



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

Tuesday, 11 July, 2017

1. The House met at 11.15 a.m. Mr Deputy Speaker read the Prayers.
2. **Votes and Proceedings**
Mr Deputy Speaker announced that he had examined and approved the **Votes and Proceedings** of Thursday, 6 July, 2017.

The Votes and Proceedings was adopted by unanimous consent.

3. **Announcement**
Visitors in the Gallery:
Mr Deputy Speaker recognized the presence of the following visitors:
 - (i) Staff and Students of *Lugbe International Academy*, Lugbe, Abuja;
 - (ii) Members of the *National Association of Political Science Students*, Ekiti State University Chapter, Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State;
 - (iii) Staff and Students of *Methodist Nursery and Primary School*, Sabon Lugbe, Abuja; and
 - (iv) Staff and Students of *Medley High School*, Mararaba, Nasarawa State.
4. **Petitions**
 - (i) Petitions from the following persons were presented and laid by Hon. Bamgbose Joseph (*Badagry Federal Constituency*):
 - (a) Falana & Falana's Chambers (Solicitors & Legal Consultants), on behalf of Ngozi Ikea, on the conduct of Officers of the Nigeria Police Force over the disappearance of Clinton Uche Ikea in the Federal Capital Territory Abuja;
 - (b) Akinbode Oluwafemi, on behalf of Nigerian Tobacco Control Alliance (NTCA) on tax evasion through the Export Expansion Grant (EEG) scheme by the British American Tobacco Nigeria (BATN) and other Tobacco companies;

- (ii) A petition from Comrade Ako Francis, on the alleged killing of late Aondowase Yongo Uzuur and 2 others by Abdulrahman Ajiya, Chairman of Abaji Area Council and others, was presented and laid by Hon. Dickson Tarkighir Dominic (*Makurdi/Guma Federal Constituency*).

Petitions referred to the Committee on Public Petitions.

5. Matters of Urgent Public Importance (Standing Order Eight, Rule 4)

- (i) ***Devastating Effects of Floods Caused by Heavy Rainfall in Some Parts of the Country:***
Hon. Abubakar Lado Suleja (*Suleja/Gurara/Tafa Federal Constituency*) introduced the matter and prayed the House to:

- (a) consider and approve the matter as one of urgent public importance; and
(b) suspend Order Eight, Rule 4 (3) to allow debate on the matter forthwith.

Question that the matter be considered as one of urgent public importance — Agreed to.

Question that the House do suspend Order Eight, Rule 4 (3) to enable it debate the matter forthwith — Agreed to.

Devastating Effects of Floods Caused by Heavy Rainfall in Some Parts of the Country:

The House:

Notes with serious concern the devastation caused by heavy down pour in Suleja, Nigeria State on Sunday, 9 July, 2017, which lasted for 10 hours;

Worried that the heavy rainfall flooded communities in Hayin Nasarawa in Tafa, Bakin Iku and Chaza in Suleja Local Government Area, leaving a trail of devastation and sorrow with about 40 people confirmed dead and more still missing, while property, including over 400 houses were washed away, resulting in the displacement of almost 500 people;

Also worried that the road connecting the communities to the highway have been cut off and the victims who were made homeless have no where to put their loads, thereby inflicting more hardship on the victims;

Disturbed that the victims were mostly women and children, including babies that were carried away by the flood;

Concerned that the torrential rain also affected other areas like Lagos State, Umuaku Ngodo, Umuelelem, Ngwoagu, Ogeduasa in Isuikwuato-Umunneochi Federal Constituency of Abia State and Evbuomore in Ovai North Local Government Area of Edo State;

Resolves to:

- (i) observe a minute silence in honour of those who lost their lives in the tragedy;
- (ii) urge the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) to mobilise to affected areas and provide relief materials and make shift camps to victims of this devastation within Bakin Iku in Suleja, Haying Nasarawa in Tafa;
- (iii) mandate the Committees on Special Duties; and Internally Displaced Persons and Refugees, to take an oversight tour to the effected areas and quantify the level of destruction and the magnitude of the humanitarian crises and further report to the House for further legislation; and

- (iv) also urge the Ministry of Works, Housing and Power and FERMA to mobilise to the affected areas for immediate actions and reconstruction of destroyed infrastructure and facilities to ease the hardship on people of the communities (*Hon. Abubakar Lado Suleja — Suleja/Gurara/Tafa Federal Constituency*).

Debate

Amendments Proposed:

- (i) *Insert a new Prayer (v) as follows:*
“Mandate the Committee on Environment and Habitat, to work within the Governor’s Forum to look into the peculiarities of individual States on proffering lasting solution to the problems of flooding” (*Hon. Rotimi Agunloye — Kosofe Federal Constituency*).

Question that the amendment be made — Negatived.

- (ii) *Insert a new Prayer (v) as follows:*
“Set up an *Ad-hoc* Committee to engage with the following Inter-Ministerial Departments: Office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Ecological Funds Office, Ministry of Water Resources, the 12 River Basins Authorities, and Federal Ministry of Works, Housing and Power, to look into the perennial flooding throughout the country” (*Hon. Ahman-Pategi Aliyu — Edu/Moro/Pategi Federal Constituency*).

Question that the amendment be made — Agreed to.

- (iii) *Insert a new Prayer (vi) as follows:*
“The *Ad-hoc* Committee should investigate the remote and immediate causes of the devastating flood at Umuaku, Ngodo, Umuelem, Nkwoagu, Oguduasau all in Isuikwuato/Umunneochi Federal Constituency, and send relief materials to the affected victims” (*Hon. Nkeiruka Onyejeocha — Isuikwuato/Umunneochi Federal Constituency*).

Question that the amendment be made — Agreed to.

Question on the Motion as amended — Agreed to.

The House:

Noted with serious concern the devastation caused by heavy down pour in Suleja, Nigeria State on Sunday, 9 July, 2017, which lasted for 10 hours;

Worried that the heavy rainfall flooded communities in Hayin Nasarawa in Tafa, Bakin Iku and Chaza in Suleja Local Government Area, leaving a trail of devastation and sorrow with about 40 people confirmed dead and more still missing, while property, including over 400 houses were washed away, resulting in the displacement of almost 500 people;

Also worried that the road connecting the communities to the highway have been cut off and the victims who were made homeless have no where to put their loads, thereby inflicting more hardship on the victims;

Disturbed that the victims were mostly women and children, including babies that were carried away by the flood;

Concerned that the torrential rain also affected other areas like Lagos State, Umuaku Ngodo Umuelem, Ngwoagu, Ogeduasa in Isuikwuato-Umunneochi Federal Constituency of Abia State and Evbuomere in Ovai North Local Government Area of Edo State;

Resolved to:

- (i) observe a minute silence in honour of those who lost their lives in the tragedy;
- (ii) urge the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) to mobilise to affected areas and provide relief materials and make shift camps to victims of this devastation within Bakin Iku in Suleja, Haying Nasarawa in Tafa;
- (iii) mandate the Committees on Special Duties; and Internally Displaced Persons and Refugees, to take an oversight tour to the effected areas and quantify the level of destruction and the magnitude of the humanitarian crises and further report to the House for further legislation;
- (iv) also urge the Ministry of Works, Housing and Power and FERMA to mobilise to the affected areas for immediate actions and reconstruction of destroyed infrastructure and facilities to ease the hardship on people of the communities;
- (v) set up an *Ad-hoc* Committee to engage with the following Inter-Ministerial Departments: Office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Ecological Funds Office, Ministry of Water Resources, the 12 River Basins Authorities, and Federal Ministry of Works, Housing and Power, to look into the perennial flooding throughout the country; and
- (vi) mandate the *Ad-hoc* Committee (when constituted) to investigate the remote and immediate causes of the devastating flood at Umuaku, Ngodo, Umuelem, Nkwoagu, Oguduasau all in Isuikwuato/Umunneochi Federal Constituency, and send relief materials to the affected victims (HR. 38/2017).

A minute silence was observed in honour of the deceased.

(ii) *Need for the Acting-President to Swear-in and Apportion Offices to Ministers-Designate from Kogi and Gombe States:*

Hon. Karimi Steve Sunday (*Yagba East/Yagba West/Mopamuro Federal Constituency*) introduced the matter and prayed the House to:

- (a) consider and approve the matter as one of urgent public importance; and
- (b) suspend Order Eight, Rule 4 (3) to allow debate on the matter forthwith.

Question that the matter be considered as one of urgent public importance — Agreed to.

Question that the House do suspend Order Eight, Rule 4 (3) to enable it debate the matter forthwith — Agreed to.

Need for the Acting-President to Swear-in and Apportion Offices to Ministers-Designate from Kogi and Gombe States:

The House:

Notes that the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria vests the 'Executive Power of the Federation in the President and such power may be exercised directly through the Vice-President and Ministers of the Government of the Federation or officers in the Public Service of the Federation. Section 130 of the ground norm provides that there shall be for the Federation a President who shall be the Head of State and Chief Executive of the Federation;

Also notes that Section 145 (1) of the Constitution, provides that whenever the President of the Federation is unable to discharge the functions of his office for whatsoever reason, the President shall transmit a written declaration to the President of the Senate or Speaker of the House of Representatives to that effect, and until he transmits to them a declaration to the contrary, the Vice-President shall perform the functions of the President as Acting President;

Aware that Section 147 provides that there shall be such offices of Ministers of the Federation as may be established by President. Such Ministers shall be nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate. Section 143 (3) and shall comply with the principles of Federal Character, and accordingly, each State shall have at least one (1) Minister;

Cognizant that since 3rd of May 2017, the Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria has confirmed the appointments of Professor Stephen Ocheni from Kogi State and Suleiman Zarma Hassan from Gombe State as Ministers of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and up till now they have not been sworn-in or allocated any Office, Portfolio or Ministry;

Worried that Kogi and Gombe States are not represented in the Federal Executive Council, thus the Federal Executive Council as currently constituted is in flagrant breach of Sections 14 (2) and 147 (3) Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended);

Resolves to:

Urge the Acting President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to swear-in and allocate portfolio and official duties to the Ministers Designate from Kogi and Gombe States within the next one (1) week (*Hon. Karimi S. Sunday — Yagba East/Yagba West/Mopamuro Federal Constituency and 3 Others*).

Debate

Agreed to.

The House:

Noted that the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria vests the Executive Power of the Federation in the President and such power may be exercised directly through the Vice-President and Ministers of the Government of the Federation or officers in the Public Service of the Federation. Section 130 of the ground norm provides that there shall be for the Federation a President who shall be the Head of State and Chief Executive of the Federation;

Also noted that Section 145 (1) of the Constitution, provides that whenever the President of the Federation is unable to discharge the functions of his office for whatsoever reason, the President shall transmit a written declaration to the President of the Senate or Speaker of the House of Representatives to that effect, and until he transmits to them a declaration to the contrary, the Vice-President shall perform the functions of the President as Acting President;

Aware that Section 147 provides that there shall be such offices of Ministers of the Federation as may be established by President. Such Ministers shall be nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate. Section 143 (3) and shall comply with the principles of Federal Character, and accordingly, each State shall have at least one (1) Minister;

Cognizant that since 3rd of May 2017, the Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria has confirmed the appointments of Professor Stephen Ocheni from Kogi State and Suleiman Zarma Hassan from Gombe State as Ministers of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and up till now they have not been sworn-in or allocated any Office, Portfolio or Ministry;

Worried that Kogi and Gombe States are not represented in the Federal Executive Council, thus the Federal Executive Council as currently constituted is in flagrant breach of Sections 14 (2) and 147 (3) Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended);

Resolved to:

Urge the Acting President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to swear-in and allocate portfolio and official duties to the Ministers Designate from Kogi and Gombe States within the next one (1) week (HR. 39/2017).

6. Presentation of Bill

National Lottery Act (Amendment) Bill, 2017 (HB. 478) was read the *First Time*:

7. Consolidation of Bills:

Motion made and Question proposed, "That a Bill for an Act to Amend the Companies and Allied Matters Act, Cap. C20, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004, to provide for the Payment of all Monies received by the Commission into the Federation Account in Accordance with Section 162 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and for Related Matters (HB. 963), a Bill for an Act to Amend the Companies and Allied Matters Act, Cap. C20, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004, to Increase the Penalties on Companies which fail to comply with the Provisions of the Act and for Related Matters (HB. 969), and a Bill for an Act to Repeal the Companies and Allied Matters Act, Cap. C20, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 and Re-Enact the Companies and Allied Matters Act, 2017 to Provide for the Incorporation of Companies, Registration of Business Names together with Incorporation of Trustees of certain Communities, Bodies and Associations and for Related Matters (HB. 1064) be now consolidated (*Hon. Mohammed Tahir Monguno — Monguno/Marte/Nganzai Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

- 8. A Bill for an Act to Amend the Nigerian Legion Act, Cap. N119, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 to Ensure Proper Welfare and Health Condition of Military Veterans, Expand the Operation and Functions of the Legion for National Development and to Establish and include Certain Functions of the Corps of Nigerian Commissionaires for the Proper Care, Good Health and Welfare of the Nigerian Legion and for Related Matters (HB. 392 and HB. 1036) — *Second Reading***

Order read; deferred by leave of the House.

- 9. A Bill for an Act to Amend the Pharmacists Council of Nigeria Act, Cap. P17, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 to Prescribe Guidelines, including Standards, for the Registration of Premises where Members of the Profession and Authorized Corporate Entities engage in the Manufacture, Distribution, Sale and Dispensing of Drugs and Medicine, to update Monetary Fees and Fines contained in the Act to Reflect the Prevailing Currency Value of the Naira and for Related Matters (HB. 1002) — *Second Reading***

Motion made and Question proposed, "That a Bill for an Act to Amend the Pharmacists Council of Nigeria Act, Cap. P17, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 to Prescribe Guidelines, including Standards, for the Registration of Premises where Members of the Profession and Authorized Corporate Entities engage in the Manufacture, Distribution, Sale and Dispensing of Drugs and Medicine, to update Monetary Fees and Fines contained in the Act to Reflect the Prevailing Currency Value of the Naira and for Related Matters (HB. 1002) be now read a Second Time" (*Hon. Abbas Tajudeen — Zaria Federal Constituency*).

Debate.

Question that the Bill be read a Second Time — Agreed to.

Bill read the Second Time.

Bill referred to the Committee on Health Institutions

10. **A Bill for an Act to Amend the Currency Offences Act, Cap. C44, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 to provide for stiffer penalties to meet Contemporary Realities and for Related Matters (HB. 922) — Second Reading**

Motion made and Question proposed, "That a Bill for an Act to Amend the Currency Offences Act, Cap. C44, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 to provide for stiffer penalties to meet Contemporary Realities and for Related Matters (HB. 922) be now read a Second Time" (*Hon. Uchechuku G. Nnam-Obi — Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni/Ahoada West Federal Constituency*).

Debate.

Question that the Bill be read a Second Time — Agreed to.

Bill read the Second Time.

Bill referred to the Committee on Banking and Currency.

11. **A Bill for an Act to Amend the Environmental Impact Assessment Act, Cap. E12, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 to make it Responsive by Ensuring that Project Developers, Approving Authorities and Persons whose Livelihood will be Affected by Proposed Projects are involved in the decision making to Safeguard the Environment and ensure adequate Remediation of the Environment and for Related Matters (HB. 977) — Second Reading**

Order read; deferred by leave of the House.

12. **Need for Rehabilitation of Billiri/Todi-Filiya/Taraba Road**

Motion made and Question proposed;

The House:

Notes that Billiri, Todi-Filiya/Taraba Road has been in a deplorable State for sometime with the major bridge along it having been washed away by flood;

Aware that numerous complaints have been made to the Federal Roads Maintenance Agency (FERMA) and the Federal Ministry of Power, Works and Housing on the condition of the Road but promises that were made for its reconstruction have not been fulfilled;

Also aware that the deplorable condition of the Road is causing immense suffering on the residents and commuters who have to endure long hours in the gridlock usually caused by the large number of articulated vehicles plying the route, as well as harassments from armed robbers;

Concerned that if urgent action is not taken to address the situation, the economic and social welfare of the communities along the route will continue to deteriorate and they may be cut off from other neighbouring communities;

Resolves to:

- (i) urge the Federal Roads Maintenance Agency (FERMA) to rehabilitate the road as a matter of urgency, to ensure safety of commuters who ply the road on a daily basis;
- (ii) also urge the Federal Ministry of Power, Works and Housing to include construction of the road in the 2018 budget estimate; and
- (iii) mandate the Committees on FERMA, and Works to ensure implementation (*Hon. Binta Bello — Kaltungo/Shongom Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

(HR. 40/2017).

Motion referred to the Committees on Federal Roads Maintenance Agency (FERMA), and Works, pursuant to Order Eight, Rule 9 (5).

- 13. Reconsideration of Outstanding Bills from the Preceding Assembly (Order Twelve, Rule 16, Standing Orders of the House of Representatives)**
Community Service Bill, 2017 (HB. 1046)
Motion made and Question proposed;

The House:

Notes that pursuant to Order 12, Rule 16 of the Standing Orders of the House, Bills passed by the preceding Assembly and forwarded to the Senate for concurrence for which no concurrence was made or negatived, or passed by the Senate and forwarded to the House for which no concurrence was made or negatived or which was passed by the National Assembly and forwarded to the President for assent but for which assent or withholding thereof was not communicated before the end of the tenure of the Assembly, the House may resolve that such Bills, upon being re-gazetted or clean copies circulated, be re-considered in the Committee of the Whole without being commenced de-novo.

Also notes that the Community Service Bill was passed by the preceding Assembly and forwarded to the President for assent but for which assent or withholding thereof was not communicated before the end of the tenure of the last Assembly;

Aware that the Bill has been re-gazetted as HB. 1046 and read the first time on Wednesday, 31 May, 2017.

Resolves to:

Commit the Bill to the Committee of the Whole for consideration (*Hon. Johnbull Shekarau — Shendam/Mikang/Qua'an/Pan Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

- 14. Devastating Flood at Evbuomore in Ovia North East Local Government Area in Edo State**
Motion made and Question proposed;

The House:

Notes that residents of Evbuomore Community in Ovia North East Local Government Area have been under serious threat following heavy flooding in the area, a situation that has led them to resort to self-help by erecting barricades to keep the flood from entering into their premises and destroying properties;

Also notes that the barricades have restricted the flood to the Benin/Lagos highway which is a major road that is now flooded, thereby making life difficult for motorists, travelers and community dwellers;

Determined to address the menace of flooding in the area in the overall interests of the residents and commuters;

Resolves to:

- (i) urge the Federal Ministry of Power, Works and Housing to put machinery in place to address the flooding on the Benin/Lagos Highway opposite S and T Barracks; and

- (ii) mandate the Committee on Works to visit the erosion and flooding sites in the affected area and make recommendations on measures to be adopted to ensure a permanent solution (*Hon. Omosede G. Igbenedion — Ovia Northeast/Ovia Southwest Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

Ordered: Matter referred to the Ad-hoc Committee on Devastating Effects of Floods caused by Heavy Rainfall in Some Parts of the Country.

15. Need to Resuscitate the 132/33 KVA Arochukwu Electricity Sub-station
Motion made and Question proposed;

The House:

Recalls that in 2000, the Federal Government conceived the 2x30 MVA 132/33 KVA Sub-station to be sited in Uburu-Ihechiowa and Amuvi Village, Arochukwu Local Government Area of Abia State with the aim of improving power supply to communities in Abia and the neighbouring Akwa Ibom and Cross River States;

Also recalls that the contract for the sub-station was awarded in May 2001 for the sum of \$3.4 million with additional local currency component of ₦91 million naira which contract sum was later varied by additional sums of \$350,000 and ₦21 million respectively that brought the total contract sums to \$3.7 million and ₦111.8 million;

Aware that the scope of the project covered comprehensive electro- mechanical and civil works that would ensure that the sub-station provides adequate electricity to the communities, thereby boosting power generation;

Notes that this critical power generation project was abandoned over ten (10) years ago without explanation after attaining ninety percent (90%) completion, thereby leaving the Communities utterly frustrated and without immediate prospect for remedy;

Concerned that the Arochukwu power sub-station project was conspicuously omitted from the power privatization programme of the Federal Government without any explanation and determined that the laudable and beneficial project be resuscitated and urgently completed for the benefits of the expectant communities;

Resolves to:

Mandate the Committee on Power to investigate the circumstances surrounding the abandonment of the Arochukwu 2x30 MVA 132/33 KVA Sub-station as well as establish the facts regarding the placement or otherwise of the project on the Federal Government's power privatization programme and make recommendations within six (6) weeks for further Legislative action (*Hon. Nkole Uko Ndukwe — Arochukwu/Ohafia Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

(HR. 41/2017).

Motion referred to the Committee on Power, pursuant to Order Eight, Rule 9 (5).

16. Call to Remove Religious Studies as Compulsory Subject in Civic Education for Senior Secondary Certificate Examinations (SSCE)

Motion made and Question proposed;

The House:

Notes that under the previous Secondary School Curriculum which brought a lot of discontentment, Civic Education was not a compulsory subject and Religious Education was taught as Islamic Religious Knowledge (IRK) and Christian Religious Knowledge (CRK), both of which were optional subjects;

Also notes that the Federal Ministry of Education introduced a revised curriculum without due consultation with parents and stakeholders and the new nine (9) year Basic Education Curriculum on Religion and National Values Consolidated Religious Education and Civic Education under National Values and made Civic Education a compulsory subject for Senior Secondary Certificate Examinations;

Observes that the curriculum for primary one to three (1-3) which is the formative stage of a child does not provide for adequate teaching of the religious beliefs of the people but rather destructive half-truths which destroys the fundamentals of the religious beliefs and erodes the essence of such religion being taught the children;

Concerned that the new curriculum which is in conflict with certain religious beliefs also makes the teaching of those beliefs compulsory;

Recalls that section 10 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 makes Nigeria a secular state, and therefore Religion should be separated from National Values;

Resolves to:

- (i) call on the Federal Ministry of Education to make Civic Education an optional instead of a compulsory subject for SSCE Examinations, and should rather be taught under the subject "Government" as was the case under the previous curriculum;
- (ii) remove the religious component from Civic Education as a subject;
- (iii) separate our national values from religious values and each should be taught independently;
- (iv) suspend the implementation of the new curriculum pending the conclusion of investigation by the House; and
- (v) mandate the Committee on Basic Education and Services to conduct an investigative hearing on the matter and report back within four (4) weeks for further legislative action (*Hon. Beni Lar — Langtang North/Langtang South Federal Constituency*).

Debate

Amendments Proposed:

- (i) In Prayer (i) immediately after the words "SSCE Examination", insert the words "Primary Education" (*Hon. Rita Orji — Ajeromi/Ifelodun Federal Constituency*).

Question that the amendment be made — Negatived.

- (ii) *Leave out* all the words in Prayer (i) and *insert* as follows:
"call on the Federal Ministry of Education to allow Civic education remain a compulsory subject for SSCE Examinations while religious education should be taught in line with the provisions of the Constitution" (*Hon. Ahmed Idris — Wase Federal Constituency*).

Question that the amendment be made — Agreed to.

- (iii) *Leave out Prayers (iv) and (v) (Hon. Solomon Bulus Maren — Mangu/Bokkos Federal Constituency).*

Question that the amendment be made — Agreed to.

The House:

Noted that under the previous Secondary School Curriculum which brought a lot of discontentment, Civic Education was not a compulsory subject and Religious Education was taught as Islamic Religious Knowledge (IRK) and Christian Religious Knowledge (CRK), both of which were optional subjects;

Also noted that the Federal Ministry of Education introduced a revised curriculum without due consultation with parents and stakeholders and the new nine (9) year Basic Education Curriculum on Religion and National Values Consolidated Religious Education and Civic Education under National Values and made Civic Education a compulsory subject for Senior Secondary Certificate Examinations;

Observed that the curriculum for primary one to three (1-3) which is the formative stage of a child does not provide for adequate teaching of the religious beliefs of the people but rather destructive half-truths which destroys the fundamentals of the religious beliefs and erodes the essence of such religion being taught the children;

Concerned that the new curriculum which is in conflict with certain religious beliefs also makes the teaching of those beliefs compulsory;

Recalled that section 10 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 makes Nigeria a secular state, and therefore Religion should be separated from National Values;

Resolved to:

- (i) call on the Federal Ministry of Education to allow Civic education remain a compulsory subject for SSCE Examinations while religious education should be taught in line with the provisions of the Constitution;
- (ii) remove the religious component from Civic Education as a subject; and
- (iii) separate our national values from religious values and each should be taught independently (HR. 42/2017).

17. Call on the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation Retail to Adjust the Cost Prices of Products to Independent Marketers

Order read; deferred by leave of the House.

18. Consideration of Reports

- (i) *A Bill for an Act to Establish the National Assembly Budget and Research Office which shall provide the National Assembly with Objective, Timely and Non-Partisan Analysis Needed for Economic and Budget Decisions and for Other Related Matters (HB. 377) (Committee of the Whole):*

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the House do consider the Report on a Bill for an Act to Establish the National Assembly Budget and Research Office which shall provide the National Assembly with Objective, Timely and Non-Partisan Analysis Needed for Economic and Budget Decisions and for Other Related Matters (HB. 377) and approve the recommendations therein" (Hon. Timothy Golu — Paskshin/Kanke/Kanam Federal Constituency).

Agreed to.

Question that the House do resolve into the Committee of the Whole to consider the Report — Agreed to.

(HOUSE IN COMMITTEE)

(Mr Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

A BILL FOR AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY BUDGET AND RESEARCH OFFICE WHICH SHALL PROVIDE THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY WITH OBJECTIVE, TIMELY AND NON-PARTISAN ANALYSIS NEEDED FOR ECONOMIC AND BUDGET DECISIONS AND FOR RELATED MATTERS

Clause 1: Amendment of Clause 13.

Funds, Estimates of expenditure, etc.

- (1) NABRO shall establish and maintain a fund which shall be applied towards the discharge of its functions (*Hon. Timothy Golu — Paskshin/Kanke/Kanam Federal Constituency*).

Question that section 1 stand part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 2: Amendment of Clause 15.

Obtaining of data from Public Bodies.

- (5) (a) It shall be mandatory for any MDAs to submit information, data, estimates and statistics as requested by NABRO;
- (b) Any person who refuses or neglects to submit information, data, estimates and statistics as requested by NABRO, is said to have committed an offence and shall be liable to:
- (i) dismissal in line with the Civil Service Rules if he or she is in the employment of the Civil Service of the Federation.
- (ii) pay a fine of ₦2,000,000 if he or she is an appointee of government (*Hon. Timothy Golu — Paskshin/Kanke/Kanam Federal Constituency*).

Question that section 2 stand part of the Bill — Agreed to.

**Clause 3: Insertion of new Clause 16.
Annual Reports.**

The Board shall not later than three months after receipt of the audit report of each year, submit to each House of the National Assembly, the report of the activities and the operations of the Board during the immediate preceding year and shall include report of the audited accounts of the Board (*Hon. Timothy Golu — Paskshin/Kanke/Kanam Federal Constituency*).

Question that section 3 stand part of the Bill — Agreed to.

**Clause 4: Insertion of new Clause 17.
The Power to Accept Gifts.**

- (1) NABRO may accept gifts of land, money or other property on such terms and conditions, if any, as may be specified by the person or organisation making the gift.
- (2) NABRO shall not accept any gift if the conditions attached by the person or organisation making the gift are inconsistent with the functions of NABRO (*Hon. Timothy Golu — Paskshin/Kanke/Kanam Federal Constituency*).

Question that section 4 stand part of the Bill — Agreed to.

**Clause 5: Insertion of new Clause 18.
Power to Borrow.**

Subject to general guidelines issued by the Government of the Federation, NABRO may borrow by way of loan or over draft from any source within the country, such specified amount required by NABRO for meeting its obligations and discharging its functions under this Bill (*Hon. Timothy Golu — Paskshin/Kanke/Kanam Federal Constituency*).

Question that section 5 stand part of the Bill — Agreed to.

**Clause 6: Insertion of new Clause 19.
Procedure for suit against the NABRO.**

- (1) Subject to the provisions of this Bill, the provisions of the Public Officers Protection Act shall apply in relation to any suit instituted against any officer or employee of the NABRO.
- (2) Notwithstanding anything contained in any other law or enactment, no suit shall lie against any member of the Board, the Director General or any other officer or employee of the NABRO for any act done in pursuance or execution of this Bill or any other law or enactment, or of any duty or authority or in respect of any alleged neglect or default in the execution of this Bill or such law or enactment, duty or authority, shall lie or be instituted in any court unless -
 - (a) it is commenced within three months next after the act, neglect or default complained of; or
 - (b) in the case of a continuation of damage or injury, within six months next after the ceasing thereof (*Hon. Timothy Golu — Paskshin/Kanke/Kanam Federal Constituency*).

Question that section 6 stand part of the Bill — Agreed to.

**Clause 7: Insertion of new Clause 20.
Service of Summons.**

A notice, summons or other document required or authorised to be served upon the NABRO under the provisions of this Bill or any other law or enactment may be served by delivering it to the Director General or by sending it by registered post and addressed to the Director General at the principal office of NABRO (*Hon. Timothy Golu — Paskshin/Kanke/Kanam Federal Constituency*).

Question that section 7 stand part of the Bill — Agreed to.

**Clause 8: Insertion of new Clause 21.
Indemnity of Members.**

A member of the Board, the Director General, any officer or employee of the NABRO shall be indemnified out of the assets of NABRO against any proceeding, whether civil or criminal, in which judgment is given in his favour or in which he is acquitted, if any such proceeding is brought against him in his capacity as a member of the Board, the Director General, officer or employee of the NABRO (*Hon. Timothy Golu — Paskshin/Kanke/Kanam Federal Constituency*).

Question that section 8 stand part of the Bill — Agreed to.

**Clause 9: Insertion of new Clause 22.
Acquisition of property by the NABRO.**

- (1) For the purposes of providing offices and premises necessary for the performance of its functions under this Bill, the NABRO may, subject to the Land Use Act —
 - (a) purchase or take on lease any interest in land, or other property; and
 - (b) construct offices and premises and equip and maintain same.
- (2) The NABRO may, subject to the Land Use Act, sell or lease out any office or premises held by it, which office or premises is no longer required for the performance of its functions under this Bill (*Hon. Timothy Golu — Paskshin/Kanke/Kanam Federal Constituency*).

Question that section 9 stand part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 10: Short Title.

17. This Bill may be cited as the National Assembly Budget and Research Office Bill, 2017 (*Hon. Timothy Golu — Paskshin/Kanke/Kanam Federal Constituency*).

Question that section 10 stand part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Long Title:

A Bill for an Act to Establish the National Assembly Budget and Research Office which shall Provide the National Assembly with Objective, Timely and Non-partisan Analysis Needed for Economic and Budget Decisions and for Related Matters (*Hon. Timothy Golu — Paskshin/Kanke/Kanam Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

Chairman to report Bill.

(HOUSE IN PLENARY)

Mr Deputy Speaker in the Chair, reported that the House in Committee of the Whole considered the Report on a Bill for an Act to Establish the National Assembly Budget and Research Office which shall provide the National Assembly with Objective, Timely and Non-Partisan Analysis Needed for Economic and Budget Decisions and for Other Related Matters (HB. 377) and approved Clauses 1 - 10, and the Long Title of the Bill.

Question that the House do adopt the Report of the Committee of the Whole — Agreed to.

(ii) Ad-hoc Committee on Development and Standardization of Manuals and Templates for the House of Representatives:

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the House do consider the Report of the Ad-hoc Committee on Development and Standardization of Manuals and Templates for the House of Representatives, namely: (i) Public Hearing Manual; (ii) Oversight Manual; (iii) Reporting Manual and (iv) Committee Manual and approve the recommendations therein" (Hon. Aminu Shehu Shagari — Yabo/Shagari Federal Constituency).

Agreed to.

Question that the House do resolve into the Committee of the Whole to consider the Report — Agreed to.

(HOUSE IN COMMITTEE)

(Mr Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

(i) PUBLIC HEARING MANUAL**1.0 Introduction**

Public hearings are an important mechanism for strengthening the legislative process and a particularly vital tool in legislative committee work. Whether they be to determine the need, benefits and consequences of proposed legislation; or to monitor, scrutinize and investigate the implementation of legislation and the exercise of Executive powers, they are critical for ensuring transparency, democratic participation and credibility in the legislative process. While the practices differ widely depending on the context, the basic elements and principles remain largely unchanged across different countries.

This Manual has been designed specifically for House Committees, Honourable Members, including the relevant Legislative Officers of the House of Representatives of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. It draws extensively on the local experience in the country, harnessed through the inputs and advice of key top level officials of the House of Representatives including the Honourable Speaker and Chairs of the various House Committees. Furthermore, experience from best practices around the world helped to refine the elements and principles through simplification for easy and practical application. It covers the theory, elements and principles of public hearing, including the types, benefits and procedural guidelines, as well as follow-up actions. This manual is a living document which will continuously enjoy inputs from emerging local experiences and international best practices to make it consistently fit for purpose (*Hon. Aminu Shehu Shagari — Yabo/Shagari Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

2.0. **Meaning of Public Hearing**

In the legislative sphere, "Public Hearing" mainly refers to special meetings organized and conducted by "House Committees" to obtain and analyse relevant information, expert and other public advice on proposed legislation, regulations or policy issues concerned with governance. Public Hearings are also vital mechanisms through which the House of Representatives scrutinizes and investigates the exercise of Executive powers, including the functions of government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs).

Public Hearings are convened by a House Committee to which proposed legislation or governance issue is referred for further research and deliberation in accordance with the Rules of Procedures of the House of Representatives. Public Hearings are convened when the relevant House Committee has insufficient information to make an informed decision on an issue or legislation; when a topic may affect a wide range of stakeholders, etc.

2.1 **Principles**

Public Hearings are underpinned by the doctrine of "natural justice". This doctrine encapsulates the two fundamental principles of right to fair hearing and the rule against bias. Both principles emphasize the critical importance of maintaining procedural fairness and fair decision-making in the Legislative process. In applying these principles, three fundamental rules are referred:

(i) **Fair Hearing Rule:**

This requires that invited persons must be allowed adequate opportunity to prepare and present their submissions. In the case of Investigative Hearings, the person complained about should be informed of the allegations in as much details as possible.

(ii) **Bias Rule:**

This requires that no one should be a judge in his own cause. If any member of the Committee is involved in the subject-matter to be considered or is an interested party, he should be excused from participating in the hearing.

(iii) **Evidence Rule:**

This requires that decisions must be based on evidence presented before the Committee and not on conjecture or mere speculation.

2.2 **Purpose**

Public hearings serve a range of purposes, including:

- the creation of the democratic platform for obtaining and exchanging information among Members of the House of Representatives (MHR), experts, and the public to enhance the legislative scrutiny and oversight of governance.
- promoting meaningful participation of the public in the deliberations and legislative business in the House of Representatives.
- Creating the mechanisms by which the House can enlighten, educate and inform the public of their law-making decisions including other aspects of legislative functions.

2.3 **Objectives**

The objectives of Public Hearings can be summed up as follows:

- to enhance citizen engagement and participation in the legislative process to improve transparency and credibility
- to strengthen democratic expertise in evidence-based decision-making and in so doing, improve the quality and effectiveness of the legislative process

- to promote greater synergy between the Legislative and other arms of government (Judicial and the Executive).

2.4 Benefits

The benefits of Public Hearings in a democratic process include:

- increased information exchange and knowledge, leading to evidence-based and credible legislative processes
- increased awareness and sensitivity of the legislative process to public opinion, resulting in increased legislative accountability and transparency
- enhanced legitimacy of the legislative process
- better informed legislation and policies, leading to better responsive governance
- increased public satisfaction, trust, confidence in, and pro-active constituency support for democratic governance.
- better conflict resolution and democratic harmony through greater consensus building (*Hon. Aminu Shehu Shagari — Yabo/Shagari Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

3.0 Types of Hearings

3.1 Legislative Hearing

Legislative hearing is conducted mainly by legislative Committees. Such Committees conduct public hearings on issues and problems related to draft laws, budgets, or to determine the necessity for a new law. Usually, the purpose of a legislative hearing is to prepare the groundwork, i.e. identify what needs to be done so that a draft can become a proposal and eventually a law.

3.2 Investigative Hearing

This type of hearing is conducted to unravel certain facts. Investigative hearings take place where there is an indication, evidence or public concern that an offence/wrongdoing has been committed by a public official and/or government department; or where a private or public company has acted inappropriately or against the public interest. It is subject to the provisions of Section 88 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (As Amended):

- 88.** (1) Subject to the provisions of this Constitution, each House of the National Assembly shall have power by resolution published in its journal or in the Official Gazette of the Government of the Federation, to direct or cause to be directed investigation into —
- (a) any matter or thing with respect to which it has power to make laws, and
 - (b) the conduct of affairs of any person, authority, ministry or government department charged, or intended to be charged, with the duty of or responsibility for —

Executing or administering laws enacted by National Assembly, and disbursing or administering moneys appropriated or to be appropriated by the National Assembly.

- (2) The powers conferred on the National Assembly under the provisions of this section are exercisable only for enabling it to —
 - (a) make laws with respect to any matter within its legislative competence and correct any defects in existing laws; and
 - (b) expose corruption, inefficiency or waste in the execution or administration of laws within its legislative competence and in the disbursement or administration of funds appropriated by it.

3.3 Oversight Hearing

This type of public hearing is also known as supervisory hearing. It is concerned with the activities of government. Where necessary and appropriate, it looks at draft legislation and proposed Acts of Parliament. Oversight hearings focus on the quality of government programmes and the level of performance of government officials. It can also examine the extent to which the implementation of a law by the executive, is in accordance with the wishes of the legislative body and reflects the public interest.

3.4 Quasi-Judicial Hearing

Quasi-Judicial hearing is more formal than legislative hearings. During a quasi-judicial hearing, the Hearing Body (House of Representatives for this purpose) must hold an evidentiary hearing and make its decision based on the written and oral evidence presented. Unlike legislative decisions, a quasi-judicial decision must be based solely on the evidence presented and cannot be based on opinions of members of the Hearing Body. Put differently, a quasi-judicial decision is one that requires the Hearing Body to find facts and exercise discretion when applying statutory standards to a specific situation. However, a Quasi-Judicial hearing is not as formal as judicial court proceedings. An impeachment proceeding of the House of Representatives is an example of a Quasi-Judicial hearing. The House of Representatives also conducts Quasi-Judicial hearing on Public Petitions. It must be noted that proper procedures must be followed in the entire process, otherwise such decisions, no matter their correctness, may be overturned by a court of law. Such procedures include observation of rules of law and natural justice (*Hon. Aminu Shehu Shagari — Yabo/Shagari Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

4.0 Procedure and Processes

The procedure:

1. A representative is entitled to request that an inquiry be held through a motion.
2. If the motion is successful, the House refers the resolution to a Committee to conduct the investigation.
3. The investigation is conducted in its entirety by a Special or Ad-hoc Committee based on its terms of reference as reflected in the Votes and Proceedings.
4. For the purpose of any investigation, under Section 88 of the Constitution and subject to the provisions thereof, the House of Representatives or a Committee appointed in accordance with Section 62 of this Constitution shall have power pursuant to section 89 (1) to:
 - procure all such evidence, written or oral, direct or circumstantial, as it may think necessary or desirable, and to examine all persons as witnesses whose evidence may be material or relevant to the subject matter;
 - require such evidence to be given on oath;

- summon any person in Nigeria to give evidence at any place or to produce any document or other thing in his possession or under his control, subject to all just exceptions
- issue a warrant to compel the attendance of any person who, after having been summoned to attend, fails, refuses or neglects to do so and does not excuse such failure, refusal or neglect to the satisfaction of the House or the committee in question, and to order him to pay all costs which may have been occasioned in compelling his attendance or by reason of his failure, refusal or neglect to obey the summons, and also to impose such fine as may be prescribed for any failure, refusal or neglect; and any fine so imposed shall be recoverable in the same manner as a fine imposed by a court of law.

5. Upon conclusion of the investigation, the Committee reports to the plenary for further legislative action.

4.2 **Planning for Public Hearings**

While planning for public hearing, several factors are to be put into consideration for proper conduct and effectiveness of the hearing. Some of the factors include:

- the importance of the subject under consideration.
- the level of interest of different groups in that subject.
- the significance of the public hearing and its outcome for the legislature itself.
- whether a hearing would be a good use of time, funds and personnel.

Before conducting a public hearing, the following important factors must be taken into consideration:

- Security and safety of the venue.
- Purpose of the hearing.
- Background information the participants need.
- Procedure and management of the hearing.
- Goals, tasks and the expectations.
- Structure of the discussions and topics for consideration.
- Matters arising from previous discussion and interactions.
- Specific information required in the submissions by respondents/stakeholders.
- Time management.
- Choice of speakers and experts on each topic.
- Engagement and management of official reporters and rapporteurs.
- Appropriate participation approach.
- List of specific questions to guide the discussion.
- Summary of the hearing highlighting vital information or discussion(s) of the hearing after the event.
- Post hearing follow up activities.
- Responsibility for each follow-up activity.
- Feedback time for each follow-up activity.
- Closing remarks.
- Acknowledgment of participant's contribution.

4.3 Pre-Hearing Activities

4.3.1 Agenda:

A carefully considered agenda is essential for conducting an effective hearing. It establishes a structure for discussion, encourages participation and helps in achieving results. It may be useful to organise a focus group to brainstorm issues before finalising the agenda. This may also help in determining how to approach certain issues and developing a list of names of experts and other witnesses to participate in the hearing.

4.3.2 Developing Agenda/Programme of Events

When it is settled that a public hearing is to be conducted, the time and venue as well as a number of other tasks should be addressed. Planning is pivotal to all hearing activities. It is very crucial that the Committee and staff are involved in the organisation and planning of each step. The Committee responsible for the planning and execution of a Hearing shall meet several times before the Hearing commences. This is to ensure that all necessary steps and tasks are completed. For a Hearing to be effectively conducted, the following pre-hearing steps are necessary:

- Establishing an Agenda
- Research and discussion of the main issues of the Hearing by the Committee;
- Issuing invitation letters to key individuals and stakeholders for testimony, presentation and general participation;
- Development and execution of a publicity plan; and
- Follow-up plan.

The Agenda establishes the structure for discussion and helps in achieving results. Copies of the printed Agenda can be circulated to stakeholders and observers as they enter the venue, or placed on their seats. It is important to make the audience at the hearing to know exactly what will happen at each moment of the Hearing. The following is an outline of suggested Agenda:

- Opening Remarks
- Purpose/Objective
- Topics for Discussion
- Hearing Roles
- Facilitating Discussions
- Summary
- Follow-up
- Closing.

4.3.3 Notification/Publicity

As part of the planning process, it is important to also publicise hearings. The decision to conduct public hearings can be published in the Assembly Journal and, where necessary, in the media.

4.3.4 Identification of Stakeholders/Witnesses

Stakeholders are parties who will be affected by or will affect the Committee's strategy or decision. It can also mean any person, group or organisation that can place a claim on the Committee's attention, resources, or output, or is affected by that output.

Part of pre-hearing activities is the identification of stakeholders in the process of public hearing. As stated above, this includes those that will be affected by the Committee's activities, as well as those that will be instrumental in the hearing process. Similarly, since public hearings are usually to establish facts, it is very important to identify those that are to serve as witnesses in the process. This involves identification of all witnesses as well as those that are vital and indispensable so that those that can be dispensed with can be isolated. Prior to invitation, the Committee Clerk identifies all potential witnesses and holds brief interviews with them. In order to give testimony, a witness must be formally invited by the Legislative Committee. Identification of witnesses is one of the most important issues in planning a public hearing. Legislative Committees should particularly focus on which opinions will be represented, who should testify, and in what sequence and format they will be presented.

4.3.5 Groups/Entities Involved in Public Hearing

The list of likely groups and entities involved in public hearing can be endless. However, Committees are enjoined to invite a cross-section of the Nigerian public:

- Ministries, Departments and Agencies of Government
- Academic specialists/experts
- Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)
- Business groups or private sector organisations
- Trade unions
- Student unions or student associations
- Social workers, medical professionals or specialists in a specific field
- Women's organizations or represented minority groups
- Representatives from interested international organizations
- Individual citizens

4.3.6 Issuance of Invitation Letters

- Once a list of stakeholders and suitable witnesses has been determined, the Committee Clerk sends official invitations to them, containing information about the purpose, the topic, date and venue.
- Invitation to witnesses should also contain information about the issue the witnesses should focus on during their oral testimony.
- Invitation should also contain a note on the time allowed for their contribution.

4.3.7 Submission of Written Memos/Evidence

- Where written evidence is to be requested and considered, a timeframe for submission of such evidence should be set out in the invitation.
- Written evidence is usually required, at least a week before the date fixed for the hearing.

- Soft copies of Memos and other relevant documents should be forwarded to the Committee Secretariat.
- Where oral evidence is not considered as necessary, witnesses may be asked to make their submissions in writing.
- The Committee may also supply witnesses with additional information, such as the names of Committee members, rules of conduct of the public hearing, and relevant extracts from legislative acts related to the subject matter.
- A successful public hearing depends on the following key factors:
 - Strong internal communication between Members and Committee Staff
 - Proactive and excellent external communication with civil society organizations
 - Strong committee leadership
 - Strong inter-departmental collaboration
 - Strong commitment by members of the parliamentary committee
 - Availability of relevant and timely information to all participants (*Hon. Aminu Shehu Shagari — Yabo/Shagari Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

5.0 The Day of the Hearing

5.1 Opening Ceremonies

This stage marks the official commencement of public hearing. It is important that for business as serious as this, hearings begin and end on time. The public may perceive the committee as unserious and even disorganised if the hearing fails to begin on time. The opening ceremony should commence with an opening remark by the Chairman. The Chairman presides over proceedings during the hearing, and as such has the duty to maintain order and decorum; indicate which participants are to speak, for how long and in what order.

5.2 Presentations

Presentations by witnesses drawn from the witness list follow the opening ceremony. Witnesses are at liberty to present additional documents relevant to the matter at the end of their testimony. Time allotted for each witness presentation is usually agreed on by the committee and announced by the Chairman. On average, 10 and 15 minutes are allocated to each witness, with an extra 5 to 10 minutes for questions by members of committee. It should however be noted that the allowable time is indeed dependent on the issue and number of witnesses. Part of the task for the Chairman is to ensure that witnesses respect established time limits. The Committee Clerks who are to keep track of the allotted time should advisedly sit close to the Committee Chair to fulfil these tasks effectively. In scheduling witnesses, conscious effort is to be made to ensure that the range of witnesses presenting is balanced to avoid semblance or perception of biased proceedings. It is standard practice that witnesses are treated with courtesy and thanked for their testimony.

5.3 Recording of Proceedings

All public hearing proceedings shall be recorded electronically or stenographically and all persons speaking shall use the microphone provided. The Committee Secretariat is enjoined to make adequate arrangement for parliamentary recording and verbatim reporting.

5.4 Engagement with the Media

Standing Orders of the House empowers Committees to engage the media for the coverage of public hearings. The secretariat is to ensure a robust coverage of public hearings.

However, Committees should:

- Guard against using media coverage of public hearings for political purpose.
- Ensure acceptable standards of dignity, propriety civility and decency in media coverage.
- TV cameras are operated from fixed positions and should not prevent coverage of the hearing by other media.
- TV and radio equipment are set prior to the beginning of the hearing and should not be installed or removed during the hearing.

5.5 Closing Remarks

At the end of public hearing, the Chairman of the Committee makes some remarks. The closing statement should summarize the hearing, with a promise that the outcome of the entire exercise shall be positive as all concerns raised shall be properly dealt with and appropriate recommendations made. The Chairman may nominate any member of the Committee to deliver a Vote of thanks. On this note, the hearing is formally declared closed (*Hon. Aminu Shehu Shagari — Yabo/Shagari Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

6.0 Post Hearing Activities**6.1 Public Hearing Proceedings and Committee's Deliberations on Hearing Proceedings**

The Committee Clerk and his team should compile a report of the hearing proceedings that clearly illustrates the hearing attendance (a list of participants to be provided as annex) with all written and oral evidence received by the Committee. The Committee should meet within a reasonable time frame after the public hearing to deliberate on evidence and information gathered taking into consideration written materials, oral testimony and information submitted during the hearing.

6.2 Report Writing and Presentation

After deliberation on Hearing Proceedings, the Committee proceeds with report writing and presentation of same. Thus, a draft committee report should contain a summary of the hearing testimony, statements, information, witness lists, conclusions and key recommendations that the Committee Members wish to make as a result of the public hearing process. Once the Committee's report has been discussed and recommendations adopted, the final report which is signed by the Chairman and Committee Clerk is submitted to the House.

6.3 Follow-up Actions

As follow-up actions, the Committee should do the following:

Identify actionable steps on relevant findings.

- Ensure that its recommendations are complied with.
- Make recommendations for budgetary provisions where necessary.
- Propose Bills, resolutions and/or motions where necessary.
- Be mindful, and take account of further feedbacks or public comments that may have come after the hearing (*Hon. Aminu Shehu Shagari — Yabo/Shagari Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

7.0 Challenges of Public Hearing

- Negative perception and misinterpretation of the intendment and purpose of the hearing by Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), stakeholders and other respondents.
- Lack of political will to pursue the investigation to a logical conclusion.
- Lack of capacity and requisite skills by the Committee and its secretariat (*Hon. Aminu Shehu Shagari — Yabo/Shagari Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

ANNEXURES:

Annex 1: Proposed Public/investigative Hearing Reporting Template *Executive Summary*

Introduction:

- Mandate of the Committee
- Subject matter of the Public Hearing
- Objective(s)
- Terms of Reference
- Methodology
- Date and Venue
- Membership
- Others in attendance (Secretariat and Consultants)
- List of Stakeholders/Investigated MDAs and their representatives
- Outline the Report.

Submissions

- Received submissions/memoranda
- Summary of submissions by stakeholders
- Analysis of submissions by stakeholders
- ✓ Presentation by stakeholders
- ✓ Documents distribution
- ✓ Summary/analysis by the Committee/Consultants
- ✓ Speech by Chairman/Deputy, explaining the objectives of the Public Hearing
- ✓ Call for presentation of memoranda
- ✓ Discussion session
- ✓ Summary of proceedings by Facilitators/Consultants
- ✓ Report writing and presentation

Committee Findings and Recommendations

Conclusion

Appendices

- ✓ Appendix 1: Attachment of Votes and Proceedings
- ✓ Appendix 2: Evidence of Newspaper Advertisement
- ✓ Appendix 3: Daily Verbatim Reports of hearings
- ✓ Appendix 4: Speeches delivered during Public Hearing
- ✓ Appendix 5: Summary of memoranda/presentations
Committee/Sub-Committee
- ✓ Appendix 6, Checklist for Organizing a Public Hearing

Culled from Service and Accountability — Public Hearing Manual (NDI, 2009)
(Hon. Aminu Shehu Shagari — Yabo/Shagari Federal Constituency).

Agreed to.

Appendix 6: Sample of a Checklist for Organizing a Public Hearing

<i>Progress</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Comments</i>
✓	N/A	Has all the relevant information been sent to the chairperson?
		Has all the relevant information been sent to committee members?
		Has all the relevant information been sent to witnesses?
		Has all the relevant information been sent to the media?
		Have you booked the hearing venue? Have you obtained the key to the room?
		Is there a need to hire a photographer?
		Is the room prepared with seats, tables, a backdrop and has catering been organized?
		Have you contacted all witnesses and committee members to confirm their participation?
		Do witnesses need transportation to and from the hearing, or expenses for a hotel?
		Do the microphones work?
		Is there a sign-in desk?
		Are notices, nameplates and any directional signs needed, properly displayed?
<i>Before the hearing</i>		Do witnesses know where to go, what they are expected to say, how long they are expected to speak, and what time they will be able to leave?
		Have witnesses been offered food and drink?
		Thank, in writing, your witnesses and any others who helped
<i>After the hearing</i>		Send any follow-up information, reports, etc to attendees and to those non-attendees who also need to be informed
		Phone target journalists and tell them about the hearing
		Ensure that all witnesses' expenses have been covered and that the costs of hiring the hall and the catering have been settled
		Follow-up on any other action that needs to be taken as a result of the hearing
		Arrange for a small working group to evaluate the success of the hearing and plan for the next one

✓ Action complete (It may be useful to insert the date the action was completed in this box)

N/A — Action not applicable

Appendix 7, Sample Timeline for Organizing a Public Hearing

<i>Progress</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Comments</i>
✓	N/A 10 DAYS BEFORE THE HEARING: Set a date and time for the public hearing Arrange a venue and a room for the hearing Confirm the list of witnesses and questions with the committee (or the committee chairperson in the absence of the entire committee) 9 DAYS BEFORE THE HEARING: Prepare and send invitations to witnesses Arrange for translation and transcription personnel and equipment 8 DAYS BEFORE THE HEARING: Prepare the press announcement and get the approval of the chairperson for its release 7 DAYS BEFORE THE HEARING: Prepare an agenda and submit it to the chairperson for approval Prepare a briefing pack and send it to members of the committee Confirm attendance of invited witnesses and members of the committee 5 DAYS BEFORE THE HEARING: Send approved press announcement to the media 3 DAYS BEFORE THE HEARING: (i) Confirm all logistics are ready for the hearing (ii) Provide written submissions to members of the committee 2 DAYS BEFORE THE HEARING: Prepare briefing pack for the press Assemble witness list and photocopy any written submissions	

1 DAY BEFORE THE HEARING:

Ensure all checklists are complied with

DAY OF THE PUBLIC HEARING:

Provide briefing pack to the media attending the hearing

Ensure extra copies of materials are available

AFTER THE HEARING:

Review the transcript of the hearing

Summarize the testimony from the hearing and produce a list of recommendations

Based on the recommendations of the committee, produce a draft report

Finalize the recommendations and the report and get final approval from the committee

Follow up the recommendations and keep the committee chair and members informed of progress

✓ Action complete (It may be useful to insert the date the action was completed in this box)

N/A — Action Not applicable (*Hon. Aminu Shehu Shagari — Yabo/Shagari Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

(ii) OVERSIGHT MANUAL**1.0 Introduction**

Nigeria's democratic establishment has witnessed tremendous development in the years following the return to democratic governance in 1999. The growing cost, dynamics and complexities of Executive institutions and responsibilities, has necessitated a robust and more effective mechanism for reviewing, monitoring, and supervising the implementation of public policy and programs to ensure a better and more responsible governance. Nigeria has now, a well-established Legislature, which beyond making and passing effective legislation to enhance good governance, plays a critical role in defining and implementing mechanisms for providing effective surveillance over the exercise of Executive powers, performance and accountability in government. This Legislative responsibility entails the development of integrated processes for ensuring that the laws work and are being administered in an effective, efficient, and economical manner. It also involves the flexibility and adaptability of legislative monitoring and supervisory processes to the complexities of the rapidly evolving and continuously modernizing democratic landscape.

This document has been developed by the House of Representatives, with inputs from National Institute for Legislative Studies (NILS) and experts, to provide a guide for the legislature on the exercise of its powers of Oversight on the Executive and Judicial Arms. While not prescriptive, it however provides a dynamic legislative oversight framework upon which new knowledge, experiences and emerging best practices can be built. More importantly, it serves not just as a reference document but also a capacity building material for legislators and legislative support staff of the House of Representatives (*Hon. Aminu Shehu Shagari — Yabo/Shagari Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

2.0 Meaning of Legislative Oversight

Legislative oversight refers to the review, monitoring, and supervision of the work of government, including the implementation by government of promulgated laws, and comparing performance of and between government agencies in executing legislative mandates. In exercising this vital legislative function, the House of Representatives examines the extent to which the Judiciary, and Executive arm and its Agencies, in implementing policies and programmes, comply with the letter and spirit of the law.

2.1 Authority to Conduct Oversight

There are varieties of instruments that provide the National Assembly with the mandate to carry out its Oversight functions including the Constitution, Statutes and Standing Rules of the two Houses of the National Assembly.

Specifically, the following are noteworthy:

2.1.1 Constitutional Authority

The constitutional authority to conduct oversight is enabled by a number of statutory provisions, which include:

- (a) **Appropriation Authority:** The National Assembly should, through an appropriation or supplementary appropriation bill, approve, vary or question budgets (annual or supplementary) submitted to it by the Executive and authorize a withdrawal, by the Executive, of monies so appropriated (Sections 59 and 80 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (CFRN) 1999 (as amended).
- (b) **Investigative Authority:** The National Assembly is empowered to investigate the conduct of any person and MDAs on matters over which the legislature has competence. This power is provided for by the Constitution in sections 4 and 88-89 for the National Assembly
- (c) **National Assembly Legislative Authority:** The legislative powers of the Federal Republic of Nigeria shall be vested in a National Assembly for the Federation, which shall consist of a Senate and a House of Representatives. The National Assembly shall have power to make laws for the peace, order and good government of the Federation or any part thereof with respect to any matter included in the Exclusive Legislative List set out in Part I of the Second Schedule to this Constitution. The power of the National Assembly to make laws for the peace, order and good government of the Federation with respect to any matter included in the Exclusive Legislative List shall, save as otherwise provided in this Constitution, be to the exclusion of the Houses of Assembly of States. In addition, and without prejudice to the powers conferred by subsection (2) of this section, the National Assembly shall have power to make laws with respect to the following matters:
 - Any matter in the Concurrent Legislative List set out in the first column of Part II of the Second Schedule to this Constitution to the extent prescribed in the second column opposite thereto; and
 - Any other matter with respect to which it is empowered to make laws in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution.
 - (5) If any Law enacted by the House of Assembly of a State is inconsistent with any law validly made by the National Assembly, the law made by the National Assembly shall prevail, and that other Law shall, to the extent of the inconsistency, be void.

- (d) **Committee Authority:** The authority conferred by the CFRN is exercisable by the whole House, joint committees or special committees. Some of the authority of these committees are defined by the CFRN (by designation of their jurisdictions), while others are defined in the relevant legislatures' rules. Specifically, Sections 62 (1) (3), and 85(5) confer the power to create these committees and to define their jurisdiction in the relevant rules.
- (e) **Special or General Committee:** Section 62 (1) empowers the Senate and House of Representatives to "appoint a committee of its members for such special or general purpose as in its opinion would be better regulated and managed by means of such a committee, and may by resolution, regulation or otherwise, as it thinks fit, delegate any functions exercisable by it to any such committee".
- (f) **Joint Finance Committee:** Section 62 (3) CFRN, empowers the Senate and the House of Representatives to appoint a joint committee on finance consisting of an equal number of persons appointed by each House and may appoint any other Joint Committee under the provisions of this section. By Section 62(4) the various committees are only authorized to make recommendations to the House on matters within their jurisdiction.
- (g) **Public Accounts Committee:** Section 85 (5) CFRN, empowers the Auditor-General to, within ninety days of receipt of the Accountant-General's financial statement, submit his reports under this section to each House of the National Assembly and each House shall cause the reports to be considered by a committee of the House of the National Assembly responsible for public accounts.

Section 85 (2): The public accounts of the Federation and of all offices and courts of the Federation shall be audited and reported on to the Auditor-General who shall submit his reports to the National Assembly; and for that purpose, the Auditor-General or any person authorized by him in that behalf shall have access to all the books, records, returns and other documents relating to those accounts.

- (h) **Statutory Authority:** The National Assembly, through statutes, confers some oversight duties on certain bodies and agencies. These bodies are then by law required to report to the National Assembly, who may also conduct oversight functions over the individual agencies. The National Assembly has the power to continue to expand their authority and or create new agencies subject to its legislative competence.

2.2 Objectives of Oversight

Legislative oversight is an important tool in promoting transparency and accountability in governance. It is an effective instrument deployed by legislators, as representatives of the citizenry, to hold government accountable.

Specifically, oversight of the executive and Judiciary is designed to achieve the following objectives:

- I. Ensure Executive compliance with legislative intent
- II. Improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and economy of governmental operations
- III. Evaluate Programme performance
- IV. Prevent executive encroachment on legislative powers and prerogatives
- V. Investigate allegations of poor administration, arbitrary and capricious behavior, abuse, waste, fraud, and dishonesty in governance

- VI. Assess government agency or officials' ability to manage and carry out Programme objectives
- VII. Assess the need for new federal legislation
- VIII. Review and determine federal financial priorities
- IX. Protect individual rights and liberties
- X. Inform the public about how the government is performing its public duties

2.3 Types of Oversight

2.3.1 Appropriation Oversight

Appropriation Enactment Procedure includes:

- The President lays the budget before the Senate and House of Representatives (see section 81 (1), which may sit jointly or separately.
- The Committee on Rules and Business schedules the budget proposal for second reading debates.
- The Committee on Rules and Business, in conjunction with the Committee on Appropriation draw up a timetable for consideration of the different aspects of the executive budget proposal. The debate focuses on the priority frameworks, macroeconomic framework and fiscal policies, etc.
- The Bill is thereafter committed to the Appropriation Committee for further deliberations
- For the purposes of the budget consideration, all other relevant Standing Committees serve as Sub-Committees on Appropriations. The Sub-Committees invite MDAs to defend their proposals. Inputs are obtained from interest groups and the public at large.
- This budget defense is oversight as it scrutinizes performance of the previous year budget and incoming year's estimates.
- The Sub-Committees of Appropriation thereafter collate a revised budget and report to the Appropriation Committee.
- Recommendations are made on the budget and forwarded to the plenary for consideration.
- Each House of the National Assembly communicates its approval to the other chamber.
- A Conference Committee (Joint Finance Committee) of the House and Senate is thereafter set-up by the leadership of the two Houses to consider areas of divergence between the two chambers. The report of the Harmonization Committee is signed by all its members and presented to each House at different times.
- After the budget is passed by the two houses, each house sends a clean copy to the Clerk of the National Assembly
- The Clerk of the National Assembly writes a letter transmitting the Budget passed by the National Assembly to the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria for his assent and thereby making the Appropriation Bill to become law

- The Constitution requires the President to sign within 30 days. He may also refuse to sign the Bill into law.
- The President may within 30 days send his comments (why he refuses and his Objections) on the Bill to the National Assembly or the National Assembly may set aside the President's comments and with a two-third majority override the President's veto and the Bill becomes law.
- This overriding power of the National Assembly is oversight.

2.3.2 Routine Oversight

Powers of oversight of the legislature as provided in the Constitution are to be exercised for making laws with respect to any matter within its legislative competence and to correct any defects in existing laws; as well as for exposing corruption, inefficiency or waste in the execution or administration of laws and in the disbursement or administration of funds appropriated by it. Apart from constitutional provisions as outlined above, for example, Order Seventeen, Rule 9 of the Standing Orders of the House of Representatives, 2016 also makes provisions for investigative hearing which is a form of routine oversight. Routine oversight refers to regular and normal oversight activities of the legislature over Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), for ensuring that due process is followed in activities of the MDAs. This type of oversight is regularly conducted in the spirit of checks and balances for curtailing excesses of the executive arm of government. Routine oversight may also take the form of legislative approval of executive appointments. Generally, routine oversight takes the following forms:

- Committee inquiries and hearings
- Formal consultations with and reports from the President
- House advice and consent for Presidential nominations and for treaties
- Informal meetings between legislators and executive officials

2.3.3 Investigative Oversight

This power is provided for by the Constitution in sections 88-89. This type of oversight is scheduled only when there is an issue to be investigated or when there are facts to be ascertained before a legislative decision is taken as to whether to amend a law, enact a new law or expose and recommend an agency or individual for prosecution for corruption, waste and inefficiency in the administration of public funds. Any such investigation must be initiated by a resolution published in the National Assembly Journal or the Federal Government Official Gazette and must relate to matters within the legislative competence of the relevant legislature. Specifically, the CFRN provide for this thus:

88. (1): Subject to the provisions of this Constitution, each House of the National Assembly shall have power by resolution published in its journal or in the Official Gazette of the Government of the Federation to direct or cause to be directed investigation into —

- (a) any matter or thing with respect to which it has power to make laws, and
- (b) the conduct of affairs of any person, authority, ministry or government department charged, or intended to be charged, with the duty of or responsibility for —
 - (i) executing or administering laws enacted by National Assembly, and
 - (ii) disbursing or administering moneys appropriated or to be appropriated by the National Assembly.

88. (2): The powers conferred on the National Assembly under the provisions of this section are exercisable only for the purpose of enabling it to —

- (a) make laws with respect to any matter within its legislative competence and correct any defects in existing laws; and
- (b) expose corruption, inefficiency or waste in the execution or administration of laws within its legislative competence and in the disbursement or administration of funds appropriated by it.

For emphasis, any investigation initiated under section 88-89 of the CFRN 1999 (As Amended), must relate to either Matters and conduct within the jurisdiction of Legislative Investigative Oversight Committees and the conduct of affairs of any person, authority, ministry or government department or both.

Matters and conduct within the jurisdiction of Legislative Investigative Oversight Committees

In accordance with sections 88 and 128 of the CFRN, Investigative Oversight is limited to matters and conduct of any person, authority, ministry or government department over which National Assembly has legislative authority. State Assemblies cannot invite Federal appointees or Federal statutory bodies and Federal Legislature can not invite bodies established by State laws or ask questions about matters it cannot make laws upon. To determine the matters or conduct of persons over which the relevant legislature has power, the committee must refer first to the sections conferring legislative authority to the National and State Assembly. These are sections 4, 90 and 100 of the CFRN. These sections provide the legislature with the authority to make laws and the matters over which it can make laws. Specifically, per the CFRN, the National Assembly has jurisdiction over 68 matters exclusively and share jurisdiction with states on other 30 matters. Although the National Assembly has priority and jurisdiction over all these matters, exclusive and concurrent, it cannot make laws or initiate investigation over matters for which the State Assemblies make or amend laws.

The conduct of affairs of any person, authority, ministry or government department

Aside the afore mentioned matters in section (a) above, the legislature: Federal and State, also have legislative oversight over the official conduct of persons, individuals, government agencies and ministries carrying out or about to be charged with the responsibility of carrying out public functions on any of the matters within the legislative list of either the national or state assemblies.

Such functions must either be mandated by statute or government policy. It also includes establishments without a statutory backing but carrying out functions over which the legislature can make law. Thus, to decide whether a present Agency, Ministerial or Departmental activity can be further mandated by statute, the legislature can invite the person, agency, authority, ministry or government department that, now, oversees the activity for any of the purposes stated in sections 88 and 128 of the CFRN.

2.3.4 Public Accounts Oversight

Historically, Public Accounts Committee (PAC)* is one of the oldest of all legislative committees and the second committee specifically mentioned in the CFRN (section 85 (5)). Public Accounts oversight signifies one of the essential constituents of legislative control which is the responsibility over public funds or expenditure. The examination of Auditor General's Reports for the Ministries, Departments and Agencies and other Independent and semi-autonomous bodies, is one of the main functions of the PAC. The main objective of the Public Accounts Committee is to ensure transparency and accountability; to ensure that public monies are applied for the purposes prescribed by the legislature; that extravagance and waste are minimized or eliminated and; that sound financial practices are encouraged in estimating and contracting, and in administration, generally. Some of the public accounts oversight strategies are:

- Identification of issues (Committee decision) for affected MDAs response - written response
- Responses from MDAs submission by PAC
- Public Hearing (defense of issues raised in submissions) i.e. outcome.
- Documentation, Analysis and Compilation for submission (Report) to plenary PAC
- Plenary decision on outcome of PAC report.

2.3.5 Impeachment Oversight

Section 143 of the Constitution stipulates the procedures for instituting impeachment proceedings against a serving President or Vice-President. The National Assembly is conferred with this power.

2.3.5 Limitations of Oversight Authority

Limitations of legislative oversight authority include:

Constitutional Limitations: Legislative Oversight Committee is not a court and its activity is subject to judicial review and determination (Section 4 (8) and (9) of the CFRN, 1999) (as amended). By extension the above provisions mean that the investigation cannot be conducted or perceived as a judicial function. It is a legislative function and there are only two possible outcomes from the investigation:

- The making of law or repeal/amendment of an existing law; and
- Exposing of corruption, waste and inefficiency in public finance and possible referral to the executive arm for a decision whether to prosecute.

Committees are limited in their inquiries to matters over which the legislature can make laws. The purpose of the investigation must be stated ab-initio and must be in fulfillment of all or any of the purposes stated in 9.1 (a) and (b) above as per section 88 or 128 of the CFRN 1999 as amended. Even where apparent corruption, waste or inefficiency is discovered the National Assembly cannot criminalize or otherwise, an action or conduct retrospectively. It can at best, as concerned body, refer the matter to the Attorney General or police for possible prosecution.

Statutory limitations

- The Freedom of Information Act signed into law on 28th May 2011
- Professional privileges and confidentiality clauses in statutes and contracts.

Non-statutory limitations

- The pursuit of personal and political interests instead of national interests.
- Absence of reliable and independent media to report, articulate and echo public outcry.
- Absence of well organized Civil Society Organisations (CSOs).
- Limited Public knowledge of the legislative process.
- Unreliable data for counterfactual test.

Capacity Limitation

- Many new legislators due to high turnover after general elections may not have sufficient experience in oversight.
- Inadequate funds to train staff and members on oversight.
- Inadequate infrastructure.
- Absence of common templates to conduct oversight.
- Poor record keeping (*Hon. Aminu Shehu Shagari — Yabo/Shagari Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

3.0 Tools of Oversight

To effectively undertake its oversight functions, several tools are available to the House. These tools include Ad-hoc or Special Committees, Hearings, and Petitions. However, for these tools to work there must be at least two conditions: the political willingness to apply the tools and an understanding of the limit of such tools. Before proceeding into detailed discussion of the procedures for the use of these tools some general definitions of the available tools are provided below:

- (a) **Ad-hoc or Special Committee:** A committee set up to perform a specific function on a matter that is of interest to a legislature, on a temporary basis.
- (b) **Hearings:** Procedures used by legislative bodies to obtain oral information from persons outside the bodies concerned. Hearings can be public or investigative.
- (c) **Petition:** A petition is a formal request to an authority for redress of a grievance. It can take the form of either a request for assistance with a specific issue or for the redress of a grievance. As a tool, for oversight, the Standing Orders establish Public Petitions Committee to investigate complaints about good governance in the country, for example, alleged mismanagement of public funds and administrative highhandedness. Order Eighteen, Rule 5 of the Standing Orders of the House of Representatives, the Public Petitions Committee, shall consist of not more than 40 members appointed or constituted at the commencement of the life of the House.

- I. The jurisdiction of Public Petitions Committee includes:
Oversight the Public Complaint Commission:

- Annual Budget estimates

- Consider the subject matter of all petitions referred to it and shall report from time to time to the House its recommendations on actions to be taken thereon, together with such other observations on the petitions.
- II. Contents of a petition: Petition must not deal with a matter that is before a court or quasi-judicial body or under investigation, if its presentation may be prejudicial to anyone:
- Address of the petitioner
 - The recipient committee
 - Title or heading of the petition
 - Brief introduction of the petitioner
 - Substance of the petition (clear and accurate statement of facts)
 - Reliefs sought
 - Date and signature of the petitioner
 - Name of the petitioner, including his/her designation where appropriate.
- III. Procedure for using Petition as an Oversight tool
- Receipt of petition by a legislator
 - Presentation to the plenary by a legislator
 - Referral to the public petition committee
 - Filing and acknowledgment of receipt of the petition
 - Committee secretariat conducts preliminary scrutiny to ascertain jurisdiction of the Committee on the petition
 - Service of the petition on the parties
 - The Committee Clerk may require the petitioner to provide further background information
 - Committee consideration of the petition (this involves invitation of relevant parties and taking of evidence)
 - Committee recommendation of appropriate measures to the plenary
 - Consideration of Committee recommendations in the Committee of the Whole House
 - Resolution

(d) **Interactive Session:** Interactive session is one of the tools that can aid oversight responsibility of the legislature. It is conducted to enable legislators and MDAs interact with government officials and engage in a dialogue with relevant stakeholders in the polity, e.g. Civil Society representatives to exchange ideas or familiarize themselves on issues that concern both parties to obtain first-hand information on developments in each other's responsibilities. Interactive session makes it easier for legislators to ask questions that ordinarily would not have arisen in the discharge of their mandate or responsibilities, as there is no limit to which an issue that concern the state of affairs of MDAs cannot be scrutinized. Likewise, it exposes to great extent the degree to which MDAs are organized to manage public funds or otherwise. This serves as an early pointer to the kind of relationship or confidence a committee can have on MDAs. The major steps to take in organizing an interactive session are:

- Initiating issues for sessions consideration by committee
- Preparation for the session
- In conducting this event, the following activities are critical:
 - ★ Publicity within the committee
 - ★ Intimating the principal officers of the legislature
 - ★ Informing committee members
 - ★ Securing and organizing venue of the session
 - ★ Sending invitation to MDAs and relevant stakeholders
 - ★ Conducting the session in a committee meeting style i.e. Chairman takes control over the session, making note of issues that concern oversight or address oversight issues
 - ★ Report writing

Note: The use of ICT has made it possible for simultaneous or 'real time' exchange of information over a transmission medium, such as conference telephone conversation, video conferencing, or internet relay chat sessions. Committees can exploit this opportunity to conduct interactive session and reduce the cost/energy for oversight engagements.

(e) **Oversight Visits:** Oversight visit refers to mission embarked upon by legislators to Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) to promote public accountability. It is an implicit constitutional obligation of the legislative arm of government. Basically, the purposes of oversight visit are highlighted below:

- To make sure that MDAs expend public funds in a cost-effective and efficient manner.
- To evaluate programmes and performance.
- To detect and prevent poor administration, waste, abuse, arbitrary and capricious behavior, or illegal and unconstitutional conduct.
- To ensure Executive compliance with legislative intent.
- To acquire information useful in future policymaking.

- To determine whether agencies or programmes are fulfilling their statutory responsibility.

Procedures for Oversight Visit

- Formal Communication to members
- Presentation/discussion of the issues and purpose of the visit.
- Communication to the MDAs about the visit stating the purpose, date and time (no visit should be undertaken without prior notice)
- Logistics arrangement for committee and support staff
- *Visit:* Interrogation and collection of evidence (videos, photographs, etc.)
- Submission of report (see appendix for the format of oversight report)
- Consideration of the report by committee members
- Presentation of the report including recommendations at plenary (if necessary).

- (f) **Legislative investigation:** Legislative investigation is a formal inquiry conducted by the House in exercise of its legislative authority. A legislature has many of the judicial or quasi-judicial powers to support a legislative inquiry, including the power to issue summons and warrants, and cross-examine a witness and to hold a witness in contempt of the committee.

Legislative investigation procedure

- Identification of persons to be invited to give evidence
 - Presentation of the issues for investigation
 - Interrogation of the issues and presentation of evidence
 - Expert advice when necessary
 - Highlights of findings on the main issues of investigation
 - Recommendations
 - Submission of report to plenary
- (g) **Specialized Committee:** Sometimes known as Select Committees, are committee appointed to perform a special function that is beyond the authority or capacity of a standing committee. A specialized committee is usually established by a resolution that outlines its duties and powers and the procedures for appointing members. Special committees are often investigative in nature, rather than legislative, though some select and special committees in some jurisdictions, have the authority to draft and report legislation.
- (h) **Special or Ad-hoc Committee:** An *ad-hoc* Committee is a special Committee set up to obtain information on a matter that is under investigation by the legislature. While the jurisdiction of permanent committees generally mirrors government departments (departmentally-related committees) or covers the whole of an area or aspect of policy (budget, gender), special or Ad-hoc Committee are set up to oversee specific issues and the cease to exist once their mission is complete. The power to set up a Special or *Ad-hoc* Committee is derived from the Constitution. Section 88 (1) of the 1999 of

the CFRN as amended, empowers the National Assembly to set up a Special or Ad-hoc committee for carrying out an investigation.

3.1 Step-by-Step Process of Conducting Oversight

1. *Oversight Preparation*

Effective oversight requires good preparation. Legislative committees therefore need to be adequately prepared before embarking on oversight activities. It is therefore advised that committees with the support of the committee secretariat and research staff undertake some preparatory activities ahead of conducting oversight. Some of the things to do are —

- Ensure that members have access to the strategic plans, periodic reports of the MDA's and Budget Statements (as relevant) for the financial year to which the periodic reports apply, so that they can compare the MDA's actual performance against its plans;
- Ensure that members have access to the previous year's annual report for the MDA, so that they can make comparisons with the MDA's previous performance;
- Ensure that members have access to the previous year's Oversight Report (where applicable) and any resolutions taken by the House in relation to the particular function, and any responses received from the Minister/Officials;
- Compile any reports from other oversight bodies and regulatory agencies as well as any other agencies monitoring complaints against MDAs;
- Compile a list of external subject experts and organisations with knowledge of the particular function that the members can contact should they wish to get an outside view on the MDA's performance in the past year;
- Depending on the nature of the oversight hearings, the committee staff may contact subject experts or organisations to make submissions and presentations;
- Prepare a list of priority questions that the member would like to pose either to the Minister or to the accounting officer.

2. *Oversight Hearing*

At this stage, Committees receive testimonies and presentations from sector ministries and get the opportunity to question them as well. Oversight hearings should be scheduled in a manner that allows the Committee enough time for preparation. The oversight hearings can be structured in four ways:

1. A presentation by the Minister and/or the accounting officer and then a page-by-page review of the relevant sections of the reports/documents. This approach requires minimal preparation on the part of members. It is very efficient in terms of time. However, it tends to be less effective because larger issues often get lost in the page-by-page process, and because there is no outside input to challenge the information put forward by the MDA.
2. A presentation by the Minister and/or the accounting officer followed by a presentation by a designated member of the committee dealing with key issues as identified by the Committee, followed by a question and answer session. This approach requires more preparation by the members of the committee, and they need to agree beforehand on the key issues. If the committee works together it can be very effective in focusing attention on

specific problem areas. It would also be more useful from the executives' perspective as it would give a clear indication of what the committee's concerns are.

3. A presentation by the Minister and/or the accounting officer followed by inputs by invited experts or stakeholder organisations, followed by a question and answer session. This format has the advantage of bringing in outside inputs to the oversight process, which can usefully broaden the committee's information base. Including experts in the process can mitigate the information asymmetry that often exists between MDAs and committees, and so prove a useful check on the accuracy of the performance information supplied by the MDA. Including stakeholder organisations can give the client's perspective on the MDA's activities, which can be a very useful check on the MDA's performance. However, to avoid accusations of bias, the committee would need to reach consensus on who to invite to make presentations.
4. A presentation by the Minister and/or the accounting officer followed by a full-scale public hearing, followed by a question and answer session. This format has the advantage of being most transparent and promoting a maximum degree of public participation. It can also be very useful in gathering information from experts and clients that may not otherwise be available to the committee, and which is useful for evaluating the MDA's performance. Care should be taken to ensure that those making presentations focus on the MDA's performance over the past year. The disadvantages of this approach are that it is relatively expensive, and can be very time-consuming.

3. *Oversight Report*

Committees must compile a report after the hearings. This is usually done by the Committee Secretariat. Oversight Reports should deal with the following issues:

- Compliance with laying deadlines and other processes set out in the Public Financial Management Regulations and recommend appropriate sanctions where Ministers/Officials and/or accounting officers have failed to fulfill their reporting obligations;
- Compliance with the prescribed formats and other official requirements, i.e. comments on, the technical quality of the annual report of the Department/Agency;
- Check on the pattern of spending, and whether payment of funds was delayed for the last quarter or month of the financial year, and whether the department or entity paid amounts due within 30 days of receiving adequate documentation;
- Comments on the functioning of the audit committee and internal controls in the department or entity;
- Comments on the adequacy/usefulness of the General Information section in the annual report of the Department/Ministry;
- Comments on the entity's reported performance as reflected in the Performance Information section in the annual report;
- Comments on the entity's human resource situation and policies regarding the Human Resource Information section in the annual report;

- Key issues that the committee would like to draw to the entity's attention about its performance in the preceding year;
- Recommendations on whether the committee believes the accounting officer deserves the proposed performance bonus, or any sanctions the committee proposes against nonperforming accounting officers; and
- Recommendations in relation to any of the issues noted above.

4. ***Laying of Oversight Reports***

Oversight reports must be laid in the House, and copies sent to various Ministries and departments once accepted. It is important that these reports are produced on time so that they can feed into the current planning and budgeting process and for the Ministries to act upon the recommendations.

5. ***Step Five: Follow-Up***

There is the need for Committees to put in place follow-up mechanisms to ensure that recommendations are being implemented.

3.2 **Public Hearings**

Public hearings are used within legislative settings mainly for two purposes:

- (i) during legislation, to get views from the public in support of or against a proposed law; and
- (ii) for oversight purposes. They can be an effective oversight tool if applied appropriately. The Public Accounts Committee in most cases uses this medium to conduct oversight. Other legislative committees with Oversight responsibilities (can also use this approach in performing their watch-dog role over government and the Judiciary and their Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs).

3.2.1 **Format for Organizing Public Hearing**

Establish Goals for the Hearing

Before a Committee embarks on holding a public hearing, it is important to determine and outline what the Committee wants to achieve. This gives direction to the Committee in the rest of its organization - for instance, it guides the Committee in choosing the right witnesses, request for the right information, etc.

After determining the goal of the hearing, the Committee should:

- Determine which issues of importance to examine during the hearing;
- Decide on which witnesses to invite and from which departments or agencies;
- Determine the information required from witnesses;
- Determine whether there is a need to issue a public call for submissions.

Before the hearing

Once a Committee decides to hold a hearing, the following need to be done in advance:

- The Clerk to the Committee should write to invite all MDAs concerned to the hearing, stating the reasons why they are being invited and the issues they are expected to respond to. The invitation should be accompanied by a brochure providing guidelines to the witness.
- Invited witnesses should be required to write to formally accept the invitation and confirm their availability to testify at the hearing.

- Invitees must be required to send written responses to queries by a certain date ahead of the hearing.
- The Clerk to the Committee should publish an announcement of the hearing for the benefit of the public in all the required media.
- Ideally, the Committee should meet to examine written responses received from witnesses and determine the queries that have been satisfactorily answered and those that need to be probed further during the hearing. This exercise allows the committee to narrow down to only important and outstanding issues.

The day of Public Hearing

- The actual hearing should be moderated by the Chairman of the Committee or his Deputy according to laid down meeting procedures.
- Witnesses should be called according to how they have been scheduled to appear.
- The Committee should agree on which Members should lead the questioning process.
- These Members will take turns to ask questions to clarify issues they are not clear on.
- Committee staff should record all proceedings. The Committee's report will be based on these records.

After the Public Hearing

- Committee Secretariat should share transcripts of proceedings with witness in order for them to confirm (by a given timeline), the accuracy of their testimonies as captured.
- Committee Secretariat should proceed to put together a report which will be presented to the House. Written responses to queries will also form a basis of the report.
- Upon laying the Committee's report, the Committee Secretariat should write to inform the MDAs concerned, requesting a ministerial response to the recommendations of the report within an agreed timeframe.
- After the ministerial response, the Committee may follow-up on the implementation of the recommendations which can include visits.

3.3 Budget Scrutiny

Budget Scrutiny is comprised of three sections — Conditions and Context; Objectives of the Scrutiny; and finally, how the budget should be analyzed (See Order Twelve, Rule 19 of the Standing Order of the House of Representatives, Ninth Edition, 2016), for a detailed guide on procedure for money and appropriation bills. The House can however, change it at any time.

3.3.1 Objectives of Legislative Budget Scrutiny

- I. Exercise of Constitutional Mandate of oversight.
- II. Hold the Executive accountable for expenditures made.
- III. Ensure that proposed policies and strategies will provide the optimum services to be delivered.
- IV. Ensure consistency between the estimates and allocations in the statement (check all the sources of revenue and the different budget classifications).

- V. Drive improvements in public service delivery.
- VI. Allow for the concerns and interest of the public and their communities and constituents.

3.3.2 Procedures

- (a) The Chairman should receive the budget at least three days before the Hearings.
- (b) Briefs should be provided by Committee Secretariat to all Members of the Committee.
- (c) Notice should go to all Permanent Secretaries and Accounting Officers of MDAs with a request to submit their expenditure plans (using the template provided by the committee secretariat) for the upcoming fiscal year.
- (d) Submissions received from MDAs should be circulated to Members.
- (e) For effective management of time, Members wishing to raise issues can submit their questions to the Committee Secretariat to be forwarded to the MDA in advance.
- (f) The Clerk should work with the Budget Officer and Director of the relevant MDAs.

3.3.3. Analyzing the Budget

Issues to consider:

Integrity of the budget proposal

- Are resources going to be used in conformity with legal requirements?
- Authorizations and Mandatory Requirements
- Based on the appropriations for the current fiscal year, how much has been spent and how much is left?

Operating Performance

- How much do programs cost?
- How are the program costs determined?
- Are any comparative analyses made?
- Are issues of efficiency and economy considered?
- How are programs financed?
- Who/How/What determines the allocation of resources?
- What is expected to be achieved?
- How do you measure impact?
- What liabilities are expected from program execution?
- How has the government managed its assets?

Stewardship

- Did the MDA's financial condition improve or deteriorate?

- What provision has been made for the future?

Systems and Control

- Are there systems to ensure effective compliance, proper management of assets and adequate performance?
- What is the status of the MDA's internal audit and how is this function assessed?

3.3.4 Framework for Budget Analysis

Documents Needed for Analysis

- Sector Medium Term Strategic Plans
- Annual Budget Statement
- Sector Estimates
- In year monitoring report
- International Commitments
- Auditor General's Report
- CSO and other Specialists Sector Analyses
- Sector Results Framework

What Should Be Analyzed

- Previous year budget performance
- Variance analysis
- Output delivery
- Programme and sub-Programme results
- Were targets met?
- Current year budget

Objectives of the Analyses

- Alignment of MDA budget to National policy framework
- Policy coherence
- Consistency between the budget statement and the Estimates
- Efficiency and economy
- Value for money

Sector Results Framework

Assess Targets and Indicators (SMART indicators)

Achievements against Targets

Sector Medium Term Plans

Sector objectives versus. National Strategies

Annual Progress Reports

Annual Budget Statement

Performance - previous year

Sector priorities and target

Resource Allocation

Sector Estimates

Identify Programmes

Previous Performance of the sector using indicators

Allocations and Actuals

International Commitments

Specific to the sector

Are Sectoral allocations responsive to the international goals?

In Year Monitoring Reports

Revenue performance against targets

Expenditure performance against targets

Sector by Sector expenditure trend

Audit Reports

Check for Sector Issues

CSOs and other Specialists Reports/Analyses

Data and information from CSOs, Development Partners and Think Tanks

3.4 Inspection Visits

Oversight function of the legislature extends to scrutiny of financial, administrative, and management practices of public officers and other public institutions. The legislature holds public institutions to account for appropriated funds to ensure transparency and accountability.

Critical areas of the national economy where thorough and persistent legislative oversight is necessary include: progress made towards national aspirations or development vision; economic policies and strategies; revenue, expenditure and debt management; management of natural resources; environmental sustainability; security; foreign policy and robust monitoring and evaluation for results/outcomes.

In general, inspections form part of the legislature's oversight role and visits to a facility or site (e.g., health facility, road infrastructure, school, local government authority) for gathering information to determine whether such projects follow legislative intent and as approved in the Appropriation Act.

Specifically, inspections provide immediate feedback, ensure that the inspected activity follows oversight regulations and hold service providers accountable for their responsibilities to provide quality services. In addition, inspections are equally important in maintaining awareness of legislative oversight, in helping the inspected activity with its own Programme, and in providing on-the-spot interpretations of policies and regulations.

Inspection visits generally include three key sets of activities: pre-inspection activities; onsite activities; and post-inspection activities.

Before the Visit

Inspection visits require proper planning and coordination to help with the timing of an inspection. It is important to schedule the inspection visit at times convenient to the organization or facility being inspected.

It is, also, important for the Committee Secretariat to conduct research on the project to be visited and provide background information to members of the Committee. This helps in adequately preparing the Committee for the visit.

When the legislative oversight team arrives at the institution, they should normally begin by clearly explaining the objective of the visit; why the Programme/project was selected for a legislative visit; as well as what the Committee will be doing during the course of the inspection.

Following this initial protocol, officials of the Programme/project are invited to provide information in writing on the institution and its on-going major activities. They will be required to focus specifically on the Programme/project which is the subject of the visit.

During the Visit

Step 1: Confirm Institution's Budget

During inspection visits, especially of big public projects, the legislative committee needs to first and foremost, check the institution's budget. This will allow the committee to confirm whether the resources approved by the legislature have indeed been released. The budget should indicate the period over which the investment is expected to take place. It will also indicate that the associated cash (out) flows had been incorporated in government's cash management plans.

Step 2: Contract Process

The inspection team should, if applicable review:

- The formal offer and acceptance of the project.
- The applicable conditions of contract, which deals with the risks, liabilities and obligations of both parties and the procedures for administration of the contract.
- The criteria and assumptions that the tenderer must have considered when pricing his bid.
- The tenderer's actual price for providing the construction works, supplies or services - which are described in the Scope of Work section in the contract.
- The Scope of Work section, which describes in sufficient detail, what is to be undertaken and related performance stipulations - including the timing.

Step 3: Project Execution

A legislative committee on a visit to a project site needs to determine the following information regarding the project execution:

- Financial viability of the project.
- How long it will take to complete.
- How risks and uncertainties are being dealt with.
- Performance indicators and targets.
- Modalities for reporting progress
- A dialogue strategy with project stakeholders.
- That the government has followed the appropriate capital project practices and processes.
- That there was full and proper planning and decision-making.
- Any other concerns regarding the project arising out of the work of the Committee.

Step 4: Feedback

Hold a feedback meeting with key stakeholders to discuss identified issues and recommend possible solutions.

- If the findings of the committee for example indicate any irregularity in the course of contract award or execution, the legislature can recommend sanctions for both the government and erring contractors if this is provided for in relevant laws of the land).
- The relevant legislative oversight committee(s) can produce public reports explaining the findings of their visit. Such reports can be used to encourage the government to act on an issue.
- The Auditor General can be asked to conduct an audit on the awarding procedures of certain contracts.
- The legislature can use question time to obtain clarity from Ministers on the selection process and qualification of the winning company.

Step 5: Reporting on the Oversight Visit

The content of the report may include:

- The date of the inspection.
- A summary of the type of evidence gathered during the inspection.
- Make recommendations on whether there are areas that require improvement (*Hon. Aminu Shehu Shagari — Yabo/Shagari Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

4.0 Oversight Coordination and Processes

Oversight coordination is very important to ensure transparency, avoid duplicity, enquiry and waste of resources in overseeing a Programme or ministry already under investigation by another committee. Accordingly, it is very important that within a legislature, e.g. House of Representatives, the Rules and Business Committee and its Clerk must ensure that there is no double investigation going on over the same issue by different Committees. Also, the Rules and Business Committee of the House of Representatives should cooperate in the sharing of information on oversight functions. They should also be ready to collaborate and share information where similar and relevant information is being sought by both Houses. This will help each House craft appropriate questions for relevant MDAs and invited witnesses.

4.1 General Techniques of Ensuring Oversight Coordination

The House is empowered to establish select or special committees to:

- (a) Probe issues and agencies,
- (b) Promote public understanding of national concerns, and
- (c) Coordinate oversight of issues that overlap the jurisdiction of several standing committees.

The House and Senate rules also require that:

- Findings and recommendations of the Committee be presented to the authorizing chamber in a timely fashion.
- The findings and recommendations are to be published in the authorizing chamber.

- The oversight plans of committees to include ways to maximize coordination between and among committees that share jurisdiction over related laws, programs, or agencies.

4.3 Specific Means of Ensuring Oversight Coordination

- Joint oversight hearings on programs or agencies.
- Informal agreement among committees to oversee certain agencies and not others. For example, the House and Senate Committees on Commerce may agree to hold oversight hearings on certain regulatory agencies in alternate years.
- Consultation between the authorizing and appropriating committees. For example, the two Committees on Commerce to collaborate with their corresponding appropriations subcommittees to alert each other to the authorizing committees' intent with respect to regulatory ratemaking (*Hon. Aminu Shehu Shagari — Yabo/Shagari Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

5.0 Participants in Oversight

5.1 Committee Members

Oversight is generally considered a committee activity. However, both casework and other project work conducted in a Member's personal office can result in findings about bureaucratic behavior and policy implementation; which, in turn, can lead to the adjustment of agency policies and procedures and to changes in public law.

- Casework-responding to constituent requests for assistance on projects or complaints or grievances about program implementation provides an opportunity to examine bureaucratic activity and operations, if only in a selective way.
- Sometimes individual Members will conduct their own investigations or ad hoc hearings, or direct their staffs to conduct oversight studies. Individual Members have no authority to issue compulsory process or conduct official hearings. However, a Senator or Representative may request a legislative branch agency, a specially created task force, or private research to investigate of a matter for a Senator or Representative and forward the report to the relevant chamber or Committee.

5.2 Committees

The most common and effective method of conducting oversight is through the committee structure. The House has standing, select or special committees whose duties include investigation of MDAs and other matters. For a clearer understanding of the Committee system, the following are notes worthy:

- All Committees have been vested with broad investigatory powers over government-wide activities.
- The House and Senate Committees on Appropriations have similar responsibilities when reviewing fiscal activities.
- During the budget enactment process, all relevant Standing Committees of the House become Sub-Committees of the Committee on Appropriation.
- Each Standing Committee has oversight responsibilities to review government activities within its jurisdiction. These Committees also have authority on their own to establish oversight and investigative subcommittees. The establishment of such subcommittees does not preclude the legislative Committees from conducting oversight.

5.3 Legislative Aides

Legislative Aide is a helper or an assistant of a legislator, i.e. Personal Staff of the legislator appointed by the National Assembly Service Commission (NASC) to assist the law maker in the performance of his duties. The categories of aides to the legislator in National Assembly include Senior Legislative Aide, Legislative Aide, Confidential Secretary, Legislative Assistant and Personal Assistant. But, presiding officers are entitled to more Aides. Legislative aides serve as official agent between the public and the law maker, e.g. MDAs. By this, the Aide can be drafted as support staff during oversight activities. This may be in the form of

- Gathering data
- Making analysis
- Documentation
- Official agent between legislator and MDAs
- Conducting research that will assist committees on oversight
- Liaison with committee clerk on oversight issues and itinerary, etc.

5.4 Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs)

Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) are the tools through which governance or public funds are expended for the wellbeing of the populace. They are major stakeholders in oversight activities of the legislators. Recently, MDAs in Nigeria have adopted a strategy of establishing liaison office or assigning liaison officer to relate with the legislature on behalf of MDAs. During oversight, legislatures or committees should demand from relevant MDAs budget Performance Reports. Such reports should be the same ones submitted in accordance with statutory requirements. These reports could be statutorily required quarterly, bi-annual or annual:

- Auditor General's Report
- Accountant General's Report
- SERVICOM's Report
- MDAs Monitoring and Evaluation Report
- Bureau of Public Procurement.

The legislature should demand that the MDAs perform the functions for which they were set up by the legislation and this include submitting the above reports to designated authorities.

5.5 Consultants

Oversight of public funds is a technical activity that a Committee may not have the capacity to undertake, hence, the need for experts or professionals usually referred to as consultants. Consultants are independent contractors generally specializing in a particular area. They are likely good at solving problems, doing research and/or exploring alternatives. Consultants bring new ideas to the legislature and the legislature can often learn from working with them. The benefits of utilizing consultants for effective oversight activities includes getting the benefit of an objective viewpoint, helping with a technical projects or subjects, e.g. Committee on Works and road projects, and offering learning opportunities for Committee operations. The best way to go about hiring a consultant is to ensure that he or she has the requisite qualification and experience on the subject matter at hand, avoid bias in the engagement process and ensure that evidence of similar work and referees are adequately consulted before signing the contract.

5.6 Stakeholders: Csos, Media, Special Individuals and Members of the Public

Usually, oversight is conducted to enhance transparency and accountability of public funds. In this regard, Civil Society Organizations, Media, interest groups or members of the public play critical role which directly or indirectly support the oversight function of the legislature. Such roles include:

- Monitoring progress of the legislature in identifying societal needs/missing gaps in legal frameworks and public expenditure
- Raising questions on accountability and transparency by linking the legislature and the governed, dialogue and consultation in legislative proposals or resolutions or through memorandum/hearings/protest
- Identifying legislative or governance challenges (early-warning mechanism) that can help in oversight activities, civic engagement in legislative process and governance e.g. the media as an educator and whistle blower in the polity.

To benefit from the stakeholders, the House should device means of:

- Scanning media reports that relate to mismanagement, abuse of financial process, etc. with a view to ensuring that issues that affect accountability in the polity are scrutinized for legislative committee action.
- Attending to constituent letters, complaints, and requests for projects to gather data on problems and deficiencies in federal programs and their administration.
- The casework performed by a Member's staff could also be effective oversight tool in the following ways:

- ★ Casework can be an important vehicle for pursuing both the oversight and legislative interests of the Member. The Representative and the staff may be attuned to the relationship between casework and the oversight function. This is facilitated by a regular exchange of ideas among the Member, legislative aides, and caseworkers on problems brought to the office's attention by constituents, and of possible legislative initiatives to resolve those problems.

- ★ If casework is to be useful as an oversight technique, effective staffing and coordination are needed. Casework and legislative staffs maximize service to their Member's constituents when they establish a relationship with the staff of the subcommittees and committees that handles the areas of concern to the Member's constituents. Through this interaction, the panel's staff can be made aware of the problems with the agency or program in question, assess how widespread and significant they are, determine their causes, and recommend corrective action.

- ★ Office procedures enable staff in some offices to identify cases that represent a situation in which formal changes in agency procedure could be an appropriate remedy. Prompt congressional inquiry and follow up enhance this type of oversight. Telephone inquiries reinforced with written requests tend to ensure agency attention.

5.7 Committee Staff

- ★ Professional staff of Committees provide the expert help required to conduct oversight and investigations.

- ★ Committee staff typically have the experience and expertise to conduct effective oversight for the committees and subcommittees they serve. Committees may also call upon legislative support agencies for assistance, hire consultants, or "borrow" staff from federal departments.

1. Committee staff also help to keep watchful eyes on the activities of MDAs and report to relevant Committees any apparent discrepancy between budgetary allocations and MDA activities (*Hon. Aminu Shehu Shagari — Yabo/Shagari Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

6.0 Legal Tools for Enforcement of Oversight

The power of oversight of the legislature can be initiated and exercised by issuance and service of summons, warrants and imposition of fines. These tools and their enforcement procedures are explained below.

6.1 Summons

A Summons is a document directing an officer of the House to notify an individual or representative of MDA to appear before a committee. For purposes of issuance of summons and warrants the oversight committee exercises the same power as a court. This is because as provided by the constitution a committee of the House of Representatives, have power to summon any person in Nigeria to give evidence at any place or produce any document or other thing in his possession or under his control, and examine him as a witness and require him to produce any document or other thing in his possession or under his control, subject to all just exceptions.

6.1.1 Content of Summons

Summons must be in writing and in duplicate. It should contain the following:

- Concise statement of the issues to be investigated.
- An order that he appears before the legislative committee at a certain time and place not less than 48hrs after the service of the summons.
- Signature of the issuing officer - The Clerk of the House.

6.1.2 Issue and Execution of Summons

Summons may be issued or served on any day including a Sunday and public holiday. here are two modes of service of summons.

- Personal service
- Substituted service.
- Summons should normally be served personally on the persons summoned
- A person served with a summons must sign the back of the duplicate to acknowledge receipt of the summons section.
- If it is artificial person such as a company the summons will be served on the secretary, or principal officer of the company.
- If a person to be served is unable to sign or mark the back of the duplicate copy of the summons, it may be served or left in the presence of a witness.

Substituted Service:

- Where personal service cannot be effected, substituted service may be employed. Substituted service may take the form of pasting the summons in a conspicuous part of the premises where the person to be served resides. Similarly, it may be served by leaving one of the duplicates with an adult member of the person's family who shall if so required by the serving officer acknowledge receipt on the duplicate.
- In all cases of substituted service, the person serving shall show proof of service by affidavit or declaration to that effect.

6.1.3 Lifespan of Summons

A summons remains valid until it is executed or cancelled. The death, retirement or removal of the person who issued it on behalf of a legislative committee or subsequent lack of authority of such a person will not affect or invalidate the summons.

6.2 Warrants

This is another tool at the disposal of a legislative committee to compel attendance of a person before the committee. This tool is never used at first instance. It is only resorted to when summons fails to yield any positive result. Summons is a forerunner of warrant. It is only when a party served with summons fails to appear that warrant is used (Warrants can only be signed by the Clerk of the House).

The Constitution provides under Section 89 (1) (d) that the House of Representatives or any committee appointed can "...issue a warrant to compel the attendance of any person who, after having been summoned to attend, fails, refuses or neglects to do so and does not excuse such failure, refusal or neglect to the satisfaction of the House or the committee in question."

- Warrant is executed the same way summons is. It also remains in existence until either executed or cancelled. The difference between summons and warrant lies in the fact that the latter seems compelling than the former. Besides, the latter occasions more punitive measures in case of default.
- Furthermore, summons leaves the person summoned or invited to appear on his own on the day stated therein but a warrant compels attendance of the person by way of arrest. A warrant must be shown to the person before executing it unless there are good reasons to the contrary. If not immediately available, its existence must be disclosed and must be shown to the person as soon as possible, this is because it is the legal basis upon which he is being apprehended.
- It is important to note that a summons or warrant issued under Section 89 (2) of the Constitution may be served or executed by any member of the Nigeria Police or by any person authorized in that behalf by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, as the case may require.

6.3 Fines

A fine is money paid usually to superior authority, usually governmental authority, as a punishment for a crime or other offence. The National Assembly has the Power and discretion to determine the amount on a case by case basis and publish the fine. The most usual use of the term, fine, relates to a financial punishment for the commission of crimes, especially minor crimes, or as the settlement of a claim. This tool of fines is used to secure attendance of persons before the legislature or legislative committees in the process of oversight hearings. It is provided in Section 89 (1) (d) of the Constitution that where a party on whom a summons is served fails to appear before the legislature or legislative committee, and does not explain such failure or neglect to appear, the legislature or legislative committee can impose fine on that person for such conduct. In addition to fine, he may also be ordered to pay costs that would cover expenses incurred in compelling him to appear.

6.4 Rights and Privileges

The legislative constitutional business is enormous and complex. In view of the complexity of legislative process and with the Assembly almost constantly in session, members of the Legislative Assembly enjoy some level of rights and privileges, including civil and criminal immunity from statement made in the Chamber while fulfilling their legislative mandates. According to the House of Representatives Standing Orders, privileges are the rights enjoyed by the House collectively and by the members individually conferred by the Legislative Houses (Powers and Privileges) Act and other statutes, or by practice, precedent usage and custom.

Importance of Legislative rights and privileges include:

- The rights and privileges allow the legislature enjoy the supervisory role of the citizen-body with oversight function.
- The legislative rights and privileges help to ensure free flow and unhindered speech and debate in their legislative functions, so that the electorates are well informed about proposals and their merits, which will affect them when passed into law.
- The legislative rights and privilege affords them the opportunity to scrutinize, criticize, or vote against the wishes of the executive including against any policy or legislative proposal which may undermine accountability in governance or which is against public or constituency the interest.
- It gives the citizen confidence to appear before the House or Committees of the House either as a witness or to make their contributions to legislative Bills, proposal or matters of national interest without fear of intimidation, arrest or prosecution.
- It protects the legislature and its members from civil liabilities for comments made on the floor of the House or Committee in the normal course of their function as a legislature (*Hon. Aminu Shehu Shagari — Yabo/Shagari Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

7.0 Output of Oversight

In the course and lifetime of a particular oversight function, several outputs are produced by the relevant Committee or the Whole House. These outputs include Reports, Recommendations, Resolutions, and Public Account Committee reports.

7.1 Reports

Report is a major tool that brings out the nature and way public resources are managed. Taking into consideration the constitutional role of the legislature, report is the instrument which committee interaction with stakeholders on the management of public expenditure is made open.

7.2 Recommendations

Oversight is an activity that demands the making of recommendations for further action. While legislative Committees differ with respect to responsibilities or kind of oversight activities, Committees or legislature end scrutiny of public expenditure with concrete recommendations. In making recommendations, Committees are required to note the following features:

- **Relevance:** Recommendation must be relevant to the subject matter of the legislative committee oversight.
- **Clarity:** Present a clear and logically developed recommendation.
- **Conciseness:** Be simple and direct. Members may want to know what was recommended and the evidence that supports the committee's view.
- **Accuracy:** Be accurate and complete, ensuring that all information is correct and relevant.
- **Actionable:** Make recommendations that are implementable.

8.0 Expected Outcomes of Oversight**8.1 Amendment of Existing Legislation**

One of the expected outcomes of legislative oversight is amendment of existing legislation. This happens when the legislature's oversight committee finds out that a particular legislation is inadequate for particular purposes. In this case, it is necessary to consider how the legislation stood when legislative oversight was conducted, what the inadequacies were for which the old legislation did not provide and the remedy recommended as a result of legislative oversight. Before this is done, application of the legislation must have been tested in all ramifications to determine its suitability, hence the legislative committee must have adopted the purposive as well as literal approaches. The legislature is expected to consider the words used in a legislation vis-a-vis the purpose (object) of the entire legislation.

The following are questions to be answered while amending the legislation:

- What was the situation and law before the present legislation was enacted?
- What were the inadequacies and defects for which the existing legislation did not provide; and
- What are the advantages of amending the legislation?
- Once the above questions are answered, amendment to an existing legislation can be effected to remedy the defects in the said legislation.

8.2 New Legislation

Legislative oversight unveils gaps in our laws. Sometimes it is discovered that legislation is needed to take care of issues for which no legislation exists at the moment. On this note, a new legislation emerges for the purpose of filling the gaps discovered. Similarly, it may also be discovered that existing legislation on a particular issue is no longer in tune with current realities. This can lead to outright repeal of an existing legislation and enactment of a new one. These gaps can easily be discovered through legislative oversight.

8.3 Policy Intervention

Apart from amendment of legislation, legislative oversight can also lead to policy intervention. This is by way of introduction of new governmental policies that would fill in some gaps in the running of government. In the process of legislative oversight, the legislature can discover that the government is losing revenue, that some workers are under productive or unproductive, that contractors are executing government projects contrary to specifications or that there is poor motivation to work amongst others. In this situation, the outcome of such legislative oversight may lead to introduction of new policies that would enhance efficiency for the benefit of the government and the citizens generally.

8.4 Exposing and Curtailing Corruption

In compliance with section 88 (2) (b) of the 1999 Constitution, the legislature is expected to expose corruption, waste and inefficiency in the management of public resources. This oversight responsibility is expected to reduce or eliminate corrupt practices with a view to enhancing transparency and good governance. However, mere exposure may not be able to curb corruption without prosecution and appropriate enforcement of sanctions by the executive. To this end the independence of anti-corruption agencies should be vigorously pursued and the agencies made to report to the Legislature rather than the Executive (*Hon. Aminu Shehu Shagari — Yabo/Shagari Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

ANNEXURES

ANNEX 1: OVERSIGHT VISIT TEMPLATE

Pre-Oversight Activities	Remarks
<i>Items</i>	
Name of Committee	
Committee Members	
Date of Oversight Visit	
Name of MDA to be Visited	
CEO/Officer in-charge at MDA	
Purpose of the Oversight Visit	
Name of Project(s), Location(s) and Date of Award and Duration	
Specific Objectives of the Project(s)	
Expected Outcomes of the Project(s)	
Name of Project(s), Contractor(s) and Consultant(s) (where applicable)	
Project Budget: (Released, Cash Backed and Utilized); Compute %	
Write the MDA(s) to submit Implementation status report of project(s)	
Preliminary Assessment of Implementation Status of Project(s)	
Questioning of the MDA and Interactive session (if need be) to resolve contending issues	
Write pre-oversight visit report, noting important questions and responses	
Communications to secure appointments and public sensitization	
Inspection Visit	
Inspection of project (s) and on the spot questioning	
Community testimony (where applicable)	
Compilation of observations and photographs by support staff	
Post Oversight Visit	
Draft Oversight Report	
Committee Consideration of Oversight Report	
Summary of Committee Findings	
Committee Recommendations/Motions	
Laying of Committee Report at plenary	
Documentation of Plenary Resolution	
Tracking of implementation of resolution and recommendations	
Communication on follow-up activities and Public sensitization	
Sessional Report on implementation of resolution	

ANNEX 2: PUBLIC ACCOUNT COMMITTEE OVERSIGHT

Pre-Oversight Activities	Remarks
<i>Items</i>	
Name of Committee	
Committee Members	
Name of MDA(s)	
Date of Oversight	
Query/Issues as outlined in Auditor General's Report (where applicable)	
Issues emanating from media, CSOs, Committees, etc. that call for status inquiry (where applicable)	
CEO/Officer in-charge at MDA(s)	
CEO or Officer affected by AGs report or issues at MDA(s) (as applicable)	
Name of Project(s), Location(s), Date(s) of Award, Duration, etc. (where applicable)	
Name of Contractor(s) and Consultant(s) (where applicable)	
Issues for oversight e.g. Diversion, over invoicing, procurement abuse, etc. (where applicable)	

Consequences of project failure or mal-administration of funds, procedure, etc.
 (where applicable)
 Project Budget: (Released, Cash Backed and Utilised); Compute %
 (where applicable)
 Committee position on issues raised by AGs report i.e. query to MDA(s)
 or officer(s) concerned (as applicable)
 Communication to MDA(s) to respond to query or issues (as applicable)
 Preliminary Assessment of MDA(s) response on query or issues
 (as applicable)
 Engagement of consultant(s) (where necessary)
 Write pre-oversight report, noting important questions and responses
 Communications to secure appointments and public sensitization

During-Oversight

Inspection of projects and on the spot questioning/assessment of
 books and issues
 Affected officer(s) questioning on relevant observations or issues
 Community testimony (where applicable)
 Compilation of observations, video clips, documents, photographs, etc.
 by support staff
 Call for Memorandum on outcome of findings for public hearing
 (where applicable)
 Public hearing to verify MDA(s) unsatisfactory answer/outcome of visit
 (where applicable)
 Draft report of public hearing (where applicable)

Post-Oversight Activities

Draft main report by support staff
 Committee Consideration of Oversight Report
 Summary of Committee Findings
 Committee Recommendations/Motions
 Laying of Committee Report at plenary
 Documentation of Plenary Resolution
 Tracking of implementation of resolution and recommendations
 Communications on follow-up activities and Public sensitization
 Annual Reporting on implementation of resolution (*Hon. Aminu Shehu Shagari — Yabo/Shagari
 Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

ANNEX 3: PUBLIC PETITION Pre-Consideration of Public Petition

<i>Items</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
Notification of petition to Rules and Business Committee	
Name of legislator who presented petition at plenary	
Date for submission of petition to plenary	
Date of Referral/terms of reference	
Filing and acknowledgment of receipt of the petition by committee	
Name of Petitioner	
Purpose of Petition	
Scrutiny to enhance deeper understanding of the issues contained in the petition	
Identification of Possible (witnesses) to Testify	

Consideration of Petition

Invitation of Petitioner and Witnesses for Testimony
 Invitation of Persons, MDAs, Organization, etc. affected to Respond

Committee consideration of the petition/visit to relevant MDA(s)
or locations (where applicable)
Community testimony (where applicable)
Compilation of observations and photographs by support staff
Call for Memorandum on findings for public hearing (where applicable)
Public hearing to verify petition claim and on the spot
assessment findings (where applicable)
Draft report of investigation/public hearing (as applicable)

Post - Petition

Date(s) Committee met/considered issues on the petition
Summary of Committee Findings
Committee Recommendations/Motions
Laying of Committee Report at plenary
Documentation of Plenary Resolution
Tracking of implementation of resolution and recommendations
Communications on follow-up activities and Public sensitization
Annual Reporting on implementation of resolution (*Hon. Aminu Shehu Shagari — Yabo/Shagari Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

ANNEX 4: INTERACTIVE SESSION

Pre-Interactive Session

<i>Items</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
Identification of issue for interactive session (Agenda)	
Date committee resolved to hold interactive session	
Name of MDA(s), Person(s) or Organization(s) to be invited	
Intimating the principal officers of the legislature	
Informing committee members of the interactive session	
Securing the Venue and making logistics arrangement for the Session	
Invitation of MDA(s), person (s) or Organization(s) for the session	
Invitation of Leadership or Principal Officers to the session	
Invitation to Media, CSOs, etc. (where applicable)	

During Interactive Session

Sitting arrangement (Committee Chair and members facing the invitees)
Session - Chaired by Committee Leadership (or Principal Officer where applicable)
Agenda distributed to guide proceedings
Taking note of important issues

Post Interactive Session

Write report
Committee Deliberations on the report
Summary of Committee position on the session
Committee Recommendations/Motions (where necessary)
Laying of Committee Report at plenary (where necessary) (*Hon. Aminu Shehu Shagari — Yabo/Shagari Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

ANNEX 5: LEGISLATIVE INVESTIGATION/HEARING

Pre- Legislative Investigation

<i>Items</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
Name of Committee	
Reason(s) for Investigation	

6.1.3 Lifespan of Summons

A summons remains valid until it is executed or cancelled. The death, retirement or removal of the person who issued it on behalf of a legislative committee or subsequent lack of authority of such a person will not affect or invalidate the summons.

6.2 Warrants

This is another tool at the disposal of a legislative committee to compel attendance of a person before the committee. This tool is never used at first instance. It is only resorted to when summons fails to yield any positive result. Summons is a forerunner of warrant. It is only when a party served with summons fails to appear that warrant is used (Warrants can only be signed by the Clerk of the House).

The Constitution provides under Section 89 (1) (d) that the House of Representatives or any committee appointed can "...issue a warrant to compel the attendance of any person who, after having been summoned to attend, fails, refuses or neglects to do so and does not excuse such failure, refusal or neglect to the satisfaction of the House or the committee in question."

- Warrant is executed the same way summons is. It also remains in existence until either executed or cancelled. The difference between summons and warrant lies in the fact that the latter seems compelling than the former. Besides, the latter occasions more punitive measures in case of default.
- Furthermore, summons leaves the person summoned or invited to appear on his own on the day stated therein but a warrant compels attendance of the person by way of arrest. A warrant must be shown to the person before executing it unless there are good reasons to the contrary. If not immediately available, its existence must be disclosed and must be shown to the person as soon as possible, this is because it is the legal basis upon which he is being apprehended.
- It is important to note that a summons or warrant issued under Section 89 (2) of the Constitution may be served or executed by any member of the Nigeria Police or by any person authorized in that behalf by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, as the case may require.

6.3 Fines

A fine is money paid usually to superior authority, usually governmental authority, as a punishment for a crime or other offence. The National Assembly has the Power and discretion to determine the amount on a case by case basis and publish the fine. The most usual use of the term, fine, relates to a financial punishment for the commission of crimes, especially minor crimes, or as the settlement of a claim. This tool of fines is used to secure attendance of persons before the legislature of legislative committees in the process of oversight hearings. It is provided in Section 89 (1) (d) of the Constitution that where a party on whom a summons is served fails to appear before the legislature or legislative committee, and does not explain such failure or neglect to appear, the legislature or legislative committee can impose fine on that person for such conduct. In addition to fine, he may also be ordered to pay costs that would cover expenses incurred in compelling him to appear.

6.4 Rights and Privileges

The legislative constitutional business is enormous and complex. In view of the complexity of legislative process and with the Assembly almost constantly in session, members of the Legislative Assembly enjoy some level of rights and privileges, including civil and criminal immunity from statement made in the Chamber while fulfilling their legislative mandates. According to the House of Representatives Standing Orders, privileges are the rights enjoyed by the House collectively and by the members individually conferred by the Legislative Houses (Powers and Privileges) Act and other statutes, or by practice, precedent usage and custom.

Importance of Legislative rights and privileges include:

- The rights and privileges allow the legislature enjoy the supervisory role of the citizen-body with oversight function.
- The legislative rights and privileges help to ensure free flow and unhindered speech and debate in their legislative functions, so that the electorates are well informed about proposals and their merits, which will affect them when passed into law.
- The legislative rights and privilege affords them the opportunity to scrutinize, criticize, or vote against the wishes of the executive including against any policy or legislative proposal which may undermine accountability in governance or which is against public or constituency the interest.
- It gives the citizen confidence to appear before the House or Committees of the House either as a witness or to make their contributions to legislative Bills, proposal or matters of national interest without fear of intimidation, arrest or prosecution.
- It protects the legislature and its members from civil liabilities for comments made on the floor of the House or Committee in the normal course of their function as a legislature (*Hon. Aminu Shehu Shagari — Yabo/Shagari Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

7.0 Output of Oversight

In the course and lifetime of a particular oversight function, several outputs are produced by the relevant Committee or the Whole House. These outputs include Reports, Recommendations, Resolutions, and Public Account Committee reports.

7.1 Reports

Report is a major tool that brings out the nature and way public resources are managed. Taking into consideration the constitutional role of the legislature, report is the instrument which committee interaction with stakeholders on the management of public expenditure is made open.

7.2 Recommendations

Oversight is an activity that demands the making of recommendations for further action. While legislative Committees differ with respect to responsibilities or kind of oversight activities, Committees or legislature end scrutiny of public expenditure with concrete recommendations. In making recommendations, Committees are required to note the following features:

- **Relevance:** Recommendation must be relevant to the subject matter of the legislative committee oversight.
- **Clarity:** Present a clear and logically developed recommendation.
- **Conciseness:** Be simple and direct. Members may want to know what was recommended and the evidence that supports the committee's view.
- **Accuracy:** Be accurate and complete, ensuring that all information is correct and relevant.
- **Actionable:** Make recommendations that are implementable.

8.0 Expected Outcomes of Oversight**8.1 Amendment of Existing Legislation**

One of the expected outcomes of legislative oversight is amendment of existing legislation. This happens when the legislature's oversight committee finds out that a particular legislation is inadequate for particular purposes. In this case, it is necessary to consider how the legislation stood when legislative oversight was conducted, what the inadequacies were for which the old legislation did not provide and the remedy recommended as a result of legislative oversight. Before this is done, application of the legislation must have been tested in all ramifications to determine its suitability, hence the legislative committee must have adopted the purposive as well as literal approaches. The legislature is expected to consider the words used in a legislation vis-a-vis the purpose (object) of the entire legislation.

The following are questions to be answered while amending the legislation:

- What was the situation and law before the present legislation was enacted?
- What were the inadequacies and defects for which the existing legislation did not provide; and
- What are the advantages of amending the legislation?
- Once the above questions are answered, amendment to an existing legislation can be effected to remedy the defects in the said legislation.

8.2 New Legislation

Legislative oversight unveils gaps in our laws. Sometimes it is discovered that legislation is needed to take care of issues for which no legislation exists at the moment. On this note, a new legislation emerges for the purpose of filling the gaps discovered. Similarly, it may also be discovered that existing legislation on a particular issue is no longer in tune with current realities. This can lead to outright repeal of an existing legislation and enactment of a new one. These gaps can easily be discovered through legislative oversight.

8.3 Policy Intervention

Apart from amendment of legislation, legislative oversight can also lead to policy intervention. This is by way of introduction of new governmental policies that would fill in some gaps in the running of government. In the process of legislative oversight, the legislature can discover that the government is losing revenue, that some workers are under productive or unproductive, that contractors are executing government projects contrary to specifications or that there is poor motivation to work amongst others. In this situation, the outcome of such legislative oversight may lead to introduction of new policies that would enhance efficiency for the benefit of the government and the citizens generally.

8.4 Exposing and Curtailing Corruption

In compliance with section 88 (2) (b) of the 1999 Constitution, the legislature is expected to expose corruption, waste and inefficiency in the management of public resources. This oversight responsibility is expected to reduce or eliminate corrupt practices with a view to enhancing transparency and good governance. However, mere exposure may not be able to curb corruption without prosecution and appropriate enforcement of sanctions by the executive. To this end the independence of anti-corruption agencies should be vigorously pursued and the agencies made to report to the Legislature rather than the Executive (*Hon. Aminu Shehu Shagari — Yabo/Shagari Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

ANNEXURES

ANNEX 1: OVERSIGHT VISIT TEMPLATE

Pre-Oversight Activities

Items

Remarks

Name of Committee
 Committee Members
 Date of Oversight Visit
 Name of MDA to be Visited
 CEO/Officer in-charge at MDA
 Purpose of the Oversight Visit
 Name of Project(s), Location(s) and Date of Award and Duration
 Specific Objectives of the Project(s)
 Expected Outcomes of the Project(s)
 Name of Project(s), Contractor(s) and Consultant(s) (where applicable)
 Project Budget: (Released, Cash Backed and Utilized); Compute %
 Write the MDA(s) to submit Implementation status report of project(s)
 Preliminary Assessment of Implementation Status of Project(s)
 Questioning of the MDA and Interactive session (if need be) to resolve contending issues
 Write pre-oversight visit report, noting important questions and responses
 Communications to secure appointments and public sensitization

Inspection Visit

Inspection of project (s) and on the spot questioning
 Community testimony (where applicable)
 Compilation of observations and photographs by support staff

Post Oversight Visit

Draft Oversight Report
 Committee Consideration of Oversight Report
 Summary of Committee Findings
 Committee Recommendations/Motions
 Laying of Committee Report at plenary
 Documentation of Plenary Resolution
 Tracking of implementation of resolution and recommendations
 Communication on follow-up activities and Public sensitization
 Sessional Report on implementation of resolution

ANNEX 2: PUBLIC ACCOUNT COMMITTEE OVERSIGHT

Pre-Oversight Activities

Items

Remarks

Name of Committee
 Committee Members
 Name of MDA(s)
 Date of Oversight
 Query/Issues as outlined in Auditor General's Report (where applicable)
 Issues emanating from media, CSOs, Committees, etc. that call for status inquiry (where applicable)
 CEO/Officer in-charge at MDA(s)
 CEO or Officer affected by AGs report or issues at MDA(s) (as applicable)
 Name of Project(s), Location(s), Date(s) of Award, Duration, etc. (where applicable)
 Name of Contractor(s) and Consultant(s) (where applicable)
 Issues for oversight e.g. Diversion, over invoicing, procurement abuse, etc. (where applicable)

Consequences of project failure or mal-administration of funds, procedure, etc.
 (where applicable)
 Project Budget: (Released, Cash Backed and Utilised); Compute %
 (where applicable)
 Committee position on issues raised by AGs report i.e. query to MDA(s)
 or officer(s) concerned (as applicable)
 Communication to MDA(s) to respond to query or issues (as applicable)
 Preliminary Assessment of MDA(s) response on query or issues
 (as applicable)
 Engagement of consultant(s) (where necessary)
 Write pre-oversight report, noting important questions and responses
 Communications to secure appointments and public sensitization

During-Oversight

Inspection of projects and on the spot questioning/assessment of
 books and issues
 Affected officer(s) questioning on relevant observations or issues
 Community testimony (where applicable)
 Compilation of observations, video clips, documents, photographs, etc.
 by support staff
 Call for Memorandum on outcome of findings for public hearing
 (where applicable)
 Public hearing to verify MDA(s) unsatisfactory answer/outcome of visit
 (where applicable)
 Draft report of public hearing (where applicable)

Post-Oversight Activities

Draft main report by support staff
 Committee Consideration of Oversight Report
 Summary of Committee Findings
 Committee Recommendations/Motions
 Laying of Committee Report at plenary
 Documentation of Plenary Resolution
 Tracking of implementation of resolution and recommendations
 Communications on follow-up activities and Public sensitization
 Annual Reporting on implementation of resolution (*Hon. Aminu Shehu Shagari — Yabo/Shagari
 Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

ANNEX 3: PUBLIC PETITION

Pre-Consideration of Public Petition

<i>Items</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
Notification of petition to Rules and Business Committee	
Name of legislator who presented petition at plenary	
Date for submission of petition to plenary	
Date of Referral/terms of reference	
Filing and acknowledgment of receipt of the petition by committee	
Name of Petitioner	
Purpose of Petition	
Scrutiny to enhance deeper understanding of the issues contained in the petition	
Identification of Possible (witnesses) to Testify	

Consideration of Petition

Invitation of Petitioner and Witnesses for Testimony
 Invitation of Persons, MDAs, Organization, etc. affected to Respond

Committee consideration of the petition / visit to relevant MDA(s)
or locations (where applicable)
Community testimony (where applicable)
Compilation of observations and photographs by support staff
Call for Memorandum on findings for public hearing (where applicable)
Public hearing to verify petition claim and on the spot
assessment findings (where applicable)
Draft report of investigation/public hearing (as applicable)

Post - Petition

Date(s) Committee met/considered issues on the petition
Summary of Committee Findings
Committee Recommendations/Motions
Laying of Committee Report at plenary
Documentation of Plenary Resolution
Tracking of implementation of resolution and recommendations
Communications on follow-up activities and Public sensitization
Annual Reporting on implementation of resolution (*Hon. Aminu Shehu Shagari — Yabo/Shagari Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

ANNEX 4: INTERACTIVE SESSION

Pre-Interactive Session

<i>Items</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
Identification of issue for interactive session (Agenda)	
Date committee resolved to hold interactive session	
Name of MDA(s), Person(s) or Organization(s) to be invited	
Intimating the principal officers of the legislature	
Informing committee members of the interactive session	
Securing the Venue and making logistics arrangement for the Session	
Invitation of MDA(s), person (s) or Organization(s) for the session	
Invitation of Leadership or Principal Officers to the session	
Invitation to Media, CSOs, etc. (where applicable)	

During Interactive Session

Sitting arrangement (Committee Chair and members facing the invitees)
Session - Chaired by Committee Leadership (or Principal
Officer where applicable)
Agenda distributed to guide proceedings
Taking note of important issues

Post Interactive Session

Write report
Committee Deliberations on the report
Summary of Committee position on the session
Committee Recommendations/Motions (where necessary)
Laying of Committee Report at plenary (where necessary) (*Hon. Aminu Shehu Shagari — Yabo/Shagari Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

ANNEX 5: LEGISLATIVE INVESTIGATION/HEARING

Pre- Legislative Investigation

<i>Items</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
Name of Committee	
Reason(s) for Investigation	

Legal framework
Terms of Reference for the Investigation
Supporting Experts
Date for Commencement of Investigation
Date to Submit Report
Secretariat and logistics for the committee work
Identification of Persons, MDAs, Organizations under Investigation
Purpose(s) of the Investigation
Summary of Petition(s) Received
Preliminary Identification and determination of validity of Petition(s)
specifying violations and the legal framework
Work Plan
Identification and Invitation of Witnesses
Advertisement/Invitation for Public Memorandum on Subject
Matter of investigation

During-Legislative Investigation

Public hearing on subject matter (where applicable) —
Presentation and interrogation of issues /evidence
Documentation and analysis of proceedings by experts and support staff
Consideration of reports of expert by committee
Final Report writing
Post -Legislative Investigation
Laying of Committee Report at plenary
Documentation of Plenary Resolution
Tracking of implementation of resolutions (*Hon. Aminu Shehu Shagari — Yabo/Shagari Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

(iii) REPORT MANUAL

1.0 Introduction

The work of the House of Representatives is varied in nature and considerable in volume. As the time at its disposal is often limited, it is seldom realistic to give close consideration in Plenary to the myriad of legislative and other matters that come before it. A good deal of its business is, therefore, transacted by Committees.

Committee report is a very important tool for documenting and communicating the outcome of Committee work to the Whole House and the public. It helps to facilitate easy deliberations of critical issues and decision-making. It also serves as an accountability tool for measuring committee outputs. Typically, after a Committee deliberation on any legislative matter (e.g. Bill or Motion), it concludes its work by writing a report. Clear presentation of reports is as important as the outcome of Committee work. Thus, these templates present some useful guidelines to aid House Committees to develop effective and actionable reports. It is noteworthy that the ultimate output of any Committee report must be guided by the relevant rules of the House (Standing Orders of the House of Representatives), particularly important for quarterly and annual reports.

Documents and reports prepared for laying are confidential. As such, appropriate security cautions should be observed until the document is laid. Reports must be well written to ensure that they are in conformity with international best practices. Furthermore, the Committee Clerk has a crucial role to play in the preparation of reports and he also signs the original to attest to its accuracy and authenticity. The Clerk is also the custodian of all reports which he archives with the rest of the Committee's documents at the end of each session.

The Objectives of these templates are to:

- Ensure professionalism in preparing complete and authoritative records of committee work.
- Provide guidelines for the preparation of reports of committee activities.
- Standardize reporting of activities in the parliament (oversight, Bill reporting, etc.).

The templates here-in are for guidance and present the recommended formats for developing various types of Committee reports. It contains the following templates:

- Minutes of Committee Meetings
- Committee Reports (Quarterly and Annual)
- Oversight Visits and Inspections
- Public Hearing
- Public Petition
- Investigative Hearing
- Questioning and Interactive Meetings/Session
- Public Accounts
- Engagement with Appropriation Bill/Budgetary Function
- Bill Reporting
- Conference Committee Report (*Hon. Aminu Shehu Shagari — Yabo/Shagari Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

2.0 Report of Interactive Sessions

Title:

REPORT OF THE INTERACTIVE SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON XYZ ON PRIMARY HEALTH CARE AND NATIONAL HOSPITAL EXPANSION BILL HELD ON THE OF 2016 AT HOUSE HEARING ROOM 01, NATIONAL ASSEMBLY COMPLEX ABUJA

CONTENTS

Table of Contents.

BODY OF REPORT:

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This should be a summary of the main report highlighting the key sections of the report, especially the key recommendations of the interactive session

2. INTRODUCTION

This interactive session was conducted in order to..... This arose out of the continued complaints and series of news reports that the community has been overtaken by unprecedented malaria epidemic ...

The latest evaluation shows that about N1m has been spent but no result has been provided...

3. MANDATE

The mandate of the Committee to organize this interactive session is as contained in the House Resolution Number in the Votes and Proceedings of (Date).

4. OBJECTIVE

The major objective of this questioning and interactive session is to stop the spread of diseases and to stem the number of deaths resulting from poor health facilities in the community.

5. TERMS OF REFERENCE (If Applicable)

The terms of reference as contained in the motion paper setting up this hearing are:

- To find out the cause of the non-completion of the anti-malaria programme in community of.....
- To find out why contractors are alleging that MDAs(XYZ Hospital...) have not paid
- To find out why the effects of the drugs paid for by government have not been observed since the vaccination programme started in

6. METHODOLOGY

The Interactive Session was conducted in a mixed format, using open mic discussion with the audience, submission of reports from some stakeholders and analysis and explanation of reports by expert consultants.

Previously raised questions include:

- Why the Anti-Malaria project has not been completed in ... community?
- Why contractors are alleging that they have not been paid for, etc.,

The Clerk of the Public Health Committee was present to take records of verbal questions from stakeholders.

Then Consultants were given the opportunity to explain previously submitted written questions of some stakeholders and Agencies.

The agencies and stakeholders that submitted written questions are given opportunity to make further clarifications to the questions if any.

7. MEMBERSHIP (members of the Committee)

The members of the Public Health Committee of the House of Representatives are:

- Hon....
- Hon..... etc.,

8. SECRETARIAT

Committee Clerks

9. LIST OF STAKEHOLDERS AND MDAs INVITED

- **Present:** The Federal Ministry of Health, The National Hospitals Management Board represented by the Legal Adviser and their Internal Auditor, Barr. Sam Oguiche and Dr. Joseph Asemota....
- **Absent:** The Management Board of Primary Health Care Abuja, The Chairman Pharmaceutical Companies Association of Abuja.
- **Apology:** Mosquito Nets Distribution Company.

10. MEMORANDUM

Summary of Verbal Questions from Stakeholders

Analysis of Written Submission from Stakeholders

11. COMMITTEE FINDINGS

After an exhaustive and successful deliberation with invited stakeholders, witnesses and perusal of the analysis of consultants, the committee made the following findings:

- The poor health and social displacement prevalent in the community is a major contributor to
- There is no law to regulate the distribution of health materials
- The hospitals and clinics supposedly built by the last administration are dilapidated and lacking many important facilities
- The government and relevant agencies seem unaware of

12. COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

After an exhaustive and successful deliberation, the Committee made the following recommendations:

- A motion be moved on the floor of the House to examine.....
- A Bill be introduced to regulate the.....
- An investigative oversight be conducted to determine the extent of
- A letter be written to the Executive arm of government requesting that it.....

13. LIST OF APPENDIX

- Guidelines sent to invitees and read at the commencement of hearing.
- Verbatim reports of Interactive session from the Official Reporters
- Written Submissions from stakeholders of Interactive session
- Presentation by Committee Chairman (if any)
- Details of relevant Legislation, Bill, Project, Contract or Policy...

There are extant laws which have relationships with the issue of health management for which this interactive session is conducted. Also relevant are the contracts awarded that were supposed to resolve these issues. They include:

- NHIS Act 2010
- Contract to build a National Hospital in....
- Contract to supply mosquito nets and drugs to...
- Details of Notices and Invitees to the Public

Multiple methods of communication channels were used to invite the public to the interactive session. These include newspaper adverts, press releases, and radio and television jingles, and placement of flyers in public places like churches, mosques, stadia, shopping malls, and conference centres.

The Committee coordinated with relevant stakeholders and encouraged them to also invite other interested members of the public to attend. The details of the public awareness campaign and invitation are described below.

This report and all other reports must be signed by Chairman and Clerk.

Committee Chairman

Committee Clerk

.....

.....

14. APPENDIX

ATTACHED APPENDIX (as identified above) (*Hon. Aminu Shehu Shagari*
— *Yabo/Shagari Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

3.0 Format for Writing Legislative Oversight Report

Legislative oversight visit/inspection refers to mission embarked upon by legislators to Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) to promote transparency and accountability in governance. A format for the report is presented below:

Cover Page

Title

Committee Members

List of Members

CONTENTS

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

Executive Summary

Body of Report**1. Introduction (Summary of pre-oversight activities)**

- Purpose of the oversight
- Names of MDA /Corporation visited
- Names of Chief Executives of the MDA /Corporation visited
- Date of visit

2. Inspection visits

- Briefing by the Chief Executive
- Remarks by Committee Chairman
- Highlights of the inspection visit

3. Fiscal Activities

- Amount appropriated (budgeted)
- Amount released
- Amount utilised
- Amount generated internally
- Amount remitted to Consolidated Revenue Fund
- Operating surplus

4. Implementation Status (if applicable)

- Physical inspection of projects
- Key questions and responses

5. Audit Status (if applicable)

- Committee comment(s) on the audit report
- Response(s) to the queries

6. Findings**7. Challenges****8. Committee Recommendations**

Appendices.

Committee Meetings Held

The Committee met 50 times within the session on the following dates ...

Attendance of Members

As depicted by the attached minutes of meetings, only about 50% of the members on the average attended meetings.

Consideration of Bills and Motions Referred to the Committee including Actions taken on such Bills and Motions.

Provide list of bills and motions referred to the Committee and a summary of actions taken on each with dates. Provide information on status of all the bills and motions.

Oversight visits undertaken

Provide information on oversight visits undertaken during the session. This should include number of oversight visits, name of the MDA, date of the visits, reasons for the visits, observations and findings, etc.

Public/Investigative Hearings Held

Report that within the session, the Committee held two investigative hearings and five public hearings. List all the hearings with dates and titles and provide summary of the major findings, recommendations and legislative actions taken.

Interactive Sessions Held

Report that within the session, the Committee held two or three or four (as the case may be) interactive sessions. List all the interactive sessions with dates, names of MDAs and provide summary of issues discussed and Committee resolutions for legislative action.

Reports received from MDAs under the Committee's Jurisdiction

Provide list of Reports received from MDAs during the session, citing the titles or subjects, dates and summary of the Reports.

Capacity Development Services

Provide list of training, workshops, seminars, roundtables, exchange of experience visits, etc. that were provided to the Committee. This should include the type of training, outcomes, organizations that rendered the services, etc.

Other Committee Activities

Report that within the session, the Committee carried out other activities which are not within the main activities highlighted above. Such activities may include courtesy calls on the Speaker, Joint Committee Meetings, Committee Members and Support Staff Meetings, etc.

PROSPECTS

Example: The House Committee on Agriculture is endowed with erudite members with bias and proficiency in agriculture. The members are diligent and proactive in their handling of Committee activities. The Staff are also hard-working and committed to enhancing the Committee's activities.

CHALLENGES

Example: The major challenge facing the Committee is a lack of office space and adequate working tools for its staff. Also, the absence of Committee Room exclusive for the several meetings and other legislative businesses of the Committee is hindering effective performance of the Secretariat's duties.

RECOMMENDATION

Example: For effective performance of the Committee activities, it is suggested that proper training of staff to appreciate the rudimentary operations of the Agricultural sector in order to match the expertise provided by the executive branch in this area.

CONCLUSION

Example: The Committee is proud to note that it has conducted ten meetings, five public hearings, considered ten bills and motions referred to it, undertaken two oversight visits, and made contributions to the development of the agricultural sector through its activities. The Committee notes that two of the bills it considered have been enacted into law and the policy impact is already being felt. Also, two resolutions were passed on motions referred to the Committee. The resolutions had been adopted by the Ministries and the effect is already being noticed in advancing the course of agricultural development. The Committee's oversight visits revealed many gaps in funding and management of funds in the Ministry of Agriculture. The post-oversight visit interactive session with the MDAs ensure that all those gaps are closed and the leadership of the Ministry promised to be more effective.

The Committee would have done a lot more if not for the paucity of funds, non-cooperation of the Ministry in providing all relevant information and irregular attendance of members to Committee meetings. The Committee recommends better funding of Committee activities and greater commitment of its members. The Committee benefitted from the services of NILS but moving forward, the institute can do more in providing intellectual resource services to the Committee to make its work effective.

.....
Chairman

.....
Committee Clerk (Hon. Aminu
Shehu Shagari — Yabo/Shagari
Federal Constituency).

Agreed to.

8.0 Tenure Report of the Committee on Steel Development House of Representatives 7th National Assembly (2011 - 2015)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to Section 62 (1) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 as amended that empowers the House of Representatives to appoint committee of its members for effective discharge of its functions, the Committee on Steel in the 7th Assembly was inaugurated on 15th September, 2011 as one of the Standing Committees of the House of Representatives in accordance with Order Eighteen, Rule 69 of the House Standing Rules.

1.1 Membership

The Committee is composed of twenty eight (28) members as follows:

Hon..... (Chairman)

Hon.(Deputy Chairman)

Hon..... (Member)

2.0 JURISDICTION

List Jurisdiction as in the Rules:

2.1 Ministries, Departments and Agencies under the Committee

The Ministries, Departments and Agencies under the Committee's jurisdiction include (list as in the Rules).

POWERS

The Committee Chairman or in his absence, the Deputy Chairman:

- Is the Presiding Officer of the Committee responsible for maintaining order, decorum, and procedure during meetings.
- Guides the Committee impartially. The Chair does not vote except in an event of a tie.
- Can censure or reprimand a member or witness for disorder in the Committee.

2.6 Attributes of an Effective Committee Chairman

An effective Committee Chairman

Sets the tone for efficiency, civility, consistency and openness of Committee meetings and activities, and balances business-like competence with camaraderie and friendliness.

Ensures the Committee implicitly adheres to set agenda and work plan.

Ensures Committee members actively participate in Committee deliberations.

Ensures orderliness and efficiency by discouraging all forms of distractions, during committee proceedings.

To achieve this successfully, the Chairman is expected to:

- Prepare in advance for meetings: Pre-meeting work is crucial, and an important piece of that is ensuring that every member is kept abreast. Set up a checklist to make sure you are giving key leaders, staff, members, interest groups (when involved) and the media the information they need and when they need it.
- Provide strong and purposeful leadership: Committees need clear direction to do justice to any matter referred to them. The Chairman ensures that tough questions are presented in a courteous and civil manner.
- Be knowledgeable in the rules and ordinances of the House as well as the prevailing political issues. A Committee Chairman earns respect of his peers and the public when he knows the rules, subject matter and political implications of the Committee's activities and actions.
- Be firm and able to take tough decisions. A good Committee Chairman must have to make tough decisions and not waste the time of other legislators to please one interest or another.
- A strategic thinker. A good Committee Chairman must think ahead of his colleagues on how to navigate out of contentious issues as well as a way out for the Committee and the Legislature in times of unpopular Committee decisions.
- Good at building relationships and alliances. Since no Chairman can succeed standing alone, he must develop good relationship with his colleagues.
- A people representative: As the representative of the people, a Committee Chairman must keep in view the citizens' perspective in all decisions of the Committee.
- Fair, Impartial and consistent. A Committee Chairman is expected to be fair to all. This can be achieved through honesty, openness and consistency.
- Be an attentive and effective listener. A Committee Chairman must find the right balance with the Committee members. He needs to listen to the views of colleagues on every subject before the Committee, irrespective of their variance with majority opinion.
- Be willing and committed to learning from others. A good Committee Chairman must be determined to learn from his colleagues and international best practices on how to best chair a committee.

2.7 Types of Committees

The following are the types of Committees in the House

2.7.1 Special Committees

Special Committees are established in accordance with the provisions of Order Eighteen, Rules 1-9 of the Standing Orders of House (2016) and operate throughout the life of the House. They include:

- Committee on Selection
- Committee on Rules and Business
- Committee on House Services
- Committee on Public Petitions
- Committee on Public Accounts
- Committee on Ethics and Privileges
- Committee on Media and Publicity

2.7.2 Standing Committees

These are Committees established under Order Eighteen, Rules 10 - 99, and they exist throughout the life of an Assembly. They are set up along policy lines to deal with subject matters or special areas within their jurisdictions.

2.7.3 Joint Committee

A Joint Committee consists of selected Legislators of equal number from both the Senate and House of Representatives. The Committee is empowered to harmonize legislative decisions for and on behalf of both Houses at a Joint Sitting. For example, the Joint Finance Committee.

2.7.4 Conference Committee

A Conference Committee stands out in a bicameral Legislature. It is constituted of equal members from each chamber to harmonize differences arising from legislation passed in both Chambers.

2.7.5 Ad-hoc Committees

Ad-hoc Committees are established by Resolutions of the House to undertake assignments such as investigations or studies. After these assignments, they cease to exist.

2.7.6 Committee of the Whole House

A Committee of the Whole House consists of the entire Membership of the House. It is chaired by the Deputy Speaker.

2.7.7 Committee of Supply

The Report of the Committee on an Appropriation Bill or any Money Bill is considered in the Committee of Supply. The Speaker presides in the Committee of Supply.

2.8 Powers of Committees

Several instruments and Statutes empower and guide the mandates and functions of Committees in the House of Representatives, including:

- The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended).
- Standing Orders of the House of Representatives.
- Legislative Houses (Powers and Privileges) Act.
- Committee Rules of Procedure.
- Existing Laws.

The Standing Orders of the House empower the committees to initiate any studies/investigations in the exercise of their mandate and may conduct their proceedings as they deem fit provided they do not exceed the authority vested in them by the House. Where a committee requires additional powers to carry out its duties, the House may confer those powers by approving a report from the committee in which those powers are requested or simply by adopting a motion conferring those powers on the committee. Specifically, committees are empowered to undertake the following:

- Brief the Chairman and Members from time-to-time, on the status of Bills referred to the Committee
- Arrange Committee Hearings in consultation with the Chairman and Members
- Supervise other staff posted to the committee
- Cultivate and sustain mutually beneficial interactions with legislative aides of committee Members, particularly in terms of research and related activities of the committee
- Perform all other legislative and administrative functions that may be assigned by the Committee.

3.6 Committee Consideration of Bills

3.6.1 How Bills Get to Committees

Upon a Bill being read a second time, it may be referred to an appropriate Standing Committee or to the Committee of the Whole House for further legislative action. When a Bill is referred to a Standing Committee, several courses of action are available to it, among which are:

(a) **Analysis of the Bill:**

Bills are analyzed to identify their intendment, advantages and disadvantages. A Committee may engage the services of experts to assist in Bill analysis.

(b) **Legislative Hearing:**

When a Bill is referred to a Committee of the House, and depending on its nature, the Committee may, in the public interest, conduct a Public or Investigative Hearing (see Manual on Public Hearings).

(c) **Amendment of the Bill:**

Any Committee to which a Bill is committed shall have the power to recommend amendments to the Bill. There is no limit to the number of amendments a Committee can recommend to a Bill, if they are germane to the original purpose of the Bill. If it is amendment Bill, Committees must work with the Principal Act in amending the Bill.

3.7 Procedure on Passage of Bills

- **First Reading:** A Bill is deemed to have been read the first time when the Clerk reads its short title; except for Appropriation Bills which its presentation by the President at the Joint Session of the National Assembly is deemed as First Reading.
- **Second Reading:** This is perhaps the most important stage of a Bill. On the appointed day, when the Clerk reads the Order of the Day for the Second Reading of the Bill, the member sponsoring the Bill is invited to lead debate on the general principles of the Bill. The lead debate is followed by contributions from other Members for or against the Bill. When a Bill is read a second time it is deemed to have been approved in principle and referred to an appropriate Committee. However, if the question that the Bill be read a second time is negative, the legislative journey of the Bill is terminated.
- **Committee Stage:** At this stage, the relevant Committee meets to discuss the proposed legislation. Stakeholders and citizens are encouraged to present their views on the Bill by mail or personal appearance. Legislative agents (Lobbyists), representing organized interest groups, are at work to oppose or support the Bill.
- **Report Stage:** Upon conclusion of its work, the Committee Reports the Bill. Bills reported with amendments are reprinted and distributed to members of the House before they are considered in the Committee of whole.