

THE 2024 APPROPRIATION ACT: FUNDING FOR WOMEN, YOUTHS AND PWD EMPOWERMENT



1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Factsheet analyses the 2024 Appropriation Act and highlights the funding for Youths, Women and People with Disabilities (PWDs) programmes in the Act. It essentially identifies funding allocations to Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) for projects and activities targeting these groups. This analysis is made to generally strengthen awareness on inclusive actions by the government and legislature and aims to satisfy the following specific objectives:

- a. Publicise the details of the 2024 budget on interventions targeted at Women, Youth and People with Disabilities.
- b. Provide enhanced and greater insights into funding commitments on the subject matter.
- c. Provide necessary data for simplified and broader discourse and analyses.

It finds, among others, that allocations to Youths, Women, & Disability inclusion and empowerment issues as a percentage of the total capital expenditure in the 2024 National Budget is only about 2%. It also finds that the outcome of the budget work in the National Assembly often results in an expanded version of the original estimates due to many project insertions by legislators. Most of the insertions are in the category of empowerment items and projects that are spread across various Ministries, Departments and Agencies; are not usually domiciled in the relevant ministry having responsibility for the issue; have overlapping descriptions; and do not demonstrate a verifiable basis for their inclusion.

METHODOLOGY

This report is made based on desk research principally of the 2024 Appropriation Act as it concerns funding for Youths, Women and People with Disabilities; and in matters of inclusion and empowerment.

Arising therefrom are analyses on relevant and appropriate trends that will support the work:

- Summaries per group showing amount and percentage of allocation
- The position/ranking of the relevant MDAs (up to the 3rd positions were identified).
- Details of all the activities (only contained in the Appendix which is accessible online)

Some secondary sources of data were used, where relevant, to support appropriate analysis.

LIMITATIONS

This report has endeavored to extract budget line items related to Youth, Women, Youth and Women (Combined) and People with Disabilities. Given the overlapping nature of the groups and descriptions in the budget, it was challenging to make an incisive and detailed analysis on every group standing alone or in relation to the various activities and programs.

2.0 BACKGROUND

The National Budget contains the planned use of revenue accruing to a government to meet public expenditure needs in such a manner that is approved by a legislature to enable the provision of goods and amenities for citizens and fulfill the political aspirations of the ruling party.

The process of consideration and passage into law of the budget for a particular year is referred to as Appropriation. When the budget is approved by the legislature, it becomes a legal instrument through which government can incur expenditures and collect revenue. The National Budget is also an aggregation of projects for communities and groups in a country that is meant to uplift the standard of living of citizens. The marginalised population in Nigeria, Women, Youths and People with Disability (PWD), are a core part of the society and have increasingly come under focus in recent years during national budgeting due to the unique needs they have.

Women typically experience economic marginalisation, gender-based violence, limited access to health care and low political participation, among others. (World Bank, 2021). Youths mostly face under-employment and limited education opportunities, which often leads to restiveness. (NBS, 2023). For People with Disabilities (PWDs), they often encounter stigma and discrimination, limited access to service, lack of legal protection, and physical inaccessibility.

The budget is meant to take these unique challenges into consideration which is why terms like Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) and Participatory Budgeting (PB), which is a form of citizen participation in public budgeting, have become popular. Given the above context, the Nigerian National Budget in form and content, thus represents a fundamental barometer of the government's proposal in the pursuit of programs to empower marginalised groups.

ANALYSES

This report is based on an analytical framework of the 2024 budget as follows:

- 2024 Budgetary allocation to Youth
- 2024 Budgetary allocation to Women
- 2024 Budgetary allocation to Youth & Women (Combined)
- 2024 Budgetary allocation to other Vulnerable/Disabled

Note: The above classification is based on groupings used in the National Budget. There are several overlapping descriptions cutting across the three major groups of Youths, Women and PWDs/Vulnerable Persons in the 2024 Budget. They include (but are not limited) the

following:

- Men, Women & Youth
- Youth & Vulnerable persons
- Men & Women
- Rural dwellers & Youth Entrepreneurial Farmers
- Rural Farmers & Market Women
- Pregnant women, the physically challenged & youths
- Youths & Widows
- Market men & women
- Women & Elderly people
- Farmers & Youth
- Women and persons with special needs
- Widows, Market women, Youths & Elderly
- Farmers & Market women
- Retired Elderly, Men & Women
- Elderly Women & people with disabilities
- Youths, Women & Elderly
- Women, Youths, Disabled & Graduates
- Fishermen & Women
- Market Men, Women & Micro-Business owners
- Women & Children
- Widows, Disabled persons & Out-of-School Women
- Women, Children & Vulnerable Groups
- Women, Children & Youths
- Aged Men & Women
- Adults & Youths
- Pregnant Women & Children
- Pregnant Women
- Women & Elderly
- Women (Battered), Men & Children
- Vulnerable Adolescents & Youth

3.0 BUDGET FOR WOMEN EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMS

Women Empowerment programs in the 2024 Budget were domiciled in 20 Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs). This includes 19 Federal Ministries and the Presidency. Projects in the MDAs amounts to a total of **N30,338,923,983** (thirty billion, three hundred and thirty-eight million, nine hundred and twenty-three thousand, nine hundred and eighty-three Naira only).

It is instructive to note that the MDAs with the highest 3 allocations are the Federal Ministries of Agriculture and Food Security accounting for **39.95%**, followed by the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs, accounting for **17.49%** and the Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment, accounting for **8.84%**, in that order.

Table 1: Summary of Breakdown of Allocations to Women Inclusion and Empowerment Programmes

ANALYSIS OF 2024 WOMEN EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMMES

S/N	MDA	NO. OF PROJECTS	AMOUNT (N)	PERCENT-AGE
1	PRESIDENCY	1	250,000,000	0.82%
2	MINISTRY OF DEFENCE	1	825,000,000	2.72%
3	MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS	1	100,000,000	0.33%
4	SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THE FEDERATION	8	500,911,100	1.65%
5	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF SPECIAL DUTIES & INTER - GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS	2	90,000,000	0.30%
6	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY	96	12,121,357,756	39.95%
7	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF BUDGET AND ECONOMIC PLANNING	4	700,000,000	2.31%
8	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY, TRADE AND INVESTMENT	18	2,682,022,162	8.84%

S/N	MDA	NO. OF PROJECTS	AMOUNT (N)	PERCENTAGE
9	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT	26	2,221,986,235	7.32%
10	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION	13	1,525,149,497	5.03%
11	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT	2	560,000,000	1.85%
12	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF MARINE AND BLUE ECONOMY	1	50,000,000	0.16%
13	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF AVIATION AND AEROSPACE DEVELOPMENT	1	25,000,000	0.08%
14	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF STEEL DEVELOPMENT	1	50,000,000	0.16%
15	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT	2	200,000,000	0.66%
16	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES	5	388,073,257	1.28%
17	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF JUSTICE	2	100,000,000	0.33%
18	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF WOMEN AFFAIRS	54	5,307,177,016	17.49%
19	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL WELFARE	14	1,824,395,570	6.01%
20	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION	12	817,851,390	2.70%
	TOTAL: WOMEN EMPOWERMENT	264	30,338,923,983	100.00%

Details of the programmes are contained in Appendix 1, which is accessible via this link: <https://goo.by/EhVkbH>

4.0 BUDGET FOR YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMS

Youth Empowerment programs in the 2024 Budget are domiciled in 33 Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs). They are made up of 32 Federal Ministries and the Presidency. The Projects in the MDAs are a total of **N80, 521,185,118** (eighty billion, five hundred and twenty-one million, one hundred and eighty-five thousand, one hundred and eighteen naira only).

It is instructive to note that the MDAs with the 3 highest allocations are the Federal Ministry of Budget and Economic Planning, accounting for **34%**, Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, accounting for **25.13%** and Federal Ministry of Labor and Employment accounting for **6.95%**; in that order.

Table 2: Summary of the Breakdown of Allocations to Youth Empowerment Programmes

ANALYSIS OF 2024 YOUTH EMPOWRMENT PROGRAMMES

S/N	MDA	NO. OF PROJECTS	AMOUNT (N)	PERCENT-AGE
1	PRESIDENCY	2	150,000,000	0.19%
2	MINISTRY OF DEFENCE	1	40,000,000	0.05%
3	MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS	2	140,000,000	0.17%
4	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND NATIONAL ORIENTATION	10	994,185,304	1.23%
5	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF ARTS, CULTURE AND CREATIVE ECONOMY	6	215,500,000	0.27%
6	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF TOURISM	5	170,000,000	0.21%
7	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL ECONOMY	5	224,049,178	0.28%

S/N	MDA	NO. OF PROJECTS	AMOUNT (N)	PERCENT-AGE
8	NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISER	1	400,000,000	0.50%
9	SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THE FEDERATION	33	3,461,367,247	4.30%
10	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF SPECIAL DUTIES & INTER - GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS	3	311,125,940	0.39%
11	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY	138	20,232,321,112	25.13%
12	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF FINANCE	1	12,495,950	0.02%
13	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF BUDGET AND ECONOMIC PLANNING	16	27,392,800,000	34.02%
14	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY, TRADE AND INVESTMENT	27	3,579,555,911	4.45%
15	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT	52	5,594,546,335	6.95%
16	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION	35	4,267,088,868	5.30%
17	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT	2	149,592,652	0.19%
18	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF POWER	2	176,777,955	0.22%
19	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM RESOURCES	5	477,295,077	0.59%

S/N	MDA	NO. OF PROJECTS	AMOUNT (N)	PERCENT-AGE
20	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF STEEL DEVELOPMENT	3	429,844,042	0.53%
21	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF SOLID MINERALS DEVELOPMENT	2	122,928,965	0.15%
22	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF WORKS	1	100,000,000	0.12%
23	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT	2	3,425,000,000	4.25%
24	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES	26	907,492,968	1.13%
25	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF JUSTICE	2	60,000,000	0.07%
26	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF NIGER DELTA	6	485,000,000	0.60%
27	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF YOUTH DEVELOPMENT	10	2,349,884,740	2.92%
28	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF SPORTS DEVELOPMENT	10	829,000,000	1.03%
29	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF WOMEN AFFAIRS	3	208,245,129	0.26%
30	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF EDUCATION	21	1,570,393,377	1.95%
31	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL WELFARE	3	120,500,000	0.15%
32	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT	6	143,209,125	0.18%

S/N	MDA	NO. OF PROJECTS	AMOUNT (N)	PERCENT-AGE
33	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION	26	1,780,985,245	2.21%
	TOTAL: YOUTH EMPOWERMENT	467	80,521,185,118	100.00%

Details of the programs are contained in Appendix 2, which is accessible via this link: <https://goo.by/TYBUgM>

5.0 BUDGET FOR YOUTH & WOMEN (COMBINED) EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMS

The 2024 Budgetary allocation to the combined group of Youth & Women in the 2024 Budget are domiciled in 29 Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), made up of 26 MDAs, the Presidency, the Office of the National Security Adviser and Secretary to the Government of the Federation.

The Projects in the MDAs are a total of N96,806, 609,673 (ninety-six billion, eight hundred and six million, six hundred and nine thousand, six hundred and seventy-three naira only).

The MDAs with the 3 highest allocations are Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, accounting for 45.84% of the allocations, followed by the Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment with 11.62% and the Federal Ministry of Labor and Employment accounting for 8.1%, in that order.

Table 3: Summary of Breakdown of Allocations to Youth & Women Empowerment programmes

ANALYSIS OF 2024 YOUTH & WOMEN EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMMES

S/N	MDA	NO. OF PROJECT	AMOUNT (N)	PERCENT-AGE
1	PRESIDENCY	4	370,000,000	0.38%
2	MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS	2	400,000,000	0.41%
3	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND NATIONAL ORIENTATION	4	400,000,000	0.41%
4	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF ARTS, CULTURE AND CREATIVE ECONOMY	9	989,535,149	1.02%
5	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF TOURISM	9	552,250,000	0.57%
6	OFFICE OF THE HEAD OF THE CIVIL SERVICE OF THE FEDERATION	2	167,328,208	0.17%
7	NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISER	1	200,000,000	0.21%

S/N	MDA	NO. OF PROJECT	AMOUNT (N)	PERCENT-AGE
8	SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THE FEDERATION	52	4,528,777,410	4.68%
9	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF SPECIAL DUTIES & INTER - GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS	7	543,663,684	0.56%
10	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY	278	44,376,243,174	45.84%
11	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF BUDGET AND ECONOMIC PLANNING	22	3,075,000,000	3.18%
12	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY, TRADE AND INVESTMENT	52	11,252,401,860	11.62%
13	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT	74	7,878,536,500	8.14%
14	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION	49	4,885,979,025	5.05%
15	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT	2	300,000,000	0.31%
16	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF POWER	2	70,653,524	0.07%
17	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM RESOURCES	1	500,000,000	0.52%
18	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF STEEL DEVELOPMENT	1	30,000,000	0.03%
19	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF SOLID MINERALS DEVELOPMENT	9	1,024,000,000	1.06%
20	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF WORKS	1	118,181,818	0.12%

S/N	MDA	NO. OF PROJECT	AMOUNT (N)	PERCENT-AGE
21	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT	2	3,355,000,000	3.47%
22	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES	24	2,080,810,424	2.15%
23	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF JUSTICE	2	350,000,000	0.36%
24	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF NIGER DELTA	18	1,220,000,000	1.26%
25	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF WOMEN AFFAIRS	36	2,360,154,071	2.44%
26	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF EDUCATION	10	1,129,685,304	1.17%
27	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL WELFARE	23	2,216,790,393	2.29%
28	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT	11	1,074,288,141	1.11%
29	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION	23	1,357,330,989	1.40%
	TOTAL: YOUTHS & WOMEN EMPOWERMENT	730	96,806,609,673	100.00%

Details of the Programs are contained in Appendix 3, which is accessible via this link: <https://goo.by/AEwcOZ>

6.0 BUDGET FOR VULNERABLE GROUPS/PWD EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMS

The 2024 Budgetary allocations to other “Vulnerable Groups” and the “Disabled” are domiciled in a total of 10 Federal Ministries.

The Projects are a total of N4, 883, 027, 720 (four billion, eight hundred and eighty-three million, twenty-seven thousand and seven-hundred and twenty naira only).

The Ministries with the 3 highest allocations are the Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Poverty Alleviation, accounting for 28.32%, Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, accounting for 21.84% and Federal Ministry of Environment, accounting for 13.81% in that order.

Table 4: Summary of Breakdown of Allocations to Empowerment Programmes for Vulnerable Groups & PWDs

ANALYSIS OF 2024 VULNERABLE AND DISABLED PERSONS EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMMES

S/N	MDA	NO. OF PROJECT	AMOUNT (N)	PERCENT-AGE
1	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF SPECIAL DUTIES & INTER - GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS	1	40,000,000	0.82%
2	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY	8	1,066,275,500	21.84%
3	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF BUDGET AND ECONOMIC PLANNING	1	55,000,000	1.13%
4	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY, TRADE AND INVESTMENT	1	250,000,000	5.12%
5	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT	5	25,666,512	10.77%
6	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION	1	200,000,000	4.10%

S/N	MDA	NO. OF PROJECT	AMOUNT (N)	PERCENT-AGE
7	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES	2	225,000,000	4.61%
8	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF WOMEN AFFAIRS	8	463,853,099	9.50%
9	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT	7	674,288,141	13.81%
10	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION	15	1,382,944,468	28.32%
	TOTAL: VULNERABLE & DISABLED	49	4,883,027,720	100.00%

Details of the programs are contained in Appendix 4, which is accessible via this link: <https://goo.by/SwDWbl>

7.0 SUMMARY OF BUDGETS FOR THE FOUR CATEGORIES: (1) YOUTH, (2) WOMEN, (3) YOUTH & WOMEN (COMBINED) AND (4) VULNERABLE/ DISABLED

The summary of the allocations as detailed above across the four groups of Youth, Women, Youths and Women, and Vulnerable Groups and the Disabled are as presented in Table 5 below:

Table 5: Summary of Allocations to Youth, Women, Vulnerable and Disabled Empowerment Programmes

S/N	MDA/LINE ITEM	NO. OF PROJECTS	AMOUNT (N)
1	TOTAL: YOUTH EMPOWERMENT	467	80,521,185,118
2	TOTAL: WOMEN EMPOWERMENT	264	30,338,923,983
3	TOTAL: YOUTHS & WOMEN EMPOWERMENT	730	96,806,609,673
4	TOTAL: VULNERABLE & DISABLED	49	4,883,027,720
	GRAND TOTAL: YOUTH/ WOMEN/ VULNERABLE/ DISABLED	1,510	212,549,746,494

Table 5 above shows that the category of Youth & Women Empowerment (combined) accounts for the highest allocation (1st position) with 46% of the total allocation to all the groups, followed by Youth Empowerment (standing alone) in 2nd position, with 38%, followed by Women Empowerment (standing alone) in 3rd position with 14% and finally, other Vulnerable Groups and Disabled in 4th position with 2% in that order.

8.0 SUMMARY OF ALLOCATIONS TO THE FOUR CATEGORIES AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

The summary of allocations to Youths, Women, Youths & Women including other Vulnerable Groups and Disabled as a percentage of the total capital expenditure in National Budget is only 2%.

There is only a total allocation of N212, 549, 746, 494 (two hundred and twelve billion, five hundred and forty-nine million, seven hundred and forty-six thousand, four hundred and ninety-four naira only) out of a capital expenditure size of N9, 995, 143, 298, 028 (nine trillion, nine hundred and ninety-five million, one hundred and forty-three thousand and twenty-eight naira only). See table 6 below.

Table 6: Youth, Women, Vulnerable and Disabled Empowerment Programmes Allocations vs. Total Capital Expenditure

S/N	MDA/LINE ITEM	AMOUNT (N)
1	TOTAL: YOUTH EMPOWERMENT	80,521,185,118
2	TOTAL: WOMEN EMPOWERMENT	30,338,923,983
3	TOTAL: YOUTHS & WOMEN EMPOWERMENT	96,806,609,673
4	TOTAL: VULNERABLE & DISABLED	4,883,027,720
	GRAND TOTAL: YOUTH/ WOMEN/ VULNERABLE/ DISABLED	212,549,746,494
	TOTAL 2024 CAPITAL EXPENDITURE	9,995,143,298,028

9.0 SUMMARY OF ALLOCATIONS TO THE FOUR CATEGORIES AS A PERCENTAGE OF BOTH CAPITAL EXPENDITURE AND RECURRENT EXPENDITURE

Stretching the analyses further to cover both capital and recurrent expenditure even decreases the percentage ratio of all empowerment programme headings to a ratio of about 1%. This is a total of N212, 549, 746, 494 (two hundred and twelve billion, five hundred and forty-nine million, seven hundred and forty-six thousand, four hundred and ninety-four naira only) out of a total of almost N19 trillion (nineteen trillion naira) for both capital and recurrent expenditure. See Table 7 below.

Table 7: Youths, Women, Youths & Women (combined) Vulnerable and Disabled Empowerment Programmes Allocations Vs. Total Recurrent and Capital Expenditures

S/N	MDA/LINE ITEM	AMOUNT (N)
1	TOTAL: YOUTH EMPOWERMENT	80,521,185,118
2	TOTAL: WOMEN EMPOWERMENT	30,338,923,983
3	TOTAL: YOUTHS & WOMEN EMPOWERMENT	96,806,609,673
4	TOTAL: VULNERABLE & DISABLED	4,883,027,720
	GRAND TOTAL: YOUTHS/ WOMEN/ VULNERABLE/ DISABLED	212,549,746,494
	TOTAL 2024 RECURRENT EXPENDITURE	8,768,513,380,852
	TOTAL 2024 CAPITAL EXPENDITURE	9,995,143,298,028

10.0 OBSERVATIONS

- i. While the budget proposal from the Federal Government is always relatively lean, the outcome of the budget work in the National Assembly is an expanded version due to many project insertions by legislators. Most of the insertions are in the category of empowerment items and projects. Observers, members of civil society and even the executive have often questioned the selection process, criteria, and potential impact of such empowerment project nominated by legislators. Many have attributed this to political bias of elected representatives.
- ii. There is a very long list of projects of various types and descriptions meant for all the targeted groups of Youths, Women, Youth and Women and others. The list stretches into several activities, such that the management and implementation of the projects may pose difficulties.
- iii. Examples include items such as "Supply of Laptops for empowered materials to youths and recent graduates ..." This observation extends to clichés and descriptions used, such as: "Empowerment", "Entrepreneurship development", "Provision of ...", "Training and Empowerment", "Review of ... module", "Strategic Empowerment", "Grants for unemployed ...", "Mind Shift for students ...", "Gender and development program", etc.
- iv. The compound classification of names for the groups could pose problems in delineation, accountability, accuracy and implementation, as different vulnerable groups are grouped together as seen in the analyses. For instance, Women & Youths, Men & Women, Elderly and Women, Pregnant Women & Youths, etc.
- v. Some of the descriptions may be cumbersome for interpretation and determination. For instance: How can one properly determine an unemployed graduate? How also can a pregnant woman be correctly identified for budget purpose?
- vi. The gestation period/long term benefits/sustainability gear of these projects may be in doubt as there is a possibility that a lawmaker proposing a project may not return after elections to follow up on its progress or may change the project entirely in subsequent years.
- vii. The 'convertibility or soft nature' of many of these projects (i.e., ill-defined and yielding no tangible assets) are a matter of concern, and could become controversial, thus hampering long term benefits and effects.
- viii. Agencies under Federal Ministries are seen to be more suited for budget management and implementation, but it is observed that the Federal Ministries are virtually in charge; maintaining the HQ (headquarters) stranglehold over matters of budget, when they should be providing an enabling environment for implementation.

- ix. In all cases of Youths, Women, and Youths & Women (Combined) allocations, their respective MDAs did not rank highest as to where projects are domiciled but other MDAs. Specifically, the Ministry of Agriculture & Food Security ranked highest except in the case of "other Vulnerable and Disabled" category where the Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Poverty Alleviation has the highest funds allocation.
- x. There appears to be a general increase in most headings of Youth, Women and the Disabled over the years. For instance, in 2023, the Federal Government allocated N3.3bn to the National Commission for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD), representing a 23% increase from N2.7bn in 2022 and now to N1.2tr in 2024. However, such increases may only serve to be nominal values. Real value, substance, relevance and core attention should be of greater concern.
- xi. The challenges of insufficient funding, lack of transparency and specificity, and exclusion in planning and implementation have become common place in Nigeria's budgeting systems. There remains the issue of projects not being financed thereby defeating the original intent.
- xii. It is not clear if there has been any verifiable basis for revenue projections for inclusion considerations or indications as basis for the estimates in projects and their costs.
- xiii. The allocation of only 2% of total capital expenditure to all marginalised and vulnerable groups in an annual budget may be considered inadequate. Looking at the budget line items and the general frame of the 2024 Budget, there is no substantial evidence of prioritisation of equity and inclusion. This is so given the high level of exclusion in the country and the commitment of only N212, 549, 746, 494 (two hundred and twelve billion, five hundred and forty-nine million, seven hundred and forty-six thousand, four hundred and ninety-four naira only) out of a total capital expenditure size of N9, 995, 143, 298, 028 (nine trillion, nine hundred and ninety-five million, one hundred and forty-three thousand and twenty-eight Naira only). This is even more concerning when calculated over the aggregate total of N28.7tr of the 2024 Appropriation Act.

11.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- i. Allocations to all marginalized and vulnerable groups that include Youth, Women, Youth & Women Combined, Other Vulnerable Groups and Disabled should be improved beyond the current 1% to 2 % that is the case of the 2024 annual budget.
- ii. The selection criteria or process for empowerment projects should be greatly improved through closer involvement of citizens and civil society, particularly marginalised groups themselves.
- iii. Budget management and implementation issues in projects must be properly studied by lawmakers for adjustment where necessary. These areas include delineation in project names and description, interpretation issues and long-term sustainability matters.
- iv. The relevant Ministries, Departments or Agencies should be used for project domiciliation. For example, as much as possible, youth programs should be in the Federal Ministry of Youth Development, while women programs and projects should be put in the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs, etc.
- v. Emphasis should be given to more 'hard' or infrastructural interventions. For example, establishing machines for soap making rather than annually making provision for items having to do with training for soapmaking.
- vi. Agencies under the Federal Ministries should be considered for the management and implementation of projects, under proper guidance and efficient/transparent guidelines of their parent ministries. This will give the parent ministries ample time for supervision.
- vii. The government must focus on provision of sufficient funding, conduct comprehensive surveys on Women, Youths, and PWDs in Nigeria to address the problem of data gap. There also needs to be an increase in the awareness of the needs of these groups, including the development and implementation of a national action plan on their issues.
- viii. The Executive and Legislature must find a way of holding pre-budget sessions as a way of articulating and aligning projects to the relevant vulnerable groups, rather than wait for a situation where thousands of projects are inserted afterwards.
- ix. Efforts should be made towards toward deliberate commitment to inclusion in future budgets, including linking of projects to national revenues rather than the open-ended projects/program determination and allocations.
- x. The National Assembly must see to it that the budget as an instrument of planning, growth and development is accorded that prime status, rather than as an instrument

for individual, group, sectional or regional aggrandizement. Consequently, the following recommendations are made to the National Assembly:

- a. The relevant Committees involved in the budgeting process alongside the Constituency Outreach and Appropriations Committee should work to ensure that item descriptions and targeted groups are vetted, screened and cleared of all overlaps, duplications, repetitions or such other cumbersome titles and headings. In addition, items in the budget that could pose difficulties in implementation must be rejected outright, including those that have compound classifications.
- b. Consequently, the many classifications for targeted groups and line items must be scaled down drastically.
- c. Budgeting must not give the impression of intent for convertibility for personal gains or as a soft source for cash or any motive other than to achieve effect.
- d. Project implementation should majorly go to agencies of MDAs rather than parent ministries as it defeats the purpose of setting up such agencies.

12.0 CONCLUSION

The place of the annual budget as a tool and compass for tangible development is not in contest. What is perhaps in contest is whether the annual budget is working and that all envisaged groups benefit from it.

APPENDICES

- Appendix 1: Details of 2024 Women Empowerment Programmes. <https://goo.by/EhVkbH>
- Appendix 2: Details of 2024 Youth Empowerment Programmes. <https://goo.by/BOqEct>
- Appendix 3: Details of 2024 Youth & Women Empowerment Programmes . <https://goo.by/hatloN>
- Appendix 4: Details of 2024 Vulnerable and Disabled Persons Empowerment Programmes. <https://goo.by/RtoHsm>

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About PLAC

Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre (PLAC) is a non-governmental organization committed to strengthening democratic governance and citizens’ participation in Nigeria. PLAC works to enhance citizens’ engagement with state institutions, and to promote transparency and accountability in policy and decision-making process.

The main focus of PLAC’s intervention in the democratic governance process is on building the capacity of the legislature and reforming the electoral process. Since its establishment, PLAC has grown into a leading institution with capacity to deliver cutting-edge research, policy analysis and advocacy. PLAC receives funding support from donors and other philanthropic sources.

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