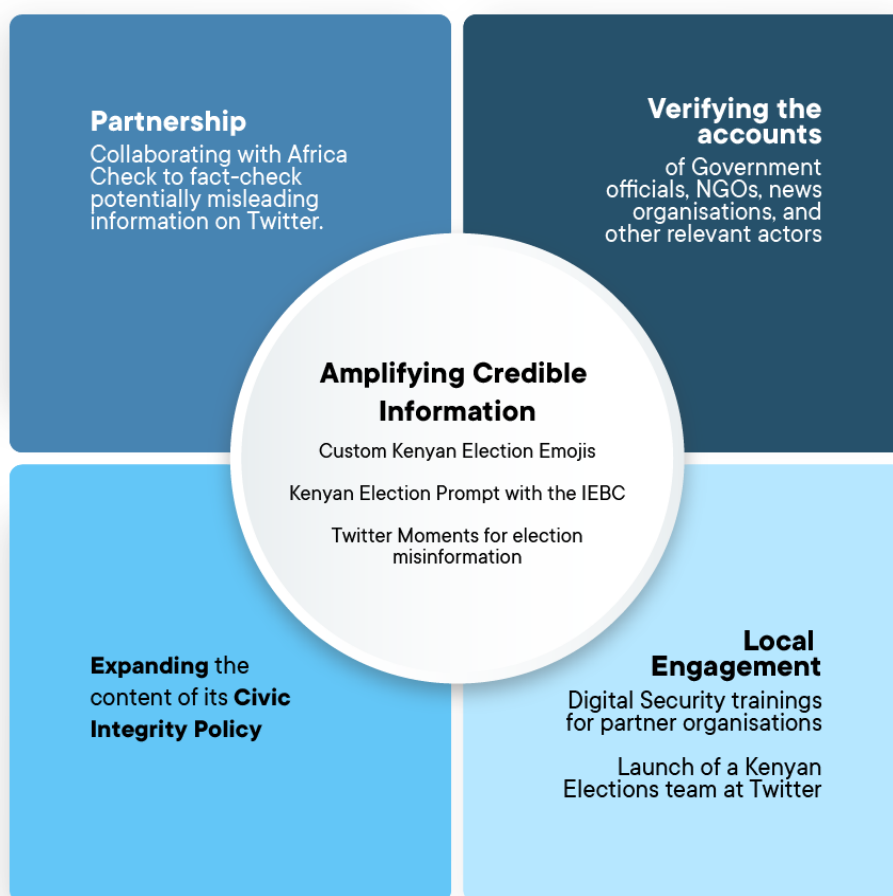
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17   Angbulu, S. (2021, August 12). 'Twitter has agreed to set up Nigeria office in 2022 – FG'. The Punch.

18   Cadwalladr, C. (2018, April 4). 'Revealed: graphic video used by Cambridge Analytica to influence Nigerian election'. The Guardian

19   Moore, J. (2018, March 20). 'Cambridge Analytica had a role in Kenya election, too'. The New York Times

20   Lubanzadio, E. (2022, August 3). 'The 2022 Kenyan General Election is happening on Twitter'. Twitter

in the elections, including: partnering with fact-checking organisation, Africa Check to curb misinformation; collaborating with the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) in launching an election prompt that directs people from Twitter to the agency's website for credible election information; curating election-tailored Twitter Moments, and offering safety and security trainings to local partners.

Partnership
Collaborating with Africa Check to fact-check potentially misleading information on Twitter.

Verifying the accounts
of Government officials, NGOs, news organisations, and other relevant actors

Amplifying Credible Information

Custom Kenyan Election Emojis

Kenyan Election Prompt with the IEBC

Twitter Moments for election misinformation

Expanding the content of its **Civic Integrity Policy**

Local Engagement
Digital Security trainings for partner organisations

Launch of a Kenyan Elections team at Twitter

While Twitter's steps in Kenya are laudable, they are somewhat a precursor and rather too basic. For Nigeria's 2023 elections, the company's approach to addressing these concerns must critically build on its Kenyan successes-taking lessons where needed and adapting them to the more-heated political space that Nigeria operates in. The tech platform needs to adopt a thoughtful and comprehensive set of programmes that engages policymakers, civil society, and citizens in making the digital space a safe haven for democracy in Nigeria. Simply **banning political ads**[21] (which is

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21   Jack [@jack] (2019, October 30). 'We've made the decision to stop all political advertising on Twitter globally. We believe political message reach should be earned, not bought. Why? A few reasons...' [Tweet]. Twitter.

actually **counter-democratic**[22]) or **updating its user policies**[23] isn't enough; the platform needs to signal to the Nigerian government that it is serious about honouring the political conditions of its reinstatement. Digital technology platforms are "**the new battleground for democracy**[24]", and tech operators must responsibly guard the space, or they risk the government doing it for them in a manner that represses digital freedom, hurts businesses, and undermines democracy altogether.

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22   Yaraghi, N. (2020, January 8). 'Twitter's ban on political advertisements hurts our democracy'. Brookings.

23   Twitter (2021, October). 'Civic Integrity Policy'. Twitter.

24   Shahbaz, A., & Funk, A. (2019). 'Digital election interference'. Freedom House.

Running Digital: Online Political Advertising and Nigeria's 2023 General Elections

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Ayantola Alayande

Four to five election cycles ago, political advertising in Nigeria looked like this: expensive nationwide media tours and press conferences across traditional media outlets with the largest number of audience; millions of naira shelled out to printing companies for flyers, banners and other traditional publicity materials; and tons of TV, radio, and newspaper adverts in aureate language.

As with many other democracies, political campaigning in Nigeria is still very much traditional (broadcast, print, out of home [OOH] media, etc), with most political ads still **concentrated**[25] on the TV, radio, and newspapers. However, as the world faces the big internet revolution which has drastically transformed the way we live, communicate, do business, and make decisions—politics without exception, political campaigning globally has equally taken a new shape, with social media and digital technology platforms gaining more attention from politicians. There is now a shift to a "**hybrid**"[26] model of political campaigning in which politicians combine the old world of broadcast and print media with the new world of the digital. Although the scale of digital political ads is difficult to estimate per country (with the exception of a few countries like the US, **where digital political ads**[27] are a wildfire), political advertising across the world is becoming more digital, data-driven, and targeted.

In the US alone, **the total contributions of digital ads**[28] to political campaigning went from 2-3% in the 2016 presidential elections to 18% in the 2020 cycle. British politicians are not exempted, as they particularly turn to **Facebook**[29] , while digital ads overall constituted about **43% of total ad spend**[30] in the UK's 2017 general elections. In the Nigerian context, the 2015 elections ushered

25   Ojekwe, G.I. (2016). Political advert campaigns and voting behaviour: Akinwunmi Ambode's 2015 election campaign in Lagos State. Journal of African Elections, 15 (2), pp.13-27.

26   Paatelainen, L., Kannasto, E., Isotalus, P. (2022, January). Functions of hybrid media: How parties and their leaders use traditional media in their social media campaign communication. Frontiers in Communication [Online Edition].

27   Statista (2022). 'Digital political advertising spending in the United States from 2008 to 2020 (in million U.S. dollars)' [Data Set].

28   Homonoff, H. (2020, December, 8). '2020 political ad spending exploded: Did it work?' Forbes.

29   Sabbagh, D. (2018, March 23). 'Rise of digital politics: why UK parties spend big on Facebook'. The Guardian.

30   The Electoral Commission UK (n.d). 'Report: Digital campaigning-increasing transparency for voters'. The Electoral Commission.

in an **upsurge in digital political campaigning**[31] — especially on Twitter and Facebook. There are already indications that digital political ads **will increase**[32] even further for the 2023 general elections.

Digital Political Advertising in Nigeria

Considering that Nigeria's political terrain is largely dominated by an older generation in its 50s and above, one wonders what could be driving the fast-moving adoption of the digital in Nigerian elections. The first reason is the perceived "**political value**"[33] of social media. Social media is the language of young people; with more than **60% of the Nigerian population**[34] being youth, and with the majority of this youth group sourcing its political news from social media, the numerical benefits of digital advertising is very significant for politicians. Another reason is the quick, mobilising and social adaptation power of social media; information travels faster on digital media, and online ads can have a ripple effect beyond their primary audience. Similarly, monitoring engagement and consumer interaction with an advert is easier on digital platforms than on traditional media.

Perhaps the most important reason for the increasing adoption of digital political marketing is the **low cost of deploying precision**[35] techniques to target voters. Social media technologies now allow politicians to direct their adverts to specific groups of people, at specific times, using specific wordings which make it easier to particularly influence neutral voters — all while spending a considerably lesser amount of money compared to traditional adverts. Also known as microtargeting, this technique has been **deemed dangerous for democracy**[36] , in that it could sway voters' perspectives of public discourse in ways they do not consciously consent to.

Such increasing preference for online news consumption has made digital advertising grow in scope and techniques lately, causing social media platforms to institute more transparency in

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31   Opeibi, T. (2019). The Twittersphere as political engagement space: A study of social media usage in election campaigns in Nigeria. Digital Studies/Le champ numérique, 9(1): 6, pp. 1–32.

32   Akingbolu, R. (2022, January). 'Political marketing: Ad practitioners foresee increased budget in 2022.' This Day.

33   Oxford Analytica (2021). Political value of social media will rise in Africa [Expert Briefings]. Oxford Analytica.

34   Akinyemi, A.I., & Mobolaji, J.W. (2022, July 18). 'Nigeria's large, youthful population could be an asset or a burden'. The Conversation.

35   Tech For Campaigns (n.d.). '2020 Political digital advertising report: How covid, massive fundraising, and the culture war played out online, up and down the ballot'. Tech For Campaigns.

36   Bayer, J. (2020). Double harm to voters: Data-driven micro-targeting and democratic public discourse. Internet Policy Review, 9 (1), pp.1-17.

the way their platforms are used and placing stringent regulations on political ads. For instance, in 2019, **Facebook had to introduce its Ad Library**[37] — a feature that allows users to track a repository of adverts that have been placed on the platform, using location, topic, and timeline as filters.

The platform, which was primarily introduced due to policymakers' concerns of transparency in political advertising, includes 3 features: the Meta Ad Library, the Ad Library Report, and the Meta Ad Library API — a more sophisticated feature requiring a basic knowledge of coding to conduct customised searches of ads on Facebook.

Digital Ads and the 2023 Elections

Despite the growing popularity of digital ads, traditional media still holds the ace when it comes to political advertising in Nigeria.

Take for example, whereas the total ad spend for social issues, elections and politics on Facebook and Instagram totalled 25.5 million naira since march 2022 (this includes non-partisan adverts by civil society organisations), a 3-hour live broadcast of political **campaigns on NTA**[38] alone costs about 10 million naira, not to mention the numerous advertising costs on pages of newspapers, and radio jingles across other multiple media outlets. Put together, traditional ads gulp millions of naira in a single month alone.

Even if we assume, for a minute, that digital ads could rapidly multiply in value as the 2023 elections draw nearer, their scope would still not match the financial enormity of traditional advertising. Of course, we cannot control for the possibility that digital advertisers may have spent less than the total amount budgeted or issued by politicians — something more probable with social media ads which have no set costs, in contrast with traditional media whose costs are more standard or fixed.

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37   Constine, J. (2019, March 28). 'Facebook launches searchable transparency library of all active ads'. Tech Crunch.

38   Adamu, F (2019, December 4). 'On the Cost of elections in Nigeria; Where does all the money go?' The Elections Network.
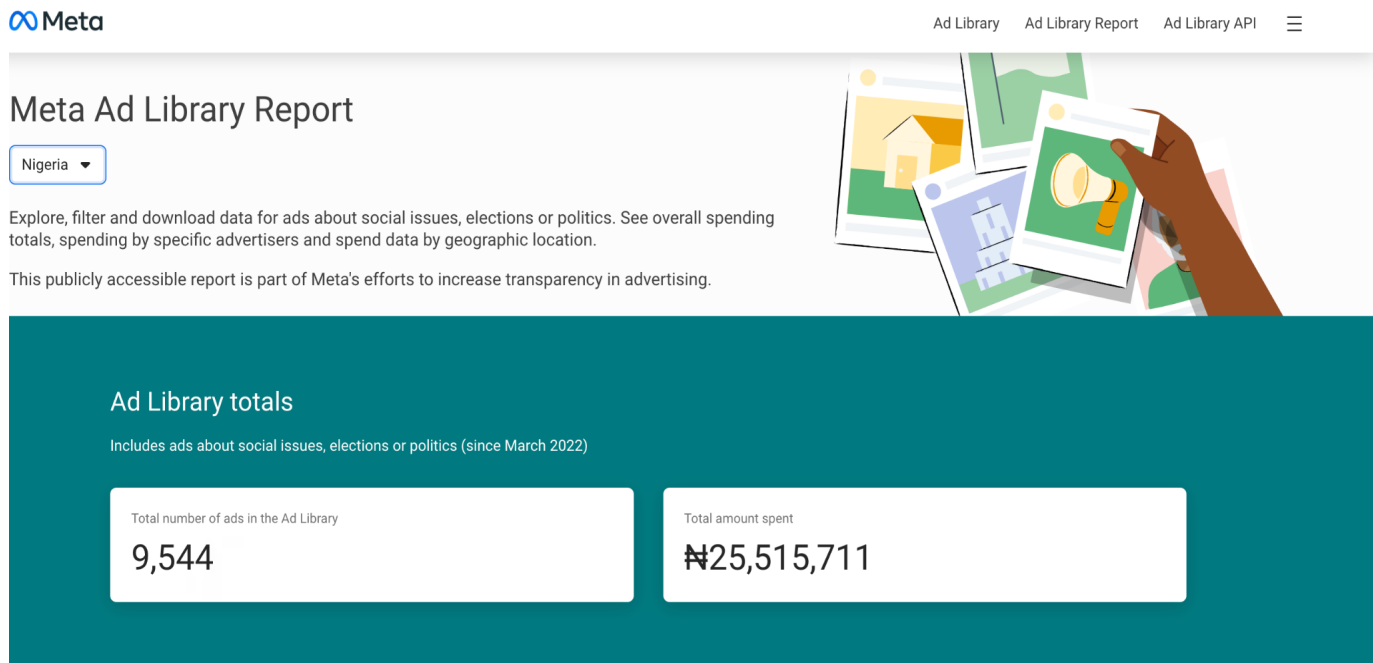
Source: Meta Ad Library

This raises two important concerns: one around the nature of social media political advertising in Nigerian elections, and two, whether social media political advertising really works. This piece attempts to answer these questions in two ways: first, using meta data from Meta Ad Library, it examines the scope of Facebook and/or Instagram ads placed by supporters of the 3 most prominent contenders in the 2023 presidential elections (Atiku Abubakar, Bola Tinubu, and Peter Obi). Secondly, it uses AI-powered social listening tool, Sprinklr, to harvest aggregated big data showing the demographic, and sentimental breakdown of online media conversations about these 3 political figures.

It is noteworthy, though, that, even though presidential campaign is not set to officially begin until September 28, 2022-**according to INEC's timelines**[39], election adverts have already begun surfacing on Facebook and Instagram (whether Facebook should have permitted adverts for presidential candidates before the official campaign period is another issue entirely).

Facebook and Instagram Ads

The table below shows the total number of monthly ads for each of the 3 most prominent candidates in the forthcoming 2023 general elections. To align with the financial timeline Facebook has automatically set for its Nigerian ad records (from March 2022), the results presented below

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39   Independent National Electoral Commission (n.d.). 'Timetable and schedule of activities for 2023 General Election'.

have been filtered to show only ads from March, 2022 till date (6 months).

A few contextual notes are important. First, since Meta Ad Library shows all ads containing each candidate's name as key words, not all ads listed under a candidate's name in the Ad Library were exclusively placed in support of that candidate.

As such, in the table below, we have included only adverts in favour of each candidate, while excluding from our calculations adverts which contain antagonistic content. It is also worth noting that the majority of the ads were placed by proxy — individual advertisers and supporter groups, rather than the official campaign pages/handlers of these candidates themselves, although a few ads were placed by the official campaign groups of the candidates. Lastly, some ads promoted events related to the candidates' presidential bid, rather than the persona, party, or political ideology of the candidates. We considered this promotional content and therefore included them in our calculations. Ads that went against Meta's Advertising policy — such as those containing hate speech or fake news — were already removed by Meta, but still remained on the list of adverts for each candidate. We excluded this from our calculations.

Monthly Advert (Facebook and IG) Per Candidate.

Candidate	Month	Total Number of Monthly Ads	Monthly Ad Spends (NGN)	Monthly Average Impressions (no. of people)
Atiku Abubakar (PDP)	March, 2022	6	₦7, 998	14, 500
	April, 2022	9	₦20, 598	10, 499
	May-22	9	₦384, 199	145, 444
	Jun-22	15	₦104, 698	30, 733
	Jul-22	14	₦50, 095	24, 357
	August, 2022	8	₦11, 499	17, 750
	TOTAL	61	₦579, 087	243, 283
Bola Tinubu (APC)	March, 2022	8	₦15, 896	8, 333
	April, 2022	10	₦13, 597	11, 400
	May-22	3	₦258, 500	318, 333
	Jun-22	29	₦169, 492	27, 666
	Jul-22	13	₦11, 093	12, 583
	August, 2022	25	₦309, 492	58, 040
	TOTAL	88	₦778, 070	436, 355
Peter Obi (LP)	March, 2022	0	₦0	0
	April, 2022	6	₦10, 097	15, 166
	May-22	8	₦97, 497	58, 750
	Jun-22	47	₦97, 191	10, 234
	Jul-22	29	₦68, 486	20, 069
	August, 2022	22	₦33, 290	18, 273
	TOTAL	112	₦306, 561	122, 492

Table: Dataphyte • Source: Meta Ad Library • Created with Datawrapper

Table Methodology:

- August 2022: Ads calculated as of 30th August, 2022

- Facebook Ad policy requires that the currency of payment for an ad and the country of targeting must match. Total number of Ads and Total Ad spends in the table above exclude ads that were paid for in foreign currency, which were removed by Facebook after a few days of running. Ads in support of Bola Ahmed Tinubu and Peter Obi violated this rule the most, as a large number of the adverts were placed by advert agencies and individuals using mostly the US Dollar, Pounds, and Argentine Peso (ARS), and the US Dollar, Euros, and Canadian Dollar respectively.

- Facebook records Ad spends using a range (higher & lower boundaries). Where this applies, the higher range has been used to calculate the cost of ads.

- Some ads used the same images, videos or creatives for multiple ads. Data for these were aggregated by Meta as one, rather than multiple ads.

- According to Meta, ad impression is counted as the number of times an instance of an ad is on screen for the first time. Repeated scrolling past the same ad within the same time still counts as a single impression; but an ad shown twice to a person at different times in a day counts as 2 impressions.

- Average impressions were derived by dividing the total sum of all monthly impressions by the number of ads per month. The average impressions gives an idea of the overall monthly performance of ads associated with each candidate, rather than the performance of each ad-since each ad's impressions would typically vary based on targeting.

- Meta Ad Library recorded monthly impressions using a range; the average calculation above was based on the higher range of each monthly impression.

From the table, we see that supporters of Peter Obi of the Labour Party (LP) have, in the last 6 months, placed the highest number of ads, although the group has spent the least amount of money on the ads by placing numerous ads with lesser cost. On the other hand, supporters of APC's Bola Tinubu have spent the most money, followed by those of Atiku Abubakar. Unsurprisingly, the highest spends and highest number of ads for both Atiku Abubakar and Peter Obi occurred in May — when both were gearing up for the primary elections in their respective parties. This is not the case for Bola Tinubu, whose major ad spends happened in August; perhaps because a

very large number of the ads placed in May were done using foreign currency, which have been excluded from our calculations.

Candidates' Facebook and IG Ad-Spend (in NGN thousands), March-August 2022
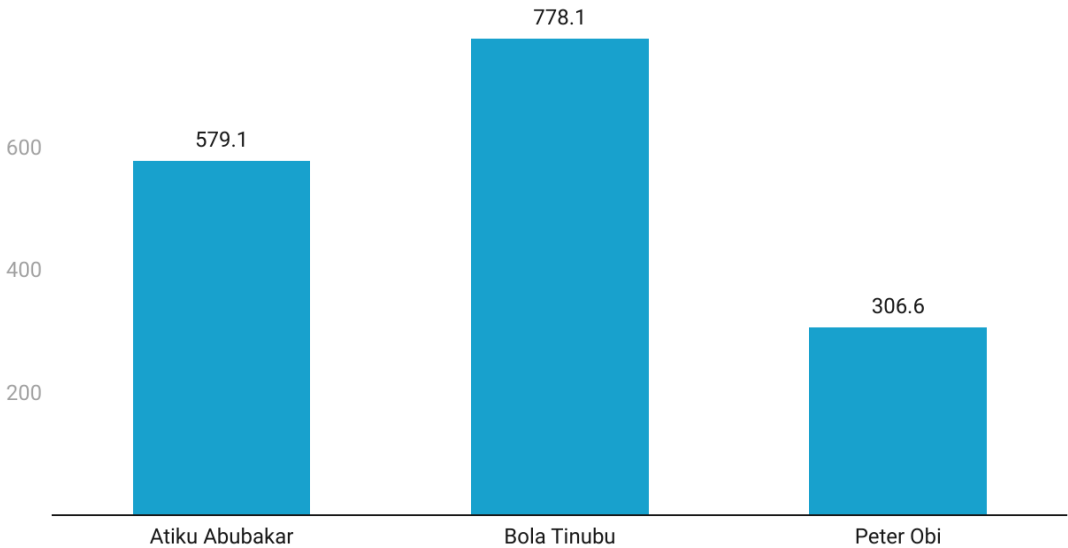
Chart: Dataphyte • Source: Meta Ad Library • Created with Datawrapper

As briefly mentioned above, one striking fact about most of the Facebook and/or Instagram ads is that they were placed by proxy groups and individual supporters, rather than the official campaign groups of the candidates. A very probable explanation for this is that candidates might be waiting for the official kick-off of the campaign period before commencing a full digital campaign. This is possibly applicable to traditional advertising as well. Relatedly, a huge chunk of the ads were foreign political ads-i.e ads placed outside of Nigeria, using a foreign currency. This could suggest a growing interest in political participation back home by Nigerians in the diaspora.

Total Number of Facebook and IG Ads, March-August, 2022

Peter Obi   Bola Tinubu   Atiku Abubakar

Atiku
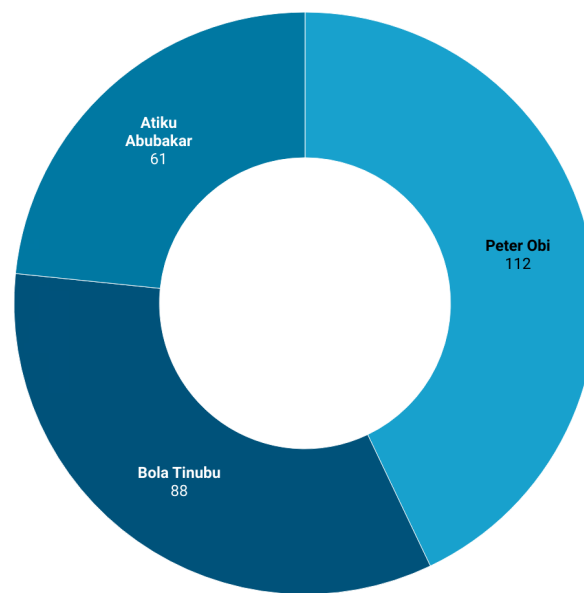Abubakar
61

Peter Obi
112

Bola Tinubu
88

Chart: Dataphyte • Source: Meta Ad Library • Created with Datawrapper

It is crucial to note that these figures do not necessarily represent the strength of each candidate's digital footprint, since several other popular mediums in Nigeria such as YouTube, Whatsapp, and TikTok, were not examined-chiefly because these platforms do not have an open portal that allows public access to ad records. Others, such as Twitter, have **banned political ads**[40] altogether. This, however, does not mean that other subtle forms of political campaigning do not occur on the platform; for example, posts by influencers endorsing a particular candidate would get high numbers of organic interactions without having to place an ad. These are difficult to quantify.

To give an insight into each candidate's digital footprint, we turn to Sprinklr for some analysis.

Snapshots from Sprinklr

To capture insights into the digital footprint of the 3 candidates being examined, we use the Overview and Author features on Sprinklr's Insights module. The timeline shows digital conversations around each candidate for the past 90 days (May 30-August 30, 2022) . Below is a quick breakdown.
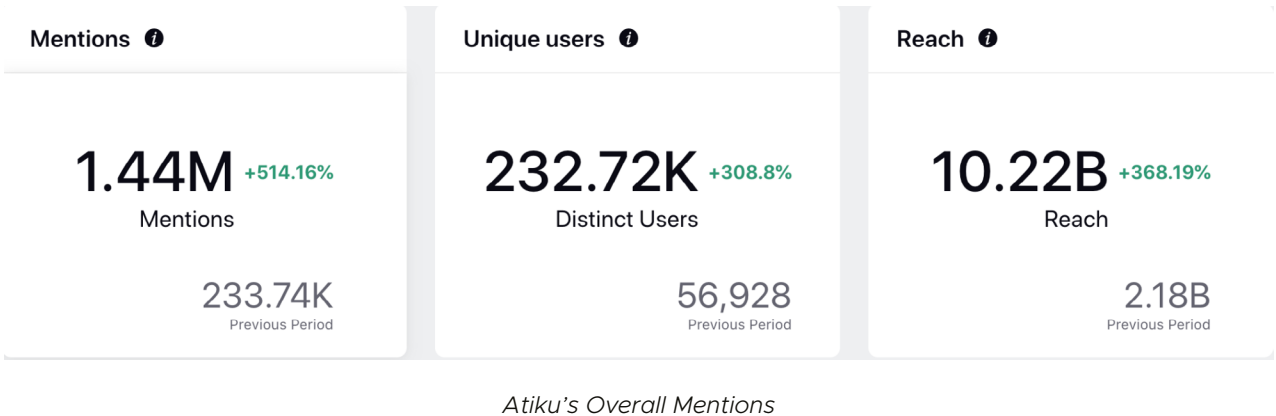
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40   Feiner, L. (2019, October 30). 'Twitter bans political ads after Facebook refused to do so'. CNBC.

Overview

The overview section presents the number of social media posts made around the candidates, including the number of people actively discussing the posts, and estimated number of people the posts have potentially reached — all within the last 3 months. The data below excludes conversations from Facebook and Instagram and is instead focused on Twitter and online news media.

Between May 30 and August 2022, there were about 455,610 mentions of Atiku Abubakar on Twitter and online news media, compared to his 150,330 mentions in the 3months before that (28 February to 30 May, 20222). These mentions are being driven by over 109,000 active users on Twitter and online news media platforms.

In contrast, Bola Tinubu has had over 1.4 million mentions within the last 3 months, driven by about 232,700 active internet users. Peter Obi has, by far, the strongest digital footprint among the trio — with over 13.2 million mentions on Twitter and online news media, driven by more than 540, 900 users. This is plausible, seeing that the vast majority of Peter Obi's supporters are **young people**[41] — the largest category of internet users in Nigeria.

Mentions ⓘ	Unique users ⓘ	Reach ⓘ
1.44M +514.16%	**232.72K** +308.8%	**10.22B** +368.19%
Mentions	Distinct Users	Reach
233.74K	56,928	2.18B
Previous Period	Previous Period	Previous Period

Atiku's Overall Mentions

41   Ndubuisi, O., & Orijinmo, N. (2022, July 5). 'Peter Obi: The Labour Party candidate electrifying young Nigerians'. BBC News.
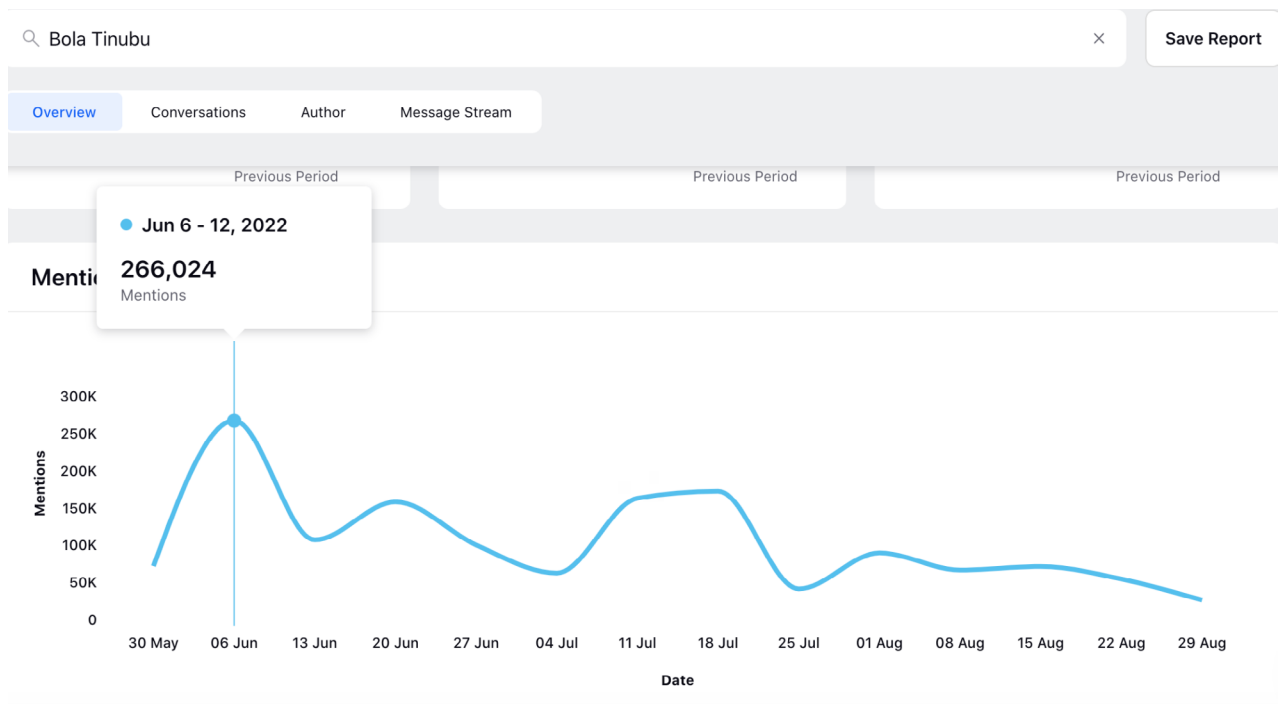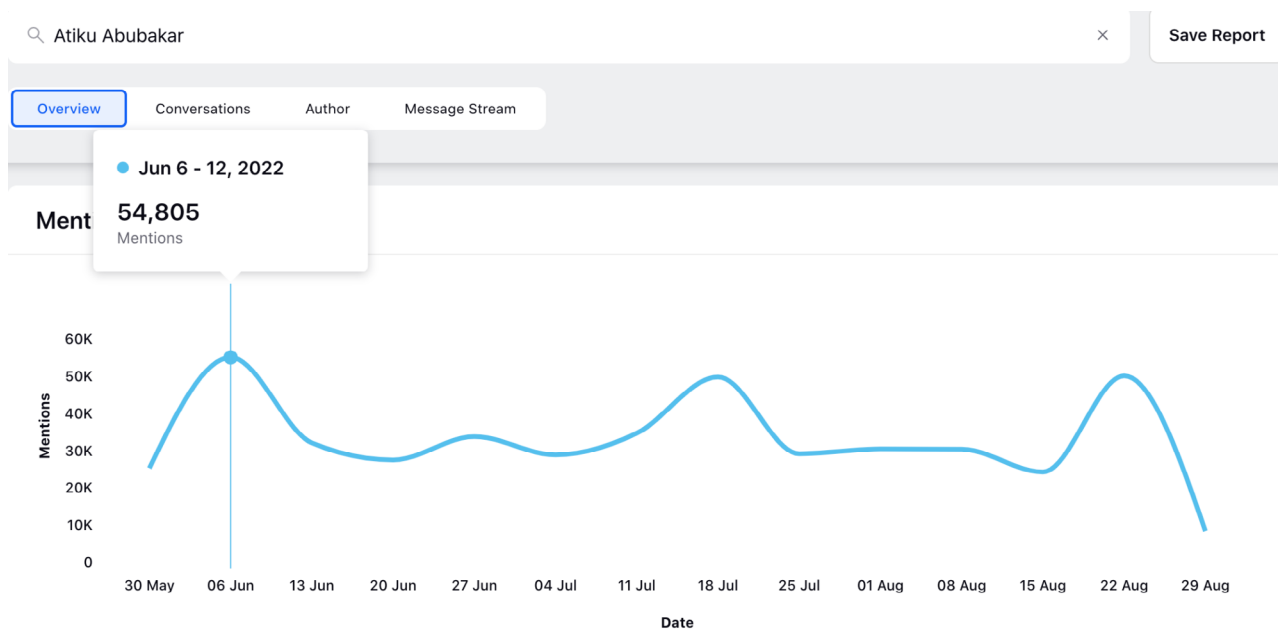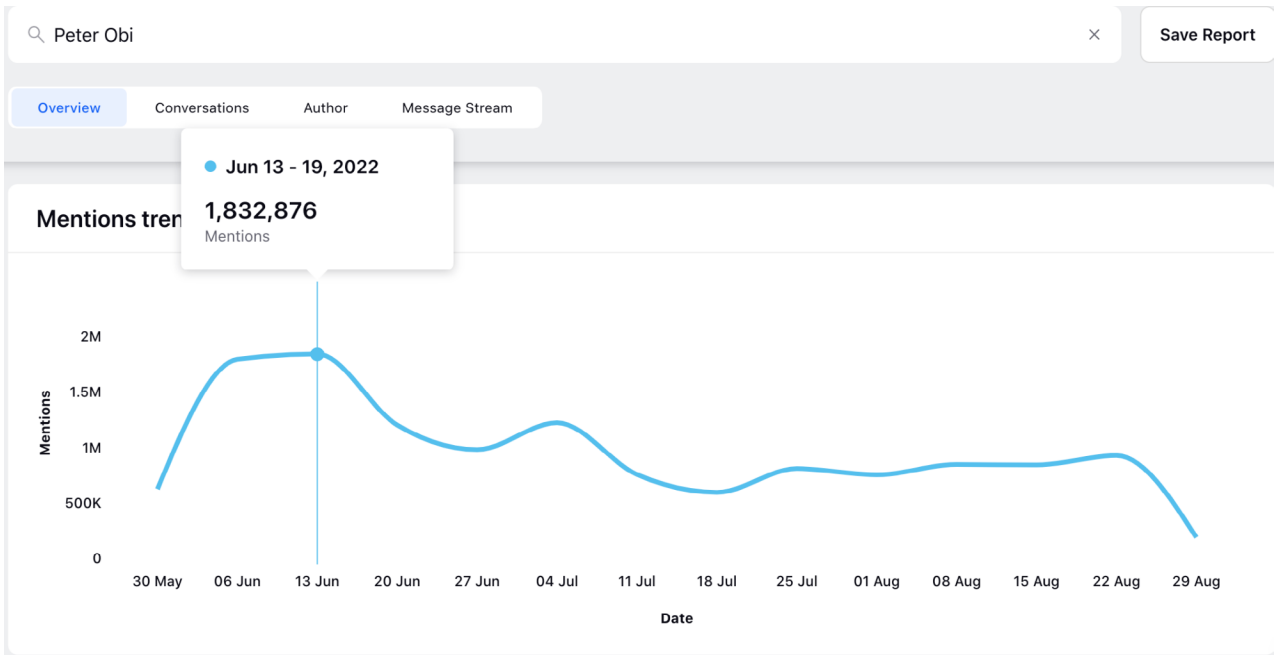
Tinubu's Overall Mentions

Mentions ⓘ	Unique users ⓘ	Reach ⓘ
455.61K +203.07%	**109.14K** +117.41%	**3.55B** +140.23%
Mentions	Distinct Users	Reach
150.33K	50,199	1.48B
Previous Period	Previous Period	Previous Period

Tinubu's Overall Mentions

Mentions ⓘ	Unique users ⓘ	Reach ⓘ
13.24M +218.49%	**540.96K** +119.59%	**56.18B** +237.14%
Mentions	Distinct Users	Reach
4.16M	246.35K	16.66B
Previous Period	Previous Period	Previous Period
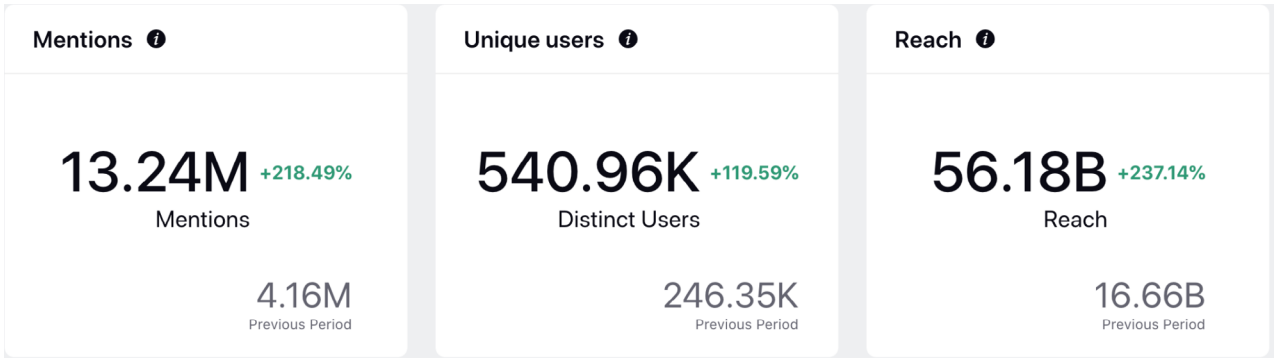
Peter Obi's Overall Mentions

Source: Sprinklr

The charts below also present a quick breakdown of the 3 candidates' weekly Twitter and online media mentions. The graph shows that both Atiku and Tinubu had their highest number of mentions in the week of 6th to 13th of June, when preparations for primary elections were either in top gear or just being concluded. This reality is somewhat different for Peter Obi, whose highest mentions seem to have a run-on effect, peaking weeks after he had clinged the

Labour Party tickets

Atiku Abubakar   ✕   Save Report

Overview   Conversations   Author   Message Stream

● Jun 6 - 12, 2022

54,805
Mentions

Ment

Mentions

60K	
50K	
40K	
30K	
20K	
10K	
0	

30 May 06 Jun 13 Jun 20 Jun 27 Jun 04 Jul 11 Jul 18 Jul 25 Jul 01 Aug 08 Aug 15 Aug 22 Aug 29 Aug

Date

Bola Tinubu   ✕   Save Report

Overview   Conversations   Author   Message Stream

Previous Period   Previous Period   Previous Period

● Jun 6 - 12, 2022

266,024
Mentions

Menti

Mentions

300K	
250K	
200K	
150K	
100K	
50K	
0	

30 May 06 Jun 13 Jun 20 Jun 27 Jun 04 Jul 11 Jul 18 Jul 25 Jul 01 Aug 08 Aug 15 Aug 22 Aug 29 Aug

Date

Source: Sprinklr

Online news media coverage for the candidates follows the same pattern as their Twitter mentions, although the trend of online news media mentions seems to be more stable but weaker than Twitter engagements. See below a quick breakdown for the 3 candidates.

Source: Sprinklr
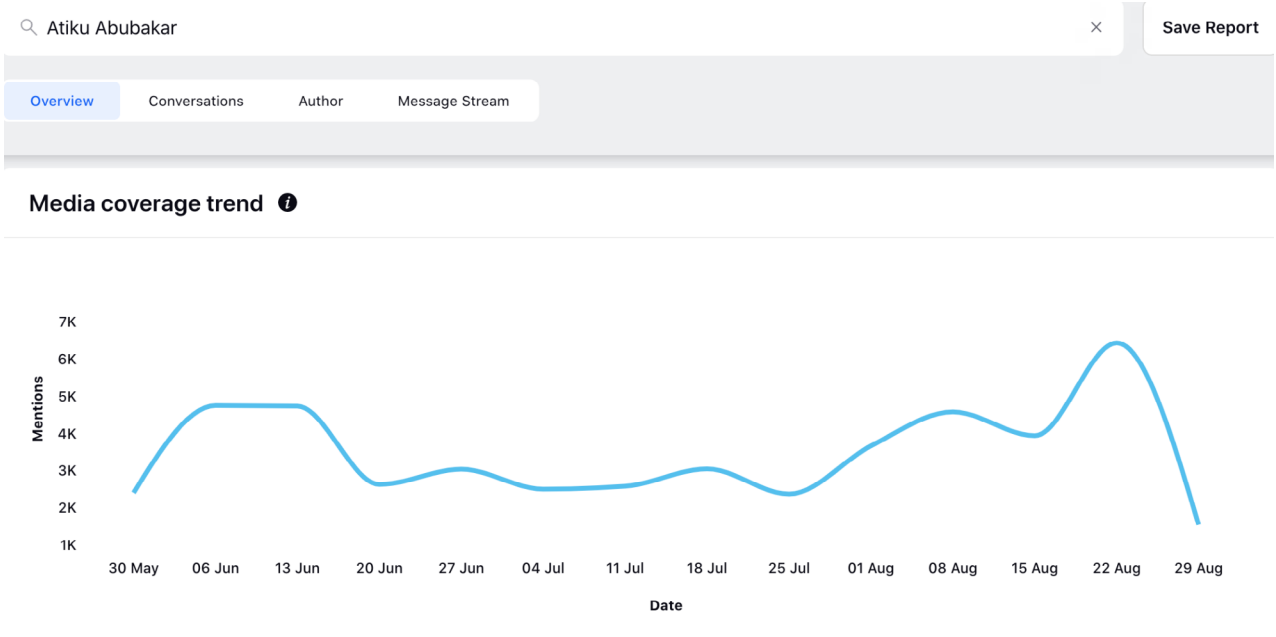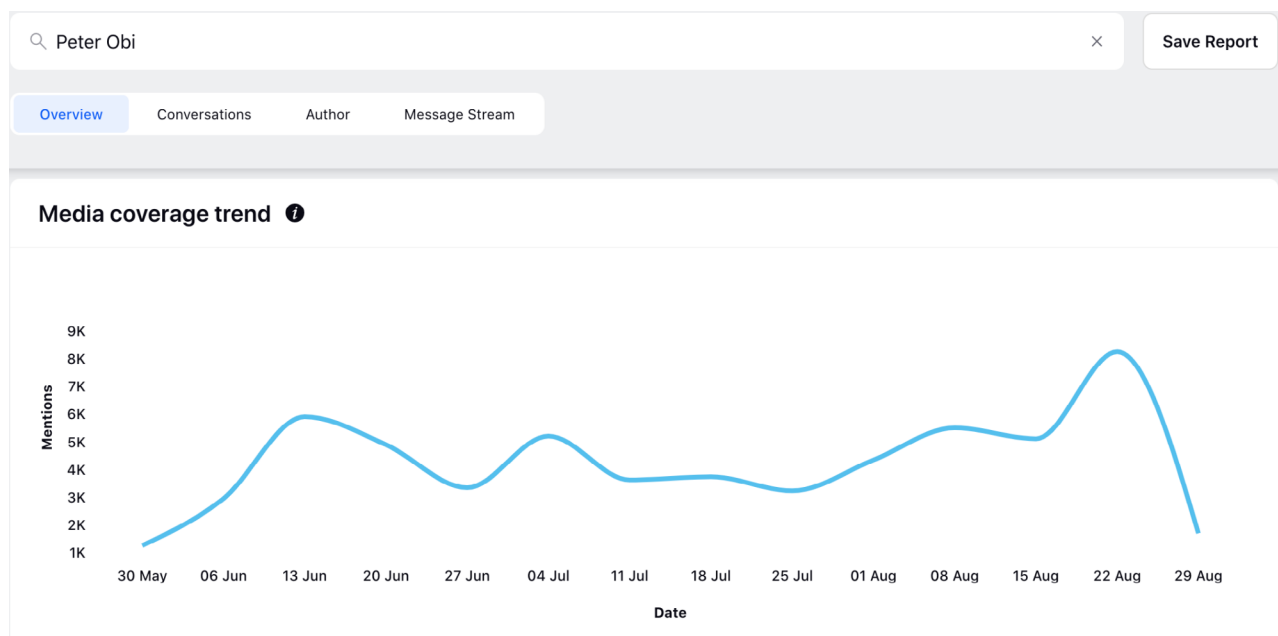
However, the sentiment behind online engagements are just as important as the mentions themselves. For instance, **research**[42] has shown that responses to a post might alter the intended meaning of a particular message from the initial author's perspective-causing a positive message to appear negative and vice versa. In the case of all the 3 figures being examined, a very large number of their online mentions carried neutral sentiments, and negative sentiments consistently outweighed positive tones in the online posts. However, the degree of negatives and positives vary for each candidate.

For Atiku Abubakar, 75.5 % of his online mentions were neutral, while 16.9% were negative and 7.5%, positive. Bola Tinubu has a somewhat similar profile, with about 72.5% neutral impressions. However, standing at 21.5% and 5.6%, respectively, he has a higher negative and lower positive sentiment than Atiku. Obi likewise has a 75.1% neutral sentiment, 16.7% negative sentiment, and a positive sentiment of 8.1%-higher than the other two contenders.

Online news media coverage for the candidates follows the same pattern as their Twitter mentions, although the trend of online news media mentions seems to be more stable but weaker than Twitter engagements. See below a quick breakdown for the 3 candidates.

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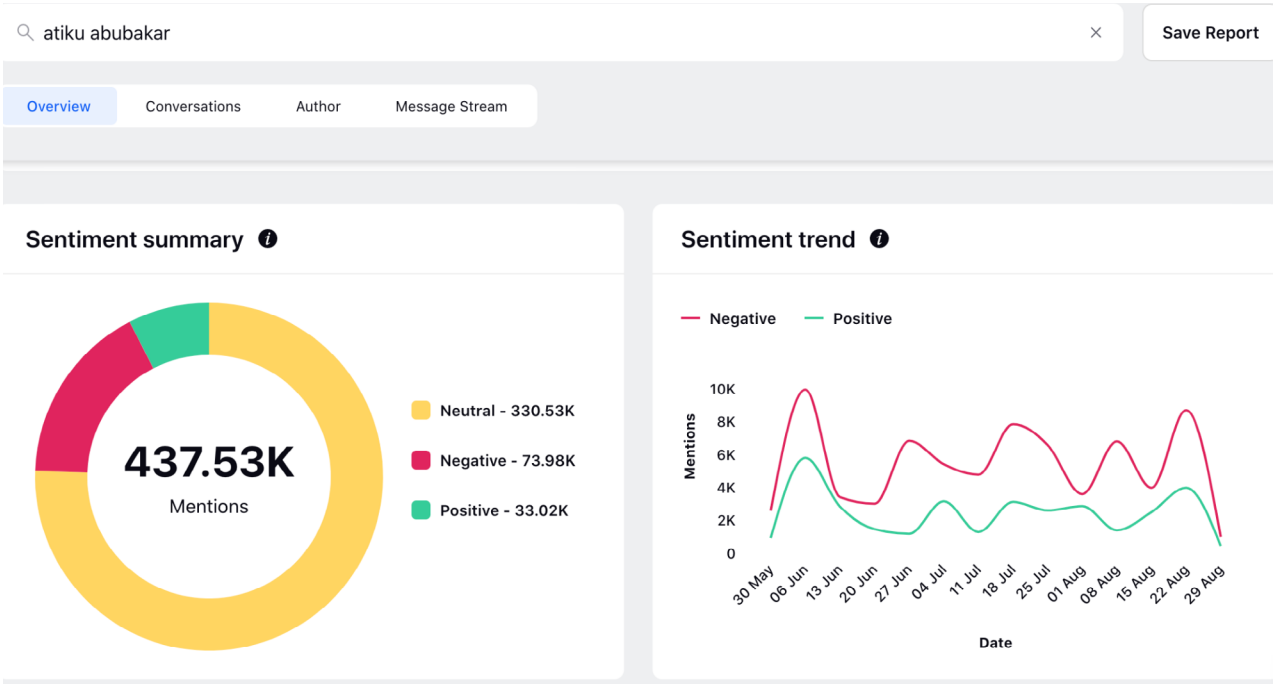
42   Matalon, Y., Magdaci, O., Almozlino, A., & Yamin, D. (2021). Using sentiment analysis to predict opinion inversion in Tweets of political communication. Sci Rep, 11(1):7250.
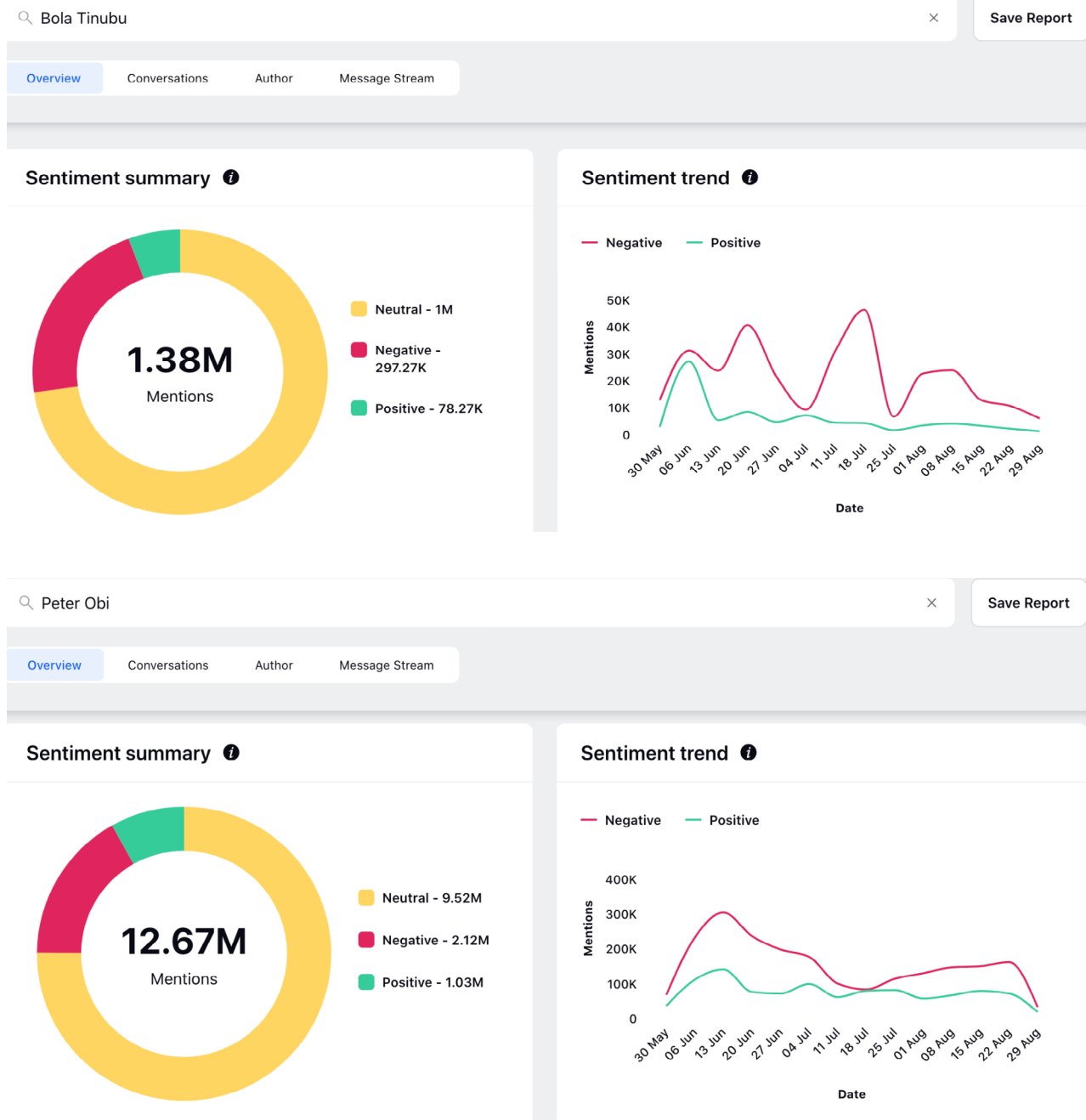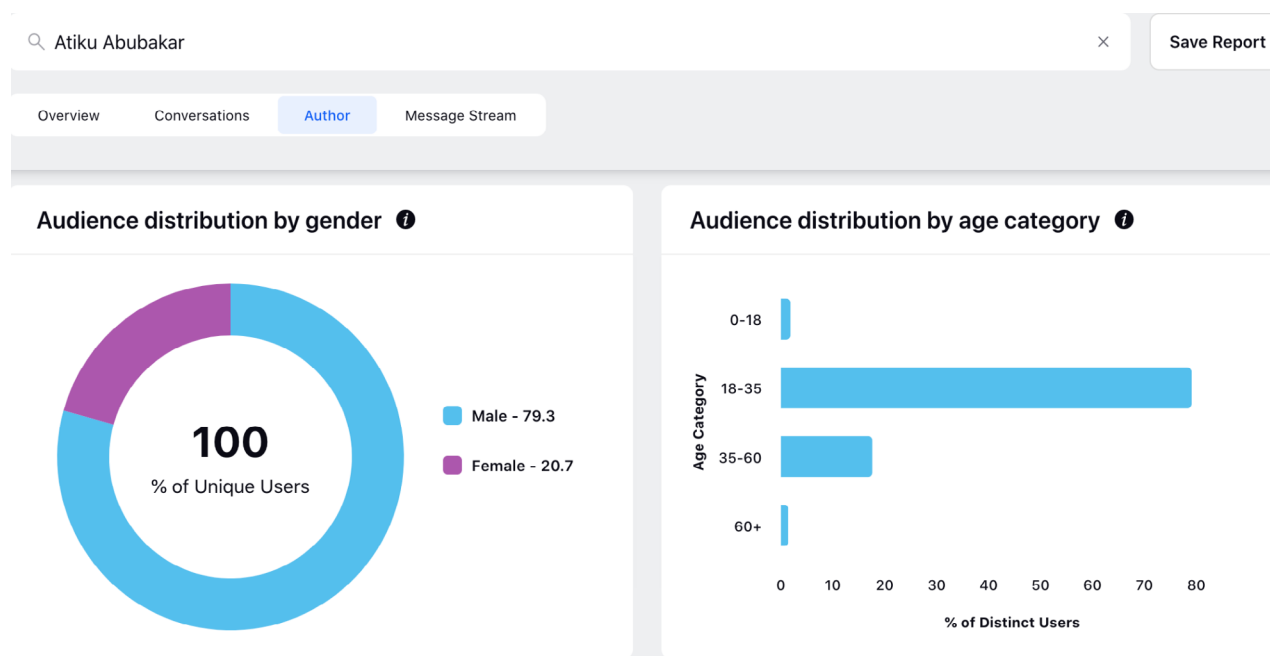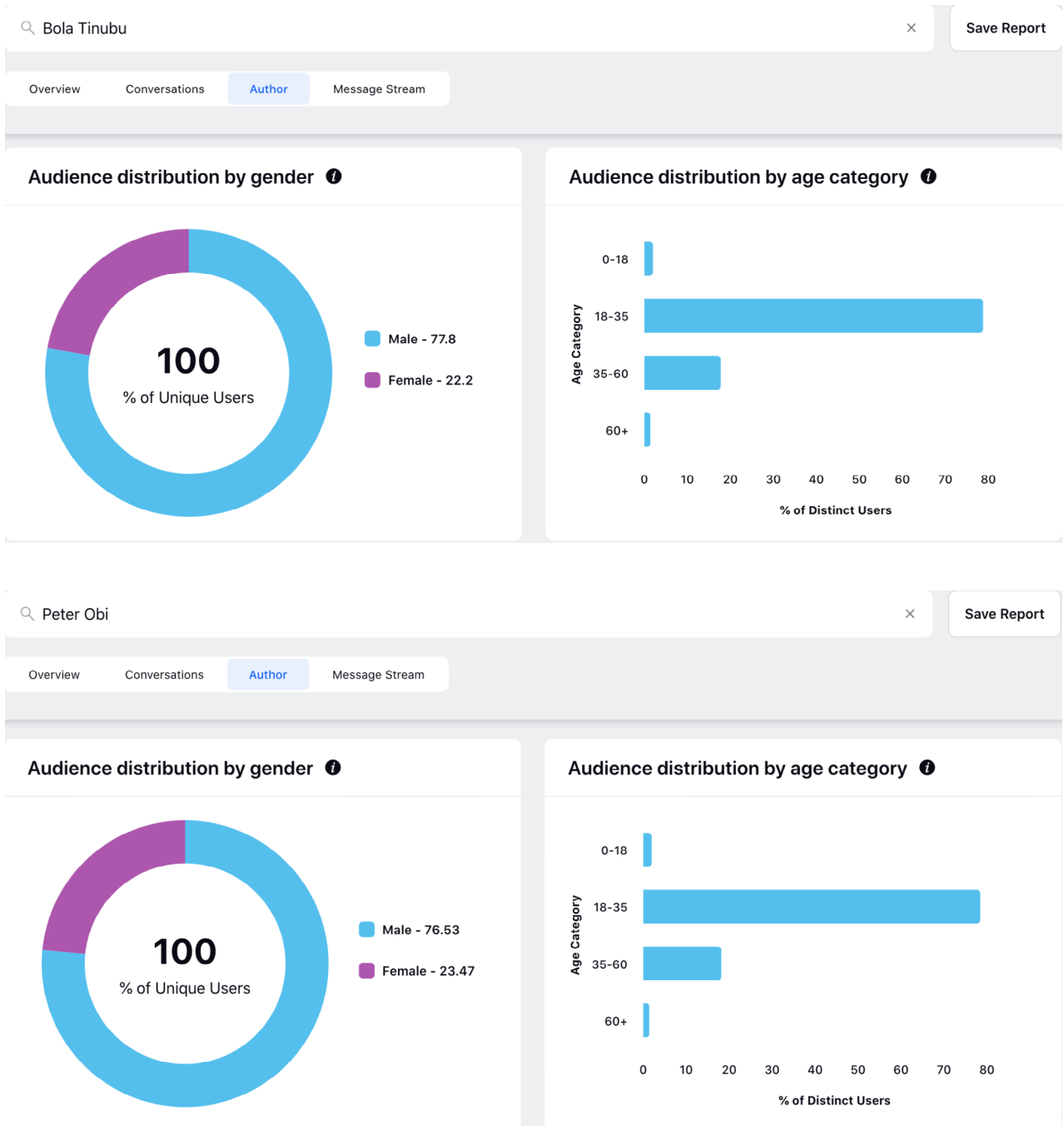
Source: Sprinklr

Audience

Elsewhere, Dataphyte has **written**[43] about the demographic breakdown of voters' registration in Nigeria. The article offers some referential insights into how digital engagement compares with offline political participation. A very important aspect of digital engagement is the demographic composition of the audience engaging a topic. This is even more crucial when tracking political ads, as certain groups often hold more (numeric) political value to candidates than the others. For instance, the largest proportion of registered voters in Nigeria are 18-34 years old; an effective online strategy would have to capture this group of voters.

The charts below highlight the demographic composition of Atiku, Tinubu and Peter Obi's respective online audiences. Online conversations around the 3 candidates are disproportionately male-driven. This is somewhat a paradox, since the number of females who have newly completed their voters' registration exceeds the males. On the other hand, it comes as no surprise that more than 78% of users discussing the 3 candidates are aged 18-35, since this age group essentially 'owns' the digital space.

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43   Amata, D. (2022, August 3). '2023 Election: Completed PVC registration across Nigeria in 5 charts'. Dataphyte
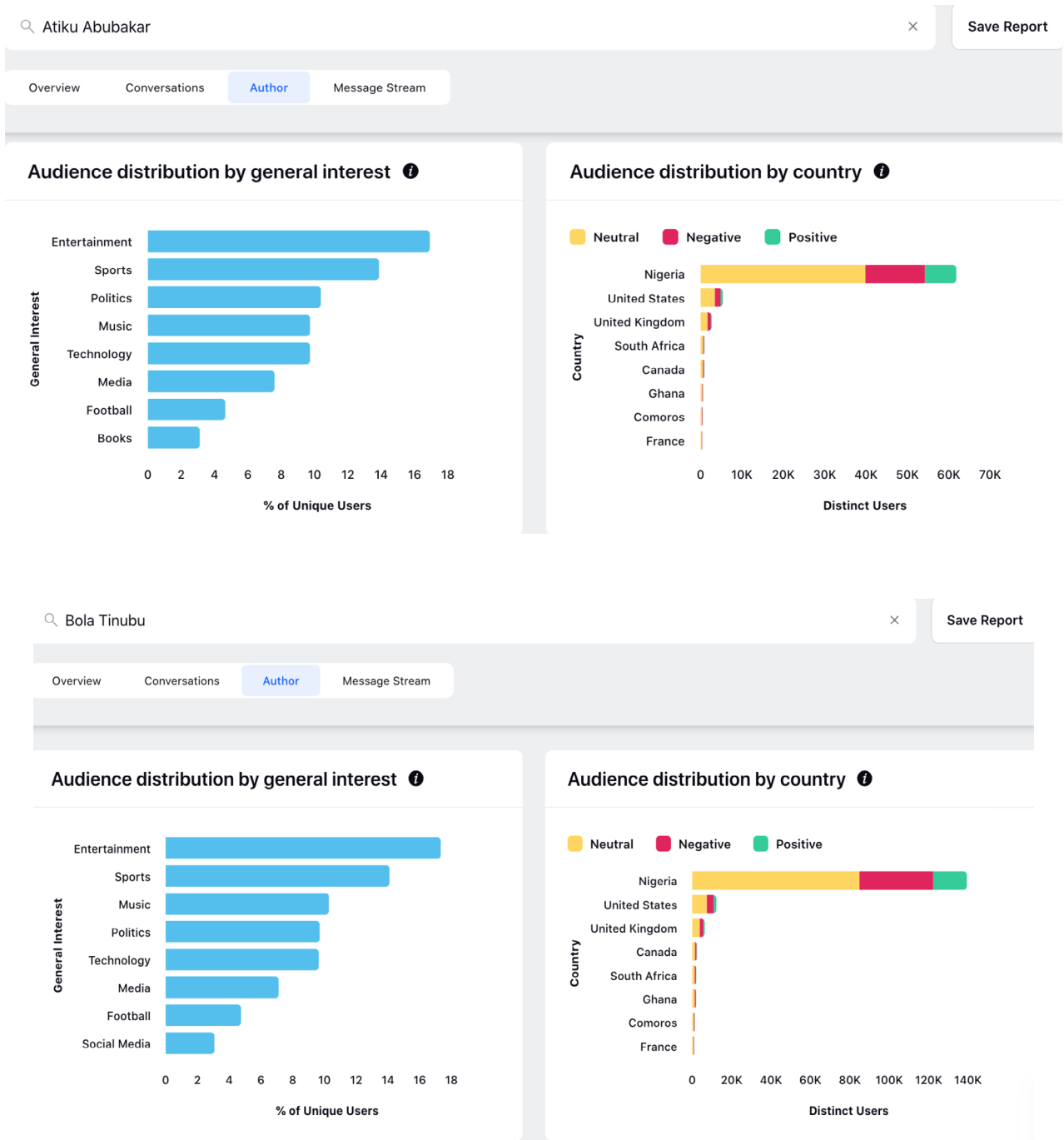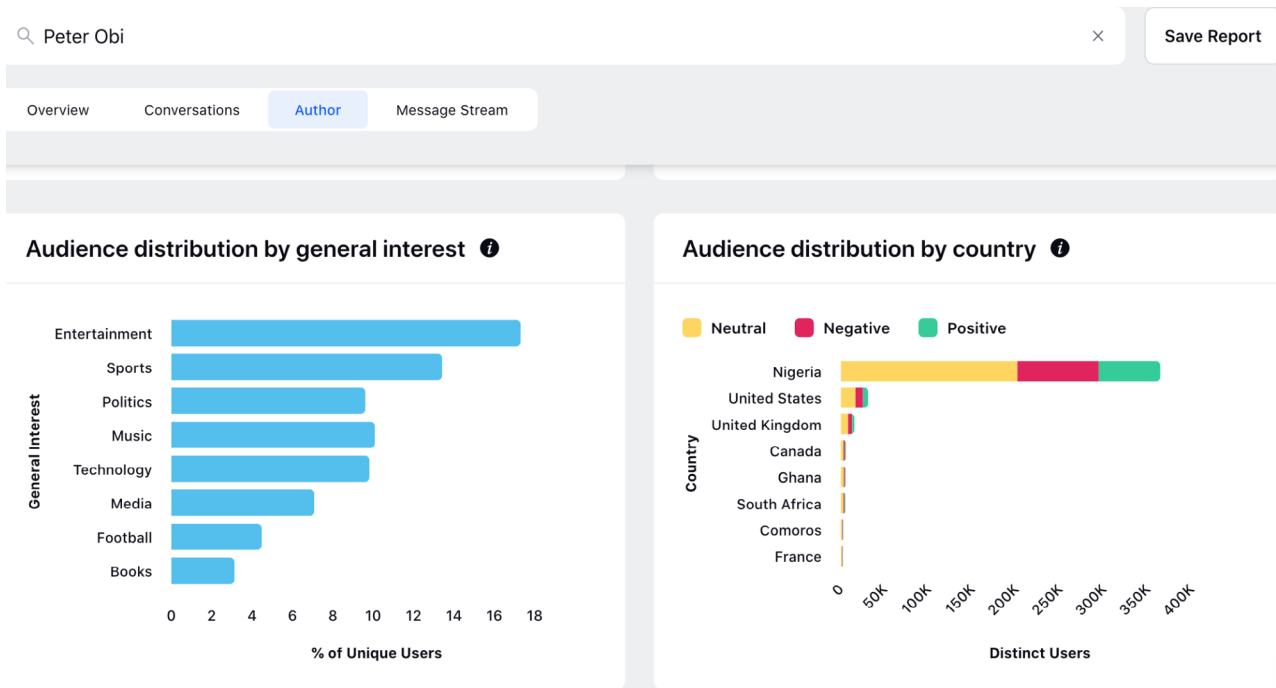
Source: Sprinklr

Similarly, the majority of this young active online audience discussing the candidates are also simultaneously interested in entertainment, sports, music, and technology. This truly corresponds with the average Nigerian youth's topic of interest online.

Perhaps, one easily negligible chart is the chart on the right, showing audience distribution

by country; afterall, majority, if not all, of the online engagements have to come from Nigeria. But the chart also offers a quick glance at the diasporic composition of Nigeria's online political discussants. For Atiku, the top 3 engagements outside of Nigeria come from the USA, UK, and South Africa; for both Tinubu and Obi, this comes from the USA, UK, and Canada, respectively.

Source: Sprinklr

Conclusion

Measuring digital political advertising in Nigeria is a not-so-straightforward task, not the least because of stakeholders' lack of transparency on politicians' digital ad records. Even where such data exists, compiling and presenting it into measurable insights is an arduous task. Besides, a meaningful evaluation of digital advertising would also require ample data on politicians' traditional advertising budgets (for comparison) — something quite difficult to obtain.

Yet, by zooming in on the 3 major contenders in the 2023 presidential elections, this piece has offered some important insights into the current nature of digital advertising in Nigerian politics. It is by no means comprehensive; however, it provides a window of discussion into some crucial questions every democracy grapples with in this age of digital revolution; such as, "might there be a link between the online world of heated political discourses and the offline political world of compromises and deal-cutting?", "how might continuous digital advertising in the coming months impact voter behaviour in the 2023 general elections?". The puzzle is indeed endless.

2023: Can INEC's Technology KO Strategy Trounce Elections Fraud?

Published on November 14, 2022

Ayantola Alayande
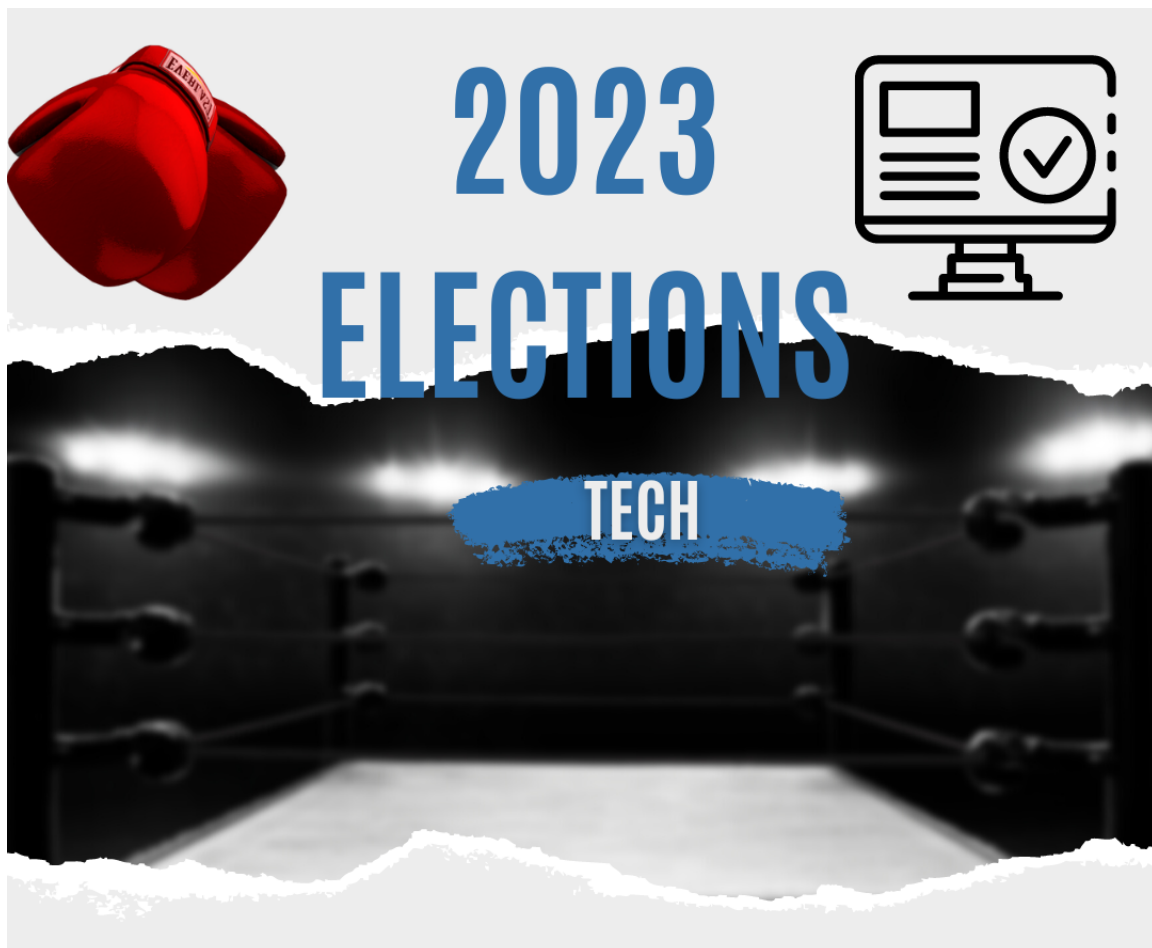
Consider a UFC or boxing arena; there is a heavyweight champion, who keeps winning the re-match every season, no matter how hard his challenger tries. This time, the challenger pulls out a new tactic; something drastic, hoping to give a final knock-out to this all-time opponent. Whether he would win depends on two things: one, how perfect he has mastered the tactic — because you cannot take out the champion with poorly-thought-through gambits, you have to master your art; and two, whether the enemy hasn't already updated his tactics to out-wit our dear challenger.

This analysis may be too late for Israel Adesanya who lost for the third time to Alex Pereira on

Saturday night, but it can still prove useful for Nigeria and INEC's fight against electoral malpractice. Imagine the UFC arena is Nigerian elections; the heavyweight champion is the mammoth of electoral malpractices that has continually bedevilled our democracy; our dear challenger is the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC); and its new tactic is electoral technology. Nigeria's electoral system has for years been unable to defeat electoral malpractice and fraud. With another chance in its hands, INEC, this time, is holding a sledgehammer: technology-hoping to give a final knockout to electoral malpractice once and for all and restore credibility to Nigeria's electoral system.

Would INEC's technology punches be the tactic that takes out the giant of politically organised election fraud? Or would it be like Anthony Joshua's failure to land efficient and powerful punches on Oleksandr Usyk in that Rage on the Red Sea battle, losing again to Usyk, despite high hopes? The devil is in the details.

There are 2 key technologies INEC aims to use for the forthcoming elections: the BVAS and the IREV. There is a third one because BVAS works hand in hand with another technology device; the IVED. While there are concerns about how INEC can efficiently deploy 2-3 electoral technologies at once (an entirely different discussion), these technologies have the potential to specifically address the lapses in INEC's voting procedures and election results management, broadly. Let's take a quick look at INEC's tactics — the technology tools the commission is deploying for the 2023 elections.

BVAS

The Bimodal Voter Accreditation System (BVAS): In simple terms, the BVAS is an authenticator device which is used for identifying and accrediting voter's biometric information. The device captures voters' fingerprints and facial identity and matches it with existing information on the voters' register. It is also used to capture images of election results sheets from each polling unit (PU) and to upload those results in real-time on the election results portal. So far, INEC has deployed the device in 3 off-cycle governorship elections (Anambra, Ekiti, and Osun elections) as well as the FCT Area Council elections earlier this year.

How does it work?

Essentially, the BVAS is an upgrade to the use of Smart Card Readers (SCR) which has been used in previous elections to verify voters' identity by scanning the microchip embedded on Permanent

Voters' Card. But BVAS is much more impressive; while SCR can verify any card presented and registered in a polling unit regardless of whether it is being used by the rightful owner, BVAS ensures that the actual PVC bearer is the one being verified.

The most important function of the device is that it is **synced with INEC's Voter Enrolment Device (IVED)** – the technology that was used to register voters in the first place. On actual voting day, the BVAS captures voters' fingerprints (and where this fails, facial image is captured). Since every voter is already registered with INEC, their facial or fingerprint identity automatically matches their existing information on INEC's database. The IVED and BVAS are technically the same thing, with the latter being an extension of the former and deployed only on election day (E-day).

INEC has recorded some meaningful **successes** with the BVAS in Osun and Ekiti. The key challenge for the commission in 2023 is ensuring that the BVAS is sufficient and that it works with minimal or no glitches. That would be a punch well landed on voting fraud!

INEC Election Result Viewing Portal (IREV): The IREV is a live portal that enables the public to view election results in real-time, after results have been collated in each polling unit and uploaded. The key goal of the platform is to enhance election results management and boost citizens' trust in the process. Hitherto, every election cycle in Nigeria has witnessed some form of **controversy** on the transmission of results across each hierarchical collation level (PU ——Ward ——LG——State).

Primarily, the IREV is simply a 'technology replacement' for the Form EC60E, which is a copy of Form EC8A (result sheet). Previously, the Form EC60E was a public version of the result sheet, which is pasted in each polling unit after votes have been counted and collated. With Form EC60E, voters would usually take pictures of the results and circulate on the internet, in a reasonable attempt to keep the public informed of voting updates in their units. But this process was amenable to fraud and digital manipulation; for instance, during the 2019 elections, citizens circulated **several fake spreadsheets** acclaimed as election results.

Now, the IREV replaces the Form EC60E, making it possible for the public (not just voters in a polling unit) to have direct access to results coming from every polling unit, ward, LGA and state collation centres, before the results are declared by INEC.

There are however a couple of things to note with the IREV. First, INEC has **stated** that the IREV by no means suggests electronic collation of results; election results would still be manually

collated and recorded on paper across different polling units. The implication of this is that results sheets are still manipulable and could even somehow be obliterated or destroyed by desperate political actors, in the absence of very integrous INEC staff and security officials.

Secondly, while the IREV helps boost public confidence in election results, it does not account for the more than 50% of Nigerians who lack the digital skills to engage with a technology as basic as a results portal. Even where the skills exist, as social media's influence in elections have grown, citizens now heavily source election-related news from social media. Quite possibly, many voters would still be vulnerable to election disinformation and misinformation online. But the IREV remains a good development, regardless.

Needless to say, priority for INEC should be investing in strong cybersecurity techniques to prevent hacking; commendably the commission was able to ward off several **hacking attempts** on the IREV portal during the Osun and Ekiti elections.

If INEC successfully gets many citizens onboard with IREV, secures the portal against cyberattacks, and ensures consistency between PU results and IREV updates, then the commission would have landed an even harder punch on the 'heavyweight champion' of electoral malpractice.

Indeed, back to the boxing arena in 2023!

In what is shaping up to be an epic boxing tournament in 2023, Dataphyte will be to you what Paul Lampley or Paulie Malignaggi is to a boxing match or what Peter Drury is to football; providing important commentary and explainers on INEC's election administration strategies; you don't want to miss important moments!

2023 Elections: A Breakdown of Benefits and Concerns in INEC's Technology Strategy

Published on December 5, 2022

Ayantola Alayande

Nigeria's general elections have included the use of technology since 2015. The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) introduced the earliest innovations in electoral technology when it initiated the use of the Permanent Voters' Card (PVC), which encloses the biometric information of voters using an embedded microchip on the card. Smart Card Reader (SCR) was then used to accredit voters by scanning the microchip on the PVC.

Combined with the PVC, the SCR was a reliable way to deter fraud by authenticating voters' identity (fingerprint and display picture) before voting. A replacement for the temporary voters' card used in the 2011 elections, PVCs were first issued in 2011 but deployed fully in 2015.

That same year, INEC, for the first time, **invested** in making election results publicly available on its website, although this was only after all votes had been tallied and final results announced.

2015 was indeed the watershed in the history of electoral technology in Nigeria.

How Has Nigeria Fared So Far?

While the number of technological innovations introduced since 2015 may seem few, each technology has brought several changes to election management.

Table 1 below summarises the use of technology across 5 stages of election administration in Nigeria so far: Voter Registration and Identification, E-voting, Results Processing, Use of Open-Source Software in Election Administration, and Online Publication of Election Data. These results are drawn from International IDEA's ICT in Elections Database, which provides data on the use of electoral technology in more than 170 countries of the world. The table shows that Nigeria has substantially implemented the use of technology across all stages of its election management – except for E-voting which has not been implemented at all, and Online Publication of Data which is still in its formative stage.

Table 1: How Does INEC Use ICT in Election Administration?

Current Status of ICT use in Nigerian Elections

Category	Question	Situation (Nigeria)
Voter Registration and Identification	How is the national electoral register created?	Created by INEC using its own data collection and/or other sources of data
	If electoral register is created by the EMB, which method is used?	A continuous register (voter data is continuously collected and updated between electoral events)
	If electoral register is created by the EMB, what type of technology is used for collecting registration data?	Digital voter registration kits/computers, off-line
	If the EMB uses technology to collect voter registration data, is biometric data captured and used during registration?	Yes, fingerprint and photos
	Is the biometric data used in voter identification at polling stations?	Yes
	Is technology used for identifying voters at polling stations (electronic poll books)?	Yes, offline/only access to polling station registration data
	How is technology used in relation to paper voter lists?	Technology is used instead of paper voters lists
E-Voting	Is E-voting currently used in any elections with EMB participation?	No
	If e-voting is currently being used, what types of technology are used?	Not Applicable

Category	Question	Situation (Nigeria)
	If e-voting is currently being used, is it taking place in controlled or uncontrolled environment?	Not Applicable
	If e-voting is currently being used, is it available for all voters or only some groups of voters?	Not Applicable
	If e-voting is NOT currently being used, what is the current status of e-voting in general?	Not Applicable
Processing of results	Are official election results processed by an electronic tabulation system?	Yes
	If official election results are processed by an electronic tabulation system, at which level are results entered into an electronic tabulation system?	Between polling station level and central level
	In the last national elections, how many days did it take for the EMB to establish final results?	4 days
	In the last national elections, how many days did it take for the EMB to announce certified results?	2 days
Use of open source software	Does the country use open-source software in electoral processes?	Open-source systems are currently being introduced or are in use

*Embed Link: **https://datawrapper.dwcdn.net/ehGWf/1/***
Note: The ICT in Elections Database provides up-to-date data for each country. Thus, responses on certain aspects of election tech in Nigeria may reflect their adoption for sub-national and off-cycle elections, even when they are yet to be used for national elections.

Nigeria is one of many African democracies that show impressive levels of progress in the use of electoral technology when compared with other regions of the world where democratic elections are held. For instance, out of the 177 countries listed on the International IDEA database, only 58 have digital voter registers, half of which are African countries.

A quick visual representation of selected use of ICT in African elections is presented below. 4 metrics are reviewed:

Figure 1: Which African countries use biometric data for voter identification?

Of the 52 countries where biometric data is used for voter identification at polling units, 20 are from Africa, and Nigeria is one of them.

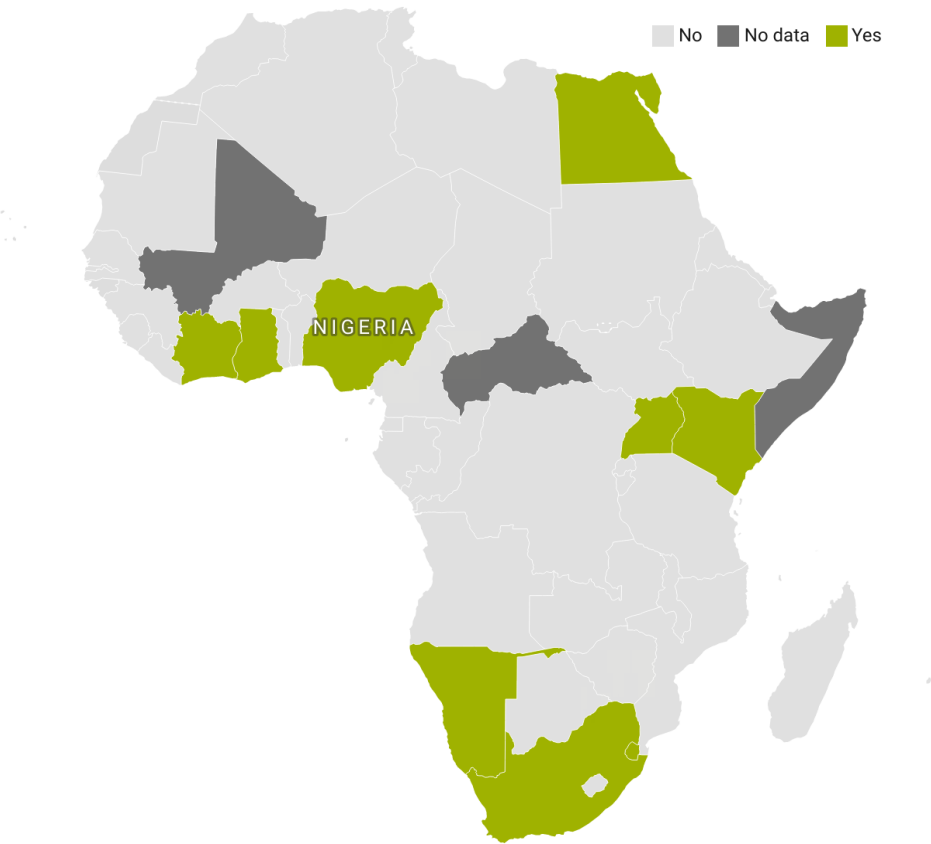**Which African Countries Use Biometric Data for Voters' Verification at Polling Units**
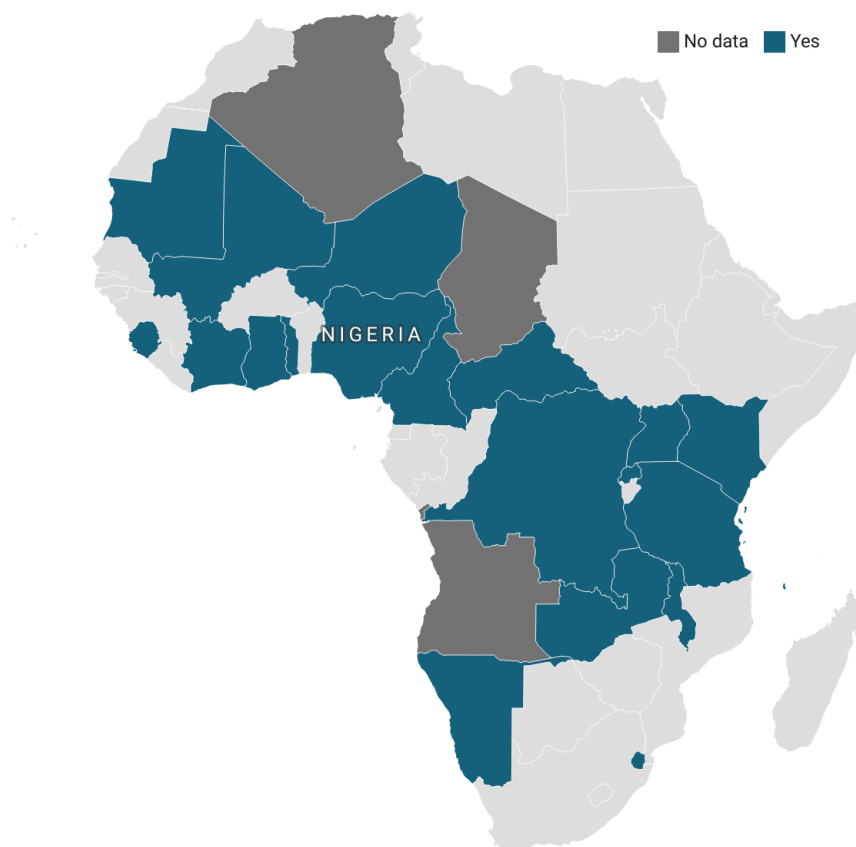
Map: Dataphyte • Source: International IDEA ICT in Elections Database • Created with Datawrapper

Figure 2: Is technology used for the voter identification process at polling units (electronic polling book)?

Nigeria is one of the 8 African countries and 47 globally where technology is used for voter identification in elections, whether this is via an offline method or connected to a central voter database.

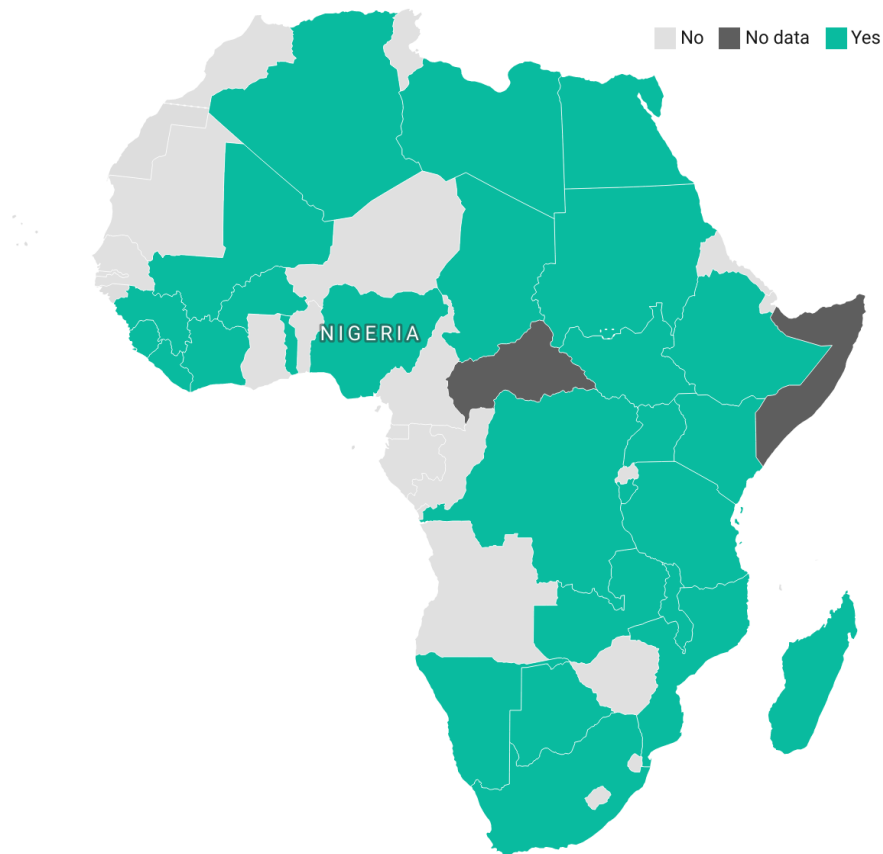**Is technology used for voter identification at polling units?**

Map: Dataphyte • Source: International IDEA ICT in Elections Database • Created with Datawrapper

Figure 3: Were results processed using an electronic tabulation system?

Nigeria is one of the 27 African countries and 105 globally where election results are processed using an electronic tabulation method. In Nigeria, this began with the 2015 elections, although votes seem to have been electronically tabulated at the state and national level collation centres only.

**Are results processed by electronic tabulation?**

Map: Dataphyte • Source: International IDEA ICT in Elections Database • Created with Datawrapper

Figure 4: Which African countries publish election results online?

The majority of democratic countries globally (114) publish their election results online, but these are mostly in non-machine-readable formats – only 57 publish results in formats that are machine-readable. In Africa, this number is even smaller, as only 6 of the 42 countries that publish results do so in machine-readable formats. Nigeria has a lot more work to do in this regard, as its online election results are currently published in the original hand-filled formats that are not machine-readable.

Are election results published online?
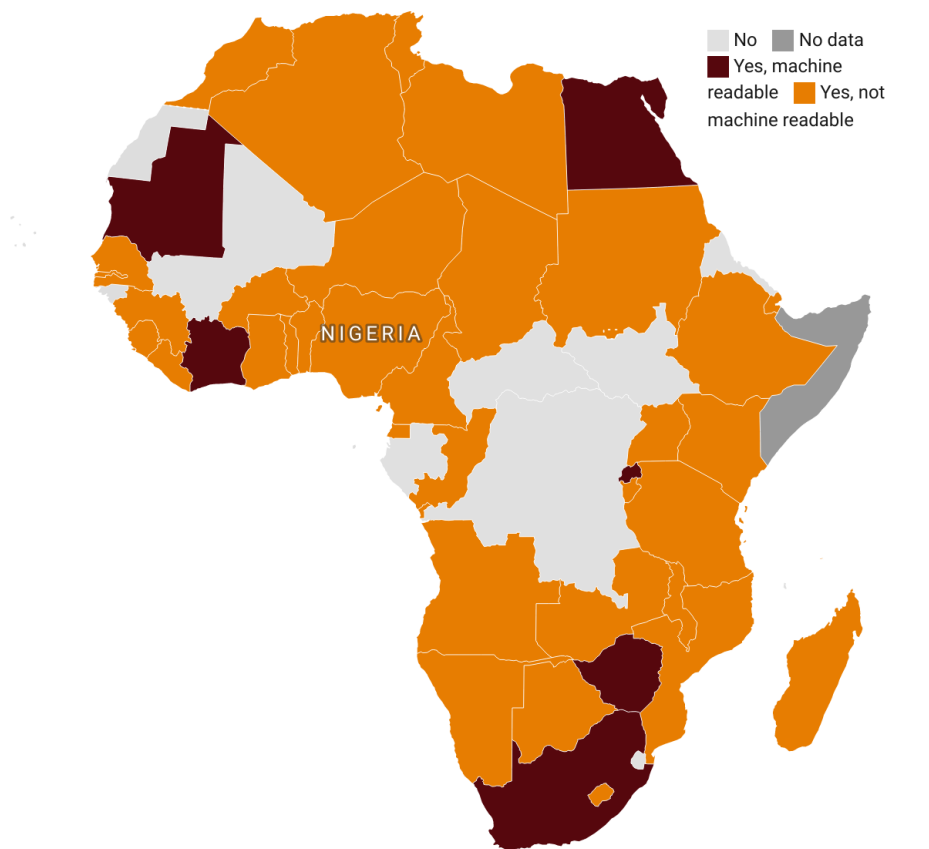
Map: Dataphyte • Source: International IDEA ICT in Elections Database • Created with Datawrapper

Note: Results are for the last national elections in each country.
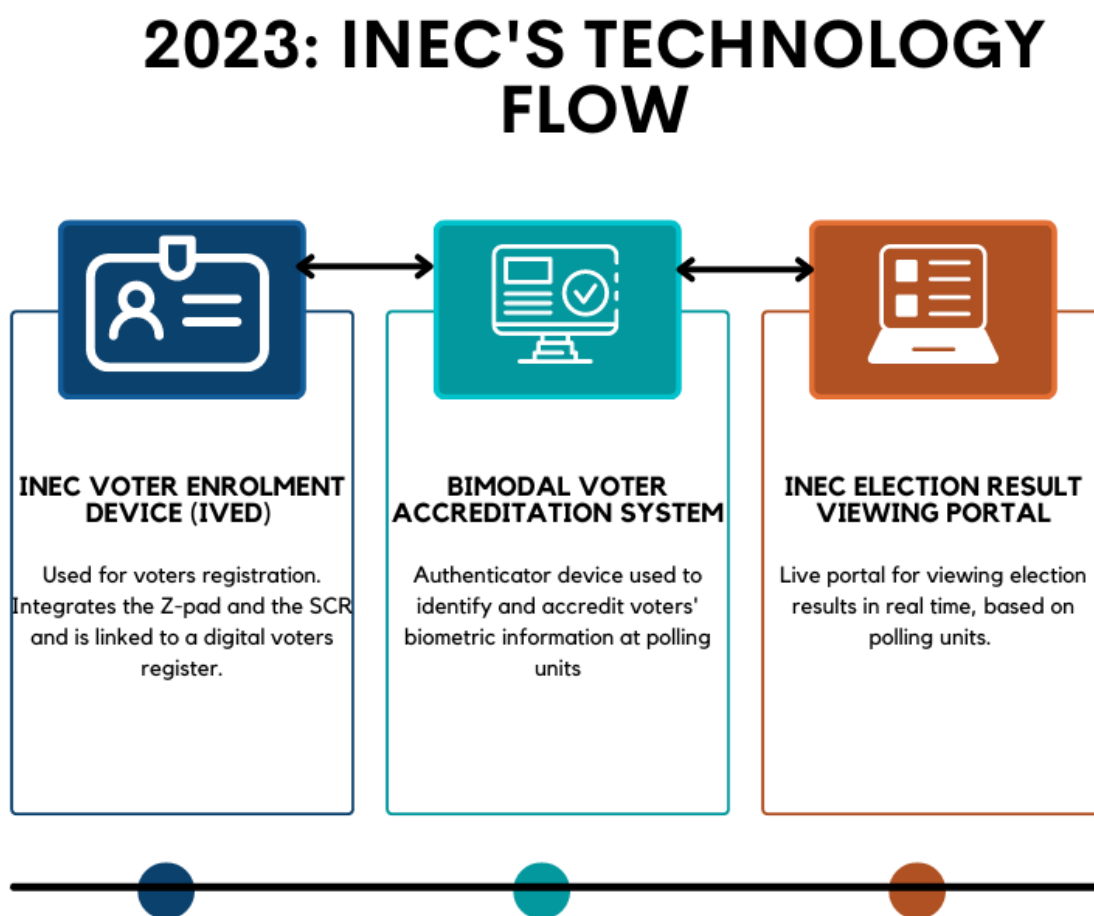*Source (Figures 1-4): International IDEA ICT in Elections Database*

How will technology be used in 2023?

The core of electoral technologies that have been introduced is fostering a more efficient voter identification process, making voting and results collation faster and more reliable, preventing electoral fraud, and overall, improving the credibility of elections. Yet, in this regard, INEC's technologies have had a few drawbacks. For example, even though results were made public on the INEC website during the 2015 and 2019 elections, these were not live updates, and the public could not access them online until final results were collated— which in most cases, never happened early enough. This made no difference between following the results update on INEC's website and simply waiting for the results announcement. Also, the process of using SCR to identify voters was done offline and unconnected to a central voters' register, making fraud deterrence less effective.

For the 2023 elections, INEC has more ambitious goals to solve these challenges. It is introducing 3 key technological innovations: the INEC Voter Enrolment Device (IVED); the Biometric Voters Accreditation System (BVAS), and the INEC Election Result Viewing (IREV) Portal. As well as improving its user friendliness, the commission has also increased the range of information publicly available on its website. For example, information about candidates and political parties, updates on PVC registration and collection, information about polling units, electoral guidelines, and many more are now available on its website.

These technological innovations are unique in that they are clearly backed by the recently passed 2022 Electoral Act, which authorises INEC to electronically accredit voters, as well as manage and transmit results. Elsewhere, Dataphyte has written about what these technologies are, and how they will work on election day.

Figure 5 below presents a quick summary of how they work in practice.

2023: INEC'S TECHNOLOGY FLOW

INEC VOTER ENROLMENT DEVICE (IVED)	BIMODAL VOTER ACCREDITATION SYSTEM	INEC ELECTION RESULT VIEWING PORTAL
Used for voters registration. Integrates the Z-pad and the SCR and is linked to a digital voters register.	Authenticator device used to identify and accredit voters' biometric information at polling units	Live portal for viewing election results in real time, based on polling units.

Source: Dataphyte

By shifting the management of specific election procedures away from people (who could be partisan) to technology, INEC was able to improve election procedures in off-cycle elections where both the IREV and BVAS have been trialled. In the recent Osun and Ekiti elections, both the IREV and BVAS were described as the **3rd force**, enhancing consistency between INEC's final results and the aggregate from polling units, as confirmed by civil society **observation** groups.

However, there are a couple of general concerns with both technologies. Perhaps most concerning is that they have been received with scepticism — especially from the **political class**, who consider technology use in elections highly volatile. Some key chieftains of the APC have recently **expressed concern** about IREV, stressing that they do not "see how transmission of results would work," given specific regional disparity in the infrastructure required for such technology to function well, such as internet connectivity and electricity.

The second challenge is that, while INEC has recorded massive successes in using these technologies in 4 sub-national elections so far, there are concerns about scale and replicability — obviously, expanding to 119, 771 polling units would present more challenges compared to just 700 polling units.

Thirdly, technologies could potentially worsen election administration by introducing new layers of bureaucracy. New technologies would involve new lines of communication, new management structure, and new manpower that could potentially create bottlenecks in the interaction between human agents and resources within each election management value chain.

More importantly, there are specific challenges with each of the BVAS and IREV, which may have a substantial impact on the elections if not well managed by INEC. These are discussed below

Addressing challenges with the BVAS

In theory, using biometric data to confirm voters' identity at polling units should work without glitches and ensure voter fraud is minimised. However, this is not always the case, and INEC has had to also use Smart Card Readers in the 2021 **Anambra** Guber polls, where it had mainly planned to use BVAS. As such, the possibility of INEC resorting to the SCR as a backup for BVAS devices in some polling units cannot be entirely ruled out, despite the Commission's **proclamations** to the contrary. However, as Dataphyte has **shown**, INEC's planned BVAS supply is insufficient. The commission is **deploying** 200,000 BVAS devices across 176, 846 polling units; an average of 1 device per polling unit. This figure fails to consider factors such as a device failing to work

properly in a polling unit, or some polling units having way more voters than others.

There are also questions on quality assurance. If BVAS devices fail, what back-up system could guarantee the same level of authenticity as BVAS? A probable alternative as mentioned above is INEC staff reverting to SCR (or manual forms) to verify voters' PVC, but this does not ensure consistency in voters' data, seeing that the SCR only accredits PVCs, whereas the BVAS performs more sophisticated functions, such as capturing images of results sheet and transmitting it in real time onto the IREV. Ultimately, where contentions on election results arise, INEC must be able to match the results sheet in each polling unit with the register on the BVAS. Using SCR in some polling units and not in others presents significant legal and technical challenges to this outcome.

Furthermore, much of the challenges with the BVAS in past elections has been attributed to poor staff training on how to use the device, as noted by INEC's Chief Press Secretary in a recent **interview** with Dataphyte. For instance, during the last FCT Area Council elections, many INEC **staff** reportedly lacked adequate knowledge of how the BVAS works and had to wait for technicians assigned to their polling unit to resolve this.

Ahead of the 2023 elections, INEC has **disclosed** that it is recruiting and undertaking extensive training for ad-hoc staff members who would handle the BVAS in each polling unit, in addition to recruiting 8,809 technical assistants who would manage the BVAS processes in each registration area (ward).

While comprehensive staff training is commendable, the planned number of technical assistants implies that each official would be supervising an average of 20 polling stations on election day. This, again, requires substantial logistical planning, such as transport and security, to cover allocated polling units within limited voting time. To boost confidence in its staff preparedness, INEC should consider expanding its number of technical assistants. Alternatively, experts have **suggested** enlisting IT professionals as volunteers to monitor and observe polling units. This might help offset the manpower shortage, although it would require significant ethical training to ensure the neutrality of individuals at the polls.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, INEC needs a clear framework to ensure data privacy and security. Interestingly, much of the public debate on the use of BVAS has been centred around the security of the BVAS and IREV joint system, to which INEC has responded that it is well **fortified** against cyber attacks, evidenced in its resistance to several **hacking attempts** during the Osun and Ekiti elections. However, a key conversation around individual data protection has been

missing in INEC's electoral preparations.

For instance, the 2022 Electoral Act — which essentially empowers INEC's use of digital technology in the elections — contains no mention of the protection of voters' data. Yet, thousands of INEC officials and ad-hoc staff would be interfacing with people's sensitive data across different stages of the election— from voter registration to accreditation and verification and management of digital registers. As the elections draw near, INEC must comprehensively apply the Nigeria Data Protection Regulation (NDPR) to every aspect of its digital innovation. It must also educate the public on how their data would be used and managed.

Addressing challenges with IREV

The key purpose of IREV is enabling a transparent and timely transmission of election results to the public. Previously, election results were published on INEC's website only after final election results were established, which took an average of 3-4 days in both the 2015 and 2019 presidential elections (see figure 6 below for comparison with other African countries).

Figure 6: It took INEC 4 days to establish final results and 2 more days to certify/announce the final results during the 2019 presidential elections.

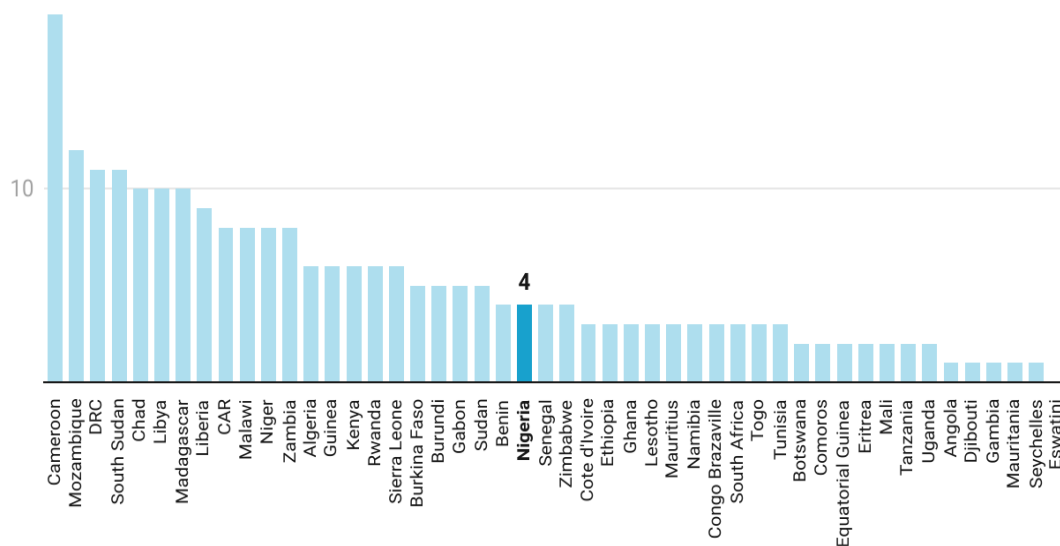**How many days did it take to establish final results in the last national election?**

Chart: Dataphyte • Source: International IDEA ICT in Elections Database • Created with Datawrapper

https://datawrapper.dwcdn.net/5QQvU/1/

Note:

i)   Data represents the number of days it took for EMB to establish final results in the last presidential elections only, legislative elections are excluded.

ii)   0 (Eswatini)= results were provided the same day as voting day.

iii)   Sierra Leone held 2 rounds of national elections in 2018; only first round is recorded above.

While IREV would not necessarily speed up the process of certifying the final results, it would enable citizens and civil society groups to independently gather and analyse election results in real-time. It would also specifically aid the Parallel Voters Tabulation (PVT) process done by many election observation groups. Barring any unforeseen changes, the public would be able to veritably confirm election winners in their units, constituencies, and states, without waiting for INEC's final announcement.

There is however a worrisome challenge with the IREV portal as it is now; where it has been trialled, many of the results sheets uploaded are not legible, either due to poor image quality or poor handwriting. Investing in BVAS devices with clear image quality and ensuring that staff clearly document results and take quality pictures are the most basic expectations on IREV from INEC.

Secondly, although the intention to upload results sheets in their original manual form to preserve results integrity is well understood, the current model is not machine readable and requires individuals and civil society organisations to either manually compute results from thousands of results sheets or use additional technology to extract and aggregate this. Even with an extra technology, individuals would have to walk through thousands of clicks to get the final result for each State; something very time consuming when analysing the Presidential election.

If the public cannot directly get aggregated information on election results either at Local Government or State level, the current design of IREV makes it less useful in the bigger picture. Afterall, most voters can already access Form EC60E (copy of election results) in their respective polling units; the real essence of a real-time IREV portal is to enable real-time aggregation. Realistically, individual citizens are less likely to go through the rigour of scrutinising 13,325 results sheets in a state such as Lagos, for instance.

While INEC might not need to convert its paper sheets into machine-readable formats, it could redesign its portal to have landing pages to harvest results sheets at both local government and state levels at once.

Also worth mentioning is ensuring a 100 percent upload rate for the results sheet. INEC was able

to **achieve this** in both Osun and Ekiti, but other elections were aggregated at a 99.13% rate. A 0.8 shortfall might seem negligible, but not for a process as simple as uploading a results sheet – especially when such a shortfall could create legal contentions about the accuracy of results in certain polling units.

The final point on IREV is ensuring routine testing and maintenance of all IT systems relevant to the portal— both software and the devices that will be used for the elections. Not unexpectedly, the IREV portal would witness more traffic and cyber threats during the Presidential elections than it did in past elections where it has been used. Notably, on 18th November, INEC's website was unusually **down** for approximately an hour; displaying the usual '404 error'.

The commission may have been performing a maintenance check, but there could be more grave implications of having such downtime during the 2023 elections — when the public is unable to access INEC's website for an hour during election results collation.

Overall, while the degree of confidence with which INEC is set to implement these technological changes in the next elections are commendable, the commission must minimise risks by having credible alternatives where technology fails. In addition, prioritising staff training and support, investing in the security of its systems, ensuring data privacy, and implementing user-friendly interfaces on its website are very crucial preparatory tasks for the commission.

Section 6

Reporting results
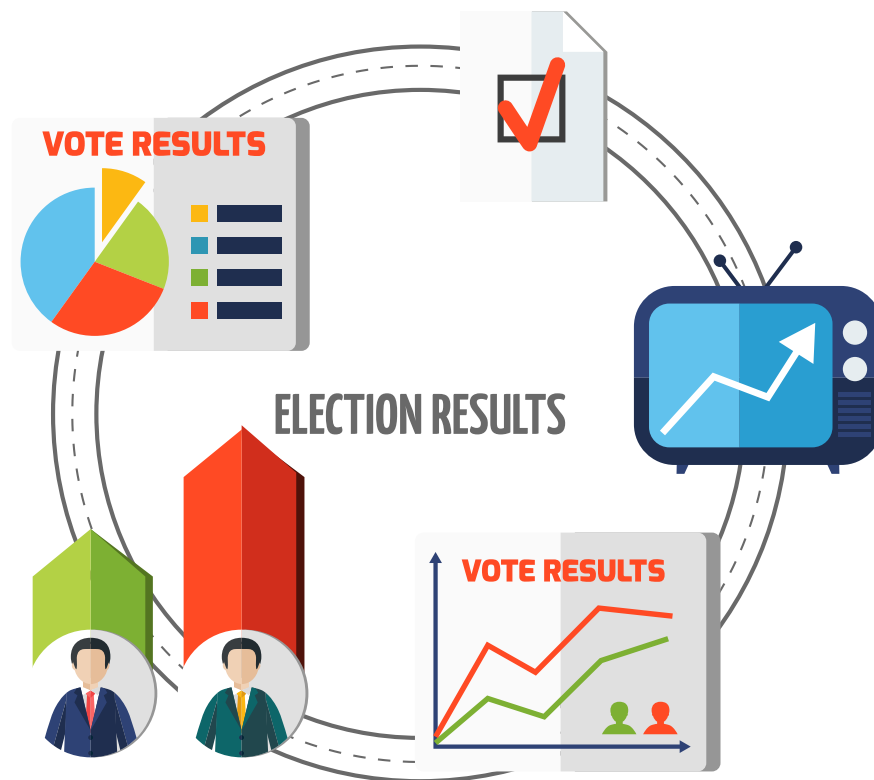
Like many other democratic countries, only the electoral umpire, INEC has the constitutional power to declare a candidate a winner in an election in Nigeria. However, before the final results are announced, election results are usually published online by different platforms monitoring the process. Individuals and followers of political parties also share results via various platforms. Often, these results are conflicting, or worse, false, as we have observed in some cases.

While there is always the urge by platforms and individuals to be the first to break the news, there is a need to pay rapt attention to the data, as wrong reportage of the election results could lead to misinformation/disinformation. And worse, it could upset the political environment, especially when such results differ from the final results announced by the electoral umpire.

The articles in this section, mainly reportage on selected sub-national elections, highlight other significant numbers to pay attention to when reporting election results, in addition to the obvious — the total number of votes polled by a candidate. The first piece provides the important numbers to note from the 2022 Osun state governorship election. It is the same for the section's second, third, and fifth articles. The third article is, however, slightly different. It is a documentation of the Dataphyte election team's observation of the FCT Area Council election, which took place in February 2022. In the fourth piece, we highlight the critical but often neglected role of election observers in ensuring a smooth electoral process.

Primary and secondary data sources were used in this section's articles. Most of the election results data are from INEC, and where they were unavailable, data published by credible organisations/ media platforms were used with sources stated. The third article mostly utilizes primary data collected by our team on the field.

#OsunDecides: 5 Numbers to Note From the Osun Governorship Election

Published on July 21, 2022

Dennis Amata

On July 16, the electorates in Osun State went to the polls. The exercise took the whole day, and the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) announced the final results in the early hours of Sunday, which ended in favour of Senator Ademola Adeleke of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).

Although Gboyega Oyetola, the candidate of the All Progressives Congress (APC) and incumbent governor of the state who came second in the race, has **said** he is still studying the outcome of the election, the people of Osun state have spoken; and the exercise has come to an end.

For us at Dataphyte, we bring the critical numbers of the just concluded guber election, from registered voters to rejected votes.

Number of Registered Voters

The number of registered voters as collated by INEC for the July 16 election was 1.95 million. In 2018, the number of registered voters was 1.68 million. This shows that registered voters increased by 16%.

## Number of registered voters in Osun State 2018 and 2022 Governorship Elections
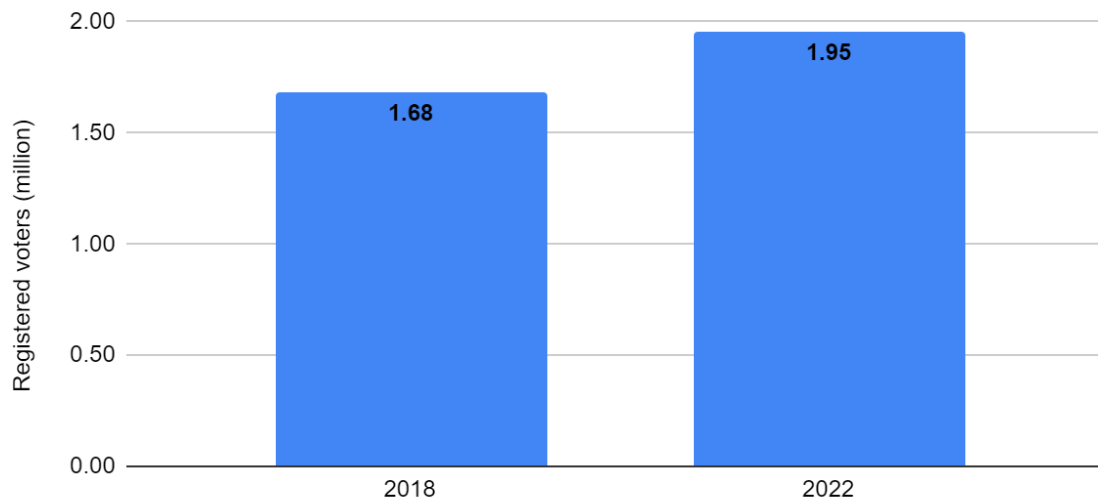
Source: INEC & CDD I Chart: Dataphyte

Number of PVCs Collected

Only 1.52 million registered voters collected their Permanent Voter Card (PVC). This puts the collection rate at 77.8%, an improvement over 2018. In the previous election, the collection rate was 67%.

PVC Collection Rate for Osun 2022 Governorship Election

Uncollected PVC
22.2%

Collected PVC
77.8%
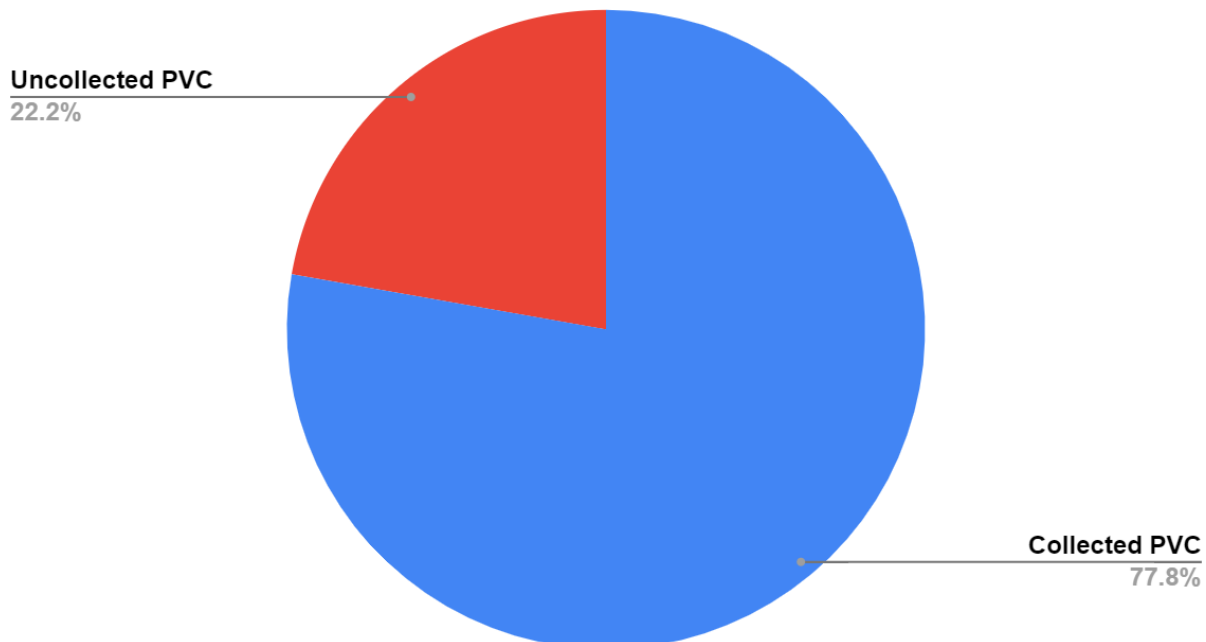
Percentage of Voter Turnout

Only 823,124 of the 1.95 million registered voters in the election eventually voted, putting voter turnout at just 42.16%.

Compared to the 45.74% voter turnout of 2018, the turnout this year is lower not just than in 2018 but in all elections.

Percentage of Voter Turnout in Osun State Governorship Election
The 2022 turnout is the lowest

Year	Turnout
2003	58.63
2014	53.14
2018	45.74
2022	42.16
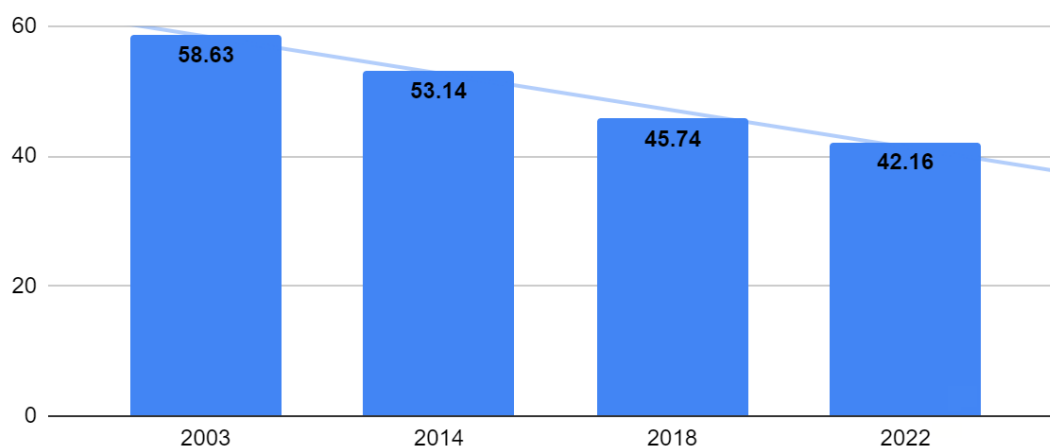
Source: INEC; BBC & CDD I Chart: Dataphyte

4,094 Accredited Voters Didn't Cast their Vote

One of the requirements stated in Section 47(1) of the Electoral Act, 2022 is that voters must present themselves with their voter's card to INEC's presiding officer for accreditation before they cast their votes.

In line with this, 827,218 persons were accredited in the Osun governorship election. But the data released by INEC shows that 4,094 people did not get to cast their votes, as the total vote at the end of Saturday's exercise was 823,124.

Osun Governorship Election: Number of persons accredited Vs those who eventually voted

Accredited Voters	Total Vote Cast	Difference between total vote cast and accredited voters
827,218	823,124	4,094

Table: Dataphyte • Source: INEC • Created with Datawrapper

18,674 Rejected Votes

From the result released by INEC, 823,124 persons voted in the Osun state governorship election. Of this figure, a total of 18,674 votes were rejected.

Number of Valid and Rejected Votes in the Osun State 2022 Governorship Election
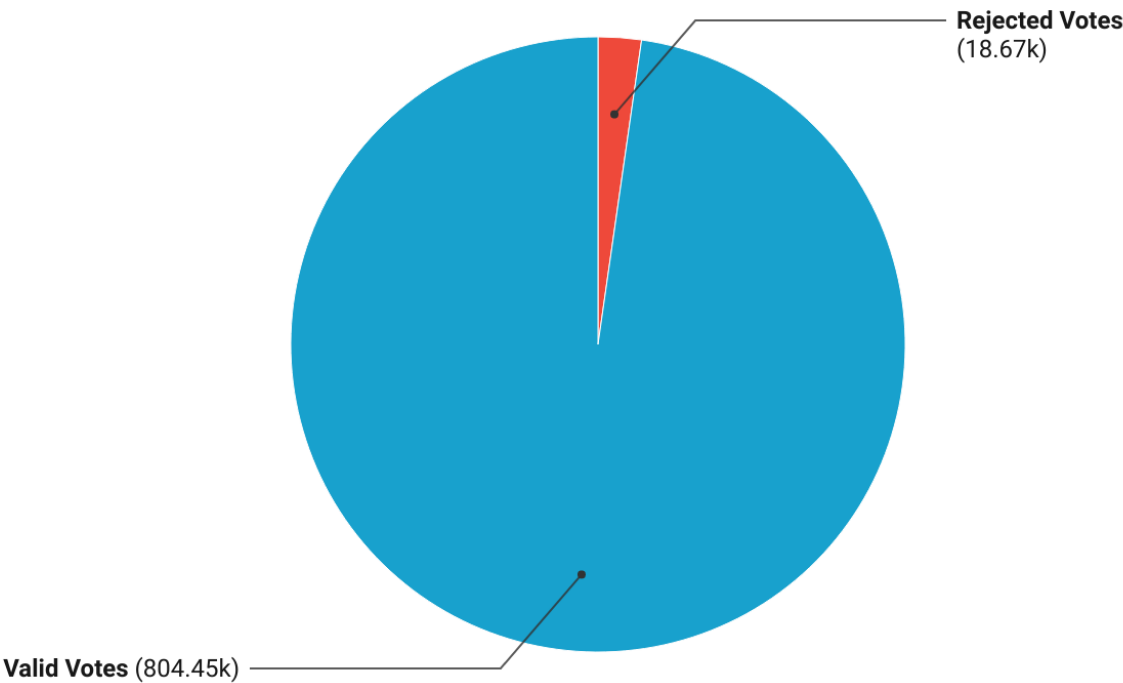

Rejected Votes
(18.67k)

Valid Votes (804.45k)

Chart: Dataphyte • Source: INEC • Created with Datawrapper

Rejected votes account for 2.27% of the votes recorded in the election.

#EkitiDecides: Ekiti Records Only 36.5% Voter Turnout, Lowest since 2003

Published on June 19, 2022

Dennis Amata

Only **360,753** people out of the total **988,923** registered voters came out to vote in the just concluded Ekiti state Governorship election. This represents a meagre 36.5% voter turnout.

Compared to the **2018** guber election, voter turnout in the 2022 election dropped by 7.9%.

A review of the state's governorship elections data from 2003 to date, with the exception of 2007 due to unavailability of the data, shows that the 2022 turnout rate is the lowest the state has ever recorded.

In the **early hours** of today, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) declared Biodun Oyebanji of the All Progressives Congress (APC) winner of the 2022 Ekiti governorship election. He polled a total of **187,057** votes to defeat his closest contender, Segun Oni of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) who polled **82,211** votes. The candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party, Bisi Kolawole got a total of **67,457** votes and came third.

Oyebanji, the winner of the 2022 governorship election, recorded 51.9% of the total votes cast, slightly higher than the percentage of the total votes Kayode Fayemi of the APC secured in 2018 to become the winner.

In the 2018 election, Fayemi polled 197,459 votes which was 51.3% of the 403,451 total votes cast in that election.

PDP got **178,121** votes and came second, while SDP secured only **367 votes**. The reverse is the case in the 2022 elections as SDP came second and PDP came third.

Voter Turnout in Previous Elections

In the 2003 election, only **43.5%** of the total 981,753 registered voters turned out to vote.

In 2014, voter turnout increased to **49.1%**, although the number of registered voters dropped.

The state had a total of **909,585** registered voters in 2018 but recorded only **44.4%** voter turnout.

According to INEC, **988,923** registered voters were expected to participate in the 2022 election.

However, only **360,753** came out to vote, which is 36.5% of the total registered voters.

Percentage of Voter Turnout in Ekiti State Governorship Elections

The 2022 voter turnout is the lowest since 2003. A pointer to the 2023 general elections?
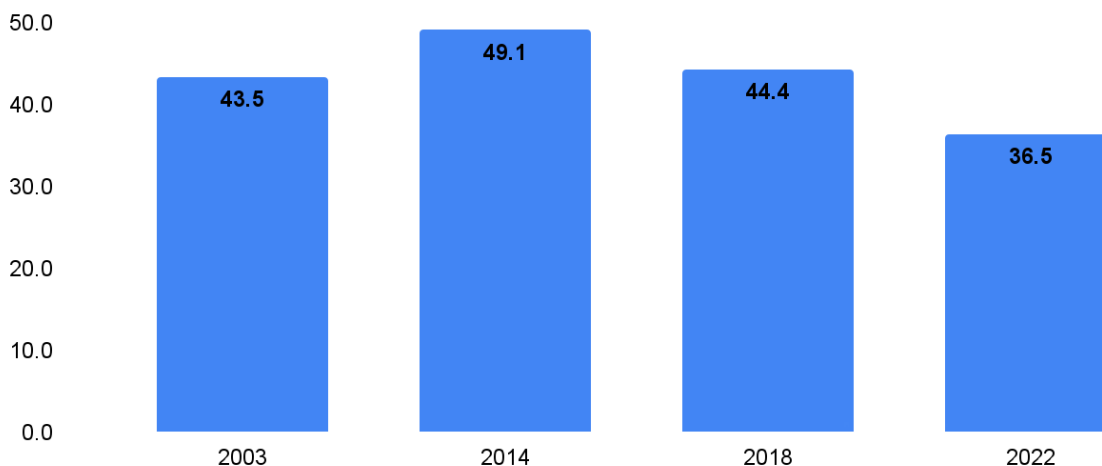
Source: INEC; Dataphyte Research; The Cable; Punch

The good people of Ekiti state have decided and given their mandate to Oyebanji of the APC, however, the voter turnout in yesterday's election leaves room for questions such as this, would the outcome have been different had more people come out to vote?

Many Nigerians on social media have expressed their worries about the turnout rate, noting that it is extremely low especially when compared to previous elections.

Shehu Sani, a former Senator from Kaduna state **said** that the turnout in Ekiti state is below expectations, and noted that if the turnout rate reflects the perception of the whole country, probably towards the 2023 general election, then nothing different has changed.

"With all the hoopla about the surge in PVC demand, the voter turnout in Ekiti is far below expectations. If this reflects the country, nothing much has changed", he said.

Another Twitter user, Oluwole Dada with the handle @oluwole_dada, also **said** that the turnout rate in the Ekiti election is a pointer that the uproar online may not lead to any difference in the anticipated upcoming general elections.

"The turnout of **#EkitiDecides2022** may be a sign that the noise online may not lead to any

significant difference in the 2023 general elections. The voter turnout today doesn't show a significant difference from what we have had in times past", Dada tweeted.

Many other social media users had similar reactions which begs the question, if Nigerians, particularly the youth will turn out to vote in the upcoming general election beyond the "noise" on social media.

This worry might be valid because the Permanent Voters Card (PVC) collection in Ekiti in 2022 is **12.3%** higher than the **667,270** collected in 2018 but this did not translate into higher voter turnout.

On top of efforts to get more Nigerians to register for their PVC, there might be a need to carry these efforts forward into getting Nigerians to actually turn up to vote.

#FCTElections: Outcome Shows Party Desperation & the Level of INEC Unpreparedness Towards 2023

Published on February 14, 2022

Dennis Amata

On Saturday 12th February 2022, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) conducted the Area Council election in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja.

The FCT has 6 Area Councils and elections held in all the areas. Dataphyte visited sixty-one out of 562 PUs and observed the voting process across these polling units in the Area Councils where the elections took place.

Observation of the process raises concerns about INEC's readiness for the 2023 general elections. Voter attitudes towards the elections also indicate some apathy towards getting involved in the electoral process. Parties still engage in vote-buying secure political offices at all costs.

Voter Turnout

The turnout in some of the polling units visited was relatively low and some units recorded zero voter turnout as late as 1pm. A case in point is PU019 at Abuja University Staff Quarters. The unit had only 5 registered voters and the INEC Adhoc staff told Dataphyte's team that none had come out to vote as of 1pm. The same was reported in polling units in Zuba and Kwali. For most of the polling units visited in Federal Housing, Nyanya, there was just the INEC staff as no voter was present by 12 noon.

In the 61 polling units visited by the Dataphyte team, 11 had zero voter turnout as at the time of visit. Commenting on the turnout, the PDP agent at PU038 Karu said that the local government and council elections generally have a low turnout. The number of voters present at the PU at the time of Dataphyte's visit was less than 16% of registered voters.

Challenges Reported

Challenges observed or reported ranged from administrative to technical.

The election which was scheduled to commence by 8 am on Saturday didn't commence as scheduled in most polling units. Out of 61 polling units visited at different Area Councils, INEC staff punctuality to the polling unit was generally poor. YIAGA Africa's **report** on the elections

corroborated this.

Dataphyte observed that INEC officials were present by 8 am at just 7 of all the polling units visited.

In accordance with the election guidelines, the electoral umpires deployed the Biometric Voter Accreditation System (BVAS).

Dataphyte observed and received reports of BVAS malfunction in almost all the polling units visited. What was not clear was if the challenges encountered with the BVAS were only technical or also a problem of expertise, the ability of INEC Adhoc staff to efficiently use the device. According to INEC Adhoc staff, they were properly trained prior to their engagement, thus all issues reported were technical.

Some of the technical issues include the device not recognising voters' fingerprints and facial biometrics and problems accessing the database of registered voters.

In PU100 FHA 1, Nyanya, the INEC staff made calls to complain about the BVAS and was told to dismantle and reassemble the BVAS which still failed to respond after the process.

"We are encountering BVAS challenges here due to malfunctioning BVAS", Al Hassan Shuaibu, a polling unit agent at Sheda Galadima unit at Kwali told Dataphyte. The story was the same at Zuba.

In most of the polling units Dataphyte visited, INEC deployed only one BVAS even though some of the units had a high number of registered voters. YIAGA Africa also noted this in their Midday Situational Statement on the election.

Dataphyte observed that the deployment of one BVAS to polling units with a large number of registered voters slowed down the exercise as noted by some of the voters and party agents who spoke to Dataphyte. This, coupled with the failure/malfunction of the BVAS caused serious delays in the accreditation and voting process.

Electoral Irregularities

The election on Saturday was marred by some irregularities, one of which was vote-buying.

At Kuje ward 01, Central Primary School, some voters alleged cases of vote-buying. Some of the recipients confirmed to Dataphyte that they were given the sum of N500 to vote and mobilize

others to do so.

In one of the polling units visited at Bwari, one of the voters who spoke with Dataphyte recounted that she was approached by a party agent to sell her vote for the sum of N2,000. She however said she rejected the offer.

Also, the use of political thugs was reported during the election. In Kwali, Dataphyte's team were accosted by political thugs.

2023 in View

With 2023 around the corner, off-cycle elections like the FCT elections become a litmus test for INEC's readiness for the general elections in 2023 as well as assessing voters' perception and sentiments towards the upcoming elections.

Though this election is a smaller one compared to the general elections happening less than 13 months away, it provides an opportunity to review performance and ask critical questions on INEC's preparedness as well as design approaches to increase voter participation through civic education.

The BVAS malfunction reported during the FCT elections is not new, this problem was reported in the 2019 general elections and at every off-cycle election since then. It raises questions about how INEC addresses the challenges from previous elections and mitigates those issues to avoid recurrence.

Protection for media personnel against harassment is another important issue that needs to be addressed. In some polling units visited, there was no media presence and the fear of harassment and assault might be some of the reasons for the media's absence.

While INEC has a lot of work to do in preparation to facilitate free and fair elections in 2023, there exists a great need for vigorous citizen sensitization towards ensuring robust voter participation and media as well as CSOs are critical to citizen engagement.

Anambra Guber Poll 2021: Reporting the Reports

Published on November 7, 2021

Ayantola Alayande

As Anambra's 2021 gubernatorial poll draws to a close, a few important but often neglected points about the role of election observers in ensuring a seamless electoral process are worth reflecting on.

According to the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), a total of 18 political parties are currently jostling for the much-coveted governorship seat of one of Nigeria's smallest states by landmass.

Already, the atmosphere leading to the elections has been one characterised by extreme brinkmanship and political distrust – on one hand among the candidates, and on the other, between the federal government and pro-IPOB agitators. There are also concerns that the **heavy presence** of security officials could lead to voter intimidation, high-handedness, and state-sponsored election manipulations.

Yet, in all these, the roles of election observers in ensuring that the electoral process is democratically legitimate are quite crucial. Earlier, INEC had announced that it accredited 72 domestic election observation groups and 5 foreign observation missions to observe the Anambra election. While it is not clear whether all the accredited groups truly mobilised observers to the field, some of the big players in the domestic election observation industry —including the CDD, YIAGA Africa, Civil Society Situation Room, among others— have already issued pre-election reports and 'preliminary' statements on the elections.

Following global conventions, these reports have focused on key areas of pre-election readiness assessment, such as: logistics and transportation of voting materials; voter turnout and voter's conduct at the polling units; election security environment; and noteworthily, INEC's deployment of a new voter's verification tool called the Bimodal Voter Accreditation System (BVAS). Such is the variety of issues election observation groups engage with during elections.

Beyond assessing the overall conduct of elections, such as the fairness of the election management body (EMB) or the accuracy of election results, most observation groups are concerned with an overarching goal of ensuring that elections are conducted according to the highest democratic standards.

This is why election observation often extends beyond actual voting day to weeks or even months of pre-and post-election activities known as "long-term observation", which addresses details of the overall electoral process. Even more than they do their pronouncement on election quality,

observers attach greater importance to their recommendations on elections.

These recommendations are often contained in final observation reports, providing actionable policies for the improvement of Nigeria's electoral process. In the past, recommendations from observers have led to major amendments in Nigeria's electoral laws, such as the introduction of the Parallel Voter's Tabulation Process (PVT) in the counting and collation of results.

While election observation groups try to dissociate themselves from the simplistic idea that their major duty in elections is to detect and deter electoral fraud, much of the conventional conversation around elections in Nigeria rarely spotlight their work beyond fraud deterrence and prevention of election manipulation. Instead, there is a disproportionate focus on what observers have to "say" about overall election results – often reflected in questions like "was the election free and fair?", "is the outcome credible?", and many more.

Interestingly, these perceptions of fraud deterrence and accountability aspects of observers' work is more common among media organisations, who are often interested in headline reporting such as, for instance, "YIAGA Africa says the election was credible". This is especially the case for "off-cycle" elections like Anambra's that tend to gain very focused attention from a wide number of people due to their timing. While not blanketly accusing the entire Nigerian media of misrepresentation, focusing on observers' overall assessment of elections alone, at the expense of other details in the observation reports brings a great risk of misrepresenting election observers.

Already, pockets of headlines on observers' views of the Anambra election have been making the rounds, even before the conclusion of the electoral process. Such constant updates are good, as they point to a well-engaged and vibrant media environment in the country. However, it is important that media outlets pay proportionate attention to both the negative and positive evaluations coming from observers, rather than an undue focus on negative headlines crediting observers with statements on the occurrence of electoral violence and other forms of manipulation.
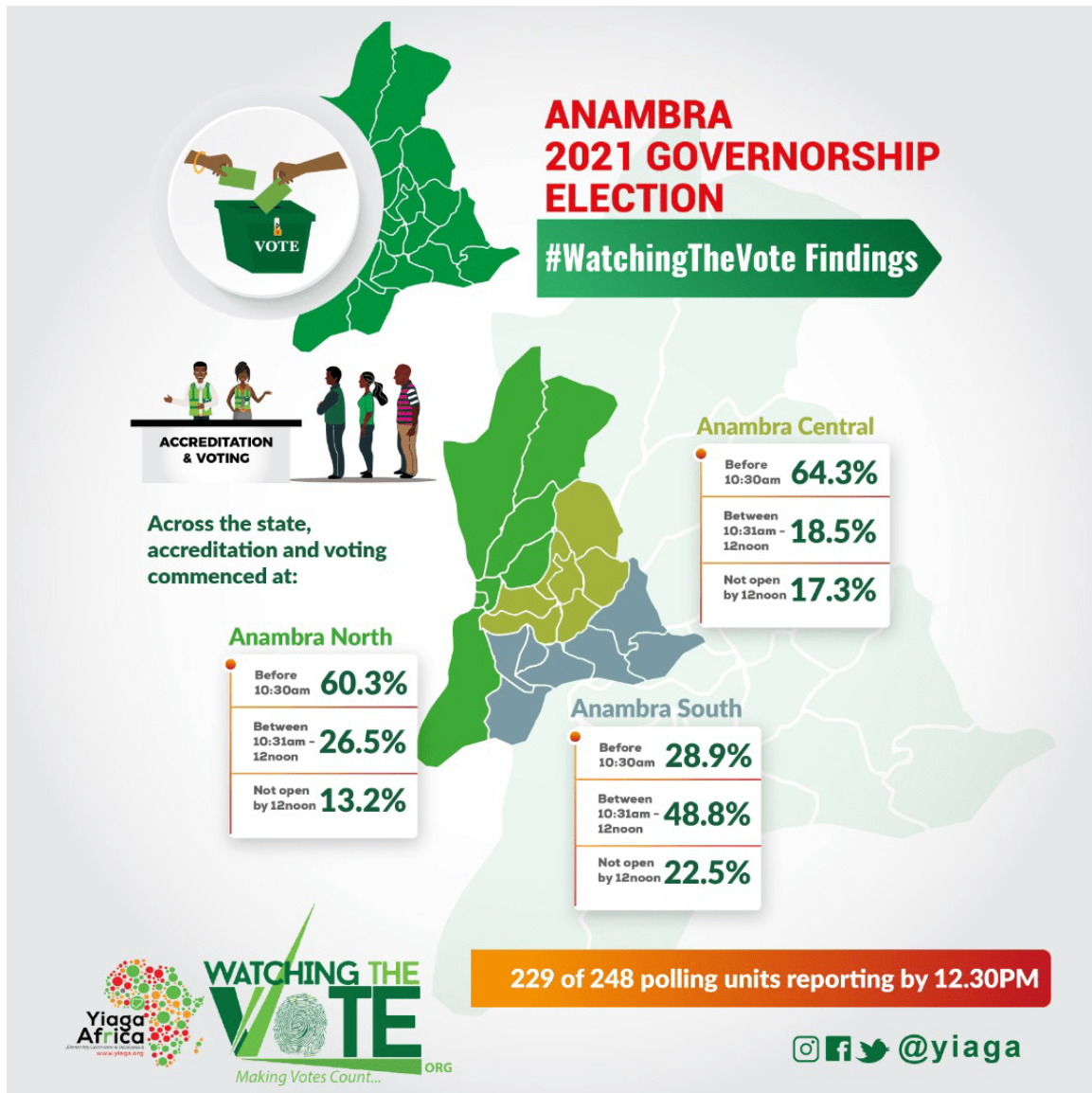
Of course, media houses are not expected to highlight the positive aspects of observers' reports only. Rather, the argument here is that news content must make efforts to show a panoramic view of observers' activities and reflect the thoroughness and sophistication of the reports or preliminary statements. Admittedly, some recent **headlines** about election observers and the Anambra polls are well-balanced.

Over the next couple of days, it is expected that the Nigerian media headlines will be suffused with news about observers' assessment of the Anambra elections, as a way to prove the credibility or otherwise of the electoral process. However, there are a couple of important points for the media and other professionals to bear in mind when reporting on election observers.

First, it is important to note that election observers usually desist from making final verdicts on elections, especially when key parts of the electoral process like collation of results and the PVT are still ongoing. This is one reason observers release what they call "preliminary statements", often with cautionary notes that the statements are not final verdicts of their assessment of the elections. Media outlets and individuals commenting on elections would therefore do well to acknowledge this nuance.
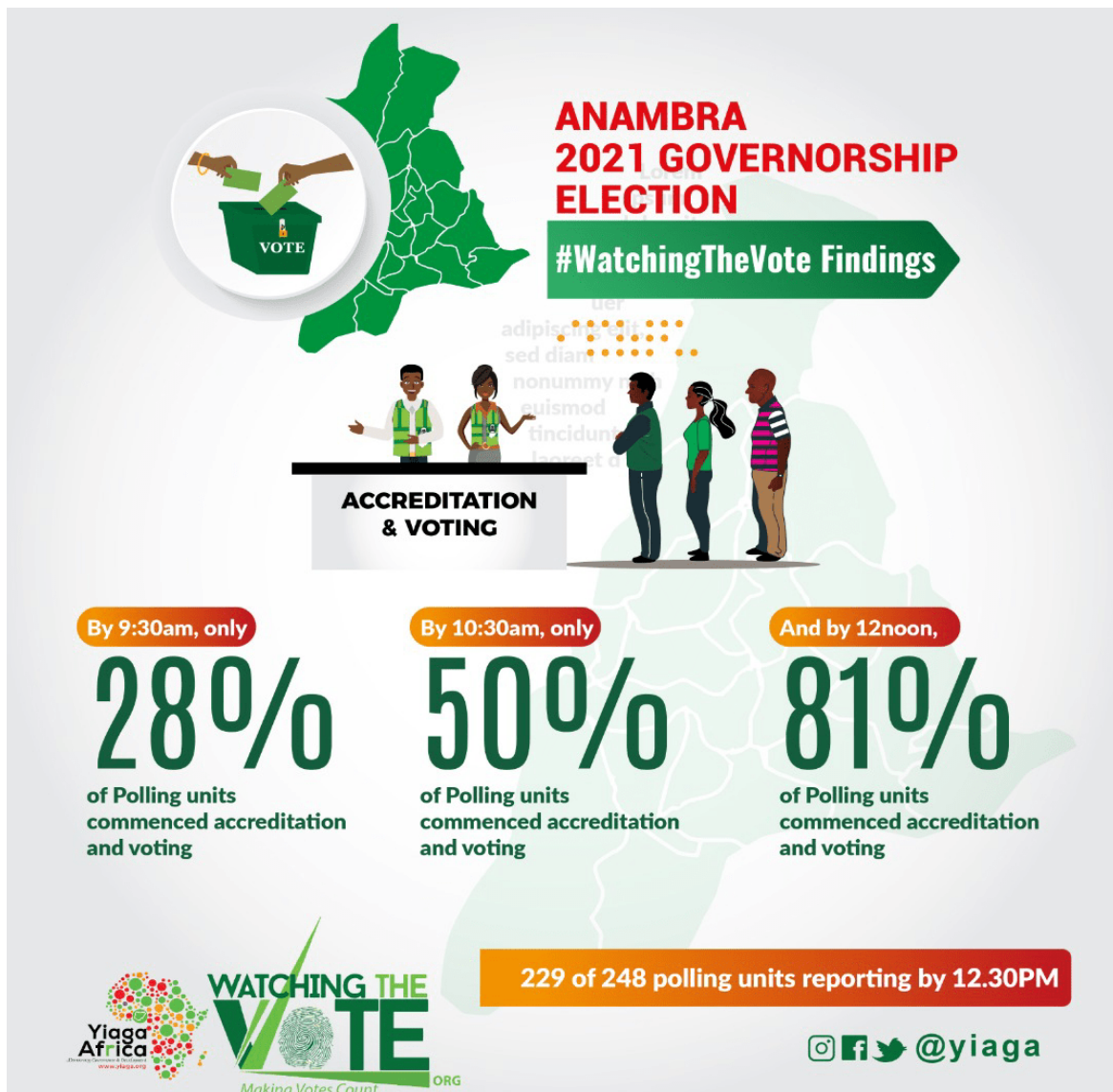
Besides, the media needs to recognise that it is not in election observers' power to make pronouncements on election quality. Understandably, the Nigerian public has historically attributed too much power to election observers, forgetting that election observers' role is simply to provide information for the citizens, not to come to a conclusion on the overall quality of the electoral process.

Globally, conclusions on election results and pronouncements such as "free and fair" or "credible" election outcomes are only within the remit of the election management body (in Nigeria's case— INEC) to make. Even the more seemingly 'powerful' foreign missions such as the EU Election Observation Mission (EU-EOM) and the African Union Election Observation Mission (AU-EOM) are subject to the Independent National Electoral Commission on key aspects of the electoral process, as they are invitees of the government. In relation to this, according to Nigeria's electoral laws, observers do not have any power to intervene in the electoral process; such powers are only vested in election 'monitors' who are part of INEC's election management structure.

Understanding these nuances about the work of observer groups is important if we must report on election observation groups accurately and not misrepresent their views on the Anambra election.

#AnambraDecides: Only 10.38% of Registered Voters Turned Out in Anambra Governorship Election, BVAS, IPOB Strengthen Apathy

Published on February 14, 2022

Dennis Amata

The Anambra electorate has spoken, giving its votes and the highest seat of the land to Charles Soludo, the governorship candidate of the All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA). But what counts as the voice of the people if about 90% of these voices never spoke?

Again, Anambra has recorded low voter turnout in its governorship election. The turnout recorded in the State's gubernatorial election this year may be the worst in the history of governorship elections in Nigeria.

The just concluded election in which Charles Soludo of the APGA emerged the winner saw just 10.38% voter turnout. This is lower than the 21.74% turnout rate the state recorded in its last election; even worse than the 16.33% turnout in the 2010 election.

A review of past elections in the state shows that it has consistently recorded low voter turnout.

Percentage of Voter Turnout in Anambra State Governorship Election (2007-2021)
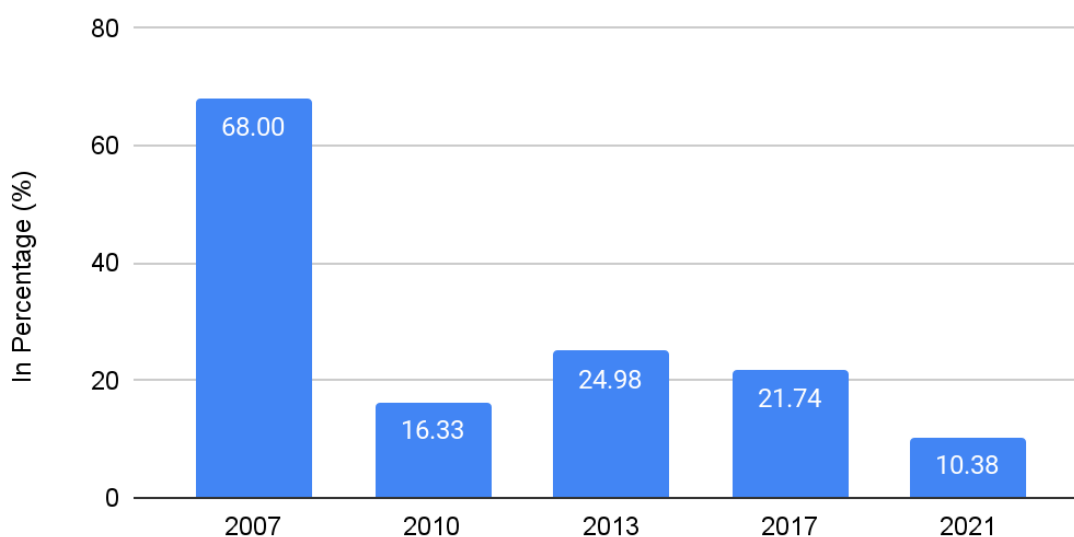
Source: CDD, Premium Times, Channels Television

An analysis of the results from the 21 LGAs in the state show that general voter turnout for the election stands at just 10.38%, which is the worst the state had recorded in its last 3 elections.

The poor turnout in this year's governorship election may have been worsened by a number of factors including, the **late arrival** of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) officials and **poor functionality** of the Bimodal Voter Accreditation System (BVAS) reported in many polling units.

In many of the polling units, there were reports of INEC officials arriving late with the voting materials to commence the exercise. There were also reports of the BVAS malfunctioning. These made INEC **extend** voting time.

Yiaga Africa noted that **these challenges** (late arrival of INEC personnel, poor functionality of the BVAS) stopped many people from voting, despite the extension.

The story was not different in Ihiala Local Government Area (LGA), where a supplementary election was conducted on **Tuesday**. The results of the LGA which was announced in the early hours of Wednesday sealed the victory of the APGA candidate, Charles Soludo.

In Ihiala LGA, a Channels Television **reporter** who was on ground in one of the polling units noted that as late as 12noon, no INEC official had been sighted even though some voters came out as early as 8am to cast their vote.

By LGA, Ogbaru LGA recorded the worst turnout in the 2021 guber election. It had just a 5.19% turnout rate. Idemili North, Onitsha South and Idemili South LGAs followed with a turnout of 5.79%, 5.83% and 5.87% respectively.

Percentage of Voter Turnout in the LGAs in Anambra State in the Last 3 Governorship Elections

Ogbaru, Idemili North, Onitsha South and Idemili South are the 4 LGAs with the lowest voter turnout in this year's election. These LGAs recorded the worst turnouts in the last 2 elections save for Idemili South in 2013.

■ Voter Turnout % (2021) ■ Voter Turnout % (2017) ■ Voter Turnout % (2013)

	Voter Turnout % (2021)	Voter Turnout % (2017)	Voter Turnout % (2013)
Orumba North	33.14	26.04	31.13
Njikoka	17.05	31.87	32.77
Anambra East	14.58	39.14	40.19
Aniocha	14.49	28.25	29.22
Orumba South	14.15	22.86	34.46
Aguta	13.95	22.51	24.17
Dunukofia	13.48	29.13	30.76
Awka South	13.39	22.29	21.43
Oyi	13.04	22.14	28.00
Ayamelum	11.08	39.37	32.48
Nnewi South	10.68	25.52	30.45
Nnewi North	9.73	18.10	26.78
Onitsha North	9.27	9.66	18.82
Anambra West	8.35	25.44	31.55
Ihiala	8.27	23.92	21.70
Ekwusigo	8.23	27.00	29.22

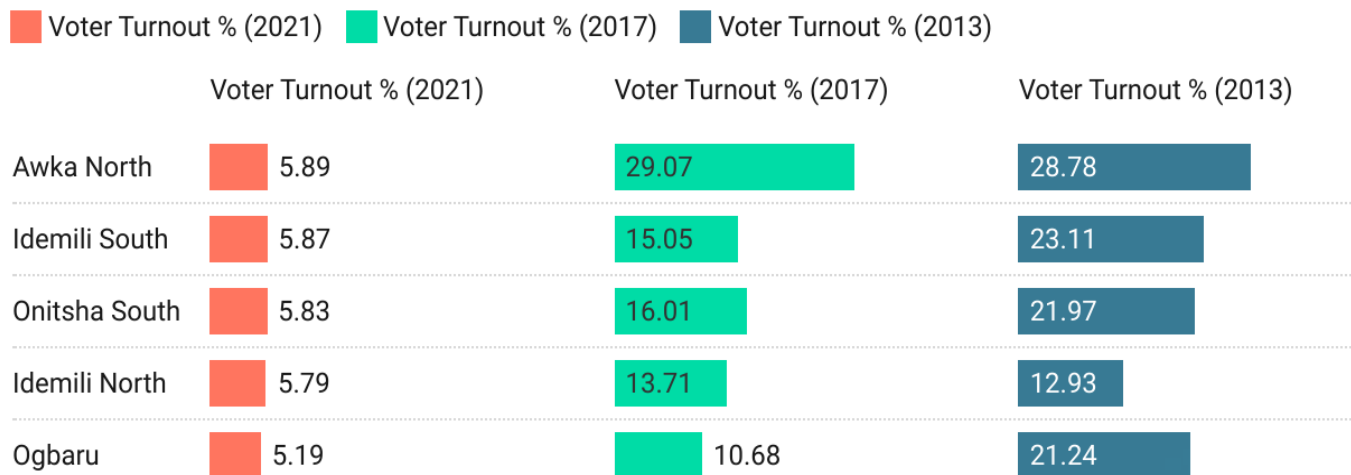|	Voter Turnout % (2021)	Voter Turnout % (2017)	Voter Turnout % (2013)
Awka North	5.89	29.07	28.78
Idemili South	5.87	15.05	23.11
Onitsha South	5.83	16.01	21.97
Idemili North	5.79	13.71	12.93
Ogbaru	5.19	10.68	21.24

Chart: Dataphyte • Source: INEC, Dataphyte Research, Premium Times, Channels Television • Created with Datawrapper

Among the 21 LGAs in Anambra, these four LGAs recorded the worst turnout rate in the state's last two elections, except for Idemili South in the 2013 guber election.

On the other hand, Orumba North LGA recorded the highest turnout (33.14%) in the 2021 election. This is the highest turnout rate the LGA has had since 2013.

Njikoka LGA followed with a turnout of 17.05%, ahead of Anambra East with 14.58% turnout rate. Both LGAs turnout is lower than what they recorded in the 2017 and 2013 elections.

The Supervising Resident Electoral Commissioner (**REC**) in Anambra State, Sam Egwu on his part, attributed the low voter turnout recorded in the election to the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) group.

The REC stated that, "there is a whole state of fear that has been created by the politics of agitation for a separate state in this part of the country. IPOB has been able to enforce the sit-at-home order over time. So the fear of IPOB has become the beginning of wisdom. We have had a problem with extremely low voter turnout. The voter turnout, I think, if you are scientific in terms of what we are seeing in many local governments, you are [actually] dealing with less than 25 percent voter turnout, and this is not really good for our democracy".

Recall that weeks leading to the election, IPOB issued a **6-day** sit-at-home order starting from November 5 in all the states in the South-East region as a way to put pressure on the Federal government to release its leader, Nnamdi Kanu from detention. However, the sit at home order was **called off** days to the elections, just like the previous ones the group issued in the **2017**

[Anambra](#) guber election and [2019](#) general elections.

While the statement by the State's REC may be true, the lack of trust in the electoral process may have also contributed to the low voter turnout witnessed in the election.

According to a [survey](#) conducted by SBM intelligence prior to the Anambra election, 26% of respondents noted that they would not vote in the election because they had lost faith in the electoral process.

The distrust in the electoral process is not peculiar to the people of Anambra, many Nigerians have also expressed distrust in the country's electoral process whether state or general elections.

Regardless of the low voter turnout, Ndi Anambra has decided and given their mandate to Charles Soludo, albeit a [weakened mandate](#), given that he is elected by a mere fraction of the entire voting population.

Going forward, INEC and the government may need to take lessons from the factors that led to the low voter turnout in the just concluded election in the state and do more to ensure higher voter turnout in subsequent elections in the state, and by extension the country's general elections in 2023, as the [bedrock](#) of democracy rests on participation.

Manifestos, political parties, and candidates
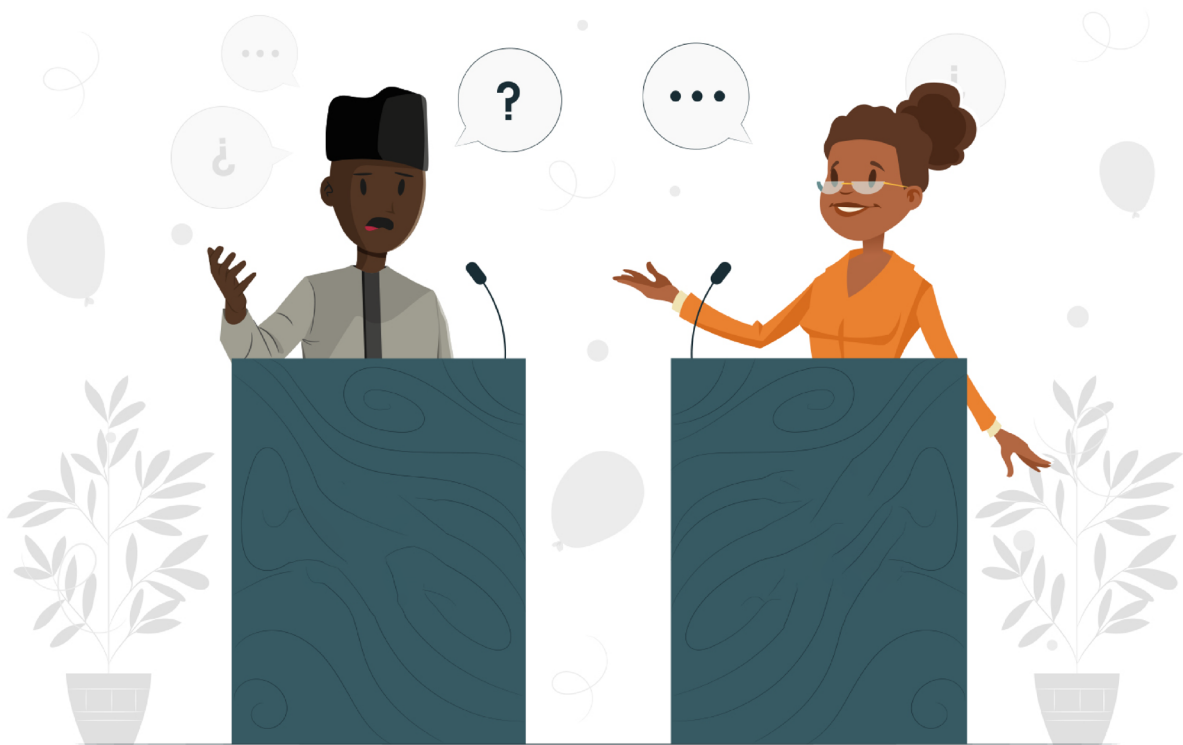
What is the best approach to report on political parties, candidates and their manifestos, in a way that covers both wider 'political' considerations as well as specifics such as party manifesto or agenda documents?

Often, there is no single way to do that. However, this section approaches this by first discussing the more general issues around political parties during elections, including party switching, nominations and campaign financing, and candidates' qualifications (experience, education and achievements). Interestingly, a large part of the data used for the pieces in this first half were drawn from news sources, and very few were from the regular statistical sources such as the World Bank, ACLED or INEC. We were able to aggregate news reports from the websites of reputable news organisations into numbers and charts that are easily comprehensible to the audience. In fact, the 3rd piece "Made in Lagos" (Part 1 in this handbook) is quite unique in this regard, as we used publicly available information about Tinubu, Sanwo-Olu, Osinbajo and MC Oluomo from Wikipedia, ThisDay live, The Africa Report, The ICIR, to construct standard metrics on their qualification, ranking the political figures in order of competence and fit for public governance. A key lesson emerges here for journalists: there is a range of innovative ways to present text sources from reputable news websites in a quantifiable or numerical manner.

The last two pieces examine the official manifesto documents of the four leading political parties for the 2023 presidential elections. In a quite comparative style, we pitched the parties against each other in groups of two (Part 1 and 2), juxtaposing the promises of the LP with the PDP, and the APC with the NNPP across 5 key metrics: insecurity, economy, education, unemployment, poverty. We also discuss each metric in the context of Nigeria's current performance on those metrics, analysing data from Nigeria Security Tracker, the World Bank, the NBS and the Budget Office.

What are the Legal Restraints Against Political Defections in Nigeria?

Published on April 22, 2022

Khadijat Kareem

From 2015 to date, at least 40 persons have defected from one political party to another, ranging from members of the national assembly, senators, past governors, and current state governors.

Political defection is the change of party allegiance from a party where a person (politician) belonged to another political party, political defections are usually out of self-interest. Reasons for political defections have been attributed to political interest, the pursuit of political ambition, internal party division, lack of transparency in party processes, lack of political ideology, and political agenda.

Ever since democracy kickstarted in Nigeria, democracy has faced a series of problems, from conflicts between parties to illiteracy, and corruption. Political defections are one of the challenges to effective democracy and a functional political system in Nigeria.

The first known and recognized political defection in Nigeria was in 1951 when members of the National Council for Nigeria and Cameroon (NCNC) defected and joined the Action group(AG) in order to deny Nnamdi Azikwe the power of the majority making Obafemi Awolowo become the premier of the western region. Other major defections have also taken place in the course of democracy in Nigeria.

An avalanche of defections has hit the Nigerian political system in the last decade, mostly movements between the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and the All Progressives Congress (APC) which are the two major parties in Nigeria.

The 2013 political crisis which occurred in PDP launched an avalanche of political defections in the past decade in Nigeria when 37 house of representative members defected from the PDP to the APC. This left PDP with 171 members from 208 members, and leaving APC with 174 members up from 137 members.

Defections in the Last Decade in Nigeria

Names	Old Party	New Party
Atiku Abubakar	PDP	ACN
	ACN	APC
	APC	PDP
Godswill Akpabio	PDP	APC
Rotimi Amaechi	PDP	APC
Musa Kwankwaso	PDP	APC
	APC	PDP
Murtala Nyako	PDP	APC
Aliyu Wamakko	PDP	APC
Abdulfatah Ahmed	PDP	APC
	APC	PDP
Aminu Tambuwal	PDP	APC
	APC	PDP
Samuel Ortom	APC	PDP
Godwin Obaseki	APC	PDP
David Umahi	PDP	APC
Ben Ayade	PDP	APC
Gbenga Daniel	PDP	APC
Bala Ngilari	PDP	APC
Grace Ben	PDP	APC
Elisha Ishaku Abbo	PDP	APC
Abdulazeez Nyako	APC	ADC
	ADC	APC
Iyiola Omisore	SDP	APC
Barnabas Gemade	PDP	SDP
Isa Hamma Misau	PDP	APC
Yakubu Dogara	PDP	APC
Dimeji Bankole	PDP	APC
Azuburike Ihejirika	PDP	APC
Ephraim Nwuzi	PDP	APC
Rochas Okorocha	PDP	APC
Hope Uzodinma	APC	PDP
Orji Uzor Kalu	PDP	APC

Table: Dataphyte • Source: This day, Vanguard • Created with Datawrapper

The majority of candidates move from one party to another in order to secure tickets or when they feel injustices have been done to them in their political parties. A typical scenario is that of Atiku Abubakar who defected to ACN from the PDP before the 2011 election, then in order to secure the presidential ticket in 2015, he defected from the ACN to the APC and back to PDP ahead of the 2019 election. Atiku Abubakar lost in these elections to Goodluck Jonathan, and Muhammadu Buhari twice.

Another instance of politicians leaving their parties to secure tickets to political seats is in the case of Samuel Ortom and Godwin Obaseki who both were under the APC during their first terms as governors of Benue and Edo states respectively but defected to the PDP in order to secure the ticket for the governorship position which extended their tenures as governors of their respective states.

Defections have also had a number of deterrents over the past decade. One of such is the case of the Ebonyi state governor David Umahi and his deputy, Kelechi Igwe, and 15 lawmakers who defected from the People's Democratic Party to the All Progressives Congress and were sacked after the Federal High court, Abuja made a judgement on March 8th, 2022, which declared that votes during any elections in Nigeria belonged to political parties and not the candidates.

Another example is that of the governor of Rivers State, Ben Ayade who defected from the PDP in 2021. The suit is currently in court and awaiting judgement.

The legitimacy of political defections in Nigeria is drawn from the Fundamental Human Right which is in section 40(6) of the Nigerian constitution. This section states that "Every person is entitled to assemble freely and associate with other persons, and in particular he may form or belong to any political party, trade union and association in the protection of his interests"

However, there are situations where defection is illegal even though the right to freedom of association still holds true. Section 68 (1) (g) of the Nigerian constitution makes party defection grounds for removal for members of the national assembly. This section states that A member shall vacate his seat "being a person whose election to the house was sponsored by a political party, he becomes a member of another political party before the expiration of the period for which that House was elected; provided that his membership of the latter political party is not as a result of a division in the political party of which he was previously a member or of a merger of two or more political parties or factions by one of which he was previously sponsored ".

However, this section only addresses members of the national assembly and is silent on all other elective positions.

The 2010 Electoral Act also attempts to forestall political defections with some of its provisions, but it has not been very successful in reducing the indiscriminate abandonment of one party for another by politicians. Attempts to introduce bills on the floor of the National Assembly to curtail defections have also been unsuccessful.

Mr Ariyo-Dare Atoye, executive director for Adopt a Goal for Development and co-convener for the Centre of Liberty, defined defection as an unthoughtful process and a distraction to democracy. Mr Atoye regarded the judgement of David Umahi and Kelechi Igwe; the governor and deputy governor of Ebonyi State by the federal high court as a noble and good judgement, stating that political parties are recognized as the custodian of votes and INEC issues the certificate of return with the candidate's name and the party he or she belongs to when elected. He also countered the claims of those against the judgement who are claiming that defection is not contained in the constitution and the constitution cannot protect what is outside the constitution.

Mr Atoye told Dataphyte that defection should be stopped so as to strengthen democracy, "Democracy in Nigeria needs to be strengthened by returning sanity to the system that has been bastardised by politicians".

As the 2023 general elections approach, there is bound to be even more drama around defections. It is to be seen whether the deterrent set by the courts in the case of David Umahi and Kelechi Igwe will have an effect on potential defectors and bring some much-needed decorum to party politics and by extension the country's democracy.

Parading Millions: Expensive Party Nomination Forms and Nigeria's 2023 Elections

Published on April 23, 2022

Ayantola Alayande

As political parties gear up for the nomination of their candidates ahead of the 2023 general elections, nearly all National Executive Committees (NEC) have begun **releasing** scheduled timetables for their respective party primaries, including detailed information on the election of delegates, aspirants' screening process, and the cost of nomination forms. An important part of the process that has **captured** the attention of many Nigerians is the exorbitant prices of the nomination forms for the two biggest political parties — the All Progressives Congress (APC) and the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).

Exorbitant Prices

On Wednesday, 20th of April, the APC **announced** that its presidential nomination form would go for a total of N100 million, while the governorship forms would be sold for N50 million. For the legislative offices category, nomination forms for the Senate goes for N20 million, while that of the House of Representatives and the State House of Assembly are pegged at N10 million and N2 million, respectively.
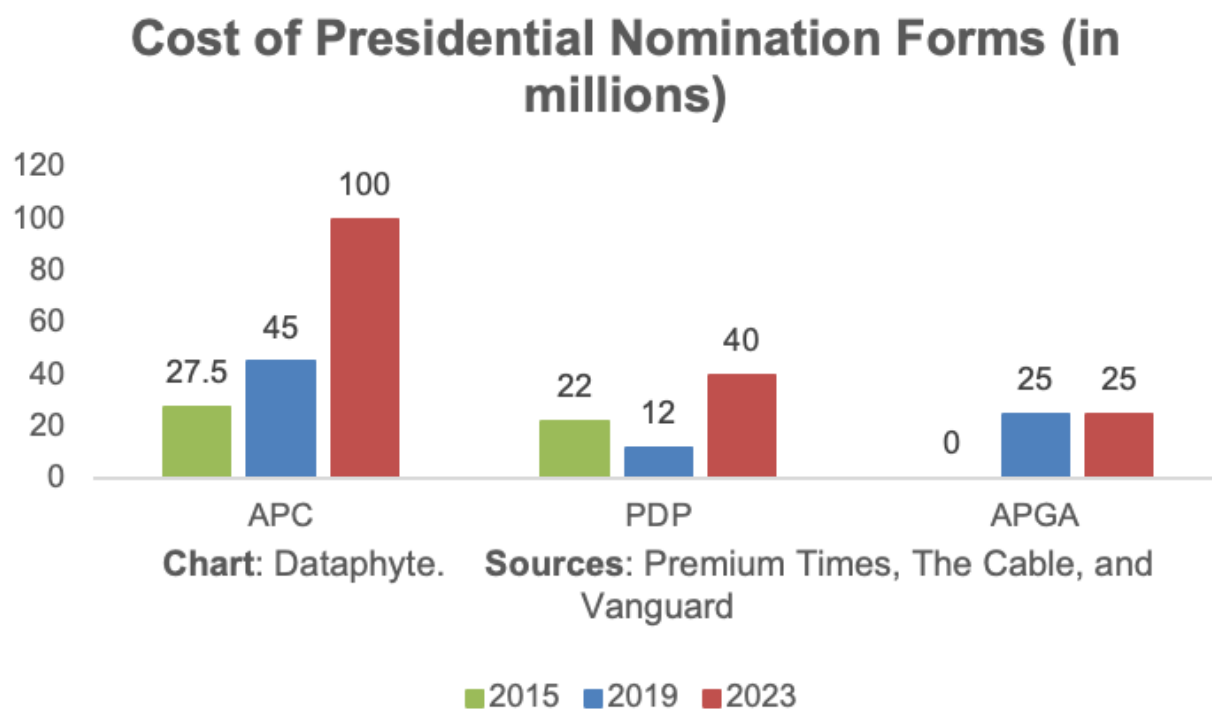
This fashion of jacking up the prices of party nomination forms is not exclusive to the APC. Just about a month ago, the PDP **announced** that its presidential nomination and expression of interest forms would both cost a total of N40 million, while the bid for the governorship would go for N21 million per candidate. For the parliamentary positions, aspirants will pick up the forms for the Senate at the cost of N3.5 million, the House of Representatives at N2.5 million, and the State House of Assembly at N600, 000. Similarly, in late March, the All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA) stated that the **nomination and expression of interest** forms would cost its presidential aspirants a total of N25 million, while that of the governorship would go for N15 million. For the Senate, House of Representatives, and the State House of Assembly, both forms would be sold for a total of N10 million, N7million, and N2.5 million respectively.
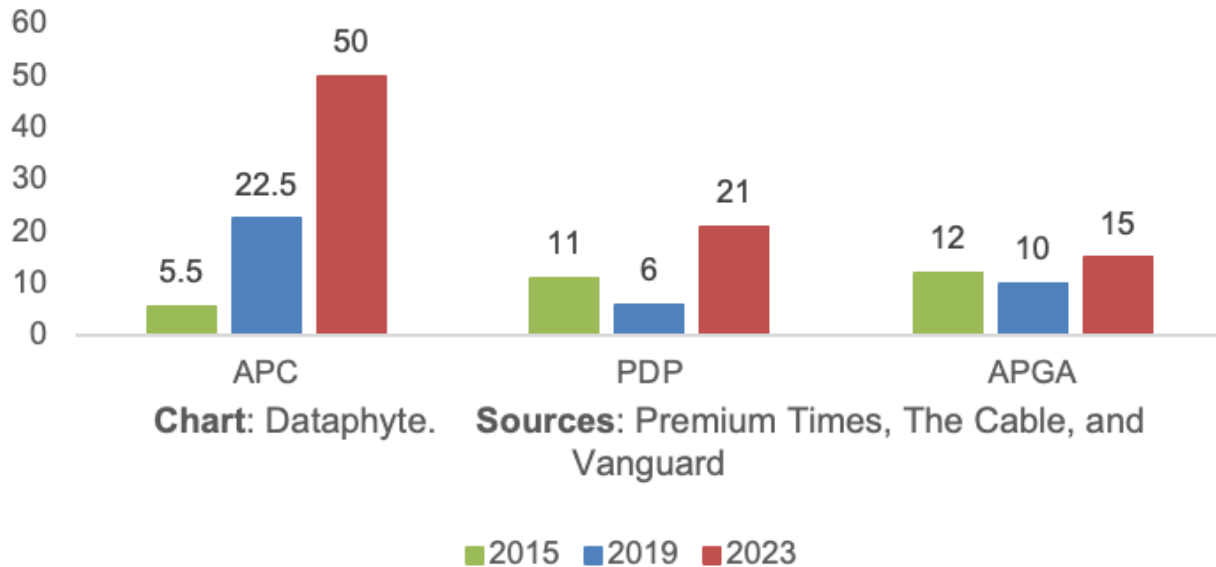
Continuous Increase

What is most concerning about these prices is not just that they are exorbitant, but that they have also increased in every new election cycle. For instance, in the 2015 presidential election

which brought in President Muhammadu Buhari (PMB), the then newly formed APC sold its **presidential nomination forms** for N27 million. At the time, PMB expressed concerns about such an enormous amount, **stating that**: "it's a pity I couldn't influence this amount to be put down…but I felt heavily sorry for myself…N27 million is a big sum". Yet, in the subsequent 2019 presidential election wherein he was the sole aspirant for the APC, the nomination and expression of interest forms were **sold for a total of N45 million** — a 66.7% increase in the price he purchased the forms in the previous elections.
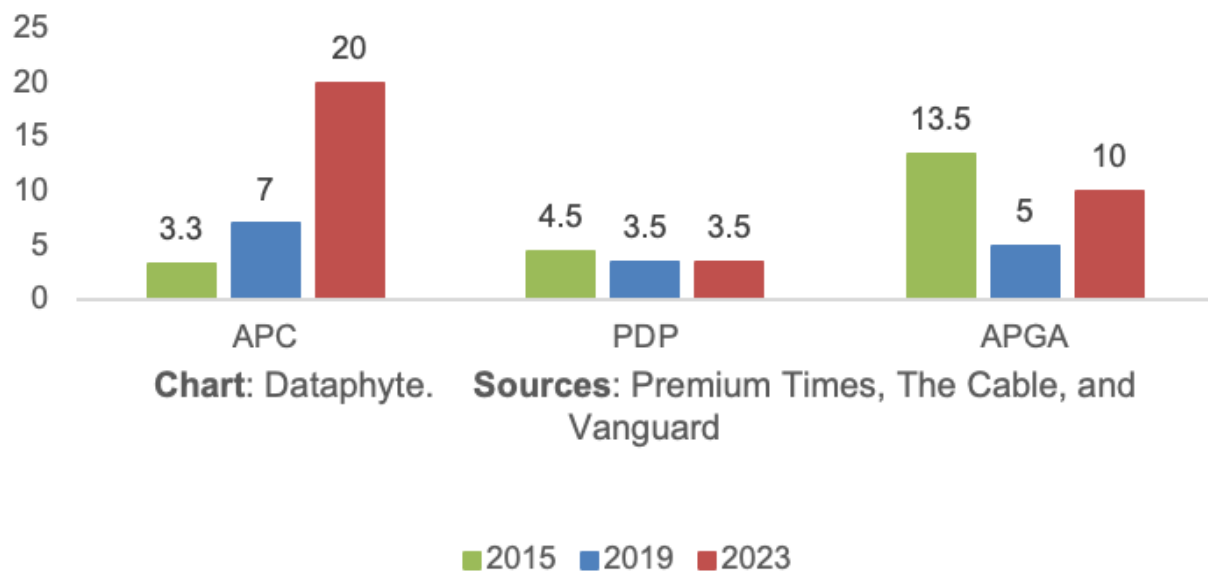
Such an upward mark in the cost of nomination forms every election cycle is universal across parties. For example, the PDP increased the cost of its presidential nomination forms from **N12 million in 2019** to N40 million for the 2023 elections — a significant 233% increase. Although the party claimed to have lowered the cost of the forms for the 2019 elections, perhaps to encourage more aspirants; nevertheless, a comparison of the difference in prices between the 2015 and 2023 election cycle shows an 81% increase in the prices of the nomination forms. However, the cost of APGA's presidential nomination forms remained the same for the 2019 and the 2023 elections, although it witnessed a significant increase in prices for the governorship and senatorial positions.

Cost of Presidential Nomination Forms (in millions)

Chart: Dataphyte.   **Sources**: Premium Times, The Cable, and Vanguard

2015   2019   2023

Cost of Governorship Nomination Forms (in millions)

Chart: Dataphyte. **Sources**: Premium Times, The Cable, and Vanguard

■2015 ■2019 ■2023

APC: 5.5 (2015), 22.5 (2019), 50 (2023)
PDP: 11 (2015), 6 (2019), 21 (2023)
APGA: 12 (2015), 10 (2019), 15 (2023)

Cost of Senate Nomination Forms (in millions)

Chart: Dataphyte. **Sources**: Premium Times, The Cable, and Vanguard

■2015 ■2019 ■2023

APC: 3.3 (2015), 7 (2019), 20 (2023)
PDP: 4.5 (2015), 3.5 (2019), 3.5 (2023)
APGA: 13.5 (2015), 5 (2019), 10 (2023)

Cost of Nomination forms (in millions) for Elected Positions in the APC, APGA and the PDP, 2015-2023

Position	Party	2015	2019	2023
Presidential	APC	27.5	45.0	100.0
	PDP	22.0	12.0	40.0
	APGA	*	25.0	25.0
Governorship				
	APC	5.5	22.5	50.0
	PDP	11.0	6.0	21.0
	APGA	12.0	10.0	15.0
Senate				
	APC	3.3	7.0	20.0
	PDP	4.5	3.5	3.5
	APGA	13.5	5.0	10.0
House of Representatives				
	APC	2.2	3.9	10.0
	PDP	2.5	1.5	2.5
	APGA	2.5	2.5	7.0
State House of Assembly				
	APC	0.55	0.85	2.00
	PDP	1.2	0.6	0.6
	APGA	1.2	1.0	2.5

Table: Dataphyte • Created with Datawrapper

The charts above show that, from 2015 to the 2023 general elections, the cost of APC's presidential nomination forms has gone up by over 300%, while the cost of the governorship nomination forms has gone up by about 800%, senate forms by 506%, and the House of Representatives and the House of Assembly by 354.5% and 263.6%, respectively — by far the highest among all 3 parties examined.

Nomination Forms and Campaign Financing

While political parties may attempt to justify the costs of nomination forms on the grounds that the monies help to finance party expenses in the general elections, the unbridled increase in these costs over the last 8 years of Nigeria's democracy should warrant stricter laws on campaign financing.

Yet, rather than a downward review of campaign spending limits for elective positions and ensuring a stricter compliance from political parties, earlier this year, the National Assembly (NASS), in the new Electoral Act, **increased** the campaign spending limits for the presidential positions from N1 billion to N5 billion. It also increased the limit for governorship campaigns to N1 billion, from the initial N200 million. This over 5-fold increase in campaign financing limit was equally applied to the Senate, House of Representatives, and State House of Assembly positions. Likewise, the lawmakers also increased the maximum amount of donation an individual candidate could receive, from N1 million to N50 million.

How do campaign spending limits of Nigeria compare to other countries? While the campaign spending limit for Member of Parliament (MP) candidates in the United Kingdom **is set at £8,700** (approximately $11,334) per candidate, Nigerians vying for seats in the Senate and the House of Representatives are allowed to spend up to $239,645 (N100 million) and $167,751 (N70 million), respectively. Of course, one could argue the difference in political systems between the two countries; nevertheless, such a huge difference is probably indefensible for a country with over 90 million poor people.

Flouting Electoral Act

Furthermore, apart from the indiscriminate increase in campaign spending limits, perhaps a more important issue is the lack of implementation of the electoral laws on campaign financing. For instance, before its amendment, **section 93** the Electoral Act (now **section 89 [3]**) stipulates that every political party must, within three months of the conduct of elections, submit an audited report of the party's electoral expenses to INEC. While the intent here is to monitor political

parties' spending to ensure that such is within limits, parties have constantly flouted this law without repercussion.

Only 4 out of the 73 political parties that participated in the 2019 general elections **submitted** a report of their financial expenses to INEC within six months after the elections. Nothing more could be taken as a prima facie evidence of poor compliance monitoring on the part of INEC. Yet, during the 2019 elections, political parties such as the APC raked in about **N6.9 billion** from the sale of nomination forms alone.

Widening Political Exclusion

As the country prepares for the 2023 general elections, it is imperative to consider that such a huge cost of nomination forms could widen political exclusion. Already, research has established that high costs of electioneering is one factor that significantly limits the political participation of **women** and **youth** in Nigeria — considering that these two groups are also the **most unemployed** or underemployed population of the country.

At a time when youth and women are disproportionately underrepresented in Nigerian politics, increasing the cost of nomination forms amounts to double jeopardy of financial burden and political exclusion for them. Although some political parties such as the APC and the PDP have announced a **payment exemption** for women and a **50% reduction** in the cost of nomination forms for the youth, such costs are only a tiny proportion of other financial costs candidates have to bear in Nigeria's hugely monetized electoral process.

Perhaps, it is time to turn on a strong advocacy on responsible election financing, advancing what was achieved with the Not Too Young to Run Bill for the youth and what is hoped with the Special Seats Bill for women.

Made in Lagos: Star Boy, State Boy, Street Boy and Tinubu's other Lifebuoys (Part 1)

Published on May 7, 2022

Data Dive

Wizkid's 2020 album, Made in Lagos, could be his most successful collection yet. The 14-track album produced by Star Boy Entertainment, his flagship record label, hit the top of the charts in many countries on many counts.

Within a year of its release, the album hit 1 billion streams-322 million streams on Apple Music, 229 million streams on Spotify, 227 million streams on YouTube, over 140 million streams on Audiomack, and over 40 million streams on Boomplay and 20.1 million streams on Pandora."
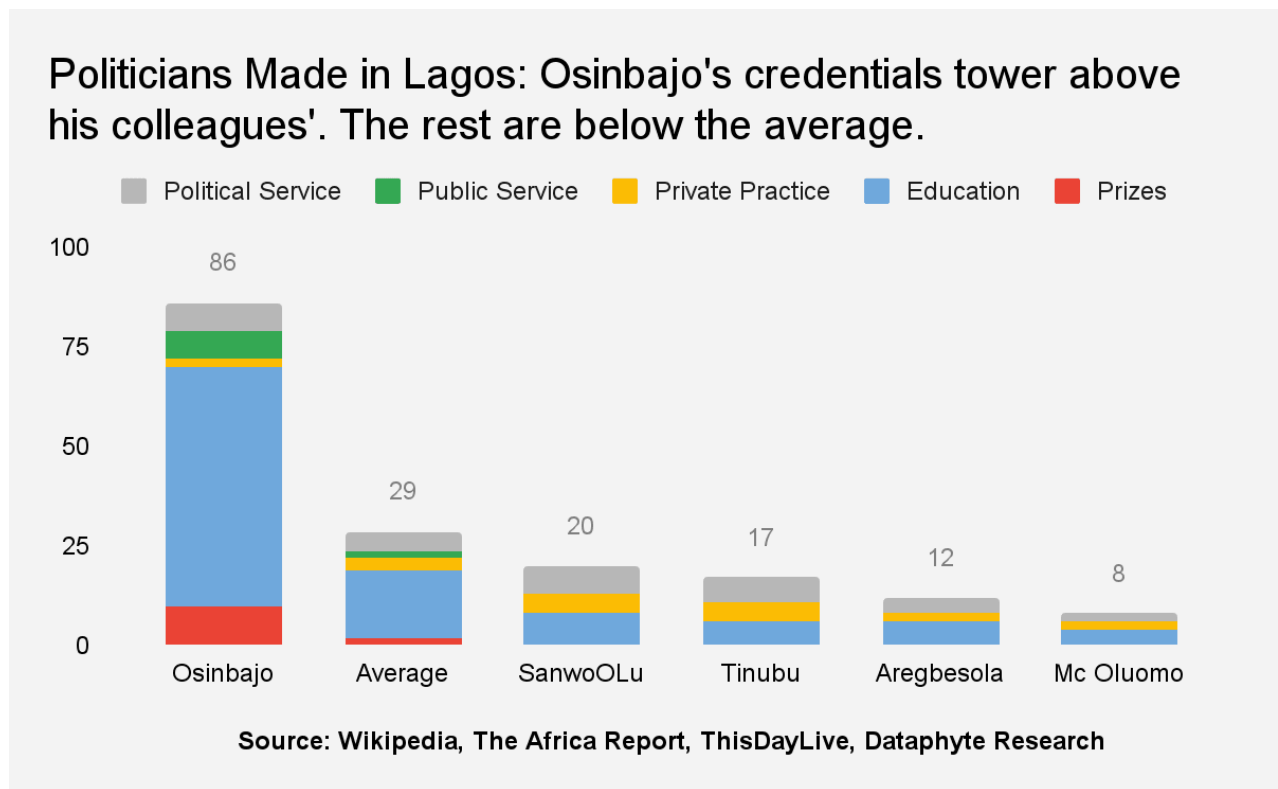
Made in Lagos, his fourth triennial, got him 2 Grammy nominations and facilitated a sold-out concert at the 02 Arena in London. Of equal essence are the sumptuous monetary rewards that have transformed the quintessential Wizkid into a Big Wiz.

The Vice President, Yemi Osinbajo, has been nicknamed Star Boy and Wizkid by many admirers. And like the musical Wiz, his star appears to shine too with dazzling lights.

The Oba of Benin, Omo N'Oba Ewuare II, while receiving the Vice President, Yemi Osinbajo, expressed his views on his guest's shining credentials among other 2023 presidential aspirants:

"No doubt, your credentials, since you have come out to run for this great office, I think you are going to give a lot of problems to all the other contestants.

"There is no gainsaying that they all probably are shivering where they are because your credentials, calmness, humility and great respect for culture and being a true man of God, are frightening."

Politicians Made in Lagos: Osinbajo's credentials tower above his colleagues'. The rest are below the average.

Legend: Political Service, Public Service, Private Practice, Education, Prizes

Osinbajo 86, Average 29, SanwoOLu 20, Tinubu 17, Aregbesola 12, Mc Oluomo 8

Source: Wikipedia, The Africa Report, ThisDayLive, Dataphyte Research

Like Wizkid, many shining stars in Nigeria's national politics today were made in Lagos. And a good number of them apprenticed under Senator Bola Ahmed Tinubu (BAT), the erstwhile governor of Lagos State.

But in Ojuelegba, his 2014 single, Wizkid muses on his humble beginnings with Mo' Dogg's Studio, and his charmed "can't explain" journey to fortune and fame.

The challenge, however, is that some of the Made in Lagos politicians want to move on to bigger things than what the Tinubu fortune machinery could offer. They crave the freedom to fly as high

as their unclipped wings could reach.

These ambitious lot just want to be like Star Boy, whose emancipation to international stardom came after he left Banky W's Empire Mates Entertainment (EME), where he had recorded his first two hit albums, 'Superstar' in 2009, and 'Ayo (Joy)' in 2014.

Sadly, they are being told that is not the way it is in politics, especially in South-Western Nigeria, where you were not allowed to rise to greater prominence or to command a higher influence in the same terrain than your political godfather.

From Raji Fashola to Akinnwunmi Ambode, from Yemi Osinbajo to Rauf Aregbesola, and from Jide Sanwoolu to Musiliu Akinsanya, many of these Old Boys from the Foremost Political Academy of Lagos have been labelled and mislabeled as daring and disloyal, traitors and ingrates, or lickspittle and loyal to their Godfather, Bola Ahmed Tinubu, the State Man of Lagos politics.

Of course, these ambitious politicians have their different stage names too-Star Boy, Stray Boy, State Boy, and the notable Street Boy, who could be the godfather's lifebuoy through the uncertain currents of Nigeria's political waters.

How then do these Made in Lagos politicians fare on their own political charts? Have they also evolved bigger than the State Man of Lagos politics who discovered them?

Assuming each of these 'Made in Lagos' politicians got their next private, public or political positions based on some form of merit in their previous position(s), who among them has a track record that's typical of the Made in Lagos Wizkid?

And who can bring so much goodwill to Nigeria from all over the world as the musical Star Boy has done?

Again, just as Wiz outgrew the space in the mother nests of the likes of Mo Dogg and the nurturing shadows of EME, which among these Made in Lagos politicians ought to move on beyond the Tinubu nest to more challenging heights?

Osinbajo on the Charts

If competitive prizes and recognitions from credible institutions speak of merit and sterling character at all, among the 5 Made in Lagos Politicians in this sample, Professor Yemi Osinbajo has the most prizes in his kitty.

Prizes and Awards

Weight	Prizes	Osinbajo	Aregbesola	Sanwoolu	MC Oluomo	Tinubu
1	Academic	The School Prize for English Oratory, 1972				
		Adeoba Prize for English Oratory 1972–1975				
		Elias Prize for Best Performance in History (WASC) 1973				
		School Prize for Literature (HSC), 1975				
1	Professional	Graham-Douglas Prize for Commercial Law				
1	State	State Merit Award 1971				
2	Federal	Grand Commander of the Order of the Niger (GCON)				
2	International	African Statesman Intercollegiate Best Speaker's Prize, 1974				
	Total Weight	10	0	0	0	0

Source: Wikipedia, Dataphyte Research

Dataphyte

@dataphyte   @dataphyteng

Like Wiz, Yemi Osinbanjo's own musical career too was made in Lagos. He started his lyrical journey in the gospel genre with hits like Your name is Yahweh, among others. But he has since shifted to R&B.

The Vice President made a comeback in his music career with a big wiz R&B performance at the 2022 UBA's Group Chairman's Forum, with an acapella cover of Ruger's "Dior". Nigeria's hip hop Vice President wove the lyric into the mic, voicing "Badman looking good in Dior."

However, the artistic criticism of his last R&B outing hinted that the professor could do better with a studio album, gifted backup vocals, and musical accompaniments, than going acapella and solo live on stage.

Besides, his extra-musical career in academia was also made in Lagos. He attended primary, secondary, and tertiary schools in the coastal city. He went on to teach Law at the age of 24 at the University of Lagos, rising through the ranks to become a Professor of Law at the prestigious institution.

Likewise, his political career was made in Lagos. He was appointed the Attorney General of Lagos State and Commissioner for Justice in 1999 by the former Governor of Lagos State, Bola Ahmed Tinubu.

Though he's still struggling to record a hit song or album, the multi-talented Star Boy has made hits in other sectors. Below is one of Professor Yemi Osinbajo's other sterling performances on the charts.

Education

Weight	Education	Osinbajo	Aregbesola	Sanwoolu	MC Oluomo	Tinubu
1	Primary	1	1	1	1	1
2	Secondary	2	2	2	2	2
3	Bachelors	3	3	3		3
4	Masters	4				
5	Doctorate	5				
1	Chapters contributed to Books (12)	12				
1	Articles in Academic Journals (13)	13				
1	Books published (15)	15				
1	Professional Memberships (5)	5		2	1	
	Total Weight	60	6	8	4	6

Source: Wikipedia, Dataphyte Research

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A similar review of Osinbajo-led judiciary reforms while he served as the Commissioner for Justice and Attorney General of Lagos State, contained in a report by the Centre for Public Impact reads:

"Immediately after his election in late 1999, the state governor, Bola Ahmed Tinubu, created a justice policy committee to review the entire legal system.

"The head of this committee, Professor Yemi Osinbajo, commissioned a widely publicised study that showed the judicial system to be suffering from rampant corruption and severe backlogs … As soon as he was appointed attorney general of Lagos in June 1999, Osinbajo started reforming the entire judiciary."

The objectives of the reforms, as they related to commercial cases, were to:

- Reduce the backlog of cases in the High Court.

- Extend the accessibility of the legal system to the wider population.

- Reduce the average delays and duration of commercial cases before the civil courts.

Almost all the reforms were carried out between 1999 and 2005. The principal reforms were:

- In 2000, as part of the Access to Justice Programme, five free Citizen Mediation Centres were opened in Lagos "as an alternative dispute resolution mechanism".

- "On 22 May 2001, the Lagos Judicial Services Commission appointed 26 judges from diverse backgrounds to the High Court, bringing the number of judges to 50 and reducing the average age of judges from 55 to 44."

- A rules committee was formed to oversee the court rules. From April 2002 to early 2003, the committee met at least weekly to review the existing rules.

- In January 2005, the Court Automation Information System (CAIS) went live and began to assign cases randomly to judges, and to calculate court fees automatically. This system helped to reduce the case backlog and the court delays."

Considering Osinbajo's impactful and widely reported tenure as Lagos State's Attorney General, it seems that his life-long experience as a public servant, both at national and international institutions, may have contributed to his relative successes while serving as a political appointee within the country's state and federal bureaucracies.

Civil Service

Weight	Public Service	Osinbajo	Aregbesola	Sanwoolu	MC Oluomo	Tinubu
1	National	NYSC - Legal Officer with Bendel Development and Planning Authority (BDPA)	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
1		Lecturer UNILAG				
1		Senior Lecturer, University of Lagos				
1		Professor, University of Lagos				
1		Senior Lecturer, Lagos State University				
1	International	Staff Member, United Nations Operations in Somalia, Justice Division, UNOSOM II.	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
1		Member, United Nations Secretary General's Committee of Experts on Conduct and Discipline of UN, Peacekeeping Personnel around the globe, Member, 2006				
	Total Weight	7	0	0	0	0

Source: Wikipedia, Dataphyte Research

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However, it is interesting to note that none of the other 4 'Made in Lagos' Politicians in this sample has a civil service experience, except the Vice President.

Many see the 2023 Presidential elections as the bout to either upturn or maintain Professor Yemi Osinbanjo's lead among his colleagues from Senator Bola Tinubu's political dynasty in Lagos.

Yet, while Mr Osinbajo, popularly known as Star Boy, leads the current crop of Made in Lagos politicians, in terms of his attainment to the office of the Vice President, it is worthy of note that there's another kid on the block in the person of Musiliu Akinsanya, popularly known as MC Oluomo.

2023: Peter Obi's Forte, Bola Tinubu's Fourth and Atiku Abubakar's Send-off? (Part 1)

Published on June 13, 2022

Data Dive

Peter Obi
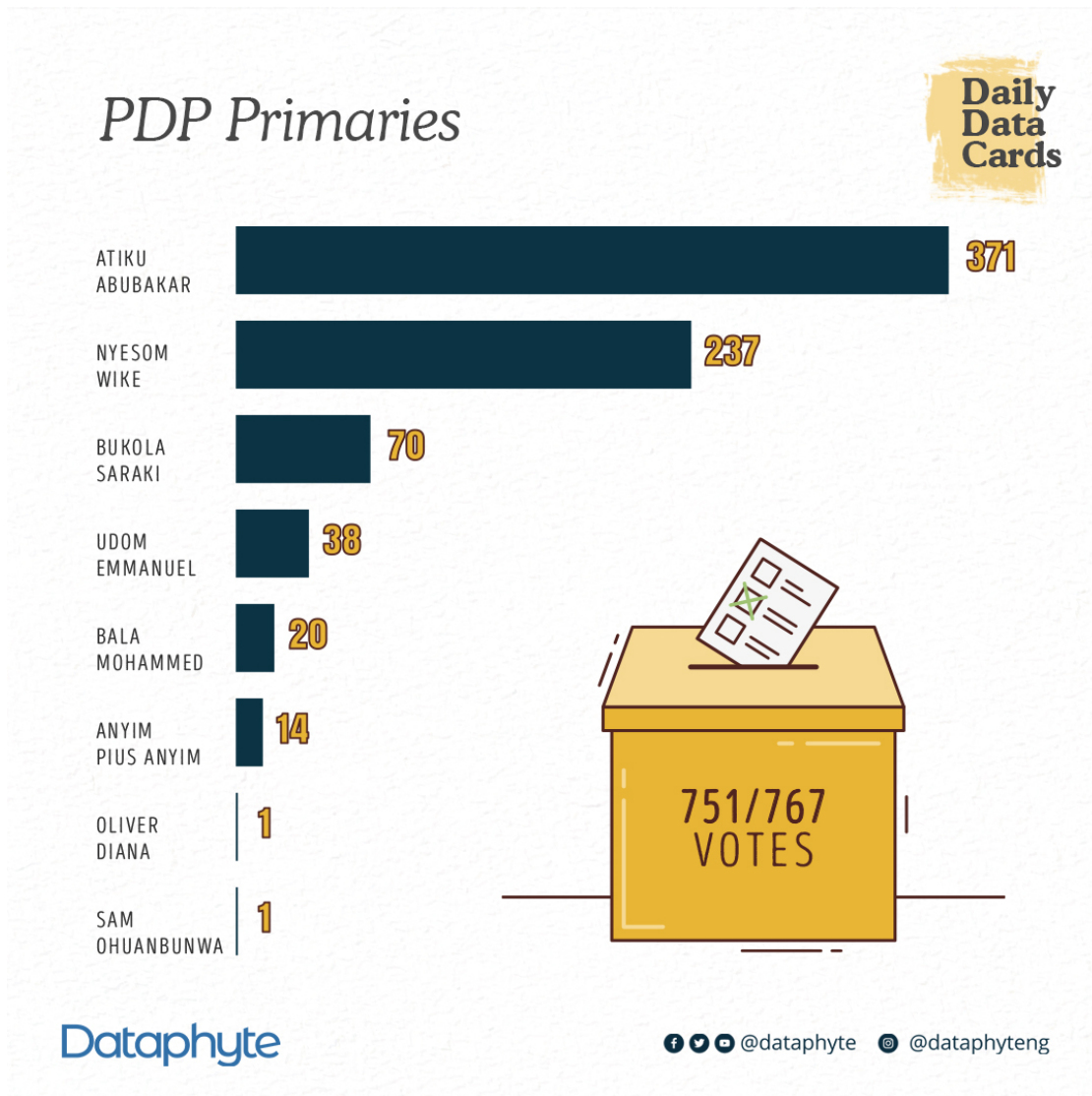Labour Party

Bola Tinubu
All Progressives Congress

Atiku Abubakar
People's Democratic Party

The 2023 election is a decisive moment for Nigeria, given the nation's sensitive fiscal, security and economic conditions. But far beyond that, the election is a defining moment for each of the three leading candidates of perhaps the three most visible parties.

With the victory of former Lagos State Governor and candidate of the All Progressives Congress (APC), Bola Ahmed Tinubu, all is now set for what's possibly a three-man show-down in next year's election. Tinubu won the election by a landslide after beating the likes of Vice President Yemi Osinbajo, former Minister of Transportation, Rotimi Amaechi, and the Senate President, Ahmad Lawan.

Tinubu polled a total of 1,271 votes – more than four times the votes scored by his closest rival, Rotimi Amaechi, who had 316 votes. Osinbajo, Lawan, and Governor Yahaya Bello of Kogi State came far behind with 235, 152, and 47 votes respectively. More than 2,300 delegates voted in the drama-filled contest that produced the former governor of Lagos as the presidential flag bearer of the ruling party.

He is now scheduled to face the Peoples Democratic Party's Atiku Abubakar, Labour Party's Peter Obi, and other candidates from other parties, in the February 25 presidential ballot.

Atiku had emerged candidate at the PDP presidential primary held penultimate week after polling 371 votes to defeat the Governor of Rivers State, Nyesom Wike, who scored 237 votes. Other aspirants with the number of votes polled include Bukola Saraki – 70; Sam Ohuanbunwa – 1; Anyim Pius Anyim – 14; Udom Emmanuel – 38 votes; Bala Mohammed – 20.

Obi, on his part, was declared Obi winner and presidential candidate of the Labour Party for the 2023 general election having polled a total of 96 votes out of the 97 valid votes with one invalid vote. He joined the party after defecting from the PDP.

Now what do the numbers say about the candidates and their chances?

Fixing an Ailing Economy: Obi's Forte

With an election campaign premised on messages designed around "Route to take Nigeria from consumption to production", Peter Obi's campaign is expectedly resonating with Nigeria's middle class and urban-dwelling, digitally compliant younger generation. The reasons are not far-fetched: Nigeria's major economic indicators are quite grim.

Nigeria's Gross Domestic Product grew by 3.11 per cent in the first quarter of 2022, according to the National Bureau of Statistics. Although the NBS said the economy showed "…a sustained positive growth for six consecutive quarters since the recession witnessed in 2020," the growth was still quite insignificant in the context of Nigeria's economic potential. Take, for instance, GDP performances under the various leaders Nigeria has had since 1999.

Data from the World Bank showed that Olusegun Obasanjo, Nigeria's first democratically elected president since the return to democracy in 1999, grew the economy by 0.58% in his first year of presidency. But in 2022, he recorded his highest rate of a whopping 15.33% growth! By the end of his tenure in 2007, Obasanjo's presidency averaged a GDP growth rate of 6.95%.

GDP (current US$) - Nigeria

World Bank national accounts data, and OECD National Accounts data files.

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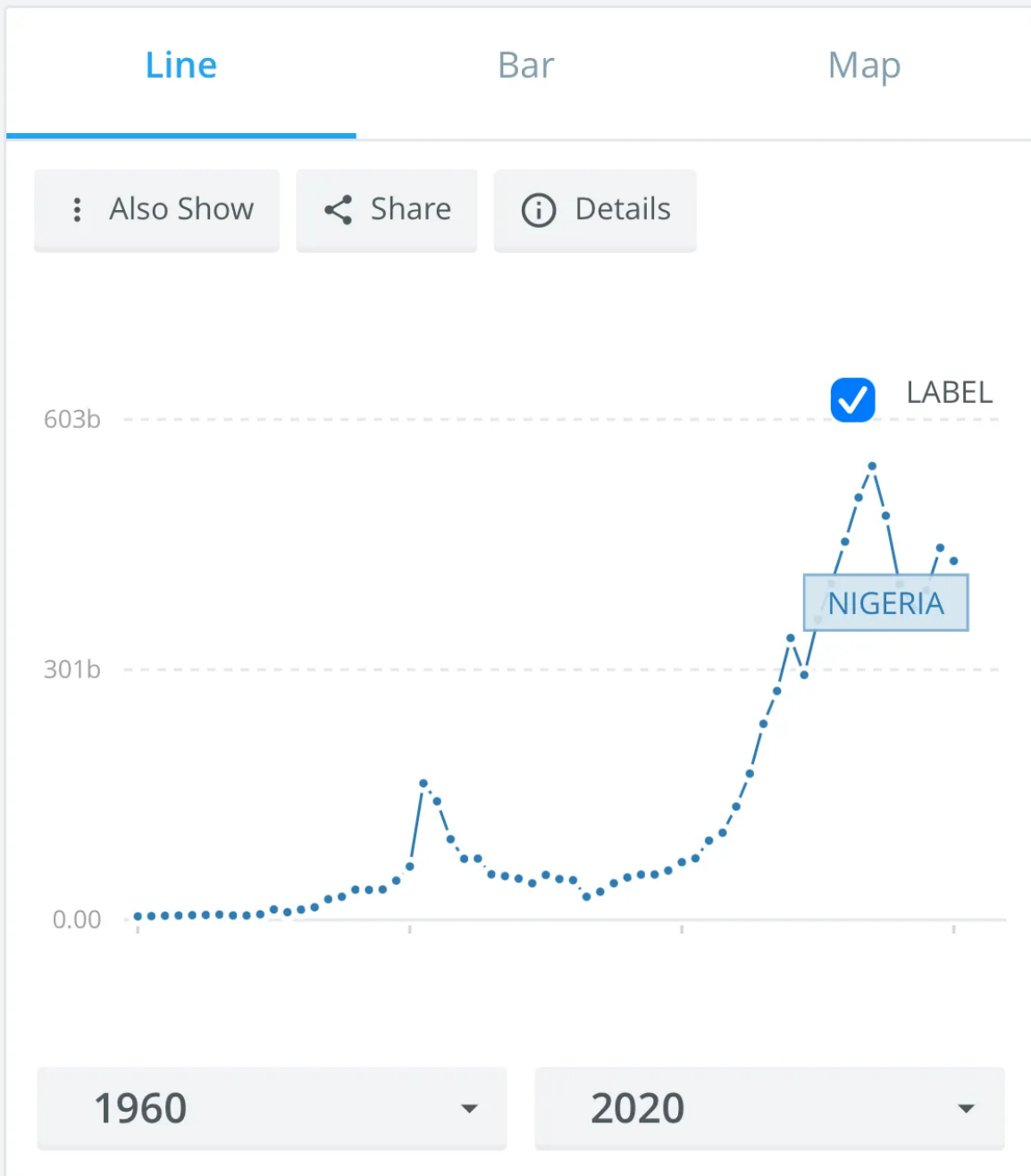
As president for three years (2007-2010), Umaru Yar'Adua who succeeded Obasanjo grew the economy from 6.59 to 8.01 per cent. Both men's economic success have been attributed to steady rise in oil prices. But the argument falls flat on its face given that Yar'adua successor, Goodluck Jonathan, earned more from oil and couldn't sustain the tempo of economic growth.

According to the World Bank data, despite earning a whopping N51 trillion from petroleum resources (per data crunched from Petroleum Inspectorate, NNPC, CBN Annual Report and Statement of Account, Nigeria Bureau of Statistics and the Nigeria Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative, NEITI between 2010 and 2015, Jonathan grew the economy by a meagre 2.65 per cent. On the flipside, both Messrs Obasanjo and Yar'adua earned N27 trillion and N9 trillion from crude oil, respectively.

Meanwhile, President Buhari's tenure has seen the nation record a miserly 0.41 per cent in growth rate.

Battered Economy

Now, in addition to the poor GDP numbers, a combination of grim economic realities has pushed many Nigerians to the wall. Hence, what resonates with them are talks around fiscal frugality, productivity and economic re-engineering.

Interestingly, Peter Obi has mastered this art of speaking to the numbers, rolling out statistics to paint a gloomy picture of a dangerous slide down to economic abyss if unchecked. Relying on personal anecdotes and his records as Anambra State governor for eight years up until 2014, Mr Obi has masterfully warmed his ways into the hearts of Nigerians, especially the younger generations who dominate political discourse on Twitter.

With rising inflation (16.82% in April 2022, according to NBS), high unemployment rate (33% as of 2020), skyrocketed food prices (18% food inflation in April 2022), battered currency (N415 and N610 to $1 in the 'regular' and black markets, respectively) and poor GDP per capita (around $2,097.09 in 2020, according to World Bank), all of which affect political reality and choices, Mr Obi is easily the most sellable candidate among the trio on Nigeria's social media platforms, especially Twitter.

Sellable Candidate; Weak Structure?

The downside, many observers have noted, is the relative obscurity of the Labour Party in Nigeria. To conveniently win a presidential election in Nigeria, beyond a candidate's personal charisma and alliance formations across political divides, there is the place of party structures across Nigeria.

There are 774 local government areas (LGAs), with each LGA further subdivided into a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 20 wards. A potential winner of the general election MUST have presence in at least 80% of these wards across the country.

In the 2019 general election, LP presidential candidate, Muhammed Usman Zaki, polled a miserably low 5,074 votes, representing 0.02 per cent of the entire votes. He came a distant 30th!

In 2015, the situation was even quite worse as the party's National Executive Council members, after months of denial, failed to present a presidential candidate and unanimously endorsed the then incumbent president Goodluck Jonathan.

Yet, LP's filthy baggage aside, if the 2023 elections are a verdict on acceptability based on economic ideas, especially on social media, Mr Obi is the candidate to beat: economic analysis layered with personal anecdotes remains his forte.

The big question remains: how far can Obi's LP and his army of independent volunteers go in penetrating the nooks and crannies of the country to sell their candidate?

11 Key Things to Note in Osinbajo's Declaration Speech

Published on April 11, 2022

Dennis Amata

After months of speculation, Vice President Yemi Osinbajo finally **declared** his intention to run for the office of the President in the 2023 general elections.

Mr Osinbajo made his intention public in a 6 minutes 56 seconds **video** posted on his official social media platforms this morning.

"I am today, with utmost humility, formally declaring my intention to run for the office of the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria on the platform of the All Progressives Congress", he said.

He then highlighted the functions he has performed in his capacity as the Vice President for the past 7 years as well as the numerous places he has visited.

He stated that he has interacted with people from different sectors — technology entrepreneurs, those in the entertainment industries, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) owners, Nigeria's gallant troops, and displaced persons, among others.

According to him, his experiences, insights, and opportunities would be put to use for the country and its great people.

Dataphyte has compiled some key areas that the Vice President noted he will focus on if given the opportunity to lead.

Security and Intelligence

First, he mentioned that he will "radically transform the security and intelligence architecture". Considering the current state of insecurity in the country, more than ever, the issue of security is paramount to Nigerians, and the Vice President has highlighted this in his speech. Last year, Nkasi Wodu, a peacebuilding practitioner noted that Nigeria's security forces are ill-equipped to tackle the frequent clashes between non-state actors. In recent times there have been a lot of concerns from citizens about the increasing insecurity in the country, ranging from terrorism to armed banditry, kidnapping for ransom, and random violent attacks across the country. So, it remains to be seen what different approach Vice President Osinbajo will take to end the numerous crises

that have worsened in the last 7 years of President Buhari and his principal's administration.

Justice Reform

The Vice President also spoke on "completing the reform of the justice system and focusing on adequate remuneration and welfare of judicial personnel, and [also] ensuring that there is justice for all and there is the observance of rule of law". In 2020, while speaking at a webinar, the Vice President **advocated** for new reforms in the judicial process, particularly as it pertains to the appointment of judges to the Bench. There have also been calls to **separate** the office of the Attorney General from that of the Minister of Justice. It is probable that this consideration resurfaces under Osinbajo's judicial reforms.

Infrastructure

Thirdly, Osinbajo mentioned his plans for the country's infrastructure. According to him, he will rapidly advance infrastructure development, especially power, roads, railways, and broadband connectivity. Last year at the Glasgow COP 26 high-level side event on improving global infrastructure, President Buhari stated that Nigeria needs **$1.5 trillion** to fix the infrastructure gap over the next ten years.

Poverty Alleviation

Interestingly, the Vice President also mentioned that he will complete the promise of lifting 100 million Nigerians out of **poverty** within a decade. This is an often touted promise by his principal, President Muhammadu Buhari, yet, exacerbated by the Covid19 crisis, double-digit inflation, and the collapse in oil prices, poverty levels in Nigeria have risen in the last 2 years of President Buhari's administration. The World Bank estimates that the number of poor persons in Nigeria will rise to 95.1 million this year.

Tech Economy

Mr Osinbajo also stated that his administration will create a tech economy that will provide jobs for millions of young Nigerians. Currently, the tech sector is booming in Nigeria, with Lagos ranked as **Africa's leading tech hub**, and the ICT sector being the **fastest** growing in Nigeria — constituting the second-largest share of the Total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by sector (over 15%) in 2020.

Education

The Vice President further stated that he will complete the task of ensuring that all Nigerians, male and female, attend school and that he will reform the educational system for relevance to the challenges of this century. Data from Statista shows that in recent times there has been a decline in the enrollment ratio in upper secondary schools in Nigeria. In 2018, **only 38.7%** of the population of upper secondary education age was enrolled in the country.

Business Environment

Osinbajo also said that he will provide an excellent environment for businesses to thrive and make sure that the government, its agencies, and regulators serve business communities. Recall that in 2016, President Buhari's administration established the Presidential Enabling Business Environment Council (PEBEC), which according to the Minister of Information and Culture, has, as at March 2022, **implemented** over 150 reforms which improved Nigeria's business landscape, moving the country up the ladder in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business Index. However, with the Bank's recent discontinuation of its Ease of Doing Business Report which ranks countries according to their business regulation environment, Nigerians may be keen to see how Osinbajo's administration will measure the impact of further regulatory reforms in the business sector.

Agriculture

The VP also promised to take the agricultural revolution to the next level, especially mechanisation and development of farms to improve the agricultural value chain. Although agriculture remains Nigeria's largest sector, **contributing** over 24% of the GDP in real terms in 2020, the sector still remains largely crude and much of its economic activities are carried out by smallholder farmers. This makes the sector extremely **focused** on production rather than improving the entire value chain through, for example, agro-processing, retail, marketing and the use of technology. As a result, agriculture currently contributes very little to Nigeria's export revenues. After a **largely** failed attempt to revamp the sector through the Agriculture Promotion Policy (APP) 2016-2020, the current administration again **recently launched** the National Agricultural Technology Innovation Policy (NATIP) 2021-2025. Perhaps, if he wins both the party ticket and the people's votes, the Vice President would implement his agricultural reforms off the back of the new NATIP policy, which would still be in effect at the onset of his presidency,

Health

On health, Mr Osinbajo said he will complete the task of universal health coverage for all Nigerians. The right to good health is the fundamental right of every citizen, but this is not the case in Nigeria as millions of Nigerians do not have access to even the most basic healthcare. According to the latest data from the World Bank, Nigeria's Universal Health Care (UHC) service coverage index score was 44 in 2019, which is way below the global average of 67, placing Nigeria at the lowest rung of UHC performance by country.

States and Local Governments

Another key issue he noted was the need to strengthen the capacity of states and local governments to deliver on their respective mandates. The Vice President has always been an advocate for the strengthening of the other two tiers of government. **Earlier** this year, while speaking at an event in Plateau state, he stressed the need to interrogate the existence and functionality of the local governance structures in Nigeria, with a view to strengthening them for better results.

Job Provision

According to him, the front and centre of his effort will be the provision of jobs and opportunities for young people. The latest unemployment figure in Nigeria stands at 33.3%, the highest in the last 10 years. With this high unemployment rate, Nigerians will want to see Osinbajo's blueprint for turning the tide if he succeeds President Buhari.

Many Nigerians have **reacted** to Osinbajo's declaration video.

It is important to state that the issues and promises made by the Vice President in his declaration are not necessarily new. The current administration under which he serves as the Vice President also promised most, if not all of these things, while campaigning for the votes of Nigerians in 2015 and 2019.

2023 Election: What are the leading candidates promising Nigerians? (1)

Labour Party vs. Peoples Democratic Party

Published on January 2, 2023

Dennis Amata

On **September 15**, 2022, the Anap Foundation released the results of its nationwide opinion poll on the 2023 presidential election, which NOI Polls Limited conducted.

The findings of the poll **tipped** the candidate of the Labour Party (LP), Mr Peter Obi as the candidate to win the 2023 presidential election if the election was to be conducted in **early September,** while Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu of the All Progressives Congress (APC) and Alhaji Atiku Abubakar of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) were predicted to take second and third place, respectively.

While different reactions **trailed** the results of the poll from the various political camps, with some quarters critiquing the methodology, there are, however, some other pertinent issues from the poll that may resonate with many Nigerians even if not all share the same view on the candidate that is tipped to be the winner of the anticipated 2023 presidential election.

According to the poll, there are **5 primary reasons** many voters are inclined to exercise their franchise in the forthcoming election. They include the need to tackle the increasing insecurity in the country, the poor state of the economy, education, unemployment, and reducing poverty.

These issues are not necessarily new to any political discourse in Nigeria, particularly during election seasons. Since Nigeria's return to democracy on May 29, 1999, they have continued to form a major part of the plan of various candidates. For instance, the present administration rode to power in 2015 on the wave of solving some of these issues. Almost eight years later, they have remained largely unsolved.

But Nigerians are hopeful whoever emerges the winner of the 2023 presidential election will tackle these issues.

In this first part of a two parts series, Dataphyte examines the plans of the presidential candidates of the PDP and LP across these issues — insecurity, economy, education, unemployment, and poverty, as stated in their released manifestos. In the next part, we shall examine the manifestos

of two other leading candidates in the race — Bola Tinubu of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) and Rabiu Kwankwaso of the New Nigerian Peoples Party (NNPP).

Insecurity

Perhaps, one of the most important issues Nigerians want to see handled by the next government is the security challenges in the country, which have become worse in recent times than in 2015 when this current administration took over power.

Security attacks across Nigeria

Data on attacks across various parts of the country between May 30, 2015 and November 23, 2022.

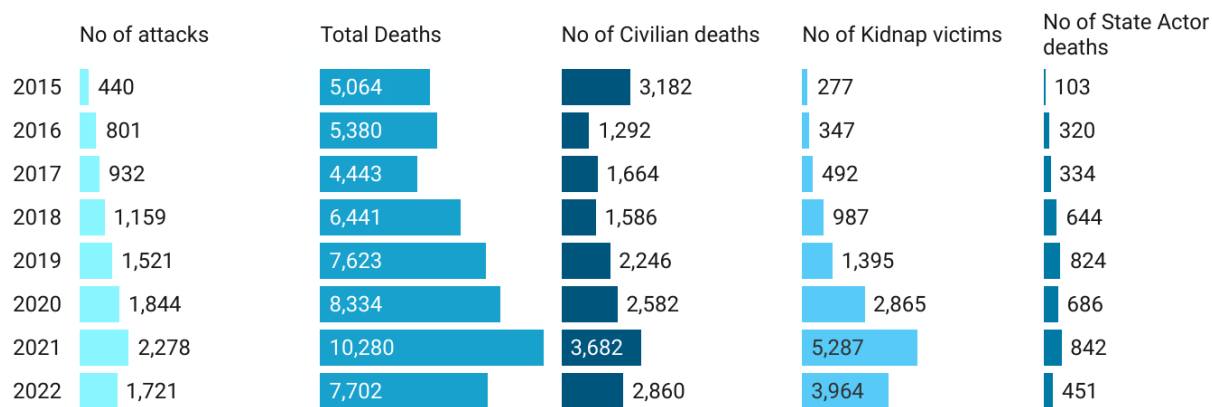|	No of attacks	Total Deaths	No of Civilian deaths	No of Kidnap victims	No of State Actor deaths
2015	440	5,064	3,182	277	103
2016	801	5,380	1,292	347	320
2017	932	4,443	1,664	492	334
2018	1,159	6,441	1,586	987	644
2019	1,521	7,623	2,246	1,395	824
2020	1,844	8,334	2,582	2,865	686
2021	2,278	10,280	3,682	5,287	842
2022	1,721	7,702	2,860	3,964	451

Chart: Dataphyte • Source: Nigeria Security Tracker • Created with Datawrapper

The candidate of the PDP recognized all the security threats bedevilling the country. However, he did not state clear strategies for addressing them. Nevertheless, he promises to increase the number of security personnel, particularly the police force, to meet the United Nations recommendation of police-to-citizen ratio of 1:450. According to him, this will combat the current security challenges in the country.

Atiku also hopes to tackle the security challenges by restructuring and enhancing the funding of security agencies and retraining security personnel. Further, he hopes to employ the tool of strategic engagement with state and non-state actors in theatres of conflict. That is, using alternative approaches to resolve the conflict with insurgents.

On the part of Peter Obi, the candidate of LP, he promises to deal decisively and put a permanent end to the country's security challenges by deploying state-of-the-art military technology to
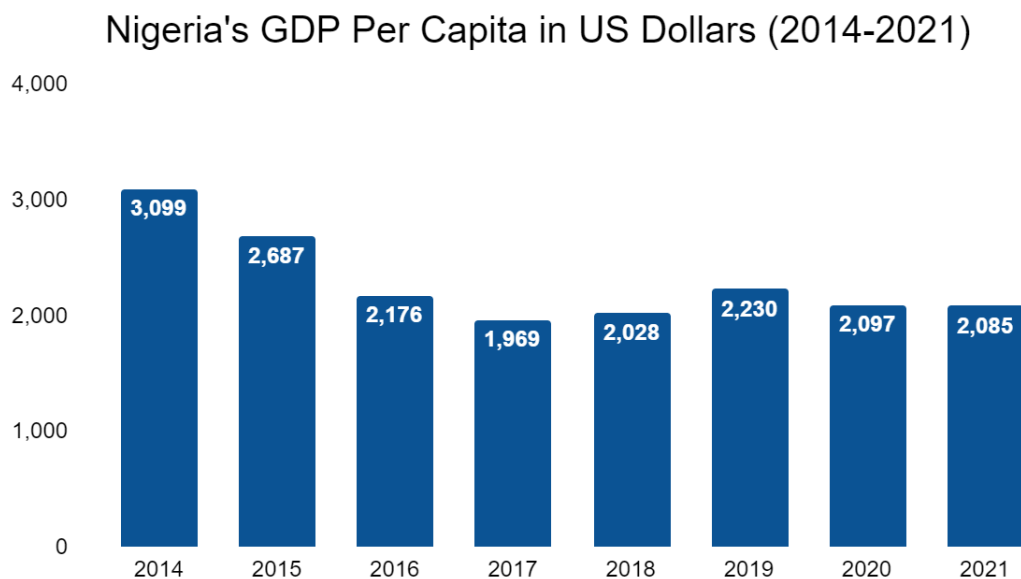
combat terrorists, bandits, insurgents, and kidnappers. Part of his security plans is also to increase the number of security personnel in the country and train, fund, and equip them.

Peter Obi of the LP also promises to initiate a constitutional amendment that allows states to establish their own police as a means of effectively fighting crime. In addition, he promises to embark on reforms in the entire security sector. Also worth highlighting is his plan to ensure swift and fair prosecution of criminals, bandits, and terrorists.

Economy

The economy is an important policy issue in this election. This is more so because the country's economy has suffered a series of setbacks since 2015 when the incumbent administration was sworn into office.

As of the end of 2021, data shows that Nigeria has a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of $440.78 billion. Although this is an increase from its 2020 figure ($432.29 billion), it is nevertheless lower than it was in 2015. Concerning the economy, Atiku promises to raise Nigeria's GDP per capita to $5,000 by 2030.

Nigeria's GDP Per Capita in US Dollars (2014-2021)

Year	GDP Per Capita
2014	3,099
2015	2,687
2016	2,176
2017	1,969
2018	2,028
2019	2,230
2020	2,097
2021	2,085

Source: World Bank I Chart: Dataphyte

According to World Bank data, Nigeria's current GDP per capita is only $2,085. Dataphyte's review of the country's GDP per capita data from 1999 shows that the highest GDP per capita Nigeria has ever had was $3,099 in 2014.

To attain his targeted GDP plan, Atiku hopes to position the manufacturing sector's contribution to 30% of Nigeria's GDP. It is essential to state that the manufacturing sector contributed only **9%** to the country's real GDP in 2021.

Atiku also promises to make Nigeria Africa's leading Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) destination. According to him, by 2030, his administration would increase the inflow of Nigeria's FDI to a minimum of 2.5% of the country's GDP.

According to the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), FDI **forms** an essential part of an open and effective international economic system and is a significant factor in a country's development.

In 2021, data from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) showed that Nigeria received an FDI inflow of $4.8 billion, the highest in West Africa, not Africa as a whole.

Still, on the economy, the PDP candidate promises to expand Nigeria's export base, especially in manufactures, processed agricultural goods, refined petroleum, and gas products.

The economic plans of the candidate of the LP are largely hinged on moving Nigeria from consumption to production. Thus, he promises to run a production-centred economy that is agricultural-based and export-oriented. He also promises to diversify the economy, focusing on developing manufacturing and processing technologies to maximise the country's agricultural potential and abundant natural resources value chain.

Further, he promises to pursue and implement economic policies that drastically reduce Nigeria's debt-servicing and debt-to-revenue ratios.

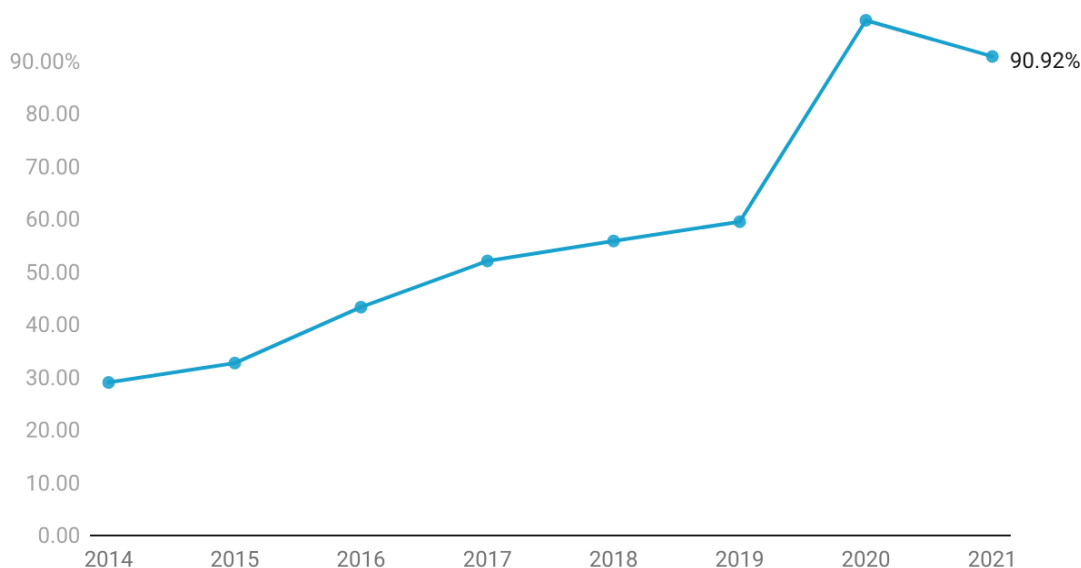## Percentage of Debt Servicing to Revenue Generated in Nigeria

90.92%

Chart: Dataphyte • Source: Budget Office of the Federation; Dataphyte Research • Created with Datawrapper

Education

The problems in the Nigerian educational sector are glaring, from the high Number of Out-of-School Children to poor infrastructures, incessant strikes, and lack of proper funding.

The candidates of the PDP and LP are fully aware of these issues, and just like past governments, they promise to address these issues if elected.

In his manifesto, the candidate of the PDP didn't specifically state any quantitative commitment to improving education. However, he stated that he would improve and strengthen the education system to make it more efficient, accessible, qualitative, and relevant. He also promises to promote Science and Technical Education to create skills for the new economy.

The candidate of the LP acknowledges the challenges in the Nigerian educational system and notes that his administration would incorporate technical, vocational, and digital skills to transform the educational sector. He also promises to partner with state governments, private-led groups, and international partners to establish incubators to train the country's young population on digital and technological skills. The partnership will also include access to seed funding and mentorship by industry experts.

In addition, he promises to prioritise funding of the sector and address the gaps in the law, guiding the funding access to the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) and the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund).

Furthermore, concerning the Number of Out-of-School Children, which is currently estimated to be 20 million, Peter Obi promises to tackle this through his "No Child Left Behind" policy that he will introduce. However, he did not state the Number of Out-of-School Children that will be enrolled in school through the policy.

Unemployment

Nigeria's unemployment rate rose five-fold within a decade, from 6.4% in 2010 to 33.3% in 2020. At its current 33.3% unemployment rate, Nigeria has the **second-highest** unemployment rate on the global list
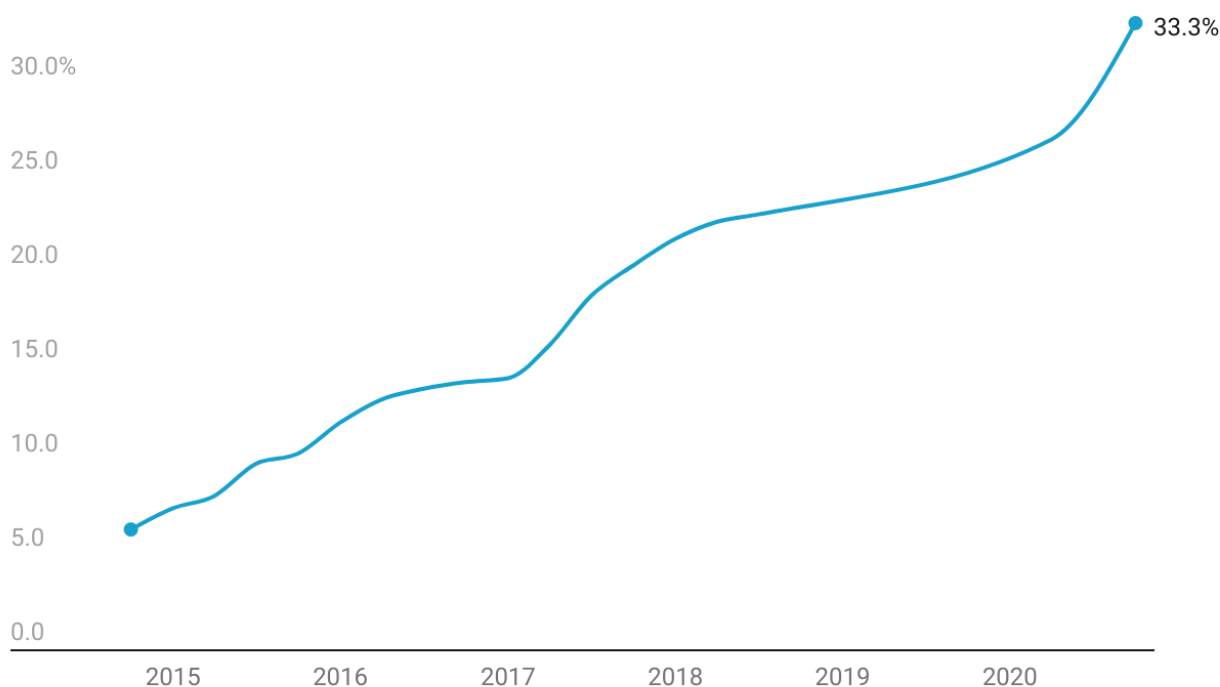
Nigeria's Unemployment Rate (Q4 2014 - Q4 2020)

Chart: Dataphyte • Source: NBS • Created with Datawrapper

It is, therefore, not surprising that it is one of the issues that Nigerians want to see the candidates and eventual winner of the race addressed.

The candidate of PDP, Atiku Abubakar, promises to address the country's increasing unemployment

rate. As noted in his manifesto document, he looks to create 3 million new jobs annually, targeting to reduce the rate of unemployment and under-employment in the country to a single digit by 2025.

Using data from NBS, the current unemployment rate (i.e., unemployment plus under-employment) is 33.3%.

The candidate of the LP did not state the number of jobs he will create annually or throughout the period of his administration. However, he acknowledged the country's high unemployment in his manifesto and noted that through his various programmes and policies, jobs would be created and unemployment reduced.

Poverty

Nigeria is endowed with land, oil, and natural resources. Despite these vast resources, a large portion of the country's over 200 million estimated population is poor. In 2018, Nigeria surpassed India as the world's poverty capital, with around **87 million** people living in extreme poverty.

Although the current government promised to reduce the poverty rate by lifting 100 million people from poverty in 10 years, the current reality shows that the promise was not fulfilled. The latest "National Multidimensional Poverty Index" report released by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) in November shows that **133 million** Nigerians representing 63% of the population, live in multidimensional poverty.

Although the NBS report came after the candidate of the PDP was published and before the manifesto of the LP candidate was published, they recognized this menace and promised to handle it if elected.

According to Atiku, his government will lift 10 million people from poverty yearly.

On the part of the candidate of the LP, he promises to create economic opportunities that will create jobs and build capacities and capabilities across the breadth of the socioeconomic divide, enabling people to fend for themselves and escape poverty. His plans for poverty alleviation also include generating quality data on livelihoods to monitor poverty to inform policies and interventions.

While these are not all of the candidates' plans, they are the major highlights of their plans for Nigerians across these issues.

2023 Election: What are the leading candidates promising Nigerians? (2)

All Progressives Congress vs. New Nigeria Peoples Party

Published on January 10, 2023

Dennis Amata

In the **first part** of the "What are the leading candidates promising Nigerians" report, Dataphyte examined the plans of the presidential candidates of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and Labour Party (LP) across insecurity, economy, education, unemployment, and poverty, as stated in their manifestos.

In this final part of the two part series, we examine the plans of the two other leading candidates — Bola Tinubu of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) and Rabiu Kwankwaso of the New Nigeria Peoples Party (NNPP).

Our selection of these five issues — insecurity, economy, education, unemployment, and poverty, is based on the result of a survey published by ANAP foundation on **September 15**, 2022, which identified these issues as the top five **primary reasons** many voters are inclined to exercise their franchise in the forthcoming election.

Insecurity

Nigeria is facing serious security threats — the conflict between cattle herders and farmers, which has morphed into widespread terrorism in the Northwest of the country, the **presence** of the Shia Islamic Movement of Nigeria (IMN) in the North-central, the Niger Delta Vigilante (NDA) and the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) in the South-East, Boko Haram, or Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) insurgency in the North-East, and **kidnapping** in South-West are some major security challenges.

Although several measures have been taken by successive governments to roll back the various security threats bedeviling the country, Nigeria still ranks as one of the most insecure places in the world.

Security attacks across Nigeria

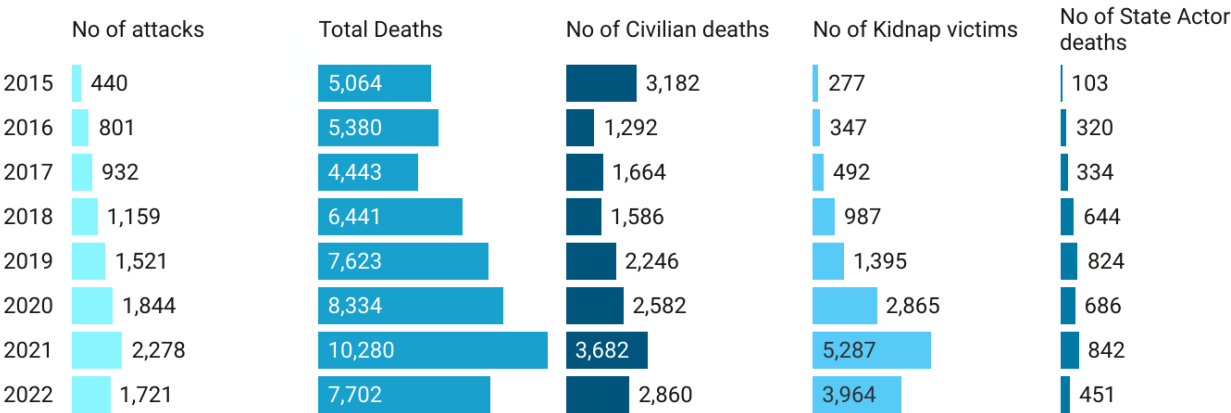Data on attacks across various parts of the country between May 30, 2015 and November 23, 2022.

	No of attacks	Total Deaths	No of Civilian deaths	No of Kidnap victims	No of State Actor deaths
2015	440	5,064	3,182	277	103
2016	801	5,380	1,292	347	320
2017	932	4,443	1,664	492	334
2018	1,159	6,441	1,586	987	644
2019	1,521	7,623	2,246	1,395	824
2020	1,844	8,334	2,582	2,865	686
2021	2,278	10,280	3,682	5,287	842
2022	1,721	7,702	2,860	3,964	451

Chart: Dataphyte • Source: Nigeria Security Tracker • Created with Datawrapper

The candidate of the APC rightly acknowledges that the protection of lives and properties is the fundamental responsibility of the government. Although he didn't state any quantitative commitment with regard to security, he promises to tackle the country's security challenges by creating Anti-Terrorist Battalions; as a response to tackling terrorists, kidnappers, and bandits terrorising the country. Part of his security plans is to upgrade tactical communications and transportation of the military to give them greater communication and mobility advantage over criminals, bandits, and terrorists.

He also promises to upgrade weapon systems and improve local arms production; improve salaries and general welfare of security services; provide economic and social assistance to communities impacted by the security crisis and revitalise Forest Guard with a mandate to monitor, identify, and track the use of forests by any violent or criminal groups.

Tinubu promises to expand the national database and other such assets for security purposes. He also promises to reposition the Police to enable the force to deliver its primary duty of maintaining law and order through crime fighting and prevention. One of the action points he promises to undertake is to free police personnel from the role of protecting VIPs.

Similarly, the candidate of the NNPP recognised all the security threats bedeviling the country, and he believes increasing the number of the country's security personnel is one of the ways to tackle the security challenges. To this end, he promises to increase the number of personnel of

the Nigerian Armed Forces (Army, Airforce, and Navy) from its estimated **215,000**-250,000 to 1 million. This would translate to the recruitment of a minimum of 750,000 persons into the Armed Forces.

Likewise, he promises to increase the size of the Nigerian Police to one million active service men and women from the estimated 230,000 personnel he quoted in his manifesto. Although his figure varies from the estimate of the INTERPOL — **350,000**, Kwankwaso's target is to make the police-to-citizen ratio 1:220, which is higher than the United Nations (UN) recommended minimum of 1:450.

Similar to the plan of the APC candidate, Kwankwaso hopes to introduce Forest Guards, as well as Coastal Guards and Military border Guards, to secure all access points into the country and combat illegal immigration, drug trafficking, arms smuggling, and cross-border crimes.

Part of the security plans of the NNPP's candidate is also to use the instrument of dialogue in resolving the country's security challenges. According to him, at the initial stage, his administration would be open to dialogue with all aggrieved groups in the country, which includes the Niger-Delta Agitators, Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), Boko Haram, Farmers/Herders, etc., to listen to their grievances and address any genuine claim that they have. However, he noted that his administration will not relent on its commitment to ensuring the safety and security of the country and its citizens.

Economy

Another important point to consider is the economic plans of the candidates of the APC and NNPP.

As of the end of 2021, data shows that Nigeria has a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of **$440.79 billion**. Although this is an increase from its 2020 figure (**$432.29 billion**), it is nevertheless lower than it was in 2015 at **$486.8 billion** when President Buhari took over.

Nigeria's Gross Domestic Product ($'Billion) (2014-2021)
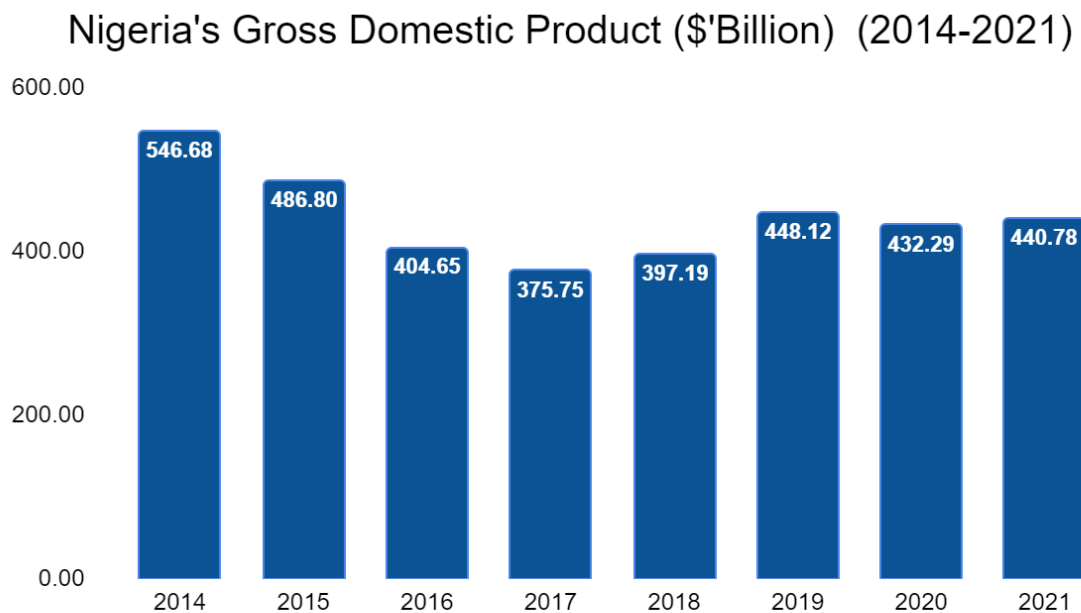
Source: World Bank I Chart: Dataphyte

On GDP, the APC candidate hopes to grow the GDP to $780.9 billion by 2027 based on the 10% growth of the World Bank data.

APC candidate promises to limit Nigeria's foreign currency-denominated debts to essential expenditures that cannot be adequately addressed by either naira-denominated expenditures or debt obligations. He believes doing this will help guard against the country's galloping inflation trend, which as of November, was 21.47%.

On his part, Mr Kwankwaso highlighted several issues he considers wrong with the economy and promised to solve them. One of his plans is to actively diversify the economy and increase the GDP contribution from the non-oil sector.

He is also promising to reduce the size of the Federal government's recurrent budget/expenditure, which has consistently accounted for a bulk of Nigeria's annual budget. This is alongside his plan to increase revenue from the non-oil sector in order to bring down Nigeria's high budget deficit.

Another key point to highlight under his economic plan is inflation. According to him, his administration will work with the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) to achieve a single-digit controlled inflation rate. It is important to state that Nigeria's inflation has recently been on an upward trend, hitting 21.47% in November.

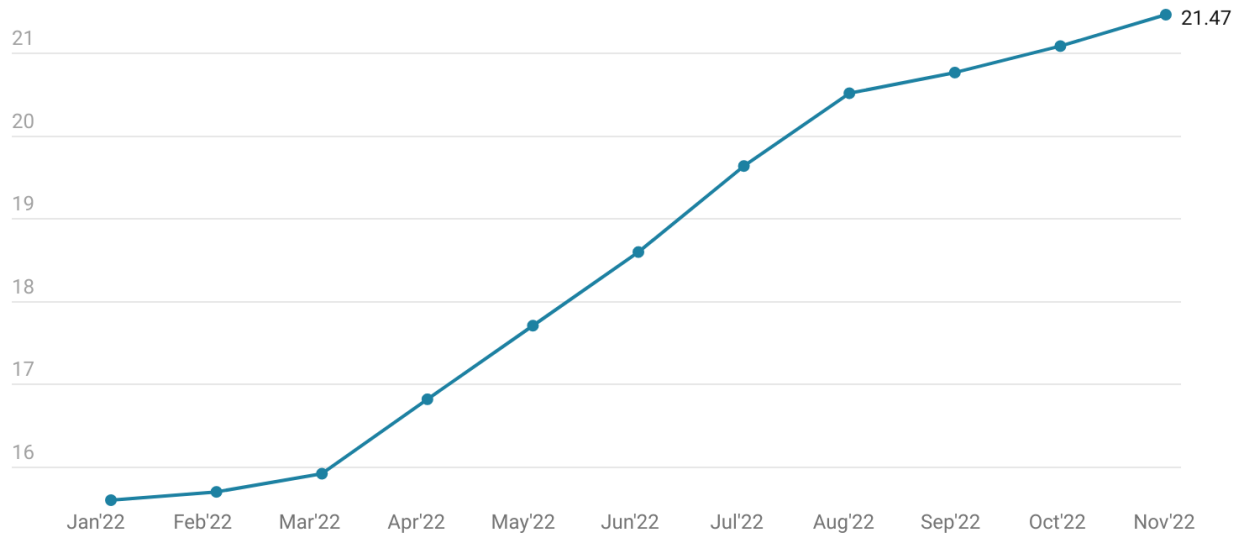**Nigeria's Inflationary Trend in 2022**

Chart: Dataphyte • Source: NBS • Created with Datawrapper

Kwankwaso also promised to improve the Nigerian business environment to boost the FDI flow to the country, particularly in the manufacturing area. According to the latest ease of business ranking released by the World Bank, Nigeria **ranks 131** out of 190 economies in the world.

The candidate of the NNPP raised concerns about the country's high debt profile and promised that his administration will pursue prudent national debt management policy and strategy. Apart from this, he didn't state anything about reducing the country's current public debt of **N44.6 trillion** as of the third quarter of 2022.

Education

The Nigerian educational sector is plagued with numerous challenges. The incessant strikes by tertiary institutions, lack of dependable infrastructural facilities, inadequate budgetary allocation, and the high Number of Out-of-School Children are notable challenges in the educational system.

Dataphyte's review of the manifestos of the candidates of the APC and NNPP shows that they are fully aware of these issues and made commitments to solving them if elected into office.

Although the candidate of the APC did not state a number, he promises to prioritise solving the growing problem of out-of-school children in Nigeria, which according to a new report by

the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), is currently 20 million.
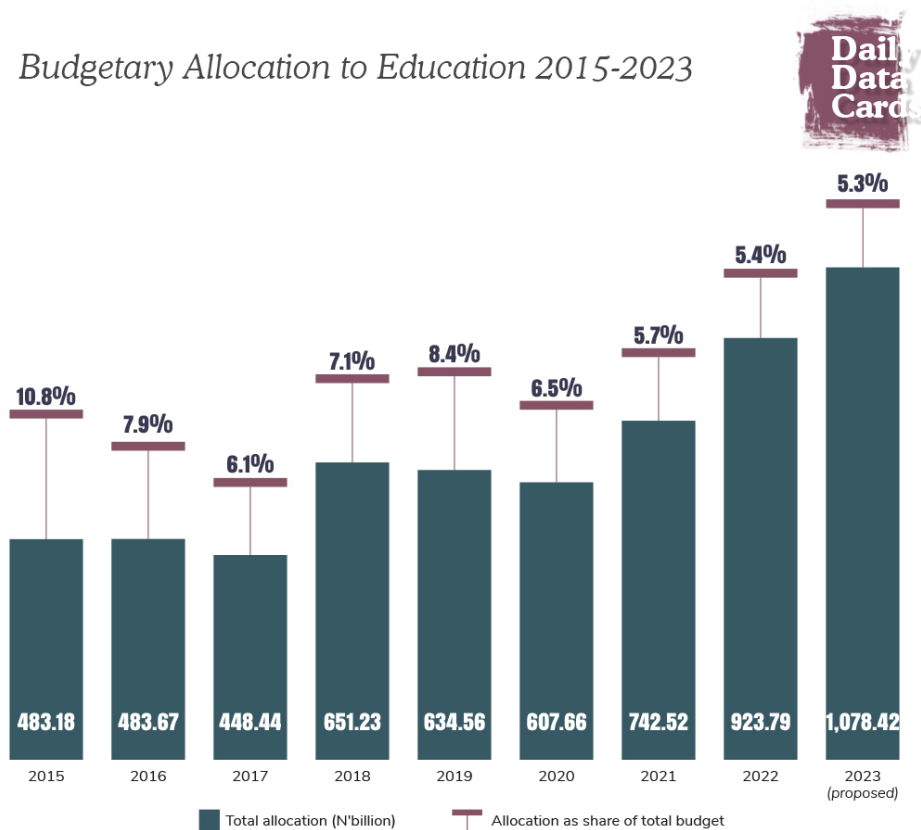
Regarding infrastructure, he stated that his administration would invest in educational institutions and provide adequate resources to improve the educational environment. Adopting a new curriculum, introducing history subjects, indigenous languages, and new accreditation requirements for teachers are some of the policies he promised to pursue at the primary and secondary schools.

At the tertiary level, one of the key promises of the APC candidate, as stated in his manifesto, is to institute a pilot student loan regime similar to the student loan board established by the Lagos and Kaduna state governments. To address the lack of funding, he promises to establish a special education fund that will be responsible for funding university education through selling bonds.

On the part of the candidate of the NNPP, he noted that in the first four years of his administration, the 20 million out-of-school children in Nigeria would be enrolled in school. He also commits to eradicating illiteracy in Nigeria. Currently, the illiteracy rate in Nigeria is estimated at **31%**.

He also promised to provide adequate funding to the education sector. It is instructive to note that, apart from the drop in 2017, 2019, and 2020, the educational budgetary allocation has been increasing yearly since 2015. However, the share of the government's annual budgetary allocation to the sector has never met the recommended 15 percent to 20 percent by the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Budgetary Allocation to Education 2015-2023

Dail Data Card

2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023 (proposed)
10.8%	7.9%	6.1%	7.1%	8.4%	6.5%	5.7%	5.4%	5.3%
483.18	483.67	448.44	651.23	634.56	607.66	742.52	923.79	1,078.42

Total allocation (N'billion)   Allocation as share of total budget

Source: Budget Office, Dataphyte

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Kwankwaso also intends to establish technical colleges and vocational centres in each of the 36 states in the country as well as expand places for the training of medical personnel in tertiary education institutions to reduce the manpower gap in the healthcare sector, which has been **badly hit** in recent times owing to the increasing emigration of medical doctors from the country.

Another key promise of Kwankwaso's manifesto is his plan to make examinations such as the West African Examinations Council (WAEC), National Examination Council (NECO), and Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) free for every Nigerian child. He also hopes to extend the JAMB result's validity period from one year to four years.

Unemployment

Since the fourth quarter of 2014, Nigeria's unemployment rate has been steadily increasing, reaching an all-time high of 33.3% in 2020. At its current 33.3% unemployment rate, Nigeria has the **second-highes**t unemployment rate on the global list.

Nigeria's Unemployment Rate (Q4 2014 - Q4 2020)
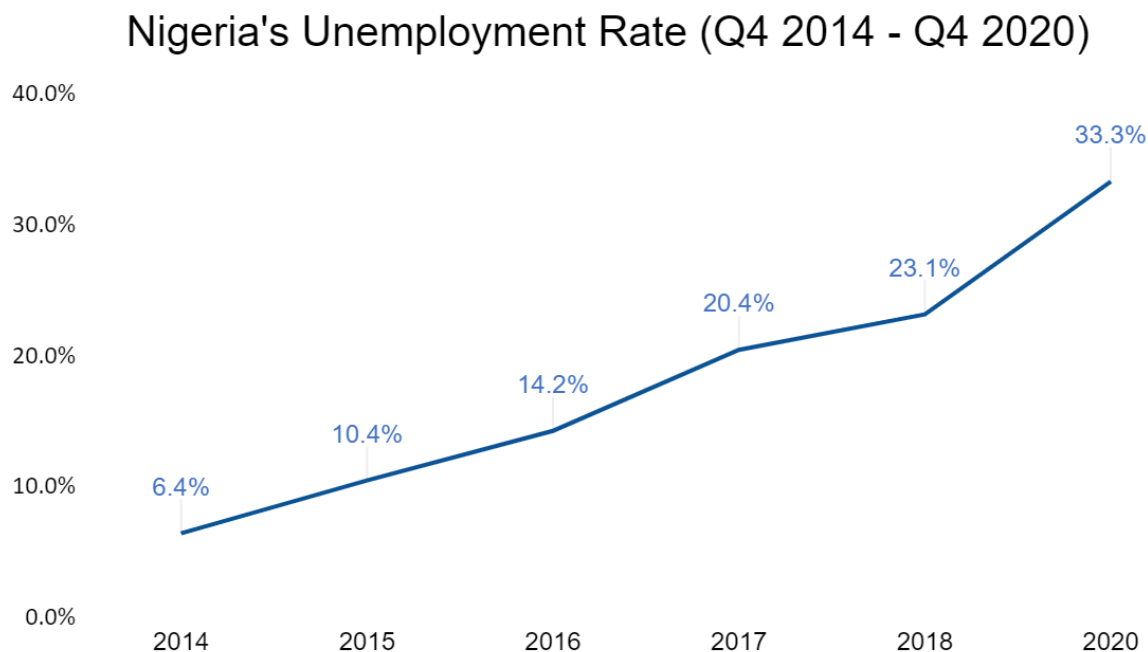
Source: NBS | Chart: Dataphyte

One of the promises the Buhari-led government sold to Nigerians, as noted in 2017 in the Economy Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP), is to tackle unemployment. Buhari planned to reduce unemployment to 11.23% in 2020. On the contrary, he has supervised the country's worst unemployment rate.

It is, therefore, not surprising that Nigerians have identified rising unemployment as a top election issue.

On unemployment, Tinubu promised to tackle unemployment by creating one million new jobs in the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) sector within his first 24 months in office. In addition, he plans to cut the youth unemployment rate in the country by half within four years of his administration.

Youth unemployment in Nigeria currently stands at 54.87%, according to the National Bureau of Statistics, in Q4 2020.

The candidate of NNPP is promising to tackle the high unemployment rate, particularly youth unemployment, which is pegged at 54.87%. He vowed to end youth unemployment by creating

a number of jobs in specific sectors. For instance, he targets to create over two million jobs in the Armed Forces, Police, and other security agencies.

He plans to create more than one million and over 2 million jobs in the housing and agriculture sector annually.

He is promising over three million job opportunities in the transportation and power sector. In the education and health sector, he also promised to create hundreds of thousands of jobs in each sector.

Poverty

Despite the fact that Nigeria is richly endowed, poverty remains high and has persisted despite efforts by successive governments to reduce the high poverty rate. In 2018, Nigeria became the world's poverty capital, with around **87 million** people living in extreme poverty.

With the latest National Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) report released by the Nigeria Bureau of Statistics (NBS) in November 2022, the figure is higher now, as the report revealed 133 million Nigerians, representing 63% of the country's population, are **multidimensionally poor**.

Although the NBS report came after the candidates of the APC and NNPP published their manifestos, they recognized this problem and promised to tackle it if elected, though they are not the first to make this promise. For instance, the Buhari administration promised to reduce poverty by lifting 100 million people from poverty in 10 years. But the reverse is the case today.

Tinubu, the ruling party candidate, promised to lift Nigerians from poverty if elected in 2023; however, he did not state the number of Nigerians his administration would lift from poverty. Tinubu stated that his administration would expand the Buhari administration's National Social Investment Program (N-SIP) and empower women to enable them to lift themselves from poverty. He also noted that his administration would provide unconditional income support to the elderly, extremely poor, and disabled persons.

Kwankwaso, on his part, acknowledged the high poverty rate in the country and promised to take initiatives, especially reviewing the current social investment programmes to better position them to combat and defeat poverty.

About Dataphyte

Dataphyte is a media, research and data analytics organisation deploying data tools and technology for socioeconomic development of Nigeria.

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